

Wem Town Council

Pre-application planning protocol

Wem Town Council welcomes early engagement with planning applicants on major or complex planning proposals. The Council seeks to ensure that planning applications and decisions on the Development Plan and site allocations fully reflect the development aims for Wem Town.

The Town Council will seek to operate in an open & transparent manner and at all times to further the best interests of the town.

Wem Town Development Aims

Proposed development in Wem should:

- Create an environment to deliver economic growth
- Avoid any detrimental impact on infrastructure
- Improve sustainability
- Protect and preserve the natural, historic and built character of Wem including the town's green infrastructure
- Provide for high quality, well designed development
- Include the opportunity for engagement with the local community
- Reflect the Town's Design Statement

Scope

This protocol sets out the Town Council's expectations and responsibilities regarding pre-application discussions.

Expectations and responsibilities

Wem Town Council undertakes to facilitate positive pre-application discussions between applicants, its Members and residents. It will also, where appropriate, participate in discussions with other planning stakeholders and decision-makers.

The Town Council undertakes to:

- Seek and encourage early engagement regarding evolving planning proposals;
- Respond positively to requests for assistance or advice from applicants;
- Work constructively with applicants to identify means to mitigate any potential negative impact of a proposal on Wem Town;
- Facilitate, where useful, public meeting to allow community engagement and consultation by applicants;
- Conduct all pre-application engagement in public;
- Treat applicants for minor and major applications equally;
- Keep applicants informed of the process and outcomes of engagement;
- Meet the applicant's requirements as closely as possible within available resources;

- Consider pre-application presentations before full Council and/ or the Planning and Transport Committee¹;
- Reserve its final position on any application until the occasion when an application is formally considered by the either Full Council or the Planning and Transport Committee of the Council;
- Explain why the applicant's concerns have not been fully met where this is the case.

The Council also recognises the importance of actively engaging with Shropshire Council on future reviews of the Development Plan and in particular site allocations for development (SAMDEV).

The Council will work with Shropshire Council to ensure any such reviews and subsequent site allocations meet the needs of the town, do not negatively impact on its character and services and meet the requirements set out in the Development Aims.

Where appropriate, the Town Council will seek to consult with local residents and others on future reviews and proposed sites. The Council may also consider it appropriate to receive representations from potential developers and others regarding individual sites.

Applicants seeking pre-application engagement should:

- Contact Clerk to the Council on info@wem.gov.uk at the earliest opportunity so that arrangements for pre-application engagement can be put into place.
- Set out in writing (email preferred) the nature of the proposal with as much information as possible and the nature of engagement or advice that is sought. In addition, any other relevant information such as supporting documentation, target dates, issues with statutory consultees or potential public concerns would also be helpful.
- Prepare a presentation for meetings before Members if this will be helpful to the applicant. Where possible, these should be on a PowerPoint presentation and supplied to the Town Council at least two days in advance of the presentation. Supporting information should also be supplied electronically;
- Not represent the conduct of any pre-application engagement as implied or explicit approval for any proposal;
- Approach the Town Clerk in the first instance and avoid contact with individual Members.

This statement was agreed by the Town Council on

¹ The Planning and Transport Committee is made up of all members of Wem Town Council