

Protocol for Dealing with Planning and Related Applications

Planning Committee

12th January 2016

Author: Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage

Wards: All Wards

Locality Affected: All Locality areas

Parishes: All Parishes and Town Councils

Purpose and Reasons

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To seek the Planning Committee's approval of the updated and consolidated consultation protocol for the dealing with planning and related applications
- 1.2 A partial review of the protocol took place in November 2014 when the committee agreed to a revised neighbour consultation protocol. Given the elapse of time it is considered appropriate that an update and consolidation of all the various protocols be carried out and set out in a single accessible document.
- 1.3 This update will not affect how Parish / Town Councils and statutory consultees are consulted.
- 1.4 It is considered that procedures should be up to-date and ideally agreed on a regular basis to reflect the current practice, and the increased use of IT. The update draws upon and clarifies adopted procedures and incorporates committee resolutions going back over many years.
- 1.5 This report will draw upon current practice and where relevant or appropriate recommends improvements / amendments.

2 Recommendations

The Planning Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note that the majority of comments are received electronically and agree to discontinue notification (other than by electronic means) to those persons who have made representations of the decision as this will be available via the planning pages of the Councils web site. (Paragraph 6.2 of the report refers).
- 2.2 Approve the procedures set out in Appendix 2 to this report for the purpose of consultation on planning and related applications ("consultation protocol")
- 2.3 Agree that the consultation protocol be circulated to all Borough Councillors and Parish and Town Councils for information.

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- 2.4 Agree that the Council's Statement of Community Involvement in Planning be amended at the next review to reflect these changes
- 2.5 Authorise the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage to publish the protocol in the planning pages of the Councils Web site.
- 2.6 Authorise the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage to make any minor or typographical changes as may be necessary

3.0 Detail

The legal position

- 3.1 The requirements for publicising planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Planning Authority is required to publicise a planning or related application once it has been validated.
- 3.2 In accord with legislation in most cases, a 21 day period is given in which responses must be made. The application details are published online and are accessed via the planning pages of the council's web site. Once the consultation period has ended, the web site reflects this, and comments are no longer able to be submitted on-line.
- 3.4 There are also statutory publicity requirements for certain categories of development, which include the posting of site notices and publishing details in the public notices section of a newspaper, for example, proposals affecting a listed building and conservation area and major development.

Consultation with neighbours

- 3.5 The legislation sets out that in addition to certain statutory consultees, adjoining properties must also be made aware and given an opportunity to comment on planning applications. Swindon Borough Council has chosen to do so by notifying the neighbouring properties, i.e. those premises that adjoin the application site. This is done by sending a card to the properties concerned, informing them of the proposal and providing details of where the details can be inspected and the date by which any comments must be made. All post is sent out via 2nd class mail except in exceptional circumstances where first class mail may be used.
- 3.6 This system has generally worked well and has advantages over the alternative of posting of a single notice at or near the property, which affected neighbours may not read.

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- 3.7 A period of 21 days is given in which responses must be made. The application details are published online and are accessed via the planning pages of the council's web site. As explained above, when the consultation period has ended, the web site reflects this, and comments are no longer able to be submitted on-line.

General Consultation Principles

- 3.8 Notifications are sent to neighbouring occupiers whose properties adjoin an application site, whether or not they are residential neighbours.
- 3.9 In the case of a side extension to a house, those properties situated either side and to the front and rear will be notified. In the case of a rear house extension, only those to the side and rear will be notified. Similar principles will apply to a front only extension. Some developments that may have wider / off site impacts may be subject to broader consultation, including the use of site notices.
- 3.10 The position in respect of applications where revised details / plans are received is set out and discussed in more detail below
- 3.11 In short, a revised notification exercise will not take place in each and every situation as the revised impact will need to be judged. If deemed appropriate to do so, notification takes the form of a card as with the original consultation exercise, albeit with a lesser timescale of 14 days allowed for responses.

