

PLANNING APPLICATION OBSERVATIONS

A simple, straightforward guide to commenting on planning applications



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District Councillor

INTRODUCTION

I have put together this simple but straightforward reference guide to commenting on planning applications to assist parish committee members and residents who are not overly familiar with the process or who have not attended CDC training. Highlighted text is linked as described. Those of you who have done this for years, please forgive me for teaching grandmother to suck eggs!

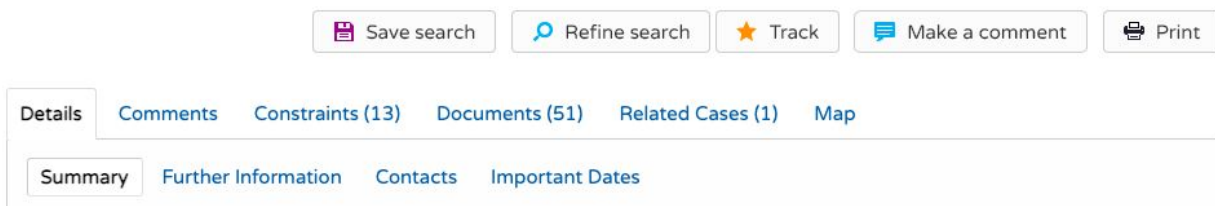
As your District Councillor, I am expected to remain impartial if I am to retain my integrity. This does not mean that I am unable to liaise with you and the planning officer, who can sometimes offer helpful guidance.

PROCEDURE

I strongly encourage any of you who wish to object, support or make other observations to an application to make comments via the preferred Public Access route on the Council's website. Occasionally comments are submitted by text or mail and this can lead to misunderstandings and/or a lack of formal record being made on the system, which in turn can lead to lack of formal communication & notification regarding procedures (e.g. Committee dates, public speaking, etc.).

Cotswold District Council Planning Portal - [Simple Search](#)

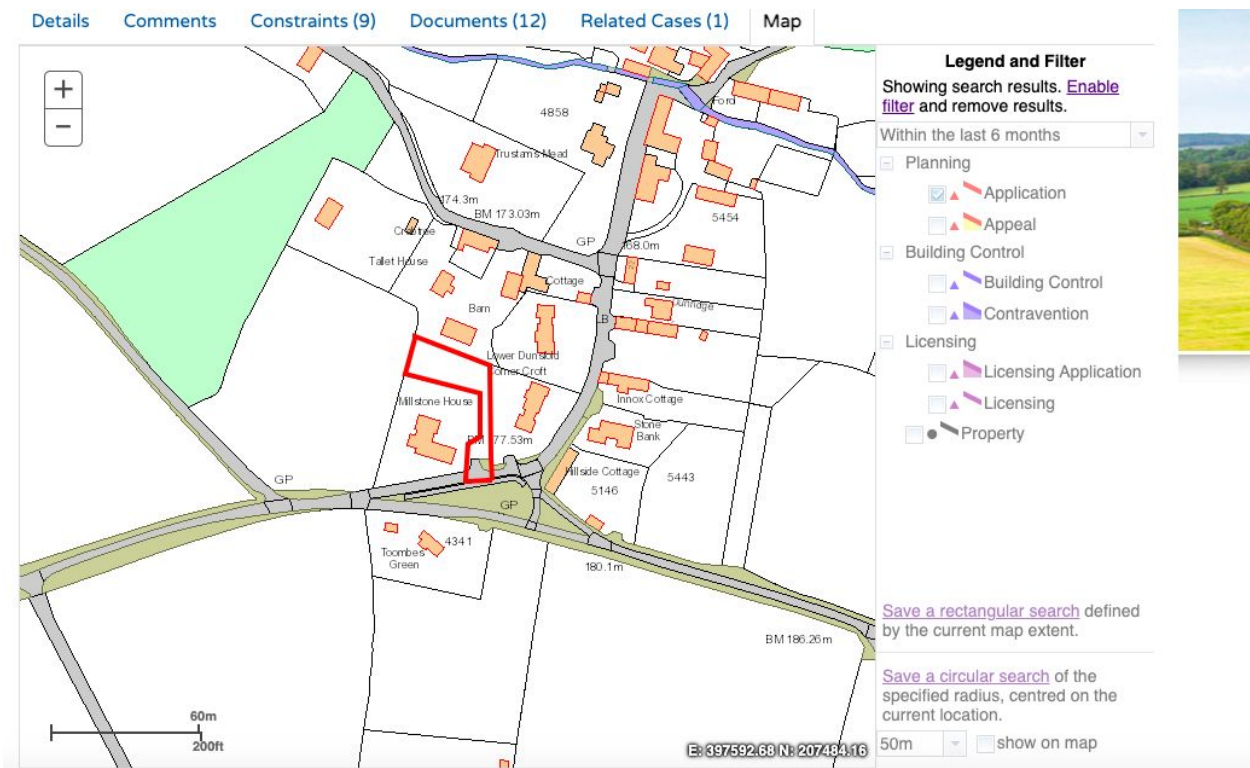
Find the property by either typing the property name, village name or reference number. You will be given the option of a number of tabs. You can 'track' an application which means that you will receive an email of any additions or changes to the application. You will also get an idea of the planning policies that the officer is taking into account, which you can.



