

EARLY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

LOGO

The purpose of this guidance is to provide potential planning applicants that may benefit from engagement with information about early advertising or public engagement, at the discretion of the Planning Team. If the applicant could benefit from early engagement, the Planning Team will provide this document to inform their approach. This document can be used in conjunction with verbal advice.

In some cases when someone applies for a planning permit or an amendment to an existing permit, Council may instruct you to notify people who may be affected by the proposal. This gives members of the community the opportunity to submit an objection (or Letter of Support). This process is called 'Public Notification' and can be carried out in different forms:

- Letter (to affected properties only)
- Sign (to be displayed on site)
- Council website
- Local newspaper (for major developments).

Considerations for early advertising or public engagement

If you are planning to submit a planning application, it may be beneficial to enter into dialogue with relevant stakeholders **well before lodgement rather than waiting until the official Public Notification period**. This can help you get your 'neighbours' on side and ensure that they are not caught off guard by the Public Notification they will receive from you after being instructed to do so by Council. It will also identify any possible issues or objections that may arise down the line before you commit additional time and resources into pursuing planning approval.

Guidance on talking points and tips

The relevant stakeholders to your planning application are determined by the location and nature of your proposed plans. For example, constructing a building along the boundary of your property may impact the neighbouring property. Therefore, your neighbour will receive a Public Notification about your plans and will have the opportunity to object to your proposal.

What kinds of things might concern them?

Stakeholders can have a range of concerns with planning applications. Some of these can form valid grounds for objections. All stakeholders have the right to submit an objection to a planning permit application.

A summary of some of the concerns that might impact stakeholders includes:



Common concerns that council usually **can** consider as valid grounds for an objection

- Loss of property value
- Commercial competition
- Number of dwellings in a development
- Who will live in the development
- Increased vehicle pollution
- Asbestos removal
- Side fencing – i.e. the impact a proposal will have on boundary fencing between two private properties. This is considered under the Fences Act, and should be discussed with your neighbour
- Impact of the construction process – i.e. if the construction process will create dust or damage property. This is covered in a building permit stage
- Impact on availability of street parking if an application does not seek to reduce the statutory car parking requirement.






Common concerns that council usually **cannot** consider as valid grounds for an objection

- Impact on the character of the neighbourhood
- Overlooking – i.e. the proposed first floor balcony overlooks the living area of another property
- Overshadowing – i.e. the proposal will result in unreasonable shadowing over your backyard
- Lack of car parking if the application is seeking to reduce the statutory car parking requirement
- Noise associated with proposed use
- Removal of significant trees
- Building scale and visual bulk.

It is useful to consider these concerns when speaking with stakeholders, and where possible using these as a reference point when assuring stakeholders of your proposal's likely impact on them.

Should I approach the relevant stakeholders?

You may want to speak to stakeholders directly at the beginning of the process to see if they have any concerns before you move ahead with your plans. Before you engage with them, consider whether you have a pre-existing relationship with them.

<p>I have a POSITIVE relationship with this stakeholder</p> 	<p>I know this stakeholder but it's NOT a good relationship</p> 	<p>I DON'T have a relationship with this stakeholder</p> 
<p>It might be appropriate to discuss your plans with them, and respond to any of their questions or concerns with the proposal early in the process.</p>	<p>In this instance talking to the person without the council may not actually be a good idea, as it may hinder your plans.</p>	<p>This is a judgment call and depends on your comfort communicating with strangers as well as the nature of your plans and how they might impact the stakeholder. Discuss it with your planner.</p>

How do I approach this stakeholder?

You may pop around next door for a chat with a neighbour if you're already familiar, but this may not be the case with other stakeholders. Instead of an informal chat, it may be more appropriate to slip a letter into their letter box to inform them of your plans. The letter should include:

- detailed information about the plan,
- the reason for your plan, and
- any comments you can provide addressing possible concerns they might have.

You may also invite them to have a chat with you if they have any follow up questions or concerns. For larger developments, coordinated community engagement should be considered to reach a broader audience of stakeholders, including town hall meetings and dedicated webpages.