

THE PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS

BEFORE YOU APPLY

We encourage for all but the most straightforward applications that you [discuss your proposals with us](#) before you submit an application; we can advise you on;

- The forms required
- The acceptability of your proposal in planning terms
- Potential planning constraints
- Other important issues you may need to address to ensure the likely success of your proposal

Time spent at this pre-application stage will usually save a lot of time during the processing of the application.

MAKING AN APPLICATION

We recommend that applications are made online via the [Planning Portal](#)

When making an application, you will need to provide the following;

- The correct [application form](#)
- The correct [application fee](#)
- The relevant information as required by the [Local Validation Checklist](#)

Once your proposal is submitted the next stage of your application is the processing.

Registration & Validation

Your application will be registered on to our computerised planning data system. Then be made up into a file and assigned a reference number. Once received, applications are usually registered within 5 working days.

Validation is where the Council decides if the correct and adequate supporting information has been submitted to understand and fairly decide an application.

The Development Management Team can only consider applications that are valid. If the correct fee or required information is missing, we will not be able to start determining the application and the process

will be delayed and application remains invalid. Submission of poor quality material may also cause delay. If your application is invalid you will be contacted and given 28 days to resolve any issues.

Common reasons why applications may be invalid include;

- Incomplete or incorrectly signed application forms
- Missing or incorrect application fee
- Site plans without the required red and blue lines that indicate the application site and land owned by the applicant
- Missing supporting information required by the Local Validation Checklist
- Plans not drawn to a recognised metric scale

For further information about the validation of application please refer to the [Making an Application](#) on the City Councils Website.

Consultation and Publicity

Once validated, your application will follow the statutory consultation procedures.

- It will appear on the Weekly Planning List
- Viewable on the online Planning Search Function
- Occupiers of adjoining land/property will be notified via letter (any comments received will be displayed online)
- If required a site notice near the application site will be displayed
- If required it will be advertised in the Worcester Standard

For many applications we seek specialist comments from our colleagues in the Council or elsewhere on matters such as flood risk, highways and ecology. This is a vital part of our consideration.

CONSIDERATION BY THE CASE OFFICER

A case officer is appointed for all planning applications and your acknowledgement letter will detail who this is.

How long will it take?

You should allow at least 8 weeks for a decision to be reached, 13 weeks for major applications.

The sites of all applications are visited by the case officer, who will check the information in the application. They will also check that the site notice has been displayed (if required) and/or neighbour notification letters have been sent to the correct addresses. The case officer will take many issues into account when considering an application:

- Local and national planning policies
- Views of other council and county council services
- Views of external bodies such as the Environment Agency
- Comment received from local people (objecting to an application will not automatically mean that it will be refused)

The case officer will then come to a balanced view. About 90% of applications are approved. The case officer may also negotiate changes to the application to deal with any issues raised or to improve the application if they are able to do so within the time frame of the application.

If there are no major objections received on your application following the consultation period or planning concerns raised by the Case Officer, a delegated (rather than committee) decision may be taken by Officers.

If the application is outside of the City Council's Scheme of Delegation or it is a departure from the Local Plan/Local Development Framework, it will be referred to the city council's Planning Committee for a decision.

The Planning Committee

At the Committee, your application will be presented and the officer's recommendation outlined. The Planning Committee is made up of 12 members. The Committee meets roughly every month and members of the public can attend and register to speak at Committee meetings. For meeting dates and further information on Committee Procedures please contact Committee Services on 01905 722 085.

We send out Decision notices the day the decision is made. The notice will set out the reasons for approval or refusals and if permission has been granted any conditions with which you need to comply. Decision

Notices are available online via the [Planning Search Function](#).

What to do if the application is refused

It is possible to appeal against a decision. There are no rights of appeal for third parties (objectors) who are unhappy with the planning decision.

There are two courses of action open to applicants;

- Amend and resubmit within 12 months without a further fee
- Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate

Discharging conditions on an application

You should apply to discharge any conditions on the decision notice. This is very important as conditions can be pre-commencement. This requires the submission of a formal application.

Amending the application after decision

Non material amendments (very minor) can be made. The changes have to be small and must not change your permission in any significant way. You should complete the Non Material Amendments application form which you can also get from the [Planning Portal](#). This should be submitted with the revised drawings (with the changes highlighted). If you wish to make more significant changes or to amend or remove a condition, you will have to make a new application.