



**South
Cambridgeshire
District Council**

Local Development Framework

Statement of Community Involvement

Adopted January 2010

03450 450 500
www.scambs.gov.uk



Local Development Framework
**Statement of Community
Involvement**

Adopted January 2010

Published by South Cambridgeshire District Council

ISBN 0906016975 © January 2010

Gareth Jones, BSc. (Hons), MRTPI – Corporate Manager

**If you would like a copy of this document
in large print or another format please contact
South Cambridgeshire District Council on
03450 450 500 or email ldf@scambs.gov.uk**

CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
What is the Statement of Community Involvement?	1
What is the Local Development Framework?	1
Planning applications	2
The SCI in context with other Strategies that the Council has prepared or has signed up to	2
Adoption of SCI	3
Chapter 2 Overall Approach to Involving the Community in the Planning Process	5
Guiding principles for community involvement	5
Consultation with minority or disadvantaged groups	5
Who can help community involvement?	6
How the Council will deal with responses from consultation	8
Chapter 3 Getting involved in the Local Development Framework	11
The Council's LDF	11
Who will be involved in commenting on LDF documents	11
How the Council will involve the Community in preparing LDF Documents and at what stages	12
Methods used in consultation on LDF documents	17
Methods of consultation with minority or disadvantaged groups	21
Monitoring the methods used for consultation	21
How to make a representation on the LDF	21
Considering representations	23
Chapter 4 Getting involved in Planning Applications	25
What is a planning application?	25
When are the opportunities to make comments?	25
Consultation before a planning application is submitted	25
Community involvement before planning applications are submitted	25
Informing the community once a planning application has been submitted	26
How to view a planning application	29
How to make comments on a planning application	29
The application decision making process	29
Opportunity to speak at Planning Committee meetings	30
Petitions	30
Joint Planning arrangements for Northstowe and the Major Growth Sites on Cambridge's Fringes	30
Involvement of community in planning obligations	31
Community involvement once decision is made on planning application	32
Monitoring the planning application service	32
Involvement if an Appeal is received on planning application	32
How else does the Council involve the community and stakeholders?	33

Chapter 5 Managing Community Involvement	35
How community involvement in planning process will be managed	35
How it will be resourced	35
Reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the SCI	35
Appendix A Consultees list for Local Development Framework	37
Specific consultation bodies	37
Government departments	38
General consultation bodies	38
Other consultation bodies	39
Appendix B Information on Local Development Framework	41
Appendix C Community involvement in the Local Development Framework	43
Community involvement in Development Plan Documents	43
Community involvement in Supplementary Planning Documents	45
Appendix D Types of Planning Applications	47
What types of planning applications are received	47
Different categories of planning applications	48
Appendix E Guidance notes for Pre-application advice	51
Appendix F How Parish Councils can become involved in consultations on planning applications	57
Appendix G Contact details for Planning Officers	59
Appendix H Glossary of Terms	63

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT?

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is one of the key documents in the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). It provides information on how this Council will involve the community and other national and local stakeholders in the planning process¹. The community includes the residents who live in South Cambridgeshire and those who work within the district as well as businesses and other organisations that contribute to life in South Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to being a listening Council and providing a voice for rural life. The SCI will help to provide for this voice by setting out clearly how anyone can be involved in the planning of the district.
- 1.3 The SCI sets out when and how the Council will be consulting on the Local Development Framework. It also describes the ways to have a say on planning applications being considered by the Council.
- 1.4 There is already a well-established procedure for consulting the community about planning matters within South Cambridgeshire. South Cambridgeshire has already asked the public and stakeholders for their views on all the documents currently in its LDF. The Council also has an existing system for asking for the public's comments on planning applications. The Statement of Community Involvement brings these processes together in one place and its preparation provided the opportunity to review and improve our methods of consultation.

WHAT IS THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK?

- 1.5 The LDF comprises a number of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that set out policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the district and Supplementary Planning Documents that expand on policies contained in DPDs. (See Appendix B for more details). LDFs were introduced in 2004 as part of a new plan-making system. The need for effective community involvement is at the heart of the new planning system with an emphasis on early involvement as plans are being developed.
- 1.6 In South Cambridgeshire the first DPDs cover the period up to 2016 and the Council is well advanced in preparing these. The Council has already

¹ A Parish Planning Pack has been prepared by South Cambridgeshire to explain simply and clearly about the planning process in the district.

adopted a number of DPDs and SPDs and these are now being used by the Council for planning in the district. With a plan-led system planning applications are determined in accordance with the policies in the LDF unless there are very good reasons to take a different decision. The current position on adopted and emerging documents can be viewed on the Council's website at www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf.

- 1.7 The Council has a statutory duty to consult with the community and local stakeholders at a number of stages during the preparation of its plans.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 1.8 Most people get their first experience of the planning process through planning applications. Planning permission is required for most new buildings, many changes of use and operational development or significant alterations to existing buildings. To obtain planning permission a planning application must be submitted by anyone who wishes to undertake development requiring consent and the Council has a statutory duty to consult a variety of people about the application so that their views can be taken into account when the Council is determining the planning application.

THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN CONTEXT WITH OTHER STRATEGIES THAT THE COUNCIL HAS PREPARED OR HAS SIGNED UP TO

- 1.9 **The Statement of Community Involvement and the Sustainable Community Strategy** - The LDF is a key mechanism for delivering parts of the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which sets out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of South Cambridgeshire that contributes to sustainable development in the UK as a whole. It tells the 'story of the place' – the distinctive vision and ambition of South Cambridgeshire. This Strategy is the result of partnership working between the public, private and voluntary and community organisations that make up the district's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP produced the current Sustainable Community Strategy, which has a vision and a set of objectives for the period up to 2025.
- 1.10 The LDF and planning applications will be important in securing those parts of the Sustainable Community Strategy, that involve the use, or development of land and buildings.
- 1.11 **The Statement of Community Involvement and the Community Engagement Strategy** - As part of taking forward its vision to be a 'listening council', the Council has also recently prepared a Community Engagement Strategy, which outlines how the Council, working with its partners, will

engage with the community on developing strategies for a wide range of issues and other initiatives for community development.

1.12 The Council wants to ensure that the Community Engagement Strategy and the SCI are where possible in agreement with each other and enable the community to have a say in the delivery of the Council's services. Because the SCI specialises in planning matters, which have to be decided in a timely manner as they directly affect how, people may use their land and buildings it may not always be appropriate to follow the wider Engagement Strategy.

1.13 **The Statement of Community Involvement and the Cambridgeshire Compact** - The Council has signed up to the Cambridgeshire Compact with voluntary and community sector organisations. This document is important in achieving effective engagement with the voluntary and community sectors and underpins partnership working and consultation with these groups. Promoting an effective working relationship with voluntary and community organisations is important as they help to give a voice to local people to enable them to contribute to community life. They also have a vital role to play in reaching parts of the community that tend not to get involved in the work of the Council. .

1.14 The SCI will play a key role in ensuring that the aims of the Cambridgeshire Compact are met. However the Compact proposes that all consultations with voluntary groups should be for a minimum of 12 weeks wherever possible. The guidance and regulations directing how planning consultations are carried out for both planning policy documents and planning applications do specify shorter consultation periods and the SCI will have to conform to these rules.

ADOPTION OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1.15 The Council's draft SCI was out for public consultation for 6 weeks from 23 October until 4 December 2009. During this time 85 representations were received on the draft SCI and these comments were considered and where appropriate the SCI was amended.

1.16 The Statement of Community Involvement was formally adopted by the Council on 26 January 2010.

CHAPTER 2

OVERALL APPROACH TO INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 2.1 The Council has devised a set of guiding principles for the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to make sure that community involvement in the planning process is as effective as possible. These require that the Council:
- Communicates effectively by making it clear in the information provided what is being proposed and how and when people can get involved.
 - Ensures that information is accessible to the community regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or disability.
 - Makes it easy for people to get involved. Helping and supporting groups and individuals with little or no knowledge of the planning process and encouraging involvement from groups that have traditionally not been involved in the planning process.
 - Uses appropriate consultation methods in order to maximise opportunity for involvement.
 - Makes sure involvement is effective by listening to the community at an early stage in the planning process.
 - Ensures that there is effective engagement in the preparation of the planning policies included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) so that there will be less need for engagement on individual planning applications which are consistent with the policies in the LDF.
 - Provides feedback on responses received and keeps consultees informed of progress made.

CONSULTATION WITH MINORITY OR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

- 2.2 The Council is committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, whatever their race or background. The Council wants to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to be involved in the planning process. The Council is aware that in the past certain groups may have been under represented when it has carried out consultations. These groups include:
- Black and Minority Ethnic communities

- Disabled people
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gendered communities
- Children, young and older people
- Faith and belief groups
- Gypsies and Travellers

2.3 The Council's Comprehensive Equalities Policy 2009-2012 adopted in April 2009, includes a commitment to the following principle:

“Encouraging ‘real’ participation in local democracy by people who may normally feel excluded from decision-making processes. In doing this, we will ensure that we seek the views of groups who are particularly vulnerable or at risk of social exclusion or have found it difficult to access our services or receive favourable outcomes from them.”

2.4 The Council within this policy document has identified four key objectives, which will be implemented over the next three years to deliver excellent equality and diversity practices within the Council. One of these objectives is ‘Community Engagement and Accountability’. This will involve ensuring that the Council consults effectively. To get the right outcomes, the Council must know what equality groups and the community think about where and what the Council needs to change.

2.5 For example the Council recognises that Children and Young People have interesting and valuable opinions. A Youth Participation Strategy is currently being developed with partners, including young people, to support young people to be involved in delivery of services that affect them. This will include their involvement in consultations on plans for their own and new communities.

2.6 To help make the planning policy documents more accessible to all within the community the Council will on request where appropriate make available all its LDF documents in whole or in part in accessible formats or languages.

WHO CAN HELP COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT?

