

## Planning Charter

### **The Planning Service**

The planning service is responsible for a wide range of issues. These include planning, listed building and conservation area applications, appeals, enforcement and related compliance matters. Planning policy issues, including the preparation of the Council's Local Plan and Local Development Framework are also dealt with by the service.

### **Our customers:**

Customers of the planning service fall under many categories. These can include: those applying for planning permission, those making representations on applications, Town and Parish Councils, the business community, Councillors, other parts of the Council, Statutory Bodies, interest groups, and other organisations interested in planning applications and the local planning process.

### **Our commitment to you:**

We aim to provide a friendly, courteous and prompt service and strive to maintain high professional standards. This allows us to make the best possible decisions for local communities.

In particular, we aim to achieve the following general service standards:

- Answer telephone calls promptly during office hours.
- Respond to telephone messages within one working day when requested.
- Respond to letters and e-mail communications with a full or interim reply within 10 working days.
- Deal fairly with complaints about the service, in accordance with the Council's Complaints procedure.
- Continue to maintain and update the Development Services website to keep users informed about changes to procedures, e.g. legislation and fees.

Our aims with regard to specific departments within Development Services are as follows:

### **Planning Enquires**

We will aim to:

- Ensure that professional advice and information on planning applications and related matters are available in a number of different forms during office hours\*.
- Welcome and provide opportunities to discuss development proposals with applicants by appointment, before they submit a planning application.



- Where proposals are considered to be unacceptable, we will aim to suggest changes and give advice on how to progress the proposal further.
- Provide guidance notes on how to make a planning application either via post or on our website.

(\* We must stress that advice given over the telephone will be based on an officers opinion and therefore cannot constitute a formal determination in any way)

For more information please contact:

Planning Enquiries  
 Stroud District Council,  
 Ebley Mill,  
 Westward Road,  
 Stroud  
 GL5 4UB  
 TEL - 01453 754442  
 Email - [planning.enquiries@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:planning.enquiries@stroud.gov.uk)

### **Processing Applications (Part of Development Control)**

We will aim to:

- Register valid planning applications within **3** working days of receipt
- Contact applicants within **3** working days if an application is incomplete and/or invalid, explaining what is missing or how to correct any mistakes. This will help to prevent unnecessary delays.
- Issue decision notices within **2** working days of the decision being made.
- Notify those who made comments on an application with the final outcome, which may include sending them a copy of the final decision notice.
- Determine 60% of major planning applications within 13 weeks; 65% of minor planning applications within 8 weeks and 80% of other applications within 8 weeks.

### **Publicity and Consultation for Applications (Part of Development Control)**

We will aim to:

- Publicise applications promptly and consult with neighbours on applications which affect them\*, giving them 21 days in which to make representations.
- Consult with external bodies where necessary as soon as the application has been registered to allow for an ample response time.
- Make available the facility to view planning applications via the Council's website.
- Publicise the weekly list of planning applications received and planning decisions made on the Council's website.

(\* Please note that when notifying neighbours, we only have a statutory duty to notify those who have a boundary with the application site. Where neighbours cannot be distinguished, a site notice will be put up.)

For more information please contact:

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Stroud District Council,  
Ebley Mill,  
Westward Road,  
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GL5 4UB  
TEL - 01453 754442  
Email - [planning.enquiries@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:planning.enquiries@stroud.gov.uk)

## Enforcement

We will aim to:

- Acknowledge enforcement related enquiries within **5** working days either by telephone or by letter.
- Investigate the enquiries and visit the site where necessary, within **10** working days.
- Provide an interim response to enquiries within **10** working days of the site visit.
- Notify the enquirer of any decision to take formal enforcement action within **10** working days of the decision.

For further information, please contact:

Planning Enforcement  
Stroud District Council,  
Ebley Mill,  
Westward Road,  
Stroud  
GL5 4UB  
email - [planning.enquiries@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:planning.enquiries@stroud.gov.uk)  
Tel - 01453 754226/7

## Conservation, Design and Trees

We will aim to:

- Have officers available by appointment during office hours to provide specialist conservation and historic building design advice. This includes advice regarding Listed Buildings.
- Have the arboricultural officer available by appointment during office hours to provide specialist arboricultural and landscape advice.
- Ensure that independent design advice is available from our Architects Panel for sensitive and major developments within the district.

For further information, please contact:

The Conservation Team,  
Development Services,  
Stroud District Council Offices,  
Ebley Mill, Westward Road,  
Stroud, Glos. GL5 4UB

Conservation email: [chris.bladon@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:chris.bladon@stroud.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01453 754221/754142/754206

Trees email: [mark.hemmings@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:mark.hemmings@stroud.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01453 754329

## Planning Policy

We will aim to:

- Maintain an up to date Local Plan and Local Development Framework for the Stroud District area.
- Widely publicise planning policies and proposals for inclusion in either the Local Plan and Local Development Framework, including on the Council's website, giving opportunities for people to comment in accordance with the relevant planning regulations.
- Make copies of the Local Plan and Local development Framework documents available at reasonable prices from our office at Ebley Mill or free on our website.
- Ensure that officers are available during office hours to provide advice and information on matters relating to the Council's planning policies and proposals.
- Carefully consider each representation made to the Planning Strategy team and inform respondents how the Council will deal with their concerns.
- Continue to provide policy updates in line with changes to Central Government legislation.

For more information, please contact:

Planning Strategy Team  
Stroud District Council  
Ebley Mill  
Stroud  
Gloucestershire GL5 4UB  
e-mail: [local.plan@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@stroud.gov.uk)  
or telephone 01453 754326/7/8

In the past the planning system has been seen as a very closed and non-transparent process. We aim to resolve these issues by making the processes involved as open and as accessible as possible, thereby encouraging greater interaction between our customers and ourselves. You can help us to achieve this by co-operating in the following ways:

- Discuss proposals with the relevant department before submitting an application. For more complex projects, it would be beneficial to submit a Project Brief with an application.
- Incorporate adequate time into project programmes both for initial discussions and for the determination timescale indicated by the Council.
- Provide good quality plans and drawings, prepared to a metric scale, preferably with appropriate professional advice from people who are fully familiar with the planning system.
- Submit an Environmental Statement, a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan, if required, at the same time as the application. This will help to avoid delays further through the process. The submission of other information may be advised if required by the department.
- Recognise that Councils are required to take decisions on planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- Respond promptly to reasonable requests for further information and drawings or to suggested alterations, provided a reason for these are clearly explained.
- Acknowledge that responses from outside consultations, which the department must undertake on an application, may raise previously unforeseen issues. Such issues can take time to resolve and may require further written or other information from applicants. In some instances, there may be a need to re-consult interested parties on revised proposals.
- Recognise that in some cases the structure of planning legislation places the ultimate decision beyond the Council's control. Consequent delays may push deadlines beyond the Council's target date for determination.