

DONHEAD ST ANDREW PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT POLICY FOR PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATION

Background:

1. Donhead St Andrew Parish Council ('the/this Council') is a statutory consultee on the local development plan and also the local development framework; but **not** a statutory consultee on planning applications.
2. Wiltshire Council Planning Officers are however obliged to notify local Councils of planning applications within the parish boundary if requested to do so by the Council. The views of the Parish Councillors will then be considered when Officers are determining the application.
3. The Council's strength lies in its specialist knowledge of the local environment, local needs and local views. Activities that a Council can undertake therefore include:
 - a. Checking that plans are accurate and appropriate.
 - b. Assessing local needs and informing the planning authority.
 - c. Gathering views and again, informing the planning authority.
 - d. Making effective observations on planning applications.
 - e. Producing design guides for the parish.
 - f. Taking the lead as the community draws up a parish plan
 - g. Actively engaging in the development plan process
 - h. Asking the planning authority to pursue enforcement.
4. At all times, the Council should represent the interests of its communities and this may not be easy when local interests are in conflict.
5. Such conflicts may not be evidenced within a community until a planning application is advertised by the planning authority and it is this that causes difficulties for the Council in agreeing to pre-application consultation items on an agenda.
6. It may be however, that the opportunity to seek and exchange information and matters of fact is helpful to both a potential applicant and also the Council.

The policy:

7. The policy for pre-application consultation will therefore be:
 - i. Any pre-application consultation will be discussed at publicly advertised Council meetings only.
 - j. Applicants must remember that planning approval is granted by Wiltshire Council and not Donhead St Andrew Parish Council.
 - k. Wiltshire Council Planning Officers are able (and willing) to give pre-application advice on how Wiltshire Council may react to a proposed application. Donhead St Andrew Parish Council cannot give advice of this nature.

- l. Applicants will be allowed 3 minutes to address Parish Councillors during the usual 'Public Consultation and Presentations' agenda item; the applicant is then unable to contribute further unless asked a direct question by the Chairman or Parish Councillor.
- m. Applicants will be able to submit a draft plan to allow Parish Councillors to consider the proposal.
- n. Parish Councillors will be able to ask questions to help identify any concerns; but would be asked to refrain from discussing in depth any issues that would be the responsibility of the Planning Department, e.g. sympathetic materials could be requested, but a discussion on exact materials would not take place.
- o. Parish Councillors would be able to identify any concerns about the proposal in order to help the applicant, but these are likely to be limited to issues such as additional traffic, access and egress to the site, design, loss of privacy to neighbours etc.
- p. Parish Councillors would be asked to restrict their comments to one brief succinct statement about the proposed application and not replicate previous comments and concerns.
- q. The Council will not express an opinion; saving this for the formal consultation from the local planning authority in due course.
- r. Any comments made by Councillors during pre-application consultation agenda items will not be binding on the Council. In particular, views expressed by an individual councillor will be no more than an immediate reaction. A different view may be taken when representations are made by the public following formal submission of the application. Even if there are no representations, a different view may be taken when the matter is discussed with fellow councillors and all submitted material is available. Accordingly, neither an individual councillor nor the Parish Council as a whole should be regarded as bound by anything said during the discussion.
- s. Unforeseen issues coming to light during the formal application process and the resolution or otherwise of these will not be compromised by any comments made during pre-application consultation agenda items.