



Northumberland
County Council

Planning services pre-application charter and guide

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1. Pre-application advice charter

Pre-application advice is advocated both nationally and locally as a positive means by which to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and improve the quality of applications and their likelihood of success. This Charter sets out Northumberland County Council's tailored approach to pre-application advice, and the roles of those involved.

1.1. What is pre-application advice?

Pre-application advice is, as the name suggests, advice from the Local Planning Authority, (and sometimes other consultees) 'pre' or before submitting a planning application.

The advice is most frequently given in an informal written letter or report, issued by the Local Planning Authority (Northumberland County Council).

The process can serve to:

- provide an understanding of the relevant planning policies and other material considerations associated with a proposed development.
- resolve issues associated with a proposed development or let prospective applicants know early on if a proposal is unlikely to be acceptable.
- enable consideration of the possible mitigation of the impacts of a proposed development.
- help identify the information required to accompany a formal planning application, thus reducing the likelihood of delays.
- help put in place a Planning Performance Agreement where this would help. (See section 12).

1.2. When is pre-application advice appropriate?

Pre-application advice in Northumberland is tailored to be proportionate to the type of development proposed. Therefore, whilst it will not always be appropriate and is not mandatory, it is encouraged for most planning applications, from the likes of householder extensions to large and complex schemes.

Asking 'Do I need Planning Permission?' is also part of the council's pre-application advice service. However, it simply confirms whether planning permission is likely to be required. It does not include any advice (see Section 2).

As a result of a review of the council's pre-application service, a new approach has been introduced, which is considered to offer greater choice and value for money to prospective applicants. Depending on the type of proposal, pre-application advice is now typically offered in two tiers as follows:

Preliminary pre-application advice

this advice is for householders and for most other developments for example, new housing, commercial development, changes of use. It is usually a desk-based assessment, which provides advice on the principle of a proposal and highlights key issues, as far as they can be identified.

Detailed pre-application advice

this advice can similarly be applicable for any scale or type of development, and is nearly always appropriate for larger, or complex schemes. It provides more detailed advice, which is usually informed by a site visit and consultation with specialists, such as in respect of highways and conservation.

The service also enables prospective applicants to have certain **add-ons** for an additional fee, where these are beneficial, such as additional meetings.

Where a proposal relates to a listed building(s) (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) bespoke conservation advice is also strongly encouraged.

For larger scale schemes, applicants are encouraged to use a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). A PPA may also be appropriate in some instances for relatively small-scale schemes. A PPA can and should ideally be agreed at pre-application stage and can be the most efficient and cost-effective means of dealing with a complex application. Further details are in Section 12 of this document.

1.3. What does it cost?

The cost of a pre-application enquiry depends on the type of proposal, as this influences the resources required in order to provide the advice. The fees together with details of what is included are detailed in sections 2-11.

Concessions

Town and Parish councils along with registered charities will be entitled to a 50% reduction applied to all pre-application fees.

A pre-application fee will not be required when the proposal is solely for the alteration or extension of an existing dwellinghouse; or works in the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse (other than the erection of a dwellinghouse) for the purpose of providing: means of access to or within it for a disabled person who is resident in it, or is proposing to take up residence in it; or facilities designed to secure that person's greater safety, health or comfort. Evidence from a medical practitioner will be required to show the disabled access or facility is required.

1.4. The council's commitment

Applicants can expect a clear, timely and authoritative view on the merits of a proposed development, as well as clear advice or signposting to further advice on the information to be submitted with a planning application, and consultation requirements. The council will endeavour to be as accurate as possible in its advice, however responses are informal and do not guarantee the validation or decision / outcome of a subsequent planning application. It should also be recognised that pre-application advice cannot pre-empt the democratic decision-making process. The advice could, however, be a material consideration and given weight in the planning application process.

The council will act with fairness and in good faith in respect of all matters related to the handling of the pre-application enquiry and any subsequent planning (and related) application(s).

1.5. Benefits

Making use of the pre-application service offers a number of benefits:

- Applicants can save time and money by getting advice before submitting an application.
- Development outcomes can be improved by having well considered proposals and addressing issues early on.
- The chances of an unsuccessful planning application are reduced.
- Once an application is submitted, delays may be avoided by having all relevant details submitted.