Use of IT / electronic media

- 3.12 The Government encourages the use of electronic media and the legislation reflects this by allowing consultation to take place in this format. The department takes advantage of IT and notifies most statutory and internal consultees by email. Similarly Parish and Town Councils are notified in this way.
- 3.13 In order to assist with the transition they currently also receive a card and 'hard' copies of some drawings / papers are made available. This duplicate system will shortly be phased out so that they will only receive an electronic notification.
- 3.14 Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications and documents / drawings electronically via the Planning Portal. Swindon currently receives about 50% of its applications in this way.
- 3.15 When an application is made electronically the planning authority may correspond with the applicant in this manner.
- 3.16 The majority of comments received on an application are made electronically, most via the Public Access System where the application details are viewed through the Councils web pages.

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- 3.17 Later in this report members will note that correspondence takes place with applicants, agents, developers and objectors / supporters. This will include informing them of the decision and if the proposal is to be considered by the committee, the details of the meeting. However, given the use of electronic media – emails- is widespread, the committee is asked to endorse the practise of carrying out this correspondence electronically, where contact with the planning authority is made by electronic means. This will enable information to be disseminated much quicker, and will help the council reduce costs by preparing, printing and posting less cards

Consultation with Swindon Borough Councillors

- 3.18 Members are made aware of applications through the weekly list of applications that appears in the Members bulletin, published each week and either emailed or posted to every Councillor. This has been the case for many years, having been agreed by the planning committee as part of the Planning Charter for Development Control. Where members request the weekly list as a standalone document, separate to the Bulletin, it is either emailed or posted to them as they may prefer upon request.
- 3.19 This procedure is also echoed and set out in the Statement of Community Involvement 2013 adopted and agreed by the Council following widespread statutory publicity and consultation.
- 3.20 Ward Councillors are only notified by a card where re-consultation takes place following amendments to an application. This is because the amendments would not appear in the weekly list, which only report applications received and determined.
- 3.21 Councillors will already be aware that from time to time they are formally notified of new applications by receiving a card similar to that sent to neighbours. Although there is no requirement to do this, it does occur where the case office is of the view that that a proposal may be locally controversial or is a type of development that Ward Members have expressed an interest in and therefore special attention should be drawn to it.
- 3.22 This is not a foolproof method as it is unlikely that officers and members will be able to always predict what might happen in respect of any particular application which on the face of it may seem like an innocuous application.
- 3.23 To quantify the position, the department is expected to receive around or in excess of 2000 planning and related applications this year. Most wards have three councillors; so a rough calculation of 3 members x 2000 applications amounts to some 6000 cards per annum to be printed and sent to members. The

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vast majority of developments are uncontroversial as most members will know, given that of the total, only around 50 - 60 applications (2 - 3%) per year are called to committee.

- 3.24 Members will be aware that the software of Planning Departments 'Uniform' IT system has recently been upgraded to a more up to date version. Whilst some teething problems remain to be resolved, it is hoped that there may be an opportunity to configure the program to generate an email notification to the Ward Members when an application is validated. Whilst members will receive much more communication (email or hard copy) from the department than they currently do, this has the advantage of making members aware of each and every application in their Ward at a very early stage and before the local residents / neighbours receive their cards. When this is available all members will be contacted to see if they wish to be consulted in this manner.
- 3.25 It is up to the members of the planning committee to decide whether they want to change the current process of notifying and consulting members. However, it is the officers' view that the current system should remain, given the information set out in paragraphs 3.23 and 3.24 above.

Consultation with Parish and Town Councils

- 3.26 The process of notifying Parish and Town Councils follows closely that for notifying neighbours, described earlier in this report. They are notified of applications within their area and are given 21 days to respond and 14 days when notified of revised plans.
- 3.27 The procedure is also contained in the Swindon Borough Parish and Town Council Charter 2015, agreed by the Parish and Town Councils, and the Swindon Area Committee of the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils in January 2015.
- 3.28 The Charter also confirms the ability of Parish and Town councils to request that applications be determined by the planning committee rather than by officers under delegated powers. This echoes the relevant clause in the Councils scheme of delegation but does require reasons to be given for the request as to why a particular application is considered to raise significant planning issues or is locally controversial.
- 3.29 Following consultation and trials, Parish and Town Councils are consulted using electronic media as described in Paragraph 2.12 above.

Consultation following receipt of revised details / amended plans

- 3.30 A proportion of the applications dealt with are subject to revisions. The legislation does not require any further consultation to be carried out in such cases.

