



Pre – Application Advice Service

Planning Development Pre-application Advice Service

This Guidance Note has been produced in order to demonstrate the Council's commitment to and means of achieving the following aims:

- To provide the best possible service and advice to all levels of planning customers; developers and householders alike, by:
- Adopting a 'front-loaded' approach to development proposals, through the:
- Encouragement of early discussion, and resulting in:
- Speedier decision making through the ability to pre-plan resources and gain a 'rolling start' for planning applications, and:
- More consistent decisions

This note sets out the nature and level of service offered by the Council. The note also clarifies the commitment that YOU the customer must make in order that the service can work efficiently to the 'benefit of all'. Finally, a 'Pre-application checklist' is set out for the benefit of all customers to clarify the level of information that will be expected by the Council before advice may be given.

The Service offered is not an alternative to employing private planning consultants or architects.

HOUSEHOLDERS & DEVELOPERS

Before continuing please consider the following:

- Please contact (telephone, email or write) the Council at the **earliest** opportunity
- Undertake some initial research yourself (check the planning pages of the Council's website for other published guidance)
- Who will be affected by the proposal? Sound out their views
- Pre-application advice, however well considered, is not binding
- The more information you give, the more accurate the response can be
- Planning considerations change over time, so can advice
- You will not be able to see a planning officer on the 'off chance' and receive in depth advice
- Vague proposals can receive only vague advice
- On complex issues seek private professional help
- Developers – on major proposals contact statutory consultees in advance – you know who they are likely to be if you have researched the site

- Provide adequate information in advance; the level of information required, and when, for each level of the service is set out in the following sections
- Remember, when finally submitting your application to refer to the pre-application discussions and who these were with

Will there be a Charge for the Service?

Yes there is a nominal charge for this service, all of these fees are published on the website.

Is Advice Confidential?

No, but under the Freedom of Information Act the Council may consider **commercially sensitive** pre-application submissions as confidential – a public interest test will be applied. Information outside this category or where a planning application is submitted on the site for a similar scheme may be available to the public.

LEVELS OF SERVICE OFFERED

1. Small householder (domestic) developments
2. Minor developments
3. Major developments

SMALL HOUSEHOLDER (DOMESTIC) DEVELOPMENTS

Service for small **HOUSEHOLDER PROJECTS** only.

Available, **by appointment only**, at the **Council Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet during normal office hours.**

To benefit from this Service **your commitment to us will be:**

- To send or email the information set out in our pre-application checklist on Pre-application advice prior to any appointment being made and confirming whether an appointment is sought or if a written response will be sufficient
- To send in plans, sketches and photos to assist the Enquiries Team
- To be prepared to meet a mutually agreeable appointment within the hours of the Service.
- Accept that no appointments will be longer than 30 mins.

Our commitment to you:

- Offer an initial view appropriate to the level of information provided
- Acknowledgement that the officer has everything necessary to deal with the application within 5 working days.
- To be aware of the limitations of the service and to undertake subsequent more in depth consideration if necessary and to relay these

MINOR DEVELOPMENTS

Service for **MINOR DEVELOPMENTS** including:

- Proposals which would realise the development value of land
- Consideration of development where internal Council consultations may be required
- Developments of small to medium size, for example 1 – 10 dwellings, commercial or retail schemes up to 1000 sq.m. or sites of up to 0.5 hectares.
- To be prepared to meet a mutually agreeable appointment within the hours of the Service at the Council Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet.

To benefit from this Service **your commitment to us will be:**

- To send or email the information set out in our pre-application checklist on Pre-application advice prior to any appointment being made and confirming whether an appointment is sought or if a written response will be sufficient
- To be prepared to meet a mutually agreeable appointment within the hours of the Service at the Council Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet.
- Accept that no appointments will be longer than 30 mins.
- Accept that if the planning officer considers the proposal to be beyond the scope of this procedure then the procedure for the most complex proposals may be instigated
- Upon formal submission, to agree to pay reasonable legal fees for agreed and necessary obligations and to provide all necessary information to facilitate the early completion of such agreements.

