

Guidance notes on validation checklists for Planning Applications



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East Cambridgeshire
District Council

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Section 1 – General Information

Introduction

When we receive planning applications we check to see that we have all the information we need to determine an application, that the plans, certificates and fee are correct. This process is referred to as the validation of the application. It is in your interests to get this correct as the application is not passed to a planning officer and processed until it is valid.

We have produced Validation Checklist forms for each type of planning application and ask that you use these.

This guide explains what information we will normally require to accompany an application to enable them to be validated. We will only require information that will be a material consideration in the determination of the application. Be aware that certain information is essential before an application can be validated.

If a scheme is acceptable and permission is granted then conditions can be imposed requiring the submission of further information. Further applications to discharge these conditions, for which a fee is payable, then need to be submitted and therefore you may wish to consider submitting additional information at planning application stage to avoid the submission of further details later which may hold up your development.

Common areas where information can be provided beforehand, to prevent conditions having to be applied, include:

- Materials – ie. Supplier and make of bricks/tiles
- Boundary treatments
- Hard Landscaping – particularly showing permeable surfaces
- Parking and turning layouts to satisfy highway requirements
- Tree protection details
- Soft Landscaping
- Drainage schemes
- Energy and Sustainability details
- External lighting details
- Contamination Surveys

As part of our pre-application process we will identify what information will need to accompany an application and you are therefore recommended to seek this advice. Further details can be found on our website (www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/pre-application-advice).

The fact that an application has been validated does not mean that the quality of the plans/documents has been fully assessed. The Local Planning Authority reserves the right to:

- **Seek further information with regard to the submitted plans/documents**
- **Seek information on material planning issues that have not been addressed in the application.**

These aspects will need to be satisfied before any decision is made on the application.

If during the course of the consideration of the application it becomes apparent that further information is required you will be contacted requesting the information and an extension of time to the determination of the application. We therefore ask you to carefully consider the constraints of a site before submitting your application; particularly as some of the additional information can take time to put together and survey work may need to be carried out at a particular time of year.

To understand the planning application process further, a set of leaflets are available on our website <http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/useful-planning-information>.

All information contained in this document is correct at the date of publication. It is likely that some requirements may change over time. Changes will be incorporated when the document is revised.

Common reasons why applications are invalid

Even though the checklist is supplied to try and ensure applications include all necessary documentation, omissions still occur, adding delay to the application process. The most common of these are:

- Design and Access Statement missing
- No location plan submitted (with North identified or missing licence and copyright information)
- No block plan submitted
- No existing elevation/floor plans submitted
- Certificate A/B/C/ D & merged Agricultural Holdings within the application form not signed
- Incorrect fee/no fee submitted
- Lack of tree survey
- Lack of ecological survey

What if further information or a fee is required?

We will endeavour to notify you within five working days, detailing the reasons for invalidity. We will specify what needs to be provided and give a timescale for the submission of the missing information or fee. If this is not submitted within the given timescale, the application will be returned to you and any fee paid returned minus an administration charge. Further details can be found on our website at <https://eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/why-applications-are-invalid>.

Online and electronic submissions

East Cambridgeshire is able to receive all applications electronically via the Planning Portal (www.planningportal.gov.uk).

Section 2 – Drawings, Plans and Certificates

Drawings

Drawings are preferred at A4 or A3, however larger drawings are acceptable. Where a drawing contains different elements of the proposal, they should be clearly grouped under headings. All drawings MUST include the following information:

- The scale of the drawing (1:20, 1:100, 1:200, 1:500, 1:1000, 1:1250 and 1:2500 as required by the drawing)
- Title to identify the development and subject of the drawing
- A unique drawing number which also indicates any revisions (e.g.1234Revision B)
- All revisions should be described to identify any changes (e.g. Revision A – Layout changed)
- A scale bar
- The date the plan was prepared or amended

Site Location Plan at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500

Such plans should show at least two named roads and surrounding buildings. If submitted based on OS data, the plan needs to contain the relevant licence information as required by copyright law. The properties shown should be numbered to ensure that the exact location of the application site is clear and the direction of North needs to be indicated. The application site must be edged clearly with a red line, including all land necessary to carry out the proposed development – for example, land required for access to the site from a public highway, visibility splays, landscaping, car-parking and open areas around buildings. If an existing access is going to be used, the red line needs to only go up to highway land. A blue line must be drawn around any other land owned or controlled by the applicant, close to, or adjoining the application site.

Site Layout Plan / Block Plan

Such Plans should be at a scale of 1:500 or 1:200, and should be on, or based on, an up to date licensed Ordnance Survey map or equivalent, and should accurately show:

- The proposed development in relation to the site boundaries, and other existing buildings on the site.
- All the buildings, roads and footpaths on land adjoining the site including access arrangements.
- The species, position, and spread of, all trees within 12 metres of any proposed building works.
- The extent and type of any hard surfacing.
- Boundary treatments including walls or fencing where this is proposed.
- The location, number and form of any vehicle or cycle parking.
- The location and shape of any vehicle turning area.
- Indicate the direction of North

Floor Plans and Elevations

Floor plans and elevations should be submitted at a scale of 1:100 or 1:50 for all new buildings and for all proposals where extensions/alterations are proposed to existing buildings. Elevations should be labelled according to orientation eg north, north-east rather than front, side etc to avoid ambiguity.

