

Background

This guidance note explains how Gloucester City Council will handle requests for pre-application planning advice.

In the case of pre-application advice, the service is intended to provide an indication as to whether a proposal is likely to gain planning permission, what the key planning issues are likely to be and the information required to be submitted with the planning application.

For advice on permitted development rights, the service provides an officer opinion as to whether planning permission is required for your development proposals. However, this is informal advice and does not have the same status as a Certificate of Lawfulness. Further information is available on the [Planning Portal](#).

Service Benefits: - Effective pre-application advice can lead to high quality and appropriate development schemes being granted planning permission more quickly. It can also identify potentially inappropriate schemes at an early stage and prevent unnecessary time and cost for customers and the Council.

Is there a charge for the service?

For the pre applications enquiry service we charge on a cost recovery basis, and this includes pre application enquiries made after an application has been refused. The cost will depend on the scale of the development proposed and the level of service.

Exemptions: - Advice sought in the following categories is free:

- Building Conservation advice for works of repair to listed buildings
- Works to trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order or trees located within a Conservation Area.
- Where the enquiry is made by a Local Authority or County Council and the proposal relates to a statutory function of the Authority/Council.
- Where the enquiry is made by a Parish or Town Council.
- Where the enquiry is made by a Housing Association, Registered Social Landlord, or an equivalent Affordable Housing Provider or an architect/agent acting directly on their behalf working on a **solely** affordable housing proposal, one scheme per site, any subsequent proposal would be subject to the full pre-application fee.
- Where the development is for the direct benefit of a disabled person (and as such there would be no fee incurred to make the planning application)
- Initial advice will be provided where Gloucester City Council are working with local independents setting up a new business and /or are grant aiding them through Business Support grants

Reductions: - 50% reduction in fees for local charities and local community groups providing services to the community and relating to the local provision of that service

What information do I need to submit?

Planning officers will provide their advice based on the information you provide about the proposal, therefore it is important to provide as much information as possible.

Service Offered by Gloucester City Council

<i>Level of Service</i>	<i>What is provided</i>	<i>Timescale*</i>
Letter only	No site visit, written response generally covering 'in principle' issues and advice on information requirements for any planning application	Householder & minor developments: 15 working days Major developments: 20 working days
Office meeting followed by letter	Meeting, written response assessing proposal and providing advice about how to overcome concerns (where possible). Advice on information requirements for any planning application	Minor developments: 20 working days Major developments: 30 working days
Site visit followed by letter	Site visit, written response assessing proposal and providing advice about how to overcome concerns (where possible). Advice on information requirements for any planning application	Minor developments: 20 working days Major developments: 30 working days
General principles meeting	A meeting between a planning officer and applicant/agent where the key strategic planning issues and general principles for a proposed development are discussed.	20 working days

*The timescale starts when a completed application, sufficient information and necessary fee have been received.

What won't Pre Application advice do?

It can't deliver a guaranteed outcome, i.e. a guaranteed planning or Listed Building consent permission or a formal view of the planning committee. This is because:

- a) Applications are subject to a wider consultation process than a pre application enquiry, and issues may come to light that are not known at the time of giving the advice,
- b) The views given will be current at the time of giving the advice but changes in planning circumstances and policy will need to be taken into account when the application is decided;
- c) Larger and/or more contentious applications will be decided by a planning committee made up of elected members. Whilst the committee will have an officer report and recommendation to consider, members may decide to give different weight to key issues and other material considerations, in arriving at their decision.

Any pre-application advice that has been provided will be carefully considered in reaching a decision or recommendation on an application; subject to the proviso that circumstances and information may change or come to light that could alter that position, as outlined above.

Please note, following the formal response, planning officers will not be able to enter into correspondence with the applicant to provide additional advice or discuss further the advice provided outside of the pre-application service.

Highways Advice

A separate fee is payable to Gloucestershire County Council if highways advice is required. Further information is available [here](#).

Further important information

We will make every effort to make sure that the advice given in the pre-application process is as accurate as possible. However, any advice given by council officers for pre-application enquiries does not constitute a formal response or decision by the council in respect of any future planning applications. Whilst such advice will be a material consideration, it cannot be held to bind the council in its validation or formal determination of a subsequent application.