

The Planning Process – how it works

The Planning Authorities – New Forest District Council & New Forest National Park Authority

Planning Applications are administered and decided upon by either New Forest District Council or New Forest National Park Authority (NPA) (for properties within the National Park boundary). After a planning application is made to the District Council or NPA, they will produce a press advert, put up a green notice adjacent to the application site and write to neighbouring properties asking for their views on the proposals. They will also publish all the details on the planning section of their website. The District Council or NPA will also consult with other bodies such as Natural England, the Environment agency, the Highways Authority at Hampshire County Council and Southern Gas, as well as the Parish Council.

The District Council or NPA will assign a Case Officer to the application, who will visit the site to assess the application, display a site notice and take photographs. In addition, they will research the history of the site and will consider the relevant issues. The Case Officer will then produce a report which is made available on their website.

Having your say in the planning process

Members of the public are also encouraged to comment directly to the District Council, which they do through the planning pages of the District Council's website [here](#). The NPA's website is [here](#). You can search for an application by the address or by the reference number, which will be on the green notice or neighbour letter.

Below is guidance to neighbours and interested parties when consulting on applications, available on their website. It gives clear details as to what is considered to be 'relevant planning considerations' in deciding a planning application and what is not. So, although you might feel that, for example, construction work will be very disruptive, or house prices affected these are not considered relevant in planning terms. Using the list of relevant considerations will enable you to focus efforts so that your representations stay fully relevant to the planning process. These considerations are not decided by NFDC or the NPA; it is national planning legislation and so NFDC & NPA are duty bound to them.

Objection Reasons:

- Loss of light or overshadowing, overlooking/loss of privacy/visual amenity
- Adequacy of parking/loading/turning
- Highway safety and traffic generation
- Noise and disturbance resulting from use or hazardous materials
- Effect on listed building and conservation area or other designations; Archaeology
- Layout and density of building or design, appearance and materials
- Landscaping, effect on ecology and nature conservation, loss of trees
- Local, strategic, regional and national planning policies
- Disabled persons' access
- Compensation and awards of costs against the Council (L.P.A) at public enquiries
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)

What cannot be taken into account are matters below and are not normally planning considerations such as:

- The perceived loss of property value or views
- Private disputes between neighbours including that on fence lines/boundaries
- The impact of construction work or competition between firms
- Restrictive covenants or ownership disputes over rights of way
- Potential difficulties in property maintenance
- Moral or religious issues / Views about the applicant.

Please note: it is important to understand that the material considerations relevant to any particular application will need to be weighed in the final decision process according to their seriousness and relative importance.

All comments made in writing become part of the application file can be viewed and copied by the applicant or other members of the public. Representations made cannot be treated as confidential or kept private.

The Parish Council's Role

When the Parish Council is notified of a new application in the village, this will be added onto the next Parish Council agenda, to be discussed at the next meeting. These meetings are held monthly, usually on the third Tuesday of every month in the Pavilion at 7.15pm. A full list of meeting dates and the meeting

agenda are available on the Parish Council's website as well as on the 6 noticeboards around the parish.

Comments made by the public to NFDC or NPA will be seen by the Parish Council and will be taken into account at the Parish Council meeting.

Members of the public can come along to a Parish Meeting and can speak for up to 3 minutes on specific planning application if they so wish, ask a question or they can just listen to the debate if they prefer.

The Parish Council's findings – classified as 'observations' – are reached following a structured but open debate, concluded by a democratic vote. The results are formally passed to the District Council's Planning Department (or National Park Authority) in the form of an Observation, which must fall under one of the following categories:

- PAR1: Recommend PERMISSION but would accept the decision reached by the Officers under their delegated powers.
- PAR2: Recommend REFUSAL but would accept the decision reached by the Officers under their delegated powers.
- PAR3: Recommend PERMISSION.
- PAR4: Recommend REFUSAL.
- PAR5: Happy to accept the decision reached by the Officers under their delegated powers.

When taking up their term of office, all new members of the Parish Council are offered training to assist them in understanding of their new responsibilities in this field of activity.

The first responsibility was to understand that they are to represent the views of the community and to ensure that the proposed Application is not going to be detrimental to the site in question and its immediate surroundings. In this respect the Parish Council encourage members of the public to attend the meetings of the Parish Council to have their say and listen to the deliberations of the committee. The second responsibility is that the adopted Village Design Statement is complied with as far as practical.

Decision-making

After voting on an application, the Parish Council will then lodge its comments with the District Council or NPA. If the Planning Officers disagree with the Parish

Council's observations, then the Planning Application has to be referred to the District Council's or NPA's Planning Committees, which consists of representatives from all political affiliations.

Most applications are determined by District Council/ NPA Officers using delegated powers. This means that an application accords with policy, the local Parish/Town Council do not have a contrary view and District Councillors have not asked for the matter to be considered by the Planning Committee. The District Council/ NPA will issue the decision together with any conditions imposed and place it on their website. They do not notify those who showed an interest in an application about the decision.

If an application is recommended to Committee, it will be placed on the first available agenda. The public can attend the meeting and listen to the debate.

Once the consultation period on an application is over, the submission is considered by NFDC in order to make a decision. As a strategic site the application will be determined by NFDC Planning Committee the date of the meeting will be published by the District Council and members of the public are able to attend to speak. The rules on public speaking are much stricter and there is a need to register so please view link below:

<https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1191/Public-participation-at-meetings>

When a decision on an application is made, the District Council or NPA will notify the outcome to the applicant and the Parish Council.