All sides of the existing building, as well as the proposed development, must be shown and these should indicate, where possible, the proposed building materials and the style, materials and finish of windows and doors. Blank elevations must also be included, if only to show that this is in fact the case. New buildings should also be shown in context with adjacent buildings (including property numbers where applicable). Finished floor levels will be required for new detached building(s). Where a proposed elevation adjoins another building or is in close proximity, the drawings should clearly show the relationship between the buildings, and detail the openings on each property.

Sections and levels

Cross section(s) through the proposed building(s) should be submitted at a scale of 1:100 or 1:50 in the following circumstances:

- Where a proposal involves a change in ground levels – illustrative drawings should be submitted to show both existing and finished levels.
- On sloping sites – full information is required concerning alterations to levels, the way in which a proposal sits within the site and, in particular, the relative levels between existing and proposed buildings. The drawings may take the form of contours, spot levels, or cross or long sections, as appropriate.
- For any new detached buildings finished levels will be required.

Ownership Certificates

You must complete an ownership certificate for all applications except:

- an application for Reserved Matters,
- works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders,
- Hedgerow removal Notice,
- Any Prior Notification application,
- notification of works to trees in Conservation Area areas,
- Applications for Express Consent to display an Advertisement,
- Certificate of Lawfulness applications,
- Any post decision application (Discharge of condition, Non material amendment).

These certificates are within the application form itself. For these purposes an ‘owner’ is anyone with a freehold interest, or leasehold interest, the unexpired term of which is not less than 7 years.

The responsibility for completing the appropriate Certificate relies entirely with the applicant. The Planning Authority has no records of the details of ownership or lease of land or buildings.

Fill in **Certificate A** if the applicant is the only person who owns the application site and none of the land is part of an agricultural holding. This is what the completed certificate A confirms.

Fill in **Certificate B** if the applicant does not own the application site or if the applicant owns the site but there are other people who also own it or have an interest in it (for example shared freeholders, leaseholders, agricultural tenants). You will need to list the names and addresses of any other people and confirm the date when you “served notice” (that is, formally told them) that you were making the application. This is what the completed certificate B confirms.

You should use **Certificate C** if you know some owners or agricultural tenants but not all of them. In this case you must also explain what reasonable steps you have taken to identify other owners and/or agricultural tenants. You will need to list the names and addresses of any other people and confirm the date when you “served notice” (that is formally told them) that you were making the application. You will also have to place a public notice in a newspaper circulating in area where the land lies.

You should use **Certificate D** if you do not know any of the owners and/or agricultural tenants. In this case you must also explain what reasonable steps you have taken to identify the owners. You will also have to place a public notice in a newspaper circulating in area where the land lies.

Please see the next section for the relevant notices needed for Certificates B, C or D

Notices

A notice to the owners of the application site must be used if Certificate B, C or D has been completed. A copy should be served on each of the individuals identified in the relevant Certificate and, if required, an advert published in the local newspaper. It will be helpful if a copy of each Notice served and advert if required, accompanies the application. The notices can be found on our website (www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/applying-permission).

Fees

The correct fee for your application may be found on our website, (www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/fees).

Section 3 – Local Validation Requirements - Supporting information

Affordable Housing Statement

When required to validate an application:

- Applications for 10 or more dwellings (or fewer dwellings if combined gross floorspace totals 1,000 square metres or more)
- Applications for dwellings on a site 1ha or more irrespective of the number of dwellings to be provided
- Applications for Outline permission for dwellings on sites over 0.5ha and the number of dwellings is unknown
- For affordable housing exception sites
- Applications submitted by Community Land Trusts

The Council will require an element of affordable housing provision on all schemes of 10 or more dwellings, or for fewer dwellings if the combined gross floorspace totals 1,000 square metres or more with such floorspace including the same floor area as determined to be liable for CIL purposes, or over 1 hectare, or over 0.5ha if the number of dwellings is unknown..

On housing schemes in the south of the district a minimum of 40% of the total number of dwellings to be provided will be sought This includes the parishes of Ashley, Bottisham, Brinkley, Burrough Green, Burwell, Cheveley, Chippenham, Dullingham, Fordham, Kennett, Kirtling, Lode, Reach, Snailwell, Stetchworth, Swaffham Bulbeck, Swaffham Prior, Westley Waterless and Woodditton.

On housing schemes in the north of the district, a minimum of 30% of the total number of dwellings to be provided will be sought. This includes the parishes of Coveney, Ely, Haddenham, Isleham, Little Downham, Littleport, Little Thetford, Mepal, Soham, Stretham, Sutton, Wentworth, Wicken, Wilburton, Witcham and Withcford.

For outline proposals up to 9 dwellings, the applicant needs to state (if known) whether the total floorspace will exceed a combined gross 1,000 square metres. If it will affordable housing will be sought and an affordable housing statement required to be submitted.

If the number of units in a development scheme is below the above thresholds, but the scheme is followed by an obviously linked subsequent scheme then the above thresholds may apply.

