

Service Standards

The Planning Applications Service

This document tells you about the standard of service we aim to provide when dealing with planning applications. We hope you find this document helpful but if you need further information or other documents, details of how to obtain these are given at the end.

OUR SERVICE AIMS

The Development Management Service deals with applications for the provision of new buildings, or the change of use of land or existing buildings. It is a statutorily regulated service that aims to make the best decision on each application in accordance, where possible, with Government and locally determined timescales. In dealing with applications, we take into account a proposal's impact on the environment and on the interests of the community. It is also necessary to balance the needs of the applicant against the possible effect that a development might have on neighbours and other people living or working nearby.

The planning system helps to match the community's need for uses of land and buildings such as homes, shops, offices, factories and schools, with the need to protect and improve the environment. We try to balance the conservation of both the built and the natural environment with the provision of development that is necessary for economic prosperity or social need. We also try to make sure, on your behalf, that new development is environmentally sustainable. This means that it meets our present needs without affecting the ability of future generations to meet theirs.

The *beneficiaries* of the service are the public at large, but the prime *consumers* of the service are applicants for planning permission. The service must respond to the reasonable expectations of both these groups and must also be in tune with the expectations of Councillors. We believe that our service should be accessible to all, in accordance with the Council's approach to equal opportunities:

- **For applicants:** the service should be understandable, fair, timely and user friendly.
- **For the public:** the service should be understandable, fair, accessible and responsive.
- **For Councillors:** the service should be understandable, consistent, related to their objectives and open to democratic involvement.

We believe you have a right to know what you can expect to receive and so in this guide we have set out the details of our key planning application services and the standards we aim to achieve.

SERVICE AIMS FOR PROVIDING ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Discussing your application with a planning officer before submitting it can help to improve its quality and ensure that it is dealt with as efficiently as possible. To assist this we aim to:

- provide an extensive and use-friendly range of advice notes both in our reception and via our website;
- provide access to applications online;
- provide a Duty Planning Officer to give general advice and information;
- operate a formal pre-application advice service, providing feedback on proposals within agreed timescales (this is subject to a charge for some types of proposals – further advice is available on the planning pages of the website);

- respond, wherever possible, to letters within seven working days of receipt, but if it is not possible to provide a full response within that time we will try to tell you when a reply will be given;
- respond to telephone inquiries within one working day, when it is not possible to deal with them immediately;
- provide a co-ordinated response for major developments; and
- maintain confidentiality within the Council on all pre-application discussions.

For more information about this aspect of the service please see the advice notes titled 'How Do I Obtain Advice Before I Make An Application?', 'What Planning Approvals Do I Need For My Proposals?', 'What Non-Planning Approvals Do I Need For My Proposals?', 'What Is The Difference Between Development Control And Building Control?' and 'How Do I Prepare My Planning Application?' plus the range of application guidance notes and forms to assist people making planning applications. These are available from reception or our website (addresses at bottom of page).

SERVICE AIMS FOR PUBLICITY AND CONSULTATION

The planning system seeks to involve interested parties in the decision making process by giving them an opportunity to comment on development proposals. To assist this we aim to:

- notify by letter all neighbours who are immediately affected by a development proposal;
- provide, to those people who are notified, clear advice about the planning process and how to make comments;
- provide a Duty Planning Officer to assist people in commenting on development proposals;
- take your views into account in formulating recommendations on development proposals;
- notify all those making representations on a development proposal if the application is going to Committee and how they can be involved in the Committee process; and
- notify all those making representations on an application of the outcome within five working days of the decision being made.

For more information about this aspect of the service please see the advice notes titled 'How Can I Comment On A Planning Application?' and 'How Does The Council Decide Planning Applications?' These are available from reception or our website (addresses at bottom of page).

