

Northumberland County Council

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Planning Officer (Development Management)	Director/Service/Sector: Local Services Group, Development Services		Office Use
Band: 7	Workplace: County Hall or Area Office location in North or West		JE ref: 2532 HRMS ref:
Responsible to: Senior or Principal Planning Officer (DM)	Date: Sept 2011	Manager Level: -	
<p>Job Purpose: The validating, processing, assessing and making of recommendations in respect of a development management caseload.</p> <p>Provide professional support to managers, principal and senior officers in the exercise of the Council's Development Management powers under the Town and Country Planning and Listed Building Acts.</p> <p>To promote the preservation and enhancement of the County's natural and built environments by securing sustainable development of a quality and to a standard of design which is commensurate with its setting and current development plan policies.</p>			
Resources	Staff	May oversee the work of junior, trainee or support staff on particular projects	
	Finance	May have some responsibility for handling payments, raising orders or processing invoices in a particular area of work	
	Physical	Shared responsibility for the physical resources used by the area team including work stations, IT hardware and software, and equipment used on site inspections. Capture, input and maintain key spatial information relating to area development management	
	Clients	Assist in the development of policies and procedures, whose application has a significant impact upon service users. Assist in dealing with the public to deliver the service	
<p>Duties and key result areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide advice to the public, professionals, Elected Members etc. on planning related enquiries, both within the office and on site, including the provision of pre-application advice 2. Receive and validate planning applications, ensuring that all relevant information and fees are submitted in accordance with statutory requirements, advise applicants/agents of any alterations or further information required for acceptance of complete planning applications. 3. Be responsible for processing and making recommendations on planning applications and other types of application including arrangements for consultations and publicity, discussions with applicants, statutory and non-statutory consultees and other interested parties, site inspections and ensuring that personal performance assists in securing all performance indicator targets for Development Management 4. Preparation of reports on planning applications which fall to be determined under the Council's scheme of delegation and by the Planning Committee commensurate with national and local planning policies and the council's established procedures and attendance at Committee and Member Site Inspections to present applications as required. 5. Preparation of evidence for planning appeals and attend and presentation of evidence at informal hearings, and attend inspector site visits for planning appeals. 6. Contribute to the monitoring of developments and the enforcement of planning control liaising where necessary with Legal Services in the exercise of the Council's enforcement powers. 7. Administer the statutory requirements of Tree Preservation Orders including the processing of applications for consent to carry out works to protected trees and liaising with the Principal Planning Officer / Area Development Manager and Neighbourhood Tree Officers on the making and review of TPOs. 8. Contribute to the preparation of master plans and design guidance for key sites and special topics. 			

9. Maintain appropriate work records, write case notes and reports relating to the work within the area/central team using ICT systems, in accordance with service procedures to the required service standards, observing data protection and confidentiality rules and procedures.
10. Work collaboratively with internal colleagues and external contacts on Development Management matters in order to promote effective partnership arrangements for the delivery of a high quality service.
11. Actively promote and represent the interests of the County Council in relation to service activities and policies at local, regional and national level.
12. Contribute to the development of policy and procedures, techniques and effective communication to bring the service's business plans and objectives into effect.
13. Undertaking research, investigations, assignments and assessments in connection with planning caseload, appeals and Public Inquiries.
14. Deal with correspondence and queries from Council Members, developers, the public, statutory and other consultees and advise on planning matters relating to the DM service.
15. Liaise with other departments of the Council, Planning Authorities, Highway Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, statutory consultees and other bodies and attend public and other meetings at the request of senior staff to offer advice on development management matters and to represent the Council's interest in both internal and external discussions.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Transport requirements:	The work may involve the need to visit other area and County offices, development sites throughout the area on a regular basis and occasionally further a-field
Working patterns:	Flexi hours. However, there may be occasions when the post holder will be required to attend at times and/or locations outside normal working arrangements.
Working conditions:	The work is office based but involves working out on site on a regular basis and which could be in a lone working situation

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Essential	Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications		
<p>A degree in a relevant subject or equivalent vocational qualification. A relevant professional qualification such as MRTPI. or equivalent Good knowledge of the main operational, procedural and practical issues relating to Development Management Good knowledge of current inter/national laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and developments relating to Development Management Understands the diverse functions of a large complex public sector organisation and the relevant professional issues. Demonstrates an awareness and commitment to proactive customer care and services. Evidence of CPD and ongoing personal development.</p>		
Experience		
<p>Experience in using GIS and DM IT applications Experience across a range of development management casework, including some major development projects Experience in the preparation and presentation of reports for Planning Committees Experience of preparation and presentation of evidence for planning appeals (written reps and Hearings) Experience in researching and providing accurate and consistent pre-application advice to the public and developers Experience in working collaboratively with service users. Experience in engaging effectively with others and building productive partnerships.</p>	<p>Experience in a relevant specialist area Experience in project management</p>	
Skills and competencies		
<p>Effective ICT skills and able to effectively use ICT to achieve work objectives. Able to apply own initiative to overcome day-to-day operational problems. Prepares written material – reports, letters etc that are accurate, rational, convincing and coherent and to best professional standards. Can communicate effectively with professionals, the public and Members</p>		

<p>Well developed negotiation skills and able to persuade others to an alternative point of view. Numerate and able to manipulate data Applies a methodical and analytical approach to problem solving. Remains calm and logical in stressful and difficult situations. A strong corporate orientation and a commitment to tackling issues in a non-departmental manner. Dependable, reliable and keeps good time. Models high standards of honesty, integrity, openness, and respect for others. Proactive and achievement orientated. Effective organisational skills Works with minimal supervision</p>		
Physical, mental and emotional demands		
<p>Normally works from a seated position when in the office but with regular need to travel to other work locations and development sites Need to maintain general awareness with significant periods of enhanced concentration. Extensive contact with public/clients/Members on planning issues</p>		
Other		
<p>A current UK driving licence.</p>		

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits