

Deopham & Hackford Parish Council

Planning Applications Policy

Adopted: 5 July 2023

To be reviewed every 3 years. Date of next review: July 2026

Purpose of Policy

South Norfolk Council is the planning authority which makes decisions on planning applications. Deopham & Hackford are a consultee on any application submitted where the address falls within the parish. The Council has no authority to make decisions on planning applications, but can seek to influence the decision by submitting a response to the application through their role as consultee. There are many different consultees to planning applications, with South Norfolk Council having the authority to make the final decision. A response can include no comments, support, objection and advisory comments. 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 both council members and the public understand how to involve themselves effectively with that process.

Responses to Planning Applications

Planning Applications are notified to the Clerk via email and the application documentation can be accessed via the District Council's online Planning Portal. It is the role of the Parish Clerk to bring to the Council's attention any planning application requiring a Council response and to list this as an agenda item for the next Council meeting. There is typically a 21-day deadline for responses. It is sometimes possible to ask the planning officer dealing with the planning application to give an extension to the 21 day deadline. An extension will be requested where the deadline for responses falls outside of the window of a Council meeting therefore preventing a discussion on the application in the public. The outcome of this request is dependent on South Norfolk planning committee dates and other information. Any response submitted on behalf of the Council will be sent via email to the planning officer by the Clerk, as discussed and agreed by the Council. All official responses submitted will be published by South Norfolk Council via their online Planning Portal in line with their internal processes.

Members are entitled to submit responses to planning applications both as a Councillor (via the Parish Clerk) and a member of the public. Where a response is submitted as a member of the public this must be done directly by the individual and it must be made clear the comments are being submitted on that basis and not as a Councillor.

Where a planning application has been submitted by a Member in relation to their own property they must declare an interest at the meeting at which that application is being discussed and must leave the room whilst discussions and any voting takes place. The Council can allow participation in a discussion by the Member by way of a resolution if they feel it is appropriate to be able to ask questions of the Member in relation to gaining clarity on an application. A resolution will not allow for any voting rights. The Member may also speak during public participation.

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 (application number, description and address). Members should view all documents relating to an application online via South Norfolk Council's Planning Portal prior to a Council meeting. Members of the public can also view the application using the same Planning Portal and searching for the application number on the agenda.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning-applications/find-planning-application>

The Parish Council will consider applications in line with the District Council's Planning Policy guidelines and "material considerations" which include, but are 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, impacts on the countryside's dark skies.

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.

As local residents Members are well positioned to consider other local impacts or benefits an application may pose and may provide additional comments in relation to this.

Dealing with applications outside of the Parish Council meeting

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 outside the window of a meeting and an extension has not been awarded by South Norfolk Council the application will be considered by email. Where the application is for a major development or controversial proposal, in consultation between the Clerk and the Chairman, an Extraordinary Meeting may be called to allow a public discussion of views on the application.

Where an application is considered by email Members who wish to comment must do so by email to the Clerk who will compile responses. If there are no comments received then the Clerk will respond to this respect to the Planning Officer, under the Delegation of Powers to the Clerk.

Where Members have submitted comments these will be collated and re-shared with the Council via email. Members will then be asked to confirm by email whether they support and agree with the comments. Any comments submitted must have been approved in writing by a minimum of 3 Members (quorum).

Any applications where a response has been agreed by email will be included on the agenda of the next meeting for the response to be ratified.

Members of the Public

Parishioners can submit their own views on a planning application via South Norfolk Council's Planning Portal. If a parishioner wishes the Parish Council to also be aware of their comments, with the view of this being taken into consideration prior to the Parish Council submitting their own comments, the parishioner is welcome to notify the Clerk of their response and Members will then be made aware. Alternatively, parishioners are welcome to attend the Council meeting at which the application is being discussed to share their views during public participation. It is helpful to the Parish Council if they are aware residents wish to discuss their views in advance.

Traffic

The roads in the parishes of Deopham & Hackford are mostly narrow, single track country roads, with many sharp blind bends and speed limits of 40mph and 60mph. The Council considers road safety for residents of the parish to be of up most importance. The Council will consider the impacts on traffic for all applications and will submit comments on an application where it feels specific restrictions may be required to maintain road safety. The Council acknowledges that the parish is in a largely agricultural area and with that brings the use of large vehicles such as tractors and trailers.

For any new residential property built it is expected that suitable off-road parking will be provided as part of the design so that there will be no on road parking.

For any industrial or business application the Council expects there to be satisfactory details provided regarding the expected impact on traffic and mitigations which will be put in place to limit any impacts. The

Council expects that no unnecessary HGVs will pass through the main residential area of the parish where there is an acceptable alternative route. The Council will also seek advice from Norfolk County Council Highways department where it has serious concerns regarding the impact of traffic on the parish.

The Council may object to an application on the basis of an unjustifiably negative impact on traffic in the parish. It may also request specific conditions are applied to an application where it feels this will be for the benefit of the parish.

Light Pollution

The parishes of Deopham & Hackford are rural parishes which benefit from dark night skies. There are no street lights and the Council wishes to protect the dark skies for the benefit of its residents and to preserve the local habitat. The Council has sought advice from the Campaign to Protect Rural England Norfolk (CPRE Norfolk) which has summarised planning policy and recommended an appropriate response to light pollution on dark skies. In adopting this policy the Council is also adopting the CPRE Norfolk's Standard Light Pollution Clause (as below).

Standard Light Pollution Clause

National Planning Policy Framework Clause 180c and Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy both recognise the importance of preserving dark landscapes and dark skies. In order to minimise light pollution, the Parish Council recommend that any outdoor lights associated with a proposed development should be:

- 1) fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fittings)*
- 2) directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)*
- 3) switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)*
- 4) white light low-energy lamps (LED) and not orange or pink sodium sources*

The Council will not object to applications on the basis that this lighting clause is observed. The Council will object to any application which demonstrates it may disregard these requirements unless satisfactory reasons can be provided as to why these requirements cannot be met. This does not negate the right for the Council to object to an application on the basis of another material consideration or concern.

Please note the Council may object to an application on the basis of any material considerations where it feels this is an appropriate decision taking into account all information provided with the application as published on the South Norfolk Council website. The Council will not object to an application without providing a reason for this decision.