

Binfield Parish Council

Developer Engagement Policy



1. **Policy Statement**

This policy is designed to clarify how **Binfield Parish Council (BPC)** will engage with developers and/or their agents, both prior to, and following, the submission of a planning application within the parish. This policy will inform Councillors and Officers when arranging discussions with developers.

2. **Policy Scope**

This policy applies to all Councillors and Employees. This policy also applies to all stages of the development cycle including speculative queries and during the construction phase. BPC will not be offering advice on Planning Policy or formal view at such presentations.

3. **Responsibility for implementation of the policy**

- 3.1 The council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- 3.2 All Councillors and employees should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any breach of this policy should be reported to the Clerk.
- 3.3 Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Clerk.

4. **Pre-Planning Application Developer Meeting Guidelines**

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

BPC will, where possible, accommodate requests from developers to present their pre-application proposals at a Council or other arranged meeting prior to public consultation on the following conditions:

Where Councillors are approached on an individual basis by developers/potential developers, they should indicate to the developer that contact should be made to the Parish Clerk. The interaction should be reported to the Clerk.

Councillors must make it clear they are not representing BPC at any time except in the appropriate meeting, unless expressly authorised to do so.

- 4.1 Pre-application planning discussions, communications and any comment given by the Parish Council will not bind the Parish Council to making a particular decision and any views expressed will be without prejudice and on the basis of the information available at that time.
- 4.2 Where possible, meetings will normally be before a meeting of the full Council or the Planning and Transportation Committee, and as a preference be open to the public. A record of meetings with developers on site and/or outside of a meeting of BPC will be made and reported to the next Council meeting. Should developers not wish to attend a meeting open to the public, a closed meeting may be arranged.
- 4.3 Developers will be sent a copy and asked to acknowledge receipt and their understanding of this Policy.

5. **Post submission of a Planning Application**

Following the submission of an application, any discussions with developers should be held as open sessions during, or prior to, a parish council or committee meeting.

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6. **Construction Phase**

There are many issues that 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 and Transportation Committee, act as a representative to feedback on such issues.

7. **Advertising of meetings with developers**

BPC will use the publication of Agendas (parish main notice board), social media and the parish website to notify local residents of such open meetings and encourage their attendance. Where a meeting is closed, the appropriate Agenda will still state the meeting time and date and developer/agent name.

8. **Monitoring and review of this policy**

The Planning & Transportation Committee shall be responsible for reviewing this policy annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. The Council shall consider adoption of the reviewed policy annually.