

Charging for Pre-application Advice

Most of Kent's Local Planning Authorities, including KCC, charges to provide advice in respect of pre-application planning proposals. Many highway authorities nationally charge for offering pre-application highway advice, both as part of a multi-disciplinary team and separately from the planning authority. While the legality of charging by statutory consultees has been challenged, the prevailing view is that legislation permits charging for pre-application advice.

Pre-application discussions benefit the applicant by identifying relevant issues and requirements at an early stage and speeding up the development process, as a consequence they can help to minimise subsequent planning application costs and avoid abortive applications. In order for KCC to provide this service to a consistent and high standard it is proposed that officer time costs should be recovered from the developer. It should be noted that the current statutory planning fees charged by planning authorities do not cover the cost of pre-application advice given by KCC Highways. The recovery of costs for this service will allow HT&W to dedicate an increased level of resource to this key stage in the planning process, and the provision of high quality pre application advice will benefit the applicant.

The charge will cover the following work:

- A single site visit (if no on site meeting is held)
- An indication of the appropriate policies, standards and guidance against which the proposal will be assessed.
- If requested, a single face-to-face meeting on site, at County Council offices, or borough/district offices if appropriate.
- A written response within 21 days of receipt of payment of the charge or any meeting.
- A single re-check of the scheme following any necessary revisions.
- Meetings will be arranged within 10 working days of receipt of payment.

An initial free response setting out the main issues will be given if the following information is provided:

- Site Plans
- Site Address
- Development Description

If further written advice, a meeting or site visit are needed, the following information will be required and a fee charged:

- Confirmation of the existing use of the site, including planning application history, where appropriate.
- Description of the proposed development, accompanied by sketch plans showing the proposal.
- Scoping for Transport Statement/Assessment or a draft of these documents, if necessary.
- Any other information critical to the consideration of the proposal at this pre-application stage.
- A letter confirming that the charge will be paid within 14 days of receipt of an invoice

Fees are determined according to the type and scale of the proposed development;

Residential

Number of Dwellings	Further Written Response, Meeting or Site Visit
1 to 5	£125 + vat
6 to 10	£250 + vat
11 to 25	£500 + vat
26 to 50	£750 + vat
51 to 80	£1200 + vat
81 to 200	£2000 + vat
201 to 500	£2500 + vat
501 to 1000	£3000 + vat
1001 or more	£4000 + vat

Commercial and Retail

Gross Floor Area	Further Written Response, Meeting or Site Visit
Up to 100m ²	£125 + vat
101m ² to 500m ²	£500+ vat
501m ² to 1000m ²	£750 + vat
1001m ² to 2000m ²	£1000+ vat
2001m ² to 7500m ²	£1500 + vat
7501m ² to 10,000m ²	£2000 + vat
10,0001m ² to 15,000m ²	£2500 + vat
15,001m ² to 25,000m ²	£3500+ vat
25,001m ² or more	£5000 + vat

The fees structures above are in line with the national average fee charged by other authorities nationally.