



# **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**ADOPTED BY COUNCIL ON  
14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2006**

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یہ اشاعت ڈیکورم باروکونسل کی کمیونٹی کی شمولیت کے بیان کے بارے میں ہے۔ اگر آپ یہ معلومات اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، یا کسی اور مسئلے پر کونسل سے رابطہ قائم کرنا چاہتے ہیں، تو برائے مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کریں 01442 867212 -  
اگر آپ یہ معلومات کسی اور شکل میں چاہتے ہیں، جیسے بڑی چھپائی یا آڈیو ٹیپ، تو برائے مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کریں 01442 228660 یا 01442 867877 (صرف منی کام)۔

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આ પ્રકાશન ડેકોરમ બરો કાઉન્સિલના જનતાને સામેલ કરવાના નિવેદન વિષે છે. જો તમને તમારી ભાષામાં આ માહિતી મેળવવી હોય અથવા બીજાકોઈ બાબત માટે કાઉન્સિલનો સંપર્ક સાધવો હોય તો, મહેરબાની કરીને ટેલિફોન નંબર 01442 867212 ઉપર ફોન કરો.

જો તમને આ માહિતી જુદી રીતે મેળવવી હોય તો દા. ત. મોટા અક્ષરો અથવા ઓડીયો ટેપ, તો મહેરબાની કરીને 01442 228660 અથવા 01442 867877 (માત્ર મીની કોમ) ઉપર ફોન કરો.

### ***What is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?***

A key objective of the new planning system encompassed in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is to strengthen the role of the community in planning decisions.

The SCI sets out how the Council intends to work with partner organisations, stakeholders and the community in considering local development (planning) documents and planning applications. It broadly sets out the expected arrangements both for consultation and participation. In establishing these arrangements the Council must strike a balance between cost, the speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public involvement.

The process proposed offers an opportunity for different sectors of the community to contribute to the preparation of local development documents in an active and open way. Particular efforts will be made to seek views from any under-represented groups.

The process will seek to achieve agreement. Whilst this will not always prove to be possible, consultation should help to ensure that a wide range of views are taken into account by the Council in its decision and planning policy process.

If you require further information about this document please contact the Development Plans Team on 01442 228660.

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## *INTRODUCTION*

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduces significant changes to the planning system. One of these is the emphasis given to community involvement in the planning process.
- 1.2 The Council encourages public consultation and involvement and has been reviewing its practices over a number of years, including through a Best Value Review of the Planning Service and production of a Public Engagement Strategy.
- 1.3 Overall, it is considered that the new planning system formalises many of the consultation processes currently used and provides the opportunity to build on these. The Council will strive to be proactive in involving people at an early stage in the production of planning documents and planning applications.

## AIMS OF CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Dacorum Borough Council encourages public involvement in planning matters, both in policy making and in deciding planning applications.
- 2.2 Through the Statement of Community Involvement the Council will seek to:
- give those who want to, the opportunity to constructively contribute and participate in the local planning process
  - front load the consultation process to enable comments to be made in the early stages before policies are drawn up, i.e. at the issues and options stage
  - actively encourage participation from any groups who have in the past been under-represented in the local planning process e.g. young people and people from ethnic minority groups
  - keep organisations and the public informed about the local planning process and provide feedback on how their comments have been considered
  - raise awareness of the local planning process
  - ensure corporate participation
  - learn from the consultation process and to seek ways of improving it
  - draw from the consultation process, views of other Council services and where possible outside organisations.
- 2.3 The purpose of consulting on planning policy issues and planning applications is to:
- provide opportunities for constructive contributions and involvement, so as to
    - enhance the quality of decision-making by the Council;
    - promote shared responsibility (where appropriate); and
    - raise awareness of the issues and understanding of decisions taken.

# PLANNING POLICY

## *The New Planning System*

- 3.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) has introduced a new planning system and the Council is required to prepare a set of documents known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The new system introduces new terms and processes which are outlined below.
- 3.2 The LDF is a folder of planning policy documents, known as Local Development Documents (LDDs). The types of local development document are
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs);
  - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs); and
  - Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3.3 DPDs to be produced by the Council include:
- a Core Strategy (i.e. the key policies for the area)
  - specific Site Allocations
  - Development Control policies
  - an Action Area Plan<sup>1</sup>
- 3.4 A Proposals Map will accompany these documents to illustrate where specific policies apply.
- 3.5 In addition to the Local Development Documents, the LDF will also include
- the Local Development Scheme; and
  - an Annual Monitoring Report.
- 3.6 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is essentially a project plan for producing each of the local development documents. It sets a clear timetable for producing the LDDs and clearly indicates when the local community and stakeholders can be involved in the policy planning process. The Dacorum LDS was adopted on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2005 and can be viewed on the Council website.

<sup>1</sup>The Local Development Scheme issued in April 2005 identified preparation of an Action Area Plan for East Hemel Hempstead Town Gateway.

- 3.7 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) indicates how the Council will consult and involve the community in preparing the local development documents and in determining planning applications.
- 3.8 The Local Development Scheme may need to be reviewed to take into account the results of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and any changes to national or regional policy. The LDS and AMR will be published but are not in themselves subject to public consultation.

#### *Stages in the Production of Development Plan Documents*

- 3.9 The stages for producing the DPDs, which are described below, are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Tables 1-4 show how consultation on the DPDs the Council intends to produce will be carried out.

#### **Stage 1 - Pre-production**

- 3.10 This is an informal stage and will be based around discussions with various stakeholders (e.g. Hertfordshire County Council, landowners and relevant interest groups), statutory consultees and other interested parties where relevant. It includes developing the evidence base (collecting relevant information, statistics and views on a particular issue through research) and scoping the sustainability appraisal. Discussions on the evidence base and alternative options for the Council to consider will be undertaken. Input at this stage will be used to develop the preferred options to take forward in the formal part of the process. This will encourage front loading of the consultation process.

#### **Stage 2 - Production Stage: the Preferred Options Report**

- 3.11 This is a formal stage in the process with the Council consulting on preferred development options, together with reasons for their selection and the alternatives considered. The Council are required to consult over a 6 week period. Representations on the preferred options and can also be made. The Sustainability Appraisal work is an on-going process and results of any testing will be presented at this stage. This is the key opportunity for communities, stakeholders and developers to comment and to make the Council aware of possible development sites.

#### **Stage 3**

- 3.12 Representations on the Preferred Options Report will be considered and the Council will need to explain how these have been dealt with, together with any changes to the policies.



#### **Stage 4 - Submission Stage**

- 3.13 This is the stage when the final documents are submitted by the Council to the Secretary of State. A statutory, 6 week consultation period at this point will enable people to make their representations. It will not be possible to accept any late representations. The planning authority will not be able to change any document at this stage, except for minor changes not affecting the substance of the plan. Each DPD will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal, a consultation statement, a statement of conformity with the SCI and any technical documents. A summary of the representations will be prepared by the Council and made available.

#### **Advertisement of Alternative Sites**

- 3.14 Where developers submit proposals at the submission stage promoting alternative sites, these must be advertised for a further period to enable any representations to be made.

