

# Statement of Community Involvement Adopted version



A code of practice for planning consultation  
January 2007

Local Development Framework for Norwich



NORWICH  
City Council





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## Why has the Statement of Community Involvement been prepared?

- 1 The City Council wants to improve the way we involve the community in plan making and in its decisions on planning applications. We want to encourage more people to be involved and to make that as easy as possible.
- 2 Under the new planning policy system (the Local Development Framework) the Council has to prepare a number of new planning documents, which will show how the City will develop and grow over the next 20 years. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to become involved in the new system. Your local knowledge will help to make sure that development in the City benefits everyone while the special qualities of the City are also protected. The way we will ensure that you are part of this process is set out in this Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3 This Statement of Community Involvement supports the Council's vision and values, and reflects existing consultation methods with the wider community of the City and our experiences of best practice. By taking these arrangements a step further we aim to exceed the minimum statutory requirements for a Statement of Community Involvement set out by the Government. This document sets out the Council's ideas for involving the local community; residents, workers, employers, young people and visitors as well as statutory groups and organisations in the preparation of new planning documents which will guide future development and growth. It also describes why and when we will consult you and explains the new arrangements for involving the community when considering major planning applications. It is important that we involve the wider community at an early stage, when you can make a difference and influence future growth and development in the City.
- 4 We will check the effectiveness of our consultation methods that are set out in this document on a continual basis. We will do this through a variety of methods, including sample feedback on consultations and evaluation of public consultation events. The effectiveness of these methods will be reported in the Annual Monitoring Report. If this shows that new approaches to consultation are necessary or others are not working, the Annual Monitoring Report will initiate a review of the Statement of Community Involvement.





## Norwich City Council's community vision and values

- 5 The Council has adopted a vision which will help to guide community involvement in the Local Development Framework. Our Vision is:
- To earn a position of community leadership by being an open, responsive, efficient and effective organisation and to improve the quality of our contact with residents by embedding 'customer care' as essential for every service.*
- 6 The Council's more detailed 'Corporate Values' also support the approach for this Statement of Community Involvement. These are:

- **Transparency and openness** – about what we do and how we work
- **Care** – in listening to citizens and communities, in responding and in our stewardship of resources
- **Respect** – of all people as equals and of the diversity of cultures
- **Partnership** – in working relationships within the Council, and with other individuals, communities and organisations
- **Pride** – in being a vital part of the City, and in our achievements

- 7 When consulting the community as part of the planning process the Council should always adhere to its Vision and Values, which strongly support an open approach to community involvement.
- 8 The Planning Service aims to provide a high quality service. It is essential that we provide a clear and prompt answer to planning policy enquiries, enquiries about planning applications, decisions on planning applications or complaints about an alleged breach of planning control. The general Planning Service standards are in Appendix 1.

### Links with the Norwich Strategic Partnership

- 9 The Norwich Strategic Partnership includes representatives from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors as well as faith communities and councillors. This Partnership has prepared and consulted upon issues for the Norwich Community Strategy, which is expected to be published in late 2006.



- 10 The Community Strategy has been drafted following extensive consultation in 2003–2004, when Norwich residents were asked to outline their priorities for improving the quality of life locally. The overall strategy will promote the social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of Norwich and its role in the region. The Council will work with other partners in developing the Community Strategy. The Local Development Framework will be a key tool for delivering the parts of the Community Strategy which affect development and change in the City.

- 11 The Council will work with the Norwich Strategic Partnership as an independent body to gather their views on the consultation approaches in this document. We will also consult Strategic Partnerships from adjoining districts (Broadland, South Norfolk and the Broads Authority) to make sure a strategic approach to consultation is developed.



## Norfolk COMPACT: Code of Practice on Consultation

- 12 The City Council has signed the Norfolk COMPACT which aims to improve the way in which the voluntary and community sectors in Norfolk are consulted on policy developments, including planning. We will continue to provide a positive framework for productive working relationships with voluntary and community organisations. We will also ensure that the guidelines set out in the COMPACT are met unless government legislation provides different regulations for consultation on planning documents and proposals.

## RTPI East of England Planning Aid Service

- 13 The RTPI East of England Planning Aid Service offers assistance and advice on the planning system to individuals and groups who are unable to pay for independent professional planning advice. Planning Aid encourages people to get involved in the planning system to help shape their own environment. The Council supports the work of Planning Aid and will work with the Service to provide independent advice for some of the consultation procedures proposed in this document.
- 14 The contact details for RTPI East of England Planning Aid Service are:

PO Box 289  
Redgrave  
Diss  
IP22 1WZ

Tel: 0870 850 9801  
Email: [eeep@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:eeep@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)  
[www.planningaid.org.uk](http://www.planningaid.org.uk)



## Who we will consult

- 15 This section considers who will be involved in the consultation process. The Council will consult anyone who is a stakeholder. This is anybody who has a stake in or has an interest in a planning issue because they live in, work in or visit Norwich.
- 16 The City Council must consult certain statutory organisations. These include other local authorities, government departments, Natural England, the Highways Authority and the Environment Agency. We will also consult community groups such as the Community Forums, Residents Associations, groups that represent the interests of different religious, racial and ethnic communities in the City, young people, bodies that represent the interests of local people and anyone else who tells us that they want to be involved. A list of Local Development Framework consultees is in Appendix 2. This will be updated at regular intervals.
- 17 Every group or individual who wants to be included in our database of consultees should contact the Planning Policy and Projects team. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.
- 18 We are keen to widen the number and type of groups who are involved in the planning process. Some groups or members of the community may not have been involved in the planning process before. These would particularly include young people, black and minority ethnic groups, people with a physical disability and people with learning difficulties. We intend to develop strategies for involving such groups and to monitor the application of those strategies to ensure they are appropriate to the relevant documents being prepared and the areas where proposals for development or change are being brought forward. It is important that this SCI document identifies ways in which these groups can become involved in the future by promoting a wide range of consultation techniques that will make the planning process easy to understand and accessible for everyone. We will work with the Council's Community Liaison team to identify 'hard-to-reach' groups and develop strategies for engaging individual groups.
- 19 One group we would like to see become more involved in the planning process is young people. We will work with Norfolk County Council's INSET service to identify planning documents that could be used as a teaching resource as part of the National Curriculum. These documents will also be available on the EsiNet website ([www.norfolkesinet.org.uk](http://www.norfolkesinet.org.uk)) for teachers, governors and parents.