2.7 There are a number of people that can assist the community and stakeholders to become involved in the planning process. The following people can help the community to have a say on planning matters and ensure their comments are part of the decision making process:

- District Councillors
- Parish Councillors
- Planning Officers
- Planning Aid

District Councillors:

- 2.8 District Councillors become involved in planning matters by being members of the Council's different decision-making committees. Some may be on the Planning Committee making decisions on planning applications and others on Cabinet and Portfolio Holder meetings that consider the Council's planning policy documents.
- 2.9 As representatives of their respective wards District Councillors can listen to residents' concerns on planning issues and where appropriate can speak on behalf of residents to put forward their concerns or provide support for a particular planning application or planning policy document. District Councillors can speak at Planning Committees or they can make their constituents' views known to other councillors on relevant decision-making committees of the Council such as Cabinet.

Parish Councillors:

- 2.10 Parish Councillors as representatives of the community at a more local level can provide an invaluable voice for the local people by finding out people's views on any plans or proposals that may have an impact on a locality. Parish Councils then have an opportunity to submit their comment on any planning matters to the District Council. They have a right to appear at a Planning Committee to state their views and can submit their representations on the LDF.

Planning Officers:

- 2.11 It is the role of the Council's officers to provide planning and other specialist expertise. Within the Council officers work in four different teams:
- 2.12 Planning Policy Team – The planning officers in this team are responsible for preparing the LDF for South Cambridgeshire of which this SCI will form a part. This team drafts the planning documents that are then subject to public consultation using the guidance set out in the SCI document. These documents must conform with national and regional planning guidance and then provide the framework for making decisions on planning applications.
- 2.13 Development Management Area Planning Teams - Planning officers work in two area teams – East and West, which divide the district into two halves with specific villages allocated to each team. These planning officers process and assess planning applications in accordance with the Council's adopted planning policy documents as well as national and regional planning guidance; site-specific issues; relevant consultation responses and other material planning considerations. They also are available to discuss planning applications with the public.

- 2.14 The planning officers can provide more detailed pre-application advice and information to applicants (as from 1st October 2009 there is a charge to applicants for some pre- application advice – see page 25). They are also available for discussion about current planning applications and permitted development enquiries.
- 2.15 A Planning Duty Officer is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm to provide general planning advice by telephone or in person without the need for an appointment. However if more detailed advice is required then an appointment with the relevant planning team can be arranged.
- 2.16 Major Development Team – These planning officers are responsible for processing and assessing the planning applications for the major developments proposed on the fringes of Cambridge and for the new settlements of Northstowe and Cambourne. They are part of the New Communities Team within the Planning Department of the Council which provide a multi-disciplinary approach to the planning of these complex developments and provide a similar service to the Area Planning Teams.
- 2.17 Conservation Team – The officers in this team provides specialist professional advice on the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment in the district, including the historic environment (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), and ecology, trees and landscape.
- 2.18 For the contact details of each of the different planning teams see Appendix G.

Planning Aid:

- 2.19 Planning Aid is a voluntary organisation providing free, independent and professional help, advice and support to members of the community about land use planning matters. It is linked to the Royal Town Planning Institute. It provides valuable help for people so that they can get involved in all stages of the planning process from making comments on planning applications to making representations on planning policy documents. Planning Aid complements the work of local authorities but is wholly independent of them.

HOW THE COUNCIL WILL DEAL WITH RESPONSES TO CONSULTATIONS

- 2.20 The Council will take account of all responses received from its consultations on LDF documents and planning applications where the issues raised are **material planning considerations**. Responses concerning other issues cannot be taken into account when determining a planning application or preparing an LDF document.

- 2.21 The matters that can be used to determine a planning application are called **material planning considerations** and can include:
- Central government policy and guidance e.g. Acts, Circulars, Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs));
 - The adopted Development Plan Documents (DPDs);
 - Any emerging Development Plan Documents – although the weight to be given to the DPD will depend on how advanced it is;
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs);
 - The planning history of the site; and
 - Site-specific issues such as the impact of the development upon, for example, the character of the area, highway safety or the amenities of neighbours.
- 2.22 When determining planning applications or preparing LDF documents, material planning considerations also include any consultation responses from statutory and non-statutory consultees, and any representations from neighbours, amenity groups and other interested parties where relevant to planning matters.
- 2.23 There are however some matters that the Council cannot consider when it is determining a planning application or planning policy. These are known as **non-material planning considerations** and include:
- Personal circumstances,
 - Boundary disputes,
 - Legal covenants,
 - Loss of a private view,
 - Devaluation of property, and
 - Matters controlled by other legislation (i.e. structural safety of a building or fire prevention).
- 2.24 The methods that are used to inform the community of planning matters will vary depending on the issue – different methods will be used at different stages in the production of a planning policy document or when determining planning application. These methods are set out in detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

CHAPTER 3

GETTING INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

THE COUNCIL'S LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)

- 3.1 All the adopted documents that the Council has produced so far for its LDF have been subject to public consultation, community involvement and independent examination. There is therefore already a well-established procedure for consulting with the community within the district. Details about the documents that currently form part of the LDF in South Cambridgeshire are included in Appendix B.
- 3.2 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out what Development Plan Documents (DPDs) will be produced, when the community will be consulted upon them and the timetable of their production. The LDS is a public document and can be viewed on the Council's web site at <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/LDS.htm>. Where there are alterations made to the agreed LDS timetable there will be an update included on the Council's website.

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN COMMENTING ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS?

- 3.3 The Council wants everyone affected by its planning decisions to have the opportunity to have their say on the Council's planning policy documents. The Government already requires that certain groups be consulted directly at key stages in the preparation of documents in the LDF. This is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 (as amended). These groups are as follows -
- **Specific consultation bodies** - The regulations list specific organisations and types of organisations that should be defined as specific bodies. A Local Planning Authority must consult with those organisations in this list that they consider may have an interest in the subject of the proposed planning document.
 - **General consultation bodies** - The regulations list categories of organisations that should be defined as general consultation bodies. A Local Planning Authority must consult with those organisations in their list of general consultation bodies, as they consider appropriate.
- 3.4 The details of these bodies are listed in Appendix A.
- 3.5 The Council has an existing consultation database that has evolved as it has carried out consultations in the past on planning documents prior to the

drafting of the SCI. This database is kept as up to date as possible. It includes a list of organisations that the Council advises at the beginning of the plan making process that a plan is being prepared and consults at key stages during the process.

3.6 The existing database includes many types of organisations that have an interest in South Cambridgeshire. It includes groups that represent the following interests:

- Housing
- Transport and Travel
- Leisure and Tourism
- Ethnic minorities such as Travellers and Gypsies
- Businesses
- Young people and children within the community
- Education and Training
- Elderly people within the community
- Religious groups
- Disabled groups
- Voluntary and community groups

3.7 Any individual or other organisation that submits a representation on a draft Local Development Document (LDDs)² will be added to a consultation list for that specific document and will be informed of all future stages of public consultation for that document.

3.8 The Council will seek to enable any other individuals, groups and organisations with an interest in any of its plans to be involved in the plan-making process. Any individual, organisation or group that wishes to be added to the consultation database to be kept informed of the progress of a particular planning policy document can do so at any time by contacting the Planning Policy Team at South Cambridgeshire District Council on 01954 713183 or email ldf@scamb.gov.uk. The Council would prefer that an email contact be given, as it is quicker and more efficient and cost effective to contact you and keep you informed by email. This request to be notified on specific documents will be included on all future letters and emails sent out during consultations and the information provided on the appropriate page of the LDF pages on the Council's website.

HOW THE COUNCIL WILL INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN PREPARING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS AND AT WHAT STAGES

3.9 There will be a number of opportunities for the community to be involved in the preparation of LDF documents. These opportunities are indicated in the

² LDDs - Local Development Documents are all the documents that form part of the LDF – both DPDs and SPDs as well as the Local Development Scheme and the Statement of Community Involvement and the Proposals Map

flow charts included in Appendix C, which show the process involved in preparing a DPD and SPD. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) for South Cambs states when the Council is planning to prepare different documents within the LDF and gives an indication of the timetable for each document. This could be a good place to start to find out when there will be an opportunity to become involved in commenting on documents during consultations.

- 3.10 The Council has experience of carrying out consultations on earlier planning documents for its LDF. When carrying out consultations, the Council is required by the Regulations to use certain methods of consultation; however the Council also uses additional methods to help further involve the community.
- 3.11 **Existing methods:** Tables 1 and 2 show the range of methods that have been used by the Council for DPD and SPD consultations. It should be noted that the additional consultation methods shown would not be used for every consultation but only where they are most appropriate. The Council will select the most appropriate methods for each document. Details of each of these methods follow the tables.

Table 1 - Consultation on Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Stage	Minimum consultation carried out by the Council according to the Regulations	Additional consultation methods that will be used by the Council
Initial consultation	<p>Consult with each of the specific consultation bodies that the Council considers may have an interest in the subject of the proposed DPD.</p> <p>Consult with other general consultation bodies that Council consider appropriate.</p> <p>Invite representations from persons who are resident or carrying on business in their area if the Council decides that it is appropriate.</p> <p>The Council must carry out the consultation on DPDs for a period of not less than six weeks.</p> <p>Methods used to consult these bodies or invite representations: either email or where email not available by letter in post.</p>	<p>Article in South Cambs magazine</p> <p>Notification of the intention to prepare document on the website</p> <p>On-line consultation calendar on the Council's website</p> <p>Notification of Parish Councils by a regular monthly email outlining current and future consultations.</p> <p>Monthly updates outlining current and future consultation will appear on consultation page within LDF section on the Council's website.</p> <p>CDs providing spoken content of documents</p> <p>News releases.</p>