The affordable housing requirement will be assessed on the “gross” provision. If the proposal involves the demolition of existing dwellings the affordable element will be required on the number of dwellings to be constructed, regardless of how many there may have been before.

Account will be taken of any exceptional costs associated with the development (e.g. site remediation and infrastructure provision and other viability issues).

Where the minimum percentage for affordable provision results in a requirement for a fraction of a dwelling, the calculation will be rounded up for 0.5 or more, and rounded down for less than 0.5.

The precise mix in terms of tenure type and house sizes within a scheme will be determined by local circumstances at the time of full or reserved matters planning permission, including housing need, development costs and the availability of subsidy. Applicants should discuss the need in the locality with the Housing Specialist Strategy and Enabling Officer at East Cambridgeshire District Council. The affordable properties will be made available solely to people in housing need at an affordable cost, for the life of the property.

Applications (other than outline application with all matters reserved) should contain information on the number and location of affordable residential units, the number of bedrooms, the mix of units, the types of tenure, and details of any Registered Social Landlords acting as partners in the development.

Applications for planning permission for 10 or more dwellings or exceeding 1,000 square metres floorspace, or over 0.5 hectares if the number of properties is not known, or over 1 hectare will need to be accompanied by draft Heads of Terms for a s106 agreement, which will typically cover the details of the affordable housing, the construction of the units, their transfer to a Registered Social Landlord, occupancy restrictions and the procedure for the nomination of tenants. A failure to meet the policy will result in the refusal of the application and the government timescale for determination will be adhered to. Applicants will be expected to undertake to pay the District Council's, and where applicable, the County Council's, relevant legal fees relating to the s106.

The Council will ensure that the construction of the affordable element takes place prior to, or concurrently with, the overall development of the site, through a s106 Agreement.

It will not be appropriate to reduce the density on a site to avoid the affordable element. It is still a requirement to make the best and most efficient use of land.

Drivers – Paragraph 62 of NPPF, Policies HOU3, HOU4 and GROWTH6 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015, Statement on the Seeking of Affordable Housing Developer Contributions, endorsed by Planning Committee on 2 October 2019

Air Quality Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- When a proposal has the potential to cause or be affected by significant levels of air pollution or odour or any potential air quality matters for future occupants.

The assessment should provide sufficient information to enable the Council to assess the likely impact on local air quality or the impact on future occupiers affected by existing air quality issues.

Assessments are required for the larger scale types of development. Whilst smaller infill development is unlikely to require an air quality assessment, the cumulative effects of such development do have an impact on local air quality. Mitigation measures or contributions to any Air Quality Action Plan and / or the Pollution Management Programme may be sought.

Further advice can be sought from Environmental Health
(<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/pollution/air-quality>)

Drivers – Paragraph 181 of NPPF, Policy ENV9 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Biodiversity - Ecological Site Assessment, Ecological Survey and Protected Species Survey

When required to validate an application:

- Major applications (10 or more dwellings, 1,000 square metres or more floorspace or site area of 0.5 ha or more)
- Development proposal affecting internationally, nationally or locally designated sites
- Development proposals involving the demolition or conversion of disused buildings
- Development within 500m of an existing pond.

However, other applications may also require a survey.

The best way to establish this is by completing the Biodiversity Checklist produced by Cambridgeshire County Council
https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Cambridgeshire_Biodiversity_Checklist_2014.pdf and guidance notes
https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Biodiversity_Checklist_guidance_notes.pdf

There is also the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Group information documents for:

- Developers (<http://www.cpbiodiversity.org.uk/download/102/>)
- Householders (<http://www.cpbiodiversity.org.uk/download/103/>)

The Council's website includes information in relation to certain species (<http://www.eastcamb.gov.uk/planning/ecology-and-biodiversity>) and further information can be found by checking Natural England's standing advice (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>)

An initial ecological appraisal, or scoping survey, is undertaken to evaluate a site's potential to support protected species or other features that might constrain development. The survey is normally undertaken using standard 'extended Phase I Habitat survey' techniques and aims to gather enough information to enable potential constraints to be identified and recommendations for further specialist surveys, if required. If a scoping survey states that further survey work is required, the local planning authority will not be in a position to approve the application until the additional survey information has been submitted.

You can determine if your proposal is likely to require an ecological scoping survey by referring to Natural England's Standing Advice: (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals#standing-advice-for-protected-species>)

A Local Planning Authority is not able to impose a condition requiring ecological survey work to be carried out therefore failure to provide ecological/protected species information at the outset can significantly delay the processing of your planning application, and could result in the need for design and layout changes.

Please note that certain ecological surveys can only be undertaken at particular times of the year. Also a proposal does not necessarily need to be within a designated site to affect it.

Avoiding Conditions relating to biodiversity enhancement.

The council wishes to ensure, through planning decisions, that there is no net loss in biodiversity and a net gain is provided, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features. To avoid a condition being imposed requiring a biodiversity scheme/improvements to be submitted and approved it is recommended that biodiversity enhancement details are included with your application.

