

Pre-Application Advice Guidance

Why seek pre-application advice?

If you wish to seek advice from one of our planners before making a formal planning application then you can apply to use for pre-application advice.

North West Leicestershire District Council welcomes and actively encourages informal pre-application discussion before those proposing development submit an application for planning permission.

Such advice is intended to streamline the planning process and remove delays by informing would be applicants of the issues associated with a development project.

It also provides an opportunity to outline the Council's expectations and the provision of informal without prejudice opinion of the likelihood of success at the formal planning stage.

Please note that this service will incur a fee.

Pre-application information requirements

The proposal must be accompanied by:-

- A completed pre-application advice form;
- A location plan clearly identifying the correct location of the site ;
- A sketch or outline drawing of the proposed plans, indicating the general layout of the site and size of the proposal; and
- The correct application fee.

The forms that are required to be completed are provided are either:-

Householder/Minor/Other Pre-Application Advice Form
Major Pre-Application Advice Form

How to submit your pre-application advice request

You can submit your enquiry by email development.control@nwleicestershire.gov.uk or by letter to North West Leicestershire District Council, Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ.

Remember that your submission will need to be accompanied by the correct fee, which can be found below in this document otherwise your submission will not be valid.

How to submit the pre-application advice fee

If you are submitting a pre-application advice enquiry to us by email, you are also able to make the pre-application advice fee by BACS using the following details:-

Sort code: 30-94-97
Account number: 00371029
Acc Name: North West Leicestershire District Council
Bank: Lloyds Bank
Description: PAA [insert site address]

Once the fee has been paid, please submit your enquiry to us by emailing development.control@nwleicestershire.gov.uk and confirm that the fee has been paid by BACS.

If you are unable to make payment by BACS please call 01530 454665 and a member of our Planning Support Team will be able to take a card payment.

Please note that for minor pre-application enquiries there is an additional fee for meetings charged at £120. Meetings are only possible where you have paid for a written response and meeting at the same time. It will not be possible to just pay for a meeting (without paying for a written responses) and it will not be possible to request and pay for a meeting, after the written response has been issued.

Once the correct information has been submitted and the pre-application fee paid, we will allocate your enquiry to a case officer and will aim to respond to your enquiry within 28 days. If the enquiry is submitted with insufficient information or without the fee, then the 28 day time period will not commence until sufficient details are provided.

Are there any exemptions to fees?

The enquiries that would be excluded from the charge schedule would be limited to:-

- enquiries relating to Listed Building Consent;
- works to trees;
- telecommunications;
- requests from a Parish or Town Council for their own development; and
- where the development is for the direct benefit of a registered disabled person.

Householder/minor/other enquiries

Our service will include:-

- An overview of any relevant planning history;
- A list of relevant policies;
- A list of site constraints;
- A list of relevant consultees that would be consulted on an application;
- A list of information required to accompany the planning application;
- An assessment on the principle of development;

- An assessment on layout, design and impact upon residential amenity where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Urban Design Officer where necessary and suggestions and options to improve layout, design and impact upon residential amenity, where this is possible;
- Where impacts upon heritage assets and trees is considered to be relevant, an assessment from the Council's Conservation Officer and Tree Officer;
- A list of other relevant material considerations, which are not covered above and contact details of relevant consultees; and
- An officer's professional opinion on whether the scheme as presented is likely to receive a favourable recommendation.

Meetings are only possible where you have paid for a written response and meeting at the same time. It will not be possible to just pay for a meeting (without paying for a written response) and it will not be possible to request and pay for a meeting, after the written response has been issued.

Meetings are restricted to 1 hour maximum and all meetings are to be undertaken virtually at this time. A site meeting will be undertaken at the request of officers or in exceptional circumstances, only.

We will aim to provide a written response (and a meeting if also initially paid for) within 28 days of receipt of payment and the pre-application request.

Householder/minor/other enquiry fees

	Written Response	An additional maximum 1 hour meeting (currently to be undertaken virtually), only where the written response has also been paid for	Total combined fee, where written response and meeting is requested to be paid at the time of submission
Certificates of Lawful Use – Existing and Proposed	£70	We do not offer a meeting with this type of enquiry	
Advertisements	£75	We do not offer a meeting with this type of enquiry	
Householder/Domestic (extensions or outbuildings to your home)	£90	We do not offer a meeting with this type of enquiry	
Change of Use	£190	£ 120 hourly rate	£310
1-2 dwellings	£225	£ 120 hourly rate	£345
3-4 dwellings	£460	£ 120 hourly rate	£580

5-9 dwellings	£900	£ 120 hourly rate	£1,020
Other developments creating floorspace of less than 500 sq metres (measured externally)	£360	£ 120 hourly rate	£480
Other Developments creating floorspace of between 500 sq metres and up and including 999 square metres (measured externally)	£720	£ 120 hourly rate	£840
All Other Development not falling within any of the categories (variation of conditions/car park and road and certificates).	£145	£ 120 hourly rate	£265
Where a development proposal falls within one or more category, the higher fee will apply.			