## Statement of Community Involvement

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- 20 In addition to this we will make community involvement as easy as possible for all involved. We will do this through:
- Making all publications available in a variety of formats, including different languages, spoken word, Braille, large print.
  - Using plain English for all publications.
  - Ensuring that venues are accessible for all (if and when necessary and possible) and are:
    - Wheelchair accessible
    - Availability of induction loops
    - Near public transport
  - Hold events at various dates and times to enable as many people as possible to attend.
  - Publicise events well in advance and emphasise why it is important that people attend.

## What role will Councillors have?

- 21 Councillors have two roles: as decision makers and community representatives. When we involve you in the Local Development Framework or on planning applications, Councillors will receive a summary of responses through written reports at Executive Committee or at Planning Applications Committee. They will take account of these views in their decisions. Councillors will also be able to find out details of new planning documents and give views on consultations at the Local Development Framework Members Working Party.
- 22 You can make your views known to your Ward Councillor or to a representative of Executive Committee or Planning Applications Committee by letter, by email or by discussing it with them. However, we would prefer that views are also put in writing to Planning Officers, as this will ensure that whilst Councillors will hear all views, you will have the right to be heard at Committees or at any subsequent Inquiry or Examination.







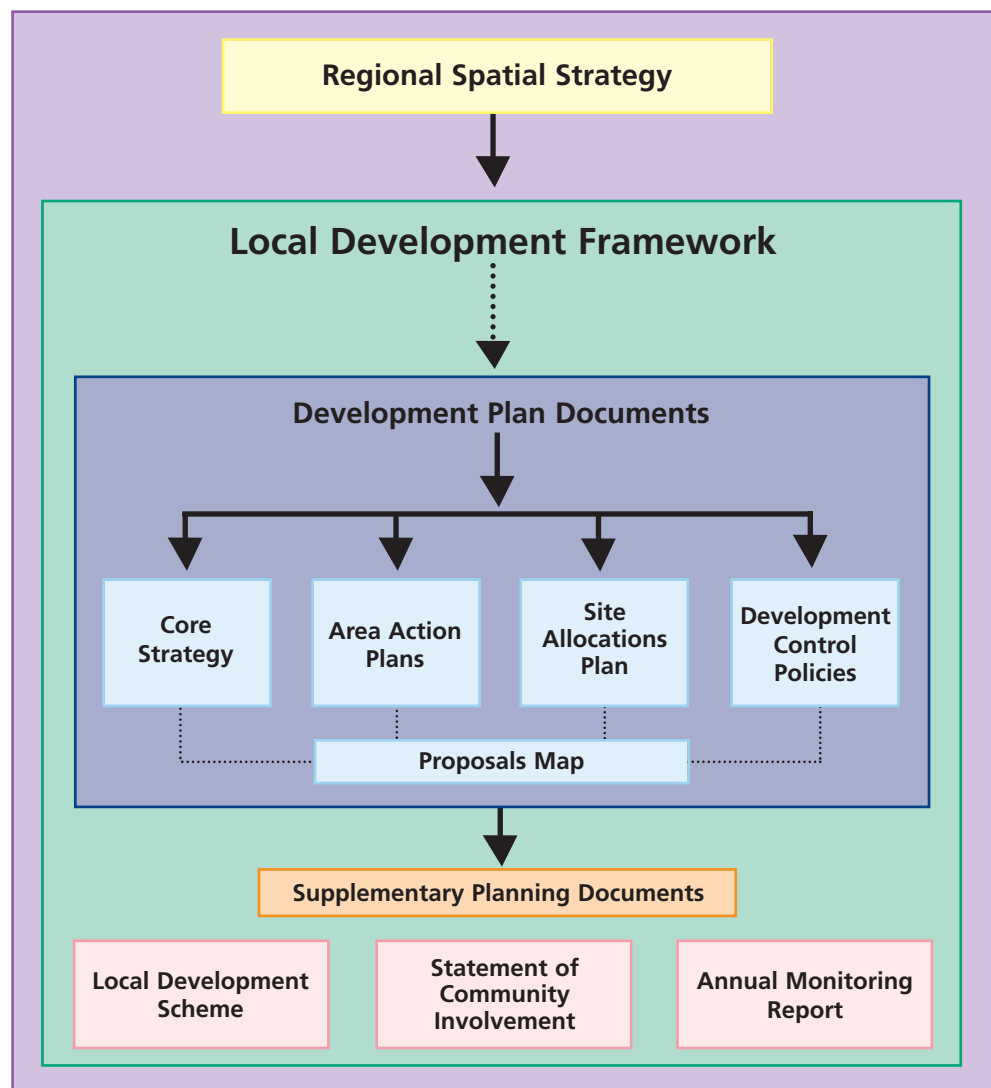
## The Local Development Framework

23 This section gives information on the Local Development Framework and outlines when we will involve the local community and statutory consultees during its preparation.

### What is the Local Development Framework?

24 The Local Development Framework is the new statutory development plan for Norwich which will guide the future development and use of land, services and infrastructure in Norwich up to 2021. It will be produced over the next five years and will eventually replace the local plan for Norwich (adopted in 2004).

**Figure 1 Local Development Framework**





## Development Plan Documents

- 25 The Council will prepare several Development Plan Documents which are identified in the Local Development Scheme.
- 26 The Local Development Scheme includes a timetable of when we aim to produce the different Development Plan Documents, and their various stages. It will include all of the documents identified in Figure 1. All documents will also be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. The Local Development Scheme is available both in hard copy and online. To order a copy of the Local Development Scheme, please contact us using the details in the back of this document. The online version can be found on the Norwich City Council website.

**Table 1 Local Development Framework Documents**

<b>Development Plan Document</b>	<b>Description</b>
Area Action Plan (and any changes to proposals map)	Detailed policies and site proposals for key areas of change in the City.
Core Strategy	The Council's vision, approach and core policies to guide development and land use in the City to 2021.
Site Allocation and Proposals Map	Policies and a map which will decide where new homes, shops, offices and employment land will be and which land will be protected against future development.
Development Control Policies (and any changes to proposals map)	Policies against which all future planning applications will be considered.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document</b>	
Supplementary Planning Document	Detail and information on specific policies.
Planning Brief	Development and design guidelines for complex sites.



