



## **Your Planning Application A Guide to the Process**

This leaflet is designed as a guide for applicants and if you have submitted this application on behalf of the applicant, please forward this leaflet to them.

If you have employed someone else to submit the application on your behalf (i.e. an agent) all correspondence from us will be sent to them and it is up to your agent to keep you informed.

Throughout this leaflet the term 'you' refers to the primary contact.

### **How an application is processed**

The process may be divided into 6 stages:

- Registration and validation
- Publicity
- Consultations
- Planning Officers' Considerations
  - Policies
  - Site visit
  - Consultations & representations
  - Statutory time limit
- Decision
- Post Decision Actions

### **Registration and validation**

An application that has been correctly submitted is registered, given a reference number and allocated to a Planning Case Officer. If there are problems with the contents then it will be made 'invalid' and you will be asked to send in the required information as soon as possible.

A letter of acknowledgement is sent to you; this letter gives the reference number of your application, the name of the Case Officer and their telephone number. At any stage in the application you may contact your Case Officer for an update on your application. The reference number should be quoted on all correspondence sent to Planning Services.

### **Publicity**

The neighbours immediately adjoining your property/site are notified of the proposals. They have three weeks within which to make their comments.

Some applications will be advertised in the local newspaper. These include applications located in conservation areas, on listed buildings and any that represent a 'departure' from the local plan policies.

You will be asked to display a site notice at or near the property.

A weekly list of new applications is published on Harts' website and the local press may publish the list as part of their editorial.

The application is recorded in the Planning Register. The Register and all the documents relating to the application, including consultation responses, letters of representation and the Officers report are available for public inspection at [www.hart.gov.uk](http://www.hart.gov.uk).

### **Consultations**

As well as notifying your neighbours, various other agencies are consulted about the scheme and invited to make comments on the proposal.

The Town or Parish Council will always be asked for a view on your application.

Departments within the Local Authority, such as Highways, Drainage, Landscape, or Conservation may be consulted about the likely impact of your proposal.

Depending on the nature or complexity of the application other bodies such as the Environment Agency, English Heritage or H.C.C. may also be consulted.

These consultees usually have three weeks in which to respond.

## **Planning Officer Considerations**

### Policies

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Planning Officer will therefore primarily consider your application in light of the relevant policies for the proposal.

The relevant Development Plans are the South East Plan and the Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006. The Local Plan sets out the most detailed policies, it is available at the Civic Offices or on-line at [www.hart.gov.uk](http://www.hart.gov.uk). You are advised to familiarise yourself with the policies or talk to a Planning Officer about those that are relevant to your proposal.

If your application is contrary to Policy, and there are no other material considerations to indicate that the Policy (including Supplementary Planning Guidance) should be overridden, then you should be aware that your application is unlikely to be recommended for approval.

### Site Visit

During the first three weeks the Case Officer will visit the site to assess your proposals. This will normally be carried out without an appointment but if the officer is unable to assess the proposals fully, an appointment will be made to visit the site again. If there is a likely to be a problem over access, please contact the Case Officer.

During the site visit the Case Officer will note, for example, the following:

- Impact on the existing building
- Appearance & setting of existing property
- Proximity of neighbouring properties
- Any windows/doors on neighbours' property that may be affected by your proposal
- Details of the boundary treatments
- Similar developments in the area
- Impact on the landscape
- Impact on the street scene

### Consultations and representations

When the consultation period is over, the Case Officer will assess all the comments, including those received from neighbours. Then, also taking into account his/her observations from the site visit, the Officer may contact you to discuss any problems. Some applications may be unacceptable initially but with minor amendments could become acceptable. If changes are made to an application then further publicity and consultations may be necessary.

### Statutory time limit

The statutory time limit within which most applications must be determined is 8 weeks. There is considerable pressure to determine applications within this period, so if the application cannot be amended within the time limit then the Officer may recommend the application for refusal or ask you to withdraw the application and begin again.

## **Decision**

By this stage the Case Officer is able to write a report and to recommend whether permission be granted or refused.

Most applications are dealt with by a Case Officer and then confirmed by a Principal Planning Officer or the Development Control Manager under 'delegated powers'. Delegated decisions can often be made within 5-7 weeks of the application being validated.

Sometimes an application will be referred to the Planning Committee for the decision to be made by the elected Councillors. If your application is referred to the planning Committee then you will be notified. The notification letter also informs you whether there will be an opportunity to address the Committee.

Once the decision has been made, either by the Planning Committee or the Case Officer, the decision notice will be produced and sent to you.

## **Post Decision Actions**

### Permission granted subject to conditions –

- Contact your Case Officer to discuss the conditions and what further information is required in order to comply with them. Planning permission is only deemed to be granted when all conditions have been fulfilled. Failure to comply with the conditions can result in enforcement action and prosecution.
- You may appeal against any condition if you consider them to be unreasonable. Please seek advice from the Case Officer before you take this action.
- Check with Building Control whether you need building regulations consent.

### Permission refused –

- Contact your Case Officer to discuss whether the scheme can be amended in any way to make it acceptable.
- If the Planning Office considers that your proposal cannot be amended in any way, you may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate at 3/15 Kite Wing, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN.

**At any stage you may contact the Case Officer to discuss your application. If you have an agent, contact should be made through them. Please make sure you know the application reference number when you call.**

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Civic Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet, Hants,  
GU51 4AE

Planning help desk: 01252 774419

Fax: 01252 774410

E-mail: [help.desk@hart.gov.uk](mailto:help.desk@hart.gov.uk)

[www.hart.gov.uk](http://www.hart.gov.uk)

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