SERVICE AIMS FOR APPLICANTS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that an application is submitted correctly. Help and advice will be available from us. Applicants should ensure that the appropriate drawings and other information are provided, in accordance with the guidance notes that accompany the application forms. To assist the smooth processing of applications we aim to:

- encourage pre-application discussions;
- provide an extensive and user friendly range of general advice notes and application forms and guidance notes both in our reception and via our website;
- register and acknowledge each valid application within five working days;
- advise applicants if their application is invalid within five working days and tell them what they need to do to make it valid;
- visit all sites within three weeks of receiving the application;

- seek amendments to schemes that require relatively small changes to make them acceptable and to determine all other applications as quickly as possible;
- notify applicants if their application is going to Committee and how they can be involved in the Committee process;
- issue a decision within two working days of the decision being made; and
- advise applicants of their rights of appeal with the decision notice.

For more information about this aspect of the service, please see the advice notes titled 'What Happens To My Planning Application?', 'How Does The Council Decide Planning Applications?', 'My Application Was Approved – What Should I Do Next?' and 'My Application Was Refused – What Should I Do Next?' These are available from reception or our website (addresses at bottom of page).

SERVICE AIMS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

The work of the Development Management Group in Waltham Forest is important to ensure that the main corporate aims of the Council can be achieved. It is therefore desirable that the service develops continuously in response to its customer's needs. To assist this we aim to:

- offer advice on planning matters and encourage pre-application discussions;
- provide a wide range of publications to assist people in formulating proposals and understanding the planning process;
- provide access to applications online;
- consult service users regularly to enable us to make improvements to the Planning Service; and
- investigate all complaints fully and promptly and advise the complainant of what action is to be taken. If no action is to be taken, the reasons will be explained fully.

A leaflet setting out the Council's complaints, compliments and comments procedure is available from reception or our website (addresses at bottom of page).

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Please let us know your views on the service that we provide, both where you think we have done well and where there may be scope for improvement. We particularly welcome your suggestions for improving the service. Please let us know your views by writing to us at dc@walthamforest.gov.uk, or at the address below, or providing feedback about the service online.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR HELP

We hope you find this document helpful. Other documents are available from our reception or our website (addresses at bottom of page). If you need further information please phone Waltham Forest Direct on (020) 8496 3000 or call into our reception at Sycamore House between 9am and 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, or 9am and 5pm Fridays (the offices are closed on Bank and Public Holidays). A Duty Planning Officer is available for general planning advice between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday on (020) 8496 6876 or in our reception.

Interpreting and translation assistance

The Council has prepared this document to assist users of its Development Management Service. If you have any difficulty reading or understanding it because English is not your first language, we will try to help you. Please tick the box, which shows which language you speak, write your name, address and telephone number and return this form, together with the document, to the address given below.

