



Guidance on How to make a Constructive Response

Planning is an emotive subject both locally and nationally as the Government tries to tackle an acute housing shortage across the country.

How can residents' comment on new planning applications?

There are two main channels available to you in The Parish of Stalbridge if you wish to comment on a planning application, either in support or objection on planning applications large or small.

1. Submit your comments directly to the planning authority, Dorset Council planning department (<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>). Dorset Council planning will take note of the volume of responses to an application when considering the decision, especially if there are many individual objections.
2. In person attendance at a Stalbridge Town Council meeting. Sometimes these happen as a dedicated 'Extraordinary Meeting' outside of the normal scheduled Council meetings. Meetings are at 7pm on a Wednesday approximately every 4 weeks. Agendas are available in advance and posted on the Stalbridge Town Council website & Facebook page (once approved) (<https://www.stalbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/town-council-meeting-agendas-and-minutes.html>). Paper notices are posted in the notice board at the top of Station Road and in the Town Council office window. If a member of the public is unable to attend a meeting, they may always provide their comments to the Clerk, (clerk@stalbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk) in advance of the meeting.

Additionally, Town Councillors may note any comments made to Dorset Council planning if they are put online (via the Dorset Council planning portal) prior to the Town Council meeting.

Material planning matters relevant the Planning Authority:

- Overlooking/loss of privacy - Is the property too close to neighbours or windows overlooking your own property?
- Loss of daylight/sunlight or overshadowing ◦ Does the position of the new property block natural light reaching neighbours?
- Scale and dominance - Is the new property in keeping with its surroundings?
- Layout and density of buildings - Is the development in keeping with the local setting?
- Appearance and design of development and materials proposed ◦ Would the property be a 'blot on the landscape'?
- Highway and Pedestrian Safety – Would a development compromise this?
- Traffic and Parking Issues – Does the development increase traffic to an unacceptable level or cause significant inconvenience?
- Consideration for Disabled persons access – Is this relevant?
- Rights of way ◦ Will any footpaths/bridleways be impacted?
- Noise, dust, fumes etc ◦ Will the development create a nuisance to the local area?



- Negative impact or effect on listed buildings, heritage assets and conservation areas? Extra conditions are required in conservation areas, areas of outstanding natural beauty and in the vicinity of historic buildings.
- Effect on trees and wildlife/nature conservation ◦ How is the natural environment impacted and have necessary measures been proposed to mitigate and/or compensate?
- Impact on the community and other services ◦ Can local services cope with any consequential population influx?
- Economic impact and sustainability ◦ Are there jobs, shops, leisure facilities nearby? Is transport being made available?
- Government policy ◦ Local housing targets, green belt etc.
- Have previous planning decisions been decided against similar plans or location (including appeal decisions?)

Material planning matters NOT relevant to the Planning Authority:

- Who the applicant is/the applicant's background.
- Loss of private views.
- Loss of property value.
- Loss of trade or increased competition.
- Strength or volume of local opposition.
- Construction noise/disturbance during development.
- Fears of damage to property.
- Maintenance of property.
- Boundary disputes, covenants, or other property rights.
- Personal circumstances.

If it's your aim to have influence of the planning decision outcome, it is advisable to concentrate your comments around the material planning considerations as detailed above.

Please note Stalbridge Town Council is a statutory consultee on planning in the Town & Dorset Council is the Planning Authority and decision maker.

Thank you.

Stalbridge Town Council

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