1.6. What is included?

The scope of what is included in pre-application advice will vary according to the type of development and type of pre-application enquiry. Further details are included in sections 2-10 of this document. In all instances the response is intended to give a clear indication as to whether development is supportable in the context of the key relevant policies of the statutory development plan, and other key planning considerations.

Pre-application enquiries are not assessed against the whole of the statutory development plan and do not represent a comprehensive assessment of all planning considerations. They are intended to focus only on key issues and will normally not appraise matters of detail (other than in some cases such as pre-application advice for listed buildings).

There may be issues which arise in the planning application process which are key to the planning application decision, which have not been identified in the pre-application advice.

1.7. Colleagues across the council and stakeholders

Preliminary pre-application enquiries are dealt with by Planning Officers. Detailed enquiries benefit from the input of other specialist Officers, as appropriate, such as those involved in highways and conservation, public health and public protection. It is the council's discretion which consultees are consulted and will depend on the nature of a

proposal and what details are known. Where relevant, applicants may be advised they should consult the Lead Local Flood Authority (which is Northumberland County Council), which will incur an additional fee, but can be co-ordinated by the planning service as part of a pre-application enquiry. This is strongly advised if an application has the potential to impact on surface water run-off, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.

It may be recommended, via the pre-application advice, that other council services and / or other statutory and non-statutory bodies should also be consulted. Depending on the nature of the consultation this may be coordinated by the council, or it may be the responsibility of the applicant.

1.8. Applicants

Applicants will get most benefit from a pre-application enquiry if they submit sufficient details and information. The information expected to be submitted is proportionate to the type and scale of development proposed. It is listed in this document as 'essential' and 'recommended'. Where it is possible to submit the recommended material, this is strongly encouraged.

Pre-application advice is based on the information submitted. It is up to the applicant to ensure they submit a thorough and complete package of material. Once a pre-application enquiry is registered, Officers will not accept amendments or additional information. All responses will be made on the basis of the original submission only. The council is not responsible in instances where information fails to include relevant details or misleads on matters, which could affect the outcome of any formal planning decision. Inadequate information could result in a void or inconclusive response. Where applicants submit a lot of detailed information for a preliminary pre-application enquiry they may be requested to resubmit their enquiry as a detailed pre-application enquiry or else matters of detail will not be appraised.

Where pre application advice is informed by a site visit, applicants may need to provide access to the pre-application site upon the council's reasonable request to support the provision of advice.

Only one proposal per pre-application enquiry will be considered. Where different options are being considered, these will normally be subject to different pre-application enquiries.

Pre-application advice will only be provided once the correct fee has been received. Additionally, for any hard copy or emailed requests, advice will not be provided until a completed form has been received.

For larger and/or more complex schemes the pre-application process may take longer. In these instances, applicants are strongly encouraged to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement – see section 12 of this document.

If pre-application advice is to be meaningful then a proposed development may change prior to the submission of a formal planning application. This could resolve issues identified at the pre-application stage and/or it may raise new issues that need to be discussed. If an application does not reflect pre-application advice, the council will not normally negotiate further changes and will make a decision based on what is submitted.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the disclaimers to providing the service – see section 13.

1.9. Timescales

The council will use its available resources to give pre-application advice within the timescales set out in sections 2-10 of this document, which vary according to development and enquiry type. Every effort will be made to meet these timescales, however where these cannot be met, prospective applicants will be advised. In some instances, an applicant may be contacted to mutually agree an extension of time.

If a response has not been received after the applicable prescribed timescale set out in this Charter, or the date agreed as an ‘extension of time’, applicants can contact the council’s Planning Services. Unfortunately, it is not possible to investigate or expedite an enquiry response before the prescribed number of working days have elapsed.

Pre-application advice is correct at the time of issue. The statutory development plan (including Neighbourhood Plans) could be subject to revisions or could be replaced or replaced in part. Similarly material planning considerations, including government policy and guidance, and / or changes to the site/building or surroundings could change and have implications on the advice issued. Applicants are responsible for checking the most up to date legislation and guidance at the time of commencing your proposed development. If considerable time has lapsed since your pre-application advice was issued, or if there are other material planning matters which have changed, applicants are advised to submit a new pre-application enquiry.

