



# South Staffordshire Council

## Guidance notes for submitting a householder planning application

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## Introduction

This document relates to applications for alterations or extensions to a dwelling within the curtilage of the residential property, such as conservatories, side or rear extensions and garden sheds. It does not apply to the erection of buildings not associated with the dwelling, such as a separate dwelling, or the change of use of a dwelling (or part of it) to other uses.

In this document, we will explain the first part of the householder planning application process, known as validation. In particular, we will clearly describe what you need to submit if we are to validate your application at the first attempt.

## Permitted development

If you have not done so already, it is worth checking that you need to submit an application at all. As a householder, you have fairly extensive rights to alter and extend your home without applying formally. Works that fall into this category are called 'permitted development'.

The 'interactive house' and 'interactive terrace' on the Planning Portal are good places to start. You can find them here:

[Interactive House – PlanningPortal](#)  
[Interactive House – Planning Portal](#)

We do not provide free informal advice as to whether you need planning permission. If you require a formal determination as to whether you need planning permission, you must apply for a lawful development certificate (LDC). Further advice is available on the Council website at:

[Do I need planning permission? | South Staffordshire District Council \(sstaffs.gov.uk\)](#)

## Pre-application discussions

In any case, we strongly advise you or your agent to contact us before submitting a planning application if it is likely to be complex, particularly if the proposal affects a listed building or involves a property within a conservation area or the Green Belt.

As before, you should have some sketches prepared and an idea of your proposal's measurements before you contact us; without them, we will be unable to give you any useful advice. We do charge for this service and, since it covers much of the same ground as a planning application, it can take some time. Further advice is available on the Council website at:

[Do I need planning permission? | South Staffordshire District Council \(sstaffs.gov.uk\)](#)

## Listed building consent or planning permission for demolition within a conservation area

It should be clear from your pre-application discussions whether either of these apply to you, but as a general rule, if you are visibly altering a listed building, you will need to apply for **listed building consent**.

**Demolitions** within conservation areas require additional planning permission; however, you do not need to apply for planning permission for other works **just** because your property is within a conservation area. You also do not need it if the structure you intend to demolish is less than:

- 115 cubic metres in volume, for a building;
- one metre high, for a wall next to a road or footpath; or
- two metres high, for any other wall.

## Submitting your application

Once you have determined that you must make an application, what kind you must make and what form it will take, you are ready to submit it. The most efficient way to do so is through the Planning Portal at:

[www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

You can attach electronic copies of your drawings, where available, and send us paper copies of any others. The website will guide you through the process.

If you do not have access to the internet, you can post your application to us or drop it off in person. Our address is:

Development Control  
South Staffordshire Council  
Wolverhampton Road  
Codsall  
Wolverhampton  
WV8 1PX

If you submit documents on paper, you must send us three copies of everything. We can make the additional copies if necessary. There is a charge of 50p per sheet to cover our costs.

We will now look at exactly what your application should include.

## National requirements

There are some things that you **must** submit with every application, no matter how small your proposal might seem or where it might be. These are **national requirements** and we cannot accept your application without them.

Please note that if you choose to submit your application in paper form, you **must** submit **three copies** of the form, plans and any supporting information.

### The standard application form

The Planning Portal will generate the correct application form automatically, but otherwise you will most likely use the 'householder' application form. Other forms are available that also include listed building or conservation area consent. You can find every application form on our website or by request.

### Ownership certificate and agricultural land declaration

You **must** complete **one** of the four certificates towards the end of the application form to confirm who owns the land within the red line on your location plan (the application site). If you own:

- **all** of the application site, **none** of which is an **agricultural holding**, complete **Certificate A**.
- **part** or **none** of the application site and you know **all** the other owners, complete **Certificate B** and **Notice N<sup>o</sup> 1**. You must send the notice to the other owner(s) and include a copy in your application.
- **part** or **none** of the application site and you know **some** of the other owners, complete **Certificate C** and the **Householder Notice**. You must have the notice published in a local newspaper and include a copy in your application.
- **part** or **none** of the application site and you know **none** of the other owners, complete **Certificate D** and the **Householder Notice**. You must have the notice published in a local newspaper and include a copy in your application.

