



Major Planning Applications

Advice to applicants submitting planning applications for major development

We are committed to providing a quality planning service that is prompt and efficient and in order to achieve this we need your help and co-operation. If you are submitting an application for major development this advice note has been written for you and it is important that you read it.

WHAT IS A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT?

Major development is defined as...

1. Residential development comprising 10 or more dwellings OR if the number of dwellings is unknown, the site area is 0.5 hectare or more;

OR

2. any other use where the floorspace proposed is 1,000 square metres or more OR if the site area is one hectare or more.

KEY ISSUES

1. There needs to be more certainty with timescales: We aim to determine major applications in 13 weeks; current target is 60%. We will also agree with you a timetable that covers the pre-application and application stages.
2. We need to improve the quality of submissions: This will help Rutland County Council to assess the proposal and lead to better development schemes. We will give you more specific advice and guidance early on during the pre-application stage.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

These are essential to good communications and understanding of each other's requirements.

- The objective will be to resolve the main issues, agree scope of information/supporting material needed and a timetable for the submission.
- Better and more structured pre-application discussions, including pre-consultation with other interested parties, will allow for a more speedy and considered appraisal of the proposal once the application is submitted.

- The need for a Section 106 Obligation may be clarified and a draft may be agreed at this stage. This is essential, as the appropriate agreement has to be signed within the target period for determination of the application.

INFORMATION REQUIRED WITH YOUR PLANNING APPLICATION

All planning applications need sufficient information to enable us to assess and determine them. If an application is incomplete and cannot be registered we will let you know as soon as possible usually within 2 to 3 working days. Similarly where an application has been registered and additional information is subsequently found to be necessary we will let you know as soon as possible.

Since requirements will vary from case to case you should check with us at an early stage for guidance as to what information you would need to submit along with your application. The following is an essential checklist:

Design Statement

The purpose of this is to explain how you have arrived at the design of your proposals in the context of the site and the surrounding area.

Illustrative Material

Illustrative material in the form of perspectives, models or computer graphics are essential in order to fully understand a proposal. The provision of such material enables a full appreciation of the design of the building in context, and can illustrate points such as the articulation of details on an elevation or important views of the building that are not always clear from two-dimensional plans.

Section 106 Obligation

Guidance is available on a number of planning issues, particularly affordable housing and public open space, that can usually be addressed through Section 106 Obligations. We will advise you at an early stage if an obligation is required. Standard drafts are available for the most common obligations. Contact details for your legal representative should be provided, along with evidence of title or confirmation that the title owner will be in a position to enter into such an obligation. These issues should be dealt with at the pre-application stage together with a target date for the signing of the agreement as part of the overall timetable for the submission. A draft agreement where this is required should be submitted with the application.

Environmental Assessment

Environmental Assessment is a key issue for certain types of development. It comes from a European Community Directive and involves an assessment of any likely significant effects on the environment. EA allows these likely significant effects to be identified, and to be avoided, remedied or minimised at an early stage. It is essential to discuss with us the scoping and preparation of the Environmental Assessment at pre-application stage. Failure to get Environmental Assessment right from the outset can be very costly and involve significant delay. We are in a position to provide essential information and advice about the steps necessary to comply with the Regulations.

Contaminated Land Survey

Most development within the City is on land that has been developed previously. Where there is a possibility that previous uses of the site or adjacent land could have given rise to contamination we will expect to see survey information indicating whether or not contamination is present, and, if so, how the contamination is proposed to be dealt with in the development.

Flood Risk Assessment

The Environment Agency has notified us of areas with Rutland that are at risk from flooding. Within these areas, all significant built development and some changes of use may need a Flood Risk Assessment to establish the impact of the development on the floodplain and the level of risk to the occupiers. If your site lies in the floodplain we recommend that you contact the Environment Agency as soon as possible to discuss whether or not a Flood Risk Assessment is required. We can tell you if your site lies in the floodplain, or you can check online at the Environment Agency's website, www.environment-agency.gov.uk under the 'Your Environment' section.

Protected Species Survey

Where there is a possibility that a site may contain protected species, such as bats or great crested newts we will expect the application to be accompanied by a survey to establish their presence or absence. Where species are known to exist, the application should contain details of proposed works to mitigate any harm that may be caused. Failure to provide this information at the outset can significantly delay the processing of your planning information whilst a survey is carried out, and could result in a need for design and layout changes that should have been taken into account in the original proposal.

Tree Survey

An arboriculturalist with experience in the protection of trees on development sites should be appointed to carry out the survey. It should cover a range of information about trees at the site and their contribution to the street scene, visual amenity and ecological importance.

AMENDMENTS TO SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS

The timescales do not allow for major changes to be considered once the application is submitted. In these situations we will encourage you to withdraw the application and discuss the changes involved before you submit a fresh application. Usually no new fee will be required for resubmission following withdrawal or refusal provided it is the first resubmission made by the same applicant on the same site and it involves the same proposal. Minor or non-material changes to a planning application can still be made provided they do not prolong the period for processing the application.