The screenshot displays a user interface for the Cotswold District Council Planning Portal. At the top, there are five action buttons: 'Save search' (with a folder icon), 'Refine search' (with a magnifying glass icon), 'Track' (with a star icon), 'Make a comment' (with a speech bubble icon), and 'Print' (with a printer icon). Below these buttons is a navigation menu with tabs for 'Details', 'Comments', 'Constraints (13)', 'Documents (51)', 'Related Cases (1)', and 'Map'. Underneath the 'Details' tab, there are four sub-tabs: 'Summary', 'Further Information', 'Contacts', and 'Important Dates'.

MAKE A COMMENT tab will open up a form for you to fill in the details. Your objection/support will be scrutinized by the officer. Most of the information you will be looking for will be listed under Documents.

The MAP tab will open to identify the site in red and has a convenient zoom option:



You can support or object to a proposal, but bear in mind that planning applications can only be decided based on *material planning considerations* within the policies. This is very important, it forms the basis upon which all decisions are made.

Material planning considerations include (but are not limited to):

- * Overlooking/loss of privacy
- * Loss of daylight/sunlight or overshadowing
- * Scale and dominance
- * Layout and density of buildings
- * Appearance and design of development and materials proposed
- * Disabled persons' access (where applicable)
- * Traffic and parking issues
- * Drainage and flood risk
- * Impact on character or appearance of area
- * Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas
- * Effect on trees and wildlife/nature conservation
- * Impact on the community and other services
- * Economic impact and sustainability
- * Government policy
- * Proposals in the Local Development Plan
- * Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- * Effect on neighbours' daylight, sunlight or privacy
- * Impact of traffic, road access, highway safety, parking
- * Appearance, bulk or height of the scheme
- * Impact on amenity, such as noise, dust, fumes generated by the proposal
- * Potential loss of a valued local service or use, such as a shop
- * Effect on wildlife, listed buildings (including neighbouring properties) trees etc

Non-material planning considerations cannot be taken into account include:

- * Who the applicant is/the applicant's background
- * Loss of views
- * Loss of property value
- * Loss of trade or increased competition
- * Strength or volume of local opposition
- * Construction noise/disturbance during development
- * Fears of damage to property
- * Maintenance of property
- * Boundary disputes, covenants or other property rights
- * Rights of way
- * Personal circumstances are generally not a material planning consideration
- * Private issues between neighbours such as land covenants, land and boundary disputes
- * Competition between rival businesses
- * Party wall disputes and fire escape matters
- * Problems while construction works are being carried out, such as noise, dust and disturbance by construction vehicles
- * Loss of a private view

CONCLUSION

The quality of objections far exceeds the quantity in importance. Robust objections will refer to the directives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Plan. The NPPF takes precedence over the Local Plan.

REFERENCES

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)

[Cotswold District Local Plan \(2011 to 2031\)](#)

Be sure to look at the appendices, especially the [Cotswold Design Code](#) which offers design guidelines for new build, extensions etc.

These documents are extensive, especially the Cotswold Local Plan. Think of them as reference guides to avoid being overwhelmed! Planning is nuanced, each application is given due consideration and scrutiny, ultimately decisions are formed by application of the considerations within the two planning documents.