

PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION ADVICE: PROCEDURES AND CHARGES

April 2024

Introduction

This document provides guidance in respect of the Council's procedures for pre-planning application advice and includes information about costs.

We currently devote considerable resources to offering advice on development proposals to achieve positive decisions. We see this as a key part of delivering a good planning service even though it is not a statutory duty. Charging for pre application advice allows the Council to recover at least some of the costs incurred through from the pre-application service and allows us to continue to dedicate time to provide quality advice that will assist applicants and their agents in submitting well considered applications.

Do I have to submit a Pre-application Enquiry?

There is no legal requirement for you to submit a pre-application enquiry though the advice that you receive will assist you in identifying any recognised problems and how these could be addressed in a planning application. We are unable to engage in detailed discussion on amendments to a planning application once it has been submitted.

House Extensions – if your proposal relates to a house then before submitting a pre-application enquiry, you are advised to look at the [House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document](#). This provides detailed advice on what may be acceptable in usual circumstances and may avoid the need for pre-application discussions. However if, after reading it, you are still unclear then please do submit an enquiry to us as we are unable to engage in detailed discussion on amendments to a planning application once it has been submitted.

What is Pre-application Service?

We offer a standard pre-application service in addition to bespoke Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) for significant or very complex sites. This note explains the Local Planning Authority's approach to a standard pre-application service. Should you be interested in a PPA, please email initial information to dev.control@warrington.gov.uk and mark it for the attention of the Development Manager.

What service is provided?

On receipt of a valid pre-application enquiry, we will:

- Arrange a meeting/ site visit (maximum 1 hour) if requested

- Use on-line resources to identify any constraints and opportunities
- Research the history of the site
- Consult relevant technical officers within the Council (e.g. highways, environmental protection, heritage)
- Assess the prospective application against Council policies and standards taking into account the site context and comments received
- Issue a written response based on the submitted proposal

A meeting, if requested, should usually take place before a written response is issued however if there is a reason why we think a different approach would be useful then we will let you know. Please tell us with the submission of your enquiry whether you would like a meeting and if you would prefer Teams, telephone or face-to-face in Council offices. Face-to-face meetings at the application site may be facilitated on request and is subject to a further £50 charge in addition to the fees below.

Attendance at meetings by additional officers, such as highways, conservation and urban design can be requested if considered necessary, but this will incur further charges in addition to those listed in the fee schedule below (note that these matters will in any case be captured in our written response where you have requested in-house specialist advice in addition to that of a case officer)

The case officer will aim to provide a detailed written response within 6 weeks of submission.

The written response will make it clear that any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application, and it shall also be made clear that subsequent alterations to local and national planning policies might affect the advice given and may affect the consideration of any applications, particularly if applications are submitted some length of time after pre-application discussions take place.

What do I need to include in my Pre-application Submission:

The following information should be submitted along with a fee (see fee schedule below). Please note that the detail in our response will reflect that in your submission and therefore you should submit as much information as you have:

- Site Location Plan that identifies where the site/ address is
- Details of current use(s)
- Draft/sketch drawings showing the existing and proposed site layout
- Draft/sketch drawings showing the existing and proposed plans and elevations
- A planning justification for the proposal (more relevant to major applications or those subject to an allocation such as Green Belt)

How do I submit a pre-application enquiry?

Information should be submitted via our [online portal](#), you will first need to register and login to use the pre-application submission service.

For further information in regard to pre application discussions contact:
Devcontrol@warrington.gov.uk

When shouldn't I use Pre-planning application advice? (Lawful Development Certificates)

The service should not be used for individuals who want confirmation that proposed development will or will not need planning permission. In these cases individuals should apply for a certificate of proposed development under Section 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act. The service should not be used for those individuals who want confirmation in respect of what is the lawful existing use of a building and/or land. In these cases individuals should apply for a Certificate of existing lawful use under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Further advice relating to the submission of lawful development certificates can be found at www.planningportal.gov.uk.

FEE SCHEDULE

The fees listed above are introduced on an interim basis on 1st April 24 and reflect the 35% and 25% increase in planning application fees for major and minor proposals respectively that were brought in nationally in December 23. Prior to this, pre-application fees had not been revised since 2016. Fees will be revised further in the administrative year 2024/25 to ensure they are proportionate to the service provided.

We will be not able to progress a pre-application enquiry without a fee, which should be paid at the time of submission. This can be paid via the [payment section](#) of our website. Please ensure you choose the correct service in the central drop down menu

	Significant 'Major' Development Proposals	'Major' Development proposals	'Minor' Development proposals	Advert Proposals	House- holder
Fixed Charge	£2,628.50 (additional £77.50 for each requested specialism)	£1,648 (additional £77.50 for each requested specialism)	£335 (additional £77.50 for each requested specialism)	£70	£85
Additional Meeting or Written Advice	£1,304 (additional £77.50 for each requested specialism)	£719.50 (additional £77.50 for each requested specialism)	£166.25 (£77.50 for each requested specialism).	£57.50	£57.50

Categories of Pre-applications:

“Significant Major” development proposals include:

- 30 or more dwellings (for outline applications a density of 30 dwellings to the hectare will be applied)
- Commercial development >2000 sq m
- 5 plus wind turbines

“Major” development proposals include:

- 10 or more dwellings
- Commercial development >1000m² or >1 ha
- 1-4 wind turbines
- All other major developments

“Minor” development proposals include:

- Less than 10 dwellings
- Commercial development <1000m² or <1 ha
- Changes of use / barn conversions
- All other minor developments including listed building & telecommunications proposals & discharge of condition proposals.

“Advertisement” development proposals include:

- Applications that will require advertisement consent

“Householder” development proposals include:

- Extensions to houses
- Erection of outbuildings
- Resurfacing front garden areas
- Erection of fences, walls and gates
- Changes to the roof shape

Viability

For pre-application advice proposals that are contrary to policy and a proposal is being justified on the basis of viability there may be a requirement for enquirers to pay separately for the Council to get viability reports independently assessed by a qualified consultant surveyor/accountant. The Council will normally ask enquirers to pay the consultant direct and in advance of a pre-application advice response.