

# Cotswold District

## Statement of Community Involvement

YOUR part in the planning system

**ADOPTED JANUARY 2007**  
**incorporating final revision March 2014**



Cotswold District Council

# Cotswold District Council

## Statement of Community Involvement Adopted January 2007

Forward Planning  
Cotswold District Council  
Trinity Road  
Cirencester  
GL7 1PX

Telephone: 01285 623000  
Email: [localplan@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@cotswold.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.cotswold.gov.uk](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk)

## **CONTENTS**

0.0	PREFACE	
		PAGE
1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	3
3.0	LINKS WITH OTHER STRATEGIES	5
4.0	COTWOLDS COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS	6
5.0	PREPARING THE LOCAL PLAN	9
6.0	PREPARING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS	11
7.0	COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY	
8.0	THE METHODS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	
9.0	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING APPLICATIONS	
10.0	REVISING THE SCI	

## **APPENDICES**

A	LIST OF SPECIFIC AND GENERAL CONSULTEES
B	TESTS OF SOUNDNESS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN
C	STRATEGIC SITE SOUTH OF CHESTERTON
D	GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## **0.0 PREFACE**

- 0.1 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was first adopted in January 2007 with minor revisions being made in 2010 and 2012. It was subject to two periods of public consultation and its 'soundness' has been examined by an Inspector. The Inspector's binding report was produced in November 2006 and the SCI was determined as 'sound'. The tests of soundness that have been applied to this latest version can be found in Appendix B of this document.
- 0.2 Since the adoption of the SCI, there have been significant changes to the planning system including the introduction of the 2012 Town and Country Planning Regulations, the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 0.3 The Localism Act 2011 places strong emphasis on the importance of community involvement within the planning system and enabling communities to make a significant contribution towards shaping the places where they live. It also introduced Neighbourhood Planning, allowing Parish Councils and Town Councils to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans for their local area for which the Council has a duty to support the preparation process.
- 0.4 The Act also introduced a new duty to co-operate, which places a legal requirement for all local Planning Authorities, National Park Authorities, County Councils and a number of other public organisations to co-operate with one another and consider joint approaches as part of the preparation of their local plans.
- 0.5 In March 2012 the NPPF was published which introduced, amongst other things, new national policy guidance relating to the preparation of local plans.
- 0.6 Finally, in April 2012, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 came into force. These Regulations set out the minimum requirements for community involvement in local plan making.
- 0.7 The Council's SCI has therefore been updated to take into account the important legislative and policy changes that have taken place since its previous adoption.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A key objective of the new planning system is to strengthen community involvement. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will set out how those with an interest in the future development of the District will be engaged in the preparation and revision of local development documents. It also outlines how the community will be consulted on planning applications.
- 1.2 It aims to ensure the active, meaningful and continuous involvement of local communities and stakeholders. The statement is not an end in itself but a means of improving the quality of the planning process. The preparation of the SCI will ensure that we consider how to involve the community and benefit from its local knowledge and views. It sets out in broad terms how and when local communities will be involved, together with a general description of the types of involvement we intend to use.
- 1.3 The SCI sets out a policy for community involvement which meets the statutory requirements for consultation while at the same time being tailored to the district's circumstances. This SCI:

- i. Demonstrates that legal requirements are being met;
- ii. Sets out the overall vision and strategy for community involvement, and how this links with other community involvement initiatives, e.g. the Community Strategy;
- iii. Explains the nature of the Local Plans and supporting documents that require consultation;
- iv. Clearly identifies the range of local community groups who need to be involved;
- v. Shows that the Council understands how best these communities can be involved in a timely and accessible way, and has identified suitable techniques to use;
- vi. Is clear about the different stages of involvement - information, participation, consultation, and feedback - and shows that these will be done in ways that work for the different stages and for the particular communities;
- vii. Shows how the results are to be fed into the preparation the Local Plan and supporting Documents;
- viii. Sets out the Council's policy for consultation on planning applications;
- ix. Sets out how the council will learn from our experiences and improve the arrangements where necessary;
- x. Shows the council can manage the process effectively.

## **The Switch from a Core Strategy to a Local Plan**

- 1.4 Like all local authorities, Cotswold District Council must develop a forward-looking Local Plan which will help shape communities and, crucially, serve as a blueprint for the future use of land, taking account of local needs. The Plan will cover the period 2011 to 2031 and its policies will be used to control development and guide most day-to-day planning decisions. Over the last few years, work has been carried out to develop a LDF -style Core Strategy, including the collation of diverse data and the commissioning of several studies and reports. Once approved, this would have formed the basis to develop more detailed documents dealing with planning policies and site allocations.
- 1.5 However, the Council has now taken action to speed up the adoption of its detailed planning policies by producing a single comprehensive Local Plan rather than a portfolio of documents led by a Core Strategy as was previously proposed. This approach has been enabled by the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which heralded a change in the planning system from LDF Core Strategies to comprehensive Local Plans.

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

- 1.6 Although they will not form part of the development plan or be subject to independent examination, they will constitute a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.7 SPDs will provide further detail in respect to the policies and proposals in development plan documents and can be topic or site/area specific.

