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| Pre Application Advice Charging Scheme |
| (Revised May 2025) |

Why make a pre application enquiry?

Early discussions with agents and developers are an important part of the development management approach to facilitating acceptable development. The National Planning Policy Framework also encourages engagement with Local Planning Authorities and local communities to achieve early consideration of fundamental planning issues and improved outcomes. Discussions about schemes before they are formally submitted as a planning application can help steer proposals into a form that are more likely to be acceptable whilst leading to the reworking or dropping of proposals that appear to be fundamentally unacceptable. Entering into pre application discussions may help save time, wasted expense and avoid frustration.

Further benefits include:

* Avoiding incomplete applications that cannot be registered
* Reducing the number of unsuccessful applications
* Reducing confrontation in the planning process
* Raising the quality of development
* Gaining community acceptance
* Securing satisfaction with the process

We will expect that guidance given by the Council’s officers is taken into account in the preparation and working up of your proposals. Extensions of time to determine applications are only agreed in exceptional circumstances, usually for the most significant applications. If a proposal is not acceptable, you will be provided with the option to withdraw your application, or it will be refused.

What is covered by the Charging Scheme?

The charging scheme covers all requests for pre application and planning advice. The scheme includes the ability to seek further specialist advice linked to the submission of a planning application such as historic building or environmental health advice for an additional fee.

The following exemptions apply:

* General planning advice given by the Customer Service Centre
* Where the works are required to meet the needs of a registered disability
* Discussions in relation to enforcement matters

In addition, the charging scheme will not apply to advice given to the following organisations:

* Parish Councils
* West Sussex County Council
* Housing Associations (where the development is solely affordable)

We expect developers to seek advice on management of trees from arboricultural consultants and will not therefore generally provide advice on tree matters.

Advice in relation to the highways aspects of development is available from West Sussex County Council as the Highway Authority, this may be accessed via the following link; <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/information-for-developers/pre-application-advice-for-roads-and-transport/>. Advice in relation to flood risk and environmental impacts is available from the Environment Agency/Natural England via the following link; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/developers-get-environmental-advice-on-your-planning-proposals>.

**How do I obtain advice?**

All requests for **pre application advice** or **Do I Need Planning Permission** enquiries must be submitted [online](https://www.chichester.gov.uk/request-pre-application-advice-and-guidance).

Upon receipt of your request for pre application advice, we will aim to contact you within 3 working days either to request further details or to confirm that your request has been allocated to a Case Officer for action.

You may make an appointment for a **Pre-application Surgery** a minimum of 5 working days in advance. The time of the meeting is flexible and will be agreed between the parties attending.

**Advice on heritage matters** is available through the Council’s new pre-application advice service which combines heritage and planning advice to ensure a joined-up approach. If advice is required on heritage matters a fee must be paid for a specialist from the Conservation and Design Team to attend a site visit and/or a meeting as part of the process.

What will it cost me to obtain advice from Chichester District Council?

The cost of the service will depend on the scale of the proposal and whether the advice of specialists is required. In addition, fees will be charged for additional members of staff to attend meetings where necessary.

Do I need planning permission and advice making an application:

| **Enquiry/Advice service** | **Timescale** | **Fee** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Do I need planning permission - householder | 15 working days | £150 |
| Do I need planning permission - commercial and housing | 15 working days | £200 |
| Do I need listed building consent | 15 working days | £200 |
| Do I need advertisement consent | 15 working days | £80 for the first sign. £40 for each additional sign. |
| Site Constraints Check | 10 working days | £75 |

Planning Surgery:

| **Type of development** | **Timescale** | **Fee** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Planning Surgery (Householder)  For enquiries for development in the curtilage of a dwellinghouse which would fall within a Householder Planning Application | Must be booked 5 days in advance | £200\*  \*An additional £100 will be required if the proposal effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the surgery |
| Planning Surgery (Minors)  For enquiries which would fall within a Minor Planning Application | Must be booked 5 days in advance | £350\*\*An additional £150 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the surgery |

Written Pre-application Advice

| **Development type** | **Fee** | **Fee for additional advice or meetings\*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Householder (enlargement, improvement or other alteration of an existing house) | £200 | £100 (meeting up to 30 mins)  £150 (site meeting up to 30 mins) |
| Householder (erection of outbuildings or other structures for ancillary purposes, and gates wall or other means of enclosure) | £100 | £100 (meeting up to 30 mins)  £150 (site meeting up to 30 mins) |
| Shop Fronts | £100 | £100 (meeting up to 30 mins)  £150 (site meeting up to 30 mins) |
| **Businesses at Home**, advice on the planning merits of a business use within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse. | £225 | £100 (meeting up to 30 mins)  £150 (site meeting up to 30 mins) |
| **Replacement Dwellings**, advice on the planning merits of a business use within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse. | £325 | £100 (meeting up to 30 mins)  £150 (site meeting up to 30 mins)  An additional £100 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the meeting |
| **Small Scale Minor**, e.g. 1-3 dwellings, non-residential (less than 500m2 gross floor space). | £475 | £150 (meeting up to 30 mins)  £200 (site meeting up to 30 mins)  An additional £150 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the meeting |
| **Large Scale Minor**, e.g. 4-9 dwellings, non-residential (500-999m2 gross floor space). | £950 | £250 (meeting up to 45 mins)  £300 (site meeting up to 45 mins)  An additional £200 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the meeting |
| **Small Scale Major**, e.g. 10-24 dwellings, non-residential (1000m2 - 1999m2 gross floor space). | £2,000 | £325 (meeting up to 1hr)  £375 (site meeting up to 1 hr)  An additional £250 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the meeting |
| **Medium Scale Major**, e.g. 25-99 dwellings, non-residential (2000m2 - 4999m2 gross floor space). | £4,000 | £375 (meeting up to 1hr)  £400 (site meeting up to 1 hr)  An additional £300 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the meeting |
| **Large Scale Major**, e.g. 100+ dwellings, non-residential (greater than 4999m2 gross floor space). | £8,000 | £400 (meeting up to 1hr)  £500 (site meeting up to 1 hr)  An additional £350 will be required if the scheme effects a listed building, a member of the conservation & design team will attend the meeting |

\* The fees for additional advice or meeting are chargeable for each additional meeting agreed between the parties. Fees for any additional meetings following validation of the pre-application enquiry must be paid in advance of the meeting.

