Pre-application Advice
Charging Guide
Introduction

From 1 January 2014, Cambridgeshire County Council has charged for pre-application advice associated with planning applications for mineral and waste developments. This follows the recommendation of the Planning Committee to introduce charges for non-statutory planning advice and was approved by members on 14 March 2013.

Early discussion between applicants and the planning authority is a valuable part of the planning application process. It can save wasted costs and enable the application to be determined more quickly and efficiently. For the Council to sustain and improve the current level of service, a range of charges has been introduced for planning advice. These fees are in addition to the fees payable for the submission of applications and the chargeable monitoring of mineral and landfill sites.

This document sets out the benefits of seeking advice prior to the submission of a planning application and the arrangements now in place for providing it.

Why seek advice?

The County Planning, Minerals and Waste Team encourage prospective applicants to seek advice prior to the submission of planning applications. There are considerable benefits in seeking advice before making an application. These include:

- ensuring that your application is complete, comprehensive and to a satisfactory standard therefore avoiding rejection at the validation stage or early refusal because of inadequate or insufficient information;
- site specific information on what is needed for an application to be considered more favourably;
- an understanding of how national and local guidance and policies will be applied to your development and identifying the need for any specialist input;
- an opportunity for wider engagement with other stakeholders where appropriate which can deliver better outcomes for all parties;
- the potential to reduce the time your professional advisors spend working up proposals;
- minimising the need to satisfy conditions before developments already granted planning permission may commence; and
- an indication of proposals that are completely unacceptable, so saving the cost of pursuing a formal application.

What are the charges?

Other than the generic advice, which is available on the Council’s website using the following link: https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning/submitting-a-planning-application/, the following charges are applicable and include administration costs and officers’ time for research and assessment.
## Charging Schedule April 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-application advice for applicants/agents</th>
<th>Charge (excl VAT)</th>
<th>Total cost *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Written advice in response to a written enquiry</td>
<td>£154.00</td>
<td>£184.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. One meeting with Planning Officer at Shire Hall followed by written advice</td>
<td>£297.00</td>
<td>£356.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. One follow up meeting at Shire Hall with Planning Officer.</td>
<td>£236.00</td>
<td>£283.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. One meeting on site by Planning Officer followed by written advice.</td>
<td>£414.00</td>
<td>£496.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any advice from non-CCC specialist e.g. noise, landscape</td>
<td>Bespoke service - cost to be negotiated on a case by case basis reflecting time and complexity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please send cheque payments to County Planning, Minerals and Waste, SH1315 Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP

Pre-application specialist advice within Cambridgeshire County Council should also be sought from Highway, Ecology, Flood and Water, Archaeology and Public Rights of Way officers. Further information on the charges related to this specialist advice can be found using the following links:

**Highway and Ecology:**

**Flood and Water:**
- Flood Risk Management:

- Ordinary Watercourse Consents:

- Surface Water and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) planning

**Archaeology:**
[https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-&-culture/archaeology/archaeological-advice-for-planning-developments/](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-&-culture/archaeology/archaeological-advice-for-planning-developments/)

**Public Rights of Way:**
[https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/highway-searches/](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/highway-searches/)
**Post-determination advice**

Where detailed advice is provided post determination of a planning application, for example in relation to changes to approved development, the County Council reserves the right to charge for this advice at the same charging rate as the pre-application service set out above. Requests will be considered on a case by case basis irrespective of the type and scale of development.

**How do I obtain planning advice?**

Prospective applicants seeking advice that is chargeable are required to complete a ‘Request for Chargeable Planning Advice’ form which is available on our website: [https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning/submitting-a-planning-application/](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning/submitting-a-planning-application/)

This form sets out the information that is expected from prospective applicants to enable a quality advice service to be provided. In some cases it is recognised that not all of the information will be available, but the more information that you provide will help us deliver a more tailored and site specific response. As a minimum you should provide:

- A clear description of the proposed development and the uses to which land and buildings are proposed to be put;
- Full site address and site location plan (usually 1:1250 or 1:2500) with the development site outlined in red and land in the applicant’s ownership outlined in blue;
- Outline of proposal in plan;
- Details of the current use of the land and buildings;
- Site history – what has the site previously been used for?
- For waste management development details of annual throughput, waste sources, waste types, potential catchment areas and estimated traffic movements;
- For mineral development details of quantities to be extracted or processed per annum, likely timescales and any ‘value added’ processes envisaged;
- Contact details including phone number and email address; and
- The appropriate fee in the form of a cheque, payable to Cambridgeshire County Council, sent to County Planning, Minerals and Waste, SH1315 Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP with a copy of your application form.

