

**PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE (POAN) & PROCESSING AGREEMENTS -**

**MAJOR\* AND NATIONAL\* PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**Proposal of Application Notice (POAN)**

A major/national planning application may be submitted following expiry of 12 weeks from the date on which the Proposal of Application Notice (POAN) notice was received by Renfrewshire Council.

During this 12 week period, it is usual for applicants to carry out the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) requirements which include publicity and the holding of a public event. The objective of PAC is for communities to be better informed about 'major' and 'national' development proposals and to have an opportunity to contribute their views before a formal planning application is submitted to the planning authority.

During this period, you are very much encouraged to discuss the detailed arrangements which can be put in place to ensure the efficient handling of your application. Renfrewshire Council is committed to dealing with all types of planning and related applications quickly and efficiently and this is assisted by the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers. However, applications which fall into the category of 'major' and 'national' do not fall to be considered under these delegated procedures and instead require to be determined by the Planning and Property Policy Board. This Board meets five times a year at approximately 9/10 weekly intervals with recesses during the Easter, Summer and Christmas periods. It is therefore important that a 'target' Board is identified as early as possible following discussion with the applicant.

It is further recognised that many 'major' and 'national' applications, because of their size, the public interest that they generate, or the complex issues that they raise, can be more challenging and require to be more carefully project managed to ensure an efficient and speedy conclusion.

## Processing Agreements

All applicants for schemes which fall into these categories of ‘major’ or ‘national’ will be expected to enter into a processing agreement. A processing agreement can deliver a number of benefits such as:-

- More effective and earlier engagement of key stakeholders;
- Clarity early in the process about information requirements and any matters to be addressed by legal agreement;
- Clearer lines of communication;
- Greater predictability and certainty over the timing of key stages;
- Greater transparency in decision making for everyone involved in the process; and
- Faster decision making through effective project management with a focus on delivery.

It is important to point out that a processing agreement does not guarantee the grant of planning consent and all associated applications will be considered on their individual merits, the provisions of the development plan and any other material considerations in the normal manner.

More recently, Renfrewshire Council has also been entering into processing agreements with applicants for more substantial ‘local’ developments.

A processing agreement template is available to view at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/National-Planning-Policy/themes/dev-man/Processing-Agreement> although it should be noted that we recognise that since applications differ in their form, content and complexity, a “one-size-fits-all” agreement will not be appropriate in every case. The agreement can be adapted to meet the particular circumstances of each application. It should equally be borne in mind that the intention is not to create a lengthy legal contract, but to reach an understanding amongst all the principal parties on partnership working which is both flexible enough to accommodate change (which could not have been anticipated), but which is robust enough to promote a structured approach to delivering an efficiently managed outcome.

In the first instance, you are invited to make contact with the case officer who handled your POAN as he/she will most likely be the dedicated case officer who will handle your subsequent planning application. This should ensure greater consistency with the same case officer handling all of the key stages including the POAN, pre-application discussions, processing arrangements, contacts with statutory consultees, internal and external consultees, and who will ultimately carry out the assessment of the planning application itself.

\* Applications falling within the category of 'Major' and 'National' are defined within the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

Further information on processing agreements is available in Planning Circular 3/2013 'Development Management Procedures'.