<p>Kansilli e ka pregaditur këtë dokument për tju ndihmuar përdorësve të Shërbimeve të Kontrollit të Zhvillimit. Po patët vështirësi për ta lexuar apo kuptuar sepse Anglishtja nuk është gjuha juaj e parë, ne do të mundohemi t'ju ndihmojmë. Ju lusim shenoni katorrin që tregon se cilën gjuhë e folni, shkruani emrin, adresën dhe numrin e telefonit dhe ktheni këtë formë, së bashku me dokumentin, në adresën e dhënë më poshtë.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Albanian <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>A Junta de Freguesia preparou este documento para assistir os utentes do seu Serviço de Controlo de Desenvolvimento. Se tiver dificuldades em ler ou compreender este documento devido ao inglês não ser o seu idioma principal, nós tentaremos ajudá-lo(a). Assinale o quadrado junto ao idioma que fala, escreva o seu nome, morada e número de telefone e devolva esta folha, juntamente com o documento, para a morada em baixo.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>لقد أعد المجلس هذه الوثيقة لمساعدة مستخدمي خدمة سيطرة التنمية. وإذا واجهت صعوبة في قراءتها أو فهمها لأن الإنجليزية ليست لغتك الأولى فسنحاول أن نساعدك. الرجاء وضع علامة بالصندوق الذي يبين لغتك وأكمل اسمك وعنوانك ورقم الهاتف وأرسل كامل النموذج مع هذه الوثيقة للعنوان أدناه.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Arabic <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Dagmada ayaa diyaarisay dukumantigaan si ay ugu caawiso dadka ubbaahan Adeegga Koontaroolka Qorshaynta Dhismaha Magaalada. Haddii aad wax dhib ah kala kulanto in aad fahamto qoraalkaan waayo Ingiriisku maahan luuqaddaada koowaad, waxaan isku dayaynaa in an ku fahanno. Fadlan calaamadi sanduuqa muujinaya luuqadda aad ku hadasho, qor magacaaga, ciwaankaaga, taleefoonkaaga, dabadeedna ku soo celi foomka, oo uu lasocdo qoraalkaan, ciwaanka hoos ku qoran.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Somali <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>কাউন্সিল এ ডকুমেন্টটি তৈরী করেছে এর ডেভেলপমেন্ট কন্ট্রোল সার্ভিসের ব্যবহারকারীদেরকে সহায়তা করার জন্য। ইংরেজী আপনার প্রধান ভাষা না হওয়ায় এটি পড়তে অথবা বুঝতে যদি আপনার কোন অসুবিধা হয়, তাহলে আমরা আপনাকে সাহায্য করতে চেষ্টা করবো। দয়াকরে আপনি যে ভাষায় কথা বলেন সেই বাস্তব টিক চিহ্ন দিন, আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও টেলিফোন নাম্বার লিখুন এবং এ ফরমটি ডকুমেন্টটির সাথে নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরৎ পাঠান।</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Bengali <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>El Ayuntamiento ha redactado este documento para ayudar a los usuarios del "Development Control Service [Servicio de Control del Desarrollo]. Si le resulta difícil leer o entenderlo porque el inglés no es su idioma materno, intentaremos ayudarle. Marque la casilla que indica el idioma que habla, rellene el formulario con su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono y devuélvalo, junto con el documento, a la dirección abajo reseñada.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Spanish <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>区议会政府准备了这份文件来介绍我们的发展控制服务。如果因为英文不是您的母语，您不能读懂这篇文章，我们可以帮您忙。请选择中文，填写您的姓名及地址以及电话号码，并将此文件寄回以下给出的地址。</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Chinese <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Belediyemiz bu belgeyi İymar Kontrol Hizmetlerinden yararlanana kimselere yardımçı olmak amacıyla hazırlamıştır. Asıl diliniz İyngilizce olmadıyğ ı için bunu okumakta veya anlamakta güçlük çekiyorsanız, size yardımçı olmak isteriz. Lütfen hangi dili konus,tugç unuzu belirten kutuyu is,aretleyip adınıyzy- soyadınıyzy, adresinizi ve telefon numaranıyzy yazdıktan sonra, bu formu belgeyle birlikte as,agç ıdaki adrese gönderin.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Turkish <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>La Municipalité a publié ce document afin d'aider les utilisateurs de son service de contrôle de développement. Si vous avez des difficultés à le lire ou à le comprendre parce que l'anglais n'est pas votre langue maternelle, nous nous efforcerons de vous aider. Veuillez cocher la case correspondant à la langue que vous parlez, indiquer votre nom, votre adresse et votre numéro de téléphone et renvoyer ce formulaire ainsi que le document à l'adresse figurant ci-après.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">French <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>کونسل نے یہ دستاویز اپنی ڈویلپمنٹ کنٹرول سروس استعمال کرنے والوں کی مدد کے لئے تیار کیا ہے۔ اگر آپ کو اسے پڑھنے یا سمجھنے میں کوئی مشکل درپیش ہے کیونکہ انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے تو ہم آپ کی مدد کرنے کی کوشش کریں گے۔ براہ کرم اس خانے پر نشان لگائیے جو آپ کی زبان کی نشاندہی کرتا ہے اور اپنا نام پتہ اور ٹیلیفون نمبر لکھیں اور اس فارم اور دستاویز کو نیچے دیئے گئے ایڈریس پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Urdu <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Name _____ Address _____ _____ _____ Telephone number _____</p>	<p>Return to: Development Management London Borough of Waltham Forest Sycamore House Town Hall Complex Forest Road Walthamstow E4 6PS</p>

Translated by the London Borough of Waltham Forest Interpreting and Translation Service

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