

Roydon Parish Council

Planning Policy

Policy Adopted at meeting: March 2023

Policy Review Date: March 2026

Next Review Date: on or before March 2029

Introduction

Roydon Parish Council is mindful that it has an important role in relation to planning applications within the parish in the following ways:

- It is 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 usually sent out by South Norfolk District Council(SNDC) planning department by email and are accompanied by a letter requesting that responses are received back within 21 days. This is to enable SNDC to achieve the timetable set by government in relation to planning applications. It is possible to ask the planning officer dealing with the planning application to give an extension to the 21-day response time – the outcome of this request though is dependent on planning committee dates and other information.

Dealing with applications at Parish Council meetings

Where possible, the Parish Council will consider planning applications at its meetings. The Clerk will circulate applications to all Councillors in a timely manner to enable them to be adequately prepared for the meeting. These planning applications will be detailed on the agenda of the meeting. In the event of them being received after the closure of the agenda the Chair will be asked whether they are happy to allow the application to be considered at the meeting. As the Council is only offering comments, not making substantive decisions, it is considered appropriate that the application is not withheld from the meeting unnecessarily. Councillors should view all documents relating to an application online at the SNDC planning portal prior to the Council meeting, as hard copies may not be available at the meeting. The Clerk will provide those Councillors, without this access, with the relevant information.

The Parish Council will consider applications in line with the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan, District Council Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. This includes, but is not limited to:

- amenity
- appearance of the development
- conservation
- design
- effect on wildlife – in line with the Biodiversity Policy
- highway safety
- historic buildings
- loss of light or privacy
- noise
- overshadowing of homes traffic and parking issues.

Issues which CANNOT be taken into account include:

- boundary disputes

- construction noise
- effect on property values
- loss of view
- private rights

Dealing with applications outside of the Parish Council meeting

In the event of an application being received between meetings, and the dates clearly not fitting with meetings even with an extension, the Clerk will circulate the application to Councillors who will advise the Clerk of their comments on the application, electronically or by telephone for those without internet access, within the 21-day consultation period. These comments will be forwarded to all Councillors. The Clerk will then respond to the SNDC planning department 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 from a member of the Parish Council, then the Clerk will ensure that the application is not sent to that Councillor. If a Councillor becomes aware that they have a pecuniary interest in an application they should declare this by email to all members, and should not participate in further email dialogue regarding the application, and should be removed from 'reply all' emails on the application.

In some circumstances where Councillors deem it necessary, such as more complex applications, developments of two or more dwellings, or where Councillors object to an application, or where objections have been received from parishioners within the 21-day consultation period, the Chair has the discretion to call an Extraordinary Meeting. Representations from members of the public received after the 21-day consultation period will not be considered, and a planning application consultee comment will not be re-considered unless there is compelling and relevant new information available. The decision to call an additional meeting, rests with the Chair whose decision is final.

In the event that the Chair has a pecuniary interest in an application, the above provisions for the decision to call an Extraordinary Meeting shall pass to the Vice Chair. As an additional meeting can only legally be called by the Chair, or by any two Councillors signing the Summons, the Chair shall not withhold their permission to hold an additional meeting if advised by the Vice Chair that they feel a meeting should be called.

It is noted that the District Council has the final say on all applications, and the Parish Council is only one of many consultees. Parishioners must write to SNDC with their views on planning applications to ensure that they are received into the planning system, and it is helpful to the Parish Council if they send a copy of their representation to the Parish Clerk to help the Parish Council in formulating their response to applications. Parishioners should note that representations received to the Parish Council are not forwarded to SNDC, and are responsible for making their own submission to the formal planning process.

This policy to be reviewed every three years or sooner if appropriate.