

Commenting on Planning Applications

How to make a submission

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At that point the Council request that submissions from residents are made in writing within 21 days.

I have included in this guide a sample template of an objection/support letter that includes the correct address, but submissions can also be made via email to: planning@castlepoint.gov.uk .

Material considerations

A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account when the Council decide upon a planning application.

The Development Control Committee are entitled to take into account all "material considerations" when deciding a planning application and it is a good idea to base your submission on material considerations relevant to the application.

Some material considerations include (but are not limited to):

- Loss of privacy
- Parking
- Highway safety
- Traffic
- Noise
- Effect on listed building and conservation area
- Layout and density of building
- Design, appearance and materials
- Government policy
- Disabled persons' access
- Proposals in the Borough's Development Plan and Local Policies
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- Nature conservation

- Source: www.planningportal.gov.uk

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Green Belt

Green Belt is an issue that a large number of residents feel very passionate about.

As I know it is of interest to many residents, please find below the Government policy on the protection of Green Belt in the new National Planning Policy Framework that relates to planning applications that can be highlighted as a material consideration on any application on a Green Belt site:

“ The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Green Belt serves five purposes:

- 1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- 2) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- 3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- 4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
- 5) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt.

Exceptions to this are:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in

disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are:

- Mineral extraction;
- Engineering operations;
- Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and
- Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order

When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.”

It should be noted that this policy is only relevant if the proposed application is for a site that is officially defined as within the Green Belt.

Sample template letter of Objection / Support

<p><i>Local Authority Address:</i></p> <p>Castle Point Borough Council Kiln Road Benfleet Essex SS7 1TF</p>	<p><i>Full name and address:</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p><i>Date:</i></p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>For the attention of:</p>	<p>(Planning Officer)</p>
<p><i>Introductory sentences:</i></p> <p>Dear Sir/Madam, I am writing to object to/ in support of planning application ref: _____</p>	
<p><i>Short Description of application:</i></p> <p>(EXAMPLE. The application comprises of a two story extension to rear of 6 Example Road)</p>	
<p><i>Interest/Relation to site (i.e. Neighbour):</i></p> <p>EXAMPLE: I have lived in the vicinity of the site on which this development is proposed for 5 years</p>	
<p><i>Reasons for Support/Objection based on Material Considerations:</i></p> <p>I wish to object to/ support the aforementioned application on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1)2)3) <p>(Note: You can base your Support/Objection on one or any number of relevant grounds based on Material Considerations)</p>	

Explanation of given reasons, how the details of the application relate to relevant Material Considerations:

OPTIONAL: Reference to other bodies and residents who support your view:

(Note: Make sure you clarify the position of organisations you wish to name and obtain the explicit consent of any other residents you wish to name in your letter)

OPTIONAL: Request to make a speech to the Development Control Committee when the application is considered:

If this application is to be decided by councillors during a meeting of the Development Control Committee, please take this as notice that I would like to speak at the meeting in opposition /support of the application when it is decided by councillors. Please do let me know as soon as possible the date of the meeting.

(Note: It is up to the discretion of the Committee Chairman how many members of the public or agents are allowed to speak and for how long on any given application. The Chairman usually allows one speech from residents objecting and one speech in support. First priority for speaking in support of an application is given to the applicant or their agents)

Regards and signature:

Regards,

Further guidance and advice

I do hope you find this very basic guidance useful. Below is a list of websites where you can seek further advice and I do suggest you explore them as well before you make your submission.

	Website	What you will find
Castle Point Borough Council website	http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/	<p>Planning application database</p> <p>Planning applications page</p> <p>Statement of Community Involvement</p> <p>Contact details of your local councillors</p>
Planning Help website	http://www.planninghelp.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/how-to-comment-on-a-planning-application	A more comprehensive step by step guide on how to comment on a planning application including template example letters
Planning Portal	http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/	Detailed explanation of the planning process, building regulations, a sample list of material objections, and a good FAQ page
Planning Permission page on GOV.UK	https://www.gov.uk/planning-permission-england-wales/when-you-need-it	A guide on what types of structure construction or alteration needs planning permission

For specific queries on individual applications or Material Considerations, you can also contact the planning department at Castle Point Borough Council by telephone on **01268 882200** .