



Hertfordshire County Council

Highways Development Management

Protocol for Charging for Pre-Application Advice

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Introduction

The County Council, as Highway Authority, welcomes and encourages discussions on the transport impacts of new development proposals before a developer submits a planning application.

By seeking transport pre-application advice, developers are able to work collaboratively with the County Council to solve problems, enhance sustainability, improve the quality of designs and provide more certainty for stakeholders.

To enable the Highway Authority to provide this service to a consistent and high standard the Highway Authority allocates significant resources to the service. Accordingly, though the County Council will provide a limited level of advice free of charge, the cost of providing more detailed dialogue and written responses, possibly requiring the attendance at meetings, site visits etc., is recovered directly from the developer, so that this does not fall as a general cost to the wider community.







It should be noted that the statutory planning fees **do not** cover the cost of transport pre-application advice given by the Highway Authority.

1. Benefits of Pre-Application Advice

The Highway Authority is a statutory consultee, and the Local Planning Authorities will consult us for advice or recommendations on any proposals likely to impact the transport network. This advice or recommendation is taken into account when the Planning Authority makes a decision on a planning application.

However, before a developer submits a planning application, the Highway Authority can provide advice on the transport issues and impacts on the highway network associated with the proposed development, as well as any mitigation required.

The benefits for seeking this advice in advance include:

	Improved understanding of how national and local guidance and policies will be applied to the development
	The potential for reducing the time that consultants spend developing the proposals
	Early identification of proposals that are considered to be unacceptable, resulting in consequential savings from not progressing abortive design and/or applications
	Identification of supporting documents that will be required as part of the formal application submission to enable full and proper consideration of the proposals
	An enhanced design framework that could be applied to the development, with greater working between professionals and thus a much improved end quality of development. This would be to the benefit of both the final occupiers and the general community
	Where appropriate, a written response can be provided confirming the advice of the Highway Authority that developers may wish to submit in support of any subsequent application

2. Principles of Charging and Levels of Response

The general principles which the County Council adheres to, when providing transport pre-application advice, are as follows:

- No charge will be made for advice relating to the extension of an individual residential property.
- With the exception of private schools, no charge will be made for charitable and public sector non-profit making proposals.
- Charges are applicable on all other developments.

The level of resource required to provide pre-application advice varies according to the scale and complexity of the proposals being put forward. In recognition of this, the County Council uses **five categories** to define the scale and complexity of new development and its transport impact. Charges are then levied in line with the relevant category, as assessed, following receipt of the application, and a review of the complexity and the access.

We provide a menu of costs, also detailed below, whereby developers can select the elements of pre-application advice they require. The cost of each element reflects the amount of time involved.
















For all categories of development, we provide a free of charge response which will refer developers to national and local policies and guidance that should be taken into account.

We cannot review transport statements or assessments, or other technical documentation, as part of the 'free' level of response. If you require more detailed advice, you will need to opt for the chargeable service where you can request a more detailed review of specific technical information relating to the proposals.

In certain circumstances, where large developments involve more complex transport impacts, applicants may want to engage with us over a longer period, as this may require a number of meetings, as well as ongoing dialogue and correspondence on the scale of transport impacts and associated mitigation needs. In these instances, it would be more appropriate to put in place bespoke charging arrangements, which can reflect the specific activities and timescales associated with the transport pre-application advice required. This could potentially be done within a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

We can also provide advice once planning permission has been granted, in advance of the submission of a Highways Act Section 278 or Section 38 application. This advice will also fall under the chargeable primary activities and categories set out in this document.

