

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

SOME ADVICE ON COMMENTING ON PLANNING PROPOSALS

The determination of planning applications is part of the local democratic process, so you have a right to put your views forward about other people's planning applications for planning permission whether or not you have been formally consulted.

As a general rule you should try to see the application documents and accompanying plans before making comments. These are available for inspection as detailed in the accompanying letter or if your neighbour is the applicant they may let you see their copy or they can be viewed on Planning Applications Search on the Planning webpage via www.bridgend.gov.uk/planning. Make sure that you understand what is proposed. If you are in any doubt about what is involved in the proposal, you should contact the Planning Department to seek clarification as your observations will not be very useful if they are based on a misunderstanding.

Decisions on planning applications are made by the Corporate Director - Communities or the Development Control Committee who will consider all aspects of the proposal in order to ensure that the general standard of amenity in the wider community is protected in the public interest. If the planning application needs to be presented to the Development Control Committee it will be discussed in public. Planning permission can only be refused if there are good and sound planning reasons for doing so. On occasions where planning permission is granted, conditions are imposed to minimise any problems that the development may cause.

If you are reasonably satisfied with the proposals in principle, but are concerned about one particular aspect, you should make those comments in writing to the Department, or through the link in the Planning web page. If appropriate, it may be possible to have plans amended or to impose conditions to minimise/overcome these difficulties. Your views are not looked upon as a vote for or against the scheme, but they are extremely useful in drawing attention to aspects of the proposal that may be unsatisfactory or potentially a cause for concern.

You should try to consider the following general aspects of the development (not all will apply in every case):-

- 1) If the application is for a change of use, do you think that the proposed use is suitable for the area?
- 2) What are your views on the general appearance, scale, height, design of the scheme?
- 3) Do you think that the development will affect you by way of loss of daylight, overshadowing, loss of privacy?
- 4) Do you think that the development will cause you any nuisance or disturbance for example from noise, traffic coming and going?
- 5) Do you think that the development will adversely affect you in any way?
- 6) Do you think that the development will have any adverse impact on the area as a whole?

Objections raised on non planning grounds cannot be taken into account in considering a proposal. Example of objections which cannot be taken into account are matters such as disputes about the exact boundary between properties, existing problems that have nothing to do with the new proposals, matters covered by other legislation such as Building Regulations, restrictive covenants, private rights of way, issues of a moral nature and discrimination.

You should also note that certain developments can be carried out without planning permission (e.g. some house extensions, garages, boundary walls etc) and no matter how strong or valid a neighbour's objection may be to such parts of an application, the Planning Authority generally has no practical means of preventing such developments. Trespass, damage to neighbouring property and poor workmanship are not planning matters.

Finally, please note that any comments received will be made available for public inspection (which may include the Council website) and may be referred to in reports to the Development Control Committee. As this is a legal requirement no representation received can be considered on a "confidential" basis.

Your attention is drawn to provisions of the Party Wall Etc. Act 1996, which relates to building work which involves:-

- (a) work on an existing wall shared with another property;
- (b) building on the boundary with a neighbouring property;
- (c) excavating near a neighbouring building.

In such cases, the developer must find out whether their works fall within the terms of the [Act](#), and if so, they must notify all affected neighbours. The Planning Authority does not arbitrate in such matters. Copies of an explanatory booklet on this legislation are available free of charge from:-

Housing Division, Welsh Assembly Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ
Tel 02920 825369, Fax 02920 825391.

Head of Regeneration and Development
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