1.10. Confidentiality

Pre-application enquiries are not dealt with confidentially, unless a prospective applicant can make a case that it should be, such as for reasons of commercial confidentiality. Pre-application enquiries are not accessible on the council’s on-line Public Access Planning Register. For the purposes of consultation they may be shared with external departments and the relevant Town or Parish Council(s) (see 1.12). Even where an enquiry has been demonstrated to be confidential, it may be necessary to disclose the details or part of the details of a pre-application enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Applicants are encouraged, where possible, to informally discuss proposals with neighbours and/or those likely to be immediately affected.

1.11. Community engagement

As part of pre-application advice, the council may encourage a prospective applicant to undertake community consultation where it can add value to the process and outcome (NB. Pre-application consultation with the community is mandatory for wind turbine proposals involving two or more turbines or where the hub height exceeds 15m).

The type of consultation that is appropriate before applications are made, will vary depending upon the scheme, but could include public exhibitions and meetings, surveys of

opinion and consultation with other key local groups. The council will expect the developer to carry out the consultation but can provide advice on the most appropriate methods for doing so and the groups they may wish to consult.

1.12. Members and town and parish councils

Democratically elected members are strongly encouraged to participate at the pre-application stage, where it is appropriate and beneficial for them to do so. As appropriate, typically for larger or more complex pre-application enquires, a briefing may be held with the appropriate committee and or the councillors within whose electoral ward the proposed development is situated. Those councillors who also sit on a committee that determines planning applications will need to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Members on planning matters and cannot predetermine their view on a scheme that will subsequently be the subject of a planning application. Applicants should not engage privately with councillors.

Town and Parish Councils will be consulted on pre application enquiries, except where an applicant justifies that their enquiry should remain confidential (see 1.10). Applicants may also be encouraged to undertake more in depth consultation with the relevant town or parish council, particularly where there is a neighbourhood plan.

1.13. Design review

The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the benefits of Design Review in appropriate cases. Where it is considered Design Review would be beneficial at pre-application stage (typically for larger / complex schemes), applicants will be advised of this. If undertaken at the pre-application stage, an applicant is encouraged to articulate the findings and outcomes of the Design Review process when making a formal planning application and as appropriate, document how the proposals have changed to reflect feedback.

Councillors may also attend architectural appraisal or Design Review panels for schemes.

1.14. Planning application outcomes

No pre-application advice given will fetter the council in exercising its statutory duties as Local Planning Authority. It will not prejudice the outcome of planning (and related) application(s) or the impartiality of the council.

2. Do I need planning permission?

2.1. Introduction

It is possible to undertake certain types of work or changes of use without needing to apply for planning permission. These are called "permitted development rights".

The council offers a 'do I need planning permission?' service to check if a proposal is permitted development or requires planning permission. However, before using the service, prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the Planning Portal – do you need permission? webpage. The national Planning Portal website provides a range

of guidance on common projects, which can help to determine whether planning permission is required. Applicable 'Local restrictions' referred to on the Planning Portal website, are detailed on the council's 'do I need planning permission?' webpage. These Local restrictions are important, as they can limit what would otherwise be permitted development. In other words, it may be necessary to have planning permission for something which would not normally need planning permission.

Certificate of Lawful Development

Where a decision on whether an existing use or development, or a proposed use or development, is lawful for planning purposes or not, a 'do I need planning permission?' enquiry is not suitable. In such instances, an application must be made for a 'Lawful Development Certificate'. This may be required for the likes of a house, or property sale. This does not fall within the pre-application service. Further details can be found on the council's website.

2.2. What will you get from this service?

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

An informal written response will be provided advising you of **one** of the following.

- Your proposal is permitted development and does not need planning permission.
- Your proposal is not permitted development and you will require planning permission. This includes the type of application you need to submit.
- Your proposal is permitted development and does not need planning permission but does require 'Prior Approval' from the Local Planning Authority.

The assessment will take a proportionate approach to check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished, where applicable.
- provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (and any subsequent revisions thereof) including any conditions that may affect permitted development rights.
- land / property history where relevant (for example, to check for a previous planning condition that could influence permitted development rights).
- any relevant constraints / local restrictions on the land.

2.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Householder do I need planning permission

£50

(20 working days)

Non – householder do I need planning permission

£100

(20 working days)

2.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. A completed 'Do I Need Planning Permission?' enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked. (This does not need to be professionally drawn up but should show where the proposed alternation/extension would be or where within the curtilage of the property, and its size / scale.)
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the front or rear of the property, depending on where proposed works are located, and the street scene. (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size and must not exceed 8MB).

