

Pre-application Advice

The Council is committed to providing an efficient and effective planning service and aims to achieve government performance targets for the determination of planning applications. Whilst the Council endeavours to deal with all applications as quickly as possible, delays can occur as a result of a lack of information accompanying the application or proposals that do not reflect planning policy or supplementary planning guidance.

We therefore encourage applicants and agents to obtain pre application advice before submitting a formal planning application, to help improve the quality of development proposals and to speed up the process of determining planning applications. However, please note that this is a non statutory part of the service and priority will be given to formal planning applications.

Impartial and professional advice will be given on all written enquiries. However, we cannot act as planning consultants and any advice given cannot prejudice the Council's final decision on your proposal.

How do I Obtain Pre-application Advice?

The Council produces a range of supplementary planning guidance, advice leaflets and development briefs relating to the planning process. Many of these can be downloaded from the Council's website at:
www.bradford.gov.uk/planningguidance.

Householder Developments

For householder development there are two relevant policy guidance documents, *House Extensions* and *Dormer Windows*. These documents can be obtained from planning reception points or be downloaded from the Council's website at: www.bradford.gov.uk/planningguidance.

The Pre-application Advice Service for Minor Residential and Commercial Development Proposals

If you telephone or visit a planning reception point to ask whether planning permission is likely to be granted for a particular minor development proposal the Customers Services Team will be unable to provide you with an immediate answer. This is because such enquiries require an investigation of the site history and/or site characteristics before a properly considered response can be given. The

Council operates a Pre-Application Advice Service for these type of enquiries. This service relates to residential developments, commercial developments including changes of use, extensions and alterations (excluding shopfronts and security measures) and alterations and extensions to listed buildings (including domestic properties). Advice on shopfronts and security measures can be found in the Council's 'Shopfront Design Guide' which can be obtained from planning receptions or downloaded from the Council's website at www.bradford.gov.uk/shopfront.

The purpose of this service is to add value to the quality of development proposals and speed up the process of determining planning and other applications. Details of how this service works are set out below. However, the Planning Service prioritises its work and deals with planning applications first. This means that during periods of high volume of workload it may take longer to reply.

Please be aware that we are also unable to respond to speculative enquiries e.g. where there has been no site acquisition / land assembly and development is uncertain.

Bradford Development Team

For major development proposals the Council operates a Development Team Approach. More information about this Service can be found in "The Development Team Approach" leaflet. This can be obtained from planning receptions or be downloaded from the Council's website at www.bradford.gov.uk/planningguidance.

What Do I Need To Do If I Would Like Advice

You will need to do some background work before you approach the Council about your development proposal. The amount of work that will be necessary will depend upon the nature of your proposal and the site characteristics. It will normally include:-

- Making sure the proposal requires planning permission
- Carrying out a planning history check on the site - this may identify previously unsuccessful applications that may inform you whether to proceed further with your proposal.
- Checking the Unitary Development Plan, emerging development plan documents and Supplementary Planning documents to see if there are any policies relating to the site and/or the proposal - this may give you a clear indication of the acceptability or otherwise of

a proposal. These can be inspected at www.bradford.gov.uk/ldf or Planning Service reception points.

- Being clear about the building/site and proposal to be considered.
- Consulting with the owners/occupiers of neighbouring property and/or land to try to minimise any potential objections.

You are then requested to complete a Pre Application Enquiry Form which can be obtained from planning reception points or on the Council's website at www.bradford.gov.uk/preapps and submit the supporting information outlined in the accompanying guidance notes.

The level of supporting information required is set out below:

- Location plan clearly identifying the site or building in question, with the site edged in red (Ordnance Survey extract where possible).
- For changes of use, details of existing and proposed use.
- A plan and description of the site characteristics and surrounding area, including trees and changes in gradients etc, any constraints to development and potential opportunities - photographs may be used to supplement this.
- For outline proposals, details of the amount and scale of development and an indicative site layout plan are required.
- For detailed proposals, drawings of the proposal including elevations, site and floor plans. Although formal plans are not required at this stage the details need to be accurate and clear enough to enable informed comments to be made.
- Draft design principles/ supporting information based on the findings of the site analysis.
- Further information such as site investigation reports may be required to be submitted during the course of the enquiry.
- Where appropriate the name of any Officer of the Council who has previously advised upon this matter should be given.

