

Pre-application Project Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the process for pre-application work between Council and a developer.

Early discussions on projects are to be encouraged to iron out issues that could delay an application once it has been formally lodged for consideration as a resource consent.

The aim is to set-up a process to enable open and constructive discussions between the Council, the developer and supporting consultants prior to lodgement of the consent.

The pre-application process should be open, constructive, sharing of design ideas and information, to ensure the collective delivery the best project outcome within our statutory responsibilities.

A well run meeting with a defined agenda, strong leadership from the chair and good minute taking is essential to ensure that all parties come away from all meetings with a clear understanding of what agreement has been reached, what matters are still outstanding and what action each party needs to take subsequent to the meeting.

Process

Developer

1. Establish project team – includes all relevant consultant/specialist skills necessary for the site. Probably includes:
 - Resource management
 - Infrastructure engineers
 - Traffic consultant
 - Urban designer
 - Architect potentially
 - Geotech potentially
 - Legal adviser
2. Determine the aim and goals for the project and what is to be achieved.
3. Undertake some initial design concepts/options.
4. Consider is this project appropriated for relationship agreement with Council?
YES / NO

If YES, complete relationship documents and make request to Council
If NO, complete pre-application process document.

5. Complete the pre-application project plan form in preparation for discussion with Council.
6. Complete pre-application meeting form and pay fees. Send to Council with the project plan document (both in electronic and hard copy form). The applicant should indicate whether the subject of their pre-application discussions is of a confidential nature, provide as much detail to Council (draft plans, etc) as possible and indicate which Council specialists they would like to be in attendance at the meeting.

What will the applicant get out of a pre-application meeting?

7. At the conclusion of any pre-application meeting the applicant should be in a position of knowing:
 - The appropriate consent(s) to apply for, and whether other consents are likely to be required from other local authorities (eg ARC);
 - The relevant issues and the scope and detail of the information required to support the applicant(s). Where issues are identified, possible alternative solutions to the issues should be suggested;
 - The parties likely to be affected and the degree of consultation required, including whether the application is likely to be notified;
 - Any other approvals that may be required, such as Transit New Zealand;
 - What procedures the application will be subject to, ie in determining whether the application will be notified or not and the criteria for non-notification;
 - The application fee required, Council's charging policy and an estimate of likely costs (if this is different from the application fee); and
 - What relevant information the Council holds which may assist the applicant, where to obtain the correct application forms, etc.

Pre-application meetings for major or complex applications

8. For major or complex proposals, a pre-application meeting gathers together the various parties likely to be involved. The meeting is a useful way of considering and resolving issues before the application is finalised. The meeting should ensure that when the application is lodged, it contains all the relevant detail. The meeting aims to:
 - Provide the Council and others with the opportunity to contribute;
 - Ensure everyone involved understands how the District Plan is interpreted;
 - Clarify any additional information requirements from all sections of Council, including specialist advice (ie hazardous and contaminated sites information, geotechnical investigations or stormwater management information);
 - Receive early feedback and information that is agreed and recorded on file;
 - Identify any development or site constraints;
 - Identify potential financial contributions;
 - Identify potentially affected parties and/or consultation requirements; and
 - Ensure the applicant scrutinises their proposal as closely as possible and produces a correspondingly targeted and appropriate AEE.

Council

9. Receive the pre-application documents and receipt/acknowledge.
10. Establish a project team and appoint a project leader.
11. Project leader to organise internal meeting to discuss project and complete the pre-application project plan document.
 - The project leader should play the role of chairperson for all pre-application meetings and take a strong lead in steering the meeting to keep it focussed on issues and ensure all matters are addressed.
 - They should prepare an agenda beforehand but be prepared to adjust it at the outset of the actual meeting then lead the meeting through the issues.
 - They should adopt a positive attitude; let the applicant lead off with their perspective on the development then take the meeting through each issue.
 - A separate note taker may be necessary for a large complex meeting.
 - Not all issues will necessarily be resolved in one meeting and it is acceptable to park issues that need further work and may require additional meetings before agreement is reached.
 - It is wise for Council staff to resolve their differences over issues prior to the initial meeting so that a common approach can be presented to the applicant. If staff differences are intractable they may need to be escalated to director level.
12. Project leader set-up meeting with developer's team.
13. Pre-application meeting to discuss project – complete meeting template.

Purpose

14.
 - (a) To agree where further work is needed
 - (b) To agree to peer reviews. Have these been completed before the lodgement of the application?
 - (c) Agree engineering standards if required
 - (d) Highlight areas that may require innovative solutions
 - (e) Highlight potential areas of disagreement and resolve if possible
 - (f) Agree potential project plan
 - (g) Set up next meeting if required.
15. Share information and meet as agreed until appropriate to lodge consent application.
16. Application lodged with all the requested information and specialist reports, etc.
17. Continue to share information and communicate for the whole process.