

CAPEL-LE-FERNE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council
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How the planning process works

1. The planning application process is very straightforward:

- A planning application is submitted to Dover District Council (DDC)
- They publicise the application usually on their website, in the “free” newspapers and by way of on-site notices
- The public (including the Parish Council) has 21 days to comment on the application.
- A decision is made on the application by DDC.
- Most planning applications are approved. But if the application is refused, or the approval has conditions on it, the applicant may appeal against the decision to the Planning Inspectorate.

If you have only heard about a development you're concerned about after a planning application has been submitted, don't delay in getting involved.

2. Who decides whether or not to approve an application? Each application is decided either by DDC Officers or DDC's Planning Committee. In exceptional circumstances an application may be referred to the Secretary of State.

3. What is the role of the Parish Council? As statutory consultees, they must be notified of planning applications under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 legislation. They provide a local perspective and make comments on applications with the benefit of a considerable amount of local knowledge. The planning subcommittee of the Parish Council, which scrutinises local applications, has 21 days from notification to respond. Their views are reported to DDC, who consider every application response. Extra planning conditions may be added to a recommendation of approval, as a result of concerns raised. The response from the Parish Council counts as one response; residents have the right to comment as individuals, a way in which Residents and Parish Councillors can work together.

Once an application has been decided, a copy of the planning permission/decision notice is sent to Capel Parish Council (CPC).

4. What is the role of the District Council? While most planning applications are decided by DDC's paid officers some are considered by Planning Committee, which comprises of District Councillors with Officers on hand to give advice on regulations and other legal matters.

Certain applications are automatically submitted for decision by DDC Councillors sitting on this committee. These include major developments, council proposals or applications that have received 5 or more public comments that are contrary to the Officer's recommendation.

However any Councillor of Dover District Council can refer or ‘call in’ an application for determination by a Planning Committee. DDC Councillors receive an email notification of any planning application submitted to the Council in their ward. From the date of that notification they have 21 days to decide whether to refer the application to a Planning Committee meeting.

When a DDC Councillor decides to refer an application to a Planning Committee meeting they must give their reasons. It is important that the reasons are based on the planning merits of the case.

Where applications are to be considered by Planning Committee, any DDC Councillor may request a site visit for any application on the agenda, but it is the committees decision to hold a site meeting or not. If it is agreed to hold a site meeting the decision is deferred until after the site visit. A sub group of the full committee will visit the site during the week of the next full planning meeting.

5. How do I hear about planning applications? DDC should publicise planning applications. This use to include notification in local newspapers but recently DDC has moved to a paperless system and uses the internet more.

To help keep local residents informed, once Capel-le-Ferne Parish Council receives (electronic) notification, the Parish Clerk publishes details on the website (www.capel-le-fernepc.kentparishes.gov.uk) and the Capel-le-Ferne Facebook page. Timescales (21 days from notification) are usually too short to allow inclusion in Grapevine.

You can also register with DDC to receive notifications of planning applications. All, or just those local to you.

Planning Department, Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ. Tel: 01304 821199.

6. What can I do to get involved? All members of the public have a right to comment on a planning application, whether to support or to object. These should be sent to DDC; though a copy to the Parish Council would be helpful. You may also attend the DDC meeting where the application is being considered and in certain circumstances address the meeting (by prior arrangement). Whether you support or object to an application write to the Planning Department at DDC; a copy sent to the Parish Clerk would be helpful.

7. Where can I find out more? DDC Planning Officers are available to offer advice on any aspect of a planning application.

In addition there are websites to help: <http://www.planninghelp.org.uk> and <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

LINKS FOR INFORMATION:

To view the weekly planning lists and/or register to receive update notifications from Dover District Council on:

<http://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Applications/Advertising-Planning-Applications.aspx>

Or View Applications on:

<http://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Applications/View-Applications--Decisions/View-Applications.aspx>

Dover District Council, Planning Department, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent. CT16 3PJ. Telephone: 01304 872486. Email: developmentControl@dover.gov.uk

ANY QUESTIONS ON PLANNING ISSUES, PLEASE LET US KNOW AND WE WILL ANSWER AT A FUTURE MEETING AND PRINT IN THE GRAPEVINE NEWSLETTER