

QUICK GUIDE: Deciding Planning Applications

An overview of how we decide planning applications in Dartmoor National Park

What are the different types of application we decide?

As the Local Planning Authority, there are a number of different types of application we will make decisions on. The main ones are:

<p>Application for outline planning permission</p> <p><i>includes basic information such as the site location and what is proposed. If it is granted, all the further detailed information will need to be agreed in a "Reserved Matters Application" before development can start.</i></p>	<p>Application for full planning permission</p> <p><i>this is a detailed application containing all the information about the proposed development.</i></p>	<p>Applications for Listed Building Consent</p> <p><i>this is an application for works to or affecting a listed building. A planning application will often be needed, too.</i></p>	<p>A Certificate of Lawful Development</p> <p><i>this is to establish whether something which is proposed, or has already taken place, can go ahead. It is a legal decision about whether a development is legally permitted, rather than judgement using policies.</i></p>	<p>Prior Notification/Prior Approval</p> <p><i>this type of application, often for utilities, forestry or agricultural works, provides simple details of a proposal. We have a short period of time to decide whether the development can go ahead or not, or whether a different type of application is needed.</i></p>
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What information should an application include?

Our [Validation Checklist](#) sets out all of the information which will be needed for an application. This will vary depending on what is proposed. It will include the application form, site location plan, and drawings, it may also include extra reports or surveys which help us and consultees consider whether the application should be approved. This information should be included for the application to be 'valid'. Only once an application is valid will we begin processing the application and invite comments.

What factors are considered when we decide an application?

A planning application is decided based upon the policies in the [development plan](#) (the Local Plan, and any adopted Neighbourhood Plan), national policies (the [National Planning Policy Framework](#)) and any [Materials Considerations](#).

You can find out more about local planning policies in our [Local Plan Quick Guide](#). Material Considerations are a broad range of issues typically including things such as overlooking/loss of privacy, highway safety, noise, and previous planning or appeal decisions. Loss of view, or impact on property value are private issues, not in the 'public interest,' so these are not material considerations and not relevant to planning decisions. You can find out more on the [Planning Portal](#).

What if the plans change part way through the application process?

Sometimes, during the application process, we might suggest the applicant amends their plans. This might be to improve the quality of the proposal, to align with policy, or in response to consultee comments. The Planning Officer will judge how significant the change is and may open the consultation again, inviting comments on the revised plans.

Who comments on planning applications?

Applications are made public for anyone to comment. Depending on the application, the planning officer may specifically invite comments from specialists for advice on, for example; highways, affordable housing, biodiversity, landscape, education, or children's play space.

How does the public comment on an application?

Applications can be viewed [on our website](#). Once you have registered, you can comment on an application. You have 21 days to submit your comments. Comments made on an application will be visible to the public on the website alongside the application.

If you are commenting, remember the factors which are relevant when a decision is made (see above). Try to ensure your comments relate to local or national planning policy, or material planning considerations, otherwise your comments may not be relevant to the decision.

How long does a decision take?

The target for major planning applications (for example 10 homes, 1,000m² building or more) is 13 weeks, the target for non-major applications is 8 weeks. If we need longer to decide, this can be agreed with the applicants.

How do we find out how an application is progressing?

