

# Application Process: Step by Step



## Step 1 – Pre-Application

Before you decide whether to make a planning application or not, we strongly recommend that you obtain specialist planning advice.

A specialist planning consultant will be able to advise you whether your proposal is likely to be approved or not and can recommend changes to ensure that your planning application has the best chance of success.

## Step 2 – Application and Validation

Once your planning application is received by the Local Planning Authority, it is checked to make sure all the required documents, plans and the correct fee have been submitted. If something is missing, they will write to us with details of what they need to receive for the application to proceed.

Once all the required information has been received the application is validated and can be registered, this can take 1-3 weeks from submission depending on how busy the LPA are.

## **Step 3 - Consultation and Publicity**

Details of your application will be published (in the form of letters, planning lists, adverts in the local press and online) to make the local community aware of your proposals.

Anyone wishing to make a comment on an application has 21 days from the date of publication to do so, though comments may be accepted after this time.

Consultation will also take place with the statutory agencies (such as English Heritage, the Environment Agency, Parish Council), utility companies and other council departments.

## **Step 4 - Site visit**

If a site visit is required, the planning officer will go out to the site and make an inspection. Where relevant, the planning officer will also gather any site-specific information such as photographs.

## **Step 5 - Consideration of your Application**

Your application will be considered against existing and emerging council policies and any past decisions relating to the site or other similar applications.

Checks will also be carried out to ensure the application meets the councils standards for things such as parking, day lighting and overlooking.

The planning officer may also contact you if more information or amendments to the application are recommended.

## Step 6 – Recommendation

The planning officer will make a recommendation on the application, taking into account planning policies, consultation responses and public representations to a senior planning officer who will make the final decision under what's known as 'delegated powers'.

If there have been a number of objections or a councillor has requested a call in, the application could be decided by Development Management Committee (DMC), which is made up of elected councillors.

The DMC will consider the report written by your case officer, which will summarise any comments received, and the key planning issues involved. If your application goes to the DMC, you may attend the meeting and listen to the discussion around your application.

## Step 7 – Decision

Minor planning applications should be decided within 8 weeks from validation; however, we are seeing a stark increase in how long it is taking LPA's to issue decisions due to capacity issues and the increase in volume of applications being submitted.

If your application is **approved**, it may be subject to certain conditions. For instance, the LPA may limit the hours of working on the site or insist that the materials need to be agreed in more detail before works can start, this will require a further application called a discharge of condition application.

If your application is **refused** and you do not believe the decision was correct, or you wish to appeal against a condition imposed on a permission, then you do have the right to appeal.

Appeals are handled by the Planning Inspectorate, an independent government body. It is recommended that you seek professional advice before deciding whether to appeal as this can be an expensive and lengthy process.