

# South Ayrshire Council Planning Service

## Guidance Note on Pre-Application Enquiries

Please read these notes carefully prior to submitting a Pre-Application Enquiry

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## 1. Scope of Guidance

Pre-Application advice is intended to guide and inform the formulation of your development proposals before you submit a formal Planning application. It provides an opportunity for you to discuss your proposals with a planning officer, before going to the expense of having detailed drawings and specifications prepared by an architect (or other design professional). It should provide more certainty for your project and assist you in making informed decisions before deciding to progress to the cost and submission of a formal Planning application. It is hoped that the Pre-Application Enquiry process is an engaging and helpful experience. The advice provided by a Planning officer can help bring forward ideas to improve your proposals.

## 2. Pre-Application Enquiries that will be considered

We will provide Pre-Application feedback in the following circumstances:

- Proposals for sites allocated as development opportunities in the South Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2.
- Proposals for 'Major' developments as defined by [The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Development\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009](#).
- Proposals for electricity generating stations, overhead powerlines, pipelines, and associated infrastructure including pre-application enquiries from the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit.
- Proposals by Services of the Council; e.g. for local authority housing or land sales.
- Any enquiries received that the Planning Service considers would be appropriate to deal with under the formal pre-application process, including proposals raising new or significant issues meriting early consideration through this process.

## 3. The Benefits of Pre-Application Advice

Pre-Application advice helps to highlight key issues, identify where further information may be required and opportunities for improvements to your proposal(s). For 'Major' developments, key consultees may also be involved. In addition, the Pre-Application process will provide certainty on information requirements and processing timescales.

It is important to note that once the Pre-Application process has been concluded and you submit your Planning application, the Planning Service will consider your application based on the scheme and information submitted at the time of making the application. Detailed Service Standards set out more information on how we will process your Planning application, and these are available on our [website](#).

Obtaining Pre-Application advice can therefore prove to be very beneficial in providing certainty for your development proposal and information to be submitted with your Planning application.



## 4. Submitting a Pre-Application Enquiry

You can obtain a copy of the Pre-Application form from our [website](#).

Please email your completed application form and any accompanying documents to [Planning.Development@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.Development@south-ayrshire.gov.uk).

### 3.1 What to Submit?

Information is requested to assist the Planning Service in providing you with the most reliable advice that we can at this stage. If sufficient information is not supplied, the Planning Service may be unable to process your enquiry. The following information is required to help us achieve this:

- ✓ A location plan sufficient to reasonably locate the property in relation to surrounding geography with the site outlined in red (1:1250 or 1:2500 in scale)
- ✓ A block plan at a suitable scale to understand the relationship of the proposal within the context of the boundaries of the site and how the development may impact upon neighbouring properties
- ✓ Sketch plans suitable to understand the design of the proposal and how it relates to existing buildings on site
- ✓ For proposed changes of use, please provide floor plans as existing and as proposed
- ✓ Where possible, photographs of the site and buildings
- ✓ The development may require a Design Statement with a formal Planning application, therefore, you may wish to provide a draft Design Statement, if available

Once the form has been submitted, the application will be checked to ensure that sufficient information has been provided. If there is insufficient detail regarding the proposed amendments, or the application form is incomplete, we will write out to you to request the information/updated form as soon as possible.

## 3.2 Pre-Application Fees

Once in receipt of a competent submission, we will then make contact to seek payment for the submission based on the submission level, as explained below:



### Local/Major Developments

For local and major developments meeting criteria set out in Section 2:

- a) 20% of the planning application fee (subject to a minimum of £164 and a maximum of £1,092)
- b) In the case of a residential development, £221 for each new dwelling proposed (subject to a maximum of £1,092)



### Energy Developments

For prior to the submission of applications for energy consent to the Scottish Ministers:

- a) 20% of the planning application fee (subject to a minimum of £164 and a maximum of £5,250)

Fees are calculated in consideration of the complexity and scale of developments, and the Officer time involved in considering the proposals. In some cases, we may seek input from external consultants and the reasonable cost of sourcing and securing such advice will be sought from the applicant/agent.

Please note that charges for Pre-Application advice are entirely separate from statutory Planning application fees and therefore the cost of advice is not deducted from the submission fee of a subsequent Planning application.

## 5. How does the Planning Service assess a Pre-Application Enquiry?

Once the Planning Service is satisfied that sufficient information (include the requisite fee) has been provided, we will then commence our assessment of your submission.

The Planning Service will process your personal data in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).

Each case will be considered on an individual basis, assessing the merits and aspects for improvements.