Drivers – Section 15 of NPPF, Policy ENV7 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Additional Questions Form (Form 1)

When required to validate an application:

Applications will not be made invalid because they lack the relevant CIL forms, however you are strongly advised to submit these with applications for the following types of development:

- All proposals for the creation of new dwellings, including flats
- All proposals for the extension of buildings falling in Use Class A (and associated sui generis) and C3 which create 100 square metres or more internal floorspace

CIL – Self build relief exemptions

If the necessary qualification requirements are met and the application process is completed within required timescales, an exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy will be available to anybody who is building their own home or has commissioned a home from a contractor, house builder or sub-contractor. Individuals benefiting from the exemption must own the property and occupy it as their principal residence for a minimum of 3 years after the work is completed. The exemption is applicable to homes built or commissioned by individuals for their own use. Self-build communal development also qualifies for the exemption where it meets the required criteria.

There is a set process which requires 4 steps to be undertaken within the required timescales. Failure to follow the set procedures within the required timescales will mean that the exemption will not be

obtained, or will be rescinded if previously obtained, and a full levy liability will be incurred. Failure to submit a commencement notice before building works begin will result in a surcharge.

The exemption must be applied for and obtained, and a commencement notice must be received by the collecting authority, prior to the commencement of the development (start of works on site).

For further information please visit the Council's CIL webpages (see <http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy>) and Supplementary Planning Document on Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations (adopted May 2013) (https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SPD%20Developer%20Contributions%20-%20Adopted%20Version_0.pdf)

Contaminated Land Investigation

When required to validate an application:

- When previous uses on or adjoining the site could have given rise to contamination such as former industrial and commercial processes, petrol filling stations, institutional uses, storage of chemicals (including on farms)
- When an initial desktop and walkover study suggests that contaminants may be present.

Where there is a possibility that previous uses of the site or adjacent land, could have given rise to contamination, we will expect to see results of investigations indicating whether or not contamination is present or likely to be present. Information on how it is proposed to deal with contamination will need to be submitted. As a first stage you should establish the former uses of the site, collect physical data, and undertake a walkover survey, and consult the regulatory authorities. Early discussions with our Environmental Health Team are recommended in order to clarify the process.

We recommend that a desktop study and walkover survey should be taken for almost every development, even greenfield sites, particularly if there have been previous agricultural uses. Sites which have only been used for residential development may have potential contaminants e.g. from domestic heating oil leaks, garages and basements.

Site proposing infiltration SUDS will need special attention to soakaway locations as these can mobilise contaminants and act as a pathway for contamination to groundwater.

Avoiding Conditions

Submit land contamination report for a proposed use that would be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination (for example residential) or where land is known or suspected contaminated.

Drivers – Paragraph 178 of NPPF, Policy ENV9 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and East Cambridgeshire Contaminated Land SPD <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/supplementary-planning-documents>

Design and Access Statement

When required to validate an application:

- Major development (10 or more dwellings, 1,000 square metres or more floorspace or site area of 0.5 ha or more)
- Listed Building Consent application
- Development in designated areas (ie conservation areas) if:
 - a) One or more dwellings
 - b) A building or buildings with a floorspace exceeding 100 square metres

Please note a Design and Access statement is not required for a Variation of Condition or Change of use applications.

The statement needs to include:

- Information about the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development
- How the proposed developments context has influenced the design
- How issues of access have been dealt with
- How relevant Local Plan policies have been taken into account.

For further information on design and access statements visit the Councils website (<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/design-and-access-statements>) or the CABE website (<http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/design-and-access-statements-how-write-read-and-use-them>).

Driver – National Validation Requirement

Drainage:

Foul Sewerage Details

When required to validate an application:

- Any development that would result in the construction of a new sewage disposal system.
- Any development of 10 dwellings or more or 1000 square metres or more of commercial floorspace, or sites of more than 0.5Ha, whether this is connecting to the public system or constructing a new one.

A foul sewerage assessment should include a description of the type, quantities and means of disposal, of any trade waste or effluent. All new buildings need separate connections to foul and storm water sewers. If an application proposes to connect a development to the existing drainage system then details of the existing system should be shown on the application drawing(s).

If you have a letter from the public drainage provider, agreeing to a connection to their system, then a copy should be included with your application. It will be helpful to refer to the East Cambs Water Cycle Study (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/water-cycle-study-pslp-document-library>) for information on capacity of infrastructure and receiving water environment.

If the proposed development results in any changes/replacement to the existing system or the creation of a new system, scale plans of the new foul drainage arrangements will also need to be provided, indicating the method of disposal proposed, and its location.

If connection to any of the above requires crossing land that is not in the applicant's ownership, other than on a public highway, then notice may need to be served on the owners of that land (See Section 1, [Ownership Certificates](#)).

You should be aware that all drainage systems would need to satisfy Building Regulations, and therefore require approval and inspection under separate legislation. The planning aspect is limited to considering the appropriateness of the type/method of drainage, not the constructional details.

Please see the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Flood%20and%20Water%20SPD%20ECDC%20-%20adopted%20FC%2016%20Nov%202016_0.pdf

Avoiding Conditions

Submit details of foul sewerage with all proposals.