#### **Stage 5**

- 3.15 The Council must consider representations on the submission DPD. The Council will not be able to make any changes to the plan at this stage.

#### **Pre Examination Meeting**

- 3.16 A meeting will be held before the examination takes place to explain arrangements and to answer questions.

#### **Examination in Public**

- 3.17 An independent planning inspector will consider the representations by written evidence or oral representation. The inspector will prepare a report identifying any changes to the DPD that need to be made. The Council will be obliged to make these changes.

#### **Adoption**

- 3.18 The DPD will be adopted as amended by the Inspector unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State.

#### **Production of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

- 3.19 SPDs will be produced to support policies and proposals in the Development Plan Documents and are more detailed in nature. The community involvement process for SPD's is more straightforward than for DPDs. Community involvement will depend on the nature of the document produced. However, where it relates to a specific site,

community involvement will focus on those living and working in the vicinity of the site. The Council expects development briefs to follow this process. Where development briefs are not needed, the notification process for major applications will be followed, supplemented as considered appropriate by the Council.

- 3.19 The statutory requirement set for consultation is between 4 and 6 weeks. The SPD can be adopted after the Council have considered any representations (see Table 5).

**TABLE 1 : CORE STRATEGY**

<b>Stage in Plan Preparation</b>	<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Relevant Regulation</b>	<b>Purpose of consultation \ participation</b>	<b>Techniques of consultation</b>
Pre-production (evidence base)	Stakeholders including internal officers.  No general consultation but all documents made publicly available.  Key Council members		To assist the development of the evidence base.  Consultation is generally targeted through specific research projects.	Depends on type of research undertaken generally includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seminar/workshops</li> <li>• briefing sessions linked to the study being undertaken</li> </ul>
Issues/options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory consultees (Appendix 1)</li> <li>• stakeholders (Appendix 2)</li> <li>• limited community</li> </ul>	s25	To engage with key individuals and organisations who have an interest in future development in the Borough, so that views and specific interests are known early in the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of documents on the Web-site (All)</li> <li>• workshop targeted at specific issues\areas for key organisations (based on areas/or topics as appropriate) (Stakeholders only)</li> <li>• internal Council briefing</li> <li>• focus group targeting hard to reach groups (Limited community)</li> <li>• newsletter (All)</li> </ul>

\* In the column headed 'techniques of consultation' the text in brackets indicates the type of consultee that will be involved.

TABLE 1: continued

Stage in Plan Preparation	Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of consultation \ participation	Techniques of consultation
Preferred Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>statutory consultees (Appendix 1)</li> <li>stakeholders (Appendix 2)</li> <li>wider community</li> </ul>	S26	Formal stage in the plan preparation process with the specific requirements set out in the regulations. Consultation responses will be taken into account in decisions made about the content of the LDD. Public involvement should be targeted at refining the preferred options into the submitted document. It should also help to identify issues that will need to be explored at the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local press (All)</li> <li>letters to the statutory and general consultation bodies</li> <li>exhibitions (All)</li> <li>newsletter/leaflet (All)</li> <li>web-site showing preferred options (All)</li> <li>material available for inspection at the Council offices and other appropriate places (All)</li> </ul>
Submission to Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>statutory consultees (Appendix 1)</li> <li>stakeholder (Appendix 2)</li> <li>wider community/ individual</li> </ul>	S28\s29	Arrangements set by regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local press (All)</li> <li>web-site to display documents (All)</li> <li>documents available for inspection at local Council offices during consultation period</li> <li>letters (All)</li> <li>copies of documents to statutory consultees/non-statutory consultees as appropriate (All)</li> </ul>
Pre examination meeting			To inform people about arrangements for the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>letters inviting attendance</li> </ul>
Public Examination			People will be able to attend the examination to put their views across.	
Adoption of DPD			All those involved in the process or who have an interest in the outcome will be notified by letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>letters notifying of adoption</li> </ul>

**TABLE 2 : SITE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT**

<b>Stage in Plan Preparation</b>	<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Relevant Regulation</b>	<b>Purpose of consultation \ participation</b>	<b>Techniques of Consultation</b>
Pre-production (evidence base)	Stakeholders (including internal Council officers) Key Council members	-	To assist in the development of the evidence base. Consultation may be targeted through specific research projects.	Dependant on the research undertaken. Generally likely to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ seminar/workshops</li> <li>◆ briefing sessions linked to the study being undertaken.</li> </ul>
Issues \ options	statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholders (Appendix 2) Communities in the vicinity of sites proposed	s25	To engage with individuals \ organisations who are interested in specific sites proposed for development so views \ interests are known early in the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus group targeting hard to reach groups (stakeholders and community)</li> <li>• exhibition (could be linked to workshop on the Core Strategy ) (All)</li> <li>• newsletter (All)</li> <li>• web-site (All)</li> </ul>
Preparation of Preferred options	Statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholders (Appendix 2) Wider community Community in the vicinity of proposal sites	s26	Formal stage in plan preparation process with specific requirements set out in the regulations. Consultation responses will be taken into account in decisions made about the content of the LDD. Consultation at this stage should help to refine preferred options and preparation of the submitted document. It will assist in identification of issues to be explored at the examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• web-site showing preferred options (All)</li> <li>• local press (All)</li> <li>• consultation letters to statutory and non-statutory consultees as appropriate and those on the mailing list</li> <li>• exhibition (All)</li> <li>• workshop targeted at specific areas (stakeholders and community)</li> <li>• newsletter/leaflet</li> </ul>

TABLE 2: continued

Stage in Plan Preparation	Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of consultation \ participation	Techniques of consultation
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Material available for inspection at the Council offices and other appropriate places (All)</li> </ul>
Submission to Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory consultees (Appendix 1)</li> <li>• stakeholder \ wider community \ individual (Appendix 2)</li> </ul>	s28/s29	Arrangements set by regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local press (All)</li> <li>• web-site to display documents (All)</li> <li>• documents available for inspection at Council offices for consultation period (All)</li> <li>• letters (All)</li> </ul>
Pre examination meeting			To inform people about arrangements for the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letters inviting attendance</li> </ul>
Public Examination			People will be able to attend the examination to put their views across.	
Adoption of DPD			All those involved in the process or who have an interest in the outcome will be notified by letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letters notifying of adoption</li> </ul>

**TABLE 3 : DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES**

<b>Stage in Plan Preparation</b>	<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Relevant Regulation</b>	<b>Purpose of consultation/ participation</b>	<b>Techniques of consultation</b>
Pre-production (evidence base)	Stakeholders	-	To assist the development of the evidence base. Consultation likely to be targeted through specific research projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependant on the research undertaken</li> </ul>
Issues \ options	statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholders (Appendix 2) Specific community interest group	s25	To engage with individuals \ organisations who have an interest in the future development of the area so their views \ specific site interests are known early in the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• web-site (All)</li> <li>• focus group/workshop (stakeholder, community)</li> </ul>
Preparation of preferred options	Stakeholders Appendix 2 Wider community Statutory consultees (Appendix 1)	s26	Formal stage in the plan preparation process with specific requirements set out in the regulations. Consultation responses will be taken into account in decisions made about the content of the LDD. Consultation at this stage should assist refinement of the preferred options and policies in the submitted document. It should also assist in identifying issues to explore at the examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local press (All)</li> <li>• consultation letter to statutory consultees/non statutory consultees as appropriate and those on the mailing list</li> <li>• web-site (All)</li> <li>• material available for inspection at the council offices and other appropriate places (All)</li> </ul>
Submission to the Secretary of State	Statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholder (Appendix 2) Community/individuals	s28/s29	Arrangements are set by regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local press (All)</li> <li>• web-site to display documents (All)</li> <li>• formal letters (All)</li> <li>• documents available for inspection at Council authority offices for statutory period</li> <li>• letters to those requesting notification of submission stage (All)</li> </ul>

