



PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE - PLANNING & OTHER PROPOSALS

**Planning
Civic Offices
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Reading
RG1 2LU**

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INTRODUCTION

The Council provides limited advice on sources of information, planning legislation and development plan policy over the phone without charge or can be found on our website or other sources. This should be sufficient in most cases to guide prospective applicants in the right direction for submitting planning applications, particularly if they are also seeking help from a planning consultant.

If more detailed advice is needed the Council also provides a pre-application planning advice service for which a fee is required. Since being introduced in 2008 this service has proved to be cost-effective and beneficial to customers by allowing them to eventually submit planning applications with a good chance of being approved with fewer costly changes needed. It is also better for the Council and those consulted on applications to have applications submitted to a good standard and capable of being considered and decided within target times set by the government.

For householders and smaller commercial schemes (Level 1 & Level 2) a fixed fee service is offered. For larger and more complicated schemes (Level 3) an initial fixed fee will be charged but if further work or consultations are required we will advise at that stage of any additional payment to be made based on officer time. In some of these cases a Planning Performance Agreement will be recommended.

Level 1 response

This level of advice is available for householders, small businesses or local community groups (and their agents) seeking advice on all house extensions and business or community uses where the floor area involved is less than 200 square meters and broad advice on the principle of a proposal has already been obtained (from available sources of information) but guidance on matters of detail (such as design, parking, policy exceptions etc) is required. We can also provide advice on works to a Tree Subject to a TPO and in a Conservation Area. These may involve officers in carrying out site assessments, history searches and internal consultations to provide a comprehensive written response. A meeting is not usually needed but if one is requested by the applicant an additional fee is required.

The Council's level 1 response normally includes:

- (a) an indication of whether the proposal is likely to be acceptable in policy terms;
- (b) detailed comment on any amenity or design considerations;
- (c) detailed comment on other constraints identified;
- (d) advice following responses by those consulted;
- (e) worked-up information on any section 106 planning obligations;
- (f) detailed validation requirements (by reference to Validation Checklist*);
- (g) where it relates to tree works, whether this is likely to be acceptable

The service standard for a written response is 4 weeks unless otherwise agreed by the pre-applicant.

Level 2 response

This level is aimed at larger commercial developments where customers are seeking advice on new residential development of up to 20 dwellings or conversions or new business premises where the floor area involved is in excess of 200 square meters. The work involved will be similar to that for level 1 enquiries but at this level also includes seeking advice from other Council officers or external consultation as necessary. A meeting is not normally included but if one is requested by the applicant an additional fee is required.

The Council's level 2 response normally includes:

- (a) an indication of whether the proposal is likely to be acceptable in policy terms;
- (b) detailed comment on any amenity or design constraints;
- (c) detailed comment on other constraints;
- (d) advice following response to consultations;
- (e) worked-up information on section 106 planning obligations;
- (f) detailed validation requirements (by reference to Validation Checklist*);
- (g) senior officer or above managing the case.

The service standard for a written response is 6 weeks unless otherwise agreed by the applicant.

Level 3 response

This is a collaborative and project management approach, suitable only for complex, large scale and major proposals (which we define as being in excess of 1000 square meters in area or with 20 dwellings or more. An initial inception or scoping meeting charged at a fixed fee of £3,000 will lead to an agreed project plan including timescales, key milestones and scheduled meetings. Any additional fee required would be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

The Council's level 3 response normally includes:

- (a) an indication of whether the proposal is likely to be acceptable in policy terms;
- (b) detailed comment on all policy considerations and any amenity or design constraints;
- (c) detailed comment on other constraints;
- (d) advice following response to consultations;
- (e) worked-up information on section 106 planning obligations;
- (f) detailed validation requirements (by reference to Validation Checklist*);
- (g) access to the Council's independent Design Review Panel;
- (h) principal officer or above managing the case.

Enquiries about development projects of this scale require detailed and evolving pre-application discussions over several weeks or months.

Follow-up Advice & Meetings

Further to the officer response to the original enquiry we can attend meetings to discuss options or provide follow up advice to comment on modifications to a proposal where the applicant has taken on board the advice provided. There is a charge for each meeting and follow-up advice.

Specialist Advice and Viability Assessments

The Council will charge separately for external independent consideration of specialist information or statements (e.g. ground condition, contaminated land, retail impact, sunlight, daylight, wind studies, ecology etc.) submitted to explain a development or demonstrate how an impact can be mitigated or to justify any deviation from the Council's policies. The charge will be advised by the relevant consultant and passed on to the applicant.