## 2.0 THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2.1 Essentially, the purpose of consultation is to produce a better outcome. By fully involving people at the beginning of the planning process, there will be a better understanding of the issues and needs that are important to the community. A **Local Plan** can then be prepared which reflects those views as far as possible. The main benefits of community involvement are:

- **Strengthening the evidence base for plans, strategies, and planning decisions** – stakeholders and local communities bring a different perspective to planning, and should be valued for their expertise, opinions and insight.
- **Community commitment to the future development of an area** – local people can be encouraged to make a difference in their area, with long-term benefits.
- **Promoting regeneration and investment** – by publicising proposals and inviting the involvement of stakeholders and local communities, we can demonstrate our commitment to improving areas and facilitating joint working to achieve better quality outcomes; and
- **Fostering ownership and strengthening delivery** – many elements of the Local Plan will require joint working between the Council, local communities and stakeholders. Involving communities at an early stage of document preparation (known as **'front loading'**) will help to resolve issues, thereby avoiding the need for lengthy independent examinations.

### Connecting people to planning

2.2 We will actively encourage the community to play an integral role in addressing local issues. Everyone should be provided with the opportunity to be involved in planning. However, the majority of people cannot or do not always get involved. The reasons for this must be considered and addressed. There are limits to our resources and we have to be realistic in our aspirations for community involvement. We therefore intend to focus on providing people with opportunities to be involved and, as such, will aim to involve them:

- where the issue is relevant to them;
- at an early stage in the process where their view could influence outcomes; and
- by a method appropriate for the purpose, the issue being discussed and the people affected.

2.3 A key priority will be to provide everyone with the opportunity to know what's going on and how they can get involved if they want to. To support this we aim to provide information that is local and relevant, and to use methods of involvement that are accessible, interesting and fun. Alongside specific consultation events, we hope to raise awareness of the planning system throughout the District. With this in mind, we are committed to placing more emphasis on going out into local communities to engage with them.

## Principles for Community Involvement

- **Access to information.** Documents will be available in a variety of formats, to encourage the widest possible readership and they will be easy to read and understand.
- **Opportunities to contribute ideas.** Community groups and the wider public will have the opportunities to put forward their own ideas and feel confident that they will be listened to and that there is a process for responding to their concerns.
- **Opportunities to take an active part in developing proposals and options.** Where appropriate, there will be opportunities for people to actively engage with planners.
- **Opportunities to be consulted and make representations on formal proposals.** This is a statutory requirement and represents the minimum in terms of community involvement.
- **Opportunities for feedback and to be informed about progress and outcomes.** We will keep local communities and stakeholders informed to foster interest in planning issues. Processes will be simple to follow and delivered in a fair, transparent and efficient manner. This will require us to identify the limits to community involvement as well as the forms it will take.

### 'Front Loading'

- 2.4 The involvement of communities, stakeholders and commercial interests will be 'front loaded' in the **Local Plan** production process. 'Front-loading' means more active involvement of these groups earlier in the plan preparation process than has occurred in the past. The aim is to seek consensus on issues early in the process. This will offer the public and organisations an opportunity to influence plan content by sharing their knowledge and views with planners. Where consensus is difficult to achieve, front-loading maximizes the opportunities for participants to understand each other's position and to negotiate. This will ensure that any issues are clearly understood by the time documents are subject to independent examination.



## **3.0 LINKS WITH OTHER STRATEGIES**

- 3.1 There are many strategies prepared by the Council and other stakeholders that will have linkages with the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal (refer to Section 7) usefully includes the requirement to identify other relevant plans, programmes and strategies. For example, these could include strategies for education, housing, health, social inclusion, waste, minerals, biodiversity, recycling and environment protection. Other examples include the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan and the Cotswold AONB Management Plan, which forms a key local environmental/landscape strategy.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

- 3.2 The Localism Act 2011 introduced reforms to the planning system that enable local communities through a parish/town council, or by establishment of a Neighbourhood Forum, to create a Neighbourhood Plan for their area with support from the Council. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 provide further details of the process of Neighbourhood Planning, including requirements for consultation and publication of neighbourhood areas, forums and plans. Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided.
- 3.3 Since Neighbourhood Plans aren't prepared by the Council, this SCI can't prescribe what methods of consultation they should follow. Neighbourhood Plans do however have to meet the requirements set out in the legislation. The Council will provide technical guidance and support to local communities who wish to introduce a Neighbourhood Plan and it is suggested that this SCI provides a good starting point in terms of the methods of consultation that should be used.

## **4.0 COTSWOLD COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS**

### **The Duty to Co-operate**

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 outlines the duty to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development whilst the National Planning Policy Framework states that public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those which relate to the strategic priorities. The Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities.
- 4.2 Cotswold District is within the county of Gloucestershire, adjacent to Stroud District, Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough authorities. The District also borders Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, as well as small sections of border with Berkshire and South Gloucestershire. We therefore have a close geographical relationship with numerous authorities.
- 4.3 The Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) also reaches from Warwickshire in the north, beyond the eastern and western boundaries of the District, and as far south as Bath. It is the largest AONB in England and Wales, a designation aimed at conserving the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside. This demonstrates that there is a degree of consistency in the character of landscape across the administrative boundaries.
- 4.4 This close relationship with neighbouring areas means that development can have impacts beyond the administrative boundary on one area. Therefore, it is important to cooperate with neighbouring planning authorities on strategic matters and a joint approach to resolving matters during the preparation of development plan documents will be pursued where necessary.
- 4.5 Infrastructure needs such as transport, water supply, wastewater, energy, telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education and flood risk will also often cross boundaries and as such we will work with other authorities and providers to understand and help meet these needs.
- 4.6 We will also work with local advisors and others to ensure we take into account higher risk sites for malicious threats and natural hazards when necessary.

