

Stiffkey Parish Council Planning Policy

Stiffkey Parish Council is mindful that it has an important role in relation to planning applications. 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 council members and the public to involve themselves effectively with that process.

Responses to planning applications

These are usually sent out by NNDC Planning Directorate on a Friday, by post and are accompanied by a letter requesting that responses are received back within 21 days. This is to enable NNDC to achieve the timetable set by government in relation to planning applications. It is often possible to ask the planning officer dealing with the planning application to give an extension to this 21 days – 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 notify Members in advance of any applications received. 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 they will be reported to the Chairman and members as being received and dealt with outside of a Parish Council meeting. Members should view all documents relating to an application online at the NNDC website prior to a Council meeting to ensure meetings do not overrun. Only in the event that the NNDC website is down, should documents be viewed at a meeting.

The Parish Council will consider applications in line with the District Council's directive which includes, but is 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 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 just after a meeting, then the parish council members will advise the Clerk of their comments on the application electronically within the 21 day consultation period. The Clerk will then respond to the Planning Directorate 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 Parish Council Chairman / or two members of the Council will call an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting for the purposes of considering the application. A quorum of three Members (minimum) is required for any meeting.

Only in exceptional circumstances, where an application is deemed to effect the whole parish, will the Council ask for an extension to the standard consultation period to enable parishioners to comment.

It is noted that the District Council Development Control Committee has the final say on all applications, and the Parish Council is only one of many consultees. Parishioners can write to

NNDC with their views on planning applications, and it is helpful to the Parish Council if they sent a copy of their letter to the Parish Clerk. Letters received will guide the Parish Council in formulating their response to applications.

Dealing with Local Issues

The Parish Council uses core strategy policies from the NNDC in order to inform its comments. Stiffkey Parish Council is keen to ensure the following:

Dark Skies

The Parish Council is supportive of how the lack of artificial light helps the coast retain its rural character and overall tranquility. With the Parish situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the majority of the settlement in a conservation area, the Parish Council wishes to actively encourage promote the 'dark Skies' initiative. Having invested in low level street lighting, the Parish Council will actively encourage prospective plans to be mindful of not adversely affecting the benefit to the village that these street lights now give.

Local Landscape

The Parish Council is supportive of the local landscape which makes North Norfolk a place unique, and the Parish Council uses the Landscape Character Assessment as a framework for comments in order to promote the idea that any settlement changes respect local distinctiveness. The Parish Council strongly believes that planning decisions should 'do no harm' to the natural and local environment and serve only to protect and enhance valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity

Building Character

The Parish Council is supportive of ensuring that any development, extension or replacement of dwellings within the Parish take into account local character and would not result in either a disproportionate increase in height or scale of the original dwelling and that they would not materially increase the impact on the appearance of the immediate surrounding environment and countryside.

Supporting Affordable and Appropriate Housing

The Parish Council is mindful of the difficulties faced by local people in finding affordable and appropriate housing within the Parish, where housing stock is frequently purchased for second home and holiday let purposes. The Parish Council is open to supporting development that might help to alleviate this problem. Where possible, the Parish Council would seek to retain smaller, comparatively cheaper, housing stock within the area.

Traffic Management

As a village with relatively narrow roads, the Parish Council is mindful of the traffic management issues cause by building and development works. Where development is deemed to have an impact on traffic flow and management, the Parish Council will seek to ensure that comprehensive traffic management plans are included with any approved planning permission.

Timing of Road closures for construction work

In order to keep disruption throughout the Parish to a minimum, the Parish Council will request that no road closures take place during the key holiday season where they are likely to have a detrimental impact on the local businesses and the bus route. Should a road closure be required, the Parish Council will request that this is done with as much notice as possible after consultation.

Enforcement

The Parish Council will refer any approved planning application which deviates from the stated conditions laid out in the decision letter to the Enforcement Officer at North Norfolk District Council for immediate action.

Light Pollution

The Parish Council would like any application that replaces or increases glazing to demonstrate that measures have been taken to minimise light pollution (such as coated glazing). In addition, the Parish Council would like any application which proposes outdoor lighting to demonstrate that the lighting is fully shielded, directed downwards and white light/preferably LED only. The Parish Council does not consider dusk to dawn lamps acceptable and is of the view that if essential, outside lights should be installed at the lowest possible height to achieve lighting levels.

Policy amended & Agreed: July 2023

Policy Review Date: July 2025