Stage	Minimum consultation carried out by the Council according to the Regulations	Additional consultation methods that will be used by the Council
		<p>Article for Economic News and other Specialist publications</p> <p>Publication of public notices / posters in libraries.</p> <p>Information sent for Parish websites, newsletters and/or village magazine</p> <p>Notify Agents Forum; Parish Forum; Equalities Consultative Forum and Business Forum</p> <p>Notify members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Neighbourhood Panels via Partnership Manager</p> <p>Young people's involvement through Youth Strategy</p>
Proposed submission	<p>Consult with each of the specific consultation bodies that the Council consider may have an interest in the subject of the DPD.</p> <p>Methods used either email or where email not available by letter in post</p> <p>Send copies of the proposed Submission documents to the specific consultation bodies selected by the Council as having an interest in the DPD Method used - send either on CD or as paper copies if requested</p> <p>Consult with other general consultation bodies that the Council consider appropriate and Inform where documents are available Methods used either email or where email not available by letter in post</p> <p>The Council must carry out the consultation on DPDs for a period of not less than six weeks.</p> <p>Copies of proposed Submission documents to be made available in Council office at Cambourne and at such other places within South Cambridgeshire, as the Council considers appropriate.</p>	<p>Article in South Cambs magazine</p> <p>On-line consultation calendar on the Council's website</p> <p>Notification of Parish Councils by regular monthly email outlining current and future consultations.</p> <p>Monthly updates outlining current and future consultation will appear on consultation page within LDF section on the Council's website.</p> <p>Leaflet drop</p> <p>CDs providing spoken content of documents</p> <p>Public Exhibition / Workshops</p> <p>News releases.</p> <p>Article for Economic News</p>

Stage	Minimum consultation carried out by the Council according to the Regulations	Additional consultation methods that will be used by the Council
	<p>Publish proposed Submission DPD documents on website.</p> <p>Publish a notice in the local press.</p>	<p>and other Specialist publications</p> <p>Publication of public notices /posters in libraries.</p> <p>Information sent for Parish websites, newsletters and/or village magazine</p> <p>Notify Agents Forum; Parish Forum; Equalities Consultative Forum and Business Forum</p> <p>Full set of paper versions of proposed Submission documents available for inspection in Cambridge at the City Council's Service Centre</p> <p>Notify members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Neighbourhood Panels via Partnership Manager</p> <p>Young people's involvement through Youth Strategy</p>

Table 2 - Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Stage	Minimum consultation carried out by the Council according to the Regulations	Additional consultation methods that will be used by the Council
Consultation	<p>Consult with each of the specific consultation and general consultation bodies that the Council considers may have an interest in the subject of the draft SPD.</p> <p>Invite representations from persons who are resident or carrying on business in their area if the Council decides that it is appropriate.</p> <p>Methods used to consult these bodies or invite representations: either email or where email not available by letter in post.</p> <p>The Council must carry out the consultation on SPDs for a period of not less than four or more than 6 weeks.</p>	<p>Article in South Cambs magazine</p> <p>Notification of the intention to prepare document on the website</p> <p>On-line consultation calendar on the Council's website</p> <p>Notification of the Parish Councils by a regular monthly email outlining current and future consultations.</p>

Stage	Minimum consultation carried out by the Council according to the Regulations	Additional consultation methods that will be used by the Council
	<p>Send copies of the draft-SPD documents to the specific consultation and general consultation bodies selected by the Council as having an interest in the draft SPD Method used - send either on CD or as paper copies if requested</p> <p>Copies of draft SPD documents to be made available in Council office at Cambourne and at such other places within South Cambridgeshire as the Council considers appropriate.</p> <p>Publish draft SPD documents on website.</p> <p>Publish a notice in the local press.</p>	<p>Monthly updates outlining current and future consultation will appear on consultation page within LDF section on the Council's website.</p> <p>CDs providing spoken content of documents</p> <p>News releases.</p> <p>Article for Economic News and other Specialist publications</p> <p>Publication of public notices /posters in libraries.</p> <p>Information sent for Parish websites, newsletters and/or village magazine</p> <p>Notify Agents Forum; Parish Forum; Equalities Consultative Forum and Business Forum</p> <p>Full set of paper versions of consultation documents available for inspection in Cambridge at the City Council's Service Centre</p> <p>Notify members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Neighbourhood Panels via Partnership Manager</p> <p>Young people's involvement through Youth Strategy</p>

3.12 **Additional methods:** As part of preparing the SCI additional methods of consultation are to be used by the Council. They are as follows:

- On-line calendar on the Council's website to link all the engagement activities the Council has planned.
- Monthly updates outlining current and future consultation will appear on consultation page within LDF section on the Council's website.
- Poster/ public notice for parish notice boards / local libraries
- Full set of paper versions of consultation documents available for inspection in Cambridge at the City Council's Service Centre

- Information sent to Parish clerks about consultations to be placed in newsletters or village magazines or posted on the Parish website
- Involve young people via the implementation of the Youth Participation Strategy
- Informing business groups via the proposed Business Forum
- South Cambs Economic News to include item on future planning consultations.
- Informing equalities groups via the Equalities Consultative Forum
- Including information on consultations in specialist media /publications
- Notify the Partnership Manager at the beginning of each consultation so all members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Neighbourhood Panels are aware of the opportunity to comment

METHODS USED IN CONSULTATION ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

3.13 The main methods used for consultations by the Council are described below.

- **Public Notices:** the Regulations on how a planning authority consults require that a notice must appear in a local newspaper. The Council publishes its notices in the Cambridge News as the local newspaper with the widest circulation in the area.
- **News releases:** the Council has an in-house team dealing with communications who have a good working relationship with local media, including newspapers, radio and television. News releases improve the chances that articles will be published or broadcast and so reach a wide audience who can be made aware of planning matters in the district. News releases are also published on the Council's website.
- **South Cambs Magazine:** the magazine provides regular updates on planning policy matters and is published quarterly by the Council. The magazine is delivered to all households in the district and is also placed in public areas in libraries and the Council's main office in Cambourne for visitors from outside the district to view it. It includes a regular LDF news article to provide current information and also articles on plans and other planning matters of current interest.
- **Direct letter:** a formal approach, which is used to officially notify particular groups and organisations about public consultations that are being carried out on planning policy documents. The Council uses this method to target appropriate organisations to consultations on which they would be interested in according to the Regulations (See Appendix A).
- **Documents available in print:** the Council makes available for inspection at its offices In Cambourne and at the City Council's

Service Centre in Mandela House, Cambridge any document that is being consulted on. Both these offices are fully accessible to people with disabilities. Printed documents are made available for purchase from the Council at a modest cost.

The Council will if requested make additional printed copies available for inspection at wider locations –e.g. Libraries /Parish Council offices. This used to be the Council's normal practice, but was stopped some years ago because some local libraries have very limited space opportunities and were concerned at receiving substantial documents and because all local libraries have access to the internet on which interactive versions of the documents can be viewed. However, we recognise that this is not always convenient when viewing long documents, particularly if there are time limitations for Internet access. Therefore, where a specific request is made to the Council it will make paper versions available at local libraries or Parish Council offices, with their agreement. The Council is also willing, if specifically requested, to provide an additional paper version to the Parish Clerk if a village does not have a parish office or convenient local library in order that he/she can make available the documents to the local community.

- **CDs containing all the consultation documents:** these are sent out to those of the specific and the general consultation bodies that the Council consider will have an interest in the subject of the planning policy document that is being consulted on. It saves on postage and on paper so is more cost effective and environmentally friendly.
- **Monthly email update**; the Council sends out an email at the beginning of each month to all the Parish Councils in the district providing an up-to-date timetable of all the consultations that are current or are planned that will affect the district of South Cambs. This enables these councils to be aware of when they will have an opportunity to become involved in policy planning matters.

The Council will publish the information in this monthly email to Parish Councils on a new consultation page within the LDF section on the Council's website so that a wider audience is kept up to date and is aware of consultations that affect the district

- **Economic News:** is published quarterly by the Council and provides a range of information, advice and support for local businesses in South Cambridgeshire. In future editions news about forthcoming consultations will be highlighted so that the business community can be more involved in planning matters.
- **Specialist media / publications:** it may be appropriate for information on some or all consultations to be included in newsletters or

magazines directed to specific groups or to inform radio programmes directed at these special groups.

- **Leaflet drop:** this can be a useful way of informing people living and working in an area that is to be affected by a planning policy proposal when the consultation timing does not link well with the publication dates of the South Cambs magazine. It can be targeted to a specific area.
- **CDs providing spoken content of documents:** this method can be used to encourage the involvement of those groups that normally do not participate in planning consultations by making it easier for them to access the contents of planning documents.
- **Public exhibitions:** these assist in reaching the wider public and give the opportunity for discussion with representatives of the Council on a one to one basis close to where people live.
- **Posters:** these are sent to libraries to be placed on notice boards. The information contained on them is based on the Public Notice that the Council must prepare as part of the preparation of LDF documents. The Council will send posters to Parish Councils and ask that they be placed on Parish notice boards.

Also posters are done to advertise public exhibitions to let everyone know when and where they are to take place.

- **The Council's website:** the Council publishes all its major publications and documents for consultation on its website which is a means of making information available to an increasingly wide audience. This is particularly relevant in the South Cambridgeshire area with its higher than average proportion of residents connected to the Internet. Representations can be submitted via the website using the Council's interactive consultation response form which makes the consultation documents more accessible and easy to navigate and makes submitting representations to the Council easier.

The Planning Policy Team regularly publishes LDF news updates on the Council's homepage (www.scambs.gov.uk) and LDF homepage (www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf).

The Council has a consultation calendar on its website, which lists all the consultations that the Council is to carry out, when and by whom. This means that the community is better informed and the Council can be more efficient in co-ordinating the use of its resources and carry out joint consultations where appropriate.

- **Workshops:** these bring together key stakeholders representing service providers, agencies, developers, local community

representatives and interest groups. The Council has found the use of independent and trained expert facilitators helpful. Workshops can be helpful for exploring site or subject specific topics.

