



**South  
Derbyshire**  
District Council

Planning Services

Local Development Framework

# Statement of Community Involvement

## Adopted

March 2006










INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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## Planning our Future

Introduction by the Chair of Environmental & Development Services Committee

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## Planning our Future

Significant changes to the way the planning system operates in England have been introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. At the heart of the new system is the necessity for better public involvement in the preparation of Local Development Frameworks and the determination of planning applications. This Statement of Community Involvement, itself created through active public consultation, shows South Derbyshire District Council's commitment to this principle.

Our vision is for residents, business people and all others with an interest in the area to understand and be involved in the planning system in a way that is relevant, transparent and appropriate to them. This document therefore sets out what we will seek to involve people in, who we will involve, as well as how and when they will be involved. The document also shows how the information collected will be used and fed back.

I am therefore delighted to offer this Statement of Community Involvement to you and I look forward to your active involvement in planning for a sustainable South Derbyshire.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Taylor', written in a cursive style.

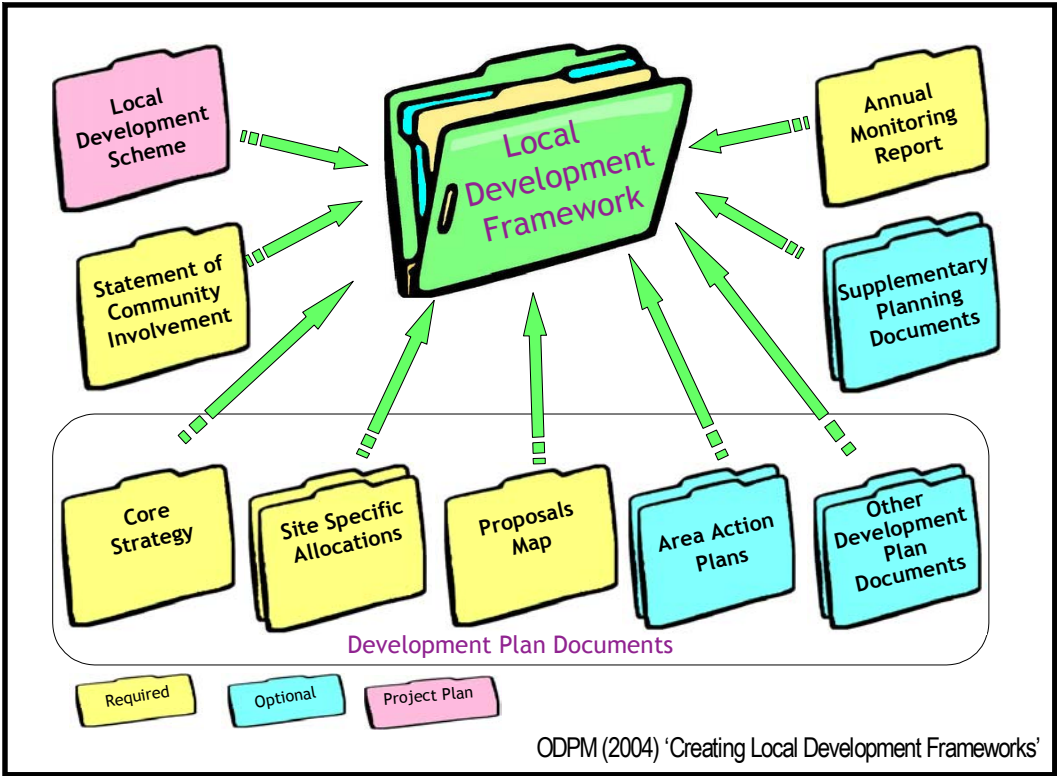
Councillor Steve Taylor  
Chair, Environmental and Development Services Committee

# What's it all about?

## Planning is changing...

The Government has made major changes to the planning system to make it faster, more responsive to change, and to encourage more people to get involved. The old approach required Councils to produce a 'Local Plan', a large document that takes many years to produce. Under the old system the Local Plan set out a vision for the development of South Derbyshire and plans for how that vision would be achieved. This included things like land allocations for different uses (e.g. housing, industrial and business) and policies for dealing with different issues such as affordable housing and environmental protection.