TABLE 3: continued

<b>Stage in Plan Preparation</b>	<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Relevant Regulation</b>	<b>Purpose of consultation/ participation</b>	<b>Techniques of consultation</b>
Pre examination meeting			To inform people about arrangements for the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letters inviting attendance</li> </ul>
Public Examination			People will be able to attend the examination to put their views across	
Adoption of DPD			All those involved in the process or who have an interest in the outcome will be notified by letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letters notifying of adoption</li> </ul>



**TABLE 4 : AREA ACTION PLAN**

Stage in Plan Preparation	Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of consultation/ participation	Techniques of consultation
Pre-production (evidence base)	Stakeholders	-	To assist the development of the evidence base. Consultation likely to be targeted through specific research projects.	Will depend on the research being undertaken.
Issues \ options	statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholders (Appendix 2) Community within and adjacent to the action area	s25	To engage with individuals \ organisations who have an interest in the future of the area's development so that their views \ specific site interests are known early in the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition (linked to focus group/workshop below) [Stakeholders and community]</li> <li>• Leaflet (All)</li> <li>• Focus group/workshop (Stakeholders/ community)</li> <li>• Web-site (All)</li> </ul>
Preparation of preferred options	Statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholders (Appendix 2) Local community Individuals	s26	Formal stage in plan preparation process with specific requirements set out in the regulations. Consultation responses will be taken into account in decisions made about the content of the LDD. Consultation should assist refinement of the preferred options and policies in the submitted document. It should also assist in identifying issues to explore at the examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local press (All)</li> <li>• consultation letter to statutory consultees/non statutory consultees as appropriate and those on mailing list</li> <li>• web-site (All)</li> <li>• exhibition (All)</li> <li>• material available for inspection at the Council offices and other appropriate places (All)</li> </ul>
Stage in Plan Preparation	Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of consultation/ participation	Techniques of consultation

TABLE 4: continued

Stage in Plan Preparation	Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of consultation/ participation	Techniques of consultation
Submission to Secretary if State	Statutory consultees (Appendix 1) Stakeholders (Appendix 2) Local community Individuals	s28/s29	Arrangements prescribed by regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local press (All)</li> <li>• web-site to display documents (All)</li> <li>• formal letters (All)</li> <li>• documents available for inspection (All)</li> <li>• letters to those requesting notification of submission stage</li> </ul>
Pre examination meeting			To inform people about arrangements for the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letters inviting attendance</li> </ul>
Public Examination			People will be able to attend the examination to put their views across.	
Adoption of DPD			All those involved in the process or who have an interest in the outcome will be notified by letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letters notifying of adoption</li> </ul>

**TABLE 5 : SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

<b>Stage in Plan Preparation</b>	<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Relevant Regulation</b>	<b>Purpose of consultation/ participation</b>	<b>Techniques of consultation</b>
Pre-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stakeholder Relevant groups in Appendices 1 and 2</li> </ul>	-	Assist in the preparation of the SPD, usually from a technical point of view in the development of approach taken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific meetings or workshop with stakeholders/groups of stakeholders</li> </ul>
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory consultees (Appendix 1)</li> <li>• stakeholders (Appendix 2)</li> <li>• targeted community</li> </ul>	s17\s18	Consultation on draft SPD prior to formal adoption by the Council. Consultation responses will be taken into account in decisions made about the content of the LDD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local press (All)</li> <li>• consultation letters (All)</li> <li>• web-site to display documents (All)</li> <li>• specific meetings or workshop with stakeholders/groups of stakeholders</li> <li>• letter notifying interested parties of the adoption of the SPD (All)</li> <li>• material available for inspection at the council offices and other appropriate places (All)</li> </ul>

## **Community and Stakeholder Involvement in Local Development Documents**

### **What the Planning Regulations require us to do**

- 3.20 We are required to ensure that consultation documents are available at the Council offices and other appropriate locations, e.g. libraries for a 6 week period (4-6 weeks for supplementary planning documents). The documents will also be made available on the Council web-site, together with information on where people can see the documents. Documents will be sent to statutory consultees. Notices will be placed in a local newspaper with information on the closing date for the consultation period and where representations can be sent to. The minimum community involvement requirements are shown in Appendix 3.

### **Community Involvement in the LDDs**

- 3.21 There are a large number of organisations and individuals who have an interest in the planning issues raised by local development documents. EERA will be consulted at an early stage to ensure conformity with the East of England Plan. Many other parties have been involved with previous consultations on local planning policy. There are also some groups who rarely respond and efforts will be made to ensure the inclusion of groups representing young people, the elderly and ethnic minorities and any other identified 'hard to reach' groups. Specifically focus groups will be used to target the hard to reach groups at the issues and options stage of appropriate local development documents. This will ensure that views of those who do not normally get involved in the planning process have an opportunity to input into the process at the outset. Selections will be made from the Citizens Panel by an independent research company who will run the focus group. Comments made in consultation exercises are valuable and will be published so that others know the issues and ideas raised. East of England Planning Aid Service is a valuable resource for advising Community groups on planning issues.

### **Dacorum Community Plan**

- 3.22 In preparing Development Plan Documents, regard should be had to the Community Plan. The Community Plan 2004/5 to 2015 has been developed through consultation with local residents and supported by a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP is a group of organisations which are from a range of interests, including public, private, voluntary and community organisations working together. Members of the LSP are set out in Appendix 4. The Partnership Board will be consulted on copies of the planning documents. Early discussions will be undertaken on particular issues and sites where they are affected.

### **The Dacorum Compact**

- 3.23 The Council has established a compact i.e. a Code of Practice that provides a framework for partnership working with the voluntary and Community Sector. This will be followed in undertaking consultation on the Local Development Framework.

### **Statutory Consultees**

- 3.24 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that local authorities consult with 'specific' consultation bodies and general consultation bodies as appropriate (see Appendices 1 and 2).

### **Key Contacts and Consultation database**

- 3.25 The Council has a database of contact details for organisations and community groups. It contains details of people who have responded to previous consultations and those who responded to the Public Engagement Strategy. It also includes details of all the groups that will be consulted on the LDDs. Requests for any amendments to contact details or additions or deletions can be sent in writing at any time to the Development Plans Team. The database may be used to identify groups to be involved in workshops or other group work.
- 3.26 The Council will endeavour to keep the database up to date, and needs the co-operation of all parties to do this efficiently.

