

Camden Planning Development Management Forum

This document explains what type of developments will be discussed at Camden's Development Management Forum and how the Development Management Forum will operate.

About the London Borough of Camden

Camden is a diverse borough extending from business and commercial areas in the south and central London, through town centres in Camden and Kilburn, to residential areas to the north. It is home to major institutions, businesses of international importance, a thriving tourist industry and several major transport hubs. It has a rich architectural heritage with more than 5500 listed buildings, 36 conservation areas and a number of landmark buildings, which have won national design awards. Because of this, the Major planning applications that Camden Planning service receives raise very complex issues. High land values in the borough, the high density of developments and the mixture of uses together with the large daily population of workers, visitors and commuters contribute to the complexity.

Why we have Development Management Forums?

Government guidance highlights the importance of discussions taking place about proposed developments before an application is submitted. It points out the benefits for developers and local planning authorities in reaching a shared understanding of aims and any constraints as early in the process as possible, and how proposals can be adapted during this pre-application stage to better reflect community aspirations.

Camden's Development Management service have looked at ways of improving the way major applications are dealt with. These are applications that provide 10 or more residential units or more than 1000m² of commercial floor space. This is to enable us to meet government targets to decide most of these types of applications within 13 weeks of receiving them whilst at the same time maintaining and improving the quality of decision making and of the service provided. We have considered how we can address key issues at an earlier stage whilst applicants are still developing their proposals.

We have a service to give advice to applicants before they submit an application for a major development scheme, which aims to help developers comply with planning policies, minimise delays when the application is received and help ensure that the application is valid.

We have also looked at good practice in other local authorities to try to improve the planning process for both residents and developers and to make the whole process more transparent. One way of doing this is through Development Management Forums.

What is the purpose of a Development Management forum?

- It familiarises local people with proposals for major developments in their area before an application is made
- It enables local residents, businesses and organisations to comment on proposals at a time when developers are in the earliest position to consider them
- It complements any local consultation which developers carry out before they put in an application
- It helps to ensure more meaningful public involvement on proposed schemes rather than awaiting the formal consultation stage of an application when it is harder to influence changes in the scheme

What does the Development Management Forum not do?

- It is not a decision-making meeting. Its purpose is to answer questions and raise issues. If a formal application is made in future the Council will decide the application on its merits following normal planning rules.
- It does not replace the legal duty for local councils to publicise certain types of planning applications that they receive. Camden's current consultation standards and practices for publicising applications will not change.
- Camden Councillors and officers who attend will not express any opinions on the merits of the proposal
- It cannot be used for lobbying members of the Development Management sub-Committee. This is because members of the sub-Committee have to keep an open mind until a formal decision on an application is made. If they express views about the proposals they will not be able to take part in any future decision.
- It cannot require the developer to make changes to the proposals as a result of the discussion at the meeting

What type of developments will be discussed at the Camden Development Management Forum?

- Proposed large-scale developments which include significant social, community, health or education facilities, or where early public discussion of issues would be useful
- Proposed developments of 50 units or more of housing

- Proposed developments of 10,000 or more square metres of industrial, commercial or retail floorspace

Camden Council will decide which schemes are suitable for the Development Management Forum in liaison with applicants. However, as the scheme is discretionary there is no requirement for applicants to participate in the scheme if they do not wish to.

Which type of developments will the Development Management Forum not consider?

- Any development where a valid application has already been made which is subject to the formal consultation process
- Straightforward major applications
- Proposals for minor or householder planning applications such as those to alter or extend houses
- Proposals to erect advertisements
- Amendments to proposals which have already been discussed at the forum

When and where is the Development Management Forum held?

Development Management Forum meetings may be held in a suitable building near to the development. Meetings will only take place if we have identified a suitable development proposal for presentation.

We will publicise the dates of the meetings and where they are to be held on the Camden website www.camden.gov.uk, through notices close to the proposed development site and if time permits ahead of the meeting, through local press. We will also send letters and emails about the meeting to individual residents, councillors and groups affected by the proposal.

You can contact the Community Liaison Officer for Development Management on Tel: 020 7974 1797 to find out details of the next meeting or email planning@camden.gov.uk.

Who can attend the meeting?

Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting and take part although Councillors who serve on the Development Control sub Committee and press representatives can attend as observers only and not take part in the discussion, or ask questions. This is because these Councillors may have to consider an application in the future and they will not be able to do this unless they can approach it with an open mind.

What happens at the forum?

- The forum is an informal meeting chaired by a senior manager of Development Management in Camden
- An agenda and short briefing note on each scheme will be prepared for the meeting
- One proposals will be considered at each forum meeting to allow time for discussion
- Forum meetings are limited to 2 hours, which includes the presentation and discussion.
- There will be no discussion on the merits of the proposal

How will the meeting be organised?

The meeting will follow the following agenda. Any changes to timings will be at the discretion of the Chair.

Welcome and housekeeping rules by the Chair	Up to 10 minutes
Background information about the site will be provided by a planning officer. This will include a summary of the planning history of the site including any previous applications or appeals, details of any planning briefs or whether the site is in a conservation area, includes or is near to listed buildings	Up to 10 minutes
Presentation by the developer/agent	Up to 20 minutes
Question and answers session	Up to 75 minutes
Chair concludes with final comments	Up to 5 minutes

What happens after the forum?

A summary of the key points made at the meeting will be:-

- Posted on the Camden website and circulated to all who provided their contact details at registration

- Placed on the site file and/or filed with the application if and when it is received
- Attached as an appendix to the Committee report recommending approval or refusal if and when a valid application is received for the scheme

You should not send any comments on the proposed development to Camden's Development Management service at this stage of the scheme. If you want us to let you know if and when we receive a valid application for the site, please provide your contact details on the attendance sheet at the meeting.

You can get more information by contacting:

Community Liaison Officer
London Borough of Camden
Regeneration and Planning
Development Management

Tel: 020 7974 1797 email: planning@camden.gov.uk