

Discussion guide for consultees

This document outlines our research plan for the sessions with special interest groups and consultees. It will be used as a guide and prompt for discussion. Design research is hands-on and participant led therefore we will not be using this document in a question and answer format.

We will use these tasks to uncover the journey that consultees undertake when finding about new planning applications in their area, viewing and commenting on and their interaction with the Council.

Aims of the research

- Understand how users find applications.
- Understand how users find and access relevant information to understand applications.
- Understand how users view and comment on applications.
- To highlight key pain points experienced by users across these interactions.

Logistics

- Snook will be holding face-to-face conversations with consultees and will be attending a Planning User Forum organised during the discovery phase.
- Each session will last for 35 minutes in total.
- Each participant will sign a consent form.
- Incentive: ?

Agenda

10 minutes

Introductory Questions

We want to gain an understanding of this user group and their interactions with Hackney Council. We will capture an understanding of their motivations, their challenges and their actions.

15 minutes

Journey Mapping

Journey mapping is an exercise used to document the end-to-end experience of users when interacting with a service.

We will use journey maps to capture the main stages across:

1. Finding
2. Viewing
3. Commenting

We will identify:

1. Main stages
2. Tasks undertaken
3. Pain points
4. Touchpoints
5. User needs
6. Potential features

The purpose of this exercise is to walk through the journey naturally however we may ask particular questions along the way that are listed below.

5 minutes

Wrap up questions

After the exercise, we will ask some remaining questions around any ideas or suggestions they might have to improve the overall experience and the quality of the planning application process.

Introductory Questions: 10 minutes

Introduction [5min]

“A little bit of background on what we are doing today:

*We are working with Hackney Council on a project to **develop a digital service covering submitting planning applications, commenting and viewing**. We are looking to improve the ease and efficiency of the current planning application process with a view to reducing customer contact, lowering the number of invalid applications and improving customer satisfaction.*

We would like to hear your experiences to inform how we could make it better. This session will last for 35 minutes and is an informal conversation about the planning process.

There are no right or wrong answers and what we learn today will feed into our prototype design phase.

Thanks for being here and taking the time to talk to us about your experience. Do you have any questions?”

Participant introduction [5min]

Q: Can you tell us a bit about you?

Journey mapping: 20 min

Q: We would like you to walk us through the stages of finding applications, viewing relevant files and register comments or objections to an application in the borough of Hackney / Southwark. We would like you to pick up an application that was particularly challenging and tell us why.

Finding about planning applications [5min]

- How is it to get access to relevant up-to-date files? And, if need, to the development plan or local plan of the area? What about policies?
- Have you ever wanted to check past planning applications for a particular site? How was it? Did you have to pay? How did you feel about it?

Viewing planning applications [5min]

- Can you tell us about your experience reading and interpreting the different files on an application?
- Have you ever used any viewing platform (like a 3D modelling app) to help you understand the proposal?

Commenting planning applications [5min]

- Could you show us how you register an objection to a planning application? Which channels do you use?
- Do you follow any rules for commenting effectively? Do you use sample letters or emails? If YES, where do you find them?
- Do you consider other people's comments?

Communications [5min]

- After commenting on an applications, how do you keep updated? Which channels do you use?

- Have you ever try to engage your community and your local planning author? If YES, how was it? What did you do? Which channels did you use?
- Have you ever speak at the committee meeting where the application is considered? How was it?

Wrap up questions: 5min

- From your experience viewing & commenting on applications, do you have any suggestions on how to improve this process?

Close

“Thank you so much for your time, it has been really useful to have you involved in this research and interesting to hear your experiences.”