## When we will consult

- 27 There are four stages that the Council must go through to consult on Development Plan Documents. Supplementary Planning Documents have fewer stages. The consultation stages for each Local Development Framework document are shown in Table 2 below. The best opportunity for public participation and consultation will take place at an early stage in the planning process, during information gathering and the preparation of any draft documents (the issues and options stage). By involving the community at an early stage the Council aims to build up the understanding of planning documents over time and improve the quality of planning decisions made in the City.
- 28 For Development Plan Documents a Sustainability Appraisal is required to be prepared alongside the document. Consultation at pre-submission stages should include material derived from the scoping report for Sustainability Appraisal and/or the assessment of options as relevant. The Submission stage of consultation on the document will include consultation on the full Sustainability Appraisal report. For Supplementary Planning Documents a sustainability appraisal statement is required to be made available, at the stage of consultation on the draft SPD.

**Table 2 Consultation Phases for the Local Development Framework**

Stage in the Consultation Process							
LDF Document	Information Gathering	Pre-Submission Consultation		Submission Consultation		Examination	Adoption
		Issues and Options	Preferred Option	Submitted Document Consultation	Reg 32/33 Alternative Sites Consultation		
<b>Development Plan Documents</b>							
Core Strategy	*	*	*	*	(*)	*	*
Site Allocation & Proposals Map	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Development Control Policies	*	*	*	*		*	*
Area Action Plan	*	*	*	*	(*)	*	*
<b>Supplementary Planning Documents</b>	*		*				*

Note (\*) = Only when this document includes site allocation proposals



29 Details of each stage in the consultation process are outlined below and overleaf.

## Stage 1 – Information Gathering Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

### What will we do

- Have more regular, organised contact with a wider range of groups and organisations including Community Forums, Residents Associations, young people, other local amenity groups and landowners
- Gather information on local issues and use local knowledge to provide the basis of documents

### Why will we do this

- To ensure documents are based on sound information
- Have a good understanding of any issues and local knowledge that may affect the document being prepared
- Promote communication between different groups at an early stage
- Give those involved the opportunity to find common ground and clarify and reduce areas of disagreement
- Promote local communities and landowners understanding of the process by being involved from an early stage
- Help to involve those groups that have not been involved in planning before

## Stage 2 – Pre-Submission Consultation Development Plan Documents

### What will we do

- For most Development Plan Documents this stage includes two sub-stages of consultation and involvement. The first is known as 'Issues and Options' and the second is the 'Preferred Option' sub-stage. We will clarify the aim and content of each stage of the process and seek comments in the initial consultation at as early a stage as possible;
- Produce a short clear document (Issues and Options) to set out the issues that the Development Plan Document will look at and the options available to deal with those key issues;
- Produce a 'Preferred Option' document that includes sufficient material to be seen as a draft plan and to explain why we have reached the choices of options which we have selected;
- Consult and involve all statutory consultees;
- Consult and involve any interested groups, individuals and organisations so that they can comment on each document at the relevant stages and see that their ideas and views are taken into account in decisions;
- Consider the comments received and use them in preparing the next stage of the plan.



## Supplementary Planning Documents

### What will we do

- Consult all statutory consultees and other interested groups on a draft Supplementary Planning Document

## Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

### Why will we do this

- Keep everybody who wants to or needs to know about land use change involved
- Find out about the community's aspirations, priorities and preferences whilst focussing on planning issues
- Give the Council the opportunity to provide feedback on a range of concerns



## Stage 3 – Submission Consultation Development Plan Documents

### What will we do

- Publish the draft Development Plan Document as submitted for a formal consultation period of 6 weeks;
- Consult all statutory consultees and all other interested bodies identified for consultation at earlier stages of preparation or who responded to the earlier documents;
- Prepare a short document to accompany each submitted document explaining how comments made at previous consultation stages have been taken into account or alternatively why comments were not deemed appropriate;
- Where the document includes proposed site allocations and alternative sites are suggested during the submission consultation, we will publish details of these sites and any appraisals that have been submitted and place notices adjacent to the relevant sites to invite public comments during a further period of four weeks.

### Why will we do this

- to verify the choices made to produce the final document
- to meet government regulations concerning this stage
- to enable people affected by alternative site proposals to have a chance to comment on them.

## Stage 4 – Examination Development Plan Documents

### What we will do

- Submit the final document to the Planning Inspectorate (see above for consultation at this stage);
- Prepare a set of reports to accompany the submitted version to explain how the comments that have been made at earlier stages have been taken into account or were not appropriate; to explain how the document has been evaluated for sustainability and environmental impact.



- Prepare supporting material to justify the policies and proposals.

#### What will happen

- An independent Inspector will consider the 'soundness' of the Development Plan Document to see if it makes sense and is consistent with relevant guidance;
- Any issues that have not been agreed will be discussed through written statements or at a public examination.
- Two or three months (depending on the type of document) before the Examination, the Planning Inspector will hold a pre-examination meeting. During this meeting, the Planning Inspector will discuss the management of the Examination. This includes setting up a timetable and identifying issues. The pre-examination meeting is open to the public.
- After the Examination, the Council will have to make the changes set out in the Inspector's Report.

#### Why will this happen

- To verify the Council's final document and allow those who disagree to have the chance to put forward their views for independent assessment by the Inspector.



## Stage 5 – Adoption Development Plan Documents

#### What will happen

- After the Council has changed the Development Plan Document according to the decisions made by the Inspector, the document will be adopted.
- The document will then become statutory planning policy as part of the Local Development Framework.
- We will contact every respondent to earlier formal consultation rounds to inform them that the Development Plan Document has been adopted.

## Supplementary Planning Document

#### What will happen

- After the Council's Executive Committee has approved the final draft document, it will be adopted.
- We will contact respondents to the formal consultation to inform them that the Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted and to notify them of changes in response to consultation.

## Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

#### Why will this happen

- To inform every respondent to consultations on that document that the policies or guidance in it are now in use.



## How we will consult

30 This section explains how we will consult the community on the Local Development Framework. The Council has a good understanding of consultation from the Replacement Local Plan process and other Council consultations. We will use this Council wide knowledge to improve our consultation methods and approach.