2.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

3. Household developments pre-application advice

3.1. Introduction

This includes extensions or alterations to existing dwellings and boundary treatments around existing dwellings. It does not apply to the change of use to dwelling(s) / new or replacement dwelling(s).

3.2. What will you get from this service?

A written response will be provided advising of the following:

- Whether the proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
- Where appropriate, what changes could potentially be made to the proposal to make it more acceptable in planning terms.

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess. The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- land / property history, where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations.

3.3. Listed buildings

If your home is a listed building, you may well need ‘Listed Building Consent’ as well as planning permission. It is a criminal offence to carry out works without listed building consent on those buildings that need it. Where proposals relate to a listed building (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings), an additional fee will apply – see below. The council reserves the right to charge a higher fee for applications relating to large scale or complex listed building(s), which an applicant will be advised of in advance.

3.4. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Householder pre-application enquiry

£100

(20 working days)

Householder pre-application enquiry relating to a listed building(s)

Additional fee of **£100** (a total of £200)

(25 working days)

3.5. What to submit?

Essential

1. A completed Pre-Application Enquiry Form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked. (This does not need to be professionally drawn up, but as a minimum, to ensure the most accurate advice, should show where the proposed

alternation / extension would be on the house or where within the curtilage of the property, and its size / scale.)

- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the front or rear of the property, depending on where proposed works are located, and the street scene. (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size and must not exceed 8MB.)
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above and any additional relevant information.

3.6. Disclaimers

See Section 13 of this document.

4. Minor developments pre-application advice

4.1. Introduction

This includes developments of:

- 1-4 dwellings (including changes of use into 1-4 dwellings);
- commercial development with no new floorspace (for example, shopfronts);
- the creation or change of use of up to 499 sqm floor space (including commercial); and
- any other development on land less than 1ha for change of use or works involving no floorspace.

4.2. What will you get from this service?

There are two options for minor development pre-application advice as follows:

Preliminary pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.

- land / property history, where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations.

Detailed pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.
3. Any key issues, such as those relating to matters of Highways Development Management and Design and Conservation, as appropriate.
4. What you will need to submit as part of a planning application.

This is a desk-based exercise informed by a site visit and consultations as appropriate, depending on the nature of proposals. It cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (That is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history, where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations – this will include those observed on a site visit and will be informed by consultation as appropriate, such as with Highways Development Management and Design and Conservation and standing advice from Public Protection.

4.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Minor development preliminary pre-application advice

£200

(20 working days)

Minor development detailed pre-application advice

£500

(30 working days)

Minor development pre-application advice relating to a listed building(s)

Additional fee of £200

(30 working days)

4.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application Enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked.
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the front of the property and street scene where applicable (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size).
- Any other relevant information to support your application.
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above and any additional relevant information.
- Please ensure that each document is no larger than 8mb in size.

4.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

5. Medium developments pre-application advice

5.1. Introduction

This includes developments of:

- 5- 9 dwellings;
- the creation or change of use of 500-999 sqm floor space; and
- any other development on land 1ha – 1.499ha for change of use or works involving no floorspace.

5.2. What will you get from this service?

There are two options for medium development pre-application advice as follows:

Preliminary pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations.

Detailed pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.
3. Any key issues, such as those relating to matters of Highways Development Management and Design and Conservation.
4. What you will need to submit as part of a planning application.

This is a desk-based exercise informed by a site visit and consultations as appropriate depending on the nature of proposals. It cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations – this will include those observed on a site visit and will be informed, as appropriate, by consultation such as with Highways Development Management and Design and Conservation and standing advice from Public Protection.

5.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Medium development preliminary pre application advice

£400

(25 working days)

Medium development detailed pre-application advice

£1000

(35 working days)

Medium development pre-application advice relating to a listed building(s)

Additional Fee of £250

(35 working days)

5.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked.
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the front of the property and street scene where applicable. (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size).
- Any other relevant information to support your application.
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above.
- Please ensure that each document is no larger than 8mb in size.

5.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

6. Major developments pre-application advice

6.1. Introduction

This includes developments of:

- 10 - 29 dwellings;
- the creation or change of use of 1000-4,999sqm floor space; or
- any other development on land 1.5ha - 1.99ha for change of use or works involving no floorspace.

