

Oulton Parish Council

Policy Regarding Consultation on Planning Applications

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Oulton Parish Council has set up a Planning Advisory Group and given delegated powers to the Parish Clerk.

Background

Oulton Parish Council is mindful that it has an important role in relation to planning applications as a consultee in the planning process. Responses to those applications must be within a specified time frame, usually 21 days. There is a need for transparency in this process. This policy is written to explain how the council will deal with planning applications so enabling both Councillors and the public to involve themselves effectively with that process.

Responses to planning applications

Planning applications are accessed via the East Suffolk Council's Planning Portal, although the Clerk would receive an email from the Planning Department in the first instance. It is the role of the Parish Clerk to bring to Council's attention any planning application requiring a Parish Council response. There is a 21-day deadline for responses.

Dealing with applications at Parish Council meetings

Where possible, the Parish Council will consider planning applications at its meetings and those applications will be detailed on the agenda. In the event of them being received after the closure of the agenda they will be reported to the Chairman and members as being received and details will be posted on the Parish Council's website advising of their inclusion in the next meeting. Members should view all documents relating to an application online at the District Council's website prior to a Council meeting to ensure meetings do not overrun.

The Parish Council will consider applications in line with the District Council's Planning Policy guidelines and 'material consideration' which includes, but is not limited to:

Amenity, appearance of the development, conservation, design, effect on wildlife, highway safety, historic buildings, loss of light or privacy, noise, overshadowing of your home, traffic and parking issues, loss of sunlight.

Issues which cannot be taken into account are civil matters and include:
Boundary disputes, construction noise, effect on property values, loss of view, private rights

Dealing with applications outside of the Parish Council meeting

The Parish Council has set up a Planning Advisory Group (PAG) made up of Cllrs Chris Smith & Peter Waring, appointed members of the Parish Council. The Parish Council has also given delegated powers to the Parish Clerk in respect of planning applications. In the event of an application being received just after a meeting, and where no extension is possible, then the PAG will advise the Clerk of their comments on the application electronically within the 21-day consultation period. The Clerk will then respond to the Planning Authority from the information provided, with the powers under Local Government Act 1972 authorising delegation to the Clerk.

In the event of an application being received which could be controversial, the Chairman and Clerk could convene a special meeting to consider the application. A quorum of three members (minimum) is required for any meeting.

The Districts Planning/Development Control Committee has the final say on all applications, and the Parish Council is only one of many consultees in the process. Parishioners can write to the District Council with their views on planning applications which are published on the planning portal.