



Langton Matravers Parish Council

Communicating with developers prior to planning applications or in other contexts

The Protocol

The Council seeks to avoid improper lobbying by developers and creating the perception that they, the Council, have predetermined their position about a proposed development.

Therefore:

- The developer must provide information about the proposed development affecting the parish in writing.
- Even if the developer considers that information provided to the Council is sensitive, this will not require the Council to treat it as confidential. From the outset, the developer must identify information that they want to be treated as confidential and explain the reasons in writing. If the developer has a legitimate expectation for confidentiality about the proposed development, the council will keep a written record of the confidential and non-confidential issues.
- Information held by the Council about a proposed development may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- Communications (including formal and informal meetings) between the developer and the Council (or with individual Councillors and/or staff) about a pre-planning application will not bind the Council to making a particular decision. Any views expressed are provisional because not all the relevant information will be available to Council and formal consultations will not have taken place.
- Informal meetings and telephone conversations between a developer and individual Councillors or staff will be documented in writing and may be subject to disclosure under the FoI Act. Council staff will arrange and attend meetings with Councillors and send a follow-up letter.

- The developer may not speak at a Council meeting except during the Public Participation period or unless invited to address the meeting. The developer may regard information about the proposed development as either confidential or 'sensitive' and therefore not suitable for discussion at a meeting open to the public. However, it is Councillors at the meeting who will decide if there are grounds to exclude the public.
- It is an offence under Section 1 Bribery Act 2010 for a developer or his agent to promise or give a financial or other advantage to a local council or councillors with the expectation of an improper consideration of a planning application. If the developer is an organisation (e.g. charity or company), the Council may request sight of its Anti-Bribery policy.

Adopted by resolution of the Council, 10th January 2019

Revised and approved by resolution of the Council, 9th May 2019

Reviewed and approved without change by resolution of the Council, 11th May 2023

Reviewed and approved without change by resolution of the Council, 12th June 2025