The fees for additional meetings do not include the fee for a Development Manager or the Divisional Manager to attend. If they are requested to attend the meeting an additional fee of £100 per hour will be charged for the Development Manager and £125 per hour will be charged for the Divisional Manager.

For the most significant schemes or strategic scale development, a Planning Performance Agreement (project management plan) may be appropriate in which the process of dealing with the proposal in accordance with a timetable, principles and procedures are agreed together. A Planning Performance Agreement would be drawn up at the pre application stage which would lead the process through the application stage and ensure sufficient resources are available to meet identified targets and commitments. This will involve agreeing a bespoke fee to ensure the aims of the Planning Performance Agreement can be achieved.

**What do I need to do before advice can be given by the Council?**

We will expect the following to be provided to enable your request to be actioned:

* Payment of relevant fee (by debit card only)
* Completion of the relevant Pre Application Advice form
* Location and site plans
* Relevant photographs to provide the case officer with an appreciation of the site and its surroundings

Where formal written advice is sought the following material will normally be expected:

* Sketch or indicative plans of the proposal
* Supporting studies/information (for major schemes)

To ensure that requests for pre application advice are as productive as possible, applicants or their agents will be expected to provide sufficient information and plans to describe and explain their proposals including:

* An assessment of the character of the area
* An analysis of the opportunities and constraints of the site in its context.

These details will be used to promote a design led approach to the scheme and will enable the Council to assess whether a development team including specialist officers should be brought together.

**What can I expect from the process?**

Requests for advice will be allocated to officers according to the level of advice requested and the complexity of the proposal. Major schemes will normally be dealt with by a senior officer.

The Pre-application Surgery is designed to provide a forum for discussion of proposals that have not been significantly advanced, whereby applicants would value a face to face discussion about the broad principles of developing a site.

The various ‘Written Advice’ services are designed to provide more detailed feedback on specific proposals. The DINPP Service will provide you with an informal opinion as to whether planning permission is required for your proposal within 15 working days. In most other pre-application advice cases we will aim to provide a written reply or arrange a meeting within 20 working days from the date your request is accepted as complete, except for the more complex proposals where we may need to agree a longer timescale with you. We will endeavour to reply to householder enquiries quicker than this where possible. Where a meeting is held, a written account of the main points will be sent within 10 working days of the meeting. Our preferred method of written communication is via e-mail and this will be used where possible.

In the case of major development proposals, it may (at the officer’s discretion) be necessary to consult statutory consultees and other groups prior to providing advice, in such cases, the pre application process may take longer in order that we are in a position to provide a comprehensive response.

The case officer (and development team where applicable) will assess the submitted information and will aim to provide you with constructive comments on the scheme in relation to the following so far as they are relevant:

* Relevant development plan policies and other Council strategies that may have a bearing on the proposal
* Site constraints, e.g. statutory designations such as conservation areas, AONB’s, Tree Preservation Orders and other constraints including listed buildings, flood zones and rights or way.
* Relevant planning history
* The details of the proposal, i.e. the acceptability of the land use, design and amenity considerations and highways and access issues where appropriate
* Infrastructure requirements, including CIL, the need for affordable housing, open space, community facilities and ecological mitigation. Any other contributions that may be required by West Sussex County Council will need to be established directly with that Authority.

We will indicate the likely information requirements (plans and supporting details/studies) to assist with the validation of any subsequent planning application. We will also explain how the development management process operates, the consultation process, decision making arrangements including committee information and the likely timetable for assessment of a planning application.

A summary of the key elements to each part of the scheme is provided as guidance notes to the relevant application form.

**What if a subsequent decision on an application does not follow the advice I was given?**

Advice given will be based on the case officer’s professional judgement and assessment of the information provided. Pre application advice whether favourable or not is given on a ‘without prejudice’ basis since the Council must on submission of an application go through the statutory procedures and formal consultations and assess the outcomes before a decision can be made Whilst advice will be given in good faith, we cannot guarantee that a subsequent planning application will be successful. We nevertheless believe that pre application advice is an extremely important part of the planning process. Fees for pre application advice will not be refunded and do not affect any statutory planning application fee subsequently required.

**What if I disagree with the advice received?**

We recognise that you may not agree with the advice you receive and it remains open to you to reject the advice and submit a formal application for determination. You may pay a further reduced fee for an additional meeting in relation to advice previously given on a previous proposal. However, significant changes to a submitted enquiry may need to be the subject of a new enquiry and may require a further full fee.

#### Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

The advice we provide under this service is generally confidential until a related planning application is submitted and development proposals are publicly available. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 we often receive requests to disclose advice we have provided, so from February 2017 we will automatically publish any submitted documentation and advice we have provided once the related planning application is submitted. At that point there is normally no reason under the legislation to insist the pre application advice or related documentation is confidential.

We may continue to receive requests for advice to be disclosed at earlier stages, which will need to be assessed individually under the legislation. If you think there are sufficient reasons under the legislation that your request and advice should remain confidential at those earlier stages please advise us in writing of the reasons at the time of your request. We will not respond at the time of your request but will take it into account when deciding whether to release information earlier than usual.