

Dumfries and Galloway Council

PLANNING SERVICES

Householder & Local Pre-Application Enquiry

Guidance Notes - November 2021



The benefits of pre-application advice

Dumfries and Galloway Council is committed to providing reliable pre-application advice as part of a positive and proactive planning service. The process aims to take some of the uncertainty out of the planning application process and allow applicants to make more informed decisions when considering development proposals.

The fee structure for pre-application advice has been devised to reflect the scale and complexity of development proposed. For more information on fees please refer to the [Schedule of Fees](#).

What advice will be offered?

The pre-application advice service provides constructive advice in writing on the proposed development, including an indication of whether the proposal is likely to gain policy support. We will:-

- Identify relevant planning constraints (e.g. conservation area, flood risk area) and any other material planning considerations that apply to the site/development and would be taken into account in the assessment of an application
- Identify internal Council services and/or external agencies that may require to be consulted at the application stage. If there are particular issues you wish to get consultee advice on (i.e. visibility, noise impacts, etc) we can arrange for that advice to be provided too, although you should note that this will add an additional three weeks to the enquiry response time. If the consultee does not provide us with a response, you will be given the option of receiving your response without it, or waiting further. If more than 2 consultations are required, you should consider using the Major, EIA & Complex Local Enquiry Service.
- Provide details of any relevant planning history of the site.
- Identify the key Local Development Plan policies and supplementary guidance that would be applied in the assessment of an application
- Identify any particular national policy or guidance that would apply to the proposal
- Identify any possible planning obligation or developer contribution that may apply.
- Provide a planning officer's assessment of the proposal summarising the key issues likely to arise in the assessment of an application
- Identify any specific submission requirements that would be expected to accompany a subsequent application for planning permission (i.e. bat survey, noise impact assessment, etc)
- Give an indication as to the likely acceptability of the proposal when assessed against Council planning policy and the likelihood of an application being recommended for approval.

Additional services offered

In the majority of cases, the above desk top assessment will be sufficient to allow us to prepare a comprehensive response to your enquiry. However, further services are also available should you require them, as set out below. An additional fee will apply in both cases, as set out in the [Schedule of Fees](#).

Meeting

A planning officer will contact you to arrange the meeting within 10 days of acknowledgment of the enquiry. The meeting will be held electronically via MS Teams and scheduled for 30 minutes. It is recommended that you request this service where there are complex site-specific issues arising from the site or the proposal. In selecting this service, you should provide a summary of the matters you wish to discuss to allow meaningful discussion. Whilst the planning officer will not be able to provide a view on the merits of the proposal at that stage, the discussion will feed into the follow-up written advice.

Site visit

A planning officer will visit the site before preparing the written enquiry response. This service should be requested if you are seeking advice on specific matters relative to the particular site, and you should provide a summary of what you want the planning officer to take into account (e.g. design of building in its context, assessment of Small Building Group, potential overlooking/overshadowing issue, etc). Unless you advise us that the site cannot be accessed, the visit will normally be unaccompanied and unannounced. Whilst the planning officer will not be able to provide a view on the merits of the proposal at that stage, the site visit will feed into the follow-up written advice.



Information that should be submitted in support of your application

The standard of pre-application advice that we can offer is often dependent on the level and quality of information that you are able to submit. The more information that is provided about the proposal, the more comprehensive the advice that can be given.

The [Householder & Local Pre-Application Enquiry Form](#) is available online. The information that should be submitted with the completed form and fee is set out below. The drawings do not require to be architecturally drawn but should be produced to a metric scale and to a reasonable standard to allow a full assessment and determination of the proposal.

- Location plan(s) with application site clearly outlined in red. The plan(s) should be to a scale appropriate to the location so that site can be easily identified. In most cases, 1:2500 or 1:1250 should suffice but in rural or remote locations 1:5000 scale plans may be necessary.
- A site layout plan with the proposed development clearly shown including any proposed access and parking arrangements and details of any existing trees or hedgerows on the site. The plan should show the relationship with any surrounding properties. Site plans should normally be to a scale of 1:500 or 1:200.
- Details of the current and proposed used of the site/building.

Subject to the type of development proposed, the following information should be submitted as appropriate.

- Sketch floor plans and elevations (to scale). Proposed materials should also be indicated. Where possible drawings should also show adjacent buildings to identify the context of the scheme.
- Existing floor plans and elevations
- Photographs of the site and surrounding area if necessary
- Design and Access Statement
- Photomontages and/or computer images



Application fee

Please refer to the Schedule of Fees for the amount to be paid, which must accompany the application. Payment can be made by [Pay it](#) on Dumfries and Galloway Council's homepage.

