

HAVING YOUR SAY ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

A GUIDE TO THE PROCESS, MAKING YOUR VIEWS KNOWN AND SPEAKING AT PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

How planning applications are dealt with

When a planning application has been made, the Council tells nearby residents and carries out other consultations. The Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement relating to publicity for planning applications. Residents may feel that there should be wider consultation but a line has to be drawn somewhere. Normally those people directly adjoining the site will be consulted, often those opposite a site and sometimes more widely depending on the nature of the application.

Following the initial consultation letter, you will receive no further contact from the Council about the application unless you have written in to make comments, in which case the Council will write to you to inform you of the decision. To view the plans, check on progress of the application and for amended plans, please check on the Council's website at www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk by selecting Planning and building control from the menu on the left hand side of the home screen, click the blue planning search button; type in the reference number in the top box and select planning only from the next box. Click Search Application Register. Once the application has been found, click on the blue underlined text. The application details will be returned where you can check on progress. The plans can be viewed by clicking the "documents" heading in the grey box and clicking the blue underlined text for each item. If you do not have access to a computer the application plans can also be viewed at the Reception Area in the Town Hall, Nuneaton and at the Area Office in Congreve Walk, Bedworth and you can check for further progress by telephoning the Planning Contact Team on 024 7637 6328.

The Council wants to know your views on planning applications. These views must be in writing and addressed to the Head of Development Control at the address on the back of this leaflet or email planning@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk The Council should make decisions within set timescales so there is a time limit of 21 days from the date on the consultation letter for commenting on planning applications. **Please note** if you do not reply in time it may be too late to consider your views, a response will not normally be made to your comments and any comments you do make will be kept on files open to public inspection. If an appeal is made copies will be sent to the Secretary of State and the person making the appeal.

Applications can either be determined by the Head of Development Control on behalf of the Council under Delegated Powers or by the Planning Applications Committee.

Applications Determined by the Head of Development Control

Applications which have less than 5 written objections or a petition with less than 5 signatures may be determined by the Head of Development Control. Applications which have 5 or more written objections or a petition with 5 or more signatures or letters of support may also be determined by the Head of Development Control where the application is to be refused in accordance with the reasons for objection after consultation with the ward Councillors or approved as the case may be. These applications are not presented to Planning Applications Committee but are determined under powers given or delegated by the Committee to the Head of Development Control.

Applications Determined by Planning Applications Committee

Applications which receive 5 or more written objections or a petition with 5 or more signatures are determined by Planning Applications Committee. In addition if a Nuneaton and Bedworth Ward Councillor requests it (within a certain time frame) or if the Head of Development Control considers that the application should be reported, the application will be determined by the Planning Applications Committee. Comments will be summarised on the Committee Agenda so that Councillors are aware of them and can take them into account. Once an application is ready to be determined by Committee an agenda for the meeting will be prepared. Committee meetings take place generally on a 3 weekly basis and 5 working days before the date of the meeting the agenda will be made public. The agenda item for each application being considered at the meeting will be uploaded at this stage to the documents heading where the plans are viewed. A full copy of the agenda can be viewed on the Council's web site by clicking Council, election and meetings from the menu on the left hand side of the home screen. Click the purple Committees button, then select Council, Cabinet and Committees. On the right hand side of the page under the Committee minutes heading, select Agendas, reports and minutes. Select Planning Applications committee. A list of agendas will be returned, the newest on the top. Click the agenda you require then click the green text to download the agenda, reports and appendices.

Having Your Say at the Committee Meeting

As well as making written comments, you can register to speak directly to the Committee. The Council allows 2 speakers for and 2 speakers against the proposal on each application. You are encouraged to group together to present your case, but if this is not possible, spaces for speaking are allocated on a first come first served basis. Please contact the Contact Team on 024 7637 6328 to register to speak at the committee meeting within 21 days mentioned on the consultation letter. Only those people registered to speak and who specifically request it will be informed of the Committee date time and venue. The contact team can help with queries relating to facilities for people with disabilities and mobility problems.

The chair of the meeting will announce each item, the Planning Officer will report on the proposal and the main considerations and the speakers will then be invited to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes, Objectors first followed by supporters and the applicant / agent. Councillors may ask questions of the speakers if there are points of clarification and the planning officer may be asked to comment on the points made by the speakers. The members will then debate the item and to ensure a full and thorough debate, there is no time limit on them speaking.

Points to Consider

It will help if you prepare what you are going to say before the meeting, you do not have to fill the 3 minutes, but you will not be allowed to over run this time. When you are invited to speak, you can come forward to speak at the table provided, or stay where you are. The committee clerk will start a timer when you begin speaking and the chair will ask you to stop upon the sound of the buzzer.

Any comments you make, must be on planning issues such as highway safety, traffic, noise, amenity, privacy pollution, historic buildings, conservation, wildlife, environmental effects, disabled access, local plan policies, and the County Council and Government guidance.

Items which cannot be considered include; the developers motives, loss of views over other peoples land, property value, private rights, covenants and boundary disputes. Please don't make slanderous, abusive or personal comments or interrupt others when they are speaking.

The Decision

All decisions whether delegated or committee are based on a number of factors including national and local planning policies, Government Guidance, the planning merits of the proposals. The law favours approving all applications unless there are overriding planning objections. Your views will be considered but may not override other factors.

Where an application is complex or the Committee Members feel it is necessary the application may be deferred possibly for the submission of further information or to allow a visit to the site. If this happens registered speakers will be given the opportunity to speak to the committee again when the item is considered again by the members.

Once a decision has been made if you make written comments on the application you will be notified in writing of the decision by the Council.

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Development Control
Town Hall
Coton Road
Nuneaton
CV11 5AA
Tel 024 7637 6328

This document is available in other languages and formats on request.