

WHAT IS THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CHARTER

Development Control is a statutory Council function which primarily involves the determination of planning applications. This Charter sets out the standards for the Council's Development Control Service.

Our aim is to make the best decision about each planning application. This means taking into account a proposal's impact upon the environment and on the interests of the community. It also means balancing the needs of the applicant against the effect a development might have on neighbours and other people living nearby.

Development Control decisions will normally be taken in accordance with relevant planning policies, unless other planning considerations outweigh these policies.

BEFORE MAKING A PLANNING APPLICATION

Development Control staff are pleased to discuss applications before they are formally made. Our aim is to encourage high quality applications and to ensure they can be dealt with as quickly as possible. Details on making an application and associated information can be found on our comprehensive website (www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk). We will also answer queries by telephone, e-mail or letter, but in the case of a specific proposal it is better to make an appointment to discuss it with a member of staff.

At our offices we have a Planning Helpdesk with specialist officers dedicated to providing informal advice and advice on the progress of an application.

HOW APPLICATIONS ARE PROCESSED

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that applications are submitted correctly. An incorrect application will be returned with an explanation of how it should be corrected.

When an application is received, a Case Officer will be identified and he/she will visit the development site. Further information to help determine the application may be sought and a time limit for its return will be set. The current status of an application can be tracked on our live website.

The majority of applications are determined by the Head of Planning Services under delegated powers. The final decision on an application will be sent to applicants promptly together with any conditions attached to the permission or reasons for its refusal. If permission is refused, the applicant's right of appeal against this decision will be explained. Copies of all planning decisions are available to view on the Council website.

OUR STANDARDS

- All letters, other than those commenting on a planning application will be acknowledged on receipt and a full response will be sent within 28 calendar days.
- Telephone enquiries not capable of immediate response will be dealt with within one working day.
- Receipt of valid applications will be acknowledged within 3 working days.
- Should the application be for development not requiring planning permission, it will be returned within 15 working days and the fee refunded.
- Incorrect applications will be returned within 5 working days with guidance notes for re-submission.
- We aim to determine at least 80% of straightforward applications (home extensions, listed building applications, changes of use) within 8 weeks, 60% of major applications within 13 weeks. For 'minor' cases, e.g. up to 9 houses, we aim to determine 65% of applications in 8 weeks.
- Decision Notices will be issued within 3 working days.
- Applications and Decisions will be posted in the Statutory Register within 3 working days.
- A period of 21 calendar days will be allowed for written comments to be submitted following posting of the Site Notices.
- We aim to inspect the majority of sites within 28 calendar days of receiving a complaint about breach of planning control and those of an urgent nature as soon as possible.

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR STANDARDS

If you wish to discuss details of a particular case contact the relevant Case Officer in the first instance.

If you feel that our standards are set at an inappropriate level or that we have failed to meet the standards set, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Coffey, Development Control Manager, on (01394) 444417, who will be happy to discuss your concerns.

PUBLIC NOTICES

All current planning applications and past decisions are listed in the Statutory Register which is available for public inspection during normal office hours and on the website.

Planning applications will also be publicised by site notice. Members of the public have the opportunity to inspect the application documents and submit written comments.

A weekly list of all applications is also posted on the Council's website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Applications related to listed buildings or development in a conservation area are publicised by advertisement in the East Anglian Daily Times on a Thursday each week.

All comments received will be considered before the decision on an application is reached.



PUBLIC SPEAKING

Representatives of applicants, objectors and the relevant Town or Parish Council can speak at one of the Council's Development Control Sub-Committees. A summary of the Council's Public Speaking Procedure is available on the website or in the 'Having You Say' leaflet. Information on the dates of forthcoming committees and the procedure for registering to speak is available on the website or by contacting the case officer.

ENFORCEMENT OF PLANNING REGULATIONS

All development must be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. When an alleged breach of planning control is reported, the site will be inspected.

The developer will be contacted and given time to take corrective action.

All complaints about alleged breaches of planning control will be treated confidentially within the Council so far as is practicable.

Development Control Charter



Suffolk Coastal
...where quality of life counts