Under the new system the Local Plan will eventually be replaced by a Local Development Framework. The new document will contain the same things as a Local Plan but the format will be very different. Rather than being one large document, the Local Development Framework will be a folder containing a number of different documents (called local development documents). This means that the Framework will be more flexible and responsive to the District's needs as each document, plan or policy can be changed or updated separately.



County Councils also have to produce their own Local Development Framework including a Statement of Community Involvement for documents relating to minerals and waste.

## What is the Statement of Community Involvement for?

A key difference of the new planning system is that it places more value on meaningful community involvement. Reflecting this, a key requirement is this Statement of Community Involvement, which must set out how people will be involved in the new planning system. Like the rest of the Local Development Framework, the Statement of Community Involvement will be independently examined by an Inspector. Once it is accepted, we will have to produce all of our other Local Development Framework documents in line with the commitments made in this Statement. It is therefore an important document for us and for our community.

Specifically, the Statement of Community Involvement sets out:

- **What** we will involve people in
- **Who** we will involve
- **How** we will involve people and **when**
- How the information collected will be used and fed back to those involved

## Involving people

The Government places a growing emphasis on community involvement in the delivery of all community services - including planning:

*“Planning shapes the places where people live and work. So it is right that people should be enabled and empowered to take an active part in the process. Community involvement is vitally important to planning.”*

We recognise that community involvement should not simply be about ticking a box on our ‘to do’ list. We are committed to involving the community throughout the planning process in a way that is relevant, appropriate and realistic.

We recognise that, by involving people effectively, we will better understand the needs and priorities of our community. This will help us to develop policies that better reflect community expectations and may help us to gain support for individual plans. Additionally, early involvement will help us to overcome the conflict that has been a part of planning processes in the past - hopefully leading to a more constructive debate about an issue or proposal.

We believe that everyone in our community should have the opportunity to have a say about the future development of the area as the plans and policies can affect them directly. So, we have developed this Statement of Community Involvement to make sure we can involve our community effectively and in a way that benefits everyone involved.

### **Our vision for community involvement in planning..**

**For everyone to have the opportunity to be involved in local planning in a way that is relevant, transparent and appropriate for them. For everyone to understand the planning system, how they are able to get involved and have meaningful feedback on how their contribution has been taken into account.**

We have actively sought to involve our community in developing this document. This has involved:

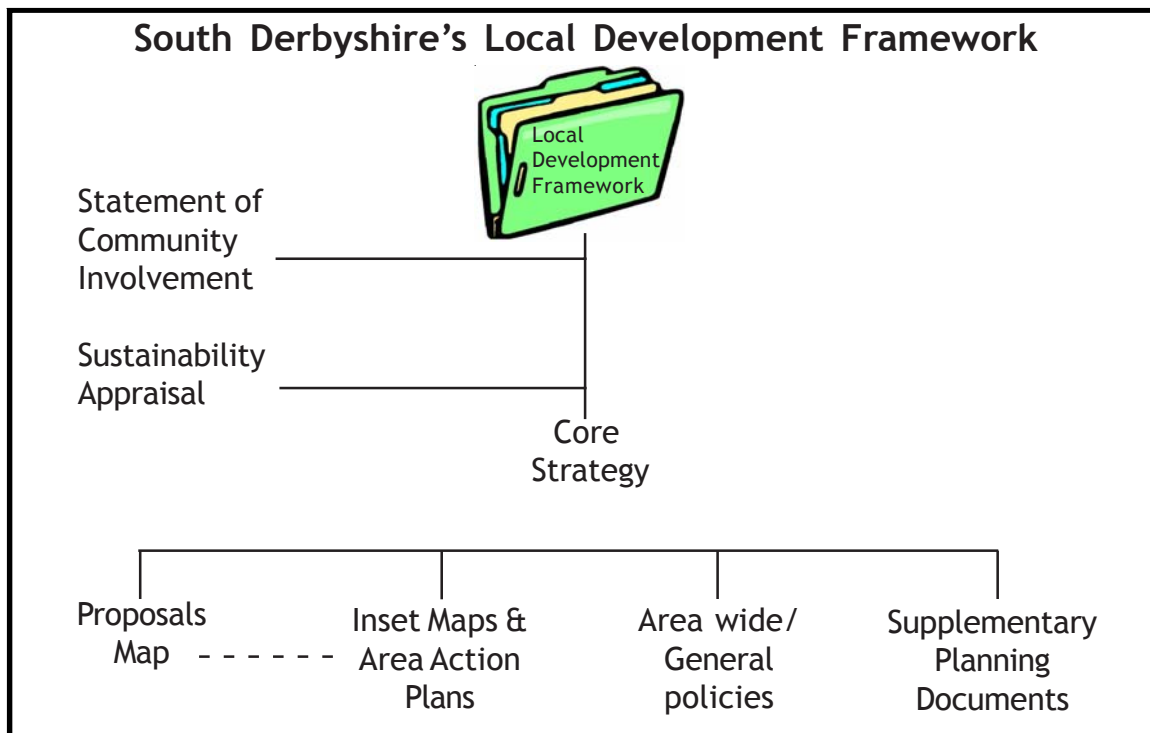
- a series of discussions with representatives covering a range of areas and interests;
- a workshop event involving community representatives, in which we asked participants to identify their priorities and ideas for effective community involvement;
- a formal 6 week consultation period on a draft document (formally known as the Pre-Submission Participation Draft).