Our commitment to you:

- To acknowledge your pre-application submission within 5 working days. If a written response is required you will be informed of the appointed officer. If an appointment is sought, the officer will be the Enquiries Planning Officer on duty for the day of the appointment
- Arrange appointments as appropriate with experienced officers
- Offer an informed opinion of the tabled proposal and further advice where necessary
- Provide a full response, in writing within 15 working days of your contact or within 10 working days of your appointment

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS (Development Team Approach)

Service for **MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS** including:

- Significant residential or commercial developments
- Large scale retail development
- Developments requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment
- Developments likely to need complex Planning (S.106) Obligations to be successful
- Other complex developments by agreement with the enquiries planning officer

Proposals of this nature may require the involvement of other Council services and in such cases a 'DEVELOPMENT TEAM APPROACH' may be adopted

What is a 'Development Team' Approach?

The advice will not come from a single officer but corporately resulting from an early review of potential consultees within the Council. The aim is to provide a complete, unified and consistent approach which will not only indicate the clear way forward but which will provide early warning of contributions/obligations/additional information etc. that may be necessary.

The results will be to assist in highlighting (and resolving) potential problems between consent regimes such as Environmental Health and Building Control and to allow the early progress towards planning obligations which in the past have resulted in delays to the grant of planning permission.

The Service

To benefit from this service **your commitment to us will be:**

- To provide the information as set out in our pre-application checklist
- To understand that any advice given by our officers is limited by the planning process and does not represent a decision. Advice is given in good faith but formal submissions are subject to public consultation and final determination by the Planning Committee.
- To understand that planning is dynamic. Schemes submitted more than 6 months after advice has been given or following changes in National or Local Policy may not rely upon the original advice offered
- Upon formal submission, to agree to pay reasonable legal fees for agreed and necessary obligations and to provide all necessary information to facilitate the early completion of such agreements.

Our commitment to you:

- To acknowledge your pre-application submission within 5 working days
- To appoint, and advise you of, a 'lead officer' to manage and coordinate your proposal from pre-application to decision and to be available to assist
- To provide final response to a request within 20 working days of the submission or 15 working days following any meeting
- To advise you of any change to the timetable
- To undertake a site inspection as part of the pre-application process
- To arrange a meeting with the 'lead officer' as necessary
- To provide a multi-disciplinary and proactive service
- To provide accurate and objective advice
- To confirm advice in writing at appropriate stages

GENERAL MATTERS

Central Government sets targets to Local Authorities for the determination of planning applications within particular timescales. Currently these targets are:

- 60% of major applications within 13 weeks of submission
- 65% of minor applications within 8 weeks
- 80% of all other applications within 8 weeks

The services outlined in this guidance note have been attuned to assist applicants, either to refrain from submitting inappropriate proposals, or to submit proposals which are most likely to achieve planning permission. Applicants who have sought pre-application advice and who follow that advice are more likely to receive speedy decisions and where small changes are required, the Council will commit to providing you with an opportunity to correct these.

In DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS No discussions will take place where:

- The proposal is unacceptable in principle
- A new design would be needed to overcome objections
- Pre-application advice has not been followed
- No pre-application advice has been sought
- The proposal does not comply with the Local Plan or published standards

Planning Obligations

The Pre-Application Advice Service will endeavour to identify developments that are likely to be subject of planning obligations at an early stage. The Council is committed to advising applicants at the earliest possible stage that a planning obligation will be required.

As a result, given the requirement to meet the timescales referred to above, the failure to conclude any such obligation within the appropriate 8 or 13 week period is likely to result in the refusal of planning permission.

Use of the pre-application service can help to avoid such cases

Councillor Involvement

Councillors represent communities and are there to help.

You can contact a councillor to notify him/her about your proposal from the outset and there is an advantage to both officers and councillors in having an early presentation of your draft plans.

However, some councillors in Hart are members of the planning committee and so are strictly constrained in what they can do or say. Please remember this but nonetheless it is a courtesy to inform local councillors well in advance.

Pre-application Advice Contact Details

Planning Services
Hart District Council
Civic Offices
Harlington Way
Fleet
Hampshire
GU51 4AE

Tel: 01252 774419
DX 32632
Email: help.desk@hart.gov.uk

Pre-application Checklist

PLEASE NOTE THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE

	Domestic	Minor	Major
Have a clear idea of your proposal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Provide sketch plans and a Site Location plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Photographs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Investigate the Planning History		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Check the Local Plan Designation and Policies		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Familiarise yourself with development control and other development standards		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Carry out a site analysis of constraints and opportunities		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commission accurate site survey plans including a condition survey of any trees and vegetation			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Prepare draft design principles (taking account of Government requirement for good design)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commission professional plans			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Undertake discussions with statutory consultees			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>