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However, along with most other local planning authorities, this council does so and this is generally regarded as good practice.

- 3.31 A revised notification exercise will not take place in each and every situation as the revised impact will need to be judged. If deemed appropriate to do so, notification takes the form of a card as with the original consultation exercise albeit with a lesser timescale of 14 days is allowed for responses.
- 3.32 Officers recognise and acknowledge the importance of notifying neighbours, which is to enable those affected to be aware of and to be able comment on a scheme. In each case a judgement has to be made whether further consultation is necessary and if so whether it should be a 'wholesale' exercise or be proportionate to the impact of the revisions.
- 3.33 The following are examples where revisions would not normally lead to a further round of consultation being carried out:
- The revisions mitigate, address or overcome objections.
 - The revisions reduce the scale or impact of a scheme to which no comments have been received.
 - The revisions amend part of a scheme where no additional impact arises and upon which no concerns have been raised,
- 3.34 When it is deemed appropriate that a revised consultation exercise takes place, the notifications will be limited to.
- Those properties that lie adjacent to the location of the amended proposals.
 - Those properties directly affected by the location of the amended proposals.
 - Those who have written in already and expressed concerns at the matters being amended – unless their stated concerns have been addressed

Consultation on applications for the approval of reserved matters following grant of Outline permission

- 3.35 Over the years there have been many applications that have attracted a large amount of objections at the outline stage but reduce dramatically once the principle of developing a site has been established.
- 3.36 The objections will normally relate to the impacts of the principle of development and the associated highway implications. In such cases, where the application is granted – either by the local planning authority or on appeal -, the principle and scale of development together with the location and impact of the access will

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normally have been considered to be acceptable in planning terms and approved. Further objections to those agreed aspects at the reserved matters stage cannot be considered.

- 3.37 To reflect the position agreed by members last year, for applications that follow the grant of outline permission the department will continue to notify only those immediately affected by the details of the reserved matters (in most cases they will be housing developments), rather than those further afield who whilst not agreeing with a development, will not be directly affected by the details – (e.g. layout and house types).
- 3.38 . Reserved matters applications can be for a significant number of houses and this council considers it important that proposals must be adequately publicised and where an application meets the definition of ‘major’ development (e.g. 10 houses or more) details are published in the local newspaper and notice is displayed on the site. This is in addition to notifying affected ‘neighbours’.
- 3.39 Similar principles would be applied to applications for full planning permission where the principle of the development has been established by the grant of planning permission and a revised application proposes changes to the scheme – e.g. changes to a housing development to alter the layout / house types.

Larger sites

- 3.40 The neighbour notification procedure described above requires all those properties adjoining the application site to be notified of the proposal. There are instances where this should be re-assessed and a more proportionate approach taken. For example there might be a proposal for a bike shelter within a large commercial complex or a school campus, where the application site might include the whole grounds. To avoid unnecessarily consulting a number of neighbours who may a significant distance away and will not be affected by the proposal a judgement will be made to ensure a proportionate consultation exercise is undertaken so that only those properties likely to be affected will be notified. Of course, a site visit might suggest otherwise and additional / wider notifications can / will be sent out.

Certificates of Lawfulness

- 3.41 These types of application allow an applicant to seek a formal decision to establish whether or not permission is required for a development he proposes to carry out or whether a development that has been carried out is lawful either by the passage of time or because planning permission was not required.
- 3.42 There is no formal requirement for a local planning authority to undertake any consultation upon receipt of either of these types of application. This is because

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they must be considered on the basis of fact rather than on the merit or desirability of the development. In clear cut cases, no neighbour consultation would be expected to be undertaken. However, there may be instances where the local planning authority may find it helpful to seek corroboration of the facts and evidence. In such cases there is nothing to preclude the local planning authority from seeking the views of local residents or any other interested parties to assist its deliberations.

Telecommunications

- 3.43 Applications whether seeking planning permission or prior approval for Masts and paraphernalia associated with telecommunications including those by mobile phone and broadband operators can be controversial. Acknowledging this, all properties, including schools, within a 100m Radius of the site will be notified when applications are received.