- **Parish Forum:** a quarterly meeting of all the Parish Councils in South Cambridgeshire to provide information on planning matters. This provides a means of notifying Parish Councils about current and future consultations and also an opportunity for Parish Councillors to discuss planning consultation issues together.
- **Parish websites/ newsletters/village magazine:** many Parish Councils within the district have their own websites and/ or village newsletters or magazines and information will be sent to the Parish Clerk in a format that can be published in the Parish newsletters or on their websites to let the community know when and what is being consulted on by the Council.
- **Agents Forum:** a quarterly meeting of agents that act on behalf of developers and landowners within South Cambridgeshire to inform them on planning matters in the district. This can provide a means of notifying agents about current or future consultations and also an opportunity for agents to discuss together issues relating to planning consultations.
- **Equalities Consultative Forum³:** this forum will be specifically notified of consultations that the Council will be carrying out. When appropriate a planning matter can be added to the agenda of their quarterly meetings.
- **Business Forum:** the Council is proposing to set up a regular forum for local businesses and future relevant consultations will be included on the agenda of these meetings to help ensure that the business community is aware of and can have the opportunity to be involved in commenting on planning matters
- **Young People's Involvement:** A Youth Participation Strategy is currently being developed with partners. This will include their involvement in consultations on plans for their own and new communities and will be through a variety of ways depending on how young people want to be involved, for example: District wide Youth Forums, Youth Participation projects, School Planning days, and Youth Parish Councils. Through the implementation of this strategy young people can be included in future planning consultations.

³ This forum has been set up to generate discussion about development of a consultation and engagement framework which will enable external stakeholders to have greater participation, engagement and a voice in the policy and service development process at South Cambridgeshire District Council.

- **Local Strategic Partnership:** the Council will notify the Partnership Manager at the beginning of each consultation period on planning policy documents in order that all the members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Neighbourhood Panels can be made aware of the opportunity to comment on these matters.

METHODS OF CONSULTATION WITH MINORITY OR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

3.14 When carrying out consultations the Council will ensure that the methods used will be the most appropriate to reach the groups that have been under represented in earlier consultations. These are considered to be:

- Newspaper publicity
- Radio
- Television
- South Cambs Magazine
- Exhibitions targeted to specific audiences in specific locations
- Focused workshops
- Use of audio CDs
- Use of specialist publications
- Use of existing forums
- Use of independent specialists to encourage involvement and assist in filling out response forms
- Use of the Internet and websites
- Equalities Consultative Forum
- Notification letters (planning applications)

MONITORING THE METHODS USED FOR CONSULTATION

3.15 The Council needs to be sure that the best methods are being used to involve the community and stakeholders in consultations. In the past there has been no way of finding out how anyone has heard about the consultations on LDF documents. A question will now be included on the response forms used when representations are submitted to the Council. This will ask where the respondent had heard about the consultation and what would be the best method to inform them of future consultations.

HOW TO MAKE A REPRESENTATION ON THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.16 The Council provides guidance for anyone considering submitting representations, which describes how to make a representation during the public consultation period. Officers from the Planning Policy Team are available during consultations to provide assistance for anyone who needs further help in submitting representations on a consultation document.

- 3.17 The Council encourages people to submit their representations about local development documents on-line. It has the advantage of being the fastest and most accurate method and helps the Council to manage representations quickly and efficiently. All documents that are part of a consultation appear in an interactive form on the Council's website and they are also published on the website as an electronic version of the printed document (i.e. in pdf format).
- 3.18 Persons or organisations that cannot make on-line representations can submit representations in writing or electronically via email. The Council has standard response forms, which mirror the on-line form, which are made available in both printed and electronic format. It is easier for the Council to accurately record comments and a better use of public money if representations are submitted on these forms. The forms can be handwritten or typed and sent to the Council offices in Cambourne or they can be electronically sent to the planning policy email address, ldf@scambs.gov.uk
- 3.19 The Council has tried to devise a response form that is clear and straightforward to fill in. It is recognised that planning can use specialist terms or jargon and the Council is aware that for many members of the public responding to a consultation can find it a complex task which appears to be designed to discourage rather than encourage involvement. The Planning Policy Team makes a point of revising response forms with the experience gained from each consultation and is committed to continuing to do this. When a consultation is carried out at an informal stage in the preparing of a planning document the Council will in future provide a simplified response form to assist people in making commenting.
- 3.20 In making representations about a local planning document the respondent must state clearly which part of the document the comments relate to and whether there are any specific changes they would like to be made to the document as a result.
- 3.21 The Council has to set a deadline for submission of representations and usually it identifies this end date as a Friday and the time as midday 12 o'clock. In responding to consultations the Council recommends that when submitting any type of response form – whether it be on-line; by email or by post that regard is given to the deadline. The Planning Policy Team is always available to assist respondents in how best to submit comments and if difficulties are found will give help and advice. It is best not to leave it until the last few hours before the deadline to submit electronically or on-line. In our experience this is when most people find difficulties with the system!
- 3.22 The Council wants to ensure that the consultation is reaching all the relevant parts of the community including those that are sometimes more difficult to reach. An equalities monitoring form is therefore attached to the response form – it does not have to be filled in and will remain anonymous. The information is passed directly to the Equalities and Diversity Officer and is not

recorded against a specific person. It helps the Council know whether a consultation has reached the community effectively.

CONSIDERING REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.23 After comments have been submitted the Council will acknowledge receipt of duly made representations either via letter or email once all the representations have been registered after the end of the consultation period. All representations are published on the Council's website to enable people to easily view representations that have been received.
- 3.24 At the end of each consultation stage the Council will consider all the representations received and will provide a short response to each which will be included in the Council's report on the consultation.
- 3.25 The Council's response will be agreed at the appropriate Council meeting depending on the stage and nature of the document. The reports and minutes of the meetings are available on the Council's website.

CHAPTER 4

GETTING INVOLVED IN PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WHAT IS A PLANNING APPLICATION?

- 4.1 Planning permission is required for most new buildings, many changes of use and operational development or significant alterations to existing buildings. To obtain planning permission a planning application must be submitted by anyone who wishes to undertake the development.
- 4.2 The Council receives a number of different types of planning applications. Descriptions of these are included in Appendix D.

WHEN ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE COMMENTS?

- 4.3 The main opportunity for an individual or organisation to make comments on a planning application is shortly after it has been submitted and before the Council makes a formal decision on it. The Council has a statutory duty to consult a variety of people about planning applications including neighbours, statutory bodies such as the Highways Authority, the Environment Agency and English Heritage and other relevant organisations so that their views can be taken into account in the determination of an application.
- 4.4 There are opportunities for a Parish Council to be involved in consultations on planning applications and these are set out in Appendix F.

CONSULTATIONS BEFORE A PLANNING APPLICATIONS IS SUBMITTED

- 4.5 The Council welcomes and encourages discussions before a planning application is submitted. Such discussions can assist in better quality applications, which stand a better chance of a successful outcome.
- 4.6 To ensure that these pre-application discussions are useful and constructive to both the Council and the applicant the Council has produced clear guidelines of what will be covered in pre-application discussions. This is included in Appendix E. There is also guidance on the procedure for seeking pre-application advice from the Council and the information that an applicant will need to provide before the Council will offer advice. The Council charges applicants a modest fee for pre-application consultations –there is not a fee for advice on small household applications.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENTS BEFORE PLANNING APPLICATIONS ARE SUBMITTED

- 4.7 Once an applicant has received advice from the Council the applicant may wish to seek the views of the local community and/or the local Parish or District Councillors before they submit the application. By carrying out consultations at this early stage it can enable the applicant to avoid issues arising after the application has been submitted to the Council. It could be an opportunity to benefit from the input of local people and/or to address objections, which could affect the determination of the application.
- 4.8 The Council does not ask for a statement of the pre-application consultations when a planning application is submitted. However it would be helpful for both the community and the Council to understand what consultation has been undertaken and how it has influenced the scheme. A statement could include who was consulted; the method, and timing of consultation and the feedback and how it was addressed in the proposal.
- 4.9 Where a Design and Access Statement⁴ is required, the Council encourages the inclusion of details of any community engagement that has been carried out prior to submission of a planning application and how this process has influenced the design of the proposed development.

INFORMING THE COMMUNITY ONCE A PLANNING APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED

- 4.10 The general consultation procedures to be followed on planning applications are laid down by Government regulation.⁵ It requires that all planning applications be subject to some form of publicity, consultation or notification before they are determined. This is set out in Figure 1. The results of any such consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by and on behalf of the Council.
- 4.11 Nearly all applications require neighbour notifications. This takes the form of a letter that is sent by the Council to all neighbours immediately abutting the site area and any neighbours that have made a written representation in connection with any application on the site in the previous three years. The Council often goes beyond the statutory requirement and notifies properties opposite the site where the development would potentially have a wider impact. Such wider consultation is carried out at the discretion of the relevant planning officer.

⁴ Design and Access Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind a planning application. They should explain the design principles and concepts that have informed the development and how access issues have been dealt with.

⁵ Standards for consulting on planning applications are set out in various pieces of Government regulations

- The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure Order) 1995
- Circular 15/92 Publicity for Planning Applications
- The Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999
- The Town and Country Planning (Major Infrastructure Project Inquiries procedure)(England) Rules 2004

4.12 All methods of publicity, consultation and notification have a statutory time period of 21 days for the receipt of responses unless otherwise stated. 21 days is the period recommended by Government to strike the right balance between timeliness of decisions and opportunity for comment. However with large scale applications such as Northstowe longer consultation periods have been given.

