

# WIGGENHALL ST GERMAN'S PARISH COUNCIL

## APPROACH TO PLANNING POLICY

Adopted March 2020  
Reviewed Jan 2026

### Aims & Objectives

1. To ensure the character and village scene of Wighenhall St Germans is maintained.
2. To provide effective report to Council on planning matters and applications.
3. To ensure the planning appraisal process is inclusive, robust, timely, to the benefit of all Parishioners, and remote from personal observations or feelings.
4. To record decisions and comments as a consultee.

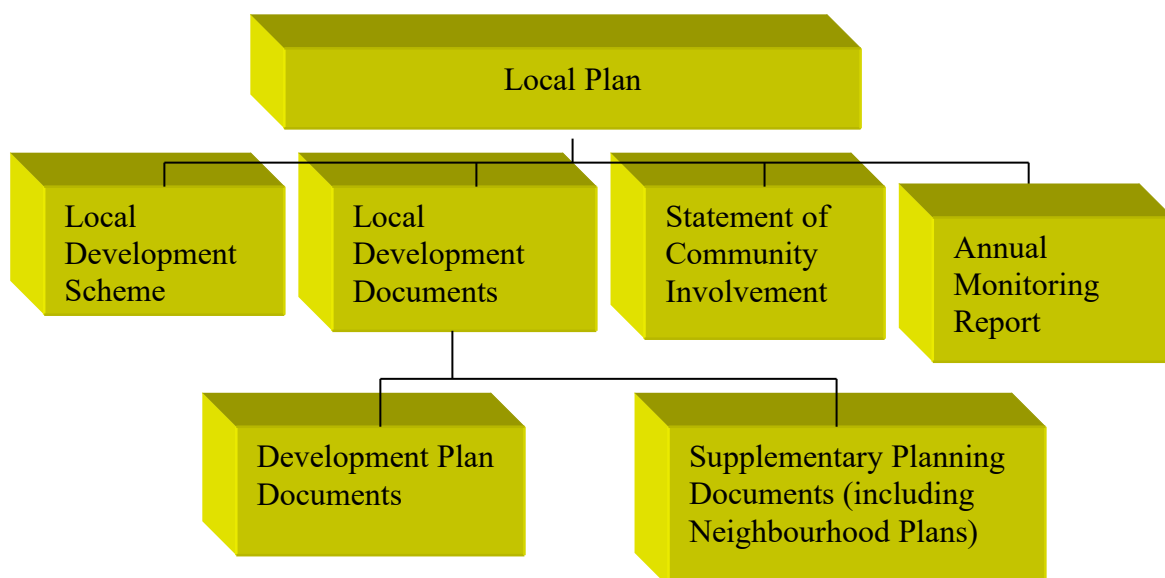
### The Planning System

The planning policy system introduced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has three tiers:

- [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (revised Dec 2024) which sets out national guidelines on things like housing, nature conservation, regional planning, transport, pollution control, flood risks, greenbelt, industrial and retail planning, waste management etc. The 2024 revision introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- [Local Plan](#) (adopted Mar 2025) – produced by the Borough Councils except in relation to minerals and waste which are the responsibility of the County Council. These include the Site allocations and Planning Policies as well as Neighbourhood Plans developed by Parish Councils

The Local Planning Authority must take national guidance into consideration when reaching planning decisions.

Regional Spatial Strategies provide the basic framework within which the Local Planning Authority must work.



The Local Plan is a “folder” of local development documents. These documents are prepared by District and County Councils and contain policies, proposals and actions that affect the future of the area.

The Local Development Scheme is a public “project plan” that sets out which local development documents will be produced, in what order and when.

The current Local Plan has interactive Policy Maps, the Wiggshall St Germans Parish can be viewed on [Policy Map 12](#). A description of Wiggshall St Germans and the current Allocated Site G123.1 can be found on page [428 of the Local Plan](#).

Local Plan development – almost as soon as the Local Plan is adopted the process of developing the next Local Plan begins, this entails a ‘Call for Sites’ where potential sites for development can be put forward for consideration, future applications for those sites are then likely to be presumed as acceptable in terms of their location.

[Supplementary Planning Documents](#): expand or add detail to the policies laid out in development plan documents, or a policy “saved” from the previous Development Plan.

### **Processing Planning Applications**

All planning applications are registered in a public register, managed by the relevant planning authority.

If you have notified the planning authority that you want to be consulted on planning applications within your parish, they must consult you.

The feedback from Anglian Water, Environment Agency and the Highway Authority about drainage, water supply, flooding, traffic etc is crucial to the process.

It is always a good thing to get to know the Case Officer who deals with applications affecting your Parish. He will normally undertake a site inspection, collate responses, and draft a conclusion based on the comparison of the application with the relevant policies and guidelines. He may also engage in negotiation with the applicant to improve the application (if he has time and if some fine tuning is all that is necessary to achieve a speedy conclusion).

General principles/best practice for Town & Parish Councillors when dealing with planning applications:

- Don’t put yourself in a position where your honesty or integrity may be questioned;
- Don’t get involved in pre-application discussions or negotiations;
- Do make recommendations on merit;
- Do avoid pre-determination - reach your own conclusion based on the facts as put before you;

### **Relevant Material Considerations**

The planning system works on the basis of approval unless the application is harmful to planning policies. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) must consider “material planning considerations”, including:

- Representations received from consultees, landowners and the public. (This is where the Parish Council gets its say – but members must base comments to planning authority consultation on material planning considerations, not on personal viewpoints);
- Precedent (previous planning decisions).

