



Pre–Application Planning Advice

(Applicable to all new enquiries from 4th January 2011)

Outline of the service

The Council is committed to working with prospective applicants to improve the quality of planning submissions by offering pre-application advice. The Local Plan and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance contain policies and advice which applicants should refer to before making an application. The Council also encourages prospective applicants to discuss their proposals before they are formally submitted.

The Local Government Act 2003 allows us to operate a scheme of charging for discretionary services, e.g. pre-application advice on certain types of development so that the costs of providing the service do not fall to the Council taxpayer, and service can be improved. (The current statutory planning application fees do not cover the cost of pre-application advice).

The pre-application advice service aims to offer prospective applicants:-

- An understanding of how national, regional and local guidance and policies will be applied to the proposal
- Potential for reducing the time that professional advisors may spend in working up the proposals for submission
- An indication of those proposals that are completely unacceptable, so saving the cost of pursuing a formal application
- Written confirmation of the advice given at the pre-application stage, that can then be submitted in support of any subsequent application.

The Service Provided

Minor or Small Scale Developments

- Named officer contact and consideration by Development Management case officer with input from other specialist officer(s) as required.
- Detail of relevant planning history of the site
- Identification of planning constraints and the relevant planning policies that apply and other material planning considerations are likely to be taken into account, including constraints.
- An indication in relation to any anticipated S106 obligation requirements
- A site visit if appropriate.
- Details of responses from CYC consultees, and where possible, identification of external organisations who may be consulted at the application stage
- A meeting if deemed to be necessary by the case officer

- Informal and “without prejudice” written comments and guidance on the content, construction and presentation of an application likely to satisfy the Council’s planning policies.
- Guidance on how to best undertake community consultation
- Advice on the documents and information to be submitted with an application to as far as possible ensure it is valid on submission
- We will aim to offer advice on minor and small-scale development (in most cases) well within 20 working days of valid receipt of the request including the appropriate fee.

Major Developments

In addition to those elements of the service provided in relation to minor or small scale development we will also: -

- Follow the *(to be)* Published protocol for handling Major Developments
- Advise on any Environmental Impact Assessment requirements
- We will aim to offer advice on major development within 30 working days of valid receipt of the request including the appropriate fee.
- Aim to determine any subsequent application which has received an indication of likely acceptability to officers in less than 13 weeks.

Large Scale Major Developments

In addition to those elements of the service provided in relation to minor or small scale developments we will also: -

- Provide a key single contact from LPA identified (a senior officer to take overall project management role).
- Propose Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) in accordance with the Council’s PPA charter, where appropriate
- Provide input from a full range of professional areas (city strategy and other Directorates)
- Provide multiple written responses / meetings over weeks/ months to an agreed level
- Agree wherever possible appropriate timetable for the submission of an application and timescale for determination, in accordance with the PPA if applicable.

What is not provided

- A plan drawing or design service
- Feedback from external organisations that we may consult at the application stage, although these will be identified as part of the pre application process so that they can be contacted directly. However in the case of large scale Majors development contact with and involvement of external consultees may form part of the pre application formulation of the scheme.
- A guarantee of officer support at the application stage when issues not apparent at the pre application advice stage are subsequently presented.
- Where an application is dealt with by Planning Committee rather than officers under delegated powers, any guarantee of approval or support from the Committee.