### What we do now

31 The Council has a well established procedure for consulting on planning policy documents such as the Replacement Local Plan. The Local Plan was publicised and consulted on in a variety of ways:

- Evening News supplement
- Newspaper and site notices
- Paper documents
- Planning for Real Events
- Presentations to Community Groups
- Publicity
- Council's website
- Exhibitions
- Public meetings
- Letters to groups and individuals

32 The Council also carried out early discussions with members of the community, developers, land owners, statutory bodies, Councillors and other groups and individuals on development proposals for specific sites/ areas of the City. Through this continuous communication with groups and individuals we identified areas of agreement and problems and attempted to resolve these as early as possible before reaching the formal stage of a public inquiry. We will continue to use these techniques during consultation on the Local Development Framework and groups who are on our consultation database will be included in the new consultation procedures. Where possible our techniques will be enhanced based on three principles of Informing, Participating and Consulting.

33 We will also seek to involve particular groups, which we have identified as being 'hard to reach', in evaluating the consultation methods used and the strategies seeking to involve those groups (see para 18 above). We envisage a variety of methods will be relevant to those strategies including involvement of schools and use of other appropriate locations in the consultations, the use of particular media for presentations to blind people, people with impaired hearing, people with mental health disabilities etc. Our approach is to develop understanding of such techniques over time and to learn from what works – and what is not effective.



## Informing

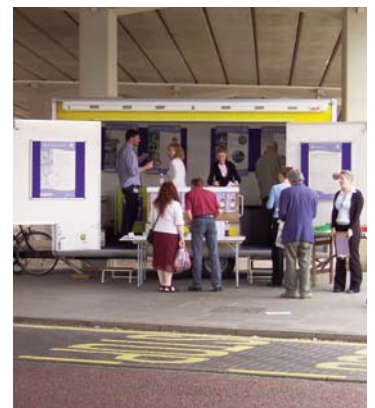
### What we will do

- Keep statutory organisations, community groups and the wider community informed during all stages of the Local Development Framework
- For each document and each stage of consultation make it clear
  - What document is being prepared
  - Where other documents can be viewed
  - Which stage in the planning process it is at
  - The main issues on which views are being sought
  - What you need to do and by when
  - When the key dates for consultation events are
  - How responses will be used and what they can/cannot influence
  - How and when the results will be available
  - What the future stages are
  - The media in which the document can be made available
  - A contact point for groups or individuals needing special presentation of the material.
- Publish information about each document at each stage in the process (see Table 3)
- Build on relationships with other organisations and groups and use their newsletters and websites to promote planning documents and consultation events
- Produce a clear, concise summary leaflet to accompany every planning document which highlights the main points of the document
- Display information at:
  - Planning Reception in City Hall
  - Central Library in The Forum
  - Citizens Advice Bureau, St Vedast Street
  - Norfolk INSET
  - Other appropriate locations relevant to the document (local libraries, Community Forum noticeboards, leisure centres and other public places)

## Participating

### What we will do

- Involve statutory consultees, stakeholders, community groups and the wider community from the earliest possible stage
- At each consultation stage give everyone the chance to have a say on documents and policies that affect them or their interests
- Provide an opportunity to comment on the suitability of sites put forward for development
- Use a range of methods appropriate for the particular document (see Table 3) to encourage the wider community to participate in the planning process
- Encourage comments to be made at an early stage by designing consultation methods to be suitable for the groups involved and relevant to the particular document







- Encourage groups who may not have been involved in the planning process before or who may find it difficult to become involved, to participate, when appropriate by:
  - Holding public events close to where those affected live
  - Holding public events at relevant times to reach a cross section of the community
  - Matching public events to the scale of the planning issues
  - Involving Planning Aid to encourage those unfamiliar with the planning process to get assistance and advice on how to make comments
  - Making sure that those with a disability do not receive a lower standard of service at public events
  - Making sure all documents are appropriate and relevant to the group(s) involved
  - Making all documents available on the Council's website
  - Making all responses publicly available so they can be viewed by others

## Consulting

### What we will do

- The legislative requirement for consultation on the Preferred Options and Submission stages of DPD's is six weeks. Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents will be for not less than four weeks;
- We will use a variety of techniques (see Table 3) to provide information, to make sure everybody understands the details of the document, including the groups identified as needing specific encouragement or assistance (see paragraph 18 above);
- Produce documents providing feedback on comments that have been made in the past and how these have been dealt with and developed;
- Use the Council's website to provide updates to Local Development Framework consultations and downloadable versions of all documents;
- Produce a standard form for making comments on Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents and make it available on the website;
- Encourage responses to be made by email to [LDF@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:LDF@norwich.gov.uk). This will make it easier and quicker for the community to respond and benefits the Council in analysing the responses.

34 The methods outlined above will be used at different stages in the planning process and will vary for different planning documents. In terms of the Regulations, which refer to 'consultation' at Stage 2 as well as Stages 3 and 4, we include consultation at each stage, but intend to go further to encourage involvement (i.e. participation) at Stages 1 and 2 than is required under those regulations. Table 3 shows at which stage different techniques of involvement will be appropriate for different documents. All information and documents will be available in a variety of formats on request, including large print, Braille and spoken word.



**Table 3 Local Development Framework Consultation Methods**

		<b>KEY</b> <b>D</b> Development Control Policies <b>C</b> Core Strategy <b>SA</b> Site Allocation/Proposals Map <b>A</b> Area Action Plans <b>S</b> Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Briefs		
Consultation Method		Informing (all stages)	Participating (Stage 1 & 2)	Consulting (Stage 3 & 4)
<b>Providing Information – paper form</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council offices, Central Library, Citizens Advice Bureau, Norfolk INSET</li> <li>• Paper copies/CD-ROM/tape/braille to buy</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Council Letters</li> <li>• Summary leaflet (for documents over 1500 words)</li> <li>• Organisation newsletters eg. Federation of Small Businesses</li> </ul>		D C SA A S	C SA A S	
<b>Providing Information – electronically</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Council's Website (downloadable form)    • Text message</li> <li>• Email alerts    • Organisation website eg. Community Forum</li> </ul>		D C SA A S D C SA A S	D C SA A S D C SA A S	
<b>Providing Information – Media</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Features/supplements in local press    • Regular press releases</li> <li>• Citizen newsletter    • Talking newspaper    • Radio adverts</li> </ul>		D C SA A S D C SA A S	D C SA A S D C SA A S	
<b>Advertising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters    • Site notices</li> <li>• Bus stops    • Car park/bus tickets</li> </ul>		C SA A	C SA A	



