The planning application process and appeals

Last Modified September 03, 2026

We recommend you seek pre-application advice before submitting an application to save unnecessary delays.

There is a charge for this service but it is considered beneficial to all parties.

Once you have submitted your planning application, it will follow the process below.

Validation of application

An application is assigned a reference number and assessed for validity within 5 days of receipt. If the application is valid the applicant/agent will be notified in writing, identifying the reference number, the name of the case officer and a target decision date.

If the application is invalid, the applicant/agent will be contacted requesting any missing information that is required to make the application valid. The requested information must be returned within 21 days or the application will be withdrawn and the fee returned, minus an administration fee which relates to the nature and scale of the proposal.

Read our validation checklist and view the planning fees.

Public consultation

All applications are made available for public inspection on our website.

If directed by the relevant legislation, the council will also publicise applications and invite public comment. This is usually for a minimum of 21 days.

Public consultation may take the form of:

- A site notice displayed in the locality giving details of the application
- Letters sent to relevant neighbours inviting them to view and comment on the application n (you do not need to have received a letter in order to comment)
- A notification providing details of the application published in a local newspaper (where appropriate)

We may also seek specialist advice from other departments within the council and external bodies. There are some statutory consultees that we must consult and this is dictated by the relevant legislation. In other cases we may simply seek the views of other departments or external bodies where we consider to be necessary to enable a proper assessment of an application. Consultees are usually given 21 days to comment and are consulted by letter or email.

Decision making

This involves various stages and the consideration of issues, which are dependent on the type and size of the application but will generally include:

- Local and national planning policies and guidance
- The views of council departments and external bodies
- Comments from members of the public
- The site visit by the case officer and details of what they have seen on site

An application is put forward for determination by either:

- Delegated powers – where a planning officer makes the decision
- Planning committee – where the planning committee makes the decision

Where members of the public have commented on an application to be determined by the planning committee, they will be given the opportunity to speak If they wish to speak they will need to check the online pages to see if and when the application is going to committe and complete the request to Request to Speak at Public Meeting form.

The agenda for the committee is published on the council's website a week in advance of the meeting (meetings are held as and when they are needed and usually on a Tuesday evening at 6.00pm).

The way in which planning applications are decided is governed by the National Scheme of Delegation but is subject to some council discretion. The approach the council takes to implementing the National Scheme of Delegation is set out in our guidance note.

Decision notice

A decision notice is issued to the applicant/agent on the day the decision is made (or the day after if the decision is made by planning committee). This is the legal document granting or refusing planning permission which can be viewed on our website.

It contains details of any conditions that may have been applied to the permission and reasons for the decision.

The government stipulates determination periods within which applications should be decided. These are generally 13 weeks for major applications and 8 weeks for most other application types. The council always seeks to determine applications within these statutory periods.

Planning appeals

An applicant has the right to appeal against failure of the council to determine an application within the relevant time period, the refusal of planning permission, or the imposition of conditions on a planning permission.

Appeals are made to the Planning Inspectorate and further information and guidance can be found at the Planning Inspectorate. Third parties do not have the right to appeal but they can make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman if they believe there was an administrative fault in the way the council handled the matter

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