Drivers – Paragraphs 163 and 165 of NPPF, Policy ENV8 and ENV9 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Surface Water Drainage Details

When required to validate an application:

- For operational developments falling within Flood Zone 2 or 3, a Critical Drainage Area or a Rapid Inundation Zone, as indicated on the Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps or the East Cambridgeshire District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- If a known drainage problem exists and the Local Planning Authority would like assurance from the developer that flood risk has been addressed.
- For all Major developments (10 or more dwellings, 1,000 square metres or more floorspace or site area of 0.5 ha or more)

A surface water drainage assessment will be required for those developments that are likely to generate a significant increase in the flow of water across, and from, the site. This should also include pollution control measures.

Cambridgeshire County Council has a webpage dedicated to Surface Water and SUDs which has further information (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/surface-water-and-sustainable-drainage-systems-suds-planning>)

The Government expects sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) to be provided in new developments. All surface water run-off to be controlled as near to its source as possible (preferably on-site) through a sustainable drainage approach to surface water management (SUDS). SUDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on or near the site as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible. SUDS involve a range of techniques including soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds and wetlands. SUDS offer significant advantages over conventional piped drainage systems in reducing flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site, promoting groundwater recharge, and improving water quality and amenity.

If a SUDS system is not proposed, the drainage assessment will need to demonstrate why this is the case and set out what pollution control measures would be applied.

Proposals for new development should have regard to the Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document 2016

(https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Flood%20and%20Water%20SPD%20ECDC%20-%20adopted%20FC%2016%20Nov%202016_0.pdf)

As with foul drainage, you should be aware that all drainage systems will need to satisfy Building Regulations. It may therefore require approval and inspection under separate legislation.

Avoiding Conditions

Smaller developments may be able to use soakaways, but this will be dependent on an assessment having been made in accordance with BRE Digest 365, for which permeability tests and possible land contamination test will be needed to demonstrate their effectiveness before layout is finalized. To avoid the imposition of conditions this information alongside a surface water drainage scheme should be provided with an application.

Drivers – Paragraphs 163 and 165 of NPPF, Policy ENV8 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Environmental Impact Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- It is not possible to invalidate an application due to the lack of an Environment Statement.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) refers to a specific process where information about the likely environmental effects of a project is collected, assessed, and taken into account in determining an application.

Where an application is for development deemed to be EIA development, the application will need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Whilst it is not possible to invalidate an application for EIA development submitted without an Environmental Statement, the absence of a statement would significantly delay the application process and prevent the Local Planning Authority from approving the application.

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 set out what constitutes EIA development and provides details on how to seek a formal 'Screening and Scoping Opinion' from the Local Planning Authority.

Further guidance on EIA can be found on the Communities and Local Government website: (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/assessing-environmental-impact-guidance>)

Flood Risk Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- For every application in Flood Zones 2 or 3 including minor development and change of use
- For any application elsewhere with a site area greater than 1 Hectare.
- All new buildings, significant extensions and changes of use within the floodplain or adjacent to a Main River
- Engineering operations that involve raising the level of land or significantly increasing surface water run-off to non-mains sewer systems such as watercourses and soakaways

The Environment Agency has identified areas within the district that are at risk of flooding. The location of these areas is available on the GOV.UK website Environment Agency's pages (<https://www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding>) or from the Council.

Where new buildings are proposed in a high risk area a Flood Risk Assessment is required to establish the impact of the development on the floodplain and the level of risk to the occupiers. If your site lies in the floodplain or is adjacent to a Main River we recommend that you contact the Environment Agency to discuss the need for and scope of the Assessment. We can tell you if your site lies in the floodplain or near a Main River, or you can check on line at GOV.UK website Environment Agency's pages. Applicants should also check if a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has already been prepared.

The Environment Agency has however produced standing advice for minor extension (householder and non-domestic extensions less than 250 square metres) in flood zones 2 and 3 and for various uses within flood zone 2, which should be consulted (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-standing-advice>).

In addition to a Flood Risk Assessment a Sequential Test may need to be carried out. To establish whether this is the case you need to consult the relevant tables in the online Planning Practice Guidance (<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/flood-zone-and-flood-risk-tables/>). If one is required then you will need to provide information about other sites to enable a sequential test to be carried out. Further information can be found in the Flood and Water SPD 2016 (https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Flood%20and%20Water%20SPD%20ECDC%20-%20adopted%20FC%2016%20Nov%202016_0.pdf)

Drivers – Paragraphs 155 - 162 of NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance, Flood and Water SPD 2016, Policy ENV8 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Green Belt Statement

When required to validate an application:

- any proposal in the Green Belt

This applies to areas in Bottisham, Lode and Swaffham Bulbeck. As part of your background research about your site, you should carry out an initial assessment to identify whether the site is within the Green Belt.

Only a limited number of types of development are considered “appropriate”. If your proposal is “inappropriate” then you must include in your application, a statement of the “very special circumstances” that you consider justify the development. We will not treat an application for “inappropriate development” in the Green Belt as valid unless accompanied by a statement of “very special circumstances”.

Drivers – Section 13 of NPPF, Policy ENV10 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Heritage Statement (Assessment of Significance)

When required to validate an application:

- Proposals affecting any listed building, including development within their curtilage
- Proposals affecting Scheduled Monuments
- Proposals affecting sites identified on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
- Proposals affecting sites known to or thought to contain archaeological remains e.g. unidentified earthworks that appear on historical mapping
- Proposals affecting the character of Conservation Areas
- Proposals affecting any building included on the East Cambridgeshire Register of Buildings of Local Interest

Heritage Statements are a method by which the Local Planning Authority can assess the impact any proposed works may have on its heritage assets. These statements should be produced in the initial stages of the scheme in order to inform its design and should be submitted as part of any application for development.

