



Development Management

Pre Application Advice Charges 2019/20



1. Why seek pre-application advice?

- 1.1 It can be very helpful to seek the Council's advice about your planning proposals before submitting your actual application. This might involve meeting with us or just sending us your proposals for us to comment. This can help to overcome potential difficulties and to make sure your application deals with all important planning considerations. You will get an informal view on the likelihood of obtaining planning permission, as well as guidance on the information you need to submit with the application.
- 1.2 You may also find it helpful to obtain advice from an independent planning specialist when drawing up your scheme. People who regularly prepare planning applications have the experience and expertise that can help make sure your scheme has the best chance of being granted consent. Spending time and effort in preparing your scheme is more likely to result in a good quality and acceptable development and also help us process your application more quickly.
- 1.3 Irrespective of the level of information you provide, we will charge for providing advice on built developments or changes of use, including any that may be retrospective. Please note that the fees below are in place to ensure the cost recovery of the service and are made on a not-for-profit basis.
- 1.4 Our advice will be provided in good faith but it will not be any guarantee that your application will result in a particular decision and will not be binding on the Council in any way. It will only be applicable so long as there is no change in policy or other circumstances relevant to the case.
- 1.5 Our opinion might have to change during the formal application process once the views of neighbours, Local Councils and District Councillors have been obtained. The final decision may also be made by the relevant Council Committee, rather than by officers, and it is always possible that the Committee Members may reach a different view.
- 1.6 Whether or not you decide to take pre-application advice does not affect your right to submit a planning application nor to appeal should consent be refused.

2. What is a Planning Performance Agreement and what are the benefits to entering into one

- 2.1 Some of our customers may find that the breadth of issues that arise as a result of their proposal cannot be covered in the pre-application advice meeting(s). For developers who would like to iteratively develop their proposals and evolve their designs based on feedback, we would recommend entering into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the Council.
- 2.2 A PPA is a project management tool that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and applicant can use to agree timescales, actions and resources for handling particular applications.
- 2.3 Through a PPA we can offer a bespoke service that provides specialist support and expertise relevant to your proposal. The cost of the service is calculated on the basis of hourly rates of the officers and experts who provide the advice.
- 2.3 The benefits of using this service are:

- Certainty of timescales for reaching a decision and a specific committee date to work towards;
- A project managed application process that includes a range of professionals involved in the determination of your application;
- The opportunity to discuss changes to proposals as they arise;
- The cost of pre-application advice, and resident engagement is included;
- Access to officers and consultees to enable constructive discussion on planning applications;
- Named officer contact.

3.0 How the schemes work

3.1 In all cases we will expect applicants to provide as much information as possible about the site upon submission. You will need to be clear about what you propose in order to help us decide who else should be consulted.

3.2 As a minimum, we will require:

- a description and summary of the proposals;
- a site location plan and stated site area; and
- your contact details.

3.3 Wherever possible we would recommend the applicant provides the following:

- photographs and drawings of the site and the proposals
- any supporting documents, surveys, statements etc.

3.4 The issues, depending on the information you provide, are likely to include:

- The planning history of the site;
- If there are any constraints on the site. For example, is the building listed; is the development site in a conservation area; is there a flood risk; are there any national or local designations etc.;
- Government advice;
- Relevant adopted and Local Plan Submission Version (2017) policies;
- The design;
- Amenity impact;
- Possible obligations on you as the developer. For example, the provision of infrastructure, affordable housing or contributions to service provision; and
- Necessary practical measures. For example, dealing with possible contamination.

3.5 The table below sets out how we will approach the provision of pre-application advice to applicants.

| Scheme Category | How we will provide advice |
|--|---|
| Schemes of up to 49 dwellings, 4,999 square metres of commercial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written advice on the basis of submitted documents. |

| | |
|---|---|
| development or change of use, or works to a site up to 2 hectares in area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we consider a meeting is required, it will usually be held at the Civic Offices in Epping and will be charged at an additional fee. Advice will be given on whether or not the scheme needs to be considered by the Development Management Forum and/or Quality Review Panel. • Whilst consultation will be undertaken with key consultees it is unlikely that any other officers would attend the meeting except at the discretion of the allocated Planning Officer. • If further meetings are deemed to be necessary by the Planning Officer then these would be charged at an additional fee. |
| Schemes of more than 50 dwellings or 5,000 square metres of commercial development or change of use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A PPA will generally be the preferred mechanism for providing advice • A Lead Officer will be assigned the case. • Other officer involvement will be agreed subject to the negotiations/details of the PPA • The number and timescale of meetings will be discussed and agreed between the Lead Officer and the applicant. • This will enable a more tailored and bespoke service to be provided for larger schemes and ensure that full cost recovery is achieved. • Schemes to be considered at a Development Management Forum and Quality Review Panel prior to submission of an application (note additional charges for these elements) |

3.6 In all cases we will provide a written summary of our advice. The timescale of this advice will vary and depend on the complexity of the proposal and our own consultation process. Once we have given you a written response, no further advice will be given unless we are presented with revisions to your proposal and thereafter advice will be charged an additional fee to be invoiced at the rate of £120 per hour, plus VAT.