6.2. What will you get from this service?

There are two options for major development pre-application advice as follows:

Preliminary pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations.

Detailed pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

- Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
- Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.
- Any key issues such as relating to matters of Highways Development Management and Design and Conservation.
- What you will need to submit as part of a planning application.

This is a desk-based exercise informed by a site visit and consultations, as appropriate, depending on the nature of proposals. It cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations – this will include those observed on a site visit and will be informed, as appropriate, by consultation such as with Highways development Management and Design and Conservation and standing advice from Public Protection and Public Health.

6.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Major development preliminary pre-application advice

£500

(25 working days)

Major development detailed pre-application advice

£1200

(35 working days)

Major development pre-application advice relating to a listed building(s)

Additional fee of £350

(35 working days)

6.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked.
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the front of the property and street scene where applicable. (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size.)

- Any other relevant information to support your application.
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above.
- Please ensure that each document is no larger than 8mb in size.

6.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

7. Large scale major developments pre-application advice

7.1. Introduction

This includes developments of:

- 30 – 99 dwellings;
- creation or change of use of 5,000 - 9,999sqm floor space;
- any other development on land of 2ha – 2.49 ha for change of use or works involving no floorspace;
- waste proposals where annual throughput is less than 50,000 tonnes;
- renewable energy developments on sites of 1-4 hectares; or
- applications likely to need EIA.

7.2. What will you get from this service?

There are two options for large scale development pre-application advice. However, for a development of this scale or nature it is unlikely to be suitable to seek preliminary pre-application advice. Furthermore, it may be beneficial to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement – see section 12 of this document.

Preliminary pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations.

Detailed pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.
3. What requirements may be applicable which will be secured via a planning condition or legal agreement (for example, financial contributions).
4. Any key issues relating to matters such as Highways Development Management, and Design and Conservation and flood risk.
5. What you will need to submit as part of a planning application.

The service will include a site visit and typically no more than one meeting either on site as part of the site visit or via video or telephone call.

The assessment will check your proposals as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan, if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history, where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations – this will include those observed on a site visit and will be informed as appropriate, by consultation such as with Highways Development Management; Design and Conservation; Public Health; and Public Protection.
- the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

7.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Large scale major development preliminary pre-application advice

£800

(25 working days)

Large scale major development detailed pre-application advice

£2000

(35 working days)

Large scale major development relating to a listed building(s)

Additional fee of £450

(35 working days)

7.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked.
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the front of the property and street scene where applicable. (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size).
- Any other relevant information to support your application. This could include early scoping of assessments required with a planning application.
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above.
- Please ensure that each document is no larger than 8mb in size.

7.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

8. Strategic scale major developments pre-application advice

8.1. Introduction

This includes developments of:

- 100 or more dwellings;
- residential developments on sites greater than 2.5 hectares;
- creation or change of use of 10,000 sqm or more floor space;
- minerals and waste developments;
- outline / hybrid applications over 5ha; or
- renewable energy developments on sites of 4.1 hectares or more;

8.2. What will you get from this service?

There are two options for strategic scale development pre-application advice. However, for a development of this scale or nature it is unlikely to be suitable to seek preliminary pre-application advice. Furthermore, it may be beneficial to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement – see section 12 of this document.

Preliminary pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.
3. What requirements may be applicable which will be secured via a planning condition or legal agreement (for example, financial contributions).

This is a desk-based exercise and cannot be provided verbally over the phone as it requires time to assess.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land / property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.
- any other known key material planning considerations.

Detailed pre-application advice

A written response will be provided advising you of the following:

1. Whether your proposal is likely to be supportable in planning terms and the key planning considerations.
2. Where appropriate, what changes could potentially make your proposal more acceptable in planning terms.
3. What requirements may be applicable which will be secured via a planning condition or legal agreement (for example, financial contributions).
4. Any key issues such as relating to matters of Highways Development Management and Design and Conservation.
5. What you will need to submit as part of a planning application.
6. Additional advice as appropriate, such as recommended community engagement, preliminary EIA advice.

The service will include a site visit and typically one or two meetings either on site as part of the site visit or via video or telephone call.

The assessment will check your proposals, as appropriate, against the following:

- the key most relevant policies of the Statutory Development Plan (that is, the Northumberland Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan if applicable to the area).
- the current use of the building or site and when these uses started or finished.
- land/property history where relevant.
- any key relevant planning constraints.

