

PRE-APPLICATION FORUM
PROCEDURE NOTE

1. This procedure note will operate on a trial basis for the first three meetings of the Forum and will be subject to review and amendment during this period.
2. Meetings of the Pre-Application Forum will be held in open public session to enable discussion of all national and major development proposals.
3. Forums will be held as soon as possible after the submission of a Proposal of Application Notice (POAN) for all national and major development proposals and, in all cases, prior to the lodging of any associated planning application (this allows a period of 12 weeks following submission of the POAN).
4. The members of the Planning Development Management Committee will constitute the members of the Pre-Application Forum.
5. Ward Members for the Ward in which a specific pre-application proposal under discussion is located will be invited to the Forum but will be allowed to participate in the Forum only in relation to the specific pre-application proposal in their ward.
6. The relevant Community Council for the prospective development proposal(s) to be discussed will be informed of the date and time of the Pre-Application Forum by Committee Services so that they have the opportunity to attend but will not be permitted to participate in the business of the Forum.
7. If a Forum is required it will take place after formal business of the Planning Development Management Committee is concluded - this will normally be 2pm on the same day as the Planning Development Management Committee. The Forum will be separate from the Committee to emphasise the clear differences in status, process and procedure between the two meetings.
8. The case officer for the pre-application proposal will produce a very brief report (maximum 2-3 sides of A4) for the Forum outlining the proposal and identifying the main planning policies, material considerations and issues associated with it and the key information that will be required to accompany any application. The report will not include any evaluation of the planning merits of the proposal.
9. Agents/applicants will be contacted by Committee Services immediately on receipt of a POAN (or before this date if notified by planning officers of the week that a forthcoming POAN is likely to be submitted) and offered the opportunity to give a 10 minute presentation of their development proposal to the members of the Forum. There will be an opportunity for Councillors to discuss these with the agents/applicants, to ask questions and indicate key issues they would like the applicants to consider and address in their eventual application(s). If an applicant/agent does not respond to this offer within 10 days, or declines the opportunity to give such a presentation, then their proposal will be considered by the Forum without a developer/applicant presentation. Committee Services will notify the case officer of the applicant's response.

10. Case officers (or Team Leader/Manager/Head of Planning) and, if considered necessary, other appropriate officers e.g. Roads Projects Officers, will be present at the Forum. The case officer will give a very brief presentation outlining the main planning considerations, policies and, if relevant and useful, procedures and supporting information that will have to be submitted. Officers will be available to answer questions on factual matters related to the proposal but will not give any opinion on, or evaluation of, the merits of the application as a whole.
11. Members, either individually or collectively, can express concerns about aspects of any proposal that comes before the Forum but (to comply with the terms of the Code of Conduct) should not express a final settled view of any sort on whether any such proposal is acceptable or unacceptable.
12. A minute of the meeting will be produced by Committee Services and made publicly available on the Council website.
13. Members should be aware that the proposal being discussed may be determined under delegated powers and may not come back before them for determination. Any report of handling on an application pursuant to a proposal considered by the Pre-Application Forum will contain a very brief synopsis of the comments made by the Forum but the report itself will be based on an independent professional evaluation of the application by planning officers.
14. Training sessions will be offered to Councillors to assist them in adjusting to their new role in relation to pre-application consultation and its relationship with the Code of Conduct.
15. The applicant/agent will be expected to report on how they have, or have not, been able to address any issues raised by the Pre-Application Forum in the Pre-Application Consultation Report that is required to be submitted with any subsequent planning application.