

Important Information for Applicants

The Council has developed a Customer Charter for users of the Development Control Service. Copies of this Charter can be obtained from the Civic Centre or can be accessed via our web site. Below is a summary of the service you can expect from us as an applicant.

- All applications will be registered or acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt. This will include any reasons why the application is found to be invalid or deficient at this stage
- When an application contains adequate detail for its proper assessment you will receive a letter acknowledging that it is valid. This will tell you :
 - The Case Officer that will be dealing with your application
 - The Planning Service phone number and e-mail address.
 - An application reference number for future correspondence
 - A target decision date.
- The Case Officer will aim to visit the site within 7 working days of validation of the application to assess the proposal. You will not need to be present at this visit.
- All reports on planning applications will be in accordance with the standard set out in the Council's code of conduct for dealing with planning matters and will be made available to the public either on the committee agenda or on the planning archive in the Civic Centre after the decision has been made.
- You (or your agent) can inspect the planning "working" file at the Civic Centre prior to the decision. As you will need to be accompanied by a member of staff when doing this, it will be necessary to arrange an appointment. Please contact us on 01785 619337 if you need to do this. As from 1st January 2005 all files may be viewed by the general public, within 20 days of a written request.
- We will operate a delegation scheme which will normally mean that over 90% of planning applications are dealt with by planning officers without having to go before the Development Control committee. Details of the current delegation scheme are available on our web site.
- Where the target decision date cannot be achieved, for example if complicated issues are raised, an explanation will be provided on request.
- Applicants, agents and the general public will be able to view details and track the status of the application via the Planning Public Access

web site at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning. The final decision on each application will also be published here.

- Please note that all application forms and supporting information including all subsequent correspondence will be seen by Councillors and members of the public and will form part of the public planning file which will be published in full on the Council's website
- Personal details of the persons making the application will be kept on a public planning file, which is also published to the web. Do not provide unnecessary personal details you do not want publicized. Your name and address are sufficient for us to validate your planning application.
- The Council acknowledges that whilst you may wish to submit an application, you may not want your signature to be published on the internet. Consequently, the Council will accept that you do not need to submit a signature provided you either type your name or write it in capital letters and your contact address is given.
- Where a legal agreement or undertaking is required before permission is granted, you (or your agent) will be notified in writing within 10 working days of the need being identified or the appropriate committee resolution to approve.
- We will operate a 'Fast Track' system for a very few industrial and commercial applications which we consider important in terms of the contribution the proposed development could make to the prosperity of the Borough. We will seek to ensure that all statutory timescales and procedures will be adhered to, but a more proactive approach will be taken with these few applications to ensure a decision is reached as quickly as possible within the timescales to remove some of the uncertainty that can exist during the application process.
- If your application is one of the few which can be "Fast Tracked" we will inform you of this and will tell you of the enhanced service you can expect to receive.
- For applications which are to be heard by committee, you or your representing agents will be notified of the date, venue and time of the Development Control Committee meeting at which your application will be heard. Public Speaking has now been introduced to our Development Control Meetings, as applicant/agent you can request to speak in support of your application, details/guidelines can be found on our web site.
- Decision Notices, with conditions and reasons, will be despatched within 3 working days of the decision being reached.
- We will make all historic planning application files available for inspection at the Civic Centre.

- The Council's Best Value Performance Indicators which show the performance of the Planning Service will be made public.

We will do our best to meet these objectives. If at any time you are dissatisfied with our performance, or if you have any other queries regarding the service, please contact us using the contact details below :

Planning Services
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford ST16 3AQ

Telephone 01785 619337
e-mail planning@staffordbc.gov.uk
www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning