

What is a pre - application meeting?

We welcome and encourage pre – application discussions. A pre - application meeting should be booked early in the design phase before plans are finalised to provide an opportunity for changes to be made without significant expense. The purpose of the meeting is to provide potential applicants with an opportunity to meet with Council Planning Officers to discuss their proposal, identify possible design issues and to provide information about the Planning Scheme and planning process.

A pre – application meeting can provide the following benefits:

- Early identification of issues;
- Increased certainty about the Planning Permit process;
- Reduction in time delays cause by Council requesting further information once you have lodged your application.



What types of applications will Council conduct a pre – application meeting for?

Council will conduct a pre – application meeting for a range of applications. However, if you have finalised your plans, there is little benefit in attending a pre – application meeting.

Council has a Planning Enquiries Counter which you can attend during business hours to check that you have all of the information you need to submit with your application. If you don't have any plans drawn up for your proposal, the Planning Enquiries Counter provides an opportunity to obtain information about the controls which apply to your land and which might impact on what could be approved on the land.

Information required for a pre - application meeting

The following must be provided at the pre – application meeting:

- Preliminary sketch plans;
- Concept elevation drawings;
- Site context plan;
- Copy of Title;
- Details for a change of use (if proposed) including nature of the use, hours of operation, number of staff, car parking availability, surrounding uses.

What if I don't have all of the information you require?

Council can provide simple advice over the telephone and you can contact Council's Statutory Planning Office by telephoning us on 5261 0600.

Council also provides a Counter Enquiries Service during business hours, where you can talk with a planning professional about your proposal and obtain key information about the planning controls which affect your land. These controls impact on what can be done on your land.

Is the advice provided at the pre application meeting legally binding?

Council Officers are able to provide informal advice based on their own professional judgement; however this will not commit Council to a particular decision or outcome given that there are a number of ways that a decision can be made on a Planning Permit application.

A Council decision will only be forthcoming once the Planning Permit Application has been made and determined. Above all, Council's discretion to make the final decision on your application cannot be prejudiced in any way.

In providing pre application advice, it is important to note that the officers will not have visited the site and will not have had the opportunity to undertake a detailed assessment of your application.

Council officers will document the advice provided at the meeting and will save it on Council's electronic management system, providing a record of the conversation.

What else can I do to assist in a smoother planning process?

We strongly encourage you to communicate directly with your neighbours about your proposal. This communication can result in some changes being made to the plans to address concerns your neighbours may have before lodging your permit application, which in turn could minimise objections being made to Council.

How do I make an appointment for a pre application meeting?

You can contact Council's Statutory Planning Department on 5261 0600 or by email planningapps@surfcoast.vic.gov.au