### **Community Groups**

- 4.7 By 'community' we mean the individuals, groups and organisations that live, work or operate in the District. This includes residents, businesses, community groups and service providers. The different groups that make up our community have different needs and expectations. They also have different desires, capabilities and capacities to get involved with the preparation of the Local Plan. Effective community involvement will therefore require a good understanding of the composition, needs and interests of the groups and their capacity to engage with the planning system. Involvement methods can then be tailored to the requirements of specific groups.

4.8 The following broad sectors of the community will be engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan:

### **Local Communities**

Local residents are relatively easy to identify by area; however, particular sections of local communities can find it harder to get involved. The interests of local communities can also be represented by Town / Parish Councils or voluntary groups such as Residents' Associations. These are easy to identify, have the capability to be involved, and offer continuity of representation at grass roots level. Some parish councils are preparing parish plans, which could contribute to the development of evidence base for the Local Plan. Likewise some of the district's Market Towns have undertaken health checks and are developing Neighbourhood Plans. Specific interests or perspectives can be represented by amenity or interest groups. We maintain a database of community groups in the District.

### **Statutory Stakeholders**

There are certain groups that we must involve when consulting on the Local Plan. These include, amongst others, English Heritage, Environment Agency, Natural England, Gloucestershire County Council and Parish Councils.

### **Other Agencies**

In addition to statutory stakeholders, other organisations can provide valuable views. These are easy to identify and generally have the capacity to be involved. These are broadly based, usually organised at the national level but often with local branches e.g. 'Cirencester Friends of the Earth'. Some, however, may need support in understanding the LDF process and how it relates to their operations so they are able to contribute effectively.

### **Developers and Landowners**

Most developers are aware of the planning system and, by way of working, seek to be involved. Many can be identified via previous involvement and have the capability to be involved. Similarly, many Landowners will be keen to understand and consider the implications of any policies / decisions for their land holdings. As the potential 'deliverers' of development these groups will have an important part to play in identifying options for the Local Plan.

### **Service Providers**

Service Providers include local health trusts, schools and colleges, transport providers, emergency services, utility providers, community development organisations, voluntary groups and others.