### **Other Council Departments and Councillors**

- 3.27 Relevant Council departments and key councillors will be consulted throughout the LDF preparation. This will help to ensure a co-ordinated Council approach to planning policy. Copies of all documents relating to the LDF will be made available. Borough Councillors represent their constituents and have a key role to play in gathering information on the lives of the community they represent. A member steering group (known as a Task and Finish Group) may be used to consider detailed issues. It would be politically balanced and whilst having no decision making powers is crucial to achieving political support for proposals being put forward to Cabinet and Full Council.

### **Town and Parish Councils**

- 3.28 Town and Parish Councils have a key role to play in voicing community needs and issues and highlighting these in the production of the local development documents. Meetings and information exchanges with the Town and Parish Councils are an effective use of resources and assist in developing a level of understanding between the Council and local community on planning/development matters. An annual meeting is held with the Town and Parish Councils to consider general matters relating to the future planning of the area.

- 3.29 All Town and Parish Councils will be encouraged to be involved particularly in the preparation of development plan documents. When the Council is organising specific events including exhibitions, the relevant Town or Parish Council will be advised so that the most effective consultation arrangements can be made between us.

## **How we might reach you**

### **Dacorum Digest**

- 3.30 The Council will continue to include information in the Council magazine which is delivered to most households in the Borough. Articles will inform the community of the issues under discussion, how to access information and how they can become involved. This provides a useful method of alerting the community to any forthcoming publications as well as providing updates on the results of consultation.

### **Exhibitions / Workshops**

- 3.31 These are a successful way of presenting and discussing issues with local communities and answering questions, particularly with people who may not normally be involved. Exhibitions and workshops will normally be held in the local area. Events will be timed so as to try and attract as wide a range of people as possible. Varying the times of events may also help to achieve this. Interactive exhibitions are useful in providing feedback to the Council and individuals can remain anonymous if they wish. External facilitators may be used to run workshops.
- 3.32 Workshops may be used to supplement other consultation methods to examine site specific issues when resources allow.
- 3.33 Focus groups may be better where there are broader issues and options to consider and would consist of a mix of people from different interests, including residents as well as professional people. They can also be used to target hard to reach groups. The Council's Citizens Panel may be invited to consider particular issues either as the Panel or as part of a workshop or focus group.

### **Dacorum Borough Council Web-site**

- 3.34 All planning policy consultation feedback documents will be published on the Dacorum Borough Council web-site. These documents will be able to be downloaded and printed as required. On-line responses to consultation documents are possible.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Council's aim is to enable full interaction on-line. At September 2005 further work was necessary to achieve this.

## **Advertising**

- 3.35 Local newspapers will be used to advertise the publication of documents and meetings. There are also several parish newsletters through which it may be possible to disseminate information. All Council–published documents will be made available in libraries in the Borough. Questionnaires may be used to get views from the public on various issues.
- 3.36 From time to time, exhibitions and display boards will be set up around the Borough to generally inform people about work that has been undertaken and how people can be involved in the planning process.

## **Concept Statements**

- 3.37 These are brief statements of how the development of the site should contribute to the local authority’s vision. They are simple clear statements of the kind of places that new development should create. It is the intention of the Council to use these where appropriate, particularly for individual site allocations. They are much less detailed than development briefs (which seek to provide specific detailed guidance for a development) and explain how the policies and objectives of the development plan should apply to a specific site.

### **Consultation on Local Development Documents (LDDs)**

- 3.38 Tables 1 – 5 in this document illustrate how we will approach consultation on each of the LDDs. The list is not exhaustive. It is intended as a guide. The full extent of consultation (e.g. number of workshops if held) and the range of techniques (which could be supplemented) is dependent on the resources available to Council, not only in terms of finance and staff but also in terms of time and the effective preparation of policy.
- 3.39 For each local development document, a consultation statement will be produced. This will explain how the community has been involved in the production of the document, and how this relates to consultation policy in the SCI.

It will:

- give details of those involved in the early production part of the document and the nature of their involvement;
- indicate how the community has been involved, together with a summary of participant responses, and feedback on them from the Council;
- dates of the consultation period(s);
- consultation steps.

- 3.40 Feedback (to participants) will be published. This may be sent directly back to respondents (where it is a small scale consultation), but more usually the Council will advise participants when and where feedback will be published (and copies obtained/inspected). The web-site will be used extensively for this purpose. For all comments received an acknowledgement will be sent. The Council will ensure that documents and other material made available for inspection will be accessible for wheelchair users and others with specific access requirements. Where appropriate, the Council will also make documents and other material consulted on, available in other formats (eg. languages other than English, Braille, large copy print, audio tape/CD and digital media download).

### **Resources and Management**

- 3.41 The Council should meet published Best Value Performance Indicators, both in reaching key stages in the programme set by the Local Development Scheme <sup>3</sup> and in achieving timely decisions on planning applications.
- 3.42 The Council has used Planning Delivery Grant to increase investment in the planning service, in terms of additional staff resources, enhanced IT/website facilities and training, to improve the planning service the authority can provide and to achieve its service targets.
- 3.43 The Council will seek to make best use of resources available, working with other departments on appropriate consultation events and tapping into existing networks linked to other plans and programmes, e.g. the Community Plan. However, the Community Plan is on a 3 year cycle for review and it is therefore unlikely that joint consultation events will be possible until the preparation of the Development Control Policies DPD and the Action Area Plan. Workshops and focus groups will require the employment of external facilitators to undertake the events. Planning officers will then consider comments made, together with the wider consultation comments.
- 3.44 The Council considers the Statement of Community Involvement to represent a realistic use of the resources it has available. However, there is some flexibility to undertake additional consultation if additional resources become available.

<sup>3</sup> The Local Development Scheme (2005) allocates £60,000 to meet consultation needs. This covers expenditure arising from producing documents and displays, room hire, transport and any special events.



## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

### **Community Involvement in Planning Application Decisions.**

- 4.1 Development should be in accordance with the policies and proposals set out in the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The previous sections of this SCI have dealt with how stakeholders can influence the drafting of these policies and proposals. However, there will continue to be the opportunity for individuals, groups and organisations to become involved in the decision making process for planning applications.
- 4.2 The Government has set minimum standards for consultation on planning and other related applications. The Council currently goes further in trying to engage the community in the determination of applications. For example the Council sends out individual neighbour letters telling individuals about planning applications rather than simply relying on a site notice. This is considered to be the most effective way of letting people know about planning proposals that may affect them.
- 4.3 The tables below set out our current practices for consultation.
- 4.4 No system for publicising planning applications can be foolproof, however, extensive. There needs to be a balance between consideration of cost, speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment. The current procedures do balance these conflicting issues.

### **Consultation procedures for planning applications**

- 4.5 These notes apply to applications for full planning permission, applications submitted by the Borough Council, applications for outline planning permission and subsequent applications for the approval of reserved matters.