**Issues the LPA can take into consideration include;**

- Overshadowing;
- Overlooking and loss of privacy;
- Adequate parking and servicing;
- Overbearing/ nature of the proposal;
- Loss of trees;
- Loss of ecological habitats;
- Design and appearance;
- Layout and density of buildings;
- Effect on Listed Building(s) and Conservation Areas;
- Access and highway safety (highway authority views crucial);
- Traffic generation (highway authority views crucial);
- Noise and disturbance from the scheme;
- Public visual amenity (not loss of an individual's view);
- Disturbance from smells;
- Flood risk (EA/ AW views crucial).

**Issues that the local planning authority cannot normally consider:**

- Loss of value to private individual property;
- Loss of view;
- Boundary disputes;
- Private covenants or agreements;
- The applicant's personal conduct or history;
- The applicant's motives;
- Potential profit for the applicant or from the application;
- Private rights to light;
- Private rights of way;
- Damage to property;
- Disruption during construction;
- Loss of trade and competitors;
- Age, health, status, background and work patterns of objector;
- Time taken to do the work;
- Capacity of private drains;
- Building and structural techniques;
- Alcohol or gaming licences;

The views of local residents are always considered – but local opposition or support on its own is not a reason for refusing or granting planning permission. Opposition or support must be backed up by valid planning reasons

Influencing Planning Decisions: The parish council can produce evidence such as whether the consent affects a listed building, conservation area, Tree Preservation Orders, special landscape areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Parish council documents containing evidence and information on traffic counts, parking capacity, the need for public open spaces, trends in school rolls, and data on flora and fauna will be invaluable in influencing a decision.

### **Wiggenhall St Germans Parish Council Process**

The Borough Council sends an email (usually weekly on a Friday) with notification of New Planning Applications, Amendments and Decisions. The Clerk reviews the lists and forwards to councillors if there are any items relating to Wiggenhall St Germans or of interest in the neighbouring communities.

A Planning Steering Group (PSG) of Cllrs has been established; selected by Council to undertake training and research to gain a greater depth of knowledge of the Planning Strategies and Policies and advise the Council on material planning matters and make recommendations to Council.

In the event of an application, amendment or decision relating to Wiggenhall St Germans the Clerk will review it on the Planning Portal and advise the Councillors of the content and depending on the nature of it the Cllrs will determine whether an extra meeting to consider the council and parishioner's views is required or whether a consultation comment can be delegated to the Clerk or PSG. Simple amendments not affecting an original consideration on application can be responded to by the Clerk after consultation with the Council's Planning Steering Group.

Councillors to notify the clerk of any prejudicial interests.

Council consider and agree a consultation response and instruct the Clerk to respond.

Prior to Planning Consideration at a meeting, the Council should consider:

- Whether to highlight to Parishioners via the PC Website & Village Notice Board.
- Visit site of application if possible.
- As far as practicable ensure immediate neighbours are aware of application and appreciate any implications for them.
- Whether to consult with Borough or County Councillors for support.
- Whether to request that the Planning is 'Called In' via the Borough Councillor for Borough Council Planning Committee review.

For transparency and retrospective reference, a Record of Decisions (Annex A) will be completed by the Clerk to record relevant information relating to the decision process, those involved, and the decisions made, along with a transcript of the comment submitted. The Clerk has the delegated authority to submit a consultation comment based on the views expressed by Cllrs.

**The taxonomy and phrasing of objection comments should try as far as possible to follow that used in the NPPF, Local Plan and Policies.** These are contained in the [Interactive Local Plan](#).

**Wiggenhall St Germans Parish Council - Planning Consultation Record**

Ref: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

| Consultee Councillors:                                                                                                                                         | Participated & Comment (support/object <sup>1</sup> ) | Interest |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Cllr Rust                                                                                                                                                      |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Ash                                                                                                                                                       |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Bridges                                                                                                                                                   |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Harrison                                                                                                                                                  |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Johnson                                                                                                                                                   |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Massen                                                                                                                                                    |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Park                                                                                                                                                      |                                                       |          |
| Cllr <i>vacant</i>                                                                                                                                             |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Taylor-Wright                                                                                                                                             |                                                       |          |
| Cllr Ward                                                                                                                                                      |                                                       |          |
| Clerk <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                             |                                                       |          |
| <b>Parish Council Response submitted to Borough/County Council<sup>1</sup> -      Date:</b>                                                                    |                                                       |          |
|                                                                                                                                                                |                                                       |          |
| Borough Councillor requested to 'call in' <sup>1</sup> to Planning Committee:    Yes / No<br>Borough Cllr: _____ [name] <b>Called In:</b> Yes / No: Ctte Date: |                                                       |          |

<sup>1</sup> Cllrs are not obliged to record for public record their support or objection vote and can ask for it to only to note participation.

<sup>2</sup> The Clerk may respond with delegated authority between meetings after consultation with the Chairman.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

| Item                                                        | Comments |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Overshadowing                                               |          |
| Overlooking and loss of privacy                             |          |
| Adequate parking and servicing                              |          |
| Overbearing/ nature of the proposal                         |          |
| Loss of trees                                               |          |
| Loss of ecological habitats/Biodiversity                    |          |
| Design and appearance                                       |          |
| Layout and density of buildings                             |          |
| Effect on Listed Building(s) and Conservation Areas         |          |
| Access and highway safety (highway authority views crucial) |          |
| Traffic generation (highway authority views crucial)        |          |
| Noise and disturbance from the scheme                       |          |
| Public visual amenity (not loss of an individual's view)    |          |
| Drainage/Flood risk (EA/ AW views crucial).                 |          |
| Impact on crime or detection.                               |          |
| Deed Restrictive Covenants compliance (Not Material)        |          |