## What are we involving people in?

### The Local Development Framework (LDF)...

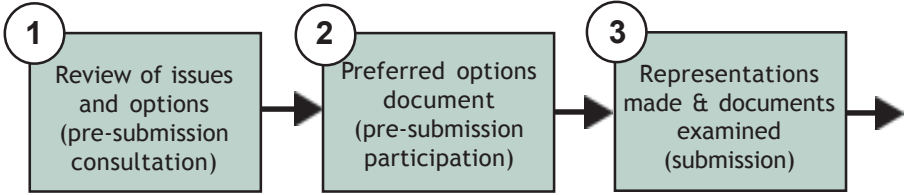
Firstly, this Statement of Community Involvement will set out how we intend to involve people in preparing and developing the Local Development Framework. The Local Development Framework will be made up of lots of different documents (development plan documents), some covering general planning issues (such as the core strategy) and others covering area-specific or topic-specific issues. Although not required, we can also develop additional documents (supplementary planning documents) covering issues specifically relating to the situation in South Derbyshire. Please refer to the glossary in Appendix 3 for definitions.



Each document we produce must have an associated Sustainability Appraisal that assesses how each new document contributes to or impacts on the environmental, social and economic position of our District. At the moment this is a new area of work about which we are still learning but will involve the community at appropriate stages in the process.

Our proposed approach to producing the Local Development Framework can be viewed in more detail in our Local Development Scheme . This is a plan of what documents will be produced and when. It can be obtained from the Council offices or viewed on our website: [www.south-derbys.gov.uk](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk)

It is important that opportunities to get involved are made available throughout the different stages of producing each document. The key stages can be summarised as:



At each stage in the process we must record how we have consulted the community and taken its views into account. When required at specific times by statutory regulations we must also publish a consultation statement. Our aims for involving the community in the development of the Local Development Framework are set out in more detail on pages 8 to 12.

**..... and planning applications**

This document will also set out how we intend to involve people in deciding specific planning applications. This includes:

- how people can access information about planning applications;
- how people can put forward their views about applications;
- how their views will be fed into the decision-making process; and
- how we will feedback on decisions made.

The requirements for involving people in planning applications as set out by the Government, and our own commitments to involving the community, are outlined on pages 13 to 14.

**Linking to other strategies**

It is important that we do not develop the Local Development Framework in isolation from other local initiatives and strategies. Of particular importance is the relationship between the Local Development Framework and the Community Strategy, that addresses local issues and aims to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Derbyshire. Those aspects of the Community Strategy relating to land use and local development will be delivered by the Local Development Framework.

The Community Strategy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the Local Strategic Partnership to reflect changes in local needs and priorities. We will therefore work with the Local Strategic Partnership to identify potential links between our documents and processes. We will seek to share information and combine community involvement activities where possible. We will investigate the practicalities of setting up a shared database for information and activities, which will better enable us to work together.

For further information on the Community Strategy please use the following link:

[www.south-derbys.gov.uk/lsp](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/lsp)

There are numerous other strategies which must be taken into account when preparing Local Development Documents, many of which have been brought to our attention during consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement.



