



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS POLICY

VERSION 2

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 All parish and town councils are statutory consultees on any planning application received by the local planning authority. The knowledge of Town Councillors represents local views, provides local knowledge, raises areas of concern, informs debate, and adds value to the process.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out how Stotfold Town Council responds to planning consultations in a way that is timely, consistent, transparent, and proportionate. The policy concentrates the Council's attention on larger or more complex applications, while allowing minor applications to be dealt with efficiently.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Members and Officers involved in responding to planning consultations from Central Bedfordshire Council as the local planning authority.
- 2.2 The Planning Committee considers those planning applications which meet the criteria set out in this policy. Not every application notified to the Council is considered by the Committee; applications are dealt with by the route set out in section 5.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Local planning authority: Central Bedfordshire Council, the authority responsible for determining planning applications in Stotfold.
- 3.2 Major application: an application defined as major by Central Bedfordshire Council under the relevant national definitions, for example larger residential or commercial developments. Where there is any doubt, the local planning authority's classification applies.
- 3.3 Minor or householder application: an application that is not a major application, typically smaller scale works such as those listed at below. This list is not exhaustive:
 - Single storey rear extensions.
 - Porches and conservatories.
 - Garage conversions into habitable space.
 - Advertising applications with limited impact.
 - Summerhouses and garden offices within permitted development limits.
 - Tree works, which will also be referred to the Tree Warden.
 - Routine repairs and restoration to listed buildings, but not applications seeking listed building consent for substantial works.

3.4 Material planning considerations: the matters that may lawfully be considered when commenting on an application. A non-exhaustive list is provided below:

- Alignment with the Local Plan, any Neighbourhood Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Scale, siting, design, and impact on the street scene or heritage assets.
- Residential amenity, including overlooking, loss of light, noise, and disturbance.
- Highways, access, parking, and servicing.
- Flood risk, drainage, and sustainable drainage systems.
- Ecology, trees, biodiversity net gain, and tree preservation orders.
- Contamination, lighting, and air quality.
- Social infrastructure, community facilities, and planning obligations.
- Cumulative impact and precedent.

4. CIRCULATION OF APPLICATIONS

4.1 The Town Clerk will email all Members a list of current planning applications on a fortnightly basis. The list will, where available, include the application reference, a link to the application, and the consultation closing date.

4.2 Any Member may ask, within the deadline set by the Town Clerk, that any application on the list be considered by the Planning Committee.

5. HOW APPLICATIONS ARE DEALT WITH

Minor applications dealt with between meetings

5.1 Unless a Member asks otherwise, the minor and householder applications listed at above may be dealt with between Committee meetings. The Town Clerk will advise Members of the deadline for responses. Members' views will be collated and the response submitted to the local planning authority. Where opinion is divided, the application will be referred to the Planning Committee.

5.2 Any application for tree works will also be referred to the Tree Warden for comment before a response is submitted.

Applications considered by the Planning Committee

5.3 The following types of application will be placed before a meeting of the Planning Committee:

- Demolition and replacement.
- Variation of conditions.
- Large extensions.
- Applications with a substantial impact on neighbours or the street scene.
- Change of use.
- Applications requiring listed building consent, other than minor repairs and restoration.
- Infill development.
- New developments.
- Social infrastructure.
- Community facilities.

- Any application a member of the Planning Committee asks to be considered by the Committee.

5.4 Members will be summoned to meetings of the Planning Committee in accordance with the Committee's terms of reference and the Council's Standing Orders.

6. Housing Development

6.1 In the interests of fairness, transparency and integrity, Officers and all Members of the Town Council can be requested to meet with Housing Developers together (where possible) to discuss aspects of planning related to new housing developments within its town borders.

6.2 Housing Developers must undertake all consultation in line with planning laws and regulations and ensuring that its consultations with the public are transparent, inclusive, compliant with regulations and fair.

7. Records, reporting, and publication

7.1 Any response submitted between meetings under section 5 will be reported to the next meeting of the Planning Committee, consistent with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

7.2 The Council's planning responses will be recorded and made available in accordance with the Council's publication practice.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The Planning Committee considers applications meeting the criteria of this policy and agrees the Council's responses, in accordance with paragraph 4.6 of the Scheme of Delegation.

8.2 The Town Clerk circulates applications, sets response deadlines, collates Members' views, submits responses, and reports responses made between meetings to the Committee.

8.3 Members provide comments based on material planning considerations and observe the Code of Conduct.

9. Related documents and legislation

9.1 This policy should be read alongside the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Localism Act 2011, the National Planning Policy Framework, the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan, the Council's Scheme of Delegation 2025 V4 (paragraph 4.6), the Council's Standing Orders, the Planning Committee's terms of reference, and the Members' Code of Conduct.

Version No	Date Approved/ Reviewed	Author/ Owner	Summary Of Changes	Responsible Committee	Review Date
1	August 2024	Town Clerk	Adopted	Full Council	August 2026
2	1/7/2026	Town Clerk	Resolved the contradiction between considering all	Public Realm	July 2028

			applications and using the delegated email route; aligned the policy with paragraph 4.6 of the Scheme of Delegation; clarified circulation and deadlines and tightened the Housing Development section		
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