NB. Information provided should be proportionate to the extent of work proposed.

For further information on Heritage Statement visit <https://www.eastcamb.gov.uk/planning/design-and-access-statements>

Driver – Paragraph 189 of NPPF, Policies ENV11, ENV12, ENV13 and ENV14 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Landscaping

When required to validate an application:

- Major schemes which are likely to have a significant visual impact within the landscape.
- All application where an Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is required to assess the impact of any individual development on the character, setting and visual amenity of the surrounding landscape and any sensitive receptors within it and should be informed by:

- Visual representations of the site before and after the proposed development such as photomontages and artists impressions;
- A list of viewpoints to assess the proposal should be agreed with the Planning Team prior to submission of the application;

- A detailed visual impact assessment on any residential properties and long distance views, including distance, compass direction, orientation of the receptor to the proposal and the extent of any vision from the property/view (oblique/direct views), details of any intervening topography/landscaping and manmade features.

Landscaping is the treatment of private and public space to enhance or protect the site's amenity through hard and soft measures, for example, by planting trees or hedges, or screening by fences or walls. It should be an integral part of a development and ideally landscaping should be considered at an early stage. Where practicable, existing trees and other vegetation should be retained and protected during the course of construction. (See the section on Tree Survey / Arboricultural Assessment).

Landscaping schemes should include:

- Proposed finished ground levels or contours.
- A soil management strategy should be provided (where significant earthworks are required).
- Means of enclosure, e.g. fencing, boundary walls or hedging.
- Extent and provision for all construction operations including site compounds, haul roads, temporary access points, etc.
- Car parking layouts.
- Other vehicle and pedestrian access routes and circulation areas.
- Hard surfacing materials, structures, and ancillary objects (lighting columns, refuse bins etc).
- Plans showing the location of existing and proposed shrubs and trees, indicating which are to be retained and which will be removed.
- A schedule of new planting showing species, size at time of planting, planting density.
- Notes on cultivation, protection measures and management objectives.
- An implementation programme for when, and at what stage of the development, the planting will be carried out.
- A landscape and, if appropriate, ecological management plan with landscape and ecological objectives, mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and provision for financing.

Avoiding Conditions

If details are submitted at application stage then the imposition of conditions can be avoided.

Drivers – Section 12 of NPPF, Policies ENV1 and ENV2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Lighting Assessment / Details of Lighting Scheme

When required to validate an application:

- Floodlighting

External lighting can have significant impacts on people's enjoyment of their homes, the countryside, and on the night sky. Where such lighting is proposed, applications should include details of the number, type (e.g. wall mounted or free-standing columns), location and intensity of any lighting installation proposed, and the hours when the lighting would be switched on. A lighting impact study may be required for floodlighting proposals, particularly for sports grounds or developments close to residential buildings, or for sites within the open countryside.

Avoiding Conditions

Provide details of external lighting for car parks and security lighting.

Drivers – Paragraph 180 of NPPF, Policy ENV2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Noise Impact Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- Proposals that generate high levels of noise such as noisy sports; industrial and/or commercial developments using noisy machinery, for example joinery workshops; refrigeration plant and equipment.
- New housing adjacent to major sources of noise, including roads, railways, commercial and/or industrial sources.

A Noise Impact Assessment may be required either for proposals that could cause significant noise disturbance or for noise sensitive developments, such as housing, that are proposed near to major sources of noise, for example main roads, railways, or major industrial development. The Assessment should provide information on noise levels and any proposed mitigation measures.

When considering the need for, and scope of, the Assessment, you are advised to contact the Council's Environmental Health officers (<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/pollution/nuisance>). Further information can be sourced from the Institute of Acoustics (<http://www.ioa.org.uk/publications/proppg>).

Drivers – Paragraph 180 of NPPF, Policy ENV2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Open Space Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- Any development that results in the loss of open space as defined below.

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, or the buildings and land, to be surplus to requirements. Plans should show any areas of existing or proposed open space within, or adjoining, the application site. Open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground. Open space should be taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation, and can also act as a visual amenity.

Drivers – Paragraph 96 of NPPF, Policy COM3 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Parking/Servicing Details

When required to validate an application:

- Any development of 10 or more dwellings or 1,000 square metres of commercial floor space
- Any development which includes alterations to existing parking and access arrangements

Each area of new residential or industrial/commercial development should make adequate provision for parking in order to minimise the impact of parked vehicles on the existing highway network, in accordance with the Councils parking provision. A statement about how much parking is to be provided and the way in which it will be accommodated should be submitted. (Parking provision will extend to cycle parking). The statement should explain the way in which the design of the development ensures that vehicles can be parked in places well related to the property they are intended to serve, and how the design ensures that the parking is secure, e.g. by overlooking.

For details of parking requirements, refer to Table 7.1 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/east-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2015>)

Avoiding Conditions

Submit details with all applications that have implications for parking and servicing.

