



# Dundee City Council - Planning Team

COVID-19 Service Status Update

22 January 2021

## **Background**

During the ongoing Covid-19 situation the Council is prioritising its essential services and the Planning Team is trying to minimise the disruption to our standard operations. However, given the physical distancing, travel and other restrictions, there are impacts on some elements of our services.

The Planning Service in Dundee is not defined as an essential service in combatting Covid-19, but continues to carry out all statutory and non-statutory functions as far as practicable, including assisting with the preparation for economic recovery.

Where there are impacts on the planning service, the team is working closely with colleagues, other local authorities and the Scottish Government to find solutions.

## **Staff**

All planning staff are working from home, are able to access all relevant planning systems and are able to process planning applications. Like many others, staff are currently facing additional responsibilities and pressures in responding as best as they can to the ongoing and unprecedented pandemic and thank customers for their understanding in that respect.

## **Existing applications submitted prior to physical distancing requirements.**

Officers are able to determine the vast majority of applications for planning permission, listed building consent, advertisement consent, and other types of application within existing delegated responsibilities. The Scottish Government has approved extensions to the duration of certain planning permissions that would otherwise expire during the current pandemic.

## **New Applications submitted since the introduction of physical distancing requirements**

### **Validation:**

Dundee City Council is still able to accept and validate new applications. It is currently unable to receive or process paper applications and is therefore strongly advising all customers to submit applications using the ePlanning portal

### **Neighbour Notification**

The Council is carrying out neighbour notification as normal but there may be slight delays for a small number of applications. Where that is the case, the Council will allow a proportionately longer time to accept representations.

### **Site Notices**

The Scottish Government has advised that the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 makes provision for the Council to set aside displaying notices for applications for listed building consent or conservation area consent and for some planning applications on site. Instead, those notices will be published weekly on the Council's website alongside the weekly list of applications, here:

<https://www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/city-development/development-management/planning-applications-weekly-list-and-register>

This will include notices relating to applications that were submitted after the physical distancing requirements commenced and for which neighbour notifications will have already been sent out. In those instances it will have the effect of extending the public participation period on those applications.

## **Site Visits**

Planning and Enforcement Officers are unable to undertake site visits unless it is essential for Council business or for public health or wellbeing due to the physical distancing requirements and associated travel restrictions.

The above matters will cause a delay to the assessment and determination of some applications until such times as the current restrictions are relaxed. However, we will continue to process applications as far as legislation and guidance permits. Officers will also continue to determine applications where there are alternatives to visiting the site (such as detailed up-to-date site photographs, information and analysis), and where legislation and guidance permits.

## **Plans, drawings and information**

Plans and particulars of all applications can be viewed online via Public Access here: <http://idoxwam.dundeeecity.gov.uk/idoxpa-web/>. However, due to current restrictions, members of the public are unable to access the internet in Dundee House or any libraries to view plans. The Planning Team is following procedures and advice from the Scottish Government which aims to continue to progress planning matters, undertake public participation, direct information to the internet and allow for electronic/digital communication. Neighbour notification letters and adverts have been amended to reflect this.

## **Representations**

Officers are strongly advising all representations to be submitted via the online Public Access portal as the Council currently has reduced capacity to deal with paper representations. Whilst officers are still currently able to receive paper representations, that position may change going forward if capacity reduces further.

## **Pre-Application Consultation for major developments**

The legal requirement for the developer to hold a public event prior to the submission of a major planning application has been temporarily suspended by Scottish Government Regulation.

The provision does not reduce the Government's commitment to early engagement in relation to major development proposals; it reflects the reality that face-to-face contact must be avoided at present. It is expected that prospective applicants will carry out alternative online engagement so that people can still be involved and have an opportunity to influence proposals that affect them. The Scottish Government will prepare guidance on expectations and good practice for online engagement.

## **Planning Committee**

The Planning Committee is now meeting virtually using Microsoft Teams.

Members of the public should contact Committee Services if they wish to view the meeting, or to submit a deputation request.

## **Local Review Body**

The Local Review Body is also meeting virtually and members of the public should contact Committee Services if they wish to view the meeting.

## Appeals

The Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division is currently operating, albeit remotely and in accordance with national social distancing advice and travel restrictions. The Scottish Government has also agreed extensions to the date by which appeals can be submitted in certain situations.

## Tree Works

Applications/notification of intention to carry out works to trees Protected by Tree Preservation Order and located in Conservation Areas can still be submitted electronically. However, due to travel restrictions the Forestry Officer will not undertake site visits unless it is required for essential Council business or critical for public health, wellbeing or safety. As a result, there will be a delay in responding to some applications and officers may not be able to respond to all notifications on time.

## Enforcement

Enforcement Officers are working from home and are unable to undertake site inspections unless required for essential Council business or for critical matters of public health/safety. Additionally, it is likely that any enforcement action requiring construction work may be unable to be completed because of current restrictions and compliance may therefore require to be delayed until the current restrictions are lifted, again with the exception of essential/critical previously referred to.

Members should also note that in line with advice from the Scottish Government's Chief Planner, officers will not currently enforce planning conditions relating to hours of operation and/or delivery at retail stores, or take-away services at restaurants/public houses.

Enforcement issues can be raised by emailing [planningenforcement@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:planningenforcement@dundeecity.gov.uk)

## Further information/Contact

The Planning Team is constantly reacting to the ever evolving Covid-19 situation and customers can keep up-to-date with the latest service updates on the Council's website, here: <https://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/service-area/city-development/planning-and-economic-development/development-management/make-a-planning-application>

Case Officers can be contacted by email in the usual manner. Officers can also make outgoing calls and host/participate in online meetings/discussions.

The planning team has a duty officer system in place to deal with general planning enquires.

Customers with any such queries should contact [planning@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:planning@dundeecity.gov.uk) and a member of the Planning Team will contact them.

## Lastly

Officers appreciate that the impacts on certain elements of the service will affect a number of customers. However, they trust this helps assure that officers are doing everything they can to provide as full a planning service as possible given the ongoing issues during these unprecedented times. The Planning Team would also like to thank customers for their understanding during these current times. If you have any queries, please contact Gregor Hamilton, Head of Planning and Economic Development or David Gray, Senior Manager by email at [Gregor.Hamilton@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:Gregor.Hamilton@dundeecity.gov.uk) or [David.Gray01@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:David.Gray01@dundeecity.gov.uk).

## Contact Details

Planning Team  
City Development Department  
Dundee City Council  
Dundee House  
50 North Lindsay Street  
Dundee, DD1 1LS

For general advice and information email [planning@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:planning@dundeecity.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/>

This information is made available in large print or in an alternative format that meets your needs.	
Chinese	欲知詳情，請致電：01382 435825
Russian	Более подробную информацию можно получить позвонив по телефону: 01382 435825
Urdu	مزید معلومات کے لئے براۓ مہربانی 01382 435825 پرفون کریں۔
Polish	po dalszą informację zadzwoń pod numer 01382 435825
Alternative Formats	For further information please contact the issuer of this publication

