

CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS WITH TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Planning Applications

Parish and Town Councils are consulted on all planning applications and on significant amendments. Although national legislation only requires us to give 14 days for comment we allow 21 days. It is often possible to extend this by negotiation with the Planning Officer dealing with the case, whose name and contact details appear at the top of the consultation letter.

The District Council gives careful consideration to all views expressed and does not allow Senior Officers to make a decision which is in conflict with the views of a Town or Parish Council without the agreement of the Local District Councillor(s). If they do not agree with the Officers the application has to be referred to the Development Control Committee. Planning Officers prepare the Committee report about 2 weeks before the meeting. If the Parish or Town Council's comments have been received in time they will be included in the report. If they are received after that time they will be reported orally at the meeting.

If the application is referred to Committee, the Parish or Town Clerk will receive a copy of the Officers' Report a few days before the meeting is held. The purpose of this is to alert you to the fact that you may:-

- (1) make a further rapid response in writing if you wish;
- (2) contact your local District Councillor to see if he or she is intending to speak on the matter; or
- (3) decide to send a representative to the Committee meeting to speak under our public speaking arrangements.

The only requirement concerning this is that the representative must arrive at least 15 minutes before the meeting in order to register their intention to speak. A leaflet, "Have your say on planning applications and tree preservation orders", explains the arrangements and is available from the Council Offices or may be downloaded from the Council's website (www.northnorfolk.org/planning) by following the 'Planning Committees' and 'Have Your Say on Planning Applications and TPOs' links.

If the Committee decides that it needs to visit the site in order to appreciate the situation on the ground the Parish or Town Council will be notified of the arrangements and invited to send a representative to speak at the meeting. Decisions are not made at site meetings but at a subsequent meeting of the Committee when public speaking rights will again apply.

When a decision has been made on an application a copy of the decision notice will be sent to the Clerk.

If an applicant appeals against the District Council's decision the Town or Parish Council will be notified of the appeal arrangements and, in some cases, the opportunities for further representations to be made. Any comments already made will be automatically forwarded to the Planning Inspector who will determine the appeal. A copy of the Inspector's decision will be sent to the Clerk at the end of the process.

Pre-Application Consultations on Major Proposal

For major proposals the District Council expects developers to consult the local community before a planning application is submitted. A number of steps are required, including consultation with the relevant Town or Parish Council.

Full details are available on the Council's web site, but a critical part of the process will be that for major applications developers are required to consult the relevant Town or Parish Council as well as informing immediate neighbours and occupiers of the site and carrying out other publicity requirements. It is important to recognise that at that stage of the process the consultation is by the developer and responses should go back to the developer, who will then be expected to supply a Statement to the District Council setting out the community engagement undertaken. This should include a summary of all the comments received, a clear indication of which comments have resulted in amendments to the scheme and what those changes are, and which comments have not and why not.

Once the formal planning application has been received Town and Parish Councils will be consulted in the normal way.

Site Notices

Application sites are always visited by the Planning Case Officer, who will post a site notice or notices in order to give local publicity to the application. A copy of the notice is sent to each Town/Parish Council for their own use.

Difficult Planning Issues

The District Council appreciates that there are sometimes difficult planning issues with which Parish and Town Councils have to deal. If you require the assistance of a planning officer because you are dealing with a difficult case or series of cases we would be happy to discuss this by phone with the Clerk or other Parish/Town representative.

Please contact Steve Oxenham (Head of Planning and Building Control), Andy Mitchell (Development Manager) or Geoff Lyon (Team Leader, Enforcement and Special Cases) if you require assistance.

Sources of Information and Advice

The Council's website includes comprehensive information about many aspects of planning (www.northnorfolk.org.uk/planning).

Full details and plans of all current applications are posted on the site, records of decisions made since 1974 and the ability to track the progress of applications. Application forms, notes and leaflets may be downloaded free of charge.

Information and links covering the Council's work on North Norfolk's natural and built heritage are provided on the "Conservation and Design" pages and the "Trees and Landscape" pages of the Council's website. This includes access to the register of all Tree Preservation Orders served by the Council and applications to the Council to carry out works to protected trees.

Advice and application forms concerning Building Regulations and Control are also available.

When determining planning applications the Council is required to make decisions which comply with adopted planning policies unless there are considerations, usually described as 'material planning considerations', which would justify a departure from these policies. Over the last three or four years the Council has prepared a number of new policy documents which are collectively known as the LDF. This work is now nearing completion. All Parish and Town Councils have been provided with a copy of the latest documents and full details are available on the LDF Web site: http://www.northnorfolk.org/ldf/default_2740.asp'.

Links are also provided to national websites which provide further information and advice.

Steve Oxenham
Head of Planning and Building Control
October 2010