



## Planning Applications – Have Your Say

Winchester City Council is just starting preparation of a new local plan which will run until 2036 and will need to allocate some land for development including housing. At this stage the exact number of houses needed is not known and if any new sites are needed for the new local plan then they will go through public participation with the Parish Council, residents as well as other statutory consultees which would include highways.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to provide some guidance to residents as to how they, as individuals, can influence applications for planning permission.

### Swanmore Parish Council Planning Powers

Parish councils may recommend that planning permission is granted or refused. However, unless the council has delegated decision making powers to the parish council (which Winchester City Council has not done), their views are given no more or less weight than any other comments a council receives.

In short, the Parish Council has no more influence on a planning application than any other single resident.

So if you want to have your say about any planning application in the Swanmore Parish area, it is always worth writing to Winchester City Council, so that your voice can be heard. However, bear in mind that a planning application can only be refused due to 'valid reasons'.

### What are 'valid reasons'?

This is a complex question issue as every application is different. However the following is a broad list of opportunities which can be put forward as the basis for objection. This list is not exhaustive but should be helpful.

**1. Negative effects on amenity** (neighbours and community) - particularly due to:

- *Noise*
- *Disturbance*
- *Overlooking & loss of privacy*
- *Nuisance*
- *Shading / loss of daylight*

*(All of the above should be accompanied by detailed evidence where at all possible - planning officers take a very dim view of speculation and hearsay!)*

**2. Over-development** or overcrowding of the site - particularly where the proposal is out of character in the area.

**3. Negative / adverse visual impact** of the development - particularly on the landscape and or locality

**4.** Detrimental effect of proposed development on the **character of the local area**

**5. Design issues** - including:

- *Bulk / massing*
- *Detailing and materials*
- *Local design guidance / policy ignored*
- *Over-bearing / out-of-scale or out of character in terms of appearance*

**6.** In **Conservation Areas** - adverse effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area or heritage assets within it.

**7.** Effect of the development on the setting of a **Listed Building**

**8. Highway safety** - only if supported with detailed and technical evidence

Notwithstanding the above items, the following items will not be taken into account by planning authorities and should not be entered as reasons for objection under any circumstances!

- The applicant's personal circumstances or other private matters
- The applicants ethnic origin, religious beliefs, their sexual orientation, political or other affiliations.
- Boundary disputes or other unresolved civil disputes (unless their cause / content is specifically related to the planning proposal)
- The reason that the applicant is applying for planning permission (e.g. if the applicant has fallen on hard times and will sell the site to the highest bidder to make money)
- Any profit likely to be made (except perhaps in the case of rural exception sites).
- The attitude or behaviour of the applicant or their representatives
- Matters relating to past infractions, such as previous nuisances caused by the applicant or site occupiers. (Except perhaps in retrospective cases)
- Worries or hearsay about possible future expansion or alternative uses of the application site - unless future plans are included in the application documentation.
- Effect on the value of properties in the area - particularly you own!

Finally, one of the most popular reasons that people tend to object is, *the effect of construction* (i.e. dust, noise, nuisance caused by construction traffic etc.). This is not a planning consideration as such and is unlikely to be taken into account.