Figure 1 – Consultation on Planning Applications – The Development Process

Stage in development process	Nature of development	Minimum consultation required by law with method used	Additional consultation
Pre-submission of planning application		See note 2 for policy on neighbour notification by letter. See note 3 for further explanation of figures in brackets.	See note 1 for meaning of wider concern as stated below
Consideration once planning application has been submitted.	Major development and applications of wider concern	LPA required to advertise in local newspaper (21 days) And Either Site Notice (21 days) or neighbour notification (21 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	The Council may consider further opportunity needs to be given to local community to air their views and to discuss their views with an applicant particularly for major developments. E.g. Public meeting or workshop, or some other type of public forum.
	Minor development	Neighbour notification (21 days) required to be done by LPA or Site Notice (21 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	Site notice by Local Planning Authority (LPA) if application is of wider concern – at discretion of planning officer on case by case basis
	Development affecting the character or appearance of a Conservation Area	LPA required to advertise in local newspaper (21 days) and Site notice (7 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	Neighbour notification by LPA (dependent on site situation) at discretion of planning officer on case by case basis. Site notice (21 days)
	Development affecting the setting of a listed building	LPA required to advertise in local newspaper (21 days) and Site notice (7 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	Neighbour notification by LPA (dependent on site situation) at discretion of planning officer on case by case basis

Stage in development process	Nature of development	Minimum consultation required by law with method used	Additional consultation
		See note 2 for policy on neighbour notification by letter. See note 3 for further explanation of figures in brackets.	See note 1 for meaning of wider concern as stated below
	Applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement	LPA required to advertise in local newspaper (14 days) and Site notice (21 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	Neighbour notification by LPA (dependent on site situation) at discretion of planning officer on case by case basis
	Applications which are a departure from the Development Plan	LPA required to advertise in local newspaper (14 days) and Site notice (21 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	Neighbour notification by LPA (dependent on site situation) at discretion of planning officer on case by case basis
	Applications which affect a public right of way	LPA required to advertise in local newspaper (14 days) and Site notice (21 days) and Parish Council is notified (21 days)	Neighbour notification by LPA (dependent on site situation) at discretion of planning officer on case by case basis

Note 1: There are applications that fall outside the category of a major development but that are likely to be of ‘wider concern’ and as such may warrant an advertisement in addition to the possibility of a site notice or neighbour notification. These cases will normally have one or more of the following impacts associated with them, with the potential to affect more than just the adjoining properties. The likely types of development are:

1. Where the development will affect nearby property by causing noise, smell, vibration, dust or other nuisance;
2. Attracts crowds, traffic and noise into a generally quiet area;
3. Cause activity and noise during unsocial hours;
4. Introduce significant change e.g. particularly tall buildings;
5. Result in serious loss of light or privacy to more than just the adjoining properties;
6. Affect the setting of an ancient monument or archaeological site; and
7. Affect trees subject to tree preservation orders.
8. Certain contentious subjects such as telecommunication masts, wind farms etc.

Planning staff will use their discretion and judgment in determining the need to publicise applications of wider concern.

Note 2: For the purposes of neighbour notification by letter, “neighbouring land” means “land whose boundary directly abuts the site of the proposed development or works except where that boundary is more than 90 metres away from the proposed development or works, or is land opposite the site of the proposed development or works, and is separated by a road of less than 20 metres wide”.

Note 3: The number of days given above in brackets represents the minimum statutory period for display of a site notice or advertisement (either 7 or 21 days); comments should be made within 21 days of the date of the site notice irrespective of the length of its display

HOW TO VIEW A PLANNING APPLICATION

4.13 Planning applications can be viewed:

- Online via the planning application search engine on the Council's website at www.scambs.gov.uk ;
- Locally, by appointment with the Clerk or Chairman of the local Parish Council (or meeting); or
- At the Planning Service, which is located at South Cambridgeshire's Cambourne offices which are open between 8.30am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

4.14 Planning officers are usually available in the Cambourne offices to give advice on submitted applications. However it is advisable to make an appointment prior to visiting the offices if you wish to make a specific enquiry or wish to see a specific planning officer. The Planning Duty Officer is available for more general inquiries on a daily basis.

HOW TO MAKE COMMENTS ON A PLANNING APPLICATION

4.15 Any comments you may wish to make on a planning application should be in writing (by e-mail or letter, in both cases stating your full postal address) and received within the consultation period that is indicated for each application. The Council will however endeavour to take into account any representations received up to the date it makes a decision.

THE APPLICATION DECISION MAKING PROCESS

4.16 Planning applications are determined against the planning policies set out in the adopted Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that form part of the LDF for South Cambridgeshire and against other material planning considerations such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

4.17 Decisions on applications can be made either by the Planning Committee; or by planning officers with delegated powers. . Normally planning applications proposing a significant scale of development are determined by the Planning Committee and minor developments such as extensions to dwellings by planning officers with delegated powers.

4.18 Agendas and reports for the Planning Committee are publicly available 5 working days before the meeting and are also published on the Council's website. Meetings of Committee are minuted. Minutes of the last meeting are

normally produced before the next meeting is held. Once agreed these are made available on the Council's website.

OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK AT PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

4.19 Members of the public can speak at Planning Committee as long as they have already written to the Council in response to formal consultation and fall into one of the following categories:

- One objector to a proposal (including someone on behalf of a protest group)
- Applicant (or the applicant's agent) or one supporter of the proposal.

4.20 Each speech is limited to three minutes and speakers must restrict themselves to material planning considerations. (See page 8)

4.21 An elected member of the Parish Council (or Chairman or duly nominated person of a Parish Meeting) may speak at a Planning Committee as long as the Parish Council itself is not the applicant. The parish representative can speak for up to three minutes and is not allowed to express any personal views. Also the local District Councillor not on the Planning Committee has a right to speak.

4.22 For further details on speaking at Planning Committee contact Democratic Services or view the Council's website:

PETITIONS

4.23 The Council will accept petitions to be presented to the Planning Committee. The lead petitioner or nominee on the petition will be invited to speak at the meeting at which it is presented for no more than five minutes and may be questioned by the councillors on the committee for no more than five minutes.

JOINT PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR NORTHSTOWE AND THE MAJOR GROWTH SITES ON CAMBRIDGE'S FRINGES

4.24 In late 2007 the three local authorities responsible for planning major growth around Cambridge – Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council committed to work more formally in partnership by creating two Joint Development Control Committees to determine the planning applications for the major growth sites. These Joint Committees were set up under the provisions of Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4.25 The consultation arrangements for these major planning applications target a wider area and can be carried out over a longer period of time. For example

for Northstowe planning application the consultation period was 3 months rather than 21 days

INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY IN PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- 4.26 Planning obligations or section 106 agreements⁶ are a necessary element of the planning process. They are increasingly used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways and transport improvements, community and recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing which are required for individual developments. There are a number of tests to determine what should be included as part of a planning obligation⁷.
- 4.27 Before submitting a planning application, an applicant is encouraged to conduct pre-submission discussion with the Council. Applicants are expected to undertake research regarding the contributions in terms of planning obligations that they may be expected to provide as a result of their development.
- 4.28 The Council will be producing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for planning obligations, which will assist in this research and will outline the expected infrastructure requirements as a result of development. The community and stakeholders will be consulted on this SPD as they were on the adopted Open Space in New Development SPD and adopted Public Art SPD, which provide guidance on what the Council expects developers to contribute to these specific areas.
- 4.29 The pre-application research undertaken by the applicant (or their agent) can, for example, involve contacting Cambridgeshire County Council to understand the current education, transport and highway needs or the Primary Care Trust to ascertain the need for local health facilities. Parish Councils are also an important consultee in any planning application and should be approached for information regarding the development and any new or enhanced community facilities that will be required should the development be permitted. The Council is willing to assist Parish Councils in these early discussions to identify appropriate needs and has a dedicated Section 106 Officer to help provide relevant advice and support during this process.

⁶ The term S106 agreement refers to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 "A local planning authority may enter into an agreement with any person interested in land in their area for the purpose of restricting or regulating the development or use of the land, either permanently or during such period as may be prescribed by the agreement."

⁷ These tests, which are contained within Circular 05/2005, identify that planning obligations should be relevant to planning; necessary to make a proposed development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the proposed development; fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and reasonable in all other respects.

- 4.30 All Parish Councils are given the opportunity to comment on planning applications once they are submitted and can at this stage put forward suggestions of what is needed within the community in order to mitigate any potential impact of the development proposals that could be included as a planning obligation. Some parishes have produced Community-led Plans (formerly known as Parish Plans), which set out priority issues within a parish and could highlight what facilities a village may wish to have provided. This information, where relevant, can be used to respond to a planning application and be used as a starting point to negotiate planning obligations.
- 4.31 The Parish Forum will be used as a means of keeping parishes informed on how to respond to the planning obligations aspect of a planning application.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ONCE DECISION IS MADE ON PLANNING APPLICATION

- 4.32 All members of the public and other consultees who submit written representations are informed in writing of the decision on a planning application.
- 4.33 A decision notice is issued normally within 2 working days of a formal decision being made and wherever possible these are sent out electronically, for example to Parish Councils. Reasons for approving or refusing an application are included in the decision notice. The decision notice is also available to view on the Council's website or at the Council offices in Cambourne.

MONITORING THE PLANNING APPLICATION SERVICE

- 4.34 The Council when it sends out decision notices regularly includes a letter about customer satisfaction to find out the applicant's experience of the planning service. A pre-paid addressed envelope is provided for the reply
- 4.35 The Council is also asking for customer's views on other aspects of the planning application service so that we can have an idea of how well we are providing our planning service. . It is hoped from the results of this survey that the Council can improve the service it provides in future.

INVOLVEMENT IF AN APPEAL IS RECEIVED ON PLANNING APPLICATION

- 4.36 An applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a refusal or contest any of the conditions imposed to the granting of permission or the non-determination of an application. Only the applicant has the right to appeal. It does not extend to other interested people or organisations (known as third parties).

- 4.37 Parish Councils and members of the public will be consulted and invited to comment on an appeal. This will be done through a standard consultation letter at the start of the appeal. The Council may invite where relevant a Parish Council to become more involved in an appeal.
- 4.38 Members of the public can speak at hearing and inquiries. Evidence from District and Parish Councillors can be useful especially if they have detailed local knowledge.
- 4.39 'Third party' interests can submit additional representations to the Planning Inspectorate on the appeal if they wish. This must be made in writing. It is also possible to ask the Inspectorate for a 'third party' to be allowed to attend an informal hearing or public inquiry in person to present their views.

HOW ELSE DOES THE COUNCIL INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS?

- 4.40 Weekly email bulletin- All District Councillors and Parish Councils are sent a weekly email bulletin that indicates how to use the planning application search facility on the Council's website to see which applications have been registered to that week.
- 4.41 Forums - The Council has set up forum groups in order to provide regular exchange of information between the planning officers and specialist groups.
- Agents Forum – This forum consists of agents who regularly come into contact with planning at the Council through submitting planning applications and by commenting on Local Development Documents (LDDs). This provides an opportunity to exchange ideas to ensure both the agents and the Council use the most effective and efficient methods when engaging with each other.
 - Planning Parish Forum - The first Planning Parish Forum took place on Monday 19 January 2009. The meetings provide an opportunity for Parish Councils to discuss any planning issues they have, whilst also providing an additional level of training. These meetings are now held quarterly.

