

If you have a question, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions, below. If you cannot find an answer to your question, please get in touch via the Contact Us page of the website.

FAQs

Why do you ask us to sign in on attendance sheets?

Our Attendance Register forms part of our Audit processes, and allows us to not only see how many people have attended, but also where they are travelling from or live. This helps us to understand the areas interested in or affected by proposals we are consulting on. We also keep a 'click count' of attendees in the room to verify numbers indicated on our attendance registers.

Tracking numbers of people in the consultation room also ensures we are able to remain compliant with any capacity restrictions in place at the venue we are using without putting visitors to the consultations at risk.

Why do we need to provide our name, address and contact details on feedback forms?

It may be necessary for us to contact consultees following during the feedback period, or afterwards if they have requested we keep them updated. We do not sell or pass on your contact details, and only keep and use them if we need to contact you to for updates, or to clarify some feedback.

We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and adhere to the Data Protection Act, and you can view our Data Protection and Privacy Policy from the front page of this website.

Why do you photograph or video public consultations?

We always like to record our public consultations so we can evidence them if necessary. We also, on occasion, have to monitor behaviour of some consultees for the safety of all concerned.

We always publicise that consultation events are being filmed or photographed with visible signage on walls, and where we are aware that visually-impaired consultees are attending we give verbal advice. All consultees are invited to advise us if they do not wish to be filmed or photographed.

What do you do with our personal data (name, address, and contact details)?

Nothing. Your personal details are collected only to ensure that if we have any questions of consultees we can reach you. These questions may be around their feedback (if, for example, we cannot make out some of what is written on a feedback form), or around their interest in a development (if, for example, they have travelled from further afield than expected and we want to explore why). We only keep your contact details for as long as we need them, and only get in touch if we need to (such as for the above examples), or if consultees ask us to contact them (to update them, for example).

We do not sell or pass on your contact details, and only keep and use them if we need to contact you to for updates, or to clarify some feedback. We always redact your personal information from the feedback you provide when we complete our reports which may or may not be made a public document.

We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and adhere to the Data Protection Act, and you can view our Data Protection and Privacy Policy from the front page of this website.

What happens to the comments we provide as feedback?

We understand there are some sensitivities to providing feedback and have put in place a range of measures to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved and provide comment.

All feedback, whether provided on direct emails, via feedback forms or through the Contact Us function on our website are gathered in our office and collated to analyse the comments. All comments, regardless of whether positive, negative or indifferent, are summarised in a report for the commissioning client, who will then consider those comments and assess if and how they can be incorporated in to the proposals.

While this is happening, we will also prepare a second report, a Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out each comment and the client's mitigation, where appropriate. Your comments remain anonymous, and even the client is unaware of which consultee provided specific comments and feedback.

How long do you keep our feedback forms and personal data for?

This will vary according to specific projects. Generally, all documents will be retained until the completion of the delivery of a project. Where consultees have requested they are kept updated about the project, their details will be retained in perpetuity unless we are asked to remove them from our systems.

We will retain electronic copies of raw data or comments provided as feedback, but not necessarily your personal contact details.

If enough people object to something that is proposed will it stop it from going ahead?

No. A consultation is not a vote or a referendum. Experience has demonstrated that proposals will only be paused or

aborted for reasons of financial viability, a change in market conditions or commercial interests. We would encourage people to engage with us and discuss the proposal, as well as their concerns, rather than simply object to it. We cannot understand concerns or the rationale behind an objection if someone simply states 'I object'.

How we do we vote for or against something in a public consultation?

As much as we encourage people to take up their right to vote, in this case you cannot. A public consultation is not a vote, or a referendum.

A consultation, by definition, is the action or process of formally consulting or discussing. We would always encourage people to talk to us about their concerns and ask questions in order to better understand why they are worried, what impact they are concerned about and how the proposals could be changed to achieve the best outcome for all concerned (while being aware that we cannot please everyone all of the time!)

Is this our only chance to comment on the proposals?

No. You can comment for 21 days from the date of the consultation event via this website. You can also provide comment to the Local Planning Authority once the application is lodged and validated, at which time the council will open its statutory consultation.

At times we may shorten or extend the consultation period - the time for feedback to be provided. Please check the relevant dates on the display boards for the consultation you wish to comment on.

I can't attend the meeting – how do I make my views known?

You can comment for 21 days from the date of the consultation event via this website. You can view, print and download the display boards and feedback forms via the Consultations tab of this website. Please contact us if you have any questions or wish to discuss the proposals ahead of providing your views – we always prefer to chat with people rather than simply receive feedback forms.

Where will I find more information about the proposals?

All information about the proposals will be available on the display boards, although there may also be an information leaflet, in which case this will be available to view, print and download along with the display boards. Further information may be released by the project team, although this may be via our social media accounts, through the media or newsletter, where one has been created and you have registered for updates.

Once the proposals are submitted for planning determination, the Local Planning Authority may also issue updates; please check with the relevant council department for any updates.

I didn't receive a leaflet about the proposal -why not?

It is regrettable that leaflets are not delivered where intended, despite the best of intentions. We endeavour to use local suppliers to deliver leaflets in the communities where development is proposed, but we are aware that sometimes some deliveries are not possible, or are accidentally omitted; either of these reasons could be applicable to you. Please bear in mind that we rely on many measures to communicate with the community and other stakeholders, using the most appropriate form of communication to do so. If you wish to discuss this further, please contact us.

Will I be kept informed after the public consultation?

Yes, if you wish. Please contact us using the options on the Contact Us page of this website to discuss the options for being kept updated.

I couldn't get to the consultation but still want to make comment – how do I do that?

Most consultations are open for feedback for 21 days, although this can be subject to change, and all information about this is available on the display boards. Display boards are available to view, print and download via the Consultations tab of this website. A feedback form is also available with the display boards. If you are having trouble accessing any of the files please contact us so we can help you to make your comments.

How do I see the plans after the public consultation event?

All the display boards will remain available to download via the Consultations tab of this website after the public consultation event, and feedback can be provided for a period of 21 days, unless the consultation period is extended. Please check the consultation you are interested in for specific details.

Once submitted for planning determination, the application will be validated by the Local Planning Authority, who will then make the documents public; this means you can view them via the council's arrangements, which may be online, but may be only in their planning department office or other public buildings. Again, this needs to be checked for each consultation you are interested in. If, after the consultation has closed, the proposals are not submitted to planning, you may still be able to access the documents; please contact us to discuss.

If you have any questions which are not covered by the above, please contact us and we will do our best to help.