<p><b>Workshops</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With organisations or interest groups                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Norwich Strategic Partnership</li> <li>Residents/Tenants' Associations</li> <li>Community Forums</li> <li>Interest Groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>C SA A S</p>	<p>C SA A</p>	<p>S</p>
<p><b>Exhibitions/Roadshows</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffed displays giving information at key locations</li> <li>Ideas/competitions for specific events</li> </ul>	<p>C SA A</p>	<p>C SA A</p>	
<p><b>Planning for Real Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of issues and proposals with officers</li> <li>Interaction with plans, models and other visual aids</li> <li>To show on plan/model/diagram what people want for an area</li> </ul>	<p>A S</p>	<p>A S</p>	<p>S</p>
<p><b>Stakeholder Forums</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisations representatives have regular discussions with officers on issues, documents, policies and proposals at small meetings with an independent chairperson.</li> </ul>	<p>D C SA A S</p>	<p>D C SA A S</p>	<p>D C SA A S</p>
<p><b>Focus Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected groups of people with particular characteristics have discussion with officers on specific site/area issues.</li> <li>Video surveys</li> </ul>	<p>SA A S</p>	<p>SA A</p>	<p>S</p>
<p><b>Opinion Polls (surveys/questionnaires)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postal</li> <li>Face to face</li> <li>Text message</li> <li>On the website</li> </ul>	<p>D C SA A S</p>	<p>D C SA A</p>	
<p><b>Local Councillors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public meetings</li> <li>Private discussion</li> <li>Letter/Email</li> </ul>	<p>D C SA A S</p>	<p>D C SA A S</p>	<p>D C SA A S</p>



## Giving Feedback

- 35 Feedback is very important to effective community involvement and needs to be relevant, concise and easily understood. This Statement of Community Involvement highlights the importance of making sure that consultation remains useful and contributes effectively to decision making. Responses made during public participation and consultation stages will be considered and the results used to inform on the progress of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. The Council will look at all comments before making a decision and will prepare a report after each consultation stage (including any alternative sites consultation that may occur) to show how the documents or proposals have been changed in light of comments made. These reports will be made available on our website [www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk) and at the following locations:
- Planning Reception in City Hall
  - Central Library in The Forum
  - Citizens Advice Bureau, St Vedast Street, Norwich
  - Other appropriate locations relevant to the document (local libraries, Community Forum noticeboards, leisure centres and other public places)
- 36 This Statement of Community Involvement will be subject to future review, for example to include a new consultation technique. At community consultation activities and events we will use feedback forms to help us assess our consultation method(s). The Norwich Strategic Partnership, the Local Development Framework Members Working Party and the RTPi East of England Planning Aid Service will act as sounding boards to advise on the consultation process and suggest points for review. This will help us to learn and improve throughout the course of the Local Development Framework. The Annual Monitoring Report, prepared by the Council to monitor progress in preparing the LDF, will reflect on and evaluate the community involvement process.
- 37 We will acknowledge receipt of a comment or response within five working days. After the end of every consultation we will give individual written feedback to each respondent. This will be after all valid responses are evaluated as a whole. The overall Council response to all valid comments will be available on the council's website.
- 38 All information and documents will be available in a variety of formats on request, including large print, Braille and spoken word. On request, feedback will be available in a variety of formats, including face-to-face, spoken word, Braille, large print and other languages. For more information, please contact the Planning Policy and Projects team, using the contact details at the end of this document.



# Involvement on Planning Applications

## Planning Application Process

39 This section sets out the Council's approach for the involvement of the community in commenting on planning applications and to encourage developers to undertake pre-application consultations on major applications.

## What we do now

40 Most of the community become involved in the planning system when planning applications are made. In 2004, Norwich City Council determined over 965 planning applications ranging from house extensions to major new housing developments, large shops and offices. These decisions matter to people because they shape the way their area will change and develop. Therefore it is important that the community have suitable opportunities to be involved in commenting on planning applications and that those comments are taken into account when the decision is made.

41 The Council has a well established process for publicising planning applications. These include:

- **Weekly email alerts**
- **Weekly list**  
(in paper form & website)
- **Letters –**  
statutory organisations  
and interest groups
- **Letters –**  
residents / businesses /  
properties next to the site
- **Letters to interested**  
parties – with Committee  
date and advise them of  
their rights to be heard
- **Decisions**  
(in paper form & website)
- **Site notices**
- **Presentations at**  
Committee
- **Newspaper Notices**
- **Meetings – Community**  
forum/other local groups
- **Committee papers –**  
available a week before  
meeting (in paper form &  
website)
- **Committee Minutes –**  
available a week after (in  
paper form/website)

42 Planning applications and supporting documents can be accessed in full on the Council's website. From Norwich City Council homepage, follow the link to 'Online Planning Services' then the 'Link to Planning Public Access'.

43 There are two independent groups who also look at planning applications. The Quality Panel with representatives from key local organisations give guidance on future development proposals, particularly those with design issues. In addition, planning proposals that may affect the character of a Conservation Area will go to the Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

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- 44 For all major planning applications we will encourage developers to have pre application negotiations with statutory organisations, the local community and other stakeholders before the submission of a planning application. If no pre-application negotiations have taken place then, at an early stage in the application process, the Council will encourage the applicant to undertake consultation with these groups, to allow comments to be made to influence the proposal before key decisions are made.
- 45 All planning applications can be viewed at Planning Reception in City Hall. Responses should normally be made within 21 days of the date the application was published. Responses can be made by letter, e-mail, or fax. If an applicant makes significant changes to an application we will consult everybody again on the revised scheme. Officers will deal with enquiries at Planning Reception, City Hall. We would prefer it if you would make an appointment to ensure a Planning Officer is available to see you. Bodies such as Natural England will be allowed a longer period of time to comment, where this is prescribed by legislation.
- 46 Statutory timescales for planning applications are set by national government. These are 8 weeks for normal applications and 13 weeks for major planning applications. The Council's target is to determine all planning applications within these timescales.

### Consultation on Major Planning Applications

- 47 Those submitting major planning applications will be encouraged to discuss their proposals at an early stage in the process (as set out in paragraph 46). This should allow those affected or concerned by a proposal to discuss their concerns before any key decisions have been made and will help resolve or identify issues of concern early in the process. To explain this in greater detail the City Council and other organisations publish a range of leaflets to provide the community with information on the planning application process and how to make comments on applications. These are available at Planning Reception in City Hall and on the City Council's website.

