

Payhembury Parish Council
Policy and Procedure for handling planning applications

Policy

Aim: To assist East Devon District Council (EDDC) in planning decisions that affect the land within the parish of Payhembury in a professional and unbiased manner.

Payhembury Parish Council is committed to carrying out the following procedure in handling planning applications.

Planning application Procedure

Conflict of interest: A Parish Councillor who has been asked to comment on a planning application must declare a conflict of interest if:

- The Councillor is the applicant
- The Councillor is a neighbour to the land relating to the application

If a Councillor has declared a conflict of interest they may put forward an opinion as a parishioner with a similar relationship to the planning application.

Planning Application Category:

- Minor - an extension which is unlikely to significantly affect neighbours
- Major - a new dwelling *See footnote

Criteria for a Site Visit: A site visit may be requested by a Councillor if:

- The application is considered major
- The application is controversial
- There are grounds for opposing the application

Parish Council website and Planning Applications:

- The Parish Council website provides a link to the EDDC planning application website portal.
- The Parish Council website will show a list of planning applications that are currently open for comments with the date that comments close.
- The Parish Council website will show a list of recently closed planning applications.
- The list of planning applications shown will indicate whether the Parish Council's response to the application has been submitted.

Planning application process:

- East Devon District Council (EDDC) notifies Payhembury Parish Council of any planning application relating to land within the parish.
- Parish Councillors are notified by the Clerk requesting a response within a given timescale.
- Parish Clerk will update the Parish Council website with the planning application number and date of closure for comments.
- Parish Councillors that declare a conflict of interest will be excluded from all discussions.
- Parish Councillors will review the application using the online documents on the EDDC website and send their responses to the Clerk within the given timescale – a minimum of 3 responses are required.
- If the majority of Parish Councillors respond with minor applications or a supportive/no objection response the Parish Clerk will synthesis the comments into a single response to EDDC with no further discussion.
- If any Councillor requests a site visit then this should take place and will be arranged by the Clerk.
- The response of the Parish Council will be submitted to EDDC by the Clerk via the EDDC on-line website portal.
- The Parish Council website will be updated by the Clerk when the response has been submitted and when the planning application has closed for further comments.

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Arrange site visit

- Check the availability of the applicant / agent.
- Check the availability of Councillors.
- Check EDDC's deadline for the application.
- Request a short extension if necessary.
- Arrange a date and time as appropriate – ensuring all parties are informed.

Pre-site visit considerations: Councillors should avail themselves of the following information:

- Who might be affected by the application.
- Views and opinions of interested parties.

Councillors should be careful not to presume the views of the Parish Council at this stage.

Site Visit

- Attending Councillors will be shown around the site by the applicant / agent and obtain their views.
- Councillors should also consider discussions with (potentially) affected parties.

Outcome meeting at end of site visit:

- Discussion between attending Councillors to agree a written response to EDDC.
- A clear statement whether the Parish Council supports or opposes the application.
- If a unanimous decision is not possible then the response will be based on a majority vote of those attending the site visit.
- Written response emailed to the clerk for forwarding to EDDC.

* National planning policy currently allows for a particular class of barn conversion to a dwelling to be permitted except if it fails to meet very specific criteria (so called, PDQ applications). Given the limited grounds on which these may be rejected, Councillors may decide that such applications fall in the 'minor' category despite being new dwellings.

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