The Council offers an in-house financial viability assessment service to consider these submissions. This service is provided on a fixed rate basis based on the number of dwellings proposed and are set out at the end of this form. Payment is needed at the time the submission is made.

Charges

The scale of charges for pre-application advice is set out in the table at the back of this leaflet and all are subject to VAT.

NOTE: Since Covid19 meetings are still usually being held using Microsoft Teams. You may also want to send video footage of the site in case an actual site visit is not possible.

Completing the Form

To help us provide an effective pre-application service for level 1 and 2 enquiries, the attached questionnaire should be completed and returned. The fee can be paid online. Your request for advice will not be progressed until the correct fee has been paid. The completed questionnaire should be returned with 2 copies of any information or plans (only 1 copy required for tree works) you wish to submit.

For Level 3 enquiries you should contact the Development Manager to arrange the initial scoping meeting. You can use the attached questionnaire for this if it helps.

"Without Prejudice" Advice

Whilst the Council's officers will endeavor to ensure that pre-application advice given is robust, please note that this advice given is on a "without prejudice" basis and cannot preempt consideration of a formal application. Also, the Council may change its views on the merits of a proposal if there is a change in circumstances after pre-application advice has been given, such as a change in planning policy or case law.

Validation Checklist

The Council has published a "Validation Checklist" and it is available on the Council's website. This document sets out the information required to be submitted for an application to be validated and may well answer many questions about how our adopted policies and national policies affect your proposal. The Validation Checklist is in two parts.

Part One is a list of national requirements that must be provided before an application can be validated.

Part Two is our local list - compliance with it is recommended but is not mandatory.

Also appended are checklists for applicants to use.

Householder Permitted Development Enquiries:

The Council no longer provides a written response for enquires regarding permitted development (i.e. telling you if you need planning permission for your proposal). Please visit the Planning Portal website (<https://www.planningportal.co.uk>) and view the "Do you need permission" section. Alternatively, you could apply for a Lawful Development Certificate for Proposed Development, which lawfully confirms whether your proposal is permitted development or whether it requires planning permission. The appropriate forms can be downloaded from the same Planning Portal website.

The Council wishes to make clear that all pre-application discussions will be treated in confidence. However where requests for information about pre-application discussions are received under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), the Council will ask the applicant for pre-application advice to confirm whether they consent to the disclosure of the information, and if not why in their view it is in the public interest not to disclose the information. The Council will then consider whether it is not in the public interest to disclose the information.

Pre-Application enquiry form

Level 1 - For enquiries on house extensions, extensions to or changes of use for businesses, commercial or local community uses where the floor area in question is less than 200 sq m.

This Level of advice should also be requested for advice on proposals for Advertisements, works to listed building or works in conservation areas, landscaping advice, works to trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders or in a Conservation Area and telecommunication equipment.

Level 1 enquiries do not normally require a meeting but if this is requested by you an additional fee of £93 plus VAT will be payable.

We aim to respond to this request within 4 weeks unless a later date is agreed with you.

Level 2 - For enquiries about extensions to businesses, commercial or community uses where the floor area in question is more than 200 square meters and for proposals for new residential development including conversions to residential use.

Level 2 enquiries do not normally require a meeting. If meetings are requested by you these will require a further fee of £118 plus vat to be paid per meeting.

We aim to respond to Level 2 enquiries within 6 weeks unless a later date is agreed with you.

Level 3 - This form can be used when approaching the Council with your enquiry on a more major or complex proposal to introduce it to us and to arrange an initial scoping meeting.

Address of site:

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Description of proposed development: If a non-household extension enquiry, please indicate the floor area involved. In all cases provide a location & site plan.

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Name, address, telephone and email address of agent/person making this enquiry.

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Name of prospective developer/organisation if applicable.

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Type of formal application proposed, e.g. Full, Outline, Listed Building, Approval of reserved matters, details required by a planning condition etc.

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Details & dates of any previous relevant applications or pre-application discussions.

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List of any documents, photographs or plans submitted with this enquiry.
If possible, include a statement justifying your proposals with reference to national & local planning policies & guidance. **PLEASE PROVIDE 2 COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS AND PLANS** (only 1 copy required for tree works)

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Details of any consultations you have done or propose to carry out with statutory and non-statutory consultees at pre-application stage.

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When do you anticipate submitting a formal application?

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PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SEPARATE SHEETS

Fee to be submitted including VAT: £
Pay-on-line: <http://www.reading.gov.uk> select 'Pay' in Council section, select 'Planning' option & select Pre-Application advice from first drop down option.
Continue to complete payment.