#### What is a Major Planning Application?

- Housing developments of 25 or more dwellings
- Any other development with a floor area of 1000 sq.m.
- Development which generates or is expected to generate over 100 traffic movements per hour at peak times or over 1000 over 24 hours
- Development requiring Environmental Impact Assessment

Developments that are particularly innovative should also be discussed with Planning Officers at an early stage

#### What is expected from developers?

- 48 We would encourage applicants to discuss proposals with a Planning Officer as part of pre-application discussions. Developers should then undertake pre-application community involvement that is suitable for the size and type of development in relation to the standards set out in Figure 2 below. These arrangements are to be organised, managed and funded by the potential developer.



## Failure to comply with these guidelines

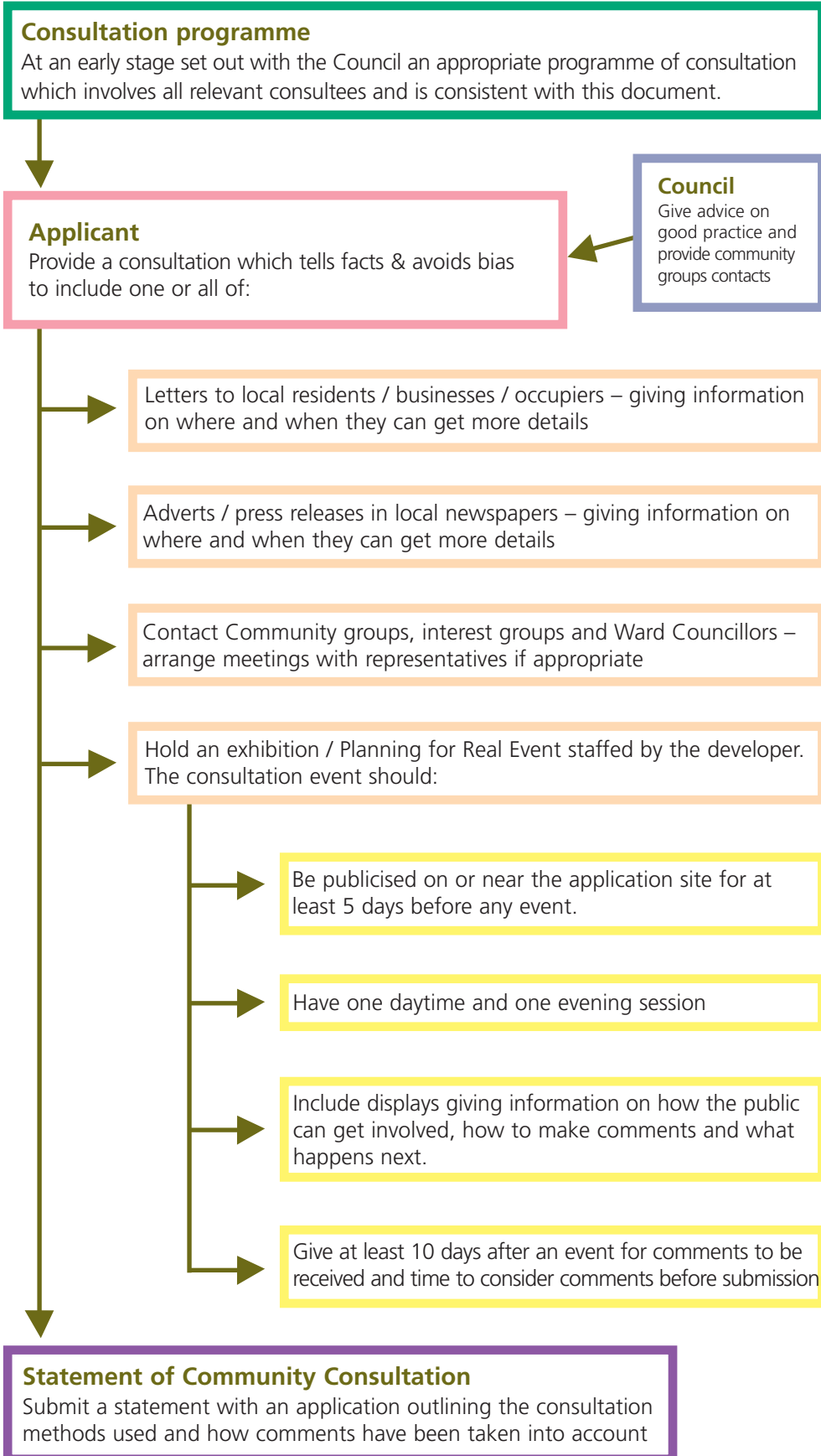
- 49 The Council will not refuse to consider a planning application because a consultation has not taken place or because we disagree with the consultation undertaken. However, failure to carry out a suitable consultation activity may result in objections being made, which will be taken into account when the application is assessed and this could result in valid planning objections, which have not been considered by the developer, becoming significant in the decision making process.

## What will happen to comments received?

- 50 The results of consultation should be summarised in a Statement of Community Consultation, to be prepared by the applicant and submitted with the application (assuming consultation has taken place in advance of submission). Where an applicant undertakes consultation later in the process than proposed in this SCI (which may be necessary where an application is substantially amended), this should be submitted as soon as possible. In either case the submission needs to include details of the form of consultation undertaken and the response rate, as well as appending the full responses received.
- 51 The City Council will then consider the Statement of Community Consultation and decide what (if any) further additional consultation needs to be undertaken. The City Council will also consult statutory consultees.
- 52 All comments received either with the applicant's Statement of Community Consultation or on any further consultation by the City Council will be summarised in the report to the Planning Applications Committee and will be addressed in the decision. A letter will be sent to all respondents once a decision has been made on the application.



