

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What are the advantages of seeking pre-application advice?**

Pre application advice will provide you with the following benefits:

- An understanding of how our planning policies will be applied to your proposal
- Identify the need for you to investigate or provide additional information at an early stage e.g. traffic impact, flooding/drainage, materials & design, conservation/heritage implications, landscape & trees, noise considerations (either generated by the proposal or affecting the site), health, contaminated land or archaeology
- Assist in the preparation and presentation of proposals for formal submission, which, if you follow our advice, should be handled more quickly and be more likely to result in a positive outcome
- Help to reduce the time that you or your professional advisors spend in working up the proposals
- Indicate those proposals that are completely unacceptable, so saving you the cost of pursuing a formal application.

### **Will I get a discount on my planning application if I put in pre-application advice?**

No. The planning application fee only covers work carried out in relation to the proposal once an application has been submitted. The government has recognised this fact by advising that Local Planning Authorities are able to charge separately for pre-application advice.

### **What is the difference between a pre-application enquiry form and a planning application?**

In broad terms, a pre-application enquiry form requires less information to be attached to it, does not go through a full consultation process, and will provide you with an indication of whether or not your proposal is likely to be acceptable to officers. (Any advice given is not legally binding, and does not give you any permission to commence development)

A planning application is a formal request for planning permission which goes through a statutory process leading to the issue of a decision notice, either approving or refusing your development proposal. If an approval is given, you are able to commence development provided you comply with any conditions or legal

agreements attached to that permission and, if necessary, securing any Building Regulation approval.

### **What is the difference between a certificate of lawfulness application and a letter about my permitted development**

A Certificate of Lawfulness application will provide you with a legally binding determination on whether the development requires planning permission or not. A letter will answer this question in a less formal way but is not legally binding. However, this is usually accepted by solicitors in the conveyancing process.

### **Do I have to submit a pre- application enquiry before applying for planning permission?**

No, however the benefits of doing so have been outlined above. There is also a considerable amount of free guidance available on line and if you simply want to find out if your proposal requires planning permission in the first instance you may wish to visit the Planning Portal Website [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk) which contains a wide range of advice and interactive guides.

There are also a number of professional planning agents operating locally who will also be able to offer a wide range of planning advice.

### **By submitting a pre-application enquiry will I get a planning decision faster?**

Whilst this cannot be guaranteed, it is likely that where pre-application advice has been followed there will be less need for officers to ask for changes to plans or for additional information. This invariably leads to delay and additional rounds of consultation.

### **Will the planning officer who dealt with my pre application advice request deal with my planning application?**

Yes, for the majority of requests this will be the case.

### **Will I get the opportunity to amend the proposal following your initial response?**

Yes, amendments submitted within 3 months of the date the original response will be free of charge provided that:

- The enquiry is made by the same person as the previous enquiry
- The enquiry relates to the same site or part of the same site as the previous enquiry
- The development is of the same character or description as the development to which the earlier enquiry related.

### **When should I submit pre- application advice?**

For householder or minor applications we would suggest you should submit pre-application advice as soon as possible- once you have an idea what it is you want to do. However for a major application we suggest submitting pre-application advice at a much earlier stage. At least 3 months before you intend submitting an application.

**Are the documents available on the Wiltshire Council website?**

Yes. The forms for pre-application advice, planning permission and the fees we charge can all be found online. See link below: -  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planninganddevelopment/planningapplicationformsandfees.htm>

**Will a site visit be made as part of a pre- application enquiry?**

This depends on the nature and size of the development. Some proposals are likely to need site visits, however household and advertising applications are less likely. Any visit after the initial site visit (where this was included in the initial fee) will be charged as per the table of fee & charges.

**Do I need to consult any neighbours?**

For household proposals it is generally sound advice to let your immediate neighbours know in advance about what you are planning and if the development is likely to be particularly sensitive, your parish or town council. This normally means showing them any plans that have been drawn up so you can establish and try to address any concerns early on in the process. Experience shows that early consultation/discussion by an applicant with neighbours often smoothes the passage of the subsequent planning application.

**What is the fee if a proposal is for mixed use?**

This will be worked out on the floor area of the proposal and the number of dwellings. The fee is calculated for each use proposed and the charge will be for whatever will be the highest fee.