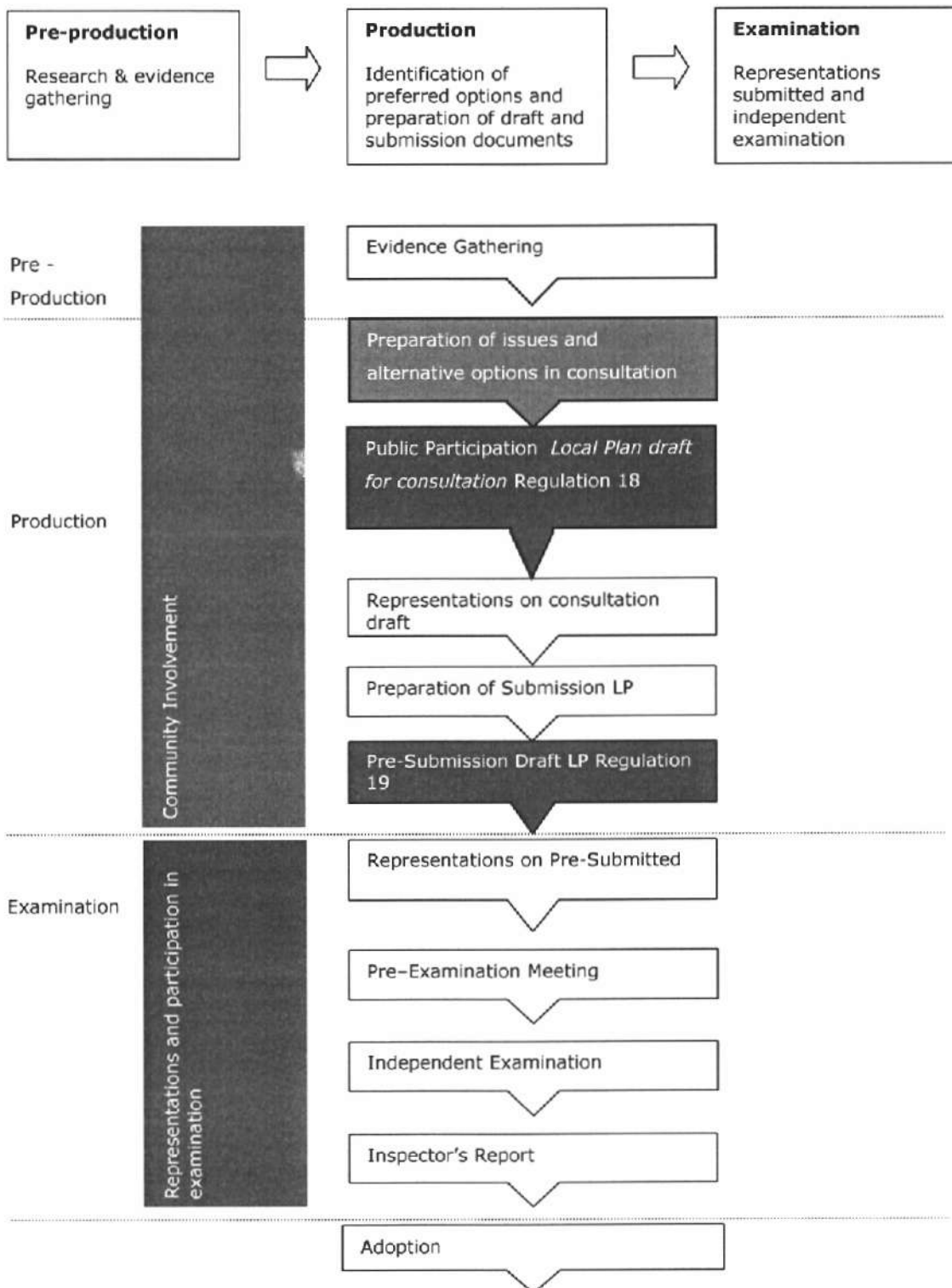
### **Business Sector**

Local businesses range in size from the self-employed and small businesses to multi-national organisations. As such, so does their capacity to be involved. Whilst larger organisations may have the capacity to get involved more actively, smaller organisations may need support in understanding the system, how it relates to them and how they can get involved. The interests of the business sector can also be represented by relevant organisations, such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, Chambers of Commerce, the Small Business Federation or Gloucestershire First.

- 4.9 Appendix A of this document contains a list of consultation bodies that will be involved where appropriate during the preparation of the local plan and associated local development documents. Local community interest groups are identified by type. A free-standing register of consultees is maintained and up-dated regularly by the Forward Planning section of the Council.
- 4.10 Section 9 of this document outlines the methods of community involvement that will be used to involve the sectors identified in this section during the preparation of the Local Plan and associated development plan documents.

## 5.0 PREPARING THE LOCAL PLAN

5.1 The diagrams below illustrate the opportunities for community involvement during the preparation of the Local Plan (LP)

