

## **Public Access Strategy for Members of the Public to the Planning Development Management and Planning Enforcement Service Areas**

The strategy covers 5 areas:-

- Web contact
- Emails contact
- Letters/written contact
- Telephone contact
- Personal face to face contact

### **Objective**

This strategy is designed to facilitate access by the public to the planning (Development Management) service advice in a way that is mutually beneficial and sustainable. To this end specified times are designated/allocated for different types of access by members of the public.

### **Web Contact**

**Wealden Website – [www.wealden.gov.uk](http://www.wealden.gov.uk)**

If you wish to obtain information quickly yourself you are advised firstly to visit our web site.

The planning pages of the Council's website contains comprehensive information relating to planning matters including downloadable application forms, planning histories, weekly lists of planning applications, committee reports, local plan documents, online mapping system as well as links to other relevant websites, e.g. the Planning Portal where you can submit a planning application online to this Council.

**Planning Applications on the Web Website – [www.planning.wealden.gov.uk](http://www.planning.wealden.gov.uk)**

This website has details of valid planning applications back to 1980 where you can view application details including plans, committee reports, decision notices etc. Note: prior to 2003 only decision notices and appeal decisions can be viewed. In addition you can also view enforcement notices which have been served together with any enforcement appeal decisions which have been made.

### **Email Contact**

- For general enquiries please email the Service on [planning@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:planning@wealden.gov.uk). All emails will receive an acknowledgement within 1 working day.
- Letters of objection/comment (attached to any emails) relating to a planning application will **not** be responded to, but will be taken into account when considering any application provided we have your name and postal address.

(Details on what are relevant planning considerations can be found on the Council's website at the following web address:

[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Planning\\_and\\_Building\\_Control/Development\\_Control/commenting.aspx](http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Planning_and_Building_Control/Development_Control/commenting.aspx)

When dealing with a specific planning officer, if you are the applicant or agent then contact via email rather than by telephone or letter is encouraged, using [planning@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:planning@wealden.gov.uk) Our response time to fax/written emails is 10 working days.

### **Letter contact**

Letters received will be replied to in accordance with the Council's target, i.e. 10 working days, where a response is requested by the author.

However there are specific arrangements for:-

- Letters received regarding a current planning application expressing either support or objection to a scheme - unfortunately owing to workload, we cannot respond to individual comments within letters.
- Letters of complaint which are dealt with through the Council's Complaints Procedure
- Letters received in relation to Planning Enforcement and which fall within the [Planning Enforcement Strategy](#).

Please note:

Correspondence seeking views on whether planning permission is required should be via a '[Certificate of Lawful Proposed use or Development](#)' application.

Correspondence seeking a view on amendments to an approved scheme should be submitted on the appropriate application form - further details about this can be found on our website located under [Useful Documents](#) (Guidance notes MMA2 and MMA3). Potential applicants are advised that the Council is only likely to accept amended plans where only the most minor changes are proposed. (A standard letter together with the appropriate forms will be sent to correspondents seeking advice on the need to seek planning approval).

If you wish to discuss the likelihood of planning permission being granted for a development scheme, then strong encouragement is given to pursuing such enquiries via the Council's [Planning Surgeries](#), or possibly via the [Duty Officer](#), rather than in written form. The surgery system is not considered however appropriate for specialist consultancy advice, (i.e. developments involving listed buildings, tree preservation, etc).

## **Telephone contact**

If you are unable to obtain the information you require from our website or are not in a position to email any requests then you can ring the service direct.

**Development Management** General enquiries:- 8.30 am - 5.00 pm. Tel: **01892 602010**

Enquiries will be handled, initially by the Development Management Technical Team officers who will assess the nature of the query.

- If the matter is of a professional (technical planning issue) nature and not within the remit of the technical officer, the call will either be
  - directed to an appropriate planning officer (if there is a current allocated officer)
  - directed to the Duty Officer (who is operational from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.) Contact 01892 602011
  - referred to the planning web site

Technical queries will be handled by the case officer or duty officer. If the duty officer considers the query requires more in depth discussion, the caller may be directed to one of the regular planning surgeries held at the Crowborough office. Contact the Technical Team for an appointment by calling **01892 602010**

- Direct Access to Planning Officers
  - Direct Access to case officers is limited so if direct dialing, they will normally only be available Mondays – Fridays, between 9.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Voicemail will be operated outside of these hours. All calls will be returned within 24 hours and voice mail will be updated daily or weekly, (for example in respect of holiday absence), as appropriate.

## **Personal Contact (face to face)**

Face to face contact can be via

- Planning Duty Officer - The officer can be contacted by phone but also by personal callers at the Crowborough Office between the hours of 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. week days. There will be two officers on duty to ensure your call is answered or you can see an officer with the minimum of delay.

This facility is for general enquiries which relate to professional planning matters and not general administrative requests (i.e. requests for [application forms](#) etc, which are dealt with by the Technical Team (01892 602010).

Queries of a more complex nature should be pursued via the “Planning Surgery” facility (at the Crowborough office).

- For general planning application matters such as request for forms, fee enquiries, progress of a planning application, etc. then contact the Technical Support Team on 01892 602010.
- Planning Surgery:- where a member of the Public has a scheme proposal (plans etc) prior appointments can be made at the Pine Grove office by contacting 01892 602010.
- For details of planning histories, copies of [decision notices](#) etc then please contact the Planning Information Office on 01892 602510 or ask at the main reception at the Crowborough or Hailsham offices.
- For general planning information, e.g. is a building listed or in a conservation area, any tree preservation orders present on the site, then please contact the GIS Assistants on 01892 602583 or 602620 or visit the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough.