- any other known key material planning considerations – this will include those observed on a site visit and will be informed by consultation, as appropriate, with Highways Development Management: Design and Conservation; Public Health; and Public Protection.
- the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

8.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Strategic scale development preliminary pre-application advice

£1200

(25 working days)

Strategic scale development detailed pre-application advice

Price on application

(Target 42 working days)

In more complex cases receipt of **detailed** advice would be the prelude to ongoing structured dialogue between the customer and the Planning Service leading up to the submission of a formal application.

8.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked.
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site photographs showing property, immediate surroundings and the street scene where applicable. (Photographs must be submitted as jpeg or pdf files to reduce file size).
- Any other relevant information to support your application. This could include early scoping of assessments required with a planning application.
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above.
- Please ensure that each document is no larger than 8mb in size.

8.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

9. Telecommunications and digital infrastructure pre-application advice

9.1. Introduction

This includes developments of:

- new or upgraded telecommunications infrastructure; or
- broadband infrastructure.

9.2. What will you get from this service?

This is a bespoke service for telecommunications and digital infrastructure and is strongly encouraged for these types of proposals.

9.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Telecommunication and broadband infrastructure pre-application advice

£200

(25 working days)

9.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Existing and proposed plans, elevations and sections to scale or with building heights marked.
- Existing and proposed site layout (preferably 1:50 or 1:100 scale).
- Site Photographs showing location of infrastructure, views to the proposed infrastructure.
- Any other relevant information to support your application.
- Please ensure that each document is no larger than 8mb in size.

9.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

10. Advertisements pre-application advice

10.1. Introduction

The display of advertisements is subject to a separate consent process within the planning system. This is principally set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#).

There are 3 categories of Advertisement Consent:

1. those permitted without requiring either deemed or express consent from the local planning authority;
2. those which have deemed consent; and
3. those which require the express consent of the local planning authority.

It should be noted that even signs that are normally permitted under advertisement consent require separate listed building consent if they are attached to listed buildings.

For planning purposes, 'advertisement' is defined in section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) as:

"any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction, and (without prejudice to the previous provisions of this definition) includes any hoarding or similar structure used or designed, or adapted for use and anything else principally used, or designed or adapted principally for use, for the display of advertisements."

10.2. What will you get from this service?

This is a bespoke service for advertisements. There can frequently be uncertainty about whether consent is required therefore seeking pre-application advice is encouraged.

10.3. How much does it cost and how long does it take?

Advertisement pre-application advice

£100

(25 working days)

Advertisement pre-application advice relating to a listed building(s)

Additional fee of £200

(30 working days)

10.4. What to submit?

Essential

1. Completed Pre-Application enquiry form including a clear and concise description of the proposed works.
2. A payment of the required fee.
3. A location plan, which identifies the site clearly, and marks the boundary in red (ideally at 1:1250 scale). You can submit this as an attached file on the form.

Recommended

- Diagrams that show proposed adverts and details of any associated illumination and fittings.
- Photographs of the site of the proposed advertisement and its surroundings and photographs of key view to the proposed advertisement.
- For listed buildings (including curtilage listed buildings and any proposals affecting the setting of listed buildings) it is strongly recommended that you provide all of the above

10.5. Disclaimers

See section 13 of this document.

11. Add-on meetings

11.1. Introduction

The council hopes to provide choice and flexibility to prospective applicants in respect of pre-application advice. Under each relevant section of this document there is a clear description of what you will get for the service selected. You have the option of selecting one or more of the following add-on services.

11.2. Meetings

- Preliminary stage meeting: **£250**
- Pre-App meeting: **£250**
- Pre-App meeting including a Development Management Manager: **£400**
- Pre-App meeting including Head of Service: **£600**
- Pre-App meeting with other stakeholders / consultees: **fee on application**

Preliminary stage meetings are available upon request to get the earliest indication of the likelihood of a development being acceptable, prior to any details or assessments being worked up. This service is offered in good faith. It has limitations and should not be used as an alternative to seeking written pre-application advice. As described in this document, pre-application advice requires research and preparation and cannot be provided verbally. It should be considered an optional precursor to a pre-application enquiry. The council has discretion to refuse a preliminary meeting where it is considered the nature of the enquiry requires the submission of a pre-application enquiry and written response.

