



Okehampton Town Council

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DRAFT Developer Engagement Policy (Planning)

1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out how Okehampton Town Council will engage with developers and/or their agents, both prior to, and following, the submission of a planning application within the town, and informs Councillors and Officers when arranging discussions with developers.

2. Policy Scope

The policy applies to all Councillors and Employees.

This policy also applies to all stages of the planning development cycle including speculative queries and during the consultation phase.

Okehampton Town Council will not offer advice on Planning Policy or provide a formal view at such presentations.

3. Pre-Planning Application Developer Meeting Guidelines

Individual Councillors may be approached by developers for informal discussion. This must be approached with caution and, in all instances, notified to the Clerk. Councillors must make it clear they are not representing Okehampton Town Council at any time except in the appropriate meeting, unless expressly authorised to do so.

The Town Council recognises that pre-application discussions play an important role in major planning applications and welcomes the desire of developers to consult both with Okehampton Town Council and the wider community. Okehampton Town Council is also aware of the importance of public perception in planning and the need to avoid any appearance that Okehampton Town Council is conducting secretive negotiations or is colluding with developers. It is important therefore that such pre-application discussions are undertaken appropriately and transparently.

Okehampton Town Council, where possible, accommodates requests from developers to present their pre-application proposals at a meeting of the Planning Committee prior to public consultation on the following conditions:

- 3.1 Pre-application planning discussions, communications and any comment given by the Planning Committee will not bind the Planning Committee to making a particular decision. Any views expressed will be without prejudice and based on the information available at the time.
- 3.2 Pre-application planning discussions will be held within a meeting of the Planning Committee which is open to the public. A record of meetings with developers/agents held on site at their request and with the permission of the landowner, will be made and reported to the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

3.3 On request of a pre-application meeting, developers will be sent a copy of this policy and asked to acknowledge receipt and their understanding of its content.

4. Post submission of a Planning Application

Following the submission of an application, any discussions with developers/agents will be held during a Planning Committee Meeting that is open to the public.

5. Construction Phase

There are many issues that can arise during the construction phase, from amendments to plans, disputes with neighbours and highways issues. A Councillor may, on the instruction of Council or the Planning Committee, act as a representative to feedback on such issues to the Clerk who will act accordingly.

6. Advertising of meetings with developers

Okehampton Town Council will use the publication of Agendas to notify residents of meetings in the normal way. The agenda will include the publication of the developer/agent's name and proposal.