

Pre-application Advice Guidance Notes

(Including guidance on completing the Pre-application Planning Advice Request Form)

1. Site Address

A full address and plan showing the site area of the development at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500 should be submitted to ensure the site can be accurately identified. This will avoid delays which would otherwise occur if further clarification of the location of the site is required.

2. Description of Proposed Development

The proposed development should be described in as much detail as possible to facilitate a full understanding of the proposal, particularly where detailed plans are not submitted with your request for pre-application advice. Where detailed plans are submitted with your request for pre-application advice it may not be necessary to provide as much written detail. However, a clear and precise description of the development proposal will always be necessary to ensure the advice given is based on an accurate understanding of the proposal.

In describing the proposed development you should include details of scale and extent of proposed buildings, uses and associated works such as car parking. In respect of Categories 4a, 4b, 5a, and 5b details of the number of dwellings, site area or floor space, and whether the application will be submitted in outline or full, will be necessary to assist in calculating the appropriate fee for your request. An outline application seeks permission for the general principle of developing a site for a specific purpose, whilst a full application seeks permission for the development in detail and requires a higher level of information to be submitted including details of what the proposal will look like.

3. Details of Previous Advice Obtained from the Local Planning Authority

If you have received previous advice from the Local Planning Authority about development on the site you should provide details of this with your request for pre-application advice as this will enable us to more quickly assess the acceptability of your current proposal, particularly if you have made amendments to the scheme to take account of previous advice.

Where known, the reference number of any previous advice should be provided, as well as the date it was written and brief details of its content. An attachment of any previous correspondence will also speed up the processing of your request. If possible, depending on when the previous advice was given, the same officer who dealt with your previous enquiry will be allocated your current request for advice to ensure consistency and speed up the time for responding.

4. Details of Consultations Carried Out with Statutory Agencies

If you have recently received advice from any statutory agency which might influence the development of your site, you should provide details of the name of the statutory agency (e.g. the Highway Authority, Highways Agency, Environment Agency), any reference number attached to that advice, the date on which the advice was given, and brief details of the advice. An attachment of the full correspondence should also be submitted as this will speed up the processing of your request and ensure all relevant factors which might influence the acceptability of your proposal are taken into account.

We will not consult statutory agencies in the process of handling your request but will advise you which agencies you should contact if you have not already done so.

5. Information to Provide in Support of Your Request

To ensure the best possible advice can be provided you should include with your application some or all of the following information as relevant to your proposal:

- Location plan with site outlined in red (at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500). This requirement is **mandatory** to ensure the site of your proposal can be accurately identified;
- Drawings of layout and surroundings including identification of neighbouring properties and existing trees on site. Understanding the context of the site will assist the Local Planning Authority in providing accurate advice about the constraints affecting the site and likely impacts of the development;
- Drawings showing proposed height and scale of development. This information will help the Local Planning Authority to assess the likely impact of the proposal on surrounding land users and the visual amenity of the locality;
- Photographs. Where appropriate, these are very useful in assisting the Local Planning Authority's understanding of the site context and development proposal, and can potentially speed up the time taken to respond to your request;
- Other e.g. noise data, flood risk assessment, tree survey, ecology survey etc. Where there are known constraints or likely impacts of the development, as much information as possible should be provided up front to enable the Local Planning Authority to assess the likely acceptability of these impacts and the need for further information. The more information you provide with your application, the more accurate and useful your response is likely to be.

It may be necessary to request further information during the course of considering the proposal in order to provide appropriate advice. Where this is necessary, it may not be possible to provide the advice in accordance with the timescales specified in the charging schedule. Any revised timescale will be discussed with you, but will be dependent on the speed with which you provide the additional information.

6. Confidentiality

To assist in dealing with your request it may be necessary for us to liaise with other teams within the Council. This will ensure you have as complete a response as possible to your request for advice. You are therefore asked to state your agreement to our sharing the information you submit with other Council officers.

Customers normally expect the details of pre-application discussions to be confidential. Officers aim to provide advice on this basis and details are not published on the Council's website. However, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and/or the Environmental Information Regulations, third parties can ask to see pre-application documentation and the Council has to decide whether information is exempt from disclosure. In order to assist the Council in dealing with such requests, applicants/agents are encouraged to submit in writing the specific reasons why in their view documentation relating to their pre-application discussions should remain confidential and not be disclosed to third parties.

7. Declaration

You are asked to complete a declaration to clarify the type of advice you are requesting, and to ensure the appropriate fee is paid and that you understand additional charges may be required if it becomes apparent during the assessment of your request that more work than originally envisaged is required to provide a proper response. This may include a joint meeting on site or a meeting with other professionals at your request. Where this becomes necessary the extent of any additional fees will be agreed beforehand.

8. Disclaimer

Any advice given by Council officers at pre-application stage is not a formal planning decision by the Council as local planning authority. We will give you the best advice possible based on the information provided. This advice will be offered in good faith and to the best of our ability, without prejudice to consideration of a formally submitted planning application which may generate previously unknown issues either through responses to statutory consultations or evaluation of the more detailed information submitted with the application.

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 the planning officers provided that decision is based on reasonable planning grounds.

Whilst pre-application advice should assist you in ensuring all necessary information is provided, if you submit a formal planning application, please also consult the Council's [National](#) and [Local Validation](#) criteria on the website to ensure you include all information relevant to your proposal.

Submitting your Request

If you wish to take advantage of our pre-application advice service simply fill out the pre-application advice request form (Provide Link) and email it together with your supporting plans, photos etc. to dcsupport@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk and pay the appropriate fee using the online payment system: <https://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/pay-online>.