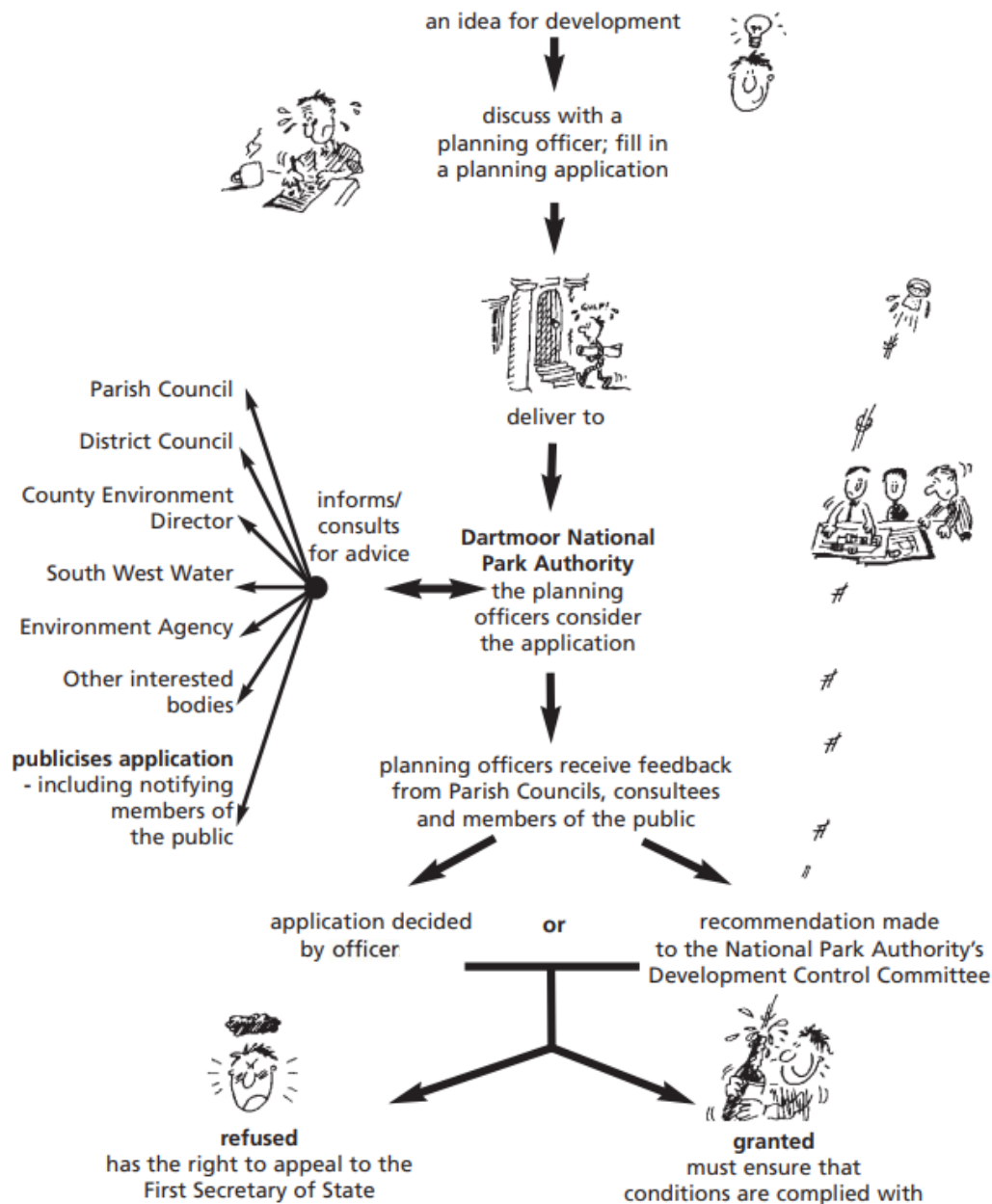
Our web site will tell you when an application is available for comment, when it is being processed, and once a decision has been made. You can contact us at any point if you would like more detail on the progress of an application.

How do I find out about planning applications in my area?

We will place a site notice for all planning applications. We will also directly notify the Parish or Town Council. You can [sign up on our website](#) to receive an email notification for applications in your area. The email you receive will give you a direct link to the application so that you can look at what is proposed, and comment if you wish



Flow diagram to illustrate the procedure for applying for planning permission



Why are some applications decided by officers, and some by the committee?

The majority (currently 96%) of applications are decided by officers. This is the quickest and most resource efficient way to make decisions. Importantly, some planning applications, such as major proposals, or those with a significant public interest will go to the planning committee to be decided.

Any application can be 'called in' by a member of the Planning Committee – they will need to give a material planning reason for calling the application before the committee. You can find out who our Members are and how to contact them [on our website](#).

For more significant applications a decision by the committee means the discussion around the application takes place in public, and supporters or objectors will have a further opportunity to share their views on the proposal. Importantly, whether a decision is made by a planning officer, or by the committee, the decision is still made based on the policies in the [Local Plan](#), national policies, and relevant material considerations.

What are planning conditions and Section 106 Agreements?

Most planning applications are granted subject to a set of conditions. These might ask for further information before work starts, require materials or details to be sent in to us for approval, or set out a way in which the development must be built or used in the future. Sometimes a Section 106 Legal Agreement is used to secure financial contributions or affordable housing. You can find out more about these in our [Quick Guide to Section 106 Agreements and Viability](#).

How do planning appeals work?

If an application is refused the applicant has the right to appeal the decision. Planning appeals are considered by the Planning Inspectorate. You can find out more information on appeals on the [Planning Inspectorate website](#).

Can approvals be appealed?

There is no right to appeal as a third party. If you are unhappy with a decision or how it has been made we will always be willing to explain why and how a decision has been reached. If you are still not happy, you can follow our [complaints procedure](#). There are also other legal routes to challenging the way a decision has been made.

What if the plans or conditions are not being followed?

It is important that a development follows the approved plans. Where this is not the case, or a where a development is happening without permission, you can report this to us. We will investigate and take action as appropriate. You can find out more about how we enforce planning control, and how to report a potential breach [on our website](#).

How do I find out more?

If you need further advice or more guidance, please contact the Planning Team.

How to get in contact:

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