The Planning Officer will consider matters such as:

- Do the proposal(s) comply with policies and guidance?
- Do the proposal(s) raise amenity issues for neighbours?
- Do the proposal(s) raise any Planning issues such as transport implications, e.g., an increase or reduction of parking?
- Is the design and materials compatible with the character of the area?
- Any other material considerations?

### 4.1 How long will it take?

There is no statutory time period within which the Planning Authority is required to conclude a Pre-Application Enquiry.

The following targets have been set to assist with prioritisation of Officer casework, and to inform customer's expectations of timescales for determination that are likely to apply to the application process (weeks taken from date of competent submission lodged):

- 🕒 Local/Other Development: 6 weeks
- 🕒 Major/Energy Development: 8 weeks

## 4.2 What advice will you receive?

You will receive a written response, advising of the acceptability, or otherwise, of the principle of the development, drawing particular attention to any aspects that should be amended and any suggestions that we consider may add value and enhance your proposal. We will endeavour to provide as constructive advice as possible including:

- Consideration of your proposal against the relevant policies of the Development Plan
- Identifying information that is likely to be required to accompany a Planning application (e.g., design statement, flood risk assessment, etc.),
- Identifying any possible Planning obligations or infrastructure/services provisions you may be required to meet as the developer,
- Any likely requirements for financial contributions from the developer,
- Indication whether the application will merit a processing agreement,
- Providing consultation responses (if consultation at pre-application stage was considered necessary and proportionate) or drawing your attention to key consultees (whom will likely be consulted at the formal application stage) and provide you with their contact details, and;
- Including an Officer view as to whether planning permission would likely be granted (or otherwise)\* and identify any process or timetable issues for processing a Planning application.

Once we issue our written response to your Pre-Application Enquiry, the process will be concluded.

### **Please note the following:**

- ! All documentation associated with pre-application enquiries may, at a future date, be made available to the public under the Freedom of Information Scotland Act 2002.
- ! The comments and advice in pre-application responses are made at an officer level only and are strictly without prejudice to the eventual decision of the Council as Planning Authority with regards to any future applications associated with the pre-application.

! We would draw your attention to the development plan for South Ayrshire which comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and South Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) 2022. In addition, you should be aware of the associated publications and guidance notes which also have been produced by the Council with regards to various topic areas. You should familiarise yourself with these documents where they relate to your particular enquiry. Please see links to these documents below:

- [National Planning Framework 4 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)
- [Local development plan 2 - South Ayrshire Council \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

### 4.3 If you are unhappy with the service provided

Please direct any complaints to the Service Lead – Planning and Building Standards in the first instance by email to [Planning.Development@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.Development@south-ayrshire.gov.uk). Complaints can be escalated via the Council's complaints procedure and, if necessary, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Please note that the Council can only address complaints relating to the service itself, not the nature of the advice offered.

## 6. Freedom of Information

There is a possibility that, under the Freedom of Information Act, we will be asked to provide information regarding enquiries for Pre-Application advice and copies of any advice provided or correspondence entered into. This information may only be withheld if its disclosure could prejudice commercial interests, inhibit the free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views during the Planning process, or could prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. Generally, notes and correspondence relating to Pre-Application discussions will be treated as confidential, unless there are insufficient grounds to maintain its confidentiality during the process of a Freedom of Information request. We cannot therefore give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

## 7. Other Helpful Information

If there is any relevant Planning history of the site within your Enquiry, this is available on our [website](#). This may assist you in understanding how other proposals were considered.

Our Local Development Plan, Planning Policy and Supplementary Planning guidance are available from our [website](#).

The Council publishes environmental information including coal assessment areas, listed buildings, conservation areas, and areas of archaeological interest on our [website](#).

Environmental designations that may affect your proposal can be obtained from [NatureScot](#) (formerly *Scottish Natural Heritage*), [Scottish Environmental Protection Agency](#) (SEPA), [The Coal Authority](#), [Historic Environment Scotland](#) (HES), [Ayrshire Roads Alliance](#) (ARA) and [Environmental Health](#).

We encourage applicants to apply for and submit applications via the [ePlanning Scotland website](#), as this is the most efficient method of submitting. [Notes for guidance on submitting](#) are also available.

You may require a Building Warrant and would advise you to contact [Building Standards](#).

*\* While we will make every effort to ensure that any Pre-Application advice is as accurate and comprehensive as possible, any advice given by officers in response to a Pre-Application advice request does not constitute a formal decision of South Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority and is given without prejudice to the determination of a Planning application and any views expressed are not binding and are not intended to prejudice South Ayrshire Council's formal determination of any subsequent Planning application.*