4.0 Reporting comments received.

- 4.1 All comments / representations received are assessed and taken into account in the determination of applications. These are set out by the officer in the application report and commented upon / addressed as appropriate in reaching the recommendation / decision.
- 4.2 All persons making representations in respect of applications that are to be determined by the planning committee will also receive a card or email notification informing them of the meeting details, to enable them to be present at or speak to the committee.
- 4.3 There are often instances where objectors / supporters of a scheme produce a standard letter / email that is copied by many individuals and submitted in opposition or support a development. As members will be aware, it is the nature of the representation that is material not the number of times the same comment is made. Nevertheless, each letter is logged as an individual comment and each person will be notified of the decision and if applicable the date the planning committee meeting at which the application that the application will be considered at.

Petitions

- 4.4 The local planning authority will continue to treat petitions that relate to a planning application as a single representation. When received, the petition will be logged as a comment from a single individual and this will be attributed to the author of any accompanying note or in the absence of any details identifying the originator of the petition, it will be attributed to the top signature on the first or top page. This protocol is confirmed and explained in the planning pages of the councils web site

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5.0 Determining applications

- 5.1 Applications are determined either by the planning committee or by Officers authorised under the Council's Scheme of Delegation This is re-affirmed by Council each year as part of the constitution. The scheme as it applies to Parish Councils is referred to above but it useful to set out details.
- 5.2 An application will be determined under delegated powers unless
- a) The Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage determined that it should be determined by the planning committee;
 - b) A member has requested in writing within 28 days of the date of validation that the application be considered by the planning committee;
 - c) A parish Council request within 21 days of notification the the planning committee considers the application because it raised significant planning issues or is locally controversial.

Late representations

- 5.3 Applications dealt with by the Planning Committee
- 5.4 Representations received after the publication the agenda and up to the start of the meeting will not normally be circulated. The committee will be informed that additional representations have been received but the detail will only be reported where they raise new points or significantly add to those reported in the committee papers. If the comments are received very late, members may be advised that there has been insufficient time to assess or consider the information.
- 5.5 With regard to request for material to be circulated at the meeting, the Members Planning Code of Good Practice advocates against allowing documents to be circulated at Committee Meetings which have not previously been submitted to the Committee as all parties may not have had time to react to the submissions and officers may not be able to provide considered advice on the material. A recent case law - R (Joicey) v. Northumberland County Council [2015] indicates that the Court is likely to quash a decision where new materials have not been made available to the public at least five clear days before the relevant meeting, in breach of section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972. The objectors were said to have not had adequate time to prepare and respond in that case.
- 5.6 Applications dealt with under delegated powers.
- 5.7 Representations received after the close of the formal consultation period will be considered, provided that the case officer is aware of them before the relevant application report has been written. Representations received after this time will be taken into account by the Officer determining the application provided that

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he/she is aware of their existence prior to the application being decided. Decided in this case means that the decision has been authorised (signed off)

Non Material and Minor Material amendments

- 5.8 Recent changes introduced flexibility into the planning regime to allow applicants to amend their schemes in a less onerous way than by making a planning application. The options available include applications for a non-material amendment and a minor material amendment, the procedure is different for each approach.
- 5.9 There can be no hard or fast approach to which method is used as each case will depend upon the particular circumstances. Similarly, the appropriateness of the extent of any consultation will have to be considered on a case by case basis, having regard to the principles in section 2 above

Site visits by the Planning Committee

- 5.10 It is now some years since the planning committee routinely deferred consideration of planning applications to enable a site visit to be undertaken by members. The committee resolved to abandon this practice due the extensive detailed application information available, both in the agenda papers and by the display of application material, photographs at the meeting. Should any interested party request a site visit, they will be advised of this resolution.
- 5.11 Individual members of the committee can, prior to a meeting, visit the site under their own volition with or without the appropriate Planning Officer if they consider it necessary.

Conditions on planning permissions

- 5.12 Most planning permissions are subject to conditions which are discharged by Planning Officers. This takes place without any further round of consultation as the legislation make no provision or requirement for this to take place. Occasionally, there will be exceptional circumstances where members may wish to be made aware of such details and may for example request that Officers discharge a condition in conjunction and the agreement the Ward Councillors. Similarly the discharge of some conditions may require that technical or specialist input is sought.