Drivers – Section 9 of NPPF, Policies ENV2, COM7 and COM8 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Planning Obligation(s) / Draft Heads of Terms / Undertaking of Costs / Title

When required to validate an application:

Applications will not be made invalid because they lack Draft Heads of Terms, an undertaking of costs or proof of title, however you are strongly advised to submit them with the following applications as this will speed up the process.

- All applications for dwellings under the following circumstances:
 - where a proposal is for 10 or more dwellings; or
 - where the proposal is an outline application on a site over 0.5 hectares, and it is not known how many homes will be provided on the site; or
 - where the proposal will create a total internal floorspace of 1,000 square metres or more (and for the purpose of calculating this area, the Council will use the same floor area as determined to be liable for CIL purposes); or
 - where the site is 1 hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings to be provided
- When advised of the need through Pre-application advice

The need for a planning obligation will depend upon the type of development proposed and the requirements of other parts of this advice note. Typically an agreement will be required for the provision of affordable housing and public open space.

Please see the SPD on Developer Contributions

https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SPD%20Developer%20Contributions%20-%20Adopted%20Version_0.pdf (adopted May 2013)

Driver – Policy GROWTH3 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Refuse Collection

When required to validate an application:

Applications will not be made invalid because they lack information regarding Refuse Collection, however you are strongly advised to submit this information with the following applications as it will speed up the process:

- creation of new dwellings
- new retail business
- industrial or leisure or other similar developments

To include details of the provision for the storage and means of disposal of refuse from the site including provision for recyclates as well as arrangements for access for refuse disposal vehicles. You should bear in mind the Building Regulations and the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning-policy/recap-waste-management-design-guide/>) when considering the siting of bin storage points.

Avoiding Conditions

Provide all details for all proposals as listed above.

Drivers – Policy ENV2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Renewable Energy and Water Consumption Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- Buildings (new build or conversions) with a gross external floorspace of 1,000 square metres or more.
- Residential developments providing 5 or more residential units.
- Residential sites of 0.5ha or more.

- Any development on a site of 1ha or more.

For Commercial developments additional information is available in our Renewable Energy (Commercial Scale) SPD and for smaller developments please refer to the Design guide SPD, both of which are available on our website (www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/supplementary-planning-documents)

Avoiding Conditions

Submit a statement for all residential and commercial development

Drivers – Section 14 of NPPF, Policy ENV4 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Retail and Town Centre Uses: Need, Sequential Approach and Impact Assessments

When required to validate an application:

For planning applications for all proposals relating to main town centre uses, on sites outside of town centres, including: -

- New development;
- Redevelopment of existing facilities;
- Extensions to existing facilities;
- Changes of use;
- Applications to vary or remove existing planning conditions, which would have the effect of creating additional floorspace e.g. mezzanine floor, or changing the range of goods sold.

In line with the **NPPF** proposals for the above types of development should provide information on the following: -

A Sequential Test – which considers whether there are any preferable sites against the requirement that development should be in town centres, then edge of centre and finally out of centre.

An Impact Assessment (for applications with a floorspace in excess of 280 square metres) – which considers:

- 1) The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment
- 2) The impact on town centre vitality and viability

Details about the accessibility of the site to the town centre by all modes of transport will also need to be provided.

The level and type of analysis should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal. You are advised to seek confirmation of our requirements in each case.

Drivers – Section 7 of NPPF, Policies COM1 and COM2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Statement of Community Involvement

When required to validate an application:

- For any development in excess of 50 dwellings or 1000 square metres of commercial floorspace

Applications may need to be supported by a statement setting out how the applicant has complied with the requirements for pre-application consultation set out in the local planning authority's adopted statement of community involvement, and demonstrating that the views of the local community have been sought and taken into account in the formulation of development proposals. The level of detail should reflect the development.

Driver – Statement of Community Involvement (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/statement-community-involvement-sci>)

Structural Survey

When required to validate an application:

A structural survey will be required in support of an application if the proposal involves

- Substantial demolition or structural alterations to a Listed Building
- Demolition in a Conservation Area
- Restoration/conversion an existing building (including Prior Approval applications).

This report should be prepared by an independent qualified specialist, giving details about the condition of the building and an objective assessment of whether it is capable of accommodating the proposed works.

Driver –Policies EMP4, ENV11 and ENV12 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Transport Assessment and Travel Plan

When required to validate an application:

- All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment (TA). What constitutes a 'significant transport implication' can vary.

Applicants should consult the Transport Assessment Guidelines, produced by Cambridgeshire County Council <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/Transport%20Assessment%20Guidelines%20Sept%202019%20Publication%20Version.pdf> and are recommended to consult an officer at the Local Highways Authority.

An indication of when a Transport Assessment will be required can be found on page 3 of the Transport Assessment Guidelines.

There may be situations where development falls below the thresholds but a TA may be required. Eg. In areas of limited parking or high traffic congestion or due to highway safety considerations.

For developments below the threshold a Transport Statement may be required.

The document Transport Assessment Guidelines provides detailed information about what needs to be included in a TA. It should illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes, and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site. It should give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling, provide details of parking and deliveries and mitigate any transport impacts.

A draft Travel Plan should also be submitted. The implementation of which is normally secured by planning conditions or a planning obligation.

