
East Clandon Parish Council Protocol for Responding to Planning Applications

1. Role of the Parish Council

- The Parish Council is a statutory consultee in the planning process.
- Planning decisions are determined in accordance with national and local planning policy. These policies define the material considerations—the specific matters that must be taken into account when assessing a planning application or appeal.
- The Council's role is to provide comments to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) based on these material considerations.
- The Parish Council does not approve or refuse applications.

Reference: For a full list of material considerations, see the [Planning and building control - Guildford Borough Council](#).

2. Normal Process

- All planning applications received are placed on the agenda for the **next scheduled Parish Council Meeting** or Planning Committee meeting.
- Applications are considered in a properly convened public meeting, where councillors debate and agree the Council's formal response.
- Decisions are recorded in the meeting minutes and submitted to the LPA by the Clerk.

3. Applications Received Between Meetings

If the consultation deadline falls before the next scheduled meeting:

- The Clerk will **request an extension** from the LPA to allow consideration at the next meeting. Extensions are usually granted.
- If an extension is not possible, the Council may:
 - a) **Call an extraordinary meeting** to consider the application.
 - b) **Use delegated authority**, where the full Council has previously resolved that the Clerk may, after consulting at least two councillors (the Chair or Vice-Chair and the Lead Councillor for Planning), submit a response on behalf of the Council.

This ensures decisions are lawful, transparent, and timely, while allowing flexibility when deadlines clash with meeting schedules.

4. Transparency and Communications

- All discussions on planning applications should be conducted in public meetings. Councillors should avoid making decisions or forming conclusions via email or private communications.
- The Clerk may use emails to circulate factual information or supporting documents, but any formal response must be made at a meeting or under delegated authority.

5. Public Participation

- Members of the public may speak on planning applications at Parish Council or Planning Committee meetings, in line with the Council's Standing Orders.
- Notice periods, time limits, and any specific procedural rules should be clearly communicated in advance to encourage community engagement.

6. Declaration of Personal Interest

- Councillors must declare any personal or prejudicial interests in planning applications in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.
- Any councillor whose judgment may be compromised should withdraw from the meeting during discussion of that item.

- Declarations and any withdrawals must be recorded in the minutes to ensure transparency and integrity.
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7. Recording and Transparency

- All planning responses are recorded in Council minutes, either from the meeting or noting that a response was submitted under delegated authority.
- Minutes may simply state: *“Parish Council Supported”* or *“Parish Council Objected”*, with more detailed reasoning available on the LPA planning portal.
- The Council’s comments are publicly available via the LPA’s planning portal.

8. Review

- This protocol will be reviewed annually at the Annual Parish Council Meeting, or sooner if required.