

Responding to planning applications

The planning process

West Suffolk Council is the Planning Authority for Lackford. Once an application has been submitted and validated, statutory consultees will be notified about the application. Lackford Parish Council is a statutory consultee. The Parish Council can submit a response which may, or may not, be taken into account by West Suffolk Council.

The decision about a planning application will either be made by planning officers under delegated powers or be referred to a planning committee (Development Control) which is made up of district councillors.

If an application is controversial it is a good idea to contact your District Councillor to raise your concerns and ask them to 'call the application in' which means asking for it to be referred to Development Control. If this happens the Parish Council and residents will have a chance to make representations.

Preparing a response

The Design and Access Statement provided by the applicant provides information about the application and often links in with planning policy. A useful starting point is West Suffolk Council's Joint Development Management Policies Document:

https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/upload/JDMPD-FINAL-for-website-R.pdf

A planning application can only be decided on planning grounds (material considerations). Effect on property value and loss of view are not material considerations.

Valid material considerations

- Loss of sunlight
- Overshadowing
- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Highway issues: traffic generation, vehicular access, highway safety, parking
- Noise or disturbance resulting from use
- 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 & handling of hazardous materials and development of contaminated land
- Loss or effect on tree or trees on the site with Tree Preservation Orders
- Adverse impact on nature conservation interests and biodiversity opportunities
- Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas
- Layout and density of building design, visual appearance and finishing materials
- Inadequate or inappropriate landscaping or means of enclosure
- May set a precedent (for example building in gardens)
- Over development of the site
- Out of keeping with the street scene (the materials and design)
- Access onto the highway may be a hazard to other traffic
- Impact on/or proximity to a listed building
- The site hosts rare plants or protected wildlife like bats and crested newts

Non- material Considerations

- Impact on the value of a neighbouring property
- The applicant is planning to move once planning permission has been granted
- The applicant is in a dispute with a neighbour about the boundary
- There is a covenant on the property
- There will be a lot of construction vehicles on the site
- Loss of view

- Applicant's personal circumstances (unless clearly relevant, for example provision of facilities for someone with a physical disability)
- Problems arising from the construction period of any works
- Previously made objections/representations regarding another site or application
- Factual misrepresentation of the proposal

Finding out about planning applications in your area

If you would like to find out about planning applications in Lackford, visit the West Suffolk Council website <https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/vieworcommentonplanningapplications.cfm?aud=resident>

Planning Policy affecting Lackford

West Suffolk Council is currently in the process of producing a new Local Plan for the period to 2040, which will set out the West Suffolk Council's vision for future growth in the area.

Part of this process is a 'call for sites' where landowner put forward possible sites which might be suitable for development (SHELAA). West Suffolk Council then decides which sites will make it into the Local Plan. Any sites which are included in the Local Plan have to conform with planning policy. Housing growth is distributed according to a settlement hierarchy which classifies towns and villages depending on their sustainability, infrastructure and suitability to support future growth. Under this settlement hierarchy, most new development is allocated to towns and key service centres like Barrow and Clare.

In the current draft Local Plan, Lackford is classified as countryside and no sites have been allocated for development.