**Figure 2 Major Planning Applications Consultation Process**







## Resources and Management

- 53 This section discusses the management of the consultation process and the resources available to the Council. The Local Development Framework will be managed by the Council's seven Planning Policy and Projects officers and supported by officers from other Council departments who will provide expertise, support and advice during the process. The resources are designed to ensure that the Local Development Framework, Community Plan and other Council strategies are linked and that all local community consultations are coordinated.
- 54 The Council has resources available including staff and budgets for preparing and consulting on its Local Development Framework. Although sufficient funding has been identified to fund the consultation activities outlined in this document we hope to work closely with those involved to understand and agree policies and proposals at an early stage so that fewer resources are needed at the examination stage. From previous experience of consulting on planning policy documents the use of time and effort at earlier stages can reduce the length of examination time.
- 55 The Council may use specialised agencies or consultants for specific parts of the Local Development Framework. They will be expected to undertake public participation and consultation on their proposals and results which will be consistent with this document.
- 56 A range of agencies and organisations carry out community participation and consultation activities across the City. The Council will work with other departments and groups to coordinate timing of their consultations to help avoid consultation fatigue and save resources.



### RTPI East of England Planning Aid Service

- 57 The Council is working closely with the local RTPI Planning Aid coordinator to agree the basis for their involvement with local communities in the City as part of the Local Development Framework process. It will be particularly useful to use Planning Aid volunteers as independent coordinators at consultation events.



## Appendix 1 Planning Service – Service Standards

<b>General</b>	<b>In our dealings with you we will treat you fairly and considerately</b>
<b>If you</b>	<b>We will</b>
Write to us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge within 5 working days. This may provide an answer or if we need to do more work the response will be within 10 working days.</li> <li>• Complex queries may take 20 working days.</li> </ul>
Telephone us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to answer your query immediately over the phone.</li> <li>• If your query relates to a specific site we may ask for a map to make sure the advice we give is relevant to the correct site.</li> </ul>
Email us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you use the <a href="mailto:LDF@norwich.gov.uk">LDF@norwich.gov.uk</a> you will receive an acknowledgement that your email has been received and a Planning Officer will follow this up by email in 5 working days after the email was received. This cannot be guaranteed if you use the address of a specific Planning Officer.</li> </ul>
Fax Us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See standards for writing to us on fax no 01603 212164. It often helps if you let us know first so we can expect a fax.</li> </ul>
Meet us face to face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make an appointment with the appropriate officer so your query is answered in full</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Actions</b>	
<b>If you</b>	<b>We will</b>
Submit formal representations on a planning document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge within 5 working days</li> <li>• Provide feedback through a report identifying which Council Committee will consider your comments.</li> </ul>
Ask for planning information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain your rights under the Freedom of Information Act</li> </ul>
Request a document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell you where you can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the document</li> <li>• Tell you whether there is a charge and what it is</li> <li>• Post it on the same day (if its free) or after receipt of payment (if there's a charge)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Have submitted comments on any Planning Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish the Council's Response alongside the final document setting out the issues raised by respondents and the Council's response to each issue raised.</li> </ul>
Have submitted a planning application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge within 5 working days</li> <li>• Decide 60% of all major applications – housing schemes over 25 dwellings or commercial developments over 1000 square metres – within 13 weeks of a submission</li> <li>• Decide on all other proposals within 8 weeks in 80% of all cases.</li> </ul>
Have submitted a major planning application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact you within 28 working days to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say whether an agreement is necessary</li> <li>• What it is likely to contain</li> <li>• Ask for an agreement to prepare the draft document and for costs of this work to be met.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
If you submit an application that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify you within 21 days of receipt of the application that an assessment is needed.</li> <li>• Give you 3 weeks to confirm in writing that you still want to continue with the application.</li> <li>• Say the type of information an assessment should contain.</li> </ul>



## Appendix 2 Local Development Framework Consultees

### Statutory Organisations

The Council must involve the following statutory organisations in the Local Development Framework consultation process. These are:

- East of England Regional Assembly
- Government Office for the East of England
- East of England Development Agency
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Highways Agency
- English Heritage
- Strategic Rail Authority
- Broads Authority
- Other Local Authorities
- Norfolk County Council
- Norfolk Landscape Archaeology
- Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority
- Anglian Water
- Relevant telecommunications companies
- Relevant electricity & gas companies
- National Power
- Parish Councils in the Norwich Policy Area

### Government Departments

The Council will involve the following government departments in the Local Development Framework consultation process. These are:

- Department for Education and Skills (through government offices)
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department for Transport (through government offices)
- Department of Health (through the relevant Regional Public Health Group)
- Department of Trade and Industry
- Ministry of Defence
- Department of Work and Pensions
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport.



## Additional Bodies

Through this Statement of Community Involvement, we are committed to involving a wide range of other groups and organisations in the Local Development Framework process. This will ensure that as many people as possible who are interested are involved in the future development of Norwich.

We will also consult the following groups, where appropriate, in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

- Community Groups – (Area based & Topic based)
- Housing Organisations
- House Builders
- Tenants Groups
- Business & Commerce Organisations
- Economic Development Agencies
- Educational Bodies
- School Councils
- Community Safety Bodies
- Environmental & Heritage Organisations
- Equal Opportunities Bodies
- Ethnic Minority Groups
- Disabled Peoples Organisations
- Elderly Peoples Groups
- Faith Groups
- Health & Social Care Groups
- Primary Care Trusts
- Youth Organisations
- Agents/Developers
- Landowners
- Regeneration Bodies
- Tourism Bodies
- Transport Bodies
- Community Centres
- Volunteer Development Organisations
- Sports & Recreation Organisations
- Health & Safety Executive
- Royal Mail
- Emergency Services
- Gypsies and Travellers
- Norwich Quality Panel



## Appendix 3 Glossary of Terms

The following are definitions of terms used in this document, which may be helpful to a lay reader.

- Adoption** Formal approval of document – usually the final stage in the process of producing a planning document.
- Allocation** Process of identifying land in a policy document for a future specific form of development. This includes adding it into the Proposals Map for the area.
- Amenity Group** An organised (usually voluntary) group of people who are concerned about the environment, privacy, security and appearance of an area.
- Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** Part of the Local Development Framework. A report produced each year (December) to assess progress towards the implementation of documents included in the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being carried out.
- Business** The general activities of Industrial, Commercial or Retail firms and their representatives in order to provide or manufacture a service or product.
- Community** A network of people who share common interests or concerns and organise themselves to share those interests or to further their objectives. It may be a local community concerned about the environment or quality of an area. It may include residents, general public, employees, people with a specific interest, voluntary organisations, local services and groups.
- Community Group** Organisation (usually voluntary), which exists to represent in some way the concerns and aims of a particular community, usually in a particular local area.
- Conservation Area** Area with special historic or architectural character which has been designated formally by the local planning authority as being important to conserve and enhance. Special planning controls apply within these areas.
- Consultation** The process of seeking opinions regarding a specific document or decision, by circulating information to those with an interest, sometimes with additional explanatory material. This process takes place within firm boundaries of decision making, set by the consulting body.
- Core Strategy (CS)** Part of the Local Development Framework. A document that sets out the key elements of the planning policies for the area. It will include a vision for the area, strategic objectives, a strategy for its achievement and a monitoring and implementation framework.

