

Sway Parish Council Planning and Transport Committee (PaTC)

An introduction for Sway Residents

Sway Parish Council Planning and Transport Committee (PaTC) usually meets on the second Thursday of the month to deliberate on matters of planning and transport within Sway Civil Parish.

We comprise 7 Parish Councillors (with a quorum of 3), plus up to 3 further co-opted members covering areas such as transport, and trees. We do **NOT** decide planning matters in Sway – the Local Planning Authority is the New Forest National Park Authority; but we are invited to make recommendations. We also cover Tree Preservation Orders and local public transport and highways matters – particularly the Cango bus service and Sway Railway Station, and Community SpeedWatch.

We seek to make planning in Sway as open and transparent as possible, so we always welcome the public and press – particularly residents of Sway Civil Parish. Normally we meet at 7:30pm in the Jubilee Field Pavilion, and if you pop along from about 7:15pm you will usually get an opportunity to view the plans and applications (and to discuss any matters informally with members of the Committee).

Our recommendations to NFNPA Planning concerning planning applications generally fall into one of five categories, and you may hear us using the numbers below as a shorthand:

1. We recommend PERMISSION, for the reasons listed below, but would accept the decision reached by the National Park Authority's Officers under their delegated powers.
2. We recommend REFUSAL, for the reasons listed below, but would accept the decision reached by the National Park Authority's Officers under their delegated powers.
3. We recommend PERMISSION for the reasons listed below.
4. We recommend REFUSAL for the reasons listed below.
5. We are happy to accept the decision reached by the National Park Authority's Officers under their delegated powers.

Planning can be an emotive issue: one person's dream extension can be their neighbour's planning blight; and one business's vital expansion can be another's financial threat. On the PaTC we give our time freely and receive no allowances or expenses, and we try to do our honest best. We do get criticism (that goes with the territory), and we rarely get praise. We ask you to be respectful and understanding, and in return we will listen carefully, and hope to consider wisely, and act on behalf of the balanced best interests of Sway residents.

If you are coming along as an applicant, as a supporter, as an objector, or to comment, we will endeavour to give you an opportunity to speak. If you do wish to speak then please let us know at the start of the meeting. We try to keep proceedings informal, and we usually invite questions or input from the public towards the end of the meeting. If things become heated or too many people wish to speak we will enforce the proper formal rules, but we hope that will not be necessary.

We are governed by rules and guidance – starting with the National Planning Policy Framework: NPPF – see <https://tinyurl.com/o5s4ydt> In planning matters we usually rely only on “material considerations” – see <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/planning/material-considerations/>

The most significant guidance for us is the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) Planning Core Strategy <http://tinyurl.com/coekfrl> from which we sometimes quote various Development Policies such as DP1 (General Development Principles) or DP11 (Extensions to Dwellings), or Core Policies such as CP8 (Local Distinctiveness). There are also NFNPA Supplementary Planning Documents, of which the most significant is the Sway Village Design Statement which contributes to the formal guidance on planning design within Sway. And the NFNPA Design Guide also provides significant help – see <http://bit.ly/16b9H2q>

We have Terms of Reference (ToR) set by Sway Parish Council - see the MS-Word document: <http://bit.ly/HPaM7t> and those include that we must declare any possible personal interest. Our ToR also state that details of the planning applications and tree protection matters to be dealt with should be posted on the Parish notice board and on the internet at least 72 hours before our meetings. Forthcoming planning matters not dealt with in the PaTC are usually considered at the full Parish Council meeting - usually held on the fourth Thursday of the month. All Sway Parish Councillors must also abide by the New Forest District Council's Code of Conduct http://www.newforest.gov.uk/media/adobe/3/6/chapter_32.pdf