3.7 For PPAs, a project management framework and timetable for progressing and delivering development on a site will be produced. The Agreement is intended to improve the quality and efficiency of the planning process and records all Parties commitments to an agreed timetable, which would include key milestones that clearly identify the level of resources and actions that are required and ensure that all key planning issues are properly considered and resolved at the earliest possible stage. The PPA approach is therefore strongly recommended for complex major planning applications.

3.8 Where a Planning Performance Agreement is not utilised, the Council will still negotiate and agree with the applicant a suitable pre-application approach that allows for multiple meetings, additional officer time, and further work than would be covered by the broad fees stated in the table above. This will be agreed in writing with the allocated Lead Officer prior to any significant assessment taking place on a submission and would be based on the standard Officer fee of £120 per hour, plus VAT.

4.0 Development Management Forum

4.1 The Council holds Development Management Forums to facilitate the discussion of large-scale or contentious development proposals. Generally the Council will expect schemes of more than 50 homes or 5,000 square metres of commercial/other floorspace to be the subject of such discussions. Its purpose is to allow participants to raise issues of concern and obtain answers to questions about the particular proposal. Wherever possible this will be prior to the review of a development proposal by the Quality Review Panel and the submission of a formal application.

4.2 Forum meetings will occur mostly at the pre-application stage to allow early discussion by Councillors and members of the public on planning issues related to these proposals and to explore the scope for amendments and agreement between all parties in a positive and constructive way prior to the later decision being made at the District Development Management Committee. They do not remove the opportunity for objectors, supporters and applicants to submit representations once an application is submitted or address the Committee when an application is to be determined.

4.3 Applicants will be expected to arrange for leaflets to be distributed to the local community (as agreed with the Council) and to pay a fee of £2,700 for officer preparation, attendance and write up of the meeting together with any associated costs such as hire of a suitable venue.

5.0 Quality Review Panel (QRP)

5.1 In general, the Council will expect the design of schemes of more than 50 homes or 5,000 square metres of commercial/other floorspace or contentious developments to be informed by an independent review by the QRP. This will also include the production of Strategic Masterplans, Concept Frameworks, Design Codes. Other smaller schemes which are complex or contentious may also be appropriate for review.

5.2 The Quality Review Panel has been established to support Epping Forest District Council in achieving high quality, innovative and sustainable placemaking. The

panel provides independent and objective advice during the policy development, planning application and delivery programme.

- 5.3** The panel supports the Council by advising on masterplans, pre-application development proposals, and planning applications. It is encouraged that schemes are referred to the panel at an early stage in the design process to identify and test the proposed design's key assumptions and since advice is likely to be most effective before a scheme becomes too fixed.
- 5.4** Early engagement with the panel should reduce the risk of delay at application stage by supporting the development of schemes of a high quality. The Council may however also request a review once an application is submitted.
- 5.5** The Quality Review Panel charges are reviewed every two years; from 1 January 2018 to 1 January 2020. Current charges are:

| QRP Review Stage | Cost |
|----------------------|--------------|
| First formal review | £5,500 + VAT |
| Second formal review | £4,000 + VAT |
| Chair's review | £2,500 + VAT |
| Surgery review | £1,300 + VAT |

- 5.6** The Quality Review Panel is an independent and impartial service provided to the District Council by Frame Projects, an external consultancy. As such the above fees for the Quality Review Panel are not included within the pre-application charges and are not paid to the Council. This Panel is an external service and fees are paid by the applicant to Frame Projects for delivering this service. A charge for Council officer input to the Quality Review Panel will also be made of £1,000.

6. Charges

6.1 To provide pre-application advice, the Council will charge the following fees:

| Pre-Application Category | Advice Format | Cost |
|--|----------------|--|
| Minor development schemes of 1 - 2 new or replacement residential units | Written advice | £300.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Creation of commercial development or changes of use up to 100 square metres | Written advice | £300.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional |

| Pre-Application Category | Advice Format | Cost |
|--|----------------|--|
| | | chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Minor development schemes of 3 - 9 new residential units | Written advice | £840.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Creation of commercial development or changes of use between 100 - 999 square metres | Written advice | £840.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Changes of use of land or earth movement on land under 1 hectares | Written advice | £840.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Major development schemes of 10 - 19 new residential units | Written advice | £1,800.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional 7.5 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |

| Pre-Application Category | Advice Format | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Creation of commercial development or changes of use between 1,000-2,499 square metres | Written advice | £1,800.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional 7.5 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Changes of use of land or earth movement on land more than 1 hectare but under 2 hectares | Written advice | £1,800.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional 7.5 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Major development schemes of 20 - 49 new residential units | Written advice | £3,600.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional 10 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| | Where applicable – consideration by Development Management Forum and Quality Review Panel | QRP and Development Management Forum charges as set out above. |
| Creation of commercial development or changes of use between 2,500-4,999 square metres, | Written advice | £3,600.00 plus VAT |
| | Meetings | All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional 10 hours of preparation time (total preparation time |