It is important that you provide us with a clear and comprehensive submission. The more information you can provide, the more meaningful our response will be. It may therefore be appropriate to engage the services of a planning consultant to assist you with this.

We have a duty to make effective use of our resources. Consequently we can only give pre-application advice where details have been submitted in writing, in accordance with the requirements of this advice note. If you do not provide the information requested we will not be able to proceed with your enquiry.

What Happens to my Enquiry?

When we receive your enquiry it will be checked and allocated to a case officer if it contains an adequate level of detail. You will receive an acknowledgment letter that will identify the case officer, a contact number and also the target date for response. This will normally be 56 days. For

more complex proposals however it may not be possible for the case officer to respond to you within this time scale.

We will employ a one-stop shop approach to your proposal in order to avoid conflicting and confusing advice from different sections of the Council. Advice will be given on all planning matters relevant to your proposal such as building conservation issues, car parking requirements and design matters. The case officer will contact the key Council services and external agencies that would be involved in the consideration of a formal application for the same proposal and co-ordinate a comprehensive response.

Your proposal will be assessed against the relevant policies in the Council's Replacement Unitary Development Plan, emerging development plan documents and Supplementary Planning documents. Other relevant information such as government guidance, the site history and previous appeal decisions will also be taken into account.

Depending upon the level of detail supplied the case officer may need to request additional information from you in order to enable them to assess the proposal.

If the case officer considers that he/she needs to meet with you to discuss the proposal in more detail or to obtain more clarification, this will normally be held at the relevant planning office.

What Advice Can I Expect To Receive?

Once the case officer has assessed your proposal you will normally receive one of three written responses:-

- The proposal is acceptable in principle in its current form. This normally will include advice about any key supporting information that should be included as part of a formal application such as contaminated land survey or flood risk assessment and also whether a S106 Agreement will be required.
- The proposal requires amendments to make it acceptable in principle. Advice will normally be given as to what key issues you need to address and also any key supporting information that should be included as part of a formal application.
- The proposal is unacceptable in principle, as it would conflict with development plan policies or Government guidance. In such cases officers will not normally enter into any further pre-application negotiations.

You should be aware, however, that any subsequent application will not be validated until all supporting information requested has been received.

If you have any queries about our response please contact the case officer to discuss the matter further. You may also wish to obtain independent advice from a planning consultant or architect before proceeding with a submission.

Please note that the advice given will be based upon the drawings and information submitted. Any views expressed are informal and 'without prejudice' to the formal consideration of any subsequent planning application.

Why Obtain Pre-Application Advice?

Pre-application advice can offer mutual benefits:-

- We can advise you whether an application is required and what form of application should be submitted.
- We can advise you what plans are required to accompany the application and advise you on any supporting information that you will need to provide. In addition we can also provide you with assistance on how to complete the application form and certificates and assess the planning fee required in order to ensure that the application can be validated more quickly.
- We can identify the planning policies in the Unitary Development Plan, emerging development plan documents and any supplementary planning documents that would be relevant to your proposal and explain what is likely to be acceptable or unacceptable in terms of these policies.
- We can advise you if your scheme has no realistic chance of success, for example, where there may be a fundamental conflict with the Development Plan, supplementary planning documents or Government guidance.
- We can identify any potential problems that need to be addressed prior to the submission of an application in order to minimise delays and costly amendments to the formal scheme. There should not normally be any new issues raised during the consideration of the formal application.
- We can discuss the design and detailing of the scheme with you and suggest amendments that will improve the overall quality of the formal submission. and result in quicker processing times.
- We can explain to you how the application process works including who makes decisions and how long it will take.
- We can save you spending time and money on abortive work.
- We can help you minimise delays and costly amendments to the formal scheme.

By taking advantage of our Pre-application Service you will have a better chance of receiving a quick decision when you submit a formal application. You should be aware that if the pre-application advice given is not followed in any subsequent formal submission, this application is likely to be determined or submitted without further negotiations. Similarly the Council reserves the right not to negotiate where pre-application discussions have not taken place.

These Advice Notes are available in large print and braille on request.