Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council

Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Fermanagh and Omagh
**Planning Applications
Validation Checklist**

October 2022

Introduction

There is a growing requirement for the Council to consider a wider range of issues as part of the planning process. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has therefore developed this Planning Application Validation Checklist to support applicants and agents through what is now a more complex planning system. This checklist builds upon the Council's Applicant/Agent Protocol – A Good Practice Guide for Processing Planning Applications.

The checklist will be a useful tool to help applicants and agents identify the information which is required with their application. The validation requirements set out below will not add any additional burden to applicants or agents as part of the planning process.

The extent of information sought will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. It is acknowledged that there may be site specific instances when a particular survey, report or assessment may not be required. Planning agents are encouraged to discuss any queries with a planning officer. While the number of requirements will increase with the complexity and scale of a planning application, it would be rare that all validation requirements would be required for any one application.

During the processing of an application, an officer or consultee may request further information once an application has been validated, if that information is deemed essential to enable the assessment of the proposal.

Performance Improvement

The Validation Checklist will improve the quality of applications entering the system and will reduce the number of times that new information needs to requested and submitted which can then result in additional advertising, neighbour notification and consultations needing to be carried out.

The information requirements will allow the fair and timely assessment of planning applications by being consistent and reducing delays. The checklist will speed up the processing of applications and allow resources to be prioritised to those more complex applications with greater economic, environmental and social significance.

The checklist aims to:

- assist in improving the quality of planning application submissions;
- reduce the potential for poor quality development across the District;
- ensure that all applications can be dealt with more effectively and efficiently;
- improve the standard of service to applicants;
- improve the consultation process and consultee workloads;
- respond positively to best practice; and,
- ensure Fermanagh and Omagh District Council complies with legislation and policy when assessing planning applications.

A better quality, more effective and efficient development management process, which processes better quality applications quicker, will offer greater certainty to the public, developers and investors. This will also help deliver better quality developments across the District.

Submitting an application

Once the Council transitions to the new Planning Portal then all planning application submissions must be made online.

Before submitting an application, particularly more complex applications, planning agents are encouraged to speak with a planning officer in relation to the Council's pre application submission services, such as PADs. Through this process a planning officer will also be able to assist with validation requirements and offer advice on the merits of particular proposals.

On receipt of a planning application, officers will check if all the required information has been submitted in accordance with the Validation Checklist. If information is missing, officers will contact agents by telephone or email to discuss the requirements for the application in accordance with the Validation Checklist. Any further information must be provided within 2 working days.

If further time is needed to enable submission of the information, then officers will return the application and the fee so that a complete application with all the information needed to determine an application can be submitted when ready.

Part A – Regional Requirements

Forms: Correct application forms submitted and signed, and a declaration of ownership completed. The form must contain the name and address of the applicant, the site address and description of the development must be clear and concise and accurately reflect the proposal.

Fee: Applications cannot be processed without the correct fee. The Planning Fees Regulations NI 2019, sets out the fees required for each application. If you are unsure about the appropriate fee for your application, please contact the Council's planning office. Further guidance on planning fees has been provided by the Department in Development Management Practice Note 11.

Plans and Drawings: All applications must be accompanied with a site location plan sufficient to identify the site (and other land owned) and a block plan, and any other plans to explain the proposal clearly. This may include existing and proposed elevations, floor plans and roof plans, existing and proposed site sections and proposed landscaping or restoration plans.

Pre-Application Community Consultation Report: Required for all major applications.

Design and Access Statement: Required for all major applications and where any part of the development is in a designated area, development consisting of –

    (i)   the provision of one or more dwelling houses, or
    (ii)   the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 100m or more.

Part B – Local Requirements

Air Quality Impact Assessment for intensive livestock units for poultry, pigs, cattle or sheep, anaerobic digester plants or manure storage facilities.

Biodiversity Checklist for development that would impact upon, or have the potential to impact on natural heritage features, including designated sites, priority habitats or protected and priority species

Biodiversity Surveys/Ecological Reports where the need for a survey is identified as part of the completion of the Biodiversity Checklist.

Contaminated Land Report for new development on, or in proximity to, land which has a current or previous use that has the potential for contamination on former industrial sites e.g. petrol filling stations or landfill sites.

Design Concept Statement to accompany all applications for residential development of more than 2 houses.

Demolition Justification Report & Structural Survey: for all applications for the demolition of all or a significant part of, a Listed Building or a building in a Conservation Area, Area of Townscape character or Area of Village Character

Drainage Assessment: for applications for 10 or more residential units, sites over 1Ha or areas of hardstanding/floorspace exceeding 1000msq.

Flood Risk Assessment: for all applications inside a 1 in 100year climate change flood plain (as identified on the DFI Rivers Flood Maps (NI) map viewer).

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for applications for wind turbines over 25m.

Lighting and or light spillage plan for any application which includes floodlights and /or new lights on sites near watercourses or other sensitive receptors.

Noise & Odour Report for development that is likely to impact upon nearby approved or existing dwellings or other sensitive receptors.

Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan for development in close proximity to a watercourse.

Parking Survey where there is an identified parking need that cannot be accommodated within the application site.

Planning Statement for applications that;

- are an exception to the policy or have policy compliance issues or material considerations that the agent considers outweigh planning policy criteria,
- result in a loss of existing open space or loss of employment land,
- that are an exception under the flooding policies,
- would result in the demolition (or part) of a Listed Building or an un-listed building within a Conservation Area,
- provide ancillary accommodation, the statement should set out the purpose and need for the accommodation.

Sequential Test and Retail Impact Assessment for retail or main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with the Local Development Plan.

Transport Assessment Form for applications for 25 or more units or non-residential with a gross floor area of 500 sqm or more.

Transport Assessment where a TAF identifies that a new development would likely have significant transport implications.

Tree Survey for development that will impact upon trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order

Waste Management Plan: for all applications for intensive livestock development or minerals

Part C – Local applications – Common Examples

The following are examples of common types of applications that are submitted locally and the type of information that must accompany an application when submitted:

Replacement Dwellings/Buildings

• Block plan clearly identifying the dwelling/building to be replaced and its curtilage

• If the new dwelling is sited outside the curtilage of the dwelling being replaced, a written explanation as to why an alternative siting is necessary & sequential assessment of sites as close as possible to the footprint of the original house.

• Bat survey or bat roost survey where the old dwelling is to be demolished or the site contains trees which are to be felled.

Dwellings on farms

• Application form P1C to include farm business number and details of farming activity;

• Evidence of an active and established farm business for more than 6 years;

• Copies of up to date farm maps to show all land which is part of the farm business;

• Location of the principal group of farm buildings and any other buildings on the farm;

• If the new dwelling is not sited to cluster/group with existing buildings on the holding, a written explanation as to why an alternative location is necessary & a sequential assessment of sites as close as possible to existing buildings on the holding.

• Details of any dwellings 'sold off' over the previous 10 years.

Dwelling based on special personal or domestic circumstances

• A Planning statement detailing the special personal or domestic circumstances;

• Support statement/Information from a suitably qualified person, such as a medical or health professional;

• Consideration of alternatives solutions.

Agricultural development

• Application form P1C to include farm business number and details of farming activity;

• Evidence of an active and established farm business for more than 6 years;

• Copies of up to date farm maps to show all land which is part of the farm business;

• Supporting statement demonstrating why the new building is necessary or essential and why any existing farm building(s) could not be used.