CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Short-term Holiday Lets

Non-statutory planning guidance

Approved 3 November 2026



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1. Purpose of this guidance

1.1 This Planning Guidance sets out how the City of York Council will assess planning applications for the use of residential properties as short-term holiday lets. It draws on established planning principles, relevant local and national policy, and the conclusions of recent appeal decisions.

1.2 The guidance aims to support applicants, agents, and residents by clarifying when planning permission is required, what issues will be considered, and what information should accompany an application. It does not introduce new policy or impose requirements beyond those contained in the Local Plan or National Planning Policy and guidance.

1.3 In 2023 Government ran a consultation on a possible registration scheme for short term lets. Recent Government statements suggest that this will come into force in 2027. When this occurs, our guidance will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

1.4 We also have further information on operating a holiday let on our website: www.york.gov.uk/business-rates/guidance-owners-holiday-lets.

2. Background

2.1 Short-term holiday lets can play a positive role in York's visitor economy by offering flexible accommodation that complements hotels and supports tourism. However, if poorly located or inadequately managed, they can also generate adverse impacts on the residential character of areas.

2.2 The Council therefore seeks to balance the needs of visitors with the amenity and wellbeing of permanent residents.

3. Policy context

3.1 The City of York Local Plan 2017-2033 was adopted in February 2025. The following Local Plan policies are considered particularly relevant when considering development of new short-term holiday lets:

- Policy H3: Balancing the Housing Market requires that new residential development maintains, provides or contributes to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities.
- Policy EC4: Tourism supports maintaining and improving the choice and quality of visitor accommodation; we recognise the role short-term holiday lets have in helping to meet this need.
- Policy D1: Placemaking seeks to ensure that development considers residential amenity issues so that neighbours are not unduly affected by noise and disturbance.
- Policy T1: Sustainable Access advises that development will be supported where it minimises the need to travel and provides safe, suitable and attractive access for all transport users, maximises the use of more sustainable modes of transport, and provides sufficient convenient, secure and covered cycle storage.
- Policy ENV2: Managing Environmental Quality advises that development will not be permitted where future occupiers and existing communities would be subject to significant adverse environmental impacts such as noise, vibration, odour, fumes/emissions, dust and light pollution without effective mitigation measures.

4. When planning permission may be required

4.1 A Short-term Let is defined in s228 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 as:

> "Short-term rental property" means[1]—

[1] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55?view=plain

(a) a dwelling, or part of a dwelling, which is provided by a person ("the host") to another person ("the guest")—
  (i) for use by the guest as accommodation other than the guest's only or principal residence,
  (ii) in return for payment (whether or not by the guest), and
  (iii) in the course of a trade or business carried on by the host, and

(b) any dwelling or premises, or part of a dwelling or premises, not falling within paragraph (a) which is specified for the purposes of this paragraph".

4.2 The Council's Development Management Service will determine whether the use of a property as a short-term holiday let constitutes a material change of use requiring planning permission. Determining whether a change of use is "material" will be done on a case-by-case basis following consideration of a number of factors including whether the proposal would impact the surrounding character.

4.3 We recommend early engagement, and pre-application enquiries, to determine whether planning permission is required for the proposed development to avoid enforcement action being taken against unauthorised development. Developers should be aware of policy DM8: Unauthorised development and enforcement of the National Planning Policy Framework, which applies to retrospective development, and allows the local planning authority to take intentional breaches of planning control into account when assessing applications.

Garden Buildings and Outbuildings

4.4 Proposals involving new or converted outbuildings (e.g. garages, sheds, pods, extensions) for use as short-term lets will not normally benefit from householder permitted development rights and will require planning permission.

5. What issues does the Council consider when assessing proposals?

5.1 The Council recognises that short-term holiday lets can contribute to the visitor economy by providing a flexible form of accommodation. However, experience from planning applications, enforcement investigations and appeal decisions in York has shown that short-term holiday lets can generate impacts that differ significantly from those associated with a typical dwellinghouse.

5.2 When assessing planning applications, the Council will consider whether the use would adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring residents or undermine the residential character of the area.

Transient Occupancy

5.3 Unlike a permanent dwelling, short-term holiday lets are typically occupied by a succession of unrelated groups. This can result in:

- frequent guest turnover
- irregular patterns of occupation
- arrivals and departures at varying times throughout the day and evening
- a level of activity that exceeds that normally associated with a family home

5.4 The Council will consider whether the nature and intensity of occupation would be compatible with the surrounding residential environment.

Guest Activity and Use of Outdoor Space

5.5 The Council recognises that visitors are less likely to have an established relationship with neighbouring residents and may be less familiar with local expectations regarding noise and behaviour.

5.6 Particular consideration will be given to:

- the use of gardens, patios and balconies
- outdoor socialising
- evening and late-night activity
- the potential for cumulative disturbance arising from changes in occupancy

Noise and Disturbance

5.7 Noise and disturbance are consistently the most significant planning concerns associated with short-term holiday lets.

5.8 The Council will consider:

- noise associated with guest arrivals and departures
- activity within external spaces
- noise from communal areas
- evening and late-night disturbance
- the likelihood of impacts occurring repeatedly over time

Access and Servicing

5.9 The Council will consider whether the proposed use would create additional pressure on local infrastructure, including:

- on-street parking
- vehicle movements
- refuse and recycling storage – the store should be large enough to accommodate the commercial waste bins required for the proposed use
- access to the site
- cycle parking

5.10 Particular regard will be given to locations where parking availability is already constrained.

5.11 When considering internal layouts of the property, owners should ensure sufficient internal storage is provided for servicing requirements, including linen and cleaning materials. Where external storage is necessary it should be sited so that it does not block access for neighbouring residents.

6. Management plans

6.1 Applicants should be aware that the submission of a Management Plan will not in itself overcome concerns relating to noise, disturbance, intensity of use, or impacts on neighbouring amenity.

6.2 Management Plans often rely on the actions and behaviour of guests, and many of the measures proposed can be difficult to monitor and enforce through the planning system. As a result, the Council may afford limited weight to management measures where the underlying use is considered likely to result in unacceptable impacts.

6.3 Where submitted, a Management Plan should explain:

- booking procedures and maximum occupancy levels
- arrival and departure arrangements
- use of outdoor areas
- access and servicing
- contact arrangements for property managers

6.4 Applicants should seek to demonstrate through the design, location and operation of the proposal that unacceptable impacts will not arise, rather than relying solely on management measures to mitigate them.

7. Summary

7.1 The Council's primary consideration when assessing proposals for short-term holiday lets is whether the use would protect the amenity of

neighbouring residents and maintain the character of the surrounding area.

7.2 Experience from planning applications, enforcement cases and appeal decisions in York has demonstrated that noise, disturbance, intensity of occupation, and impacts arising from frequent guest turnover are recurring issues associated with short-term holiday lets.

7.3 Applicants should clearly demonstrate that these impacts can be avoided and that the proposal would operate in a manner compatible with its surroundings. Proposals that would result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity are unlikely to be supported.

Pre-Application Enquiries

7.4 Given the site-specific nature of planning assessments and the potential complexity of determining whether planning permission is required, applicants are strongly encouraged to engage with the Council at an early stage. Early discussions can help identify potential planning issues, clarify information requirements, and establish whether a proposal is likely to raise concerns in principle.

7.5 Applicants are therefore encouraged to seek pre-application advice before committing to a proposal or preparing a planning application. Pre-application discussions provide an opportunity to understand the Council's expectations and identify any issues that may affect the acceptability of the proposed use before submitting an application.