**Notice N<sup>o</sup> 1** and the **Householder Notice** are available on our website or on request.

For these certificates, you 'own' the land if you have bought it outright (freehold) or have more than seven years left to run on your lease.

### The location plan

You must submit a location plan based on an up-to-date map at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500. The plan should show at least two named roads and surrounding buildings. You should name or number the properties you show to ensure that the exact location of the application site is clear.

You should clearly outline the application site in red; this will generally be the extent of your property. If you own any additional land, edge it in blue.

Whilst we do not have a licence to produce location plans, several companies have a service specifically designed for planning applications. You can either follow the links on the Planning Portal or call the National Map Centre on (020) 7222 2466.

## **Other plans**

In most cases, we will also require the following plans. Apart from the site plan, they will generally be drawn to a **scale** of **1:50** or **1:100**.

### ***Site plan***

This must be drawn to a scale of 1:500 or 1:200 and show:

- the direction of north.
- all existing and proposed buildings on the site.
- all buildings, roads and footpaths on land adjoining the site, including accesses.
- all public rights of way crossing or adjoining the site (including footpaths, bridleways and byways).
- the position of all trees on the site, and those on adjacent land that could influence or be affected by the development.
- the extent and type of any hard surfaces.
- all existing and proposed boundaries, like fences and walls.

### ***Existing and proposed elevations***

These show your property from the front, sides and rear. They should clearly show how the property looks now and how it would look after the proposed works. Even if you do not intend to change one or more of the elevations, you should include them in the drawing to make this clear.

If possible, use these drawings to show the materials and style you will use for windows and doors. If one of the elevations is attached or close to a neighbouring building, you should also show at least part of that building.

### ***Existing and proposed floor plans***

These show your property from above, one floor at a time where necessary. You should use these plans to indicate where you intend to add or demolish walls or whole buildings.

### ***Existing and proposed site sections and finished floor and site levels***

If your proposal involves any earthworks or your property slopes noticeably, you may need to include a cross-section of the site and/or a survey of spot heights to show how the proposal will affect them.

### ***Roof plans***

A roof plan is used to show the shape of the roof and is typically drawn at a scale smaller than the scale used for the floor plans. Details such as the roofing materials, vents and their location are typically specified on the roof plan.

## **Fee**

The flat-rate fee for householder applications. There is no additional charge for listed building or conservation area permission applications.

If you reapply within 12 months for similar development on the same site (for example, if you submit an amended proposal for an extension following a refusal), there is no fee for your application.

If we approve your application and you require:

- formal approval of details, such as materials or a landscape scheme; or
- a minor alteration, such as a repositioned window or reduced roof height

you will need to pay a further fee per request. Your case officer can advise you further towards the end of the application process.

### **Design and access statement**

A design and access statement is a document that essentially describes the thought process behind the proposals. You do not need to submit a design and access statement with a householder application unless your property is:

- a listed building;
- within a Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- within a conservation area.

In such cases, please consult the Design and Access Statements document at the foot of the application forms page on our website. Pages six and seven describe what your statement should contain.

## Local requirements

In some cases, we might need further information on an aspect of your proposal before we can determine it. If you think your proposal might require any of the following documents, you will save considerable time and effort if you contact us or the organisations indicated before submitting your application.

## Daylight assessment

Where your proposals might adversely affect the levels of light enjoyed by adjoining properties or building(s), including associated gardens or amenity space, then you may need to include a daylight/sunlight assessment in your application. Further information is available from the Building Research Establishment ([www.bre.co.uk](http://www.bre.co.uk)) and elsewhere.

Please note that, even if we grant planning permission, you must still ensure that your proposal is acceptable under other legislation, such as the Right to Light Act 1959. We cannot advise you directly on such matters, since they are covered by civil law, rather than planning law.

## Ecological survey and report

If your proposal might affect natural habitats and/or disturb protected species like bats, barn owls, badgers, great crested newts, you will need to conduct an ecological survey. In these cases, you will need to seek specialist advice from a qualified ecologist. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust ([www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk](http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk) or (01889) 880100) and Natural England ([www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) or 0845 600 3078) can also provide useful initial information.

