

Fontmell Magna Parish Council

Planning Application Policy

1. This Policy sets out the procedures the Parish Council (**the PC**) will follow when consulted by Dorset Council's Planning Authority on planning applications. **NB. This Policy does not cover applications in respect of trees.**
2. The PC is required by law to be consulted by the Planning Authority on planning applications within the Parish. While the PC does not make planning decisions (it does not grant or refuse permission) the Planning Authority may take into account the PC's comments/observations when making a final decision. Even where the PC raises an objection, the Planning Authority may decide that other planning-related considerations outweigh local concerns and permission will be granted. Where permission is refused, the applicant has the right of appeal.
3. The PC's view on community needs is contained in the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan (**the Plan**). The PC has set up the Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group (**the NPMG**), formerly the Planning Working Group, in order to keep the Plan under review but also to assess all applications for compliance with the policies in the Plan.
4. On receipt of a valid planning application, the Planning Authority will:
 - Display (for at least 24 days) a site notice on or near the boundary of the site;
 - Post details of the planning application online at <https://planning.north-dorset.gov.uk/online-applications/>
 - Notify the neighbours (usually those properties on either side);
 - Carry out statutory consultations – statutory consultees include the PC, the Highways Authority, the Environment Agency, Historic England etc. Statutory consultees, and anyone else who wishes to comment, normally have 24 days to comment to the Planning Authority.
5. On being consulted on a planning application, the Clerk will update the PC's website and notify the following:
 - The Parish Councillors, who are all expected to view details of the application on-line on the Planning Authority's website.
 - The NPMG, who will assess the application against the policies in the Plan and send a written report to the Clerk within 10 days, recommending whether to support or object to the application based on compliance with the Plan.
 - Those residents who have agreed to be included in the Village Contacts email list. The Clerk will accompany the planning application notification with the wording: "If you have any comments you wish the Parish Council to take into account in its response to this application please let me have any comments within 10 days of the date of this email, otherwise any comments should be posted on the Dorset for You website by.....".
6. The Councillor responsible for planning will, if they consider it necessary, visit the site to acquaint themselves of details, and may seek the views of neighbours (anyone who might be materially affected by the proposed development). They may also, if the plans are not readily readable from the website, contact the agent to obtain a better version of the plans. Having considered the application, the Councillor responsible for planning will report back to the Clerk and other Parish Councillors, and will place a copy of the NPMG's report on the PC's website.
7. Residents may let the PC know their views verbally or in writing and/or, if appropriate, attend PC meetings and voice their views. The PC will consider, but not be bound by, comments and representations made to them in arriving at its consultation response. Alternatively, as all planning applications are in the public domain and can be viewed by anyone on-line, residents may submit their own comments on-line without recourse to, or in addition to, the PC. Residents may also make written comments on a planning application to the relevant officer at the Planning Authority (these comments will also be in the public realm).

8. All applications will be considered at the next following PC meeting, and placed on the agenda for that meeting, so that the applicant, their agent and any parishioners may attend to express their views. However, because PC meetings are held every two months, the period for commenting to the Planning Authority may expire beforehand.
9. If the application is suspected or known to be major or potentially contentious, every effort will be made to extend the deadline for comments so it can be discussed at the next PC meeting. If this is not possible, an extraordinary PC meeting shall be convened.
10. For other applications, the PC's Standing Orders (4a.) allow the PC to determine its consultation response outside a PC meeting if authorised by a majority of Parish Councillors in writing (including by email). For this purpose, a Parish Councillor is deemed to agree with the proposed action if they fail to respond to the Clerk within a specified timescale. Where the PC's consultation response is so decided, the decision (and the reasons it was arrived at) will be recorded at the next PC meeting and contained in the minutes of that meeting.
11. The Clerk, having taken into account the NPMG report, the report from the Councillor responsible for planning, and any views from other Parish Councillors and residents, shall draft an appropriate consultation response. Subject to final agreement by Parish Councillors, the Clerk shall send this response to the Planning Authority.
12. Comments on a planning application need to relate to **material planning considerations**. These include:
 - National, regional, strategic and local planning policies, including the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - Government circulars, orders and statutory instruments.
 - Previous planning decisions.
 - Highway safety, traffic generation or road access.
 - Adequacy of parking, loading or turning.
 - Loss of light, overshadowing, overlooking or loss of privacy.
 - Visual amenity (but not loss of private view) or loss of trees.
 - Noise, disturbance, smells or hazardous materials.
 - Design, appearance, materials, layout and density.
 - Effect on listed building, conservation area and archaeology.
 - Nature conservation.
 - Residential amenities.
13. **Non-material planning considerations**, e.g. issues that are not usually relevant in reaching planning decisions, include:
 - The perceived loss of property value.
 - Loss of view over other people's land.
 - Private disputes between neighbours (e.g. boundary or access disputes).
 - Ownership disputes over rights of way.
 - The impact of construction work or competition between firms.
 - The developer's morals or motives.
 - Possible future development.
 - The age, race or gender of the applicant and similar issues.