Appeals

- 5.13 When an appeal is received, all persons who were notified of and who commented upon the related application are required to be informed that an appeal has been lodged. The local planning authority must notify the interested persons but any comments they wish to make must be sent to the planning

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inspectorate who administer the process. The exception is in respect of 'householder' appeals where there is no further opportunity to comment.

Permitted Development / Prior approvals

- 5.14 Informal requests for a decision on whether a proposal constitutes permitted development is no longer given. Such requests can be made via an application for a certificate of lawfulness. However, as members will be aware the scope of permitted development rights have recently been extended and relaxed.
- 5.15 The relaxation has in many instances introduced a formal but limited consultation requirement, default approval where no representations have been made and also sets out the limited extent of matters that can be taken into account. For example, where larger 6m and 8m long house extensions are proposed, only the immediate neighbours are notified and if they do not object within 21 days, permission is deemed to have been granted. Members and Parish Councils are unable to have any part in this process. The local planning authority is required to determine such applications so as to comply with and be in accord with the relevant regulations.

Local Development Orders

- 5.16 The Committee has approved a number of Local development orders in the last 5 years, including those covering house extensions, development at employment locations, Low carbon energy and an area based order for Victoria Road. Each of those orders will specify the publicity that will be necessary. This will be less than for formal applications as a wide consultation exercise took place in the formulation of each order

6.0 Other Matters

- 6.1 From time to time the department is contacted by persons who have requested (insisted) that they be formally notified of an application of which they have knowledge of by being sent a card. They are of course already aware of the application, which is the rationale for notifying, but have not been formally consulted. This is most likely because they live a little further away from a site than would trigger a notification. In such cases it is not appropriate to agree to their request as they clearly know about the development and are not prejudiced or precluded from commenting. This would extend the consultation period for a further 21 days which may not be desirable or reasonable. Criticism could also be levelled at the council for not informing others in a similar position. Such interested persons will be advised to comment on the application as this would trigger and ensure further notifications about the application will be sent to them as it progresses.

Notification of the decision

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from *Andy Brown* on 466286 or Email andybrown@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 6.2 Given that most objections and representations are received electronically, the committee is asked to review the continued notification of decisions by printing and sending cards as the details are easily available via the Councils web site where most people already have visited to view the application. The committees views are sought on this and whether notification is only given by electronic means –e.g. by emails once this is facilitated by the departments system

Privacy statement / How personal information will be used

- 6.3 The Planning department receives a significant amount of correspondence on applications, much of which is required to be made available and published so that it can be viewed on-line. There is a requirement to ensure that sensitive information is not made available electronically, including contact details and signatures. Such details are redacted.
- 6.4 A privacy statement is published to ensure that those persons who make comments will know what will happen to the information they give us. The current wording along with other useful information that is also provided in this section is attached at appendix 1 to this report.

Pre application consultation

- 6.5 The council encourages all applicants, developers and landowners to discuss their proposals with Borough Councillors (Ward Members) and the local community before submitting planning applications. However, the legislation as currently drafted does not make this mandatory. There may be instances where a developer wishes to carry out pre – application discussions about a potential scheme with the local planning authority that they do not want to be made public, even when these discussions include selected Statutory Consultations. The local planning authority will have to comply with such a confidentiality request, albeit the developer will be urged to share his scheme with the community at the earliest opportunity

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 Whilst this protocol will cover most situations and applications, there will always be the occasional proposal that will require special treatment or wider publicity. In such cases the local planning authority will continue to adopt a cautious approach of undertaking more, rather than less publicity.

8.0 Alternative Options

- 8.1 The Planning Committee may not agree to adopt some or all of the protocol, but the Local Planning Authority will have to continue to publicise applications in a manner that at least meets the statutory requirements

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- 8.2 The above report properly stresses the importance of ensuring that an adequate and appropriate level of consultation takes place to continue to ensure that those persons affected by development are aware of the proposals. Members are also invited to express support for the increased use of digital media in publicising applications and related matters and to support investment in improvements to the planning pages of the councils' web site.

