**Activity 2: Key steps in the planning application process**

**Pre-application advice:** Before submitting a planning application, it is recommended to seek pre-application advice from the local planning authority. This step helps applicants understand the feasibility of their proposal, identifies potential issues and provides guidance on making the application compliant with local policies. It can save time and resources by addressing concerns early.

**Submit planning application:** The next step is to prepare and submit a planning application to the local planning authority. The application includes detailed plans, drawings and supporting documents, such as design statements, environmental assessments and site plans. A fee is also required. Once submitted, the application is validated by the LPA, which checks that all required information is included.

**Validation and consultation:** After submission, the planning application is validated, meaning it is checked for completeness. If valid, the LPA begins a consultation process. Nearby residents, statutory consultees (such as highways authorities or environmental agencies) and other relevant bodies are invited to comment on the application. This ensures that stakeholders have a chance to express their views.

**Site visit and assessment:** A planning officer from the LPA will typically visit the site to assess the physical context of the proposal and its potential impact on the surrounding area. The officer will evaluate the proposal against local planning policies, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other relevant guidelines. Any issues raised during the consultation will also be considered.

**Decision-making:** After the consultation period, the planning officer prepares a report with a recommendation to either approve or reject the application. Some applications are decided under 'delegated powers' by planning officers; larger or contentious applications may be referred to the planning committee. In both cases, the decision is based on whether the proposal complies with planning policies and considers public and consultee responses.

**Decision notification:** Once a decision is made, the applicant is notified in writing. If approved, the decision notice will outline any conditions that must be met before work can begin, such as compliance with building regulations or environmental measures. If rejected, the decision notice will explain the reasons for refusal, and the applicant can revise their proposal or appeal the decision.

**Appeals process (if necessary):** Once a decision is made, the applicant is notified in writing. If approved, the decision notice will outline any conditions that must be met before work can begin, such as compliance with building regulations or environmental measures. If rejected, the decision notice will explain the reasons for refusal, and the applicant can revise their proposal or appeal the decision.

Source: [www.planningportal.co.uk/planning/planning-applications/the-decision-making-process/introduction](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/planning/planning-applications/the-decision-making-process/introduction)