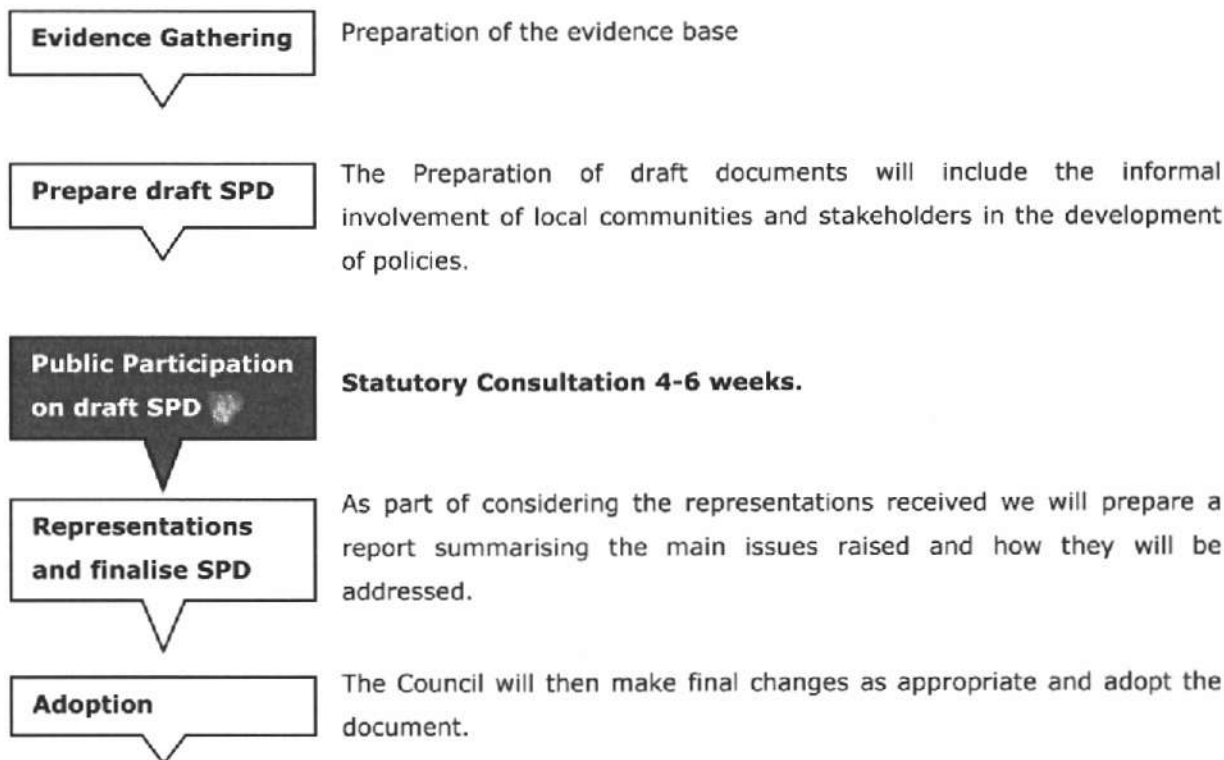


## **Protocol for periods of statutory consultation (6 weeks)**

- Copies of the draft/submission Local Plan and any supporting documents will be made available for inspection during normal office hours at the Council's main offices in Cirencester, the Moreton Area Centre and at local libraries, in accordance with Regulations.
  - The draft/submission Local Plan and supporting documents will be published on the Council's website.
  - Notice will be given by local advertisement of the fact that the draft/submission Local Plan and its supporting documents are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.
  - The draft/submission Local Plan will be sent to each of the specific and general consultation bodies (to extent that they are affected or that it is considered appropriate). Letters will be sent to consultation bodies who have requested notification of document publication stating the places and times it can be inspected.
  - Residents and businesses within and adjoining identified locations subject to site specific policies/proposals will be notified directly.
  - Standardised representation forms will be produced so that comments are framed around the tests of soundness. Representations will be able to be submitted via the Council's website.
  - The Council will acknowledge the receipt of all representations. These will be available for public inspection together with the Councils' response to them.
- 
- For the submission Local Plan the Council will prepare a statement setting out:
    - (i) which bodies have been consulted during its preparation
    - (ii) how these bodies, and any other persons, were consulted; and
    - (iv) how those main issues have been addressed in the Local Plan.
  - A statement will also be prepared for the submission Local Plan setting out in full or summary the main issues raised in representations on the draft Local Plan, and how those main issues have been addressed.
  - Any major modifications to the Local Plan after submission will be subject to a further 6 week consultation period.

## 6.0 PREPARING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 **SPDs**, whilst not having development plan status, can be used to expand policy or provide further detail to issues in the Local Plan. There will be formal community involvement in the preparation and adoption of the draft document. The preparation process allows for documents to be prepared quickly. Although not subject to independent examination, the underlying principles of soundness will still apply.



## 7.0 COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

### Keeping you informed of progress

- 7.1 Developing the **Local Plan and associated SPDs** will be an ongoing process. As well as consulting the community, we will undertake research and draft documents. To ensure that people are aware of progress, we intend to provide an ongoing commentary of our progress on our website.
- 7.2 The emerging Local Plan also includes a proposed strategic site allocation for mixed-use development on land south of Chesterton, Cirencester. This will probably be the largest development in the District over the next 20 years and as such it is important that the community and stakeholders are fully involved in its conception and design. Appendix C sets out how this will be achieved.

### Feeding back

- 7.3 The **Local Plan** will require a statement of compliance. This will outline how the **SCI** has been followed and how the main issues raised have been addressed, including any benefits this brought to the process. All general feedback, summary outcomes as well as the Local Plan and Development Plan Documents will be available from our website, at our offices in Cirencester and Moreton-in-Marsh and at public libraries throughout the District. In addition we aim to feedback directly to those involved, either in specific involvement activities (such as workshops), or other consultation processes associated with the Local Plan and Development Plan Documents.

### Feedback Protocol

We aim to provide feedback following informal community involvement activities or statutory consultation processes associated with **the Local Plan**.

**Feedback will include:**

- An acknowledgement of your comments ;
- A summary, or full response report and;
- An outline the actions made and the reasons why in relation to a representation



## 8.0 THE METHODS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

8.1 The following table sets out the different types of consultation that can be used in respect of the Local Plan and SPDs.

	Method of involvement	Usefulness / Considerations	Community Sectors
Information	<b>Media</b> (Local Press, Radio, TV, Parish and Voluntary Group Newsletters, Cotswold News)	Local media can be used to carry articles and stories about proposals. This can reach a wide audience; raise the profile of the LDF, and inform of opportunities to get involved. Press releases can be a pro-active way of engaging people. Use should be made of the Council's own publication, 'Cotswold News' and its wide distribution.	Local Communities, Developers & Landowners, Business Sector
	<b>Internet</b> (Website, e-mails, and enabling online consultation and responses)	Increasingly the first port of call for those seeking detailed information. A useful means of providing feedback to consultation exercises. Not everyone has access to the web, although it is more accessible to some hard to reach groups e.g. younger people/youth groups. The opportunity to make use of online response forms should be explored.	All Sectors
	<b>Local Publicity</b> (at District and Town Council offices/ notice boards, shopping centres, sports centres, libraries etc)	Summary leaflets and flyers or site notices can publicise an outline of a proposed document or application, and inform the community of further opportunities to get involved. This can reach those people who wouldn't normally seek to get involved.	Local Communities
	<b>Notification of consultation periods in newspapers</b>	Statutory requirement. Likely to make use of the Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard, Cotswold Journal, Gloucestershire Echo.	Local Communities, Developers & Landowners, Business Sector
Consultation	<b>Documents available for public inspection</b> at District Council offices, libraries and on website	Statutory requirement. It should be clear how and when people should respond. Offices and documents should be accessible to those with disabilities. The statutory consultation period must be publicised widely before it takes place.	Local Communities, Developers & Landowners, Business Sector
	<b>Notification of consultation periods in newspapers</b>	Statutory requirement. Likely to make use of the Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard, Cotswold Journal and Gloucestershire Echo.	Local Communities, Developers & Landowners, Business Sector
	<b>Letters or emails sent to Statutory Bodies</b>	Statutory Requirement to inform such bodies of document publication and formal consultation periods.	Statutory Consultees, and those requesting notification by post.