## Flood risk assessment

You do not need to submit a full flood risk assessment with a householder application. However, if your property is within flood risk zones two or three, your proposal must demonstrate that any new development will be at or above existing floor levels, and that you have included flood proofing measures where appropriate. Failing that, you must show that finished floor levels will be set above the maximum extent of flooding. For further information, and to see if your property is within a flood risk zone, contact the Environment Agency ([www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) or 07808 506506).

## Heritage statement

Where your application involves a listed building, ancient monument or conservation area, your statement must also include a section on its heritage aspects. This section should begin by stating any relevant designations, i.e. whether it is listed and at what grade, or whether it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument or in a conservation area. Then it should go on to cover the effect of your proposals on the:

- special architectural and historic interest of the building;
- particular physical features of the building that are mentioned in or justify its designation as a listed building; and
- building's setting.

Further advice and information is available from the Staffordshire Historic Environment Register and our Conservation Officer ([planning@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:planning@sstaffs.gov.uk) or 01902 696000).

### **Parking and access provision**

If the proposal affects existing parking and access arrangements, then your site plan and other documents should provide details of the existing and proposed arrangements. These details should also be shown on the site layout plan.

If you are proposing a new or altered access, you will need to provide details of the existing and proposed visibility splay, accompanied by speed surveys if the splay will be below recommended limits. For further advice, please contact Staffordshire Highways ([www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/staffshighways](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/staffshighways), [highways@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@staffordshire.gov.uk) or 0300 111 8000).

### **Photographs and photomontages**

These provide useful background information and can help to show how large developments can be satisfactorily integrated within the street scene. It is worth including photographs if the proposal involves the demolition of an existing building or affects a conservation area or listed building.

### **Planning statement**

In general, you will not need to submit an additional planning statement with a householder application. However, if your proposal exceeds the normal policy limits on extensions in the Green Belt or Open Countryside, you will need to set out the 'very special circumstances' that you feel support our making an exception to policy in your case. As mentioned earlier, it is very important to discuss such proposals with us before submitting your application.

### **Structural survey**

If your proposal affects a listed building, or involves the conversion of a redundant structure to an annexe or additional residential accommodation, you will need to consult a qualified structural engineer and include their survey report in your application. This enables us to determine the suitability of the structure for conversion or the precise effect of your proposals on the integrity of the listed building, as the case may be.

### **Tree survey**

If your proposal might affect or be affected by trees on or near the site the Council will require a survey of the tree to be carried out. The survey should include the positions of the trees accurately shown on a scale plan. The survey should also include a report. Together the plan and report should accurately describe the trees':

- species
- condition
- trunk diameter in millimetres measured at 1.5m above ground level
- crown spread



- root protection area (based on a circle with a radius of 12 times trunk dia).

The information should be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced arboriculturalist.

The Council will seek to retain and protect the best trees and other vegetation where possible. However, if your proposal involves the removal of or any works to existing trees then this should be clear from your application plans and documents.

You can get further advice on trees and related matters from our Senior Arboricultural Officer, Gavin Pearce ([trees@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:trees@sstaffs.gov.uk))

## Checklist

- 1. Householder application for planning permission for works; or**  
**2. Extension to a dwelling, including demolition within a conservation area; or**  
**3. Extension to a dwelling and listed building consent.**

National requirements	Tick
Completed application form, including ownership certificate and agricultural land declaration (three copies)	
Copy of Notice N <sup>o</sup> 1 or Householder Notice, where necessary (one copy)	
Location plan (three copies)	
Site / block plan (three copies)	
Existing and proposed elevations (three copies each)	
Existing and proposed floor plans (three copies each)	
Existing and proposed site sections / floor levels, where necessary (three copies each)	
Existing and proposed roof plans, where necessary (three copies each)	
Design and access statement, where necessary (three copies)	
Application fee (as appropriate, except for resubmissions)	

<b>Local requirements</b> may include some or all of the following:	
Biodiversity survey and report	
Daylight/sunlight indicators	
Flood protection details	
Heritage statement	
Parking and access provision	
Photographs/photomontages	
Planning statement	
Structural survey	
Tree survey and landscaping details	