

Client - Briefing

ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY
CHARGING

DLP BRIEFING NOTE 145

Prepared by
DLP Planning Consultants

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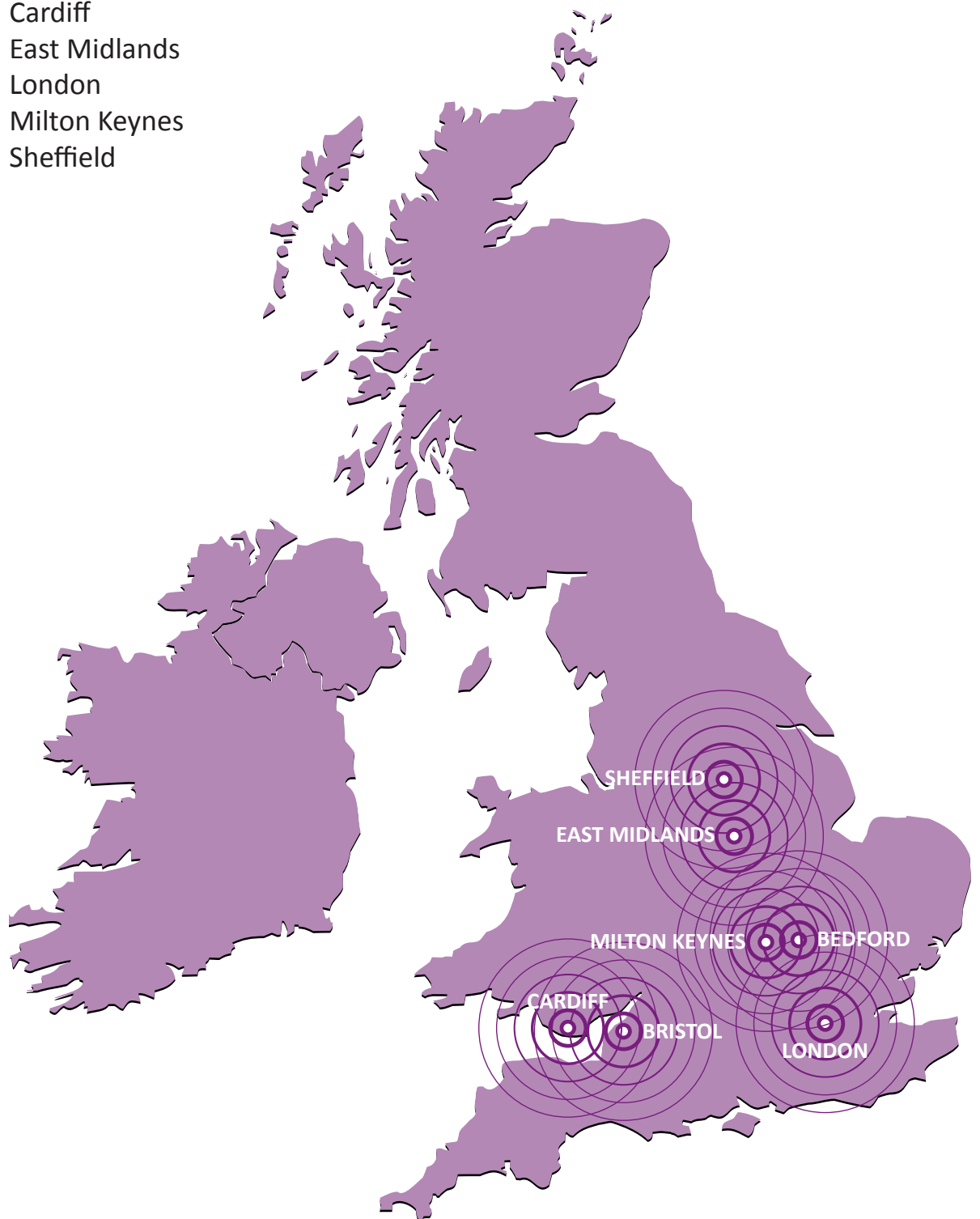


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Environment Agency Charging

Introduction

The Environment Agency has recently announced that following a free preliminary opinion, it will now begin charging developers and their consultants for detailed, technical advice. This advice will be billed at an hourly rate of £84.

The Environment Agency

The Environment Agency was established as a non-departmental body under the Environmental Act 1995 with the aim of protecting and improving the environment, and promoting sustainable development. They play an important role in helping to deliver the environmental priorities of Central Government and work closely with a variety of stakeholders, including local government, businesses, communities and other bodies. The Environment Agency currently employs 11,400 people throughout England and Wales.

In June 2013, Chancellor George Osborn announced in the spending review that DEFRA will have its budget cut in real terms by 10% between 2013/14 and 2015/16. This includes the Grant in Aid funding which allows the Environment Agency to give free advice. As a result of these changes, a charging schedule has been implemented to recover costs.

Existing Service

The Environment Agency currently provides free advice to applicants / developers on issues of flood risk, land and water quality, waste management and fisheries through its pre-application enquiry forms. This service includes standing advice and guidance on proposed development or change of use for a specific plot of land. The Environment Agency encourages pre-application enquiries because it allows them to identify potential issues at an early stage and can potentially reduce delays during the planning process.

Proposed Charging Schedule

From the 3rd of March 2014 in Yorkshire, the Environment Agency is to begin charging for the planning advice provided to developers and consultants.

A preliminary opinion will outline the Environment Agencies position and highlight any environmental issues they are concerned about as a statutory consultee. Further bespoke advice would then be provided at the chargeable rate. This could include for example, reviews of Flood Risk Assessments and other technical documents, attendance at meetings and site visits.

Where a developer requests planning advice from the council which is relevant to the Environment Agency, they will be asked to contact the Environment Agency directly to discuss the matters in question and consider the need to charge.

Charges will be implemented through a formal agreement, including programme of advice, timetable, approximate costs and project manager. They are based on cost recovery and have been set at £84 per hour excluding VAT. Local Authorities will also be charged where they are the applicant.

The Environment Agency's role as a statutory consultee will remain unchanged and they will continue to offer free preliminary advice on planning applications including the drafting of conditions and Section 106 agreements, Strategic Local Plans, as well as feedback in relation to Local Enterprise Partnerships, City Deals and Enterprise Zones.

If you require more information or would like to discuss the issues mentioned in further detail please contact:

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A summary of matters that the DLP Consulting Group provide services for follows:

Strategic Planning Research Unit (DLP)

- Objective Assessment of Housing Needs
- Five Year Land Supply Assessment
- Economic Impact of Housing
- Economic Impact of Development Proposals
- Retail Impact Analysis
- Expert Witness on Housing Needs
- Local Plan Examinations

DLP Planning Consultants

- Planning Applications and Appeals
- Public Consultation
- Development Promotion
- Development Plan Representations
- Land Searches
- Project Management
- Minerals and Waste Planning
- Conservation Area / Listed Building Negotiation
- Enforcement
- Retail Impact Analysis
- Renewable Energy Planning and Delivery
- Discharge of Planning Conditions

If you would like to receive a brochure providing more detail of the service provided by the DLP Consulting Group, please contact any of the offices listed on the left of this page.

