



London Borough of Hounslow

Pre-application advice: guidance note for developers

The London Borough of Hounslow has decided to charge for pre-application planning advice, as per the terms of the Local Government Act 2003, with effect from April 1 2008.

Pre- application advice is already provided and early discussion benefits all parties: the planning department can provide detailed advice on key issues prior to formal submission, help to improve the quality of design, encourage greater public consultation and speed up the application process, thus helping to avoid delays or refusals due to unacceptable proposals.

This pre-application advice is time consuming and currently not covered by the planning fees. In view of the increasing number of inquiries and in order to provide a consistent and high quality service the Council has decided to recover the costs directly from the applicant rather than as a general cost on the department's budget and the Council tax payer.

Applicable developments.

The following categories of development (inter alia) will all fall within the pre-application charging regime: The fees proposed are for research culminating in one main meeting, plus a formal but without prejudice response. Further meetings and/or other officer responses will generate additional charges as per the fees chart.

Category 1 : Major Developments (A) (£2,000 + VAT) (new build and changes of use)

- Schemes including 25 or more dwellings
- Commercial floorspace of 2000sqm or more
- Any other floorspace ie hospital, education leisure of 2000 sq m or more
- Any mixed use development which takes the gross floorspace of a scheme over 2000 sq m
- Sites subject to an EIA
- One off strategic schemes

Category 2 : Major Developments (B) (£1,500 +VAT) (new build and changes of use)

- Provision of 10-24 dwellings
- Commercial floorspace any category 1000-1999 sq m
- Any other floorspace between 1000-1999sq m
- Any mixed use development which does not fall into Category 1
- Complex Listed Building applications
- Complex departure applications

Category 3 : Medium Developments (£750 + VAT)

- Provision of 1-9 dwellings (including conversions to flats)
- Commercial floorspace between 0-999sq m
- Any other floorspace between 0-999 sq m
- Advertisements for hoardings

- Telecommunications equipment and masts

All floorspace figures are gross

Exemptions

The following types of development will be exempt from the charging regime until further notice

- Householder extensions and alterations
- Householder certificates of lawfulness
- Access improvements to small businesses or community facilities

What does the pre application service provide ?

The service will provide:

- History search
- Information on the relevant planning policies and other planning requirements and how they relate to your proposal
- Advice on the procedure, consultation and estimated timescale of your application once submitted
- Informal and without prejudice officer comments on the scheme and proposed amendments where appropriate
- Likely Heads of Terms for any S106 contribution and estimated costs – where known
- A pre-application meeting with an appropriate planning officer (up to 4 relevant officers) and a written summary of advice

The service cannot provide:

- Any guarantee that the proposal as submitted or amended in line with pre-application advice will receive planning permission

There will be limits on officer time available for providing advice and attending meetings and effective pre-application service requires the provision of the correct information from the applicant. The terms and conditions of the Pre application scheme are described more fully in the Pre-Application Advice Procedure Note.

Disclaimer

We cannot offer advice that can bind the Council but we will give you the best advice possible on the information and proposals that you provide. Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith and to the best of ability without prejudice to formal consideration of any planning application, which will be subject to public consultation and ultimately decided by the Council. We cannot guarantee that any subsequent application you make will be valid or will get approval. However, the pre-application advice we give you will aid this process significantly. It should be noted that if there is a material change in circumstances or new information comes to light after the date of the advice being issued then less weight may be given to the content of the Council's pre-application advice of schemes.

Pre Application Advice Procedure Note: 1

This note comprises 3 elements:

- 1 Procedure for engaging in pre application advice
- 2 Charges for Pre-applications advice
- 3 Pre Application Advice Request form

1. Procedure for engaging in pre-application advice

The pre-application advice process has a number of stages outlined below:

Stage 1

You should make yourself aware of the information which eventually will be required to accompany applications, as described on the borough's checklists, which can be located at www.hounslow.gov.uk/planning. If you require pre-application advice for a development within one of the 3 development categories identified in the Guidance Note you should download and submit a completed pre application request form together with the standard fee and accompanying information to the Head of Development Control by post at or by email at preapplication@hounslow.gov.uk.

In order to provide a quality service we will need sufficient information to

- a) determine whether a pre application meeting is required – *please note the Council has the right to decline a request for pre application advice if it is not considered appropriate or necessary*
- b) to enable us to ensure the right people are available to provide good quality advice.

