

(From MBC) Planning applications – having your say

Every application we receive is important to the people who make it and also anyone it may affect. We want you to be involved in the planning process and will consider all comments carefully before making a decision. Please remember that any comments we receive are treated as a public document and are available for the public to see. This may include publishing them on our website.

Matters which we can take account of

When considering an application, we have a legal duty to take account of all planning policies which include:

- central government policies;
- regional planning guidance;
- the current structure plan;
- adopted Maidstone local plan policies and approved supplementary planning guidance; and
- other relevant policies that may apply.

We will consider all comments we receive, but when making our formal decision we can only take account of matters known as 'material planning considerations'. These include the following.

- Loss of light
- Overshadowing
- Overlooking another property and loss of privacy
- Visual appearance
- Parking facilities
- Traffic the proposal would create and effects on highway safety
- Noise, smells and disturbance resulting from use
- Loss of trees or other important landscape features
- Design, appearance and materials proposed to be used
- Effect on listed buildings and on the character of a conservation area
- Layout and density of proposed buildings

This is not a full list.

Matters which we cannot normally take into account

For legal reasons it is not possible to take account of matters including the following.

- Matters controlled by building regulations or other non-planning laws such as structural stability, fire precautions and so on
- Private issues between neighbours, for example disputes over land or boundaries, damage to property, private rights of way, private agreements and so on
- Loss of value of a property
- Possible problems associated with the building work, for example, hours of work, noise, dust, construction vehicles and so on
- Loss of view
- The number of people who object to a planning application
- Issues of land ownership

How we take account of your views

Decisions on applications will often be made by a planning officer. The case officer who deals with the application will take your views into account and make a recommendation to a principal planning officer who will then review all the information available and make the final decision.

The Planning Committee will decide some applications. This will happen if the application is contentious or if parish or local councillors ask the committee to make the decision. The Planning Committee is made up of elected council members. The committee will receive a report that explains the application, gives a summary of the views we have received and any policies that apply. In this report it is usually necessary to summarise your comments, but the committee will be aware of them.

We realise that every application is important to everyone involved, and will try to balance all the issues when making a decision.

How you can find out about our decision

You can see all decisions on our website at www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk. Or, you can call 01622 602736 after the target date for making the decision.