## Who will we involve?

### Our community

By 'community' we mean all individuals, groups and organisations that live, work or operate within the District.

Our community is different from other areas and we understand that the different groups that make up our community have different needs and expectations, different interests and different capabilities to be involved.

To make sure that it is effective in improving community involvement in planning, the Statement of Community Involvement must recognise these differences. The approaches outlined must provide an opportunity for all of our community to get involved if they want to - at an appropriate and relevant level for them.

### Who's who?

We have to involve some people by law. These are called 'statutory' or 'specific' consultees and consist of organisations such as the regional planning body (East Midlands Regional Assembly), our neighbouring Councils, the Environment Agency and Countryside Agency. At minimum, we have to formally consult these consultees at each stage of the process relating to the preparation of each document making up the Local Development Framework.

In addition to the groups we must involve, we recognise that there are many other organisations and individuals operating in our area who have a valuable role to play in shaping the individual documents that make up our Local Development Framework. These are called 'general' consultees and include organisations such as local interest groups, businesses, schools, developers, service providers and also individual residents. We are committed to involving these organisations and individuals in addition to and, if appropriate for them, in the same way as the 'specific' consultees. We have a comprehensive database of contact details. Any individual or organisation wishing to be included on the database, should get in touch, providing contact details and indicating the type of issues they want to be consulted on.

The diagram opposite lists the different types of community 'group' that we intend to involve, their interests and our view on their capacity to be involved.

Of particular importance to the new planning system - and this Statement of Community Involvement - is the focus on involving those people who do not normally get involved in planning matters.

## Different interests and desire to be involved

Community Group	Interests & Capability	Hard to Reach?
<b>Statutory/Specific Stakeholders</b> e.g. Regional Planning Body, Neighbouring Councils, Environment Agency, English Heritage, County Council	Each organisation must be consulted on the different documents and, although easy to identify and contact, may have limited time to be involved in the development of every document every time. Some organisations, such as Environment Agency/English Nature also have specific interests.	No
<b>Additional Authorities</b> e.g. Town & Parish Councils, South Derbyshire District Council departments, CPRE, Highways Agency, Sports Council	Organisations are likely to wish to be informed of the whole process, however each is likely to get more involved in area-specific (Parish Councils/CPRE) or topic-specific (individual council departments) documents that are more relevant to their area of interest or expertise. These groups are easy to identify and involve, but may need some support in understanding planning issues.	No
<b>Service Providers</b> e.g. Health Trusts, Fire & Rescue, Police, Transport Providers, Utilities Providers, Schools, Charities & Voluntary Organisations	These organisations are likely to be involved as representatives of specific issues/interests and different local communities. They are easy to identify but may have limited experience in planning issues and may therefore have a limited interest in being involved. They are also likely to wish to be involved only in documents relating to their interest or area.	No, and can be useful in reaching more hard to reach communities
<b>Business Sector</b> e.g. Different local businesses, retail outlets and shopping centre management, tourism organisations, Chambers of Commerce.	These organisations will be easy to identify, although involving all businesses may be difficult. Most are also likely to have limited knowledge of planning issues and therefore limited interest. They are likely to wish to be involved only in documents affecting the area in which they operate.	No, although small businesses and sole traders may find it difficult to get involved
<b>Local Communities</b> Individual residents and groups of residents e.g. by age, ethnicity, disability, lifestyle, interest, activity, belief or geographical areas. Local Strategic Partnership.	Most individuals will be interested only in documents that affect them directly (e.g. specific to where they live). Community groups can be involved as representatives of specific issues/interests /areas. Such groups have different levels of understanding of the planning process and how to get involved.	Yes, some community groups can perceive planning issues as remote and difficult to understand
<b>Developers &amp; Landowners</b> e.g. Individual developers, regeneration organisations, Home Builders Federation, National Trust	These groups are likely to wish to be involved in documents affecting where development can occur and also more general policies guiding different aspects of development . They are likely to have some experience and knowledge of the planning process and are relatively easy to identify through their previous involvement in planning activities.	No



## How will we involve people?

### What do we mean by involvement?

By ‘involvement’ we mean any interaction between the Council and the community regarding planning. We recognise that there are different levels of involvement including:

<b>Informing people</b>	providing information, for example leaflets, advertising, ongoing awareness programmes and the media
<b>Consulting people</b>	asking for views on issues or a document, for example through surveys, exhibitions and formal consultation processes
<b>Actively involving people</b>	involving people in identifying priorities and contributing ideas, for example through workshops or specifically designed interactive methods.