Detailed pre-application meetings are only available as an add-on to one of the pre application enquiries – that is, they cannot be used as a substitute to a written pre application enquiry.

Similarly, requests for written or verbal advice from select consultees, or on a particular matter of detail will not be accepted, as it is important pre-application enquiries are dealt with in a holistic way.

In all instances the type of meeting will be at the council's discretion and may be on-site, in person, or via telephone or video call. Meetings will be with a Planning Officer or senior Planning Officer unless you select the associated higher fee for a more senior officer of Head of Service to be present. It should be noted that the council will endeavour to arrange meetings as quickly as possible, but this will be subject to availability. It may take up to 4-6 weeks prior notification to schedule a meeting, or potentially longer in the case of the Head of Service.

Meetings will be based on the information submitted as part of the pre-application enquiry. If an applicant wishes to submit any additional information this must be done at least three working days in advance of the meeting, to enable Officers to review and prepare for the meeting.

A brief note of the meeting will be taken by the council and will be shared with an applicant. Unless via prior agreement, meetings will only relate to a single pre-application enquiry. Officers will not be able to comment on other schemes. These will incur an additional meeting fee.

If you wish for other stakeholders to attend a pre-application meeting this may be arranged at an additional fee. For example, the Council can coordinate the involvement of specialist Conservation Officers, Highway Officers, Public Health Officers or other services such as Public Protection and the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority. The fee will be calculated according to who you wish to be involved. However, it may be beneficial for you to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement – see Section 12 of this document.

Meetings will not exceed 1 hour, other than via prior agreement and subject to an additional fee.

12. Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)

A Planning Performance Agreement is a project management tool, which a Local Planning Authority and applicants can use to agree timescales, actions and resources for handling particular applications. It should cover the pre-application and application stages but may also extend through to the post-application stage. Planning Performance Agreements can be particularly useful in setting out an efficient and transparent process for determining large and/or complex planning applications. They encourage joint working between the applicant and Local Planning Authority, and can also help to bring together other parties, such as statutory consultees. A Planning Performance Agreement is agreed voluntarily between the applicant and the Local Planning Authority prior to the application being submitted and can be a useful focus of pre-application discussions about the issues that will need to be addressed.

In principle, Planning Performance Agreements can be used for any application, although whether an agreement is justified will depend on the size and complexity of the proposal. They are typically appropriate for large scale schemes.

If an applicant is interested in the potential for entering into a Planning Performance Agreement they are encouraged to contact the Planning Department. The council can discuss and agree a suitable process, format and content which is proportionate to the scale of the project and the complexity of the issues to be addressed.

Planning Performance Agreements are subject to charges, in addition to any subsequent planning application fee for the proposed development. These charges will be calculated upon request depending on the nature and complexity of the agreement.

13. Disclaimers

13.1. 'Do I need planning permission?'

For 'do I need permission?' enquiries the site / property will not be subject to a site visit.

If an applicant submits inaccurate or incorrect details the advice provided by the council may be void, or you may receive an inconclusive response.

Where the Council's response advises that a proposal is permitted development (that is the right to do certain changes to a building without the need for planning permission) these are nearly always subject to a development satisfying various criteria and conditions. The Council's assessment is a provisional assessment of a proposal and does not confirm whether all of the relevant criteria and conditions have been satisfied. Some of these may not be known until an applicant knows the details of a proposal. It is an applicant's responsibility to check and ensure that development complies with the relevant section(s) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or revisions thereof). Failure to fully comply with the relevant criteria and conditions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or revisions thereof) could result in Planning Enforcement Action.

Where the council's response advises an applicant that the proposal requires planning permission, a planning application must be submitted if the proposed development is to proceed. Failure to submit a planning application could result in Planning Enforcement Action.

The advice in a Do I need Planning Permission enquiry response will not provide information on what is needed to be submitted as part of any subsequent planning application. For further advice on submitting a planning application applicants should seek pre-application advice and / or refer to the council's web page to [ensure your application complies with our Validation Checklist](#). See subsequent sections of this document.

Where the council's response advises that a proposal is permitted development (that is, the right to do certain changes to a building without the need for planning permission) but requires the Local Planning Authority's Prior Approval, a prior approval application must be

made if the proposed development is to proceed. Failure to submit a prior approval application for could result in Planning Enforcement Action.

