

Working Better Together

Dorset LEP Planning Charter



March 2013



Dorset
Local Enterprise Partnership

What is the Dorset LEP Planning Charter?

The Dorset LEP aims to drive private sector growth and job creation

Creating a business-friendly planning system within the LEP area is important to the competitiveness of the region and is a priority for the Board. The Planning Charter sets out how we will support growth through the planning system by the delivery of quality places. The Charter is supported by a series of pledges which shows our commitment to providing excellent service across Poole, Bournemouth and Dorset.

We aim to deliver high quality sustainable development in a streamlined, consistent and collaborative way across Dorset. The key focus is on securing investment and business development to enable and support economic growth, as well as preserving and enhancing the natural and built environments and meeting the needs of communities through planning.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework establishes a priority for sustainable economic development and growth through place shaping. This charter is designed to specifically relate to the handling of larger more complex planning applications and the delivery of regeneration sites in order to ensure delivery of economic, social and environmental benefits. However it can also be applied to smaller scale applications relating to incoming and existing business and investment.

Planning can be an effective tool to add value in differentiating places and raise their prestige. Well considered planning and urban design approaches add economic value by producing high returns on investments such as good rental returns and enhanced capital values.

Parameters of the Protocol

The protocol is supported by all Local Authorities across Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and all parts of the councils that provide a service to the development industry including economic development, transportation, environmental health, building control and planning departments.

The protocol is not a guarantee that planning permission or building regulations will be granted. We are required to ensure that decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with the NPPF, the LEP Strategic plan and Local Authority Local Development Frameworks UNLESS there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. However, following the protocol can help to reduce unnecessary time delays and costs on the development proposals.

If you would like to discuss the protocol in more detail please contact Stephen Thorne, Head of Planning, Borough of Poole s.thorne@poole.gov.uk

The Planning Charter

- We will adopt a 'common sense', 'proactive' and 'customer friendly' approach to managing your development related enquires and planning applications in light of the relevant policy and legislative considerations.
- Dorset LPAs will develop and continue to update local development plans through the revision of Core Strategy and other development plan documents to give clarity and certainty over development opportunities and help inform investment decisions.
- Dorset LPAs will actively encourage applicants to enter into pre-application discussions and give timely detailed, robust responses identifying issues and constraints and how these may be overcome.
- Dorset LPAs will encourage applicants to engage with local communities and businesses as early as possible prior to applications being submitted and throughout the process and take their views and priorities into consideration and demonstrate how these have been incorporated into proposals.
- Dorset LPAs will demonstrate a willingness to discuss ideas and opportunities for development proposals, offer advice and suggestions where required and discuss with applicants what information is required to be submitted to speed up the application process.
- Dorset LPAs will engage and communicate effectively and openly as a two way process, including engaging with local communities and businesses most affected by large scale developments.
- LPAs in Dorset will work proactively and in partnership with customers to aim to understand their needs and development constraints/opportunities in order to bring regeneration and place shaping.
- LPAs in Dorset will prioritise applications for businesses and major regeneration sites and deal with such planning applications in the timeliest manner possible.
- LPAs in Dorset will work with customers at the earliest opportunity to understand their business needs and development proposals to mutually understand scheme viability and deliverability matters; giving feedback and assistance where possible to work through any issues and constraints and not to impose unrealistic and onerous requirements to ensure the viability of development opportunities in the context of the place.

- LPAs in Dorset will undertake regular reviews of the services delivered by providing customers with an opportunity to give feedback and influence the way in which the LPA works in the future.
- LPA planners will enable appropriate development rather than control it. Proactive and supportive of business and investment, at the heart of planning decisions will be quality, sustainability and an honest dialogue.
- LPA planners will work with developers to seek to agree the strategic acceptability of development first and deal with the detail second and be proportionate in requests for information, analysis and supporting documentation.

What the protocol requires of developers

The key to the success of the protocol lies with good communication between all parties. The protocol requires developers and their partners to:

- Engage early with us to seek our views and provide accurate, clear and detailed information about what is proposed
- Engage with the named point of contact provided to you through the engagement and preapp process
- Work closely with us to seek solutions and avoid unnecessary costs and delays. Follow advice given and provide an explanation of the reasons and justifications for any departure from advice and/or policy
- Consider entering into a formal Planning Performance Agreement with the Local Planning Authority
- Field the best team to progress the project