<b>Planning applications</b>	<b>Statutory requirements for consultation and notification (What we must do)</b>	<b>Additional consultation (What we do extra)</b>
Pre-submission of planning application	<p>Applicant to serve notice on owner of land if they are not the owner.</p> <p>If the owner is not known the applicant must advertise his/her intention to submit an application both on site and in the London Gazette.</p>	<p>Encourage applicants to discuss proposals with interested parties and local communities.</p> <p>Encourage applicants to discuss proposals with development control officers.</p> <p>Encourage applicants to discuss proposals with statutory consultees, e.g. Environment Agency, where appropriate.</p>

Planning applications	Statutory requirements for consultation and notification (What we must do)	Additional consultation (What we do extra)
<p>Post submission of planning application</p>	<p>Details of valid planning application entered on statutory register. Both register and copies of application may be viewed at the Council offices.</p> <p><b>For applications for major development or for planning applications raising issues referred to in the note below</b></p> <p>Applications publicised by means of a notice in a local paper.</p> <p>A site notice to be displayed by the Council at a prominent position near the application site for at least 21 days prior to the determination of the application.</p> <p><b>For all applications:</b></p> <p>Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining sites. Statutory minimum period of at least 14 days for comment.</p> <p>Town/Parish Council notified. Statutory minimum period of at least 14 days for comment.</p>	<p>Copies of valid planning applications available to view on the Council's website.</p> <p>Copies of applications available to view at the relevant Town/Parish Council offices or local community centre.</p> <p>Lists of all applications received published in The Gazette.</p> <p>All initial notification letters give 21 days for comment.</p> <p>Where significant amendments to the application are accepted further neighbour notification letters are sent out giving at least 14 days to comment.</p> <p>Comments received through Council website.</p> <p>All initial notification letters give 21 days for comment.</p>

Planning applications	Statutory requirements for consultation and notification (What we must do)	Additional consultation (What we do extra)
	<p>Statutory consultees notified of application where appropriate.</p> <p>Representation received taken into account in determination of planning application.</p> <p><b>For applications dealt with by Development Control Committee:</b></p> <p>Report to Committee available to be viewed by the public for 5 working days prior to the committee meeting.</p>	<p>Where significant amendments to the applications are accepted further neighbour notification letters are sent out giving at least 14 days to comment.</p> <p>Interest groups e.g. The Chiltern Society notified of application where appropriate.</p> <p>Neighbours are notified of applications for prior approval of siting and appearance for telecommunications development.</p> <p>For applications for planning permission or prior approval for telecommunications development schools within 200 metres of the site are notified by letter.</p> <p>List of applications to be reported to Committee posted in Planning Reception.</p> <p>Committee reports available to view on the Council website</p>

Planning applications	Statutory requirements for consultation and notification (What we must do)	Additional consultation (What we do extra)
<p>Planning application appeals</p> <p>This includes appeals against enforcement notices</p>	<p>Notify individuals/other groups consulted as part of the original application process; those who commented on planning application; and other interested parties that an appeal has been submitted. Details provided of the appeal reference number and of how to comment to PINS on appeal.</p> <p>Further letters sent out giving details of time, date and venue for appeal hearing or inquiry if appropriate.</p>	<p>Public speaking at Committee – see separate leaflet for details.</p> <p>Town/Parish Council notified if officer recommendation is contrary to their views. If final decision is contrary to their views separate letter notifying them of decision is sent.</p>
<p>Consultations on applications received from adjoining districts</p>		<p>Information copied and sent to appropriate Town/Parish Council for comment. Comments to be sent direct to relevant District Council.</p>

**Note: Planning applications raising one or more of the following issues are also advertised by way of a site notice and newspaper advertisement**

- The proposal is a departure from the Local Plan.
- The development proposal is not within a Conservation Area but is likely to affect the setting of a Conservation Area.
- Development is within a Conservation Area and is likely to affect the character of the Conservation Area.
- Proposed works to a listed building.
- Development affects a right of way.
- Applications accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment.

**Consultation on application for listed building/conservation area consent**

Pre application submission	<p>Applicant to serve notice on owner of land if they are not the owner.</p> <p>If the owner is not known the applicant must advertise his/her intention to submit an application both on site and in the London Gazette.</p>	<p>Encourage applicants to discuss proposals with development control/conservation officers.</p> <p>Encourage application to discuss proposals with statutory consultees, for example, English heritage if appropriate.</p>
Post application submission	<p>Applications publicised by means of a notice in a local paper.</p> <p>A site notice to be displayed by the Council at a prominent position near the application site for at least 21 days prior to the determination of the application.</p> <p>Consultation with Conservation Section/Town/Parish Council and Statutory Consultees. At least 14 days for comment.</p>	<p>All initial notification letters give 21 days for comment.</p> <p>Where significant amendments to the application are accepted further notification letters are sent out giving at least 14 days to comment.</p>

**Applications for advertisement consent**

Pre-application submission		<p>Encourage applicants to discuss proposals with development control officers.</p> <p>Encourage application to discuss proposals with statutory consultees, for example, Hertfordshire Highways if appropriate.</p>
Post-application submission	Consultation with statutory consultees.	

- 4.6 No notification/consultation other than with appropriate statutory consultees is carried out for applications for certificate of appropriate alternative development, agricultural determination, applications for the discharge of conditions, applications for works to trees in conservation areas, applications for works to preserved trees or applications for lawful development certificates.
- 4.7 Applications for County Matter applications and Statutory Undertakers the Borough Council is a consultee and not the determining authority.
- 4.8 Applications for approval of works to trees that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order only the Trees and Woodlands Section is consulted. These are normally applications where the technical expertise of members of this section are required to ascertain whether the works are acceptable. Details are sent to the Town or Parish Councils where appropriate.
- 4.9 Applications for works to trees in Conservation Area (TCA) only the Conservation Section and Trees and Woodlands Section are consulted. These are normally applications where the technical expertise of members of this section is required to ascertain whether the works are acceptable. Details are sent to the Town or Parish councils where appropriate.
- 4.10 Applications for Lawful Development Certificates require a technical assessment of whether planning permission is required. Comments on the merits of the proposal cannot be taken into account. Where the issue is whether a development has been in existence for 4/10 years some consultation with residents/Town or Parish Councils may be carried out to verify information submitted by the applicant. This will be determined by the Planning Case Officer.

## **5 SUMMARY TABLE OF CONSULTATION TECHNIQUES FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Below is a summary table showing all of the consultation techniques that the Council will use in relation to different planning applications. Applicants proposing large scale development schemes are encouraged to carry out their own pre-application community involvement.
- 5.2 This table refers to the additional consultation that will be carried out to engage the community. This relates only to major applications.
- 5.3 The statutory definition of major development is set out within various legislation documents:
- The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995

- Circular 15/92 Publicity for Planning Applications
- The Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999

These define major development as:

- Applications for 10 or more dwellings or where the number of dwellings is not given on sites over 0.5 hectares.
- Non-residential development over 1 hectare.