Information needed (where applicable): (2 copies in hard format, or if possible a copy in soft format)

- A description of the proposed development and schedule of uses and floorspaces
- Information about the existing uses, floorspace, parking, jobs etc
- A site location plan (1:1250)
- Drawings and photographs of existing site and context
- Sketch layouts/elevations to show scale of developments/heights at appropriate scale 1:100/1:200
- Information about affordable housing proposed
- Information on the approach to sustainability measures
- Supporting information on traffic generation, servicing, access arrangements, parking and public transport
- Information on existing site conditions including levels, trees and ecology
- Draft design and access statement

Stage 2

On receipt of the pre-application request we will determine whether the proposal requires the pre application procedure at all. **If it does not we will inform you in writing and return the fee.** If the process is appropriate for your proposal the following stages apply

Stage 3

Within 10 working days of registering the pre-application request, we will contact you to arrange a meeting at the first available date and inform you of the named case officer. Meetings will only be available in 2 slots per week. Wed am 9.30 – 11 and 11.30 – 1.00

Stage 4

The case officer will carry out an initial site visit and policy review after which the Head of DC will determine which officers, always with a minimum of 2 (up to four on categories 1 and 2, and two on category 3) will attend the pre-application meeting and a note of which will be taken.

Stage 5

Pre application advice meeting held with you/your team and council officers. Council to provide service as outlined in the Pre Application Advice Note

Stage 6

Within 10 working days of the meeting a letter confirming the advice and outcome of the meeting will be dispatched signed by either the Head of Development Control or the appropriate Area Manager

Step 7

If any further meetings are required or additional specialist advice needed , a further fee is likely – see charging identified in the charges policy

Step 8

Formal submission of planning application.

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Pre Application Advice Procedure Note: 2 Charges for Pre-Application Advice

The process for obtaining pre-application advice is as set out in the Pre-Application Advice Procedure Note, detailed in part 1: Procedure for engaging in pre-application advice.

The charging regime for the procedure is as follows:

Category 1 – initial fee	£2,000 + VAT
Category 2 – initial fee	£1,500 + VAT
Category 3 – initial fee	£750 + VAT

Reference Guidance Note for Category definition.

The initial fixed fee relates to the scale and complexity of the proposal category; and will cover:

- the administration of the pre-application system
- the amount of time taken by the named case officer from the investigation stage to the meeting stage including consultation with senior officers*
- the attendance of up to 4 officers at the meeting
- the final written comment

*The Head of DC will determine the appropriate officers to attend both the initial and future meetings.

Any additional meetings or specialist advice will require additional charges . The **hourly rate, inclusive of VAT**, for all disciplines is as follows:

Head of Development Control	£100
Area Managers/Heads of Sections/Conservation Officer	£85
Principal /Seniors	£65
Other Officers	£50
Administrative support	£30

Please note – the standard fee must be payable prior to the commencement of pre application work. Invoices relating to further investigation, advice or additional meetings should be settled within 21 days.

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PRE APPLICATION ADVICE PROCEDURE NOTE: 3

To: Head of Development Control Borough Planning Office London Borough of Hounslow The Civic Centre Lampton Road Hounslow TW3 4DN	PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE REQUEST FORM Town and Country Planning Act 1990 The Local Government Act 2003 FORM PRE1
www.hounslow.gov.uk Email: preapplication@hounslow.gov.uk	Telephone 020 8583 4945 FAX: 020 8583 4900

1. PERSON RESPONSIBLE	
APPLICANT	AGENT (IF ANY) FOR CORRESPONDENCE
Name:.....	Name:
Address	Address
.....
.....
Tel.No.....	Tel.No.
Fax No.....	Fax No.
	Reference

2. THE SITE
a) Site Address
.....
b) The Site Area is..... square meters
c) The present use, or if vacant the last know use, of the building/land is.....
.....
.....

3. THE PROPOSAL
a) The proposal is for <i>(please give a full description including number and types of units if residential)</i>
.....
.....
.....

ATTACHED INFORMATION

- A description of the proposed development and schedule of uses and floorspaces
- Information about the existing uses, floorspace, parking, jobs etc
- A site location plan (1:1250)
- Drawings and photographs of existing site
- Outline of proposals (1:200)
- Sketch layouts/elevations to show scale of developments/heights at appropriate scale 1:100/1:200
- Information of affordable housing where appropriate*
- Information on the approach to sustainability measures
- Supporting information on traffic generation, servicing, access arrangements, parking and public transport
- Information on existing site conditions including levels, trees and ecology
- Draft design and access statement

I (the undersigned) hereby request the views of the Council on the pre-application proposal and enclose the fee of £ as payment* for this service. I also agree to pay any additional sum arising from the service as detailed in the Pre-Application Planning Service Charging Scheme

Signed on behalf of Date.....

*Please make cheques payable to "The London Borough of Hounslow"

Please tick if application contains commercially sensitive or confidential information and should not be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act

For internal use only

Application No	Received Date	Fee	Case Officer
Stage 4	Stage 5 Meeting	Stage 6 letter	Additional sheet

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