

Sampford Brett Parish Council Procedure for Review of Planning Applications

Background

West Somerset Council (WSC) is the decision-making authority for planning applications relating to land and properties in Sampford Brett Parish.

WSC notifies Sampford Brett Parish Council (SBPC) of applications within the parish. Notification is by email, and is followed later by a hard copy of the application and key documents. SBPC has 21 days from the date of initial notification in which to provide comments to the Planning Officer. The Planning Officer is required to take account of Parish Council comments when preparing his/her report and recommendations.

Planning applications are determined either by the Planning Committee or by the Planning Officer under delegated authority. For applications that are considered by the Committee, the Parish Council can apply to speak at the planning committee meeting.

Review Process for Councillors

The following describes the process for review of planning applications by Councillors.

1. On receipt of notification of a new planning application, the Clerk forwards WSDC email to all Councillors. This normally includes a link to the electronic application on WSC's planning page.
2. All Councillors undertake an initial review of the application on the WSC website and, within 5 days, circulate any comments or queries they have on the application and/or request a site visit.
3. If a site visit is required, the Clerk will arrange this with the applicant or his/her agent at the earliest opportunity and advise all Councillors of the meeting location and time. Residents with an interest in the application will be notified of the meeting and encouraged to attend.
4. The Clerk, in consultation with Councillors, will seek to resolve any queries relating to the application. Councillors will have the opportunity to revise their comments if necessary.
5. The Clerk and Chair review Councillors' written comments and
 - a. either circulate a collated set of comments to all Councillors, identifying which comments, in their opinion, are valid planning objections and therefore warrant comment to WSC
 - b. advise that no-one wishes to comment.

6. In the event that no-one wishes to comment, the Clerk will advise the Planning Officer that SBPC has considered the application and 'does not wish to comment on the application' or 'has no objection to the application'.
7. If one or more Councillors raises potentially valid planning objections, the Clerk will either:
 - a. Include the application on the agenda for the next Parish Council Meeting if that falls before the deadline for comments, or
 - b. Convene an extraordinary Parish Council Meeting, which will be advertised on the village website and notice boards as per normal meetings.
8. At the meeting:
 - a. The Chair (or another Councillor) will provide an overview of the application
 - b. Members of the public will be invited to comment on the application, provided they have notified the Clerk, in writing, in advance. Contributions will be limited to 3 minutes.
 - c. Councillors will discuss the application and agree either that the application does not require formal comment, or the key points that are to be included in the objection. If consensus cannot be reached, the course of action will be determined by a simple majority vote.
9. A draft letter to the Planning Officer summarising the key issues of concern will be drafted and circulated to all Councillors for final comment.
10. The Clerk will submit the letter to the Planning Officer and keep a copy in the Planning File.

Public Input

Residents of the Parish are encouraged to let the Parish Council know their views on applications that affect them at the earliest opportunity.

You are also encouraged to comment individually on applications and, for applications going to committee, to apply to speak at the planning meeting.

Adopted at the meeting of Sampford Brett Parish Council on 6th December 2017.