CHAPTER 5

MANAGING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HOW COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING PROCESS WILL BE MANAGED

- 5.1 The Planning Policy Team will manage the consultations on matters relating to the Local Development Framework (LDF). Consultation procedures for planning applications will be managed by the Council's Development Management Area Planning Teams. For the major development areas the consultation on masterplanning or on planning applications for these areas will be done by the Major Development Team.

HOW IT WILL BE RESOURCED

- 5.2 It is important that the proposals set out in this document are based on a realistic assessment of the resources available in order to involve the community effectively in the planning process. It is essential that sufficient resources are made available to implement the consultation methods proposed.
- 5.3 This document has not included additional methods of consultation if it is considered that the Council would not have sufficient staff and/or funding to comply with the subsequent requirements in the agreed Statement of Community Involvement.
- 5.4 The Council may use specialist agencies or consultants for specific parts of the LDF.
- 5.5 Community involvement can be costly in terms of resources and staff time. The Council will maximise resources available by working with others to hold joint consultations where appropriate. The Council is setting up a consultation calendar so that the public will know what consultation is planned and for different Council departments to be able to co-ordinate consultation exercises.

REVIEWING AND MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 5.6 In order for the Council to be able to consider the success of the implementation of the SCI there will need to be means of monitoring and reviewing the document. The Council will be collecting the following data to monitor the success of the SCI:

- Data collected from customer satisfaction research being carried out by the Council on its planning applications service (See page 32)
- Equalities monitoring form data collected from consultation response forms by Equalities and Diversity Officer (See page 22)
- Use data collected from additional question on consultation response forms about how respondent had heard of consultation and their preferred method for future consultations (See page 21)

5.7 The data collected will be published in the Annual Monitoring Report which the Council publishes each year. If this indicates that there are problems arising with the existing methods of consultation or improvements could be made to the way the Council involves the community and stakeholders in consultations on planning matters then changes may need to be made to the SCI. There will need to be a review of the SCI and the timescale of this set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

APPENDIX A

CONSULTEES LIST FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

- A.1 This appendix outlines the groups, organisations and individuals that the Council will seek to involve in the plan-making process.
- A.2 In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 (as amended) the following consultation bodies may be consulted where the Council considers that they will be affected by what is proposed in a Development Plan Document (DPDS) or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

SPECIFIC CONSULTATION BODIES

- A.3 These are organisations that a Local Planning Authority may consider have an interest in the plan. The specific consultation bodies are listed in the Regulations as:

The Regional Planning Body - East of England Regional Assembly
A relevant authority, any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local council. This will include Cambridgeshire County Council; all the District Councils whose boundaries adjoin South Cambridgeshire; all the Parish Councils within South Cambridgeshire and those whose boundaries adjoin South Cambridgeshire; and Cambridgeshire Constabulary (as the local police authority).

The Coal Authority

The Environment Agency

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England – English Heritage

Natural England

The Secretary of State for Transport (in relation to the Secretary of State's functions concerning railways and highways)

A regional development agency whose area is in, or adjoins, the area of the council – East of England Development Agency

Any electronic service provider (i.e. mobile phone providers)

- to whom the electronic communications code applies (see Section 106 (3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003)
- who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of South Cambridgeshire.

Any of the bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of South Cambridgeshire:

- A Primary Care Trust - Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust.
- A person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989
- A person to whom a license has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986
- A sewage undertaker

- A water undertaker.

Home and Communities Agency – this organisation will officially be a specific consultation body from 6th April 2010.

- A.4 Note, this list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisation occurs.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

- A.5 These will be consulted where the Council considers the Department would have an interest in the DPD subject matter and if there is a land holding by any of the Government Departments within the plan area.

- (i) Department for Education and Skills (through Government Offices);
- (ii) Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;
- (iii) Department for Transport (through Government Offices);
- (iv) Department of Health (through relevant Regional Public Health Group);
- (v) Department of Trade and Industry (through Government Offices);
- (vi) Ministry of Defence;
- (vii) Department of Work and Pensions; and
- (viii) Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

- A.6 Some government departments will be consulted via the Government Office for the East of England or the East of England Strategic Health Authority.

GENERAL CONSULTATION BODIES

- A.7 The general consultation bodies are also listed in the Regulations. A Local Planning Authority may consult with these bodies where it considers it appropriate. The general consultation bodies are:

- Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the council's area
- Bodies, which represent the interests of different ethnic or national groups in the council's area
- Bodies, which represent the interests of different religious groups in the council's area
- Bodies, which represent the interests of disabled people in the council's area
- Bodies, which represent the interests of people carrying on business in the council's area.
- The exact organisations that fall into each of these categories will vary locally.

OTHER CONSULTATION BODIES

A.8 A key principle about consultation is that South Cambridgeshire should carry out public participation that is appropriate for the DPD or SPD being produced.

Depending on the plan being produced, it may be appropriate to consult with other individuals; groups and organisations in addition to those identified as specific or general consultation bodies. The Council's existing consultation database includes an extensive range of organisations that represent a range of interests within South Cambridgeshire. The following list provides some suggestions made by the Planning Advisory Group, but it is **not** exhaustive. These organisations are included in the Council's database including where appropriate the local contact.

- Age Concern
- Airport Operators Association
- British Geological Survey
- British Toilet Association
- British Waterways and other canal owners and navigation authorities
- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
- Chambers of Commerce, local CBI and local branches of the Institute of Directors
- Chemical Business Association
- Church Commissioners
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)
- Crown Estate Office
- Diocesan board of finance
- Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
- Electricity, gas and telecommunications companies, and the National Grid company
- Environmental groups at the national, regional and local level, such as the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Friends of the Earth, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and wildlife trusts
- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Fire and rescue services
- Forestry Commission
- Freight Transport Association
- Gypsy Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- Help the Aged
- Higher and further education institutions
- Home Builders Federation
- Learning and Skills Councils
- Local Agenda 21 organisations, including civic societies, community groups, local transport authorities and local equalities groups
- National Playing Fields Association
- Passenger transport authorities
- Passenger transport executives

- Post Office property holdings
- Regional housing boards
- Regional sports boards
- Road Haulage Association
- Sport England
- Theatres Trust
- Train operating companies (passenger and freight)
- Traveller Law Reform Project
- Water companies
- Women's National Commission

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- B.1 South Cambridgeshire District Council has already produced a number of these documents. The Development Plan Documents consist of:

The Core Strategy sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for the spatial development of South Cambridgeshire.

Development Control Policies DPD sets out the policies that will be used when planning applications are considered by the Council.

Site Specific Policies DPD allocates sites for particular uses such as housing, employment and other development or other site-specific policies for the use of land where Area Action Plans are not being prepared.

Gypsy and Traveller DPD will allocate sites and contain policies for the provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- B.2 The Council has a number of **Area Action Plans (AAP)**; the AAPs provide detailed planning policy guidance for specific sites on the urban fringe of Cambridge and Northstowe. These are for areas where major developments are proposed within the district: and include the following:

Northstowe AAP is a new settlement proposed to the north west of Cambridge.

Cambridge East AAP (prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council) this is for an urban extension largely using the Cambridge Airport site.

Cambridge Southern Fringe AAP is for an urban extension to the south of Cambridge. It adjoins an area within Cambridge City where major development is also proposed.

North West Cambridge AAP (prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council) this is for an urban extension to provide for the development needs of Cambridge University.

- B.3 **Proposals Map** shows in a spatial format all site-specific policies and allocations in all the relevant adopted planning documents. This document identifies the boundaries of the Cambridge Green Belt and the boundaries of other special areas, such as village frameworks, identified in adopted policies in DPDs. It is not a Development Plan Document.

- B.4 **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** expands on policies contained in adopted DPDs. They provide additional details on how policies will be implemented. These documents are taken into account as 'material planning considerations' when assessing planning applications. The process

for preparing a SPD is similar to the process for a DPD but they are not subject to independent examination. However they still require community involvement in their production. The Council has produced a number of SPDs on a range of subjects, see the Council's website for more information. www.scambsgov.uk/ldf.

B.5 The LDF consists of other documents. These are as follows:

Statement of Community Involvement - (this document) sets out how the community should be involved in the preparation of the LDF and on planning applications.

Annual Monitoring Report - provides an annual review of the progress on the preparation of the plans as set out in the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies are being achieved.

Sustainability Appraisal - these are required to be undertaken by the planning authority for each DPD to identify and evaluate any likely economic, social and environmental effects of the policies and site allocations. The aim is to enhance the positive effects whilst minimising any potentially adverse impacts. A Scoping Report has to be produced as the first stage of the preparation of an appraisal, which sets out the context and establishes the sustainability objectives against which documents will be considered. This includes the requirements of the European Union Directive of Strategic Environmental Assessments

Habitat Regulations Assessment - all Local Development Documents (LDDs) must also be subject to a Habitat Regulation Assessment, which assess the policies within any planning document to see if they are cumulatively likely to affect internationally recognised nature conservation sites – Natura 2000 sites. Such assessments must be subject to consultation with environmental specialists such as Natural England.

Equalities Impact Assessment as a public authority the Council is required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) to promote equality in policy making, service delivery, regulation, enforcement and employment to meet our legal obligations; as part of the specific requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 an EQIA must be prepared for all planning documents prepared by the Council. It should be noted that they should not only be applied to LDF documents but also to all of the documents /strategies /policies prepared by the Council.

APPENDIX C

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

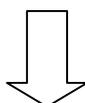
FLOW CHART 1

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

PRE-PRODUCTION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

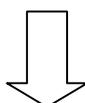
Evidence gathering

Evidence to inform the preparation of the DPD, involving stakeholders where appropriate.



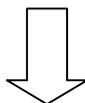
Initial consultation of DPD (Regulation 25)

Notify and invite bodies to make representations. Previously there were two formal stages of consultation at this point in the preparation of a DPD. (Issues and Options & Preferred Options). The regulations now only require one.



Consideration of Representations (Regulation 25(5))

The Council must take the comments made during this initial consultation into account in preparing the proposed Submission version of DPD.