As the people involved in our workshop realised, we have to be realistic about how many people we are able to involve at each stage in the process, particularly at more active levels of involvement. They suggested that we should involve people at a level that is appropriate for the document being discussed and the people being involved. One idea was to use more active involvement methods to help shape area-specific documents, where more people may want to be involved and more interactive approaches would increase the benefits to both the Council and the community.

### Our approach

We recognise that community involvement must be effective to be worthwhile. Informed by what makes involvement effective, we aim to involve the community according to the following principles:

<b>Genuine</b>	making it clear from the start what can be influenced and feeding back outcomes to demonstrate the benefits of being involved.
<b>Accessible</b>	avoiding the use of jargon or explaining specific terms clearly and making documents available in different formats and through a range of methods.
<b>Timely</b>	involving people throughout the whole process, particularly in the early stages, to maximise the benefits of identifying and aligning different ideas and views.
<b>Relevant</b>	providing information that is interesting to the audience and clearly communicates the importance/meaning of different activities to people.
<b>Open</b>	allowing everyone to know what’s going on throughout the processes and freedom to discuss views without being judged or dismissed.

## Possible methods of involvement

Method	Things to think about . . .	Does it inform?	Does it consult?	Does it involve?
Newsletters & leaflets	Can provide up to date information, but can be costly. Can also reach large numbers but it is not possible to guarantee that it will be read.	Y	N	N
Media (local press/TV/radio)	Can reach large numbers of people. Adverts can be costly but press releases and editorials are free although it is not possible to guarantee how the information will be reported.	Y	N	N
Exhibitions & displays	Can be more interesting and interactive but requires people to attend. It is possible to display information in places such as supermarkets and care will be needed to achieve representative audiences overall.	Y	Y/N	N
Website	Can be very resource efficient and convenient, particularly for organisations, however not everyone has access to a computer.	Y	Y/N	N
Questionnaires & surveys	Can be effective in gaining a large number of responses but is often viewed as boring and many people do not reply. Not effective for complex issues which need to be explained.	Y	Y	N
Citizens' Panel	Already exists and is available for use in relation to planning documents. Would need to consider how representative the panel is.	Y	Y	N
Public meetings & surgeries	Can be relatively inexpensive and can be effective. But can suffer low attendance and attendees may not be representative. Could use existing meetings such as Area Meetings.	Y	Y	N
Focus groups	Can be used to actively involve hard to reach or specific interest groups and will need careful preparation, resourcing and expertise.	Y	Y	Y/N
Workshops	Can be effective for complex issues and can involve a large number of people at one event and will need careful preparation, resourcing and expertise.	Y	Y	Y
Participative planning activities and mediation	Can be more tailored and interesting to those people who do not usually get involved and can help resolve issues in a less confrontational way and will need careful preparation, organising and facilitation.	Y	Y	Y
Community forums or liaison groups	Allows ongoing/regular involvement at a more informal level. Groups gain in-depth understanding of issues and are able to contribute in more detail. Can help to overcome conflict and will need careful balancing of costs and benefits.	Y	Y	Y

## Overcoming barriers

The key barrier to community involvement identified by the people at the workshop was a combination of poor access to information, a lack of understanding of the planning process and issues involved, and a lack of understanding of why it is relevant to individuals.

One of our key priorities is to provide everyone with the opportunity to know what is going on and how they can get involved if they want to. To support this, we aim to provide information that is locally relevant, and use methods of involvement that are accessible and interesting.

Alongside specific involvement activities, we are committed to raising awareness of the planning system throughout our community. With this in mind, we will seek to maximise use of the website to provide up to date information about the planning system and make officers available to attend meetings or present to groups and organisations on request. We will also provide easy to understand A4 summary sheets relating to each new document.

