



# **Pembrokeshire County Council**

## **Pre-Planning Application Service**

## **What is Pre-Planning Application (Pre-App) advice?**

- The Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application) Wales Regulations 2016 requires all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in Wales to provide a statutory pre-application service.
- Pre-App advice is informal advice that can be obtained from Pembrokeshire County Council before a potential applicant commits to a planning application.
- Pre-App advice comprises a written response that identifies relevant planning policy and any other considerations against which a proposal would be considered should a planning application be submitted, and also provides an informal view from a planning officer.

## **What is the status of Pre-App advice?**

- Every effort will be made by the Council to provide accurate and consistent pre-application advice. It should be noted, however, that such advice is offered on an informal basis. It is not an absolute guarantee that planning permission would be granted and it would not prejudice the Council when dealing with any subsequent related planning application.
- All Pre-App advice will clarify this position.

## What does a Pre-App enquiry need to contain?

- All Pre-App enquiries must be made in writing. The preference is for submission of a simple pro-forma electronically by email.
- If you would like to use the Pre-App service, the Pre-App advice form must be completed with any necessary additional information also supplied.
- As a minimum, the following information should be included:
  - your name and address (including email);
  - the site address (if different from enquirers address);
  - a site location plan (to a recognised metric scale or dimensioned) clearly identifying the site and how it is accessed);
  - The current use of the site; and

- The intended development (building, alterations or change of use for example). Please give as much detail as you can (sketch plans of the location, dimensions and appearance will assist and need to be dimensioned or to scale).
  
- The type and level of information to accompany a Pre-App submission should reflect the complexity and potential impact of the proposal. Please contact us if you are unsure as to the level of information that should be provided.

## What are the benefits of getting this advice?

➤ It can:

- Identify schemes which have little or no realistic chance of obtaining planning permission and highlight any fundamental issues. This could minimize abortive costs for schemes that are unlikely to be successful;
- Provide guidance on the level of information needed to make a valid planning application;
- Provide guidance on how to resolve any potential issues before a formal planning application is submitted, thereby making the process of obtaining planning permission smoother;
- Identify any important organisations with whom you might need to consult before submitting a planning application;
- Explain whether you need to discuss your proposals with community and other related groups and/or elected members before submitting a planning application;

- Provide a structured project management approach for "major" applications that involve large or complex projects; and
- Establish a relationship with the planning officers and other relevant council officers who will make up the planning application team should you progress with your proposals.

## **What Pre-App advice won't do?**

### **It cannot deliver a guaranteed planning outcome!**

- Planning applications are subject to an extensive formal consultation process and issues may come to light that may not be obvious at the time of giving the Pre-App advice.
- Some planning applications will be decided by the Planning & Rights of Way Committee which is made up of elected Members. Whilst the Committee will have a report and recommendation to consider, Members may decide to attach different weight to key factors which may lead to a different conclusion.



## **What will the advice look like?**

- The Pre-App advice will be delivered by letter or by email.
- In some cases, a request may be made for additional information to enable detailed advice to be provided.
- A meeting either at the Council officers or on-site may be requested if a planning officer feels this is necessary in order to provide detailed advice.

## Is there a charge for a Pre-App enquiry?

- Yes, the fee will be payable by the enquirer. Without receiving the appropriate fee, pre-application advice will not be provided.
- A summary of Welsh Government's charging regime is outlined below:

Householder	£25
Minor	£250 maximum
Major	£600 maximum
Minerals and Waste	£600
Large Major	£1000 maximum

- The detailed fee schedule is available in a separate document, on the Council's website.

## What quality of service can you expect to receive?

- Our aim is to respond as quickly as possible. The Regulations require LPAs to:
  - Acknowledge receipt of your Pre-App enquiry within 2 working days.
  - To provide a written Pre-App response within 21 days, unless an extension of time has been first agreed between the Authority and the enquirer.
- As a minimum, enquirers for householder proposals can expect to receive the following information within their written response:
  - Relevant planning history for the site;
  - Relevant development plan policies against which the development proposal will be assessed;
  - Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG);

- Identification of evident material planning considerations; and
  - An initial assessment of the proposed development, based on the information above.
- For all other development proposals, enquirers should receive all of the information outlined above and the following:
- An identification of any Section 106 contributions which are likely to be sought and an indication of the scope and amount of these contributions;
  - An identification of any other technical information required to validate the application such as ecological surveys etc.

## Are Pre-Apps treated confidentiality?

- Pre-App enquiries are normally dealt with on a confidential basis.
- However, it should be noted that, under the Freedom of Information Act, the Authority may be asked to provide information regarding such enquiries. This information may only be withheld if its disclosure could prejudice commercial interests, inhibit the free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views during the planning process, or could prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. The aim of the legislation is to make information accessible unless there is a compelling reason not to.
- In enquiries where a request for confidentiality has explicitly been made, the enquirer will be expected to provide a written submission that sets out the reasons why, and for how long, any

information relating to the case needs to remain confidential. It is for the local authority to decide whether information can be treated as exempt from disclosure. Should a Freedom of Information request be made, each case will be assessed on its own merits.

- Generally, notes and correspondence relating to pre-application discussions will not be treated as confidential once a planning application is submitted.

## **Is the Pre-App process the same for large scale projects?**

- To deal expediently and effectively with substantially large or complex projects, the Council has adopted a project management approach led by a Senior Officer specifically responsible for dealing with such development.
- Any such cases will be identified and confirmed by the Council upon receipt, and the process of dealing with such enquiries will be in accordance with mutually agreed parameters.
- Such an approach involves commitment on all sides. It will not be justified on every occasion, but it is particularly appropriate for:
  - Developments of major significance in terms of regeneration and economic benefits;
  - Developments with wide corporate involvement by the Council;

- Developments eligible for large-scale time-limited public funding; and
- Proposals for large scale housing delivery (over 50 dwellings) or significant affordable housing schemes.



## **Submission of Pre-App enquiries**

Please telephone one of the numbers below if you have any enquiries with regard to the Pre-App process:

David Harries (Development Management North) – 01437 775365

Alison Mattson (Development Management South) – 01437 775326

Pre-App enquiries should be sent to:

Address & email:

Development Management, County Hall, Haverfordwest, SA61 1TP

Or

[planning.support.team@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.support.team@pembrokeshire.gov.uk)