

Job Description

1 Job details

Job title:	Planning Assistant
Team:	Development Management
Directorate:	Strategy and Planning
Post number:	P02084
Hours per week:	37
Grade:	Band 4
Base:	Lymington Town Hall, Lymington
Accountable to:	Senior Planning Officer
Responsible for:	N / A
Budget Responsible Officer (BRO):	No
Car user:	Casual
Politically restricted:	No
Does this post involve working with children and/or vulnerable people?	No
Membership of professional body required:	No
Key liaisons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Forest National Park Authority (NPA) internal staff ▪ NPA members ▪ Partner organisations ▪ Members of the public ▪ Planning Inspectorate

2 Role summary

- 2.1 To accurately assess and input information, maintain records and assist with all administration and technical tasks associated with the planning function in a timely manner.
- 2.2 To provide administrative and technical support within Development Management (DM).
- 2.3 To provide good customer service giving general advice to members of the public, applicants and planning agents.

3 Main duties and responsibilities

- 3.1 Check and validate all planning applications in accordance with statutory guidance and deadlines. Use of the Planning database for accurate registration and retrieval of information relating to all planning applications, enforcement cases and associated appeals. Ensuring accurate digitizing of data on Geographical Information System.

- 3.2 Calculate and record fees in accordance with the Fee Regulations and internal procedures, requiring the post holder to accurately measure plans both manually and electronically.
- 3.3 Assess applications and write descriptions in accordance with current legislation.
- 3.4 Identify and notify statutory bodies, neighbours, internal and external consultees of receipt of applications.
- 3.5 Prepare, check and undertake reconciliation of weekly lists and fee report. Undertake advertisements for publication in the local press and produce a daily Land Charges Report.
- 3.6 To liaise and advise applicants/agents on invalid applications to ensure applications meet with Local and National requirements.
- 3.7 To register and process planning appeals in accordance with agreed deadlines for appeals administration. The post holder is required to co-ordinate between the Planning Inspectorate, legal staff, planning officers, appellants and agents to ensure all statutory appeal timetables are adhered to and advise all relevant third parties of appeals.
- 3.8 To assist planning officers with general appeals administration such as completion of online questionnaires and submission of Statements and Proofs.
- 3.9 Provide administrative support at Planning Hearings and Inquiries, both on and off site as required, and to assist members of the public at such Hearings and Inquiries.
- 3.10 To provide general validation advice to members of the public by telephone, written correspondence and in person.
- 3.11 To assist planning officers in answering general permitted development enquiries and the processing of non-material amendments.

4 Problem solving

- 4.1 The post holder will be required to use their own initiative to resolve day to day problems and will need an understanding of the planning system and the technical administrative processes involved.
- 4.2 The post holder will be required to adhere to legislation and government guidance, including the fee regulations, especially in relation to the validation of applications and appeals administration.
- 4.3 The post holder will be required to liaise with agents/applicants by phone, email, written correspondence and face to face to address discrepancies rendering applications invalid.
- 4.4 The post holder will need to be able to balance and prioritise daily workload to meet the team's targets and to assist other members of the team where necessary.

5 Decision making

- 5.1 The post holder will be required to make decisions on a day to day basis relating to prioritising their personal workload to meet the required statutory deadlines.
- 5.2 A careful and methodical approach will be required to ensure attention to detail.
- 5.3 Day to day decisions will impact on the work of the team and the Service.

- 5.4 The line manager sets targets and objectives in discussion with post holder.

6 Operational responsibility

- 6.1 The post holder will be required to accurately deal with all aspects of technical and administration processes within statutory deadlines.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of all staff who input, store, retrieve or otherwise manage data to ensure that it is of the highest quality and complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and internal procedures.
- 6.3 Adhere to the NPA's Anti-Money Laundering Policy when dealing with planning application fee payments.

7 Communication

- 7.1 The post holder will operate as part of the DM team and will have contact with employees and customers who may not be familiar with the planning process. It is important that the post holder is able to deal with difficult customers in a diplomatic, tactful way. The post holder will be required to receive information and to pass this onto the relevant person. There will be both internal and external communication.
- 7.2 Written skills: using Plain English in correspondence to set out a clear, concise and logical approach.
- 7.3 This position may involve personal contact with people with differing views to the NPA's policies.

8 Working conditions

- 8.1 The work is office-based, though there may be very occasional travel.
- 8.2 The post holder will be required to adhere to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002) when retrieving files located at height and lifting of heavy items.
- 8.3 A large percentage of work will require the use of Visual Display Unit (VDU) equipment.

9 General

- 9.1 The post holder must at all times carry out his/her responsibilities with due regard to NPA policies and procedures.
- 9.2 All staff have a responsibility to participate in the NPA Appraisal Scheme and to contribute to their own development, and the development of any staff they appraise or are responsible for.

10 Confidentiality

- 10.1 In the course of your employment you will have access to confidential information relating to NPA business. You are required to exercise due consideration in the way you use such information and should not act in any way prejudicial to the NPA's interests. Information which may be included in the category which requires extra consideration covers both access to and the general business of the NPA and information regarding individuals. If you are in any doubt regarding the use of information in the pursuit of your duties you should seek advice from your manager before communicating such information to any third party.

11 Health and safety

- 11.1 Employees must be aware of the responsibility placed on them under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) to maintain a healthy and safe working environment for both staff and visitors. Employees also have a duty to observe obligation under the NPA and departmental Health and Safety policies, and to maintain awareness of safe practices and risk assessment.

12 Financial regulations

- 12.1 All staff are responsible for security of the property of the NPA, avoiding loss or damage of property, and being economical and efficient in the use of resources. Staff should conform with the requirements of the NPA financial procedures.

13 Job description agreement

- 13.1 The above Job Description is not intended to be exhaustive, the duties and responsibilities may therefore vary over time according to the changing needs of the service.

**Job holder's
signature:** _____

Date _____

**Manager's
signature:** _____

Date _____

Person Specification

Planning Assistant Strategy and Planning

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessed by
Education / qualifications			
Education to GCSE level (or equivalent) including Mathematics and English (or comparable in terms of experience)	Y		A
Experience			
Previous experience and understanding of office procedures	Y		A / I
Experience of working in a team environment	Y		A / I
Knowledge			
Good IT skills and knowledge of current systems with the ability to adapt to new systems	Y		A / I / T
Knowledge of planning legislation / experience of working in a planning department		Y	A / I
Skills			
Good oral and written communication skills	Y		A / I
Ability to interpret, understand and follow government legislation and guidelines	Y		A / I / T
Ability to read and scale plans		Y	A
Ability to negotiate/deal with difficult situations	Y		A/I
Adaptability to change in procedures	Y		A/I

Evidence assessed by key:

A = Application form

I = Interview

T = Testing / assessment / presentation