All fees are inclusive of VAT.

Major development enquiries

Major applications comprise more than 10 dwellings, a proposed floor area of more than 1000m² or a site area of larger than one hectare.

Our service has been split into a two stage process

- Stage 1 – Overview and
- Stage 2 – Detailed

Within each stage there is the option for just a written response, or a written response and a meeting.

Stage 1 (Overview)

Stage 1 provides an overview of the potential issues and an opinion on the principle of development only. There is also the option for a meeting with the case officer, in addition to the written advice, which is an additional charge.

Stage 1A Overview Written Response will include:-

- An overview of relevant planning history
- A list of relevant policies
- A list of relevant consultees
- A list of information required to accompany the planning application
- An assessment on the principle of development
- The relevant material considerations and contact details of relevant consultees
- An officer's professional opinion on whether the principle of development is acceptable.

Stage 1B Overview Written Response and Meeting will include:-

- An overview of relevant planning history
- A list of relevant policies
- A list of relevant consultees
- A list of information required to accompany the planning application
- An assessment on the principle of development
- The relevant material considerations and contact details of relevant consultees
- An officer's professional opinion on whether the principle of development is acceptable
- A maximum 1 hour meeting with the case officer to discuss the elements set out above.

The meeting is to be undertaken virtually at this time, and at the Council Offices in all other scenarios. A site meeting will only be undertaken at the request of officers or in exceptional circumstances.

Stage 2 (Detailed)

Stage 2 provides for a more detailed analysis of the proposal. There is also the option for a meeting with the case officer, in addition to the written advice, which is an additional charge.

Stage 2C Detailed Written Response will include:-

- An overview of relevant planning history;
- A list of relevant policies;
- A list of site constraints;
- A list of relevant consultees;
- A list of likely S106 contributions;
- An assessment on the principle of development;
- Where applicable, an assessment on layout, design and impact upon residential amenity where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Urban Design Officer and suggestions and options to improve layout, design and impact upon residential amenity, where this is possible;
- Where applicable, consideration of housing mix and tenure, where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Housing Officer and suggestions and options to improve the housing mix, where this is possible;
- Where applicable, consideration of the impacts upon heritage assets, where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Conservation Officer and suggestions and options to improve the impacts, where this is possible;
- Where applicable, consideration of the impacts upon protected trees, where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Tree Officer and suggestions and options to improve the impacts, where this is possible;
- The relevant other material considerations, which are not covered above and contact details of relevant consultees; and
- An officer's professional opinion on whether the scheme as presented is likely to receive a favourable officer recommendation.

Stage 2D Detailed Written Response and Meeting will include:-

- An overview of relevant planning history;
- A list of relevant policies;
- A list of site constraints;

- A list of relevant consultees;
- An assessment on the principle of development;
- Where applicable, an assessment on layout, design and impact upon residential amenity where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Urban Design Officer and suggestions and options to improve layout, design and impact upon residential amenity, where this is possible;
- Where applicable, consideration of housing mix and tenure, where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Housing Officer and suggestions and options to improve the housing mix, where this is possible;
- Where applicable, consideration of the impacts upon heritage assets, where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Conservation Officer and suggestions and options to improve the impacts, where this is possible;
- Where applicable, consideration of the impacts upon protected trees, where the enquiry includes sufficient information in order for this to be assessed. Input from the Council's Tree Officer and suggestions and options to improve the impacts, where this is possible;
- The relevant other material considerations, which are not covered above and contact details of relevant consultees;
- An officer's professional opinion on whether the scheme as presented is likely to receive a favourable recommendation; and
- A maximum 1.5 hour meeting to discuss the elements set out above with the case officer and also the Urban Design Officer, Housing Officer, Tree Officer and Conservation Officer, if necessary.

You can decide whether to opt directly for Stage 1 (A or B) or Stage 2 (C or D). If you initially choose Stage 1 and then decide after to also to progress to Stage 2, only the different between the fees, would be applicable.

This is on the basis of the Stage 2 being the same site and development type and paid for within 56 days of the response on the Stage 1 advice.