9 Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 9.1 There will be no impact upon fee income, however previously identified savings on printing, paper and postage will continue. In addition, by directing consultation to those directly affected by and interested in a development, consultations will be timelier and less resource hungry, so that the focus can be directed to the increased workload, enabling the local planning authority can continue to meet its statutory targets.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 9.2 Legal and human rights implications have been taken into account in preparing this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 9.3 It is envisaged that the protocol would enable staff to exercise judgement from the largely administrative process of determining applications to enable resources to be focussed on dealing with those proposals that are likely to require a greater level of input.

The revised protocol should help efficient and appropriately targeted consultation to those affected.

- 9.4 Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies
This report supports the achievement of One Swindon outcomes: with respect to deregulation, facilitating local decision-making and helping to deliver economic growth. As such the proposal is fully aligned to our Corporate Objective around securing good economic growth.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 9.5 This report also updates the protocols last agreed in November 2014 and sets out in more detail how proportionate consultation (engagement) will take place. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has previously been completed in respect of the Statement of Community Involvement June 2013. We do not believe that the implementation of this proposal will create an adverse impact on the basis of age,

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disability, race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief. A copy of the DIA is available from the report author on request.

Risk Management

- 9.6 Risk Assessment has been previously been undertaken in respect of consultation with individuals and the local community under the Statement of Community involvement June 2013. The procedures set out above reflect the statutory duties the Local planning authority must comply with.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

Background Papers

- Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)
- Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (2013)
- Parish Borough Planning charter 2015
- Scheme of Delegation 2015
- The Councils Adopted Consultation policy 2104 – 2017 (2014)
- Members Planning Code of Good Practice

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Privacy Policy

Appendix 2 – Protocol for Dealing with Planning and Related Applications

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Appendix 1

Privacy Policy

All comments received form part of the statutory register and must be made available for public inspection. All representations (comments) that we receive about an application will be made available for public inspection via the Planning pages of this Councils website.

The addresses of those persons commenting on an application will usually be included in any application report containing an assessment of the proposal and the recommendation. This will include reports for decisions made under delegated powers and any published report considered by the planning committee.

Only those comments received in writing can be considered. Comments made verbally, in person or by telephone will not be recorded or taken into account.

It is important that comments are made within the formal consultation period that is set out in the notification. Failure to do so may result in your comments not being considered.

Any comments of an inappropriate, derogatory or defamatory nature will not be taken into consideration or published.

Anonymous comments will not be considered.

Only comments relating to planning matters can be considered. By keeping your comments to the point will help us to easily identify your concerns.

We receive hundreds of comments upon applications each year. It is not possible to acknowledge receipt of or to respond to your comments directly and it is our policy not to do so. You can however be assured that all comments are considered.

All comments received by the planning department will be placed on the application file and made available to be viewed online via the Planning pages of the Councils web site. The published information will include the names and addresses of persons making comments. Other personal details including email addresses, signatures and telephone numbers will normally be removed (redacted), if included.

Do not include:

- Signatures or personal telephone numbers
- E-mail addresses or any other personal information that you do not wish to be made public.

Do include:

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from *Andy Brown* on 466286 or Email andybrown@swindon.gov.uk.

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- The date
- Your name and address
- The application number
- The name of the case officer
- The site address.

The full content of all correspondence including any personal details will however be placed on the 'paper' working file and will be available to view, on request, at: Planning Office Wat Tyler House Beckhampton Street Swindon. SN1 2JH

Please note that 24 hours notice is usually required to do this.

In most cases, once an application has been determined, all the relevant information will be scanned and stored electronically and the working file will be destroyed, in which case only the online version will be available.

In the event that an appeal is lodged against the decision of the council, copies of all representations received will be copied and provided to both The Planning Inspectorate and the appellant. This may include any personal data contained in the comments.

Petitions should be submitted under the name and address of the person that produced it, or in the absence of such information, the petition will be attributed to the first signatory. The whole petition will be scanned and published but will be listed as a single comment and listed as a petition of X number of signatures. For your information, signatures, telephone numbers and personal email addresses will be removed (redacted) before appearing online.

In exceptional circumstances we will consider any special request of making personal details sensitive, to protect identities (although be aware that the nature of the comment may make this obvious). If you feel your comment should be kept confidential please contact the Case Officer direct.