

Broad Overview of Faculty Application Process

A faculty is required for a large majority of proposed works to church buildings, particularly those that are listed, with works types ranging from the installation of memorial plaques to a complete reordering of the church building. Faculty applications are considered by the Diocesan Registry, being the legal “arm” of the Diocese, who will take advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) which is made up of a number of both Clergy and lay members, many with a great deal of knowledge and experience in the areas of expertise such as archaeology, monuments, and stained glass etc. The DAC also has access to a pool of specialist consultants who do not attend DAC meetings, where proposals are considered, but can be consulted to advise on applications on an “as needed” basis.

The faculty process is divided into a number of stages:

1. Logging of the application on the Online Faculty System (OFS).
2. Initial DAC Review of the application.
3. DAC Review Pre-Formal Consultation.
4. Formal Consultation (if needed).
5. DAC Review Post-Consultation.
6. DAC Review Consultation Changes.
7. Notification of Advice.
8. Public Notice and submission of the application to the Diocesan Registry for determination.
9. Faculty Grant.

Details of the various application stages are broadly as follows:

Logging of the application on the OFS:

This will usually be carried out by the petitioner, either a member of the PCC, such as a Churchwarden, and/or incumbent member of the Clergy and will include the following:

- Location.
- Summary description of the proposed works.

At this stage the OFS automatically notifies the DAC Secretary that an application is in progress and, following a check of same, the petitioner may be advised on what supporting information is required to support the application and any understood restrictions such as archaeology or listed monuments.

Initial DAC Review:

At this point the application is reviewed by the DAC Secretary and advice given on the documentation required to progress the application, typically this will include:

- The Statement of Need – being the establishment of the current position and the proposals to address same.

- The Statement of Significance, which will summarise the history and contents of the site/building and the historical significance of same. This is useful in clarifying areas to the DAC where works are likely to be permitted and those where works would be discouraged.
- Drawings and specifications of works and photos of all the affected and adjacent areas, in context.
- Confirmation of the PCC's agreement to the works.

Any restrictions such as the presence of archaeology or significant monuments etc. may be advised at this time.

DAC Review Pre-Formal Consultation:

The proposal will then be assembled into a series of presentation slides and added to the agenda for consideration at a full DAC meeting which are typically held on the afternoon of the second Friday of each month, with a break in August - if there is a need for more urgent consideration of relatively uncomplicated applications, this can be undertaken by the DAC Standing Committee via "round robin" emails to whichever members of the committee are best placed to offer advice.

Following this review, feedback is emailed to the petitioner and the online application status updated to one of the following "states":

1. The application is not ready and needs further work.
2. The application is ready and requires formal consultation.
3. The application is ready and does not require consultation.

For 1. it may be that additional detail is required for consideration or that some aspects of the proposal are not supported by the DAC and need to be reconsidered by the petitioner.

For 2. the DAC are broadly supportive of the application but advise that the one or more of the amenity societies are consulted on the proposals, these include Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Church Buildings Council and The Victorian Society – other consultees may include specialists in the areas of archaeology and monuments etc. If the application requires formal consultation, then the DAC will decide on whom to consult, and subsequently send out the appropriate invitations; the period of consultation is a statutory 42 days.

For 3. The application can be progressed to the stage 7, where the DAC notification of advice is added to the application, often with a condition of some kind such as the involvement of the PCC's inspecting architect on a particular aspect of the works.

DAC Review Post-Consultation:

Following the receipt of any responses from the amenity societies and/or consultees, these are assembled and reviewed at a full DAC meeting, the feedback is then emailed to the

petitioners with accordant advice on suggested changes to, or developments of, the proposals.

DAC Review Consultation Changes:

If changes are made to proposals following the formal consultation, then the merits of same are considered at a full DAC meeting.

Notification of Advice:

The last stage of DAC involvement in the application process is the notification of advice for which the options are:

- The Committee recommends the works or proposals for approval by the court (subject to the provisos entered below:)
- The Committee does not recommend the works or proposals for approval by the court for the principal reasons entered below:
- The Committee does not object to the works or proposals for approval by the court (subject to the provisos entered below:)

Following this notification, the petition details are completed by the petitioner and a public notice also, which needs to be displayed on the site for a period of 30 days; concurrently, the application is submitted to the Registry for consideration and determination. If objections to the proposals are received then these are considered by the Registry who may also request additional information from the petitioners directly, or further comments from the DAC, ahead of a decision being made on the proposals.

Prepared by DAC Secretary Kevin Tucker – August 2023 (updated March 2024)