3. Categories of Development

Category A <i>Small scale development / Low complexity transport impact</i>		2-9 dwellings		Up to 500m ² commercial floor space
		Simple dropped kerb / bell mouth access arrangements / modification of existing access		
Category B <i>Medium scale development / Medium complexity transport impact</i>		10-49 dwellings		Between 500m ² and 1000m ² commercial floor space
		Construction of new access requiring assessment of suitability taking into account visibility splays. Assessment of bell mouth access / T-junction / mini roundabout and other alterations to the highway to accommodate the work		
Category C <i>Large scale development / Large complexity transport impact</i>		50-79 dwellings		Between 1000m ² and 2000m ² commercial floor space
		Construction of new access requiring assessment of suitability taking into account visibility splays. Assessment of bell mouth access / T-junction / mini roundabout and other alterations to the highway to accommodate the work Developments requiring a Transport Statement		
Category D <i>Major development I / Complex transport impact</i>		80-120 dwellings		Between 2000m ² and 2500m ² commercial floor space
		Construction of new access/highway works which are required to facilitate the development and, as such, need to be properly considered in the wider context of the locality. Including significant junctions and alternations to the highway which require assessment / signalised junctions / roundabouts / realignment of the highway, etc. Developments requiring a Transport Statement		
Category E <i>Major development II / Complex transport impact</i>		120+ dwellings		Above 2500m ² commercial floor space
		Construction of new access/highway works which are required to facilitate the development and, as such, need to be properly considered in the wider context of the locality. Including significant junctions and alternations to the highway which require assessment / signalised junctions / roundabouts / realignment of the highway, etc. Developments requiring a Transport Statement		

4. Table of Charges

When considering a request for pre-application advice, we determine the appropriate category using the definitions above, and we then apply the charges detailed below.

To facilitate this assessment, we charge an administration fee to cover the cost of processing the application, determining the appropriate category for the development and writing to advise you of the charge. This is a fixed **non-refundable** fee of £90 (+VAT), and only applies for the chargeable service. Please note: this is **no longer** deducted from the service fee.

Applicants should also use [the request form](#) to select from the menu of services detailed in the table below. This enables applicants to select only the services they require, resulting in advice that is tailored to their specific needs.

If you would like to discuss your application to clarify which category it fits into, or you would like advice on which services you may require, please email us on HighwaysPlanning@hertfordshire.gov.uk, and one of our team will contact you.

Non-Chargeable Activities	Scope	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	Category E
National and Local Transport Policy Overview	Confirmation and direction to relevant national and local transport policies	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Primary Activities						
Menu of Chargeable Activities	Scope	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	Category E
Site Visit	A single visit to the development site to carry out an inspection in support of the consideration of the transport impacts of a proposed development and the impacts on the existing highway network. The charge makes allowance for up to a 1 hour visit, plus travel.	£390 (+VAT)	£390 (+VAT)	£635 (+VAT)	£740 (+VAT)	£845 (+VAT)
Pre-Application Advice Meeting	Based on a meeting of up to 2 hours duration at County Hall, including meeting preparation and review of subsequent meeting notes prepared by the developer or their consultants.	£420 (+VAT)	£475 (+VAT)	£720 (+VAT)	£1,015 (+VAT)	£1,100 (+VAT)
Review of 'In Principle' Highway Proposals	Review and comment (via e-mail or short report) on access type, geometry, outline capacity implications, compliance with policy and design standards or reviewing proposed departures. Includes one follow up review of a refined set of access proposals.	£390 (+VAT)	£495 (+VAT)	£1,100 (+VAT)	£1,690 (+VAT)	£1,900 (+VAT)
Subsidiary Activities						
Menu of Chargeable Activities	Scope	Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	Category E
Review of Trip Generation and Distribution	Review and outline comment (via e-mail) on supplied information on trip generation / distribution and one follow up review of any amendments to the data.* *Not necessary if a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment is being provided for review.	£250 (+VAT)	£390 (+VAT)	£615 (+VAT)	£805 (+VAT)	£975 (+VAT)
Review of Independent Junction Models e.g. Arcady/Picady/Linsig etc.	Per junction, covering 'base' and one 'do something' scenario only. All data and analysis supplied by developer.	£340 (+VAT)	£595 (+VAT)	£700 (+VAT)	£805 (+VAT)	£1,080 (+VAT)
Review of Transport Scoping Note	Review and provide comments (via email) on the methodology and requirements of the Note. Fee allows for one follow up review of a refined Note.	£445 (+VAT)	£615 (+VAT)	£785 (+VAT)	£870 (+VAT)	£1,060 (+VAT)
Review of Draft Transport Statement or Transport Assessment	Review and provide comments (via email) on draft Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Fee allows for 1 follow up review of a refined document in response to the advice provided.	£410 (+VAT)	£550 (+VAT)	£1,280 (+VAT)	£1,910 (+VAT)	£2,290 (+VAT)

