

## **MAJOR AND STRATEGIC SCHEME PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE PROCEDURES**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

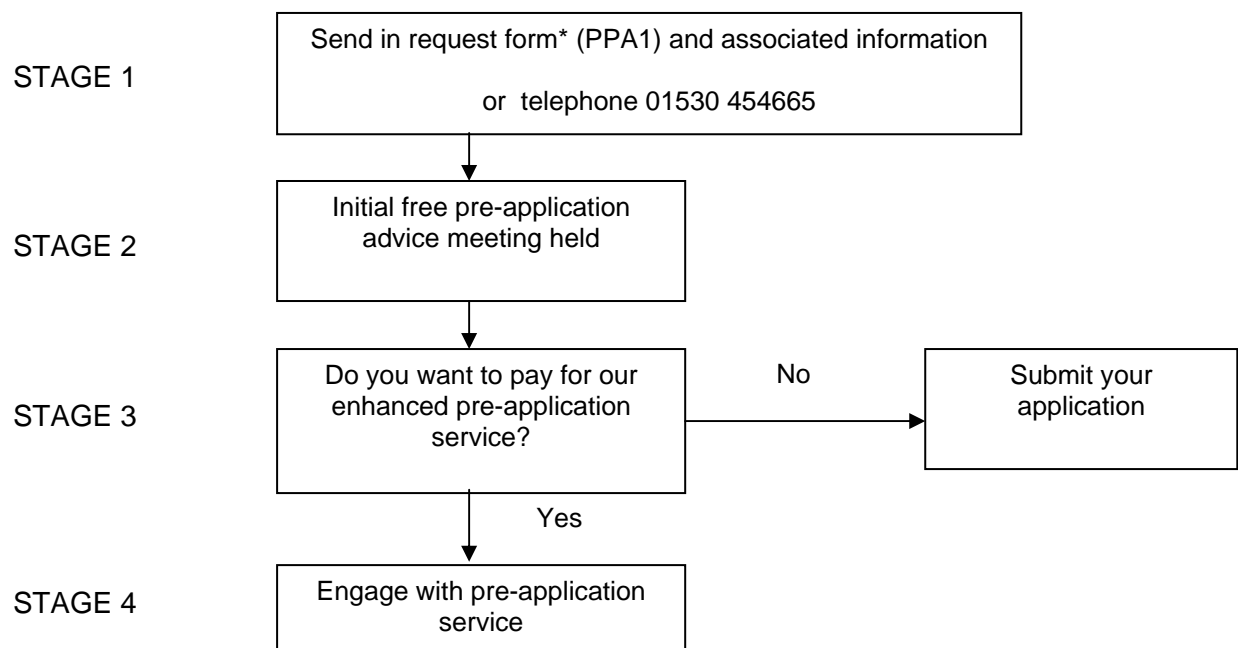
- 1.1 The Council is able to provide advice and information if you are considering submitting a development proposal. We welcome and encourage discussions before you submit your application and understand that early discussions of your proposal can provide advantages for all parties involved. We will be able to provide advice to developers and their agents on key issues prior to formal submission where the function is to speed up the development process, and avoid unacceptable proposals and sustain and improve the service provided.
- 1.2 The provision of advice on development schemes is time consuming and the current statutory planning fees, do not cover the cost of these discussions. In view of this and taking into account the increased number of requests for advice, we have formalised the procedures for handling this area of work and introduced a fee for the most complex applications. Development proposals that are subject to the chargeable pre-application advice scheme are the following types of development, or where a development forms part of a comprehensive scheme within these thresholds:

	<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	<b>COMMERCIAL</b>	<b>PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE FEE (INC VAT)</b>
<b>STRATEGIC PROPOSAL</b>	50 dwellings or more	10,000 + sq m floor space	£3400.00
<b>MAJOR PROPOSAL</b>	10-50 dwellings	1,000 – 9,999 sq m floor space	£1800.00

- 1.3 As mentioned above, we welcome pre-application discussions for all types of development proposal and believe they are of value to all parties. The first pre-application advice meeting will be provided free of charge to all applicants to enable them to make an informed choice about whether to pay for the enhanced pre-application advice service.
- 1.4 If a development proposal falls within the categories above, it will remain the applicant's decision as to whether they choose to pay for enhanced pre-application advice or just to submit their application.