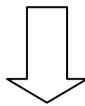


PRODUCTION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

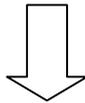
Preparation and consultation on Proposed Submission version of DPD (Regulation 28)

Preparation of a draft document including consideration of the issues and options that have led to the proposed policies and strategies included in the proposed submission version of the document.

Publication of a Proposed Submission version of the DPD for consultation for a period not less than 6 weeks.



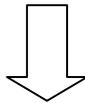
Consider representations made to Proposed Submission version of DPD. Only if representations raise fundamental issues of soundness can the Council consider making changes to the published proposed submission version of the DPD.



SUBMISSION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

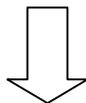
Submission of DPD (Regulation 30)

Submission DPD sent to Secretary of State with those documents as set out in Regulations. This includes the sustainability appraisal report; a submission proposals map (if appropriate); statements setting out results of the consultations at Regulations 25 and 28.



Consideration of representations by Inspector (Regulation 31)

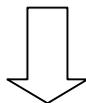
Government Inspector must consider any representations made to Proposed Submission version of DPD. Persons making representations can request the opportunity to appear before and be heard by Inspector.



ADOPTION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

Adoption of DPD (Regulation 36)

Inspector will produce a binding report, which Local Planning Authority must comply with. (Regulation 35).



Incorporation of Inspectors' recommendations into the Submission DPD. The Council must then adopt the document.

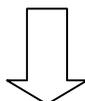
FLOW CHART 2

PRE-PRODUCTION OF SPD

Evidence gathering

Evidence to inform the preparation of the SPD, involving stakeholders where appropriate.

May be appropriate to consult with the community and relevant stakeholders who have an interest in the subject matter of the SPD.

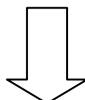


PRODUCTION AND CONSULTATION OF SPD

Preparation and consultation on draft SPD (Regulation 17)

Preparation of draft SPD document.

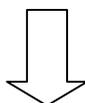
Consultation period must be of not less than 4 weeks or more than 6 weeks.



Consideration of Representations by Local Planning Authority (Regulation 18)

The Council must consider any representations made to the draft SPD. Reports produced clearly stating main issues of representations and response to each representation and where appropriate the suggested amendments to SPD.

This report is presented to New Communities Portfolio Holder.



ADOPTION

Adoption of SPD by LPA (Regulation 19)

The Council adopts the document subject to the agreement of New Communities Portfolio Holder.

APPENDIX D

TYPES OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WHAT TYPES OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS ARE RECEIVED?

D.1 There are three main types of planning application:

1. **Outline Applications** these are usually submitted to agree the principle of how a site can be developed. As a minimum, outline applications must include information on: use; amount of development; indicative layout; scale parameters; indicative access points. Outline planning permission is granted subject to conditions, which can govern the use of a development as well as requiring the subsequent approval of one or more reserved matters.
2. **Reserved Matters Applications** these must be submitted within the specified timescale of the approval of an outline application. Reserved matters are normally layout; scale; appearance; access and landscaping.
3. **Full Applications** this is where planning permission is granted for the principle and all the details of the development at the same time. It must be accompanied by a site plan and any other plans, drawings and information necessary to describe the development.

D.2 **Permitted Development**

Not all development requires the Council to grant planning permission. Small-scale extensions, such as conservatories, and outbuildings are often classed as permitted development by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Whether a development is permitted under the criteria of the Order is often down to the scale of the development and its location within the curtilage of a property. This Order has been amended a number of times, most recently in October 2008 to allow for more development to be classed as permitted development. In the case of developments that are permitted by the Order there is no requirement to notify the planning department and the Council would not carry out consultations or notify neighbours in the same way as if a planning application was submitted. The Council however encourages individuals carrying out permitted development to consult their neighbours to ensure that any concerns they have about adverse impacts can be addressed through alternative designs where possible. The Council also encourages individuals carrying out developments that they believe to be permitted development to clarify whether they would meet the criteria of the Order prior to commencing any work. If planning permission is required and not applied for before work is commenced the Council can take enforcement action that could result in the development being removed.

- D.3 The Council has a target of 8 weeks to determine minor and other applications, and 13 weeks to determine major applications. The definition of what type of development constitutes major and minor applications is included below.

DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF PLANNING APPLICATION

- D.4 Planning applications fall into a number of different categories - major development; minor development and other developments.

1. What constitutes Major Development?

A planning application involving new dwellings is a major application if:

- The number of dwellings to be constructed is 10 or more; or
- If the number of dwellings is not provided in the application, the site area is 0.5 hectares or more.

For all other uses an application constitutes major development if:

- The floorspace to be built is 1000 square metres or more, or where the site area is 1 hectare or more.

The following will be taken into account in the decision to classify a development as major or not:

- The area of the site is defined as the area directly involved in some aspect of the development (usually outlined on the plan).
- If the area involved in a development is split into two parts by a classified road it should still be considered as one site. The area occupied by the road should not be included in the site area.
- The floorspace of a building is defined as the total floor area within the building, which is measured externally to the external wall faces at each level. Basement car parks, rooftop plant rooms, caretakers, flats etc. should be included in the floor space figure.
- Where a major development is subject to a change of use application it should be coded as a major development, not as a change of use, for example converting a warehouse into 12 flats.

2. What constitutes Minor Development?

Applications, which do not meet the criteria for major development or other development.

- The granting of outline permission for the development of a site may have been classified as a major development, but the approval of reserved matters for five houses on part of the site, for example, would be classified as minor development.
- Decisions relating to major/minor developments should be classified by reference to the principal use within the development. This is usually the one with the greater proportion of new floorspace. If there

is doubt as to the principal use in a multistory block the ground floor in used as the principal one. This would apply when two different uses are taking up approximately the same amount of floorspace. A proposed development should be classified by its own principal use and not the use of the complex it is in. So for example a construction of offices being developed in a heavy industrial site should be classified as 'Offices/Research and Development/Light Industry'.

3. Other Development

Change of Use:

A planning application should only be classified as 'change of use' if one or more of the following apply:

- The application does not concern a major development;
- No building or engineering work is involved; and/or
- The building or engineering work would be permitted development were it not for the fact that the development involved a change of use e.g. removal of internal dividing walls in a dwelling house to provide more spacious accommodation for office use.

Householder Developments:

Defined as those within the curtilage of a residential property, which require an application for planning permission and are not change of use;

Included in householder developments are extensions, alterations, garages, swimming pools, walls, fences, vehicle accesses, porches and satellite dishes; and excluded from householder developments are applications to change the number of dwellings within an existing development.

Advertisements:

Any applications for consent to display advertisements under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended).

Listed Building Consents:

Any application for Listed Building consent to

- extend and/or alter under Section 8 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; or
- demolish under Section 8 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conservation Area Consents:

Any applications for conservation area consent under Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Other Planning Related Decisions:

Include all decisions relating to:

- Applications for certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development;

- Applications for certificates of lawfulness of proposed use or development;
- Applications for certificates of appropriate alternative development;
 - Notifications under Circular 14/90 (overhead electric lines);
- Applications by the British Coal Corporation under Class A, Part 21 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995;

Applications for prior notification under Part 6 and 7 (Agricultural and Forestry Buildings and Operations) and Part 24 (Development by telecommunications code system operators), and Applications for hazardous substances consent under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990.

APPENDIX E

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

E.1 Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council welcomes and encourages discussions before a planning application is submitted. Such discussions can assist in better quality applications, which stand a better chance of a successful outcome.

There are considerable benefits in seeking advice before making an application:

- It gives you the opportunity to understand how policies and guidance will be applied to your development
- It can identify at an early stage where there is a need for specialist input, for example about urban design, listed buildings, trees, landscape, noise, transport, contaminated land, ecology or archaeology
- It may lead to a reduction in time spent by your professional advisors in working up proposals, identifying potential problems and sorting them out before an application is submitted
- It may indicate that a proposal is completely unacceptable, saving you the cost of pursuing a formal application
- It will ensure that you provide all the necessary information and drawings to enable the application to be registered as valid.

E.2 Charging

For details see the Council's website or contact the Planning Duty Officer on 01954 713155

Exemptions from charging

- People with disabilities
- Charities
- Parish Councils
- Permitted development proposals caught by Art 4 Directions
- Householder developments
- Small businesses (up to 5 employees)
- Works to listed buildings and demolition in conservation areas
- Trees

E.3 General Advice

There are some general points, which you should take into account before you contact us:

- Try to contact us at the earliest reasonable opportunity in your project
- Undertake some initial research yourself by using the planning pages on the Council's website www.scamb.gov.uk

- Sound out the views of those that may be affected by your proposals
- The more information you can give us, the more accurate and helpful our response can be - vague proposals may only receive vague advice. The key to the success of this service will be providing adequate information in advance, and
- On complex issues be prepared to seek private professional help - our service is not intended to be an alternative to employing professional consultants.

E.4 What areas can be covered in pre-application discussions?

The matters, which could be subject to pre-application discussions, include:

- Planning history of the site;
- The surrounding context of the site;
- Statutory designations and site constraints (Conservation Areas, Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Importance, Protected Species etc);
- Relevant planning policies;
- The likely requirements for developer contributions;
- Informal and without prejudice comments on the preparation, content and presentation of an application;
- The need for additional information such as an Environmental Impact Assessment (if relevant);
- The Design and Access Statement (if relevant to the type of application) refer to the CABI guidance document;
- The contents of the application to ensure that it can be registered as a valid application;
- Providing an adequate level of biodiversity information, collected at the correct time of year.

E.5 What is the procedure for seeking pre-application advice?

