



**PLANNING HOUSE**

Unravelling the red tape of Town Planning

www.planninghouse.co.uk  
@\_planninghouse  
info@planninghouse.co.uk

If you're planning a development, choosing the right professionals need careful thought. An architect will design to your specification, however progressing this through the red tape of the planning process without a town planning consultant onboard can be risky.

To help you narrow down your selection here's every step you need to find your perfect consultant.

## STEP 1

### ARE THEY A REGISTERED TOWN PLANNER?

As with any profession which provides a service, you will want to make sure your town planning consultant is accredited and insured.

A Charter Town Planning Consultant is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, fully trained and professionally qualified. All members of the RTPI are bound by a Code of Professional Conduct setting out required standards of practice and ethics.

The Institute requires planning professionals to meet and maintain high standards of competence and conduct themselves in a way that inspires trust and confidence in the profession.

A chartered town planner will usually have MRTPI after their name to identify that they are accredited.

## STEP 2

### DO THEY HAVE EXPERIENCE?

There are many areas of planning so just because someone is a town planner doesn't mean they have been involved in handling planning applications.

It's not essential that a consultant has experience in public sector planning, however, if they have experience dealing with planning applications by working in a Local Planning Authority they can have an edge in providing advice to developers on what the best approach maybe for a particular scheme.

## STEP 3

### WHAT IS THEIR SPECIALISM?

Everyone has an area of expertise, a town planner who works predominantly in minerals and waste isn't necessarily going to bring the right set of skills to support a self builder through the planning process.

Whilst town planning isn't rocket science each consultant can have knowledge and experience in different development areas.



Don't be afraid to ask questions and always do your homework when choosing a town planner.

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## WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT THEM?

Most planning consultants have a website, do they have references or testimonials to support their work. Do they advertise elsewhere for instance Yell or Google are there reviews you could consider? Do your homework!



# 5

## ARE YOU ON THE SAME PAGE?

When you talk to your consultant are they interested in the proposal? Do they think what you are trying to achieve is reasonable? Talk about timescales but be aware once a planning application is submitted it is generally out of your planning consultants' hands.



# 6

## ARE THEY PERSONALLY SUITABLE?

Do you feel comfortable with them? At the end of the day they are acting on your behalf trying to secure your planning consent. Do they know what your aspirations are and what (if anything) you would compromise on? Be honest about what you're looking for and ask them for their honest opinion about your chances of success, but don't discount them if they don't think your proposal is 100% guaranteed be more worried if they think it is! Most planning consultants have a website, do they have references or testimonials to support their work. Do they advertise elsewhere for instance Yell or Google are there reviews you could consider? Do your homework!



# 7

## DO THEY HAVE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE?

It doesn't matter if they don't live in the area, rather do they have experience in the local area, have they been involved in other projects? If they have, they may provide more realistic advice about your project, local planning policies and what the best approach may be to take your proposal forward.



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## HAVE YOU COMPARED QUOTES?

Everyone loves a bargain; however, every town planner will have their own fee structure, it's really no different to EasyJet and Virgin airlines, both services will get you there but you need to weigh up what's important to you. Do you opt for a no frills service or go for a more personal bespoke service - neither are incorrect. Our advice compare your quotes taking into account all of the other steps and I'm sure you'll find your ideal town planning consultant.

**If you have any questions drop an email to [info@planninghouse.co.uk](mailto:info@planninghouse.co.uk)**