



East Devon AONB Partnership

Development/Landscape
advice

March 2014

EAST DEVON AONB PARTNERSHIP

DEVELOPMENT/LANDSCAPE ADVICE

Valid from 5 March 2014

The AONB Team has, as a result of increasing demand for development and landscape advice, introduced a charge which has been approved by the AONB Executive Group on 5 March 2014.

This paper sets out the nature of the AONB role in development advice and the charges, what the AONB will expect to receive as part of any enquiry, and what customers can expect of us.

Pre-app planning advice

For pre-application planning advice, East Devon District Council's Development Management Team should be your first point of contact. There is a pre-application advice process which the Council offer. For full details see www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning_services

The District Council Planning Service at present is divided into geographic areas the details of which can be viewed on the following Council web site link. www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning_team_staff

AONB Team role

The AONB Team is able to offer advice on certain development proposals on behalf of the Partnership. For example, this could help development proposals at an early stage with meeting the purposes of the AONB's and the AONB Management Strategy and in developing plans for landscape proposals. The level of advice may vary and may include advice on the compatibility or otherwise of a proposal, or ways in which a scheme could be amended to be more compatible, e.g. through appropriate design, scale or mitigation measures such as landscaping. Organisations represented on the Partnership may provide separate advice or comment and this may differ to that of the AONB Team.

Status of AONB advice

The fact that discussions with the AONB Team may have taken place **must not** be deemed to indicate AONB Partnership support. Advice given by the AONB Team is **not** provided in the form of an endorsement and may not be cited or implied as such in any planning application as giving support. It is important to note that when the AONB Partnership is consulted on planning applications it neither supports nor objects to an application in its response but refers to the assessment of the impact a development will have on the AONB. The views expressed by the AONB Team will always be without prejudice to the possible response to any ensuing planning application. Such responses may also be the subject of consultation with AONB Partnership members.

Nature of assessment

East Devon District Council may require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for certain types of development, sometimes as part of a wider Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Statement. This is to help inform the determination of the application by the Council, including in relation to the AONB. Its content may inform any consultation response by the AONB Partnership, but this is not the reason why it may be required. The AONB Partnership may choose to comment on LVIA reports, but is **not** an arbiter of whether such studies are of a standard to meet the Council's requirements.

We do not provide routine guidance on the LVIA process, which is established nationally both in and out of protected landscapes, and the accepted methodologies are set out in the Landscape Institute's second edition *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (2002).

Reference will be made to the [Landscape Character Assessment](#) Management Guidelines that cover East Devon AONB as part of any advice/comments. Customers are therefore encouraged to refer to this document in the development of their proposals.

Consideration of AONB status

The AONB designation should be considered not just in relation to visual amenity. The natural beauty remit of the AONB includes considerations of biodiversity, heritage, tranquility and the way in which the many natural and human elements of landscape combine, and these aspects should all be taken into account in relation to decisions affecting the AONB. Applicants are recommended to look at relevant objectives, policies and sections of the AONB Management Plan which is available at www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/index.php?page=aonb-management-plan

Rates

Rates will be applied to the nearest half day with a minimum half day charge and will be according to those current at the time of your request. A half day equates to approximately 3¾ hrs.

Rates as at January 2014 ex vat

- ½ day = £250
- full day= £500

Further costs may be incurred for the use of meeting rooms etc. as agreed in advance.

Payment terms

Payment will be agreed in advance and an order/request written or by email by the applicant for the meeting/advice with confirmation of the anticipated total costs that can be varied only by joint agreement. Payment can be made by BACs payable to *East Devon District Council (EDAONB Partnership)* and must be made within 30 days of the meeting/advice being provided.

What we will do

- On receipt of your request we will assess your information to ensure we have enough to give a detailed response. If further information is deemed necessary you will be contacted and asked to provide additional details.
- If a meeting is thought necessary or is your preferred method of engagement arrange a mutually convenient time and place. These meetings will be charged for on the basis of the current rates that apply at the time of the request (as detailed above).
- Comments may be provided in writing following the meeting and will be in the form of a summary record of the discussions and points covered.
- All comments will be provided on a **without prejudice** basis and will be given on the understanding that it is not that of the Local Planning Authority or individual AONB Partnership members but is the professional opinion of the AONB Team.
- The written comments will identify the issues which the AONB Team perceives to be raised by the development/proposals and what, if any, improvements may be made to the scheme. The advice does not necessarily mean that a proposal will be accepted by the Local Planning Authority.
- Subject to the request, we may consider options for not charging. For example if it is a local charity or community request.

What we will not do

- Carry out detailed impact assessments or provide information in a format required for planning applications.
- We are not obliged to respond to all requests for advice and will make judgement based on time and resources.
- We do not operate to short deadlines but will indicate what we anticipate our response time to be if we agree to provide it.
- We will not identify the level of community consultation to be expected in order to meet the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.
- We will not comment on the nature and quality of information required on the main or any supporting documents for any application to the local planning authority
- We will not comment on which local plan policies are relevant to a given scheme. Applicants are expected to investigate this area for themselves as part of developing their proposal.
- We may suggest contacting but will not talk to other parties such as the Highway Authority, Environment Agency and or any other statutory consultees on behalf of the applicant.
- Any notes or record produced as a result of any conversations or meeting and not endorsed by the AONB Team will not be regarded as an accurate record.

What you are expected to do before asking for advice either from the AONB Partnership or East Devon District Council

- Fully investigate the planning history of the site. Does this tell you anything, which may be relevant to your proposals? All recent previous applications are now scanned to the Council's planning web pages for you to look at.
- Familiarise yourself with the relevant Development Plans, the relevant policies and other supplementary planning documents the Council may have adopted which may be of relevance. In addition you may wish to consider any advice available from the Planning Portal and Department for Communities and Local Government web sites. The Planning Portal for instance contains a great deal of information on good practice.
- Provide a site analysis (with photographs) dealing with site characteristics, constraints opportunities and the surroundings. Accurate site survey plans and tree condition surveys and wildlife surveys (where applicable) will be required if a planning application is to be submitted. Therefore, these survey plans are likely to be useful in the process of designing a scheme too.
- A bare minimum of information would be an Ordnance Survey location plan showing the site marked in red and any other land in your [client's] ownership, sketch layout and if possible elevation plans and some photographs.