

CAM PARISH COUNCIL PRE-APPLICATION COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROTOCOL

This Protocol is part of the suite of documents that together form the **Cam Neighbourhood Development Plan**. The aim of the Protocol is to do all possible to ensure that planning applications accord with this plan and with those of any higher level plans, notably that of Stroud District Council, as well as all national policy. One particularly effective way of achieving this is through early, planned engagement with the Cam community via the Parish Council. The Protocol is also a Cam-specific version of that adopted by Stroud District Council.

Use of this Protocol is without prejudice to the eventual judgement of Cam Parish Council on the merits of any final application, even if a good engagement process has been agreed and followed.

Context

The **National Planning Policy Framework** states that:

“Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably.”

The **”10 Commitments for Effective Pre-application Engagement”** published by a group representing planning, industry and community groups states that:

“Early, collaborative discussions between developers, public sector agencies and the communities affected by a new development can help to shape better quality, more accepted schemes and ensure improved outcomes for the community. These discussions also avoid wasted effort and costs.”

It is the view of Cam Parish Council that, for their community, the above should also apply to smaller developments because these can have at least as much impact as larger ones.

Cam Parish Council fully support and endorse all of the above and will play their appropriate role in delivering high quality pre-application engagement with themselves and the wider Cam community as proposals come forward.

Process

Drawing from the 10 Commitments and other guidance on best practice, potential applicants should work with Cam Parish Council to fulfil the following principles:

- **‘Day One’ contact:** By far the best results for all emerge when contact is made with our Parish Council, and through us with our local community, at the very start of any process; consulting people late with already prepared schemes is not productive.
- **Agreed Process:** A key aim of this early contact is to discuss and agree the nature, scope, timetable, information and so forth of the engagement – i.e. the process to be followed.*
- **Applicant Leadership but Shared Responsibility:** Although it is the applicant’s role to lead and fund engagement, the Parish Council will offer as much support as possible to any agreed process; for example by providing local information, contact details for local groups, advice on meeting places, access to newsletters and so forth.
- **Openness and Transparency:** Building trust between all and ensuring an agreed outcome depend heavily on having a process that is as open as possible on all sides, though the Parish Council will respect any issues of clear commercial confidentiality.
- **Agreed Community:** A project may have an impact on a limited number of people or on all of the parish. The details of those to be involved will need to be discussed and agreed for any project, as will the potential ways to contact and engage them.
- **Agreed Scope:** There will also need to be agreement about the scope of the engagement, i.e. what is and is not open to change (e.g. layout, quantum of development, design etc.).
- **Proportionality:** The nature and scale of engagement will be balanced in appropriate proportion to the scale and likely impact of any proposals.

- **Final Reporting:** The applicant should submit, with any final application, a thorough report – a full ‘audit trail’ - describing and summarising the outcomes of the engagement, showing how the proposals have (or have not) responded to results. If they have not, a short note should be included to explain this. If the process has been followed fully, the Parish Council will endorse this report; if not they may submit their own evaluation of it**.

* There is considerable benefit for applicants in also sharing any process with Stroud District Council, as planning authority, and securing their agreement to it.

** As per the opening proviso, endorsement of an engagement process and results does not necessarily mean support for the resulting proposals.

Initial contact should be made at the very outset with the Parish Council via The Parish Council commits to doing all possible to arrange an initial meeting as soon as possible following this contact.