Please return completed form to: Planning, First Floor North Rear, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU or email: plgadmin@reading.gov.uk

LEVELS OF PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION ADVICE		FIXED FEES	MEETINGS & FOLLOW UP	TARGET FOR RESPONSE IN WRITING
LEVEL 1 Householders: advice on house extensions. Small businesses and developers: advice on building works and change of use where the floor area involved is up to 200 sq m. Proposals for Local Community Uses - (Free for up to 200 sq m). Advertisements. Telecommunication installations. Listed building consent Trees and landscaping. Works to trees covered by Tree Preservation Order or in a Conservation area.		£160 + VAT = £192 £160 + VAT = £192 £148.60 + VAT = £178.30 £250 + VAT = £300 £250 + VAT = £300 £148.60 + VAT = £178.30 £148.60 + VAT = £178.30 £148.60 + VAT = £178.30	Meetings or follow up advice charged at £93 + VAT per hour = £111.60	4 weeks
LEVEL 2 Business, commercial or other development of 201 sq m to 1,000 sq m or up to 19 dwellings.	201 - 499sqm	£370 + VAT = £444	Meetings or follow up advice charged at £118 + VAT per hour = £141.60 per hour.	6 weeks
	500 - 1,000sqm.	£690 + VAT = £828		
	1-3 dwellings	£370 + VAT = £444		
	4-9 dwellings	£690 + VAT = £828		
	10-15 dwellings	£860 + VAT = £1032		
	16-19 dwellings	£1150 + VAT = £1380		
LEVEL 3 Development > 1,001 sq m or 20+ dwellings or other proposals.		Fee for introductory meeting, scoping of the advice required and initial response. £3,000 + VAT = £3,600	If additional time, meetings or planning performance agreements (PPA) required - the fee will be by negotiation	By Negotiation

Viability Charges: these are base costs for work undertaken to assess, and negotiate, submitted viability appraisals. The Council reserves the right to charge additional fees at a fixed hourly rate where matters get particularly complicated or overly time consuming.

Proposals	Initial Fixed Fees
1 unit	£1,500
1-4 units	£2,500
5-9 units	£4,000
10-14 units	£5,000
15-29 units	£8,000
30+ units	£10,000
Strategic/multiphase schemes	£15,000
If deferred to external consultants then their cost will be advised at the time of outsourcing.	

All pre-application charges are subject to VAT

If you need help to fill in or understand this planning document or would like this to be made available in large print, braille or audio format then please call 0118 9373787

如果您需要帮助填写或了解这份计划文件, 或需要相应的大体字, 盲文, 或声音格式文件, 请拨打电话 0800 626540.

“यदि आपको इस योजना दस्तावेज़ (प्लैनिंग डॉक्यूमेंट) को भरने या समझने के लिए सहायता की आवश्यकता है या आप चाहते हैं कि यह आपको बड़ी छपाई, नेत्रहीनों के लिए प्रयोग की जाने वाली लिपि या औडीओ (सुनने वाली) टेप के रूप में उपलब्ध कराया जाए तब कृपया 0800 626540 पर फ़ोन करें”

Osoby potrzebujące pomocy w zrozumieniu lub wypełnieniu niniejszego dokumentu bądź ragnące uzyskać kopię dokumentu wydrukowaną dużą czcionką, alfabetem Braille'a lub zapisaną w formacie audio, proszone są o kontakt telefoniczny pod numerem 0800 626540.

Caso precise de ajuda para preencher ou entender este documento de planejamento, ou prefira tê-lo disponível em formato de letra grande, braille ou áudio, por favor ligue para 0800 626540.

“ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ (ਪਲੈਨਿੰਗ ਡੋਕੂਮੈਂਟ) ਨੂੰ ਭਰਨ ਜਾਂ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ, ਨੇਤ੍ਰਹੀਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਵਰਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਲਿਪੀ ਜਾਂ ਔਡੀਓ (ਸੁਣੀ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੀ) ਟੇਪ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0800 626540 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ”

اگر آپ کو پلاننگ کی اس دستاویز کو پُر کرنے یا اسے سمجھنے کے سلسلے میں مدد درکار ہو یا آپ چاہتے ہوں کہ اس بڑی طباعت، بریل یا آڈیو کی شکل میں تیار کیا جائے تو براہ مہربانی 0800 626 540 پر ٹیلیفون کریں۔

For general advice/information about planning:

<https://www.planningportal.co.uk>

<http://www.reading.gov.uk> 'Planning' section

Or write to:

Planning, Reading Borough Council,
Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU

Email: plgadmin@reading.gov.uk