	<b>Method of involvement</b>	<b>Usefulness / Considerations</b>	<b>Community Sectors</b>
	<b>Town and Village meetings and forums</b>	Gaining first-hand view on a specific area. Open and inclusive way for people to engage in robust debate on the issues. Meetings must be carefully prepared and effectively chaired.	Local Communities, Developers & Landowners, Business Sector
	<b>Public Exhibitions and Road shows</b>	Good medium for disseminating information, allowing communities to air their views. Should be held in accessible locations and may need to be held over a number of days and varying times to ensure all sections of the community have the opportunity to attend.	
	<b>One-to-one meetings with selected stakeholders</b>	Useful means of identifying key issues, getting key people involved (on demand) and achieving alignment with other strategies and initiatives.	Developers and Landowners, Local Communities
	<b>Qualitative Research</b> (including focus groups, stakeholder groups and citizen panels)	Good introduction to the main issues. Responses can help to identify key interests and groups. Useful for area-based discussions and presentation of options. Can help to gain more understanding of public concerns. Provides opportunity to explore issues in depth.	Local Communities, Developer and Landowners, Business Sector
<b>Participation</b>	<b>Interactive Workshops</b> e.g. 'enquiry by design' and 'planning for real' exercises	Means of engaging local communities on significant planning applications and developing 'ownership of proposals'. Useful for identifying and focusing discussion around difficult issues and key themes. Feedback would be essential.	Local Communities, Developers and Landowners.  Statutory consultees and service providers will be invited as appropriate.
	<b>Steering/ Advisory/Working Groups</b>	Mechanism for getting key organisation involved in overseeing or acting as a sounding board for the production of LDDs. Role of the group needs to be clear and there should be a transparent approach to selecting members.	All Sectors

## **9.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

9.1 Planning decisions are made in line with the development plan unless material considerations such as national planning policies dictate otherwise. This section covers our method for consultation and publicity on planning applications, as well as the opportunities for community participation regarding proposals determined by Cotswold District Council. It considers how community involvement should relate to different stages of the application process i.e. pre-application, application and post-application.

### **COUNCIL PRACTICE FOR PUBLICITY AND CONSULTATION**

#### **The Pre-Application Stage**

##### **Community Involvement by the Developer**

9.2 Section 61W of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 added by the Localism Act 2011 places a legal duty on developers to consult local communities on very large scale development proposals prior to submitting a planning application. For large scale proposals where there is no legal requirement to consult, the Council agrees with the suggestion in the National Planning Policy Framework that it should strongly encourage developers to involve the local community from an early stage. This may take a variety of forms such as local exhibitions, public meetings, circulation of leaflets or the creation of a well-publicised dedicated website, including a facility to make comments.

9.3 Community involvement should ideally be sought in two stages:

- Firstly, views should be sought from groups on what may be appropriate for a site so that these comments can, wherever possible, be taken on board before the proposals are drawn up; and
- Secondly, further views should be sought on the evolving proposals before a planning application is submitted, so that changes can be made in response before submission, and also so that people are already aware of the background and the proposals when we carry out consultations on the application.

9.4 Where an applicant has arranged some community involvement prior to making a planning application, we expect a supporting report to be submitted setting out the type of community involvement, undertaken, the views expressed and the changes made by the applicant in response; if no changes have been made, the report should explain why not.

9.5 Anyone proposing development of any scale is likely to find that early information of and consultation and discussion with neighbours, or others, likely to be affected by the development will ease the planning process.

## **Pre-Application Discussions with the Council**

- 9.6 We encourage developers to seek our views on development proposals before they submit an application. While any views we express will not bind the Council in its subsequent decision on any planning application, these pre-application discussions help to identify key issues, and help to ensure that the application closely accords with our planning policies. We usually charge a fee for pre-application advice. More detailed information on pre-application discussions is available on our website.

## **The Planning Application Stage**

### **Legal consultation requirements**

- 9.7 We ensure that we carry out all consultation that we are required to do and allow the necessary time period for comments to be made. Consultation may include:
- Advertising proposals in local newspapers;
  - Placing a site notice as near as possible to the application site;
  - Advising in writing occupiers of properties immediately adjacent to the application site and directly affected by the proposal;
  - Consultation as required with statutory consultees – such as Environment Agency.
- 9.8 Where appropriate, we also consult others including the following:
- i. We provide details of applications on our website. We provide public access to scanned application documents and drawings once applications are complete and ready to be processed. People can register to be notified by email about applications in their area or any part of the district they are interested in. Comments on proposals can be submitted online.
  - ii. We consult other groups and bodies as appropriate to the particular nature of the proposals or its location. The relevant groups or bodies are too numerous to list in full here, but include, for example:
    - Gloucestershire County Councils Highways
    - Thames Water
    - Wessex Water
- 9.9 Any amendments to application details may be the subject of further consultation. The extent of any consultation will be determined by assessment in terms of impact, the comments received and the relevance of the revisions.

