

Planning

The District Council as planning authority

District [Borough] Councils produce Local Plans. These set out the District planning policy and proposals for in the area. They identify where development can and cannot take place, the natural and the built environment and the management of traffic. The Local Plan covers a 10 year period but is kept under fairly constant review. The District Council also prepares Design Briefs. These are aimed at developers and give details of the type and density of building that is acceptable, the material to be used, green spaces etc.

Although there are a number of exceptions, anyone wishing to develop must apply to the District Council for planning permission. The District will forward one copy of the application and the plans to the Parish Council. People living in the vicinity of the proposed development will be told that they can inspect the plans at the Parish Council Offices. The District Council Planning officers will consider all the comments received and reflect these in the report made to the District Council Planning Committee.

The Parish Council as consultee

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications and is normally given 21 days to comment. Plans for consideration will be listed on the Council agenda and comments returned to the District within the deadline.

In commenting on Planning applications, it is important that the Council considers planning issues. These include:

- consistency with the development plan for the areas
- Traffic and highway safety issues
- overlooking, loss of privacy and loss of light
- scale of the development
- design, appearance, layout and material
- loss of important open space or physical features
- noise, disturbance or smells
- local knowledge of drainage or other possible problems with the surface
- impact on the surroundings

Issues that are not relevant include:

- Effect on the value of property
- Loss of view over other peoples land
- Possible future development not included in the application
- Private property rights such as boundary or access disputes
- Matters covered by other laws
- The morals or motives of the developer

Special rules apply for listed buildings conservation areas, trees (some are protected by Tree Preservation Orders). Planning permission is needed for advertisements above a special size. If development appears to have taken place without permission or if the development is more extensive than given in the planning consent, the District Council's enforcement officer to visit the site and take any necessary follow up action.