

NOTES ON SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO IMPROVE QUALITY AND TIMELINESS

All Local Planning Authorities are required to determine planning applications within timescales set by Central Government. For the majority of planning applications this is within 8 weeks from the date a valid application is received. The purpose of this advice is to set out the guiding principles that South Gloucestershire will follow in order to meet these time targets.

Pre-application queries

South Gloucestershire Council encourages pre-application dialogue, and recognises the part this plays in reducing uncertainty for the applicant, improving the quality of submissions, and in meeting deadlines once a formal application is submitted. This is particularly the case in relation to major or more complex planning applications. The Customer Service Charter for Development Control sets out the standards of service which the service aims to achieve in relation to such queries. Most pre-application discussion can take place via an exchange of written correspondence, however in cases of particularly sensitive, complex or major development a combination of written correspondence, or a meeting in the office or on site may be undertaken.

Process for dealing with applications

In assessing applications submitted to the Council, one of the three following courses of action will be taken.

- 1) Should there be pre-application advice that indicates that the proposed development is unlikely to obtain planning permission, but a planning application is submitted contrary to the advice, then the application will be determined with no further recourse to the applicant.
- 2) If a planning application is submitted, which in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority is a clear refusal, then the application will be refused with no further recourse to the applicant.
- 3) If a planning application is submitted that, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, could be acceptable with amended plans/further information, then one of the following courses will be followed.
 - a) If there is sufficient time within the timescale to submit amended plans, re-consult and determine the application, then the applicant will be invited to do so. The applicant will be given 10 days within which to submit amended plans/further information, otherwise the application will be determined as it stands. (Given the timescales this will tend only to relate to straightforward amendments/or information that is immediately available).
 - b) If there is insufficient time within the timescale to submit amended plans, re-consult and determine the application, then the applicant will be advised and invited to withdraw the application. Otherwise, the application will be determined as it stands. The applicant will be able to resubmit once all the required amendments/additional information is in place.

I hope you find this note and the flowchart give you helpful guidance on how the Council will deal with the application you intend to submit. If you have any queries however, please seek further advice via either the Planning website at www.southglos.gov.uk, by letter, by e-mail at PlanningApplications@Southglos.gov.uk, or telephoning the Contact Centre on 01454 868004.

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