

# Vale of Glamorgan Council

## Changes to Outline Planning Permission and Reserved Matters



### **Legislative Provision**

1. The amendments to articles 1 and 3 of the GDPO formally enacted on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008 modify the outline planning permission regime in relation to the information to be provided at the outline application stage and the matters that may be reserved.

### **Background**

2. The planning system regulates development through the granting of planning permission. In doing so decisions must have regard to national and local planning policies. To ensure development takes proper account of such policy objectives, its impact must be understood and evaluated. Adequate information is needed with the planning application to allow for such assessment.
3. Outline applications allow for a decision on the general principles of how a site can be developed. They are typically used where applicants are looking for formal agreement about the amount and nature of development that can take place on a site prior to preparing detailed proposals.
4. The amendments made to the GDPO, when taken alongside the requirement to submit an access statement and the Assembly Government proposals for design statements mean that outline applications will have to demonstrate more clearly that the proposals have been properly considered in the light of relevant policies and the site's constraints and opportunities. Information provided as part of the application will need to be such as to allow for proper consideration by both decision makers and local communities. They will also provide the basis for greater and better informed community involvement in the planning process.

### **Reserved Matters**

5. Outline permission is granted subject to a condition requiring the subsequent approval of one or more reserved matters. A definition of outline planning permission and reserved matters is set out in article 1(2) of the GDPO. Reserved matters previously consisted of siting, design, external appearance, means of access and the landscaping of the site and are now superseded in respect of outline applications made after 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

6. In the case of applications for the approval of reserved matters made in respect of extant outline applications, the above categories of reserved matters will continue to apply until the consent lapses or is correctly implemented.
7. The changes made to the GDPO revise the reserved matters as follows:
  - **Layout** – the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces are provided within the development and their relationship to buildings and spaces outside the development.
  - **Scale** – the height, width and length of each building proposed in relation to its surroundings.
  - **Appearance** – the aspects of a building or place which determine the visual impression it makes, excluding the external built form of the development.
  - **Access** – this covers accessibility to and within the site for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network.
  - **Landscaping** – this is the treatment of private and public space to enhance or protect the site's amenity through hard and soft measures, for example, through planting of trees or hedges or screening by fences or walls.

### **Information to be submitted with an Outline Application**

8. With an application for outline planning permission detailed consideration will always be required on the use and amount of development. In addition, even if layout, scale and access are reserved, an application will still require a basic level of information on these issues in the application. As a minimum, therefore, applications should always include information on:
  - **Use** – the use or uses proposed for the development and any distinct development zones within the site identified.
  - **Amount of development** – the amount of development proposed for each use.
  - **Indicative layout** – an indicative layout with separate development zones proposed within the site boundary where appropriate.
  - **Scale parameters** – an indication of the upper and lower limits for height, width and length of each building within the site boundary.

- **Indicative access points** – an area or areas in which the access point or points to the site will be situated.

### **Design and Access Statements Accompanying an Outline Application**

9. Design and access statements play a particular role in linking general development principles to final detailed designs. Each statement accompanying an outline application must explain how the applicant has considered the proposal, and understands what is appropriate and feasible for the site in its context. It should clearly explain and justify the design and access principles that will be used to develop future details of the scheme. Such information will help community involvement and informed decision making. The design and access statement will form a link between the outline permission and the consideration of reserved matters. Further guidance is available from the Council in respect of the preparation of Access and Design statements.

### **Requirements for Additional Information**

10. The changes made to the outline planning permission regime do not affect a local planning authority's ability to require further information. This power enables the local planning authority which is to determine an application to direct an applicant in writing to supply any further information necessary for them to determine an application.
11. Similarly, under article 3(2) of the GDPO, where a local planning authority that is to determine an application for outline planning permission are of the opinion that, in the circumstances of the case, the application ought not to be considered separately from all or any of the reserved matters, they can within one month, beginning with the receipt of the application, notify the applicant that they are unable to determine it unless further details are submitted, specifying the further details they require.