Drivers – Paragraphs 102, 108 and 111 of NPPF, Policy COM7 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Tree Survey / Arboricultural Assessment

When required to validate an application:

- When proposals could have an impact on significant trees on or adjoining the site, whether or not the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order or are in a conservation area (and are therefore protected).

Please note aerial photos can be checked during validation process and site visits are carried out on all applications.

What tree information is required:

Take advice from your arboriculturalist regarding which of the below will be required. They can consult one of the Council's Tree Officers. Usually items 1 and 2 will be required as a minimum.

1. **Topographical site plan to scale** showing the accurately plotted locations of the significant trees on or adjoining the site.
2. **Tree Survey** carried out by a professional arboriculturalist with the following information-
 - a. Tree reference number
 - b. Species
 - c. Height
 - d. Stem diameter
 - e. Canopy spread (x4 cardinals)
 - f. Life stage
 - g. Physiological condition
 - h. Structural condition
 - i. Safe useful life expectancy remaining
 - j. Current British Standard (BS5837:2012) Category classification
 - k. Root Protection Area (RPA) radius
 - l. General site notes
 - m. Recommendations of tree work proposals, irrespective of development.
3. **Tree Constraints Plan** including
 - a. A schedule of trees
 - b. Drawing to scale showing root protection areas and canopy spreads
 - c. An outline design and layout recommendations
4. **Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan & Preliminary Arboriculture Method Statement** a detailed report of
 - a. Tree root protection (with distances, engineering specifications)
 - b. Changes in, and specifications for, alterations in levels and/or surfaces
 - c. Installation and layout of services
 - d. Demolition of existing buildings and the removal of surfaces
 - e. Contact listing (Council, arboriculturalist, architect etc)
 - f. Construction site access, layout (offices, parking, etc), storage & mixing of materials (with contingency plans for chemical spillage, collision or emergency access to the identified tree protection areas)
 - g. Schedule of tree work proposals specifically to allow development (prior to and upon completion of construction works)
 - h. Tree Protection Plan with distances, type of fencing, trenching (methods)
 - i. Scaled, comprehensive drawings with representation of pre-development site and proposed layout, and thorough tree protection design
 - j. Assessment of overshadowing by trees
 - k. Replacement planting positions for new trees and hedge planting.
5. **Detailed Arboricultural Method Statement**
 - a. More detailed arboricultural report for specific aspects of the preliminary method statement.

Avoid Conditions

Details of tree protection measures.

Drivers – Section 15 of NPPF, Policies ENV1 and ENV2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Utilities Statement

When required to validate an application:

Applications will not be made invalid because they lack a Utilities Statement, however you are strongly advised to submit this information with the following applications as it will speed up the process:

- Development of 10 dwellings or more
- 1000 square metres or more of commercial development.

An application should indicate how the development connects to existing utility infrastructure systems. Most new development requires connection to existing utility services, including electricity and gas supplies, telecommunications and water supply, and also needs connection to foul and surface water drainage and disposal (see Drainage section). Two planning issues arise; firstly, whether the existing services and infrastructure have sufficient capacity to accommodate the supply/service demands which would arise from the completed development, and secondly, whether the provision of services on site would give rise to any environmental impacts, e.g. excavations in the vicinity of trees or archaeological remains.

The applicant should demonstrate:

- That, following consultation with the service provider, the availability of utility services has been examined and that the proposals would not result in undue stress on the delivery of those services to the wider community.
- That proposals incorporate any utility company requirements for substations, telecommunications equipment or similar structures.
- That service routes have been planned to avoid, as far as possible, the potential for damage to trees and archaeological remains.
- Where the development impinges on existing infrastructure the provisions for relocating or protecting that infrastructure have been agreed with the service provider.

Drivers – Sections 8, 10 14 and 16 of NPPF, Policies GROWTH3 and ENV2 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Ventilation / Extraction Details

When required to validate an application:

- All applications for hot-food takeaways, bars/pubs, restaurant uses and laundrettes etc where new or amended ventilation extraction equipment is proposed
- Significant retail, business, industrial or leisure or other similar developments where substantial ventilation or extraction equipment is proposed to be installed.

For a development likely to require ventilation or extraction, full details of the position and design of ventilation and extraction equipment, including odour and abatement techniques and acoustic (noise) characteristics, should accompany the application.

Drivers – Section 15 of NPPF and paragraph 123, Policies ENV2 and ENV9 in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Further Information and Contacts

Most of the references to national and local planning policies and other background documents are available online. Useful websites are set out below.

For national and regional planning policies and guidance (Planning Policy Guidance Notes or Statements, government circulars etc):

- East Cambridgeshire Local Plan - <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/east-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2015>
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government>
- Planning Portal – www.planningportal.co.uk
- GOV.UK – www.gov.uk and <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Where can I find more help?

Copies of this Note and the Validation Checklists can be viewed or downloaded from the Council's website (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/applying-permission>)

If you require further information please contact us...

...In person

At our offices - The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambs, CB7 4EE
Between 8:45 to 17:00 Monday to Thursday and 08:45 to 16:30 Fridays

...By telephone

To our General enquiries line - telephone 01353 616136

...By email

plservices@eastcambs.gov.uk