



Delivery of planning services during coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic - Update 25 March 2020

Current Government Guidance

The Government has advised Local Planning Authorities that it is important they continue to provide the best service possible in these challenging times and to prioritise decision-making to ensure the planning system continues to function, especially where this will support the local economy.

In line with these Government expectations the Authority is continuing to progress decision-making wherever possible at the current time but in a way which protects its staff and the people they would normally interact with.

How We Are Delivering the Development Management Service?

In line with Government advice all of our planning staff are now working remotely and the Council offices are closed to the general public.

This will impact on the level of service that we are able to offer at the current time.

Decision Making

Current Planning Applications

Any current applications where the consultation period has expired will be progressed to a decision where possible. The majority of decisions will be issued under delegated powers in line with the scheme of delegation as set out in the Council's constitution.

Planning Panel

All applications that have been subject to significant public representation and also those applications which are awaiting a Members site visit will still be determined by the Planning Panel.

At present there is no intention to hold any Planning Panel meetings until clarification has been received from the Government regarding public meetings and decision making by Local Planning Authorities. Consequently the meeting scheduled for 08th April 2020 has now been cancelled.

The Council will issue further details regarding the operation of the Planning Panel in due course.

New Planning Applications

All new planning applications should be submitted electronically, preferably through the Planning Portal. Any documentation submitted through the postal system will result in delays.

Once received an initial acknowledgement e-mail will be sent to you so that you know we have received your submission. However you should note that there will be a delay in the validation and processing of any new application received by the Council after 13th March 2020 until further notice.

Viewing Planning Application Documents

All public access to our Council offices is currently prohibited.

The Council is currently reviewing how it can make planning documents available to the public. Further details will be issued as soon as possible.

Any queries in the interim regarding access to planning documents should be submitted to the following e mail address:-

Development.Control@copeland.gov.uk

Pre Application Advice

The Planning team`s main focus at present will be on decision making in accordance with Government instruction. Consequently the provision of pre application advice will be given reduced priority by Officers until further notice.

All communications relating to requests for pre application advice should be sent via e mail to the following e mail address:-

Development.Control@copeland.gov.uk

Please note that there may be a delay in any response which can be provided.

Planning Enforcement

We will continue to operate the planning enforcement function and all new cases will be logged and reviewed.

Any cases where an offence is being committed i.e. unauthorised works to Listed Buildings and protected trees will be treated as a priority.

Urgent cases should be e mailed to Planning.Enforcement@copeland.gov.uk

Contacting Us

All communications should be sent via e mail to the following e mail address:-
Development.Control@copeland.gov.uk

Please note that there may be a delay in any response which can be provided.

Please note, due to the rapidly changing situation the above approaches are subject to immediate change without notification or consultation.