

Writing comments on planning applications: A basic guide for residents by Sandymoor Parish Council

Writing style

- Keep your comments brief, concise and relevant to the information contained in the planning application.
- Focus on *issues which influence the planning decision making process*. Issues which do not relate to the planning decision making process will not be taken into consideration.
- Include relevant evidence which supports your points.
- Consider using sub-headings to organise your points.

Issues which influence the planning decision making process

- local, strategic, regional and national planning policies
- Government circulars, orders and statutory instruments
- previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- design, visual appearance, and materials
- layout and density of buildings
- loss of daylight or sunlight
- overshadowing/loss of outlook (but not loss of view)
- overlooking/loss of privacy
- noise and disturbance from use
- smells
- light pollution
- highway safety issues
- traffic generation
- vehicular access
- adequacy of parking
- loss of important trees
- landscaping
- nature conservation
- intrusion into the open countryside/ Green Belt
- risk of flooding
- effect of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas
- archaeology
- hazardous materials and ground contamination
- disabled persons access
- other 'material considerations', which are defined by your local planning authority (Halton Borough Council).

Issues which do not influence the planning decision making process include

- loss of view
- loss of property value
- breach of restrictive covenant
- loss of trade to a competitor
- the level of profit a developer might make
- personal circumstances of the applicant (in most cases)
- moral objections e.g. to uses such as amusement arcades and betting offices
- matters controlled under Building Regulations or other non-planning laws, e.g. structural stability, drainage, fire precautions etc
- private issues between neighbours e.g. land/boundary disputes, damage to property, private rights of way, covenants etc
- problems arising from the construction period of any works, e.g. noise, dust, construction vehicles, hours of work etc.
- the development is already completed

References

This document borrows heavily from 'A guide to commenting on planning applications' by Cheshire East council:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/view_a_planning_application/how_to_comment_on_applications/guide_to_commenting.aspx