



**Horsham
District
Council**

Public Involvement in Planning



**The right to speak
at meetings**

2010-2011 Edition

The Purpose of this Leaflet

A test of the planning system is the ability of the public to understand the framework in which planning operates and to be able to engage in the planning process whether through consultation on individual planning applications or through commenting on matters of planning policy that will affect the future planning of the District. Horsham District Council is committed to encouraging public involvement in planning as witnessed in the Statement of Community Involvement published in connection with the Local Development Framework and through the consultation carried out in connection with individual planning applications.

This leaflet deals specifically with the process involved in the determination of planning applications and the steps to be followed should you wish to take the opportunity to be involved in the process.

The Planning Application Process

The Council receives on average 3,200 applications a year for a range of development proposals, from small household extensions to larger residential and commercial developments. No matter the scale and form of development the Council is committed to balancing the speed and efficiency of decision making against the involvement of the public in the planning process.

The key steps of the planning application process and the opportunity for you to become involved are set out in this leaflet.

Step 1 : The consultation process

Consultation on planning applications takes the form of:

- * publication in the local press on a weekly basis of lists of planning applications received;
- * publication in the Council Offices of planning applications available and also in the Public Access section of the Council's website at www.horsham.gov.uk;
- * sending of letters to those who are likely to be affected by development;
- * display of site notices to advertise development in special areas such as conservation areas or for particular forms of development.

Unless otherwise specified a period of 21 days is given to comment on a planning application. However, the Case Officer will take representations into account up until the date of determination. Responses may be received from those who have been directly invited to comment via the consultation process or from anyone who has an interest in the application.

Step 2: How to respond to consultation on a planning application

The Council is required to assess each planning application on its own merits having regard to the planning policy framework as set out in the Horsham District Local Development Framework and the West Sussex County Council Structure Plan, the comments received as a result of consultation, and other material considerations.

It is important that any comment submitted in response to a planning application should be relevant to the proposal and does not contain racist, sexist, improper or slanderous statements.

A checklist of relevant and irrelevant considerations is set out overleaf.

Considerations relating to planning applications

Relevant material considerations	Irrelevant considerations
Structure Plan and Local Development Framework	Matters covered by other legislation e.g. licensing
Government Guidance	Private property rights
Case Law and previous decisions	Effect on value of property
Highway safety, traffic, parking	Personal and financial circumstances, other than in exceptional cases
Noise, disturbance, smells	Loss of view
Design, appearance, materials, character	Moral, religious issues
Overshadowing, loss of privacy	Restrictive covenants
Loss of trees	
Effect on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas	

You may view the application at the Council Offices; through the Public Access Section of the Council's website (www.horsham.gov.uk); or at the Planning Reception in Park North, North Street, Horsham from 9am - 5pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am -4pm on Friday.

Any comments on the application should be made in writing; through the comments form available on the Council's website; or by email to planning@horsham.gov.uk. The letter or email will be acknowledged within 3 working days and forwarded to the planning case officer. The letter will be displayed on the Council's website along with the other documents associated with the case. However, given the large numbers of letters received and the limited resources available it will not be possible to enter into detailed correspondence on individual planning applications.

It is important that you indicate whether you wish to speak on the planning application. If you have submitted your comments via email, please ensure that you still confirm in writing whether you wish to speak.

Step 3: Assessment of the planning application

The planning application will be allocated to a planning case officer. The planning case officer will be your point of contact for making enquiries regarding the progress of the application. The planning officer will be responsible for carrying out the site visit, assessing the merits of the proposal having regard to planning policy and the comments received as a result of the consultation process, and reaching a decision as to whether the application should be recommended for approval or refusal.

Step 4: The decision

Planning applications may be determined by officers under delegated powers or by planning committee. 90% of planning applications are dealt with under delegated powers, the remaining 10% being determined by Committee, withdrawn prior to a decision or otherwise not proceeded with. There are two planning committees, Development Control North and Development Control South. They each meet once a month, a list of meeting dates is set out at the end of this leaflet. The right to speak at Committee is available to Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, objectors, applicants and/or their agents and supporters.

a) The right to speak

If you have indicated you wish to speak on the application as set out in Step 2 above you will receive written confirmation of the Committee date and recommendation to establish whether you still wish to speak on the application at committee (at this point you should phone as per the instructions in your letter to book your speaking slot). Your right to address the committee will be dependent upon meeting the following criteria:-

- * that you made a representation that is material (having regard to the list of relevant planning considerations as set out on page 4);
- * that you indicated as part of Step 2 that you would like the opportunity to address the committee.

At the Committee meeting each speaker will be limited to two minutes in which to make representations. Unless the Chairman specifies otherwise, the total time for such representations will be divided as follows:-

	<i>Total time allowed</i>
1. Planning Officer To introduce the application and update the objections, letters of support, etc. received.	
2. Objectors.	3 speaking slots, each limited to 2 minutes
3. Applicant or agent and supporters	3 speaking slots, each limited to 2 minutes
4. Parish or Neighbourhood Council representative(s).	2 minutes
5. Planning Officer - to deal with matters which have arisen.	

The order laid out here is the order that speakers will be heard at Committee.

The Speaker list closes at 12pm on the last but one working day before the date of Committee.

b) The Committee Meeting

All meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Park North, North Street, Horsham (the building next to the Capitol). Dates of meetings can be found on the back of this leaflet.

If you have registered to speak, you should arrive no later than 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. You will be given a brief explanation of the arrangements and your attendance will be recorded.

The Council will not be able to show yours or anyone else's photographs, plans, documentation or any other visual aids. Nor should any material be circulated at the Committee meeting.

Items will normally be heard in the order set out on the agenda. People therefore need to be aware that it may be sometime before the item in which they are interested is heard.

The order of speaking and time allowed is as set out in the table on page 6 opposite.

Following the presentation of the case by the case officer and the comments received from speakers the Councillors will discuss the planning application, involving the officers as necessary. There will be no further right to speak or raise questions.

The Committee will make a decision to:

- * refuse the application;
- * permit the application as recommended or with additional conditions as it sees fit;
- * defer the decision on the application to another meeting to enable further discussion to take place/to obtain additional material; or
- * delegate the decision to the Head of Development in consultation with Chairman and Vice-Chairman and local members, as appropriate.

Once the Committee has taken a decision only the applicant/agent has a right of appeal, there is no third party right of appeal.

c) The issuing of the planning decision

The planning decisions on delegated items will be issued on a rolling basis as and when decisions are made, 80% of applications dealt with under delegated powers are determined within 8 weeks. The issuing of decisions on Committee items will normally take place within 3 working days of the meeting unless the decision is pending the receipt of additional material or legal agreement related to the development.

Queries

If you have any queries about the process set out in this leaflet, please contact:-

The Planning Department,
Horsham District Council,
Park North,
North Street,
Horsham,
West Sussex RH12 1RL

Telephone: (01403) 215187

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk

Dates of Meetings

Area North (starting at 5.30pm)	Area South (starting at 2.00pm)
11 May 2010	18 May 2010
8 June 2010	15 June 2010
6 July 2010	20 July 2010
3 August 2010	17 August 2010
7 September 2010	21 September 2010
5 October 2010	19 October 2010
2 November 2010	16 November 2010
7 December 2010	21 December 2010
11 January 2011	18 January 2011
1 February 2011	15 February 2011
1 March 2011	15 March 2011
5 April 2011	19 April 2011
3 May 2011	24 May 2011



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