# Statement of Community Involvement

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## **Design**

The process of working out how a development should appear in relation to its surroundings and the character of the area and applying any policies which apply to this.

## **Development**

The process of carrying out building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of a material change of use of any building or land.

## **Development Control Policies**

Document forming part of the Local Development Framework, which provides general policies using criteria to assess whether development should be permitted.

## **Development Plan Document (DPD)**

Part of the Local Development Framework. These are the documents which form part of the development plan for the purpose of judging whether development is consistent with approved policies. Such documents have to be subject to independent scrutiny through an Examination in Public.

## **Examination in Public (EiP) (or Public Examination)**

A stage during which an appointed Inspector attends to hear information and evidence in public about the soundness of a Development Plan Document or the Statement of Community Involvement. The Inspector will hear from invited objectors concerning their objection. Occasionally when no public hearing has been requested, the Inspector will conduct the process in writing.

## **Exhibition**

Public display of information and illustrations to show in summary form what a document contains and what it is intended to achieve. (May be mobile – to be moved between different locations).

## **Faith Group**

A group of people sharing a common faith or religion and practising it together.

## **Focus Group**

A group of people, who have no other shared interest, invited to come together specifically to give feedback on certain issues.

## **Feedback**

Information about a response to certain issues, comments or objections. (Specifically information about comments that have been made on a document and how the Council will take account of them at the next stage).

## **General Consultation Bodies**

Certain bodies specified by the Council to be involved in consultation at each stage in preparation of the Local Development Framework and its constituent documents.

## **Heritage**

The collective value inherited and passed on from previous generations relating to buildings, artefacts or areas.

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**Interest Group** An organisation which has a specific interest in a subject or area.

**Issues and Options** A stage in the preparation of a document, during which the matters which are of concern for the document and the possible measures to deal with them, are considered.

## **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The collective term for the portfolio of documents prepared by the local planning authority to deliver the strategy for the location, scale and form of development in the area.

## **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**

Part of the Local Development Framework. A document which presents the Council's intended programme for preparation of its other Local Development Framework documents and is regularly reviewed.

## **Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)**

The partnership set up to prepare the Sustainable Community Strategy for the area, usually led by the local authority and involving a range of other local bodies and representatives of community groups.

## **Major Planning Application**

A proposal submitted to the local planning authority for development above certain size limits (defined in the Statement of Community Involvement).

## **Norwich Policy Area**

The area, including adjoining rural areas, within which planning policies propose that growth associated with the urban area should be accommodated.

**Occupier** A person, business or company which is occupying or using a certain building or parcel of land at the time.

**Participation** A process of involving people by a variety of methods (including consultation) in preparing, considering and determining proposals or policies for an area or subject. The boundaries of decision making will allow public involvement in the actual process leading up to a decision.

**Partnership** A group in which two or more organisations come together under an agreement to share their work or actions.

**Planning Aid** An organisation set up by the Royal Town Planning Institute to provide assistance to people involved in proposing or responding to developments or proposals through the planning system.

## **Planning Applications Committee**

The name of the City Council's decision making committee which determines approval or refusal of planning applications.

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**Planning Brief** Part of the Local Development Framework. A document which provides more detail to show how development of a particular site should be taken forward.

## **Planning for Real Event**

A method of participation in which local communities can express their ideas focused on a site or area using maps and flags or other symbols to show those ideas.

## **Planning Inspectorate**

The body set up by government to provide Inspectors to hear planning inquiries of various types (including Examinations in Public into Development Plan Documents).

**Preferred Option** A stage in the preparation of Development Plan Documents, in which possible options are considered and one of them selected for further work.

**Proposals Map** A map illustrating the site or location specific policies in a development plan document. This is updated as each document is brought forward and adopted.

## **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)**

Part of the Local Development Framework. A document prepared by the Regional Planning Body to provide the strategic policies for a whole region, as the basis for each individual authority's LDF.

**Roadshow** A means of explaining proposals to a range of bodies and at different locations in an area, using a mobile exhibition and/or other materials that are moved from place to place.

## **Site Allocation Plan**

Part of the Local Development Framework. A document which proposes the type, scale and form of development on identified sites. It must include a Proposals Map to identify the sites specifically.

**Site Notices** A formal notice placed on or near a site in a prominent position to inform people about proposals or planning applications which apply to the site.

**Soundness** The formal tests which Development Plan Documents are required to satisfy, as set out in government guidance. These tests form the subject of an Examination in Public.

**Stakeholder** Person or body with an interest in an area.

## **Stakeholder Forum**

A selected group of people with an interest in an area who meet to provide reaction and feedback to the local authority in developing proposals for that area.





### **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

Part of the Local Development Framework. Sets out the standards for the methods and scale of public involvement in the preparation and adoption of Local Development Documents, which the local authority sets for itself.

### **Statutory Consultee**

Specific bodies specified in government guidance who should be consulted at each stage in the preparation of all Local Development Documents.

### **Statutory Requirement**

Something which has to be done, because it is specified in legislation or regulations passed under the relevant Act.

### **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

Part of the Local Development Framework. A document which explains in more detail matters which are covered in broad terms in one of the authority's Development Plan Documents. Different procedures apply to SPD's compared with DPD's and they are not subject to an Examination in Public.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

An integrated process of assessing, reporting on and influencing the environmental, social and economic effects of plans or proposals. It is a statutory requirement to carry out such an appraisal of all local development documents and publish its findings at certain stages.

### **Workshop**

A method of presenting information about a plan or proposal to a group or forum and enabling discussion of the information or proposals.





# Statement of Community Involvement Adopted version

A code of practice for planning consultation  
January 2007

## Local Development Framework for Norwich

Information correct at time of publication. If you require this document in another format or language, please contact:

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