

# Formal Letter of Objection and Request for Deferral: Significant Environmental, Structural, and Public Safety Concerns

February 23, 2026

**Ref: PH 28.2 – 21 Windermere Avenue (1-154 Swansea Mews) Application No. 25 250881 STE 04 OZ /PH28.2**

**Proposed Redevelopment: 21 Windermere Avenue (Swansea Mews Revitalization)**

Attn: Nancy Martins phc@toronto.ca

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

I am writing as a long-standing resident of Coe Hill Drive in the Village of Swansea, a neighbourhood distinguished by its **environmentally sensitive landscape**, complex terrain, and **challenging, unstable soil conditions**. Having lived in this community for more than **25 years**, I have observed first-hand the fragility of the land and the severe structural stresses that my home and many other houses have endured.

Given these realities, I must formally register my **strong objection** to the proposed Swansea Redevelopment. The intention to erect 35-storey and 20-storey towers on land known to be **contaminated and already exhibiting significant soil settlement issues** that are adversely impacting adjacent low-rise homes and apartment buildings, raises serious concerns. Proceeding under such conditions is fundamentally inappropriate and poses unacceptable risks to adjacent properties, and surrounding ecosystems are substantial, well-documented, and cannot be dismissed or minimized.

I am in support of a safe building replacement model and the right of return of all displaced residents of Swansea Mews, who were uprooted in May 2022, when a ceiling collapsed and subsequently injured a Swansea Mews resident and the emergency evacuation of all families living in the 154 units.

An alternate development concept, available at [www.swanseapark.ca](http://www.swanseapark.ca) and prepared for the Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) Swansea Mews site, can be reviewed by the Members of the Planning and Housing Committee. This proposal or any other that offers an opportunity for the City to achieve an appropriate balance among social, ecological, and functional considerations will provide a potential win-win solution for all of the residents who call this community home.

Below is an itemized listing highlighting reasons why as follows:

## **1. Existing Structural Vulnerability of my home**

Over the last two decades, my home has experienced **progressive structural deterioration**, which includes:

- Increasingly visible **cracks in the foundation** and interior/exterior walls
- Noticeable **sinking and uneven/major settlement** of the main house, backyard and garage areas
- Periodic shifts consistent with soil instability, groundwater flow issues, and aging city's local infrastructure

These problems did not occur suddenly; they reflect the **inherent geotechnical instability** of the surrounding Swansea area. My home, like many others nearby, is already structurally vulnerable. Any additional external stressors, particularly heavy construction or deep excavation, will likely amplify existing damage and create new, irreversible hazards.

## 2. Evidence of Broader Neighbourhood Instability

My concerns are not isolated. Many neighbouring properties have documented similar issues, including:

- Structural cracking and widening fissures
- Ongoing settlement and shifting foundations
- Ground instability following seasonal moisture changes

This demonstrates a **neighbourhood-wide geotechnical sensitivity**, not an individual property anomaly. The collective pattern across Swansea underscores the urgent need for caution and deeper environmental due diligence before any large-scale development proceeds.

## 3. High-Risk Impacts of the Proposed Development

### a. Ground Disturbance, Vibration, and Excavation Hazards

The proposed development involves activities that pose serious threats, including:

- Disruption or disturbance of underground soil layers that are highly **contaminated**
- Continuous heavy machinery vibrations
- Deep excavation, soil removal and dewatering issues

These activities will worsen existing structural settlement, alter groundwater movement, and disrupt fragile soil conditions already known to be problematic in the area.

### b. Underground Soil Contamination Concerns

The Swansea area has a **documented history of soil variability, previous industrial activity nearby, and irregular subsurface composition**, including:

- **Potential legacy contaminants** associated with historical landfill use and past industrial operations in surrounding zones
- **Shallow groundwater tables** that can mobilize contamination when disturbed
- Unknown or undocumented fill materials present beneath portions of the neighbourhood

Without comprehensive testing, excavation could **disturb contaminated layers**, causing:

- Migration of contaminants into **residential soil and our drinking water**
- Potential infiltration into groundwater/aquifer systems
- Health risks for all residents
- Long-term environmental degradation

Given the proximity to homes, schools, and green spaces, the risk of disturbing the underground **soil contaminants** must be treated as a **serious public health and environmental protection issue**.

#### **4. Environmental Risks and Community Impact**

If the project proceeds without extensive safeguards, the consequences could include:

- Accelerated structural damage to all the existing homes and small businesses in our neighbourhood
- Long-term safety risks from compromised foundations
- Environmental harm through soil destabilization, water infiltration, and ecosystem disruption
- Potential exposure to disturbed underground contaminants affecting soil and groundwater

Once such damage occurs, **it cannot easily be reversed**, and in many cases, cannot be reversed at all.

#### **5. Request for Action to be taken**

In light of the above, I respectfully ask for a **deferral** and that City planning staff, and project developers take the following steps **before any approvals are granted**:

- **Commission a rigorous, independent geotechnical assessment** of the entire impact zone, including slope stability, groundwater flow, and soil contamination testing
- **Tower heights of 35 and 20 storeys be re-evaluated**, with analysis of reduced height alternatives as depicted in [www.swanseapark.ca](http://www.swanseapark.ca) and greater setbacks and step-down massing to ensure appropriate transitions to adjacent neighbourhoods that face east and west of the proposed site.

- **Revisit** shadow, geotechnical, infrastructure, transit and traffic studies and publicly disclosed
- **Implement mandatory monitoring** (pre-construction, during construction, and post-construction) for vibration, soil movement, and groundwater behaviour
- **Prioritize community safety** over densification goals where geological conditions pose unacceptable risks

I reiterate that proposed construction in this setting presents profound dangers. The re-development must not proceed without absolute certainty that the safety, stability, and environmental integrity of Swansea will be safeguarded.

Thank you for your consideration of concerns raised. I trust you will act responsibly to protect the environment and plan wisely for residents, given the sensitive landscape and unstable soil conditions in and around the neighbourhood.

Sincerely,

C Dhanpaul

Resident, Coe Hill Drive  
Village of Swansea, Toronto