Any further advice required, which is over and above that allowed for in the initial charge, will be charged as a new application using the above rates. For further advice requested **within** 3 months of the admin fee being paid, then no additional admin fee will be due. For further advice requested **beyond** 3 months of the original admin fee being paid, then another admin fee will be charged.

In addition, we can also provide the following services, prices for which are available depending on the size and complexity of the development:

- Road Safety Review
- Supply of Traffic or Transport data held by HCC
- Review of Micro-simulation Model
- Environmental Impact Assessment Review

5. How to Request Pre-Application Advice

Developers who wish to request transport pre-application advice should first complete in full a copy of the [Request for Transport Pre-Application Advice form](#). You can also request a copy of the form by sending an email to HighwaysPlanning@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

As part of your application, you will need to clearly identify the services you require by completing all the fields on the form, even if you only require the 'free service'.

The form should be accompanied by the following, as appropriate:

- Site location plan with site boundary shown*
- Site layout plans of the proposed development*
- Confirmation of the function and scale of the development*
- Details of site access/highway works proposals, including a plan detailing achievable pedestrian and vehicular visibility splays*
- Confirmation of the existing use of the site, including relevant past planning application history where appropriate
- Scoping note or copy of transport statement or transport assessment, if available and required by the scale of the development
- Details of trip generation and distribution
- Details of known highway mitigation proposals
- The scope of any committed development that is to be taken into account

Supplementary technical information can be provided as necessary.

If requesting advice in relation to a forthcoming Section 278 or Section 38 Application, the following information is required:

- Copy of planning permission or reference number
- Copies, or confirmation, of the status of any associated Section 106 Agreements

Note: Any item marked with an asterisk (*) is a mandatory requirement to support any Request for Transport Pre-Application Advice

6. What the County Council Provides for its Chargeable Service

Following receipt of a completed application form and supporting information we will:

- Provide confirmation within 5 to 10 working days of receiving your request and advise whether the services you have selected are appropriate for the proposed development, confirming the charges appropriate to your application in line with your request.
- Contact you to arrange any requested meeting
- Depending on the service requested, we will aim to provide you with a response to the service requested within 21 working days of receipt of the notes from the meeting, and/or receipts of documents/plans which are the subject of the review. If we feel this turnaround is unrealistic due to the complexity of the work, we will discuss and agree a more appropriate turnaround time.
- Keep a central record of your application, and any advice given, so that it can be referred to at a later date as part of any application.
- Provide information about the council's technical standards for development proposals.
- Provide information about the Council's requirements regarding the information that we would require in order to assess a planning application.
- Provide information about the Council's requirements for, or contribution to, infrastructure provision e.g. highway improvements, sustainable transport contributions or commuted sums.
- Provide informal, and without prejudice, comments and guidance on the content, construction and presentation of an application likely to satisfy the council's planning policies.

Please Note:

- Requesting transport pre-application advice from the County Council as Highway Authority is not mandatory, but we will not enter into dialogue over the scope of new development proposals, and their impact on transport and the local highway network, outside of this service.
- Any advice given by County Council officers for transport pre-application enquiries does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council with regards to future planning consents.
- Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith, and to the best of ability, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application, which will be subject to public consultation and ultimately decided by the Planning Authority. The County Council cannot guarantee that new issues will not be raised following submission of a planning application and consultation upon it.
- It should be noted that the weight given to pre-application advice will decline over time.
- Please be aware that Hertfordshire County Council is subject to requirements under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Where the County Council receives a request to disclose any information in relation to this discussion, it will notify and consult with you concerning its possible release. However, the County Council reserves the right to disclose any such information it deems appropriate, and shall be responsible for determining at its absolute discretion whether the information is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the EIR or FOIA.