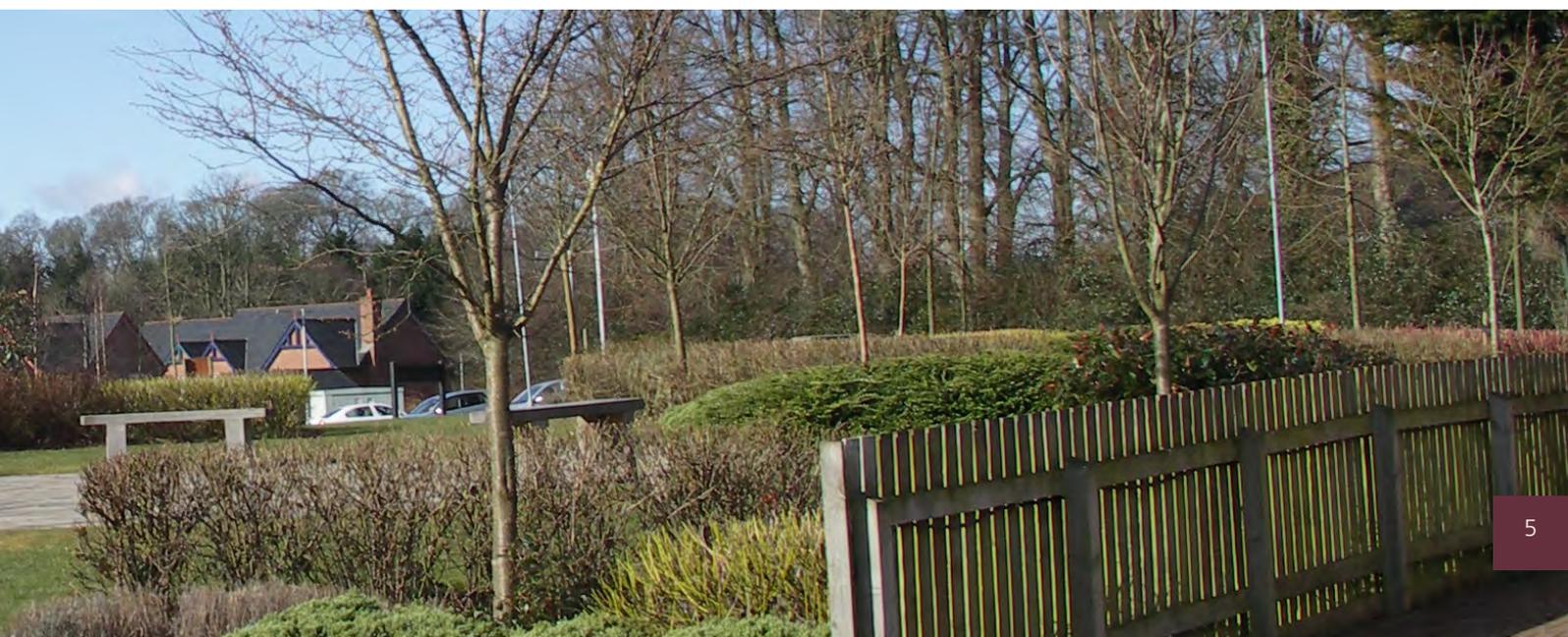
Submitting your application

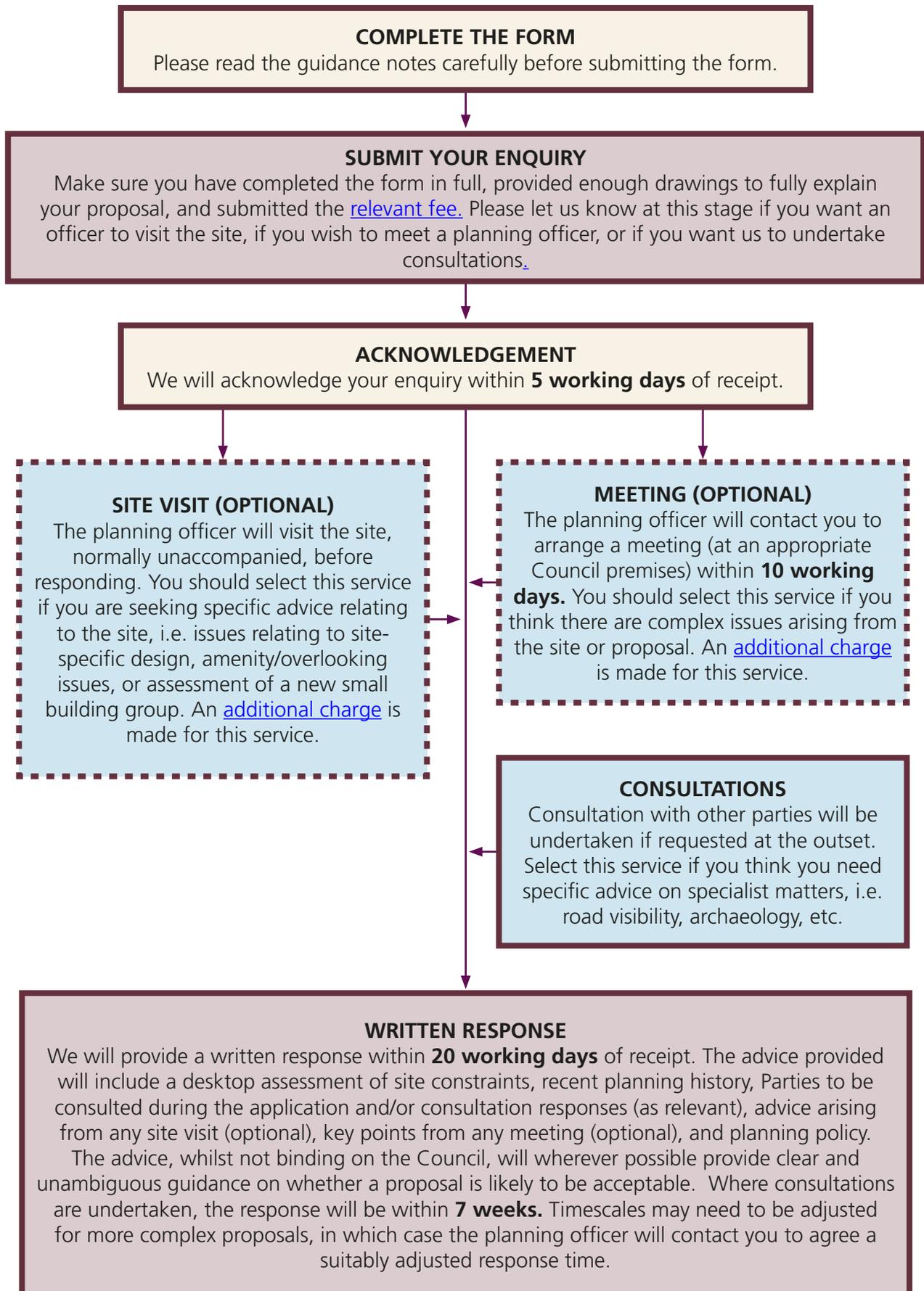
The enquiry form and drawings should be submitted in electronic format to planning@dumgal.gov.uk