| Pre-Application Category | Advice Format | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| | Where applicable – consideration by Development Management Forum and Quality Review Panel | for all officers attending) QRP and Development Management Forum charges as set out above. |
| Changes of use of land or earth movement on land 2 hectares or more | Written advice Meetings | £3,600.00 plus VAT All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional 10 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| Major development schemes of 50 and over new residential units | Written advice Nature and form of meetings by negotiation | By negotiation or as agreed by way of a Planning Performance Agreement. |
| Creation of commercial development or changes of use of 5,000 square metres floorspace and over | Written advice Nature and form of meetings by negotiation | By negotiation or as agreed by way of a Planning Performance Agreement |
| All other cases, including householder additions, adverts, and other commercial development alterations | Written advice Meetings | £80.00 plus VAT All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with an additional chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |
| All other cases, including householder additions, adverts, and other commercial development alterations, which involve works to a statutory Listed Building | Written advice Meetings | £120.00 plus VAT All meetings and site visits will be charged at £120 per hour per officer, with |

| Pre-Application Category | Advice Format | Cost |
|--------------------------|---------------|--|
| | | an additional chargeable 2 hours of preparation time (total preparation time for all officers attending) |

6.2 Please note our pre-application advice will not cover all planning related issues:

- Essex County Council charge separately to EFDC in respect of advice about highways access/traffic issues, surface water urban drainage (SuDS) on Major Developments as defined above, education and community infrastructure and archaeology.
- Environment Agency provides separate advice on flooding related issues.

6.3 Depending upon the nature and scale of the scheme, it may be possible to incorporate Essex County Council as a signatory to the PPA. This will be agreed on a case by case basis.

7.0 Other planning advice available

7.1 We now provide much more information and documents online at www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk . Examples include:

- Our current Local Plan with all planning policies and progress towards a new Local Plan.
- The Epping Forest District Local Plan (Submission Version) 2017 and the associated evidence base
- Advice when planning permission is needed.
- Information about the planning history of sites.
- Real time updates on the progress of current applications.
- The Council's local validation requirements.
- Conservation and Heritage Advice

8.0 Application for Building Regulations Approval

8.1 Should you gain planning permission for your development, please contact our Building Control section to make an application and complete the process before work commences, on 01992 564141

9.0 Next Steps

9.1 To request pre-application advice, please complete the form below and e-mail us at contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

9.2 Your payment must be made upon submission by cheque, banker's draft made payable to Epping Forest District Council or alternatively, by debit or credit card ringing either of the following two numbers: 01992 564476 or 01992 564584 between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday. We will need to be satisfied that your payment has cleared before we can meet you or provide a written response.

5. List of Plans, Drawings and Information

Please provide as much information as possible. Providing more information will enable more detailed advice to be offered. Existing and proposed plans are helpful.

Location Plan (e.g. 1:1250 scale) with site edged red

Block Plan

Elevations / Alterations

Statement as relevant

Photographs of the site

6. Type of Development

Major development schemes of 50 and over new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use of 5,000 square metres floorspace and over. = By negotiation or as agreed by way of a Planning Performance Agreement

Major development schemes of 20 - 49 new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use between 2,500-4,999 square metres, or changes of use of land or earth movement on land 2 hectares or more = £3,600.00 plus of VAT at 20%

Major development schemes of 10 - 19 new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use between 1,000-2,499 square metres, or changes of use of land or earth movement on land more than 1 hectare but under 2 hectares = £1,800.00 plus of VAT at 20%

Minor development schemes of 3 - 9 new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use between 100 - 999 square metres or changes of use of land or earth movement on land under 1 hectares = £840.00 plus of VAT at 20%

**Minor development schemes of 1 - 2 new or replacement residential unit or the creation of commercial development or changes of use up to 100 square metres
= £300.00 plus of VAT at 20%**

**All other cases, including householder additions, adverts, other commercial developments alterations = £80.00 plus of VAT at 20% unless it involves works to a statutory Listed Building
= £120.00 plus of VAT**

Please tick here if a meeting is required. A separate meeting fee will be calculated in accordance with the pre-application charging schedule on receipt & review of documents.

Your payment must be made in advance by cheque, banker's draft made payable to Epping Forest District Council or alternatively, by debit or credit card by ringing either of the following two numbers:

01992 564476 or 01992 564436 between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

We will need to be satisfied that your payment has cleared before we can arrange a meeting or provide a written response.

7. Freedom of Information Act

The Council is unable to keep queries confidential in the majority of cases due to the Freedom of Information Act.

8. Signature

I confirm that the above information is correct.

Signed.....

Date.....