

HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE 2026-2027

Hailsham Town Council is a consultee in the planning legislative process, it is the responsibility of the Planning & Development Committee to receive and respond to planning applications, planning appeals and applications for certificate of lawful development from Wealden District Council, East Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park local Planning Authorities.

In reviewing planning applications its purpose is to ensure that they meet with current planning law, satisfy local development frameworks and published development guidance.

The committee will also comment on matters of local concern including major developments, proposed planning gain agreements in respect of developing community and commercial infrastructure, statutory, utility and common communal services and matters relating to the historical essence and character of Hailsham.

The committee will also provide responses for licensing applications and for matters determining, amending or stopping up Public Highway, Public Right of Way and will respond to proposed temporary, experimental or permanent traffic regulation orders.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The Planning & Development Committee is constituted as a Standing Committee of Hailsham Town Council. The Committee composition shall be a maximum of Seven Councillors as voting members (unless council resolves otherwise).

Members and Substitute Members must be formally appointed at the Annual Meeting of Council or subsequently at other council meetings.

2. Quorum shall be half of appointed members or the closest majority to that number

3. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee shall be elected annually by the Committee or Town Council.

4. The Committee shall meet every three weeks, or unless otherwise required and agreed by resolution of the committee.

PLANNING

5. A record of all planning applications, the responses and eventual results shall be noted in the minutes of meetings.
6. The Committee has delegated authority to consider all planning applications pertaining to the Town and environs of Hailsham and to respond to Wealden District Council, East Sussex County Council or the South Downs National Park as local planning determination authorities. Minutes/Reports of all meetings will be presented for adoption at the next full Council meeting
7. The Planning & Development Committee may canvas opinions for and against applications to assist with fair determination of applications. The Committee has an obligation to ensure that relevant parties are given a reasonable hearing – applicants, as well as objectors, will have the opportunity to speak prior to the commencement of meetings in accordance with the Town Council Standing Orders. Solely at the discretion of the Chairman the committee may seek clarification of views expressed by applicants or objectors when a specific application is presented and debated.
8. The committee clerk shall present each application for consideration by the committee. The clerk shall identify the location of the application, shall provide an outline of the application, present the planning history and shall make recommendations of options available to the committee. The clerk shall where appropriate have visited the application location to photograph any existing buildings on the site and the surrounding buildings and land.
9. Presentation of application plans and supporting documentation shall make full and appropriate use of electronic files and overhead projection systems, ensuring that this can be clearly viewed by both the committee and attending members of the public. The committee will use paper documentation only when suitable electronic systems are unavailable.
10. Applications considered to be controversial may be referred to the Full Council. A time sensitive response may be made by the Committee Chairman or Clerk following a majority decision by the Committee. Any two (2) Councillor members of the committee may request an application be deferred for a meeting of the Full Town Council.
11. Where an onsite meeting is arranged, it will be subject to the prior approval of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman. A Committee member will then present findings to the Committee.
12. Where an application is subject to an appeal, the Committee is authorised to make written representation or to elect a member of the Committee to attend the hearing.
13. All correspondence shall be conducted through the Town Clerk (or the delegated officer).
14. The Town Clerk (or the delegated officer) will write letters to the appropriate Planning Authority or other relevant body detailing the Planning Committee's response to each application and will ensure that these letters arrive within the timescale for each application.

15. Where an application is subject to an appeal, the Committee will prepare and recommend a draft written representation to the full Town Council and propose a member of the Committee to attend the hearing and speak on behalf of the council if called to give evidence.

16. Wherever possible, a member of the Planning Committee is to be nominated to attend Planning Authority's Planning meetings to represent the Committee's views in respect of major and controversial planning applications.

17. Minutes of all meetings are to be kept by the Clerk. Agendas and minutes shall be forwarded by e-mail to all members of the Town Council. (Only members who do not have access to e-mail, or have not agreed to receive minutes and agendas in this manner, shall receive a printed copy by post).

18. The Planning and Development Committee shall ensure that due regard is given to the content of the Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan when commenting on planning matters.

DEVELOPMENT

19. The committee shall work with adjacent parishes, District and County Councils, Police, Fire & Rescue, Ambulance and NHS Authorities to ensure that appropriate development is fully and transparently determined for the residents of Hailsham being mindful that this should comply with current planning law and guidance.

20. The committee will seek to meet with land owners, agents and developers to offer pre-application advice about the council and community views of potential developments within Hailsham and also within adjacent parish locations that could impact visually or environmentally upon Hailsham Residents.

21. Any views expressed by members will be indicative of likely community views, the committee should not be regarded as determining the specific view of the council and residents prior to the council being consulted about finalised outline or full applications presented for determination by the appropriate planning authority.

22. The committee will seek to encourage developers of significant major applications to meet with the full council and to provide a presentation for residents. The Planning & Development Committee is empowered to ensure that such presentations are widely advertised to encourage public participation.

23. The committee will monitor the progress of s106/CIL planning gain agreements for developments within Hailsham and its environs, ensuring that applicants and planning authorities are advised of the views of the council and community about the provisions of the agreement at appropriate payment trigger points.

24. The chairman and committee clerk will provide progress reports to full council on behalf of the committee of all development consultation and s106 activities.

25. The Planning and Development committee will appoint members to the board of the Community Land Trust if required or requested.