## **Accessing and commenting on applications**

- 9.10 Each week a list is published of all planning applications received and determined. Copies of all current applications are kept for public inspection at the District Council Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester. Town and Parish councils are notified by email alert of applications for their area. A local viewing may be possible by prior agreement with the clerk.
- 9.11 All applications are scanned and entered onto the Council's web site using a continuously updated Planning On-Line system. Members of the public are able to view on-line application forms, full plans, drawings and applicant correspondence and can comment on them directly via the website. The Council are currently developing the on-line system to display all application documents and related correspondence during the period when the application is being processed.
- 9.12 Any planning-related comments made in response to a planning application will be placed on file. This is available for public inspection and the applicant will also be able to read the comments made. All representations, whether in support or against the application, will be taken into consideration during the decision making process.

## **How planning applications are determined**

- 9.13 A decision whether or not to grant planning permission can either be taken by the Planning Committee or by Development Management Officers. Over 90% of applications are determined by Officers using the adopted Scheme of Delegation. The Scheme of Delegation is available from the Council offices or can be viewed on the Council's website.
- 9.14 Lists are published of the applications due to be considered at the forthcoming meeting of the Planning Committee including the officer's report to that meeting. These are available on the web site for at least five working days before the meeting. Those who have submitted or commented on a proposal will be advised in writing of the Committee date.

## **Public Speaking at Planning Committee**

- 9.15 People who have objected to or supported an application (or their representatives) are allowed to speak at meetings of the Planning Committee subject to certain rules. This facility is also available to a representative of the Town or Parish Council, and the applicant or agent. A leaflet explaining more about public speaking is available either from the Council offices or can be viewed via our website.

## **Feedback on Decisions**

- 9.16 All decisions are available for inspection on the Council's website. The email alert system allows anyone to subscribe and will provide information at various stages of the determination process.
- 9.17 To promote transparency in the decision making process the applicant and the community need to know why a planning application has been permitted or refused. The decision notice and the associated Committee or delegated reports therefore give the reasoning behind decisions. Where the Planning Committee makes a decision against officer recommendation, the reason for this alternate view is reported in the minutes of the meeting. All information is publicly available, including on our website.

## **10.0 REVISING THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 10.1 It is our intention to revise the SCI on an on-going basis to address any particular problems or successes which we experience. Revisions may also be necessary to reflect best practice, changes to legislation, policy or guidance.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY CONSULTEES FOR THE LOCAL PLAN AND PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Please note, the following lists are not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.

#### **Bodies that Cotswold District Council has a Legal Duty to Co-operate with where Relevant**

Environment Agency

Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)

Natural England

Civil Aviation Authority

Homes and Communities Agency

Each clinical commissioning group established under section 14D of the National Health Service Act 2006

National Health Service Commissioning Board

Office of Rail Regulation

Integrated Transport Authority

Each highway authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Highways Act 1980 (including the Secretary of State, where the Secretary of State is the highways authority)

Marine Management Organisation.

#### **Other Consultation Bodies**

Coal Authority

A Relevant Authority any part of whose areas is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area.

Primary Care Trusts

Network Rail

Gloucestershire County Council

Surrounding Local Authorities

Cotswold District Town and Parish Councils

Adjoining Town and Parish Councils

Cotswold AONB Conservation Board

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Local Nature Partnerships

Highways Agency

English Heritage

The Strategic Rail Authority

Utility Providers (eg. water, electricity, sewerage, gas)

Telecommunications Providers



## **Government Departments**

We will consult any Government Departments or agencies where those departments or agencies have significant land holdings in the area affected by a planning application or DPD.

Home Office

Department for Education and Skills;

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs;

Department for Transport;

Department of Health (through relevant Regional Public Health Group)

Department of Trade and Industry

Ministry of Defence

Department of Work and Pensions

Department of Constitutional Affairs

Department of Culture Media and Sport

Office of government Commerce (Property Advisors to the Civil Estate)

## **Other Consultees**

We will consider the need to consult, where appropriate other agencies and organisations, including the following:

Age Concern;

Airport Operators;

British Chemical Distributors and Traders Associations;

British Geological Survey;

British Waterways, canal owners and navigation authorities;

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology;

Chamber of Commerce, Local CBI, Institute of Directors;

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE);

Commission for New Towns and English Partnerships;

Commission for Racial Equality;

Crown Estate Office;

Diocesan Board of Finance

Disability Rights Commission

Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee;

Environmental Groups at national, regional and local level, including:

    Council for the Protection of Rural England

    Friends of the Earth

    Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; and

    Wildlife Trusts

Equal Opportunities Commission

Fire and rescue Services  
Forestry Commission  
Freight Transport Association  
Gypsy Council  
Health and Safety Executive  
Help the Aged  
Housing Corporation  
Learning and Skills Councils  
Local Agenda 21 including:  
    Civic Societies  
    Community Groups  
Local Transport Authorities  
Local Transport Operators  
Local Race Equality Councils and other local equality groups  
National Playing Fields Association  
Passenger Transport Authorities  
Passenger Transport Executives  
Police Architectural Liaison Officers / Crime Prevention Design Advisors  
Post Office Property Holdings  
Rail Companies and the Rail Freight Group  
Regional Housing Board  
Regional Sports Board  
Religious Bodies  
Road Haulage Association  
Sport England  
The House Builders Federation  
Traveller Law Reform Coalition  
Water Companies  
Women's National commission

### **Local Consultees (General Categories)**

A freestanding register of Local Plan consultees, including Registered Social Landlords and Gloucestershire Race Equality Council, is maintained and updated regularly by the Forward Planning section.