The advice provided is correct at the time of issue. Please be aware, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 could be subject to revisions or could be replaced, or replaced in part, via other new or revised legislation. Similarly, government guidance could be subject to revisions or be revoked or be superseded by new guidance. You should check the most up to date legislation and guidance at the time of commencing your proposed development.

Where formal confirmation that a proposed development does not require planning permission is needed (for example, if requested by a legal representative as part of a house sale) an application should be made for a Certificate of Lawful Development – further details can be found on the council's website.

Notwithstanding whether or not planning permission is required, works may require other approvals such as Buildings Regulations. The council's webpages provide further guidance.

The council's written response to a Do I need Planning Permission enquiry is offered in good faith and to the best of planning officers' ability, without prejudice to the consideration of any subsequently submitted planning application or prior approval application or any subsequent enforcement action.

13.2. Pre-application advice

With rare exception, pre-application advice is provided in a written response provided by the council. It constitutes informal advice and is based on the information submitted. If inaccurate or incorrect details are submitted the advice provided by the council may be void or be an inconclusive response.

The site / property will or will not be subject to a site visit depending on the type of pre application enquiry. Details of what is included is provided in the relevant sections of this document. Where a site visit is undertaken, unless via prior agreement (for major and complex schemes) case officers will not be able to advise an applicant verbally about the pre-application enquiry while on a site visit.

Depending on the type of pre-application enquiry prospective applicants will or will not have a meeting with a case officer and / or others. This may be via telephone, video call or in person. Details of what is included is provided in the relevant sections of this document. Any request for a meeting not included in the prescribed service offer, or any additional meeting in connection with a pre-application enquiry will be subject to an additional fee – see Section 11.

The council's response to a pre-application enquiry will give an indication of whether the proposed development is supportable in the context of the statutory development plan. Planning applications have to be decided in line with the relevant statutory development plan, unless there is a very good reason not to do so. It should be noted however that the pre application enquiry will not be assessed against the whole of the Plan. It will focus only on key planning policies and will not appraise matters of detail. There may be key matters

and key material planning considerations which are not picked up in pre-application advice.

In some instances, an applicant may be advised of potential changes to a proposal, which could potentially make a development more acceptable. Any such advice is given without prejudice to the subsequent determination of a planning application. It will not provide advice on matters of detail.

The council's response to a pre-application enquiry is provided by the council's planning service. Depending on the type of pre-application enquiry it will or will not be subject to consultation with internal council consultees, such as Highways Development Management, Design and Conservation, Public Health, Public Protection and / or any other internal or external consultees. The relevant consultees will be at the council's discretion. Irrespective of whether or not consultation occurs, there may be key matters and key material planning considerations related to these specialisms which are not picked up in pre-application advice.

The council, including other services out with planning, responding as consultees to a pre-application enquiry, retains the right to provide standing advice. That is pre-written advice that explains what applicants must do to meet legislative and policy requirements and enables them to prepare good quality planning applications. This should typically be expected in the case of Public Health and Public Protection but may also apply to other advice.

Depending on the type of pre-application enquiry the response will or will not provide advice on what needs to be submitted as part of any subsequent planning application. Irrespective of the advice, applicants should refer to the national and local validation requirements, which are available on the council's website.

Pre-Application Advice alone does not cover matters relating to Listed buildings. If your proposal relates to a listed building, an additional fee applies.

Pre-application advice is correct at the time of issue. The statutory development plan (including Neighbourhood Plans) could be subject to revisions or could be replaced or replaced in part. Similarly material planning considerations, including government policy and guidance, and / or changes to the site/building or surroundings could change and have implications on the advice issued. Applicants should check the most up to date legislation and guidance at the time of commencing development. If significant time has lapsed since a pre-application advice was issued, applicants are advised to submit a new pre-application enquiry.

Works to a home or property or land is likely to require other approvals, such as Buildings Regulations. The council's webpages provide further guidance.

The council's written response to a pre-application enquiry is offered in good faith and to the best of planning officers' ability, without prejudice to the consideration of any subsequently submitted planning application.

If a planning application is subsequently submitted which fails to take on board pre-application advice given by the Planning Service, the council may refuse it without further discussion with the applicant or their agent.

The decision on the formal application may also be made by the Planning Applications Committee which, democratically, is entitled to arrive at a different conclusion to planning officers, provided that the decision is based on reasonable planning grounds.

This document was produced by:

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