**Additional information would usefully include:**

- Sketch drawings showing height/scale of development and elevational details;
- Photographs and/or sketch drawings showing the site, buildings and trees as existing;
- Details of materials;
- Proposed access arrangement and vehicle movements including number of HGVs;
- Draft floor plans and number of storeys in height;
- Details of proposed mitigation;
- Details of survey work

If you are seeking a meeting, there is the option to include one or more of the Council’s specialist advisors such as the ecology officer, highway engineer, transport officer or archaeologist. Please note that specialist advisors will attend subject to availability and at the discretion of the Council. If you would like a specialist advisor to be included in any meeting, please indicate on the form.
All requests for chargeable information should be accompanied by the relevant fee, either payable online or by cheque made payable to Cambridgeshire County Council. Please note that we will not be able to give chargeable advice without receipt of the fee.

What the Council will do

Within 3 working days of receiving a request for chargeable advice, the County Planning, Minerals and Waste team will contact you either by telephone or in writing to confirm that:

- Your request for advice has been received;
- That the fee is correct or, if a fee has not been submitted with the form, what the fee is;
- Any additional information that may be required; and
- The name of the planning officer who will be providing the advice and their contact details.

Within 5 working days of receiving a valid request, the planning officer will contact you and agree a suitable time and date for any meeting. The timing of the meeting will depend upon the complexity of the proposal, the amount of preparation work needed prior to a meeting and availability of any specialist advisors who may be needed. Where no meeting is requested, the planning officer will confirm the timescale for issuing their advice. The target date for responding to a valid request is 20 working days, although we will aim to respond quicker than this.

Where written advice is required following a meeting, the timing of this will be agreed at the end of the meeting. This will usually be within 10 working days of the meeting.

What will our advice contain?

The planning officer will identify:

- key planning considerations which need to be taken into account in preparing any planning application;
- the need for any specialist input;
- informal and without prejudice officer advice on the planning merits including an indication if the proposal will be completely unacceptable;
- advice about the Council’s development management process including the consultation requirements, likely timetable of consideration and estimation of decision date or Planning Committee date where applicable; and
- where appropriate suggest pre-submission consultation with identified stakeholders.

What if you choose not to seek advice?

To make best use of resources, applications will normally proceed to determination on the basis of information provided in the application without recourse back to the applicant. Poor quality applications are likely to be returned as not valid or refused on the grounds of insufficient information.

Important notes

Please note that any views or opinions expressed in responses are made at officer level in good faith, and to the best of ability, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application which will be subject to public consultation and ultimately determined by the County Council as Planning Authority.
The final decision on any application that you make is made only after the County Planning Authority has consulted the local community, statutory consultees and any other interested parties as part of the formal planning application process and taken into account the comments that they may raise.

Any advice given by officers does not constitute a formal response or decision of the County Council. In no event will the County Council be liable for any loss or damage including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage, or any loss or damage whatsoever arising from or in connection with, the use of the advice.

The pre-application advice given may not necessarily be exhaustive but will highlight the main issues that need to be addressed/considered as part of the application process on the basis of the discussions that have taken place and the information that is available at the time.

Any pre or post application advice that has been provided will be carefully considered when reaching a decision or recommendation on an application for planning submission, subject to the proviso that circumstances and information may change or come to light that could alter that position.

In providing written advice planning officers will not draft planning statements or other reports to accompany applications as that is the responsibility of the applicant. In this respect applicants should appoint their own professional advisers as necessary, particularly on more complex proposals.

Should the detail or the nature of the proposal change, further advice should be sought. Similarly, once the detail of any proposal has been worked up if not previously available, it may be helpful to seek further advice prior to the submission of an application.

The advice and any attachments to it are solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient of the advice, you must neither take any action based upon its contents, nor disclose the communication to a third party.

The County Planning, Minerals and Waste Business Manager has the right to decline a request for pre-application advice where it is not considered either appropriate or necessary.

Emma Fitch
Business Manager

County Planning, Minerals and Waste
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