## 2. HOW DO I GET PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE?

2.1 The procedure outlined below applies to strategic and major schemes as outlined in 1.2 above.



\* This can be downloaded at [www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/planning\\_advice\\_and\\_guidance](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/planning_advice_and_guidance)

### Stage 1

2.2 A pre-application advice request form (PAA1) can be downloaded from the Council website. This will ensure that the Planning Officer is able to obtain an overview and understanding of your proposal prior to the initial pre-application advice meeting. Alternately, you can call 01530 454665 to arrange an initial meeting. If you choose this option, the PAA1 should be completed and submitted at the initial meeting.

### Stage 2

2.3 We will aim to hold the free initial meeting within 10 working days of your request. The meeting will be with the Planning Officer dealing with the case and will be provided free of charge. This meeting will last for a maximum of 1 hour.

2.4 The general advice provided at the meeting will include:

- An overview of policies relevant to the proposal
- The effect of relevant planning history
- The constraints and/or assets of the site for example, flood risk, a designated area or building
- Advice to the acceptability of the proposal including recommendations, where possible, on improvements
- Details of bodies which will need to be consulted on a planning application

- Any further additional information which will be required in a formal planning application to facilitate its decision such as national and local validation requirements
  - A guide to the timescales within which the planning application may be determined
  - Information that will be required from you if you wish to pay for further pre-application advice.
- 2.5 Following the initial meeting, you will be provided with a written summary of the advice within 10 working days.

### Stage 3

- 2.6 This stage involves you making a decision about whether you wish to pay for additional and more detailed pre-application advice, or would prefer to just submit your application.
- 2.7 If you wish to pay for further pre-application advice, the charges are set out at 1.2 above. You should contact the Planning Officer with whom you had the initial pre-application advice meeting. Their contact details will be provided in the written summary as provided at 2.5 above.

### Stage 4

- 2.8 For those applicants who choose to pay for additional pre-application advice, we will:
- Provide written confirmation within 3 working days of receiving your payment
  - Contact you within 10 working days of receiving the fee to arrange a date for a meeting and agree any additional information required
  - Arrange a meeting with you and the specialist Council officers needed to advise you on your case, including any site visits needed.
  - Provide detailed written confirmation within 10 working days of the meeting, or a timescale agreed within the meeting of the advice and views given by us
- 2.9 The additional pre-application advice provided will cover the following, where appropriate:

#### Land use

- If your proposals are in line with the National, Regional and Local planning policy framework, if it is not, how they could be justified
- If the site is covered by any specific policies or covered by any other designations or safeguards
- If, in our opinion, your proposals take account the impact on local needs and facilities, for example the impact on transport, education or community use and how a S106 Agreement or Obligation might mitigate against such effects

## Design

- The characteristics of the existing site and surrounding context
- The architectural approach including the height, scale, massing and materials
- The environmental impact of the development including sustainable design and construction
- The design of the public realm including open space and landscape treatment

## Housing

- Provide general advice on the Council's affordable housing requirements

## Conservation

- The impact your proposal may have on a listed building or, if within a conservation area, an unlisted building on or near the site
- When a proposal is in or adjoining a conservation area, in our opinion the development would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that conservation area

## Environment

- Where there are any trees or hedgerows that are protected and require special treatment
- How the council's public open space policies will impact on your proposal and whether a financial contribution under a S106 agreement might be appropriate
- If, the proposal is within a flood plain, whether it is feasible to build in the area or advise on the level of mitigation required.
- Habitats regulations/ Environmental Impact Assessment information

## General

- Advice about which other agencies you need to speak to e.g. County Council, Natural England etc.
- In the opinion of the Council, any further information that would require submission with a full planning application

2.10 We will also agree a timescale with you for the production of the written confirmation advice given by us at the meeting and/or site visit. If this is part of a pre-arranged block of meetings, we will also agree milestones for the delivery of further information or the arrangement of future meetings will be discussed.

### **3. IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO NOTE**

3.1 Any advice given by council officers to pre-application enquiries is the informal opinion of that officer, and does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council in respect of any future planning application.

3.2 Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith, based on existing planning policies and standards and the information supplied by the applicant. Circumstances and information may change, and so alter the position and

affect the final recommendation on the application. Any views provided will also be without prejudice to the formal consideration of any future planning application which will be the subject of public consultation and may ultimately be decided by the Council's Planning Committee or by senior officers.

- 3.3 Planning officers will ultimately make a recommendation to the Council, as Local Planning Authority, on how the application should be determined. The officer's duty remains to advise the Council on determining the application in the public interest. It follows that officers cannot give any guarantees about the final formal decision that will be made on any future planning application.
- 3.4 Any advice given in relation to planning history of the site, planning constraints or statutory designations does not constitute a formal response under the provisions of the Local Land Charges Act 1975, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and other relevant legislation.