

Decision-making at the Planning Committee



This note is intended to provide a very broad guide to the role of the Planning Committee and the parameters within which it must work in making decisions on planning applications.

The role of the Planning Committee

It is the statutory duty of the Planning Committee to decide planning and other development related applications in Reigate and Banstead. The members of the Committee are elected to represent the interests of the whole community in planning matters and is comprised of fifteen elected Councillors with the numbers of each party reflecting the political makeup of the Council.

Public speaking

Members of the public may register to speak if they have made written representations. In these circumstances the applicant and/or agent has the right of response.

Only those who have registered to speak are permitted to address the committee. Please be respectful during the meeting so as not to disrupt proceedings.

The order of speaking on each item will normally be as follows:

1. introduction by planning officer
2. public speaking
3. ward members not serving on the Planning Committee
4. planning Committee members
5. answers to questions by officers
6. motion for resolution put by Chair.

Each public speaker is limited to three minutes.

Public speakers' own visual aids are not allowed, but plans and photographs for the application will be displayed during the meeting. Once a public speaker has finished there will be no other opportunity to speak to the Committee, nor to ask or answer questions.

Motions and voting

Once the debate has concluded, the Chair will invite Members of the Planning Committee to vote upon the recommendation within the officer's report and addendum, unless a Member of the Planning Committee proposes valid reasons (see 'material considerations') why Members should consider a decision contrary to the officer's recommendation, which must also be seconded by another Member of the Committee. Applications may be deferred until a future meeting if the Committee does not have enough information to reach a decision.

The Planning Committee uses a show of hands to vote and the Clerk will count and state the number of votes either for, against or any abstentions.

Material considerations

Legislation requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with development plan policies unless material considerations dictate otherwise. The development plan policies are those contained within the Council's adopted Core Strategy and Development

Management Plan. Local opposition or support for a proposal is not in itself a ground for refusing or granting planning permission, unless it is founded upon valid planning reasons.

Apart from the adopted planning policies, there may be other things that can be accepted as relevant in reaching a decision (these are known as material considerations - see below for examples). These are the matters that the Committee will consider as relevant when deciding a planning application.

Material considerations can include (but not limited to):	Issues that cannot be considered to be material considerations include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Layout / density / scale 2 Character / amenity 3 Privacy / overlooking 4 Daylight / sunlight 5 Access / traffic / highways safety / parking 6 Local economy 7 Design / appearance 8 Noise / smell 9 Landscape 10 Cumulative Impact 11 Previous similar decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Competition between businesses 2 Devaluation of property 3 Personal circumstances 4 History of applicant 5 Restrictive covenants 6 Constructional details 7 Disruption from construction works 8 Issues more readily covered by other legislation 9 Impact on property value 10 Ownership of land / right of access 11 Loss of a private view