<b>Approach</b>	<b>Tier 1:</b> applications where there are issues of scale and controversy, or are contrary to/out of line with local development framework	<b>Tier 2:</b> Applications broadly in accordance with the local development framework but raising controversial issues	<b>Tier 3:</b> Applications of a scale or on a site for which authorities require wider community involvement. Also applications that fall within sites that are sensitive to development pressures
Public exhibition	√	√	√
Town/parish councils	√	√	√
Media – press release	√	√	√
Website	√	√	√
Architects panel*	√	√	√

\*The Hertfordshire Architects Panel will be consulted where the issue of detail relates to design or site layout, regardless of the location of the proposal.

Note: Development briefs are likely to be produced where a proposal presents issues of scale and controversy and the Council is in support of the development. This is referred to in the section regarding the LDF process above. The table sets out as a guide, the consultation expected on major applications. There may be instances where additional consultation might be appropriate. For example, In some circumstances public meetings may be held gauge the views of the local community. This will depend on the nature of the development proposal.

At pre-application stage the views of key consultees will be sought. The Council will normally be responsible for seeking the views of key consultees. The Council will work with developers to ensure that material explaining major development proposals is publicly exhibited and made available in the local area.

### **How to make representations**

5.4 Representations on any planning or other application can be made in writing to Planning and Regeneration. We will accept comments by letter, e-mail or through the Council's website. Representations should refer only to material planning considerations.

### **How a decision is made**

- 5.5 Once the application has been registered and the consultation letters sent out the application is passed to the Planning Case Officer. When the Case Officer has visited the site and received all comments he/she will write a report recommending that planning permission is either refused or granted.
- 5.6 Not all of our planning applications are reported to the Council's Development Control Committee. If the application is not contentious and falls within the Council's Scheme of Delegation the application will be decided by the Development Control Manager. In other cases the application will be reported to the Development Control Committee who sit on a three-weekly cycle. The Committee will then decide on the application.

### **Development Control Committee**

- 5.7 The Committee is made up of 13 of the Council's elected members.

### **Attending Committee meetings and speaking at Committee**

- 5.8 Meetings of the Development Control Committee meeting are open to the public. You can address Councillors at the meeting. There are some rules to make sure that as many people as practicable can be heard fairly. You need to register in advance of the meeting with the Council's Member Support Section. Speakers are given 3 minutes to address the Committee. Where more than 1 person wishes to speak, on a single item, a total time of 5 minutes is shared between speakers.
- 5.9 A leaflet Public Participation at Development Control Meetings provides further advice. This is available from Member Support.

### **Post decision**

- 5.10 Decision notices can be viewed on the Council's website or are available to view at our offices.
- 5.11 Decision notices are also sent to the relevant Town or Parish Council and community centre.

## **REVIEW OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 6.1 The SCI will be kept under review and revised when necessary, via the Annual Monitoring Report. Government guidance in Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) advises that it is only likely to be necessary to revise it when significant changes have occurred in the type of groups to be engaged in the strategy or different types of engagement are to be used. This will trigger commencement of a review process. It is unlikely that a complete review of the document will be required so the consultation is likely to focus only on the aspects of the SCI that need



to be updated. The process will involve all the parties consulted on this SCI.

- 6.2 The overall consultation process is being reviewed and a sample of the respondents will be contacted for feedback. This will be used to improve the process for the future.

## **Appendix 1: List of Specific Consultation Bodies.**

Government Office for the East of England (Go-East)  
Regional Planning Body (East of England Regional Assembly)  
East of England Development Agency  
Town and parish councils\*  
St Albans City and District Council  
Three Rivers District Council  
South Beds District Council  
Luton Borough Council  
Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Chiltern District Council  
Hertfordshire County Council  
Bedfordshire County Council  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
The Countryside Agency  
The Environment Agency  
Highways Agency  
English Heritage  
English Nature  
Network Rail  
Relevant telecommunications companies:

- British Telecom
- other phone operators

Strategic Health Authority  
Primary Care Trust  
Relevant gas, water and electricity companies:

- Transco
- British Gas
- other providers
- Three Valleys Water
- Thames Water

\* parish councils include those within the Borough and those in adjoining council areas

## **Appendix 2: General Consultation Bodies**

The following groups are considered to be general consultation bodies. The regulations require them to be consulted when the Council considers it appropriate. They are broadly defined as voluntary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the authority's area, and other bodies representing the interests of different racial, ethnic, religious, disabled and business groups. This list may need updating from time to time

- internal consultees at Dacorum Borough Council
- other local authorities
- ethnic minority groups
- disability groups
- local business groups and major employers
- young people's groups e.g. youth groups, schools and colleges
- residents associations
- planning agents/landowners/key land developers
- key infrastructure providers
- housing interest groups including Housing Associations and homeless groups
- older persons groups
- health care groups
- local and national conservation landscape, wildlife preservation and amenity groups
- public transport operators

There are other consultees that the Council will identify taking into account the other consultees set out in PPS12. This will include the Local Strategic Partnership.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Community Involvement Requirements as set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004**

- Informal pre-submission consultation is as required by Regulation 25.
- Formal pre-submission participation is as required by Regulation 26.
- In terms of development plan document preparation, pre-submission consultation (Regulation 25) must take place with each of the specific and general consultation bodies (specified in Regulation 2) that the authority considers appropriate.
- For the Statement of Community Involvement, pre-submission consultation must take place with the bodies specified in Regulation 25(2).
- When an authority submits a development plan document to the Secretary of State (Regulation 28), it must also make a copy available for public inspection and send a copy to the bodies referred to above.
- Consultation on supplementary planning documents is a formal requirement before they can be adopted although there will be no independent examination. They should, however, be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement. Supplementary planning documents should be subject to public participation as required by Regulation 17. Authorities must consult with the specific and general bodies that are appropriate to the document in question.
- Consultation should be undertaken on any sustainability appraisal testing undertaken as part of the Regulation 25 consultation for development plan documents and during the preparation of the draft document for supplementary planning documents.
- Consultation should be undertaken on the sustainability appraisal report in the case of development plan documents concurrently with Regulation 26, and in the case of supplementary planning documents concurrently with Regulation 17.

#### **Appendix 4: Members of the Local Strategic Partnership <sup>4</sup>**

Hightown Praetorian Churches Housing Association  
Churches Together  
Business Forum  
Dacorum Environmental Forum  
Hertfordshire Constabulary  
Dacorum Primary Care Trust  
Town and Parish Councils  
Dacorum Council for Voluntary Services  
Hertfordshire County Council  
Dacorum Borough Council  
Dacorum Chinese Association

<sup>4</sup> At September 2005

## **Appendix 5: Notification Arrangements**

### **Neighbour notification policy**

What is neighbour notification?

When the Council receives an application for planning permission it must notify occupiers of buildings on land adjoining the application site. The notification will tell them:

- That an application for planning permission has been received and
- Where the application and related plans may be inspected.

Who are the neighbours?

For the purposes of neighbour notification, neighbours are:

- a. those who adjoin the boundary of the application site; or
- b. those who would adjoin the boundary but for an access or a road less than 20 metres wide.

If the application relates to a building in multiple occupation e.g. a block of flats, we will notify units above and/or below those each side.

If the addresses of neighbouring properties cannot be easily identified the application will also be advertised by way of a site notice and press advertisement.