### **Other Useful Contact Points**

**Planning Enforcement Advice** General enquiries 8.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Tel: 01892 602460

**Conservation & Design Advice** General enquiries 8.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Tel: 01892 602538

**Aboriginal/Landscape Advice** General enquiries 8.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Tel: 01892 602451

For more detailed advice, the support staff will arrange for a specialist officer to contact you within 24 hours.

### **Building Control**

For general advice and appointments for site inspections contact Tel: 01892 602497.

Inspection requests made prior to 10.00 a.m. on any week day can usually be accepted for same day site inspection.

For dangerous structures (office hours) contact Tel: 01892 602497 (out of hours) Tel: 01435 813311

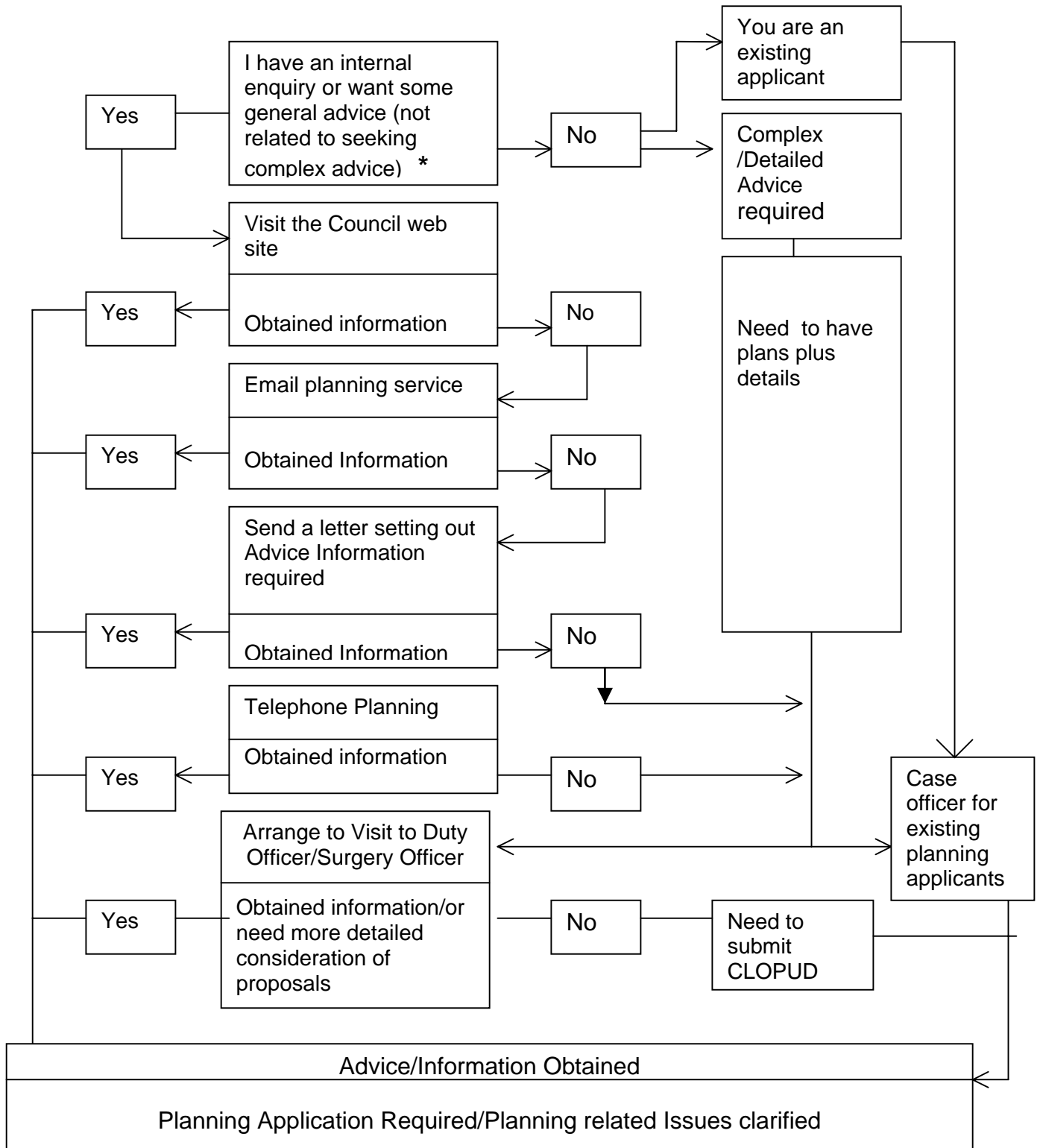
Direct telephone contact to the Building Control Surveyors is detailed on the notification of Passing of Plans.

For more details about the service please visit the Planning and Building Control Website.

The Planning and Building Control Service is currently located at:-

[The Council Offices,](#)  
[Pine Grove,](#)  
[Crowborough](#)  
[East Sussex](#)  
[TN61 1DH](#)

## SEEKING PLANNING ADVICE - HOW TO GO ABOUT IT



\* Where seeking information whether planning permission is required and you have detailed proposals you should either submit a [CLOPUD](#) (Certificate of Lawful Proposed Use or Development) Application or make an appointment with the planning surgery.