

## Development Management Service

### Best Practice in Planning Guidance Note 2

#### Planning Applications: Advice for Applicants (Revised February 2012)

##### 1. Information about the District

Chichester District has a population of 110,500 and is located in an area of over 300 square miles stretching (east/west) between the Hampshire border and Arun and Horsham District and from the Surrey border in the north to the sea. The main urban areas are the City of Chichester (the County town), Midhurst, Southbourne, Petworth and Selsey, however, much of the district is rural in character.

The historic and landscape importance of the district is reflected in the fact that it contains 92 Conservation Areas, over 3,500 Listed Buildings and the South Downs National Park and Chichester Harbour Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations cover over two thirds of the area.

The District is administered, for planning purposes, from East Pallant House, Chichester and there is an Area Office in Midhurst. Since April 1 2010 the South Downs National Park Authority has become the Local Planning Authority for a large part of the rural area of the District north of Chichester (details can be found on [www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk)). West Sussex County Council is also based in Chichester in The Grange, Tower Street, which deals with local development issues. Within the District there are 57 Parish Councils serving 67 parishes.

Those applications requiring a committee decision are made by the Development Control Committees representing the North and South areas of the district. These Committees normally meet the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month alternatively at the Council Chambers, East Pallant House, Chichester.

A meeting of the Planning Application Referral Committee (PARC) can determine planning applications referred to it by Area Committees.

Some 'significant' planning applications are also determined by the South Downs National Park Planning Committee, details of which are available on its website.

##### 2. Preliminary Advice and Information

The planning reception is situated within East Pallant House where the public planning register is available to view. This incorporates a copy of each current

application and a record of any previous applications and decisions with associated plans/drawings.

Recent applications can also be viewed across the Council's web site (<http://www.chichester.gov.uk>) but if you wish to view old files, then to avoid delay you should telephone customer services (01243) 534734 and make prior arrangements.

A duty planning officer is normally available between 9.00am and 1.00pm to give informal advice to members of the public. Appointments can be made with planning officers to discuss more significant proposals at a mutually convenient time. Guidance notes are available on different types of development proposals, which can be found on the Council website ([www.chichester.gov.uk](http://www.chichester.gov.uk)) under Planning Advice and Guidance and there is also a procedure for making a Preliminary Enquiry prior to submitting a planning application, for which a charge is now levied (see Planning – Pre-application advice charging scheme [www.chichester.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=14644](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=14644)).

If you are proposing a business related development you may wish to contact the Council's Economic Development Office on 01243 534669.

### **3. Submitting your Planning Application**

Several types of planning application forms are available On Line including one for domestic extensions (householder applications) and a more detailed form for other types of development with supplementary forms for commercial and agricultural proposals. Specific forms are needed for applications affecting listed buildings and demolition in Conservation Areas, advertisements and works to protected trees. These can be obtained and printed directly from our web site (<http://www.chichester.gov.uk>).

Ordnance Survey extracts to accompany planning applications can be purchased at the reception.

In completing a planning application it is important that you follow the notes for guidance carefully or your application may be subject to delay if the requirements of the validation checklist have not been satisfied and the appropriate fee has not been paid. Once validation has been completed you will receive an acknowledgement giving you a reference number which you should quote in any future contact.

### **4. Publicity and Consultation**

Once the administrative procedures have been completed, neighbouring properties will be notified of the application, and under some circumstances a site notice may be displayed. The Parish Council will receive a copy of your application, and a planning officer will visit the site to inspect the property.

A period of up to six weeks from the validation date may have to elapse before the expiry date for publicity and advertisement has been reached. During this time the officer may negotiate amendments to a proposal or if it is considered to be fundamentally flawed, the officer may prepare reasons for refusal. The complexity of the proposal will normally dictate the level of consultation which will need to take

place (for instance: the Natural England, Environment Agency and County Local Development Division) and consequently the time taken to process the application.

## **5. Decision Making**

Most applications are determined within eight weeks but if not, you may have the right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against the Council's failure to determine the application. In practice such appeals are rare because they normally take longer to resolve than the planning application.

The final decision in 80% of planning application cases rests with the Assistant Director of Development Management Services and other designated officers, under delegated powers. Applications are reported to the relevant Area Development Control Committee if they meet set criteria such as:

- the proposal conflicts significantly with a Development Plan policy;
- a formal request is made by a councillor;
- the officer recommendation is contrary to an objection by a Parish Council or a statutory consultee;
- where the applicant is a Councillor or an employee of the District Council;
- where the officer recommendation on an application by another Local Authority is to refuse or object;
- otherwise as identified by the Assistant Director of Development Management Services as a matter which requires the attention of the committee.

The Area Development Control Committees comprises 13 members for the North and 16 for the South. The meetings start at 10am and you are advised to check before attending that the item of interest to you is on the agenda and that you have the correct date and location. An agenda for the meeting is normally available at the meeting with any appropriate updates. Committee members and other councillors will normally speak on applications and applicants, supporters and objectors can also address the committee direct. Advice on public speaking can be found under Planning – Council procedures on the website.

The Committee may approve or refuse an application either in accordance with, or contrary to, an officer recommendation. Occasionally applications may be deferred for the purposes of a site visit or to enable further discussions or negotiations to take place, in which case the matter usually proceeds to the next available meeting of the committee.

Following a committee meeting or a delegated decision, the relevant notices are issued promptly as the decision has not been formalised until it is despatched. Applicants have a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a refusal of planning permission or a condition imposed on a permission, details of which may be found on the Planning portal website [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).