## Appendix 6 – IAP2 Public Participation Toolbox

### IAP2 Public Participation Toolbox (relevant extracts)

Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
Printed public information materials – fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, Issue Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KISS! – Keep It Short and Simple</li> <li>• Make if visually interesting but avoid a slick sales look</li> <li>• Include a postage-paid comment form to encourage two-way communications and to expand mailing list</li> <li>• Be sure to explain public role and how public comments have affected project decisions</li> <li>• Q&amp;A format works well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can reach large target audience</li> <li>• Allows for technical and legal reviews</li> <li>• Encourages written responses, if comment form enclosed</li> <li>• Facilitates documentation of public involvement process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only as good as the mailing list / distribution network</li> <li>• Limited capability to communicate complicated concepts</li> <li>• No guarantee materials will be read</li> </ul>
Information Repositories – Libraries, city halls, distribution centres, schools, and other public facilities make good locations for housing project-related information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure personnel at location know where materials are kept</li> <li>• Keep list of repository items</li> <li>• Track usage through a sign-in sheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant information is accessible to the public without incurring the costs or complications of tracking multiple copies to different people</li> <li>• Can set up visible distribution centres for project information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information repositories are often not well used by the public</li> </ul>
Technical Reports – Technical documents reporting research or policy findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports are often more credible if prepared by independent groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides for thorough explanation of project decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be more detailed than desired by many participants</li> <li>• Not written in accessible language</li> </ul>

Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<b>Advertisements – Paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Figure out the best days and best sections of the paper to reach intended audiences</li> <li>• Avoid rarely read notice sections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially reaches broad public</li> <li>• May satisfy legal notification requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive, especially in urban areas</li> <li>• Allows for relatively limited amount of information</li> </ul>
<b>Newspaper Inserts – A “fact sheet” within the local newspaper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design needs to get noticed in pile of inserts</li> <li>• Try on a day that has few other inserts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides community-wide distribution of information</li> <li>• Presented in the context of local paper, insert is more likely to be read and taken seriously</li> <li>• Provides opportunity to include public comment form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive, especially in urban areas</li> </ul>
<b>Feature Stories – Focused stories on general project-related issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipate visuals or schedule interesting vents to help sell the story</li> <li>• Recognise that reporters are always looking for an angle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can heighten the perceived importance of the project</li> <li>• More likely to be read and taken seriously by the public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No control over what information is presented or how</li> </ul>
<b>Press Releases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to hand deliver press releases or kits to get a chance to discuss project</li> <li>• Foster a relationship with editorial boards and reporters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informs the media of project milestones</li> <li>• Press release language is often used directly in articles</li> <li>• Opportunity for technical and legal reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally low media response rate</li> <li>• Frequent poor placement of press release within newspapers</li> </ul>
<b>Web sites – World wide web sites which contain project information, announcements and documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep it simple and easy to navigate</li> <li>• Use a logical site organisation</li> <li>• Always keep site up to date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capable of reaching very large audiences with enormous amounts of information</li> <li>• Can be a very low cost way of distributing larger documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many people still cannot access the web</li> <li>• Information overload and poor design can prevent people from finding what they need</li> </ul>



Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p><b>Briefings – Use regular meetings of social and civic clubs and organisations to provide an opportunity to inform and educate. Normally these groups need speakers. Examples of target audiences: Rotary Club, Lions Clubs, Elks Clubs, Kiwanis, League of Women Voters. Also a good technique for elected officials</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>KISS – Keep It Short and Simple</b></li> <li>• <b>Use “show and tell” techniques</b></li> <li>• <b>Bring visuals</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Control of information / presentation</b></li> <li>• <b>Opportunity to reach a wide variety of individuals who may not have been attracted to another format</b></li> <li>• <b>Opportunity to expand mailing list</b></li> <li>• <b>Similar presentations can be used for different groups</b></li> <li>• <b>Can build community good will</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Project stakeholders may not be in target audiences</b></li> <li>• <b>Topic may be too technical to capture interest of audience</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Central Information Contact – Designated contacts are identified as official liaisons for the public and media</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If possible, list a person not a position</b></li> <li>• <b>Best if contact person is local</b></li> <li>• <b>Anticipate how phones will be answered</b></li> <li>• <b>Make sure all recorded messages are kept up to date</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>People don’t get “the run around” when they call</b></li> <li>• <b>Controls information flow and promotes information consistency</b></li> <li>• <b>Conveys image of “accessibility”</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Designated contact must be committed to and prepared for prompt and accurate responses</b></li> <li>• <b>May filter public message from technical staff and decision makers</b></li> <li>• <b>May not serve to answer many of the toughest questions</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Information Hot Line – Identify a separate line for public access to pre-recorded project information or to reach project team members who can answer questions / obtain input, also use email and web sites</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make sure contact has sufficient knowledge to answer most project related questions</b></li> <li>• <b>If possible, list a person not a position</b></li> <li>• <b>Best if contact person is local</b></li> <li>• <b>Use toll free number if not local</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>People don’t get “the run around” when they call</b></li> <li>• <b>Controls information flow and promotes information consistency</b></li> <li>• <b>Conveys the image of “accessibility”</b></li> <li>• <b>Easy to provide updates on project activities</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Designated contact must be committed to and prepared for prompt and accurate responses</b></li> </ul>

Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p><b>Expert Panels – public meeting designed in “Meet the Press” format. Media panel interviews experts from different perspectives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunity for participation by general public following panel</li> <li>• Have a neutral moderator</li> <li>• Agree on ground rules in advance</li> <li>• Possibly encourage local organisations to sponsor rather than challenge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages education of the media</li> <li>• Presents opportunity for balanced discussion of key issues</li> <li>• Provides opportunity to dispel scientific misinformation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires substantial preparation and organisation</li> <li>• May enhance public concerns by increasing visibility of issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Field Trips – provide tours for key stakeholders, elected officials, advisory members and the media</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how many participants can be accommodated and make plans for overflow</li> <li>• Plan question/answer session</li> <li>• Consider providing refreshments</li> <li>• Demonstrations work better than presentations</li> <li>• Make sure everything is safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to develop rapport with key stakeholders</li> <li>• Creates greater public knowledge of issues and processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of participants is limited by logistics</li> <li>• Potentially attractive to protestors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Fairs – Central event with multiple activities to provide project information and raise awareness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All issues, large and small must be considered</li> <li>• Make sure adequate resources and staff are available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses public attention on one element</li> <li>• Conducive to media coverage</li> <li>• Allows for different levels of information sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public must be motivated to attend</li> <li>• Usually expensive to do it well</li> <li>• Can damage reputation if not done well</li> </ul>

Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p><b>Interviews – one-to-one meetings with stakeholders to gain information on public concerns and perspectives for developing or refining public involvement and consensus building programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where feasible, interviews should be conducted in-person, particularly when considering candidates for citizens committees</li> <li>• Take advantage of opportunity for public to input in how they participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides opportunity to get understanding of public concerns and issues</li> <li>• Provides opportunity to learn how to best communicate with public</li> <li>• Can be used to evaluate potential citizen committee members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling multiple interviews can be time consuming</li> <li>• Interviewers must engender trust or risk negative response to format</li> </ul>
<p><b>Response Sheets – Mail-in-forms included in fact sheets and other project mailings to gain information on public concerns and preferences</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use prepaid postage</li> <li>• Include a section to add name to the mailing list</li> <li>• Document results as part of public involvement record</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides input from those who would be unlikely to attend meetings</li> <li>• Provides a mechanisms for expanding mailing list</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not generate statistically valid results</li> <li>• Only as good as the mailing list</li> <li>• Results can be easily skewed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mailed Surveys &amp; Questionnaires – Inquiries mailed randomly to sample population to gain specific information for statistical validation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you need statistically valid results before making investment</li> <li>• Survey/questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias</li> <li>• Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings</li> <li>• Provides input from cross-section of public not just activists</li> <li>• Statistically tested results are more persuasive with political bodies and the general public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response rate is generally low</li> <li>• For statistically valid results, can be labour intensive and expensive</li> <li>• Level of detail may be limited</li> <li>• May be perceived as a public relations tool</li> </ul>
<p><b>Telephone Surveys / Polls – Random sampling of population by telephone to gain specific information for statistical validation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you need statistically valid results before making investment</li> <li>• Survey/Questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias</li> <li>• Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings</li> <li>• Provides input from cross-section of public, not just those on mailing list</li> <li>• Higher response rate than with mail-in surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More expensive and labour intensive than mailed surveys</li> <li>• Bias is easily charged if questions not carefully constructed</li> </ul>

Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<b>Internet Surveys / Polls – Web-based response polls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be precise in how you set up site, chat rooms or discussion places can generate more input than you can look at</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings</li> <li>• Provides input from cross-section of public, not just those on mailing list</li> <li>• Higher response rate than other communication forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally not statistically valid results</li> <li>• Can be very labour intensive to look at all of the responses</li> <li>• Cannot control geographic reach of poll</li> <li>• Results can be easily skewed</li> </ul>
<b>Computer-Based Participation – Surveys conducted via computer network</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate for attitudinal research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides instant analyses of results</li> <li>• Can be used in multiple areas</li> <li>• Novelty of technique improves rate of response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High expense</li> <li>• Detail of inquiry is limited</li> </ul>
<b>Focus Groups – Message testing forum with randomly selected members of target audience. Can also be used to obtain input on planning decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct at least two sessions for a given target</li> <li>• Use a skilled focus group facilitator to conduct the session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides opportunity to test key messages prior to implementing program</li> <li>• Works best for select target audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively expensive if conducted in focus group testing facility</li> </ul>
<b>Advisory Committees – A group of representative stakeholders assembled to provide public input to the planning process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define roles and responsibilities up front</li> <li>• Be forthcoming with information</li> <li>• Use a consistently credible process</li> <li>• Interview potential committee members in person before selection</li> <li>• Use third party facilitation</li> <li>• Make sure members communicate with their constituencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides for detailed analyses for project issues</li> <li>• Participants gain understanding of other perspectives, leading toward compromise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General public may not embrace committee's recommendations</li> <li>• Members may not achieve consensus</li> <li>• Sponsor must accept need for give-and-take</li> <li>• Time and labour intensive</li> </ul>

Tools & Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p><b>Panels – A group assembled to debate or provide input on specific issues</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Most appropriate to show different views to public</b></li> <li>• <b>Panellists must be credible with public</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Provides opportunity to dispel misinformation</b></li> <li>• <b>Can build credibility if all sides are represented</b></li> <li>• <b>May create wanted media attention</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>May create unwanted media attention</b></li> <li>• <b>Can polarise issues if not conceived and moderated well</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Workshops – An informal public meeting that may include presentations and exhibits but ends with interactive groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Know how you plan to use public input before the workshop</b></li> <li>• <b>Conduct training in advance with small group facilitators. Each should receive a list of instructions, especially where procedures involve weighting/ranking of factors or criteria</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Excellent for discussions on criteria or analysis of alternatives</b></li> <li>• <b>Fosters small group or one-to-one communication</b></li> <li>• <b>Ability to draw on other team members to answer difficult questions</b></li> <li>• <b>Builds credibility</b></li> <li>• <b>Maximises feedback obtained from participants</b></li> <li>• <b>Fosters public ownership in solving the problem</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hostile participants may resist what they perceived to be the “divide and conquer” strategy of breaking into small groups</b></li> <li>• <b>Several small-group facilitators are necessary</b></li> </ul>

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## Appendix 7 Process of Preparing the Statement of Community Involvement



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED**

### **AMR Annual Monitoring Report**

A document to be produced each year showing progress in achieving the timetable set out in the LDS and setting out revisions to the LDS.

### **AONB Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

National designation of countryside which is of high landscape quality. Stringent controls on development apply. Three Rivers District Council is a member of the Chilterns Conservation Board which ensures implementation of the Management Plan for the AONB.

### **DPD Development Plan Document**

Any part of the LDF that forms part of the statutory development plan – these are: Core Strategy, area wide policies, topic policies, area action plans, proposals map and site allocations (includes LDDs but not SCI or SPDs)

### **EiP Examination in Public**

An examination chaired by an independent inspector into objections to the DPD's and into the soundness of DPD's as a whole.

### **EERA**

A partnership of elected representatives and regional stakeholders working to promote the social, environmental and economic well being of the eastern region.

### **Front Loading**

This relates to involving stakeholders and the community at the earliest possible opportunity in the making of the new development plan documents. The reason is to make sure the Council is aware of important local issues at a very early stage and can build consideration of them into the process.

### **GOEAST Government Office for the East of England**

Regional Government office (based in Cambridge) responsible for implementing national policy in the region and ensuring Local Planning Authorities policies and plans accord with national guidance.

### **LDD Local Development Document**

The individual documents that set out planning policies for specific topics or for geographical areas.

### **LDF Local Development Framework**

The collective name given to all those policies and documents forming the planning framework for the District.

### **LDS Local Development Scheme**

A project management document setting out what the LDF will contain, a timetable for its production and proposals for monitoring and review.

**LP Local Plan**

The existing statutory plan for the area setting out policies for controlling development and proposals for particular areas/sites.

**RSS Regional Spatial Strategy**

Overarching strategy produced by Regional Planning Body, with broad land use, transport and other policies to inform LDFs, will form part of the statutory development plan.

**“Soundness of the Plan”**

Development Plan Documents will be tested thoroughly by independent examination to ensure they have followed correct procedures, conform to national and regional policy and the Council’s community strategy, and the policies they contain are coherent, consistent and effective.

**SA Sustainability Appraisal**

An appraisal of the impacts of policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental issues.

**SCI Statement of Community Involvement**

The document that sets out how the Local Planning Authority will involve and consult the public in the production of the LDF and on major development control matters.

**SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment**

An assessment of the potential impacts of policies and proposals on the environment, to include proposals for the mitigation of impacts.

**SPD Supplementary Planning Document**

A document providing an elaboration of policies, design guidance, site development guidance, parking standards etc.