What happens next?

On receipt, enquiries will be checked to ensure that sufficient information has been provided and the appropriate fee has been paid. Confirmation of receipt of a complete enquiry will usually be given within 5 working days.

A planning officer will then assess your enquiry and provide a written response within 20 working days (4 weeks), or 7 weeks if you have requested consultations. If you have requested a meeting, this will be arranged within 10 days. Timescales may need to be adjusted for more complex proposals, in which case the planning officer will contact you to agree a suitably adjusted response time.





Disclaimer

Pre-application advice is given without prejudice to any decision that the Council as planning authority may make in respect of any future planning application for planning permission. Unless the option of a site visit has been chosen or there are specific reasons why consultations have been undertaken, the advice provided will only be based on a desktop assessment of the proposal against planning policy and guidance. Furthermore, other issues may arise during the detailed consideration of a formal planning application that may not have been evident at the pre-application stage and which may be material to any decision made.

Please also note that correspondence and details relating to pre-application enquiries are treated confidentially. However, if a request is made under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 we may be obliged to reveal details of your enquiry. Your enquiry will not be treated as confidential once a planning application has been submitted and is in the public domain. If you believe your enquiry is confidential, please explain why on the enquiry form.

Other sources of advice

The planning system operates in a fully open and transparent manner and the advice we provide you will be based on information and policies that are all in the public domain. Should you not wish to use the pre-application enquiry service, you will be able to find the relevant information and policies online. Most of the enquiries we receive relate to one of the following development types and relevant guides have been produced to assist, all of which are available on our [Planning Advice and Enquiries](#) webpage.

[Alterations and Extensions to Dwellinghouses](#) – This provides detailed advice to guide the design of a house extension or alteration.

[Planning for Small Scale Residential Development](#) – This assists in the planning of either a single dwellinghouse or a small residential development of up to four houses, including conversion of existing buildings and renovation projects which bring derelict dwellings back into use.

[Practice Note \(Housing in the Countryside\)](#) – This gives guidance on new dwellings proposed on the basis of agricultural or rural business need.

[Planning for Small & Medium Businesses](#) – This gives guidance on a range of small business types such as home-based businesses (e.g. childminding, home office), tourism and recreation (e.g. caravans, chalets, B&Bs, rural business, farm diversification), town centre businesses (e.g. shops, cafes, advertisements) as well as general business and industry proposals in urban areas.

For other types of development, you should refer to adopted [Supplementary Guidance](#) and the [Local Development Plan](#).

Before submitting an application you are advised to investigate the [Planning Constraints](#) and [History](#) of the site.

Permitted development enquiries

Planning permission is generally required for new buildings, major alterations to dwellinghouses, and most alterations to other buildings, and to change the use of buildings or land. However, some works (usually very small scale proposals) do not require planning permission. Relevant guidance is available on [What Needs Planning Permission](#).

If you require informal written advice you can submit a [Permitted Development Enquiry](#) to us.

If formal confirmation that a proposal does not require planning permission is required, you should submit a [Certificate of Lawfulness for a Proposed Use or Development](#).