



# HUME CITY COUNCIL DECISION TIMELINES FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Council makes every endeavour to determine town planning applications in a timely and efficient manner.

**Prior to lodgement of your planning application, it is critical that applicants discuss their project with a Council Planning Officer.**

This will help ensure that all the required information is included with the application and minimise delays in processing the application. A fully completed application that has been discussed prior to lodging will take less time to assess and finalise. Incomplete applications will not be accepted over the counter or registered, any incomplete applications received in the mail will be returned. Council has application checklists relevant to various proposals available at the Council Offices or on Council's website.

## As a general guide, the following time lines apply to planning applications:

- Minor applications for buildings and works such as sheds and swimming pools that do not require external referrals and do not require advertising; within 40 to 60 statutory days
- Applications such as new dwellings, non-residential retail uses, industrial uses within 50 to 60 statutory days.

## Additional time will need to be allowed for in the following circumstances:

- If Council has insufficient information to process the application and requires further information pursuant to Section 54 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; add the time taken to satisfy the request.
- If advertising of an application is required, add a further 21 days
- If advertising cannot be completed before 24 December, add up to a further 28 days for advertising over the holiday period
- If referral to a Statutory Authority is required; add a further 28 days (this will run concurrently with any advertising required)
- If a meeting is required between objectors and applicant; add a further 14 days
- If the application needs to be reported to a Council meeting for a decision (eg the application has attracted 3 or more objections); add up to a further 45 days.

In accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, a Council is "allowed" 60 statutory days to determine a planning application, after which an applicant may appeal to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) against Council's failure to determine the application within the specified time.

The 60 statutory days includes weekends, public holidays and commences when the application is lodged. This figure has remained the same since 1987, notwithstanding the significantly increased complexity of the planning process. There is also significantly increased interest from the community in having a say on the impact of planning applications on their local amenity.

The legislation allows for the 60-day statutory clock to be stopped and re-started in certain circumstances. These are as follows:

Please turn over for more requirements

## Further information

When Council requests further information from the applicant, the clock stops. When the information requested is returned to Council and is satisfactory, the clock restarts at zero.

## Advertising the application

The clock is stopped when Council directs that an applicant gives notice of an application, the clock continues when the last notice is given. This is interpreted by Council to be when either:

- The last advertising notice is mailed to adjoining owners/occupiers
- The advertising notice is erected on site
- When the notice is placed into a nominated newspaper if required from the date the request for advertising is made.

## Referral authorities

If a referral authority requests more time to consider an application, the clock stops when Council receives the request. The clock continues when the referral authority responds to the referral.

## Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal appeals

It should be kept in mind that an appeal to VCAT would cause further significant delays. VCAT generally take 12 weeks to list a hearing date. Following this, it can take up to four to six weeks to hand down a decision.

**Disclaimer:** Please note this checklist is for standard information required for lodgement. Additional information may be required by the assessing planning officer after registration.