

Handling of the planning applications, Stanton Wick

The two planning applications submitted in relation to this site were assessed by our registration team on submission as is our normal practice. Applicants/agents must sign to certify that the information in their application is correct and the Council's planning registration process is designed to check basic information required to register a case with a more detailed assessment made by the case officer once they receive the file.

It is necessary to operate this two stage process as part of the case officers role in checking the application takes place when they visit the site.

Once the more detailed check was made in relation to the first application, taking into account the information submitted by third parties whose input forms an important part of the planning process, the case officer sought the withdrawal of the inaccurate application.

The agent acting on behalf of the applicant was informed of the problems with the first application and again signed to certify that the details in the second application were correct. When the application arrived, there was sufficient information to register it as set out above.

The planning case officer has been away on annual leave but has now been able to undertake the more detailed review of the second application.

Unfortunately, the red line around the application site is incorrect and they have included an incorrect grid reference on the application form.

The agent will be asked to amend these errors (there is no need to include a grid reference at all but if it is there it should be correct). These revisions will have an impact upon the site area and the description of the application.

Planning applications can raise concerns in local communities and it is not uncommon for new issues, errors or changed circumstances to come to light during the course of the assessment of the case.

These can sometimes impact upon the details as submitted and or the recommendation and eventual decision.

The Planning system is designed to be open and transparent and so this is why we seek the views of third parties and it is for individuals to decide whether or not to participate.

Government regulations require officers to act in a positive and proactive way and as such they have to remain in touch with applicants throughout the course of an application and so the case officer will contact the agent to request amendments to address the errors in their submission.

If the agent is unable to correct them officers will seek the withdrawal of the application or it may be refused on the basis of inaccurate information.

The key point is that no recommendation or decision will be made in relation to the latest application until the details have been fully assessed and considered and interested parties will be kept informed of any changes that are made and will be given the opportunity to comment further where changes are made.

DPD

Why if this DPD was so important to you this time last year has so little demonstrable progress been made to provide authorised sites?

Responses from local communities to the 2012 consultation robustly requested that the Council undertake more detailed work on individual sites before the Council consulted the public again.

In response to this feedback the Council is rigorously investigate sites before releasing information on site assessments in order to ensure issues are adequately addressed.

This minimises the uncertainty for local communities where potential sites are being assessed by allowing the Council to rule out inappropriate sites wherever possible but inevitably takes a significant amount of time to complete.

The DPD will be assessed for soundness through independent examination and the Council cannot proceed to a draft plan until it has properly undertaken the work set out in the Cabinet report, particularly around the duty to co-operate and the proper assessment of opportunities outside the Green Belt.

This requires on-going work with other local authorities which affects the timetable for the B&NES work. It would be a waste of resources to present a quickly prepared and unsound plan for examination.

Has inactivity & delay resulted in the loss of Station Road, Newbridge as a potential site?

The Council has not been inactive but has continued to assess sites and undertake the other work set out at the 12/9/12 Cabinet. The Station Road, Newbridge site is no longer available for a Travelling Showpeople use due to the requirements of the Bath Transport Package.

The Council needs to maximise the potential development value of individual sites acquired for this project, and a review of the Station Road site shows that a higher return could be gained through use for housing than for Travelling Showpeople.

If the Plan had published a draft Plan as previously timetabled, then the site would still not be available and therefore the delay to the Plan has not resulted in

Why hasn't Lower Bristol Road been progressed any further than finding consultants? You are surrounded by planning professionals, so why is it taking SO long to get a planning application organised?

A pre-application enquiry for this site was completed by planning consultants in April. That enquiry highlighted where further work needs to be prepared in advance of submitting a planning application, including detailed site surveys.

Consultants are tasked with submitting an application this September but are also preparing for a public consultation in August 2013.

As well as detailed site work, the Council is also progressing the commissioning of a development partner who will run the site's development and long term management.

I move the recommendations.