1. Within 5 working days of receiving a request the Council will contact you by phone or email to confirm the following:
 - i. That the Council is prepared to offer pre-application advice (the Council has the right to decline a request for pre-application advice where it is not considered appropriate
 - ii. To confirm what information should be submitted;
 - iii. To provide the name of the case officer who will be dealing with the enquiry;
 - iv. To suggest dates for a pre-application meeting if this is required (normally within 10 working days of receipt of all the information requested).
2. If a meeting is considered necessary the date and venue will be confirmed. Normally this will be at the Council offices, but site meetings will be arranged if appropriate

3. The Council will endeavour to provide written advice (prepared by the case officer and agreed with a senior manager) within 10 working days unless an alternative timescale has been agreed between the parties, for example, to allow consultation with other organisations or individuals;
4. Anyone using this service should note the following important information:
 - Any advice given by Council officers in response to pre-application enquiries does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council in respect of any future planning applications;
 - Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith, based on existing planning policies, standards and the information provided at that time, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any future planning application;
 - It should be noted that policies, constraints etc. change from time to time and may affect the advice given. The weight that can be given to pre-application advice will therefore decline over time;
 - The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act bind the Council, as a public authority, and therefore it should be presumed that information supplied to the Council is likely to be disclosable under the above Act. If the applicant wants information to remain confidential, he/she should state clearly why. Information sent to the Council "in confidence" may still be disclosable under the above Act. Before sending such information the applicant is advised to take legal advice if there are fears that disclosure would prejudice himself/herself in some commercial way
 - Any advice given in relation to the planning history of the site, planning constraints or statutory designations does not constitute a formal response under the provisions of the Local Land Charges Act 1975.

E.6 **What the applicant should provide for the pre-application meeting.**

The applicant will need to write to the Council including the following as a minimum:

- Proposed developments involving 100 dwellings or more or 10,000 sq.m of floor space or more, should be accompanied by an initial outline for the proposal **including** if possible a draft **Masterplan** for the site;
- Description of the nature and scale of development proposed and the uses to which land and buildings are to be put;
- Full site address and location plan (1:1250 scale) with the site outlined in red;
- Site history i.e. occupancy of the site;
- Photographs of the site and adjoining properties affected by the development

- For proposals, which will be submitted as full or reserved matters applications, sketch drawings providing details of the proposal. Floor plans for each floor of the proposed building together with at least sketch elevations that are sufficient to indicate the initial architectural approach and palette of materials should be provided. Drawings should also show any adjacent buildings and boundaries to identify the context of the scheme;
- Draft of Design and Access Statement (if relevant to the type of application) and
- Presence of protected species.

E.7 How will the advice be structured?

The written advice will depend upon the information presented (please see 'what the applicant should provide'). Advice will usually be in the form of a written report considering the following areas:

- Relevant planning history;
- Relevant policies and constraint;
- Whether the proposed type of development is acceptable in principle;
- Recommended consultations before the application is submitted;
- Issues relevant to the type and scale of proposed development, such as: urban design (encapsulates design and its surroundings), amenity, transport and environmental issues including noise, contamination, flooding, drainage and biodiversity;
- Developer contributions;
- List of additional information, which will be required from the adopted Local List to validate an application.

E.8 Disclaimer

You should be aware that any advice given by the Council in relation to pre-application enquiries will be based on the case officer's professional judgement and will not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council with regard to any future planning applications. Any views or opinions expressed, are given without prejudice to the consideration by the Council of any formal planning application, which will be subject to wider consultation and publicity. Although the case officer may indicate the likely outcome of a formal planning application, no guarantees can or will be given about the decision that will be made on any such application.

The Council positively encourages applicants to enter into pre-application discussions but if a major or minor application is submitted without such discussions, the Council may determine the application as submitted without post submission discussions.

E.9 Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires us to make all documents available to members of the public, if requested. Pre-application advice can

only be treated as confidential if there are clearly demonstrable issues of commercial sensitivity or other significant reasons why this information may not be made public. (Any enquiry in this category should be clearly marked as confidential). If a planning application is made as a result of pre-application advice, **all** documentation may be publicly available, as they will form background papers to the application.

E.10 Our Commitment to You

If the Council exceeds a period of 8 weeks to provide a written response (unless a longer period of time has been agreed in writing), and is at fault, a refund will be given to show our commitment to this service.

APPENDIX F

HOW PARISH COUNCILS CAN BECOME INVOLVED IN CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Pre- application consultations

The Council encourages applicants to seek the views of the local community before a planning application is submitted and this could be done with the help of Parish Councils. It is an opportunity for the applicant to have the input of local people and/ or address objections, which could affect the determination of the application and Parish Councillors, can provide an invaluable voice for local people in this process.

Once a planning application is submitted

Copies of planning applications within a Parish are sent to the relevant parish council so that people can have access to view them locally.

Parish Councils are notified about planning applications within their parish and have 21 days to submit a response.

Planning Committee Meetings

An elected member of the Parish Council (or Chairman or duly nominated person of a Parish Meeting) can speak at a Planning Committee as long as the Parish Council itself is not the applicant. The parish representative can speak for up to three minutes and is not allowed to express any personal views.

Involvement of Parish Councils in planning obligations

When Parish Councils are commenting on submitted planning applications they can at this stage put forward suggestions of what is needed within the community in order to mitigate any potential impact of the development proposals what could be included as a planning obligation. Community-led Plans, which set out priority issues within a parish, could be used to highlight what facilities a village may wish to have provided and be used in the negotiating of planning obligations.

Appeals

Parish Councils and members of the public will be consulted and invited to comment on an appeal. The Council may invite where relevant a Parish Council to become more involved in an appeal. Evidence from Parish Councillors can be useful especially if they have detailed local knowledge.

APPENDIX G

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PLANNING OFFICERS

By telephone – 08450 450 500 (for all general enquiries)

Planning Duty Officer telephone 01954 713155

Contacting the planning officers in writing – by post at the following address.

South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

Planning Policy Team responsible for preparing the Local Development Framework (LDF) for South Cambridgeshire –
email ldf@scambs.gov.uk

Major Development Team dealing with the major developments around Cambridge and the new settlement of Northstowe –
email majordevelopments@scambs.gov.uk

Conservation Team dealing with conservation issues –
email conservation@scambs.gov.uk

Development Management Area Planning Teams - at present planning applications and related work are distributed between two area teams, each led by a Team Leader. The two area teams cover the following parts of the district. The table below shows which team is responsible for which village.

DCTeamEast@scambs.gov.uk or

DCTeamWest@scambs.gov.uk

TEAM EAST	TEAM WEST
Babraham	Abington Pigotts
Balsham	Arrington
Bartlow	Bar Hill
Carlton cum Willingham	Barrington
Castle Camps	Barton
Chittering	Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth
Cottenham	Bourn
Duxford	Boxworth
Fen Ditton	Caldecote
Fulbourn	Cambourne
Great Abington	Caxton
Great Shelford	Childerley

TEAM EAST	TEAM WEST
Great Wilbraham Harston Hauxton Hildersham Hinxton Histon Horningsea Horseheath Ickleton Impington Landbeach Linton Little Abington Little Shelford Little Wilbraham & Six Mile Bottom Milton Newton Oakington and Westwick Pampisford Rampton Sawston Shudy Camps Stapleford Stow-Cum-Quy Teversham Thriplow (Village & Heathfield) Waterbeach West Wickham West Wrating Weston Colville Whittlesford	Comberton Conington Coton Croydon Croxtan Dry Drayton Elsworth Eltisley Fen Drayton Fowlmere Foxton Gamlingay Girton Grantchester Graveley Great & Little Chishill Great & Little Eversden Guilden Morden Hardwick Harlton Haslingfield Hatley Heydon Kingston Knapwell Litlington Little Gransden Lolworth Longstanton Longstowe Madingley Melbourn Meldreth Orwell Over Papworth Everard Papworth St Agnes Shepreth Shingay-cum-Wendy Steeple Morden Swavesey Tadlow Toft Whaddon Willingham Wimpole

OTHER SOURCES OF INDEPENDENT PLANNING ADVICE

Planning Aid

Planning Aid for the East of England is a free voluntary service offering independent professional advice on planning matters to individuals, community groups and voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for planning consultants. Details can be found on their website - www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

Planning Portal

This is an online resource for planning information and services set up to help anyone who wants to know more about planning process in England and Wales. Details can be found on their website. www.planningportal.gov.uk

APPENDIX H

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AAP	Area Action Plan	Provides a statutory planning framework for an area of change
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy	Strategy for promoting the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area and contributing to the achievement of district-wide sustainable development
CS	Core Strategy	An element of planning policy within the LDF
CABE	The Commission for Architecture and Built Environment	CABE is a public agency that works with architects, planners, designers, developers and clients, offering them guidance on projects that will shape lives.
DPD	Development Plan Document	Statutory document having been through Independent Examination
	Design and Access Statement	Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind a planning application. They explain the design principles and concepts that have informed the development and how access issues have been dealt with.
	Equalities Consultative Forum	Group set up by South Cambridgeshire Council to ensure the Council takes the needs of minority or disadvantaged groups into account.
GO-East	Government Office for the Eastern Region	
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment	All Local Development Documents must also be subject to a Habitat Regulation Assessment, which assess the policies within any planning document to see if they are cumulatively likely to affect internationally recognised nature conservation sites – Natura 2000 sites.
LDD	Local Development Document	Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
LDF	Local Development Framework	A “folder” containing LDDs, LDS, SCI etc.
LDS	Local Development Scheme	Sets out the LDDs to be produced over the next 3 years
LPA	Local Planning Authority	e.g. South Cambridgeshire District Council
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership	Public service providers, local communities, voluntary, public and private sectors co-ordinate improvements in public services to achieve sustainable economic, social and physical regeneration
	Masterplan	Strategic & Local Master Plans
	Parish Plan – now known as Community led Plans	A vision of how a town or village should be, addressing social, economic or environmental issues
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance	National planning guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statement	New form of national planning guidance replacing PPGs
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy	New name for RPG

SA	Sustainability Appraisal	An appraisal against sustainability criteria of proposals for LDDs by independent consultants
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	Shows how the wider community and stakeholders are to be involved in the process of producing a LDF
	Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans, promoting sustainable development
	Section 106	Planning agreements that secure contributions (in cash or in kind) to the infrastructure and services necessary to facilitate proposed developments
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	Informal policy which has been the subject of public participation (the new name for SPG)
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest	Designated site of national importance to wildlife and/or geology
	Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 (as amended)	The regulations that set the rules for producing planning policy documents. They interpret the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Planning Act 2008.



Planning and Sustainable Communities
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridgeshire CB23 6EA

t: 03450 450 500

www.scambs.gov.uk