### **Local Community Groups**

Amenity Groups  
Countryside/Conservation/ Environmental Groups  
Civic Societies  
Ethnic Minority Groups  
Disability Groups

Residents' Associations  
Religious Groups  
Youth Groups  
Health Care Groups

**Developers, Landowners, Architects and Consultants**

**Business Sector including Local Enterprise Partnerships.**

**Service Providers e.g.**

Local health trusts  
Schools and Colleges  
Transport Providers  
Emergency Services  
Community Development Organisations  
Voluntary Groups

Any individual or organisation may request to be added to the Local Plan Consultee database by contacting [localplan@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@cotswold.gov.uk) Alternatively, you can contact:

Forward Planning  
Cotswold District Council  
Trinity Road  
Cirencester  
GL7 1PX

Tel. 01285 623000  
Fax. 01285 623900

## **APPENDIX B – TESTS OF ‘SOUNDNESS’ FOR LOCAL PLANS**

The following tests are taken from the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;

**Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;

**Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and

**Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

## Appendix C - STRATEGIC SITE SOUTH OF CHESTERTON

The emerging Local Plan includes a proposed strategic site allocation for mixed-use development on land south of Chesterton, Cirencester. The Council anticipates that the landowner will submit a single outline planning application for this proposed development.

Section 11 of this document addresses community involvement in planning applications. Paragraph 11.16 (and the associated table) describes a range of pre-submission community involvement methods appropriate to different tiers of significant planning applications. The anticipated outline planning application for Chesterton is of particular significance, not least because of the strategic nature of the allocation. The Council therefore considers it appropriate to propose bespoke methods of pre-submission community involvement in the Chesterton case. The Council's allocation policy requires the production of a Master Plan Framework for the Chesterton site, prior to submission of any outline planning application. The Council therefore considers that the Master Plan Framework should be the focus for pre-submission community involvement, as described in the table below. This work will be led by the landowner's consultant team.

	<b>Stages of production for the Master Plan Framework</b> The Council anticipates that production of the Master Plan Framework will involve the indicative stages described below.	<b>Proposed methods of community involvement</b>
1	<b>Understanding the place</b> Initial information gathering and urban design analysis of Cirencester. Assessment of the site's immediate and wider context in terms of physical, social and economic characteristics and relevant planning policies.	Meetings with stakeholders. Consideration of local strategies; e.g. Community Plan and Green Spaces Strategy etc. Walkabouts.
2	<b>Initial design work</b> Evaluation of the information collected, identifying opportunities and constraints and formulating initial design concepts.	Stakeholder briefing workshop to explore issues and initial design concepts. Discussions with stakeholders. Exchanges of information.
3	<b>Evaluation of the design options</b> Testing the design options against the emerging Local Plan policy position and earlier urban design analysis.	Community planning weekend to explore design options. Media. Website - enabling online consultation and responses.
4	<b>Refining the design proposals</b> Refining the design proposals in light of the outcomes from the earlier stages.	Design team report back on the community planning weekend. Analysis of consultation responses. Ongoing discussions with community and stakeholders at forum events/exhibitions.
5	<b>Submission of the Master Plan Framework</b> Master Plan Framework submitted to the Council. Council will make a decision on whether the document has been produced with an appropriate level of community involvement as summarized in this table.	The final version of the Master Plan Framework will include, or be accompanied by, a Statement of Community Engagement. This will describe the methods of community involvement used, and explain how the responses influenced the design proposals.

The purposes of this pre-submission community involvement are as described in section 11.0 of this document. It will of course be followed by further public consultation on any subsequent outline planning application. The Council will also continue to consult the community on its emerging Local Plan, including the proposed strategic site allocation south of Chesterton.

## **APPENDIX D - GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**Area Action Plan (AAP)** a *Development Plan Document* focused on a specific location or an area subject to significant change or requiring conservation.

**Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)**: part of the *Local Development Framework* to assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in the *Local Development Documents* are being implemented.

**Development Plan**: document setting out policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings (usually the Local Plan)

**Development Plan Document (DPD)** a *Local Development Document* that has 'development plan' status.

**Development Management Policies –A** suite of policies which set out the criteria against which planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings are determined. Such policies will ensure that development accords with the vision and objectives set out in the *Local Plan*.

**Local Development Document (LDD)**: the collective term for *Development Plan* and *Supplementary Planning Documents*

**Registered Social Landlord (RSL)** housing landlords that are registered with the Housing Corporation. The term currently applies to housing associations and not for profit companies. RSLs are obliged to have publicly available policies and procedures for allocating tenancies.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** a *local development document* that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides detail of policies and proposals Local Plan

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental, and economic factors).

This document can be made available in other formats, such as large print and languages other than English, upon request. For a version in an alternative format please contact:

Forward Planning Manager  
Cotswold District Council  
Trinity Road  
Cirencester  
GL7 1PX

Telephone : 01285 62 3000  
Email : [localplan@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@cotswold.gov.uk)  
Website : [www.cotswold.gov.uk](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk)

