

The Planning Process, the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan. A brief introduction

All planning applications to Milton Keynes Council are checked against three key documents: The National Planning Policy Framework, Plan MK and, if adopted by the oncoming referendum, our Neighbourhood Plan.

Each and every application has a period of 28 days for consultation. Normally MKC Planning (MKCP) affix a letter to one or more lamp posts nearby the site seeking planning approval and alerting residents to the application. Residents in the immediate vicinity of the application will be receive a letter individually notifying them of the application. The Parish Council is also notified of all planning applications in the parish.

For most planning applications the decision to permit a development can be made by the Planning Officer under what is termed Delegated Authority. This means it will not be discussed by the Development Control Panel (DCC) and the Planning Officer's decision will be final.

If the public want a planning application discussed by the DCC a letter has to be sent to the Planning Department by at least 5 residents from different households or a Ward Councillor or the Parish Council within the 28 days consultation period with an explicit request that the application be referred to the DCC. The DCC are then obliged to consider the views expressed. Members of the public can also request the opportunity to address the DCC and a three-minute slot at a Milton Keynes Council Development Control meeting will be allocated in which to do so.

If an application is referred to the DCC all public comments are considered by the appointed Planning Officer who prepares a report for the DCC which is presented to them for a decision to approve or not to approve the application. This report should include all the comments made by the public.

Any public comments must align with one or more of the requirements of the three key documents above. Members of the public can ask for advice from the Planning Officer for clarification of the planning requirements.

In their deliberations the DCC will consider how many residents write in and make specific comments and the weight of public opinion. It is important to note that the Parish Council's vote to support or object to an application is counted as only one opinion despite nine councillors making any decision for or against. So public comment is vital in determining a decision.

Locally we have captured our residents wishes in respect of planning requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan. To ensure this is adopted by Milton Keynes Council please make sure you vote in the forthcoming referendum. The Plan goes a long way to addressing our Planning requirements for the Planning Officer to adhere to.

MKC Development Control Committee meetings are broadcast live on YouTube.