

Homersfield Parish Council

PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS

Internal procedure to follow for the discussion, assessment and decision on planning applications in our parish

1. The Clerk receives notification of a planning application via email from East Suffolk Council (ESC).
2. The Clerk to check date that comments are required by ESC and if after the next PC meeting the planning application can be put on the agenda for discussion.
3. If the date that comments are required is prior to the PC meeting, the Clerk to contact the case officer at ESC and ask for an extension until after the PC meeting. If the extension is granted the application can be put on the meeting agenda. If no time extension is granted then an extraordinary meeting should be called to discuss the application.
4. If an extraordinary meeting is required, a quorum of the council must be the minimum number of councillors attending to enable any vote to take place. The quorum number for HPC is 3 councillors.
5. Any planning applications can only be added to an agenda if all councillors have been given a minimum of 3 clear days' notice to enable them to check any relevant details and be in a position to discuss the item at the meeting.
6. Once all above can be satisfied, the Clerk should send the application details to all councillors so that they can see the planning application on the ESC Planning Portal.
7. Councillors should go to <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications> and enter the application number in the search box as required. (example below)
8. All relevant documents to the planning application will be available to view online and download to print off if required.
9. Councillors should study the documents for each planning application prior to the meeting in which they will be discussed so that they will be ready to give their views.
10. However, no decision should be made prior to the meeting by individual councillors as all information may not be forthcoming until all councillors and the public have spoken.
11. Any Councillor can, if they see fit, contact the applicant and neighbours of the applicant to get their views and also request to visit the site of the proposed development. Remember that you will need permission from the land owner or you may be trespassing.
12. If members of the public are in attendance to make comments regarding any planning application on the agenda during the public 10 minutes, it would be recommended that the Chair bring forward the planning applications on the agenda so that all comments can be heard together.
13. All councillors to be given in turn a maximum of 2 minutes to state their views on the planning application.

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14. When commenting on planning applications, please ensure that what you say is relevant to planning, as the council can only take into account material planning considerations.

Relevant planning issues include the following:

1. Overshadowing and loss of light
2. Over dominance
3. Noise disturbance, smells, obtrusive lighting or other impacts on amenity
4. The planning history of a site
5. National planning policies and guidance
6. Regional planning policies and guidance
7. Local planning policies and guidance
8. Highway safety issues
9. Traffic generation
10. Car parking provision
11. Design, including appearance, layout, scale, density and materials
12. Local drainage issues
13. Local flooding issues
14. Loss of important open spaces
15. Loss of important community facilities
16. Impact on important trees
17. Proposed landscaping
18. Impact on the character or setting of a listed building
19. Impact on the character or appearance of a conservation area

This list is not exhaustive but it gives a clear idea of the sort of comments that are relevant to the consideration of a planning application.

Examples of what are not material planning considerations include the following:

1. Reduction in property values
2. Loss of a private view over land
3. Boundary and access disputes, covenants and other private property matters
4. Questioning the applicant's motives or morals
5. That a planning application has been submitted retrospectively
6. Commercial competition
7. Once all councillors have stated their views there should be a time for any questions to be asked and a short discussion if required.

Once all statements, questions and discussion have been completed, the Chair should propose a vote on the application.