

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT



Reviewed:

n/a

Approved:

Full Council Meeting – 20th November 2024

Review Period:

Annually

Next Review Date:

November 2025

INDEX

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Planning Committee Remit.....	2
3. Core Principles.....	2
4. Review of Applications	3
5. Representation and Public Participation	4
6. Delegation and Authority	4
7. Neighbourhood Plan and Design Statement.....	4
8. Additional Considerations.....	5
9. Review Process	5

1. Introduction

This Planning Policy Statement outlines the principles and processes that Southwater Parish Council's Planning Committee follows when reviewing and providing comments on planning applications submitted to Horsham District Council. The policy adheres to local, district, and national planning frameworks and aims to protect and enhance the character of Southwater Parish while supporting sustainable development.

2. Planning Committee Remit

The Planning Committee operates under the authority of Southwater Parish Council, with its remit approved and revised over time, most recently in May 2023. The Committee's main function is to review planning applications and other related matters within the Parish, ensuring compliance with local and statutory policies, including the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish Design Statement.

3. Core Principles

- The Planning Committee seeks high standards for new development, ensuring any projects align with Southwater Parish's character and policies.
- The Committee's focus is on *material planning considerations*, referring to local planning policies (Southwater Neighbourhood Plan), district policies (Horsham District Planning Framework), and national policies (National Planning Policy Framework).
- *Material planning considerations* are considered as follows:
 - Local, strategic, national **planning policies** and policies in the Development Plan.
 - Emerging new plans which have already been through at least one stage of public consultation.
 - Pre-application planning consultation carried out by, or on behalf of, the applicant.
 - **Government and Planning Inspectorate requirements** – circulars, orders, statutory instruments, guidance and advice.
 - **Previous appeal decisions** and planning inquiry reports.
 - Principles of **Case Law** held through the Courts.
 - **Loss of sunlight** (based on Building Research Establishment guidance).
 - **Overshadowing/loss of outlook** to the detriment of residential amenity (though not loss of view as such).

- Overlooking and **loss of privacy**.
 - **Highways Issues**: traffic generation, vehicular access, highway safety.
 - **Noise or disturbance** resulting from use, including proposed hours of operation.
 - **Smells and fumes**.
 - Capacity of **physical infrastructure**, e.g. in the public drainage or water systems.
 - Deficiencies in **social facilities**, e.g. spaces in schools.
 - Storage and handling of **hazardous materials** and development of **contaminated land**.
 - Loss or effect of **trees**.
 - Adverse impact on **nature conservation** interests and biodiversity opportunities.
 - Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas
 - **Incompatible or unacceptable uses**.
 - Local **financial considerations** offered as a contribution or grant.
 - **Layout and density of building** design, visual appearance and finishing materials.
 - Inadequate or inappropriate **landscaping** or means of enclosure.
- The Committee aims to balance development needs while protecting Southwater’s environment, heritage, and public spaces.

4. Review of Applications

- a. **Consultation and Public Engagement**: The Planning Committee reviews all applications submitted to the Local Planning Authority and encourages local engagement. Parish Councillors may visit sites to gather information from applicants and neighbouring properties, although site visits are not mandatory. Identification is provided during visits (Planning Committee Remit).
- b. **Committee Meetings**: Planning applications are discussed during Committee meetings, with additional email consultations possible when time-sensitive decisions are required. Planning decisions (comments to the Local Planning Authority) are made in alignment with the Scheme of Delegation and reported to the Local Planning Authority either by delegated powers or following the Planning Committee meeting. Any decisions taken by delegated powers bestowed to the Executive Officer in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee are reported at the next Planning Committee meetings.

- c. **Material Considerations:** The Committee's comments focus on the material considerations such as impact on neighbouring properties, alignment with local design and sustainability standards, traffic and access issues, environmental impact, and the preservation of green spaces.

5. Representation and Public Participation

Residents and applicants may request to speak for or against applications at Committee meetings. These representations are considered before the Committee forms its recommendation. Recommendations typically include either "no objection" or "objection," with a clear citation of relevant policies and material reasons.

6. Delegation and Authority

The Executive Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee, is authorised to act on behalf of the Council in urgent planning matters under the Scheme of Delegation. This ensures timely responses to applications when deadlines fall between meetings.

7. Neighbourhood Plan and Design Statement

The Southwater Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in June 2021, and the Parish Design Statement 2011 guide the Committee's decisions. These documents should be periodically reviewed to ensure they reflect the evolving needs of the community and the environment.

The Southwater Neighbourhood Plan is currently under review and has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. At the time of writing, it is waiting to progress to the next stage of the review process.

The Parish Design Statement is overdue a review and is to be reviewed by the Planning Committee in 2025.

8. Additional Considerations

- The Planning Committee also engages with strategic planning activities, such as street naming, conservation areas, and Tree Preservation Orders.
- Major developments may trigger the Committee's participation in Public Inquiries, and the Council may make formal representations at Horsham District Council's Planning Committee meetings for key applications, and/or where the Local Planning Authority may have a differing view to the Planning Committee.

9. Review Process

This policy is to be reviewed annually to ensure it aligns with updated planning regulations, local needs, and the evolving character of Southwater Parish.