In terms of options and fees, two examples are provided below:-

- Example 1 – you submit a scheme for 10-49 dwellings through Stage 1A (Overview Written Response) paying £1,200. The principle of development is deemed by the case officer to be acceptable and you wish for more detailed advice in terms of layout, design etc. and would like to progress through to Stage 2A therefore only paying an additional £1,200, (to total £2,400) for the difference between the two stages.
- Example 2 – you submits a scheme for 10-49 dwellings directly to Stage 2A (missing out Stage 1A) and pay the fee of £2,400 from the off-set to discuss the principle of development *and* detailed matters.

If Stage 1A is selected we will aim to provide a written response within 28 days.

If Stage 1B is selected we will aim to provide a written response and a meeting within 28 days.

If Stage 2A is selected we will provide a written response within 28 days.

If Stage 2D is selected we will aim to provide a written response and a meeting within 28 days.

The meeting is to be undertaken virtually at this time, and at the Council Offices in all other scenarios. A site meeting will only be undertaken at the request of officers or in exceptional circumstances.

Major development enquiry fees

	Stage 1A - Overview Written Response	Stage 1 B– Overview Written Response and 1 hour Meeting	Stage 2C – Detailed Written Response	Stage 2D – Detailed Written Response and 1.5 hour Meeting
Major Residential 10-49 dwellings	£1,200 (inc VAT)	£1,440 (inc VAT)	£2,400 (inc VAT)	£2,880 (inc VAT)
Strategic Residential 50 + dwellings	£2,250 (inc VAT)	£2,700 (inc VAT)	£4,500 (inc VAT)	£5,400 (inc VAT)
Major Floor Area 1,000 sqm – 9,999 sqm (measured externally)	£1,200 (inc VAT)	£1,440 (inc VAT)	£2,400 (inc VAT)	£2,880 (inc VAT)
Strategic Floor Area 10,000 sqm + (measured externally)	£2,250 (inc VAT)	£2,700 (inc VAT)	£4,500 (inc VAT)	£5,400 (inc VAT)
Development of 1 hectare or more all Other Development not falling within any of the categories i.e. solar farm	£1,200 (inc VAT)	£1,440 (inc VAT)	£2,400 (inc VAT)	£2,880 (inc VAT)
Where a development falls within more than one category, the higher fee will apply.				
If any further additional meetings, beyond those set out above are required after the Stage 2D then this will be charged at the following rates (and restricted to a 1.5 hour meeting) Residential 10-49 dwellings = £480 Residential 50 + dwellings = £900 All other development = £480 Floor Area 1,000 sqm – 9,999 sqm = £480 Floor Area 10,000 sqm + = £900				

All fees are inclusive of VAT.

Our pre-application commitments

- We will acknowledge receipt of requests within 5 working days.
- We will advise you if your request is invalid, explaining the reasons why and allowing you time to submit any missing information. If a fee has been submitted for advice without all of the necessary information and the information is not received within 20 working days following a request, the fee will be returned with £30 deducted for administration costs.
- We will aim provide a written response within 28 days* of a valid request*.
- We will aim to provide a written response and meeting with 28 days* of a valid request.
- *Should circumstances arise where we know we will be unable to respond back directly to you within the 28 day timeframe, we will let you know the reason for the delay at our earliest opportunity and advise on a new timeframe, to reflect the reason for the delay.
- All meetings are to be undertaken virtually at this time, and at the Council Offices in all other scenarios. A site meeting will only be undertaken at the request of officers or in exceptional circumstances.
- Any advice given by Council officers for pre-application enquiries does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council in respect of any future planning applications;
- Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith, based on existing planning policies and standards, and without prejudice to the formal consideration of any future planning application which will be the subject of public consultation and maybe decided by the Council's Planning Committee.
- It follows that officers cannot give any guarantees about the final formal decision that will be made on any future planning application.
- Any advice given in relation to planning history of the site, planning constraints or statutory designations does not constitute a formal response under the provisions of the Local Land Charges.

Please note that pre-application advice is only an informal opinion and does not constitute a formal or guaranteed outcome, nor prejudice the formal consideration of any application by the council against local and national planning policies and current guidance at the time a formal application is received.

Confidentiality

We send a consultation letter to the relevant Ward Member for every pre-application enquiry and ask for any comments they may have. We ask Members to treat this confidentiality and not share with members of the public.

It should be noted, however, as a matter of course, requests for pre-application advice will not automatically be treated on a confidential basis. The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 require us to make recorded information available to members of the public, if requested.

Pre-application advice may only be treated as confidential if you have specified in your submission clear, demonstrable issues of commercial sensitivity or other specified reasons why this information may not be disclosed. A public interest test may also be applied.