## More than consultation

At minimum, we will provide an opportunity for our community to put forward their views during the formal consultation processes. The community must be consulted on the draft documents (review of preferred options) and also be able to submit 'representations' (comments) on the pre-submission and submission versions of the documents. These comments are then considered at the independent examination. A reminder of the 3 key stages are displayed opposite.



Although this is the minimum, we recognise the benefits in involving people more actively in identifying priorities and shaping documents. We are therefore committed not only to consulting people on an issue or document, but also to involving them in contributing ideas and identifying priorities.

We have set out in the table on page 12 how you can expect to be involved in the preparation of the different documents that make up the Local Development Framework, including through more interactive approaches. We have also identified the different activities we aim to undertake if resources are available to us.

## Involving everyone

The people who have been involved in the activities to develop this document identified a number of different community groups who are 'hard to reach'. There are varying reasons for this. Some people are difficult to identify and contact,

some people are difficult to engage in issues relating to planning through lack of understanding, experience or access to information.

The Council's approach has not been to allocate particular methods of consultation to particular 'hard to reach' groups but rather provide a suite of methods that can be used as required to engage with all sections of the community where particular issues are identified.

Under recent disability and race relations legislation, the Council is obliged to promote equality and diversity. With regard to its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (amended April 2005), the Council has since 1999 sought to provide disabled people access to its services by way of making reasonable adjustments to the way services are delivered. For example the Council's website includes a 'browse aloud' facility allowing access by the visually impaired whilst all Council documents are made available in large print and braille formats if requested. Similarly the Race Relations Act (as Amended 2000) places a general duty on South Derbyshire District Council to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups. In order to operate within the provisions of the Act the Council has a duty to ensure that as a policy maker and service provider it consults ethnic minority representatives and takes account of the potential impact of policies on ethnic minorities taking remedial action when necessary to address any unexpected or unwarranted disparities.

We know that involving our community in an appropriate and effective way requires specific skills and additional capacity - for both us and community members. We will make sure that we continually review needs and work to fill any gaps, for example through training.

We will also review the specific requirements of particular groups and try to match their needs by tailoring our approaches - for example arranging suitable times for events so that the working community can attend, and perhaps using technology to engage young people.

### **Stage 1: Pre-production (undertaking research and gathering evidence)**

We have to gather evidence to inform each document. We will have to undertake research on issues such as housing and employment to identify specific needs, ideas for improvement and hopefully potential options for guiding future development. The information we gather will be collated and used to identify priorities and inform options the production of the associated local development documents (LDDs). During this stage we are likely to undertake the first exercise in community involvement - **Pre-production consultation**.



### **Stage 2: Pre-submission (preparing the document)**

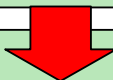
We will review the needs identified in Stage 1 and the different options available to us. We will produce a report, which will outline the available options and the Council's opinion of the preferred option. Any responses received at Stage 1 will be considered when preparing a draft of a local development document. You will be able to review this document and make comments during a 6 week consultation period which is part of the formal process - **Pre-submission participation**. As outlined in the SCI, we aim to provide everyone with the opportunity to present their views if they want to.



### **Stage 3: Submission & Examination (producing submission document and independent examination)**

After the 6 week period of consultation during Stage 2, we will produce a 'submission document'. This will build on the previous document and will be informed by any comments made. The submission document will be submitted to the secretary of State for independent examination. You will be notified of this stage through the methods proposed in the SCI and there will be a second 6 week period within which you can make formal comments (representations) on the document. (nb: in addition, in the case of a 'site allocations' document, a further 6 week period of consultation will be held inviting responses to representations received in the second 6 week period).

Following the second (or third) 6 week consultation period as the case may be, an examination will be held. A Planning Inspector, who is independent from the Council, will consider each of the representations received and will decide if any changes are necessary. The Inspector will produce a report and we will have to abide by the recommendations made in this report.



### **Adoption**

On receipt of the Inspectors report, the Council will adopt the document and all future planning decisions will be guided by the policies and proposals set out in the new document. The Council will inform all those who have asked to be notified of the adoption of the document and where it can be obtained.

## Choosing appropriate approaches

The following table sets out the approaches we will use to involve the community in the LDF and its different documents (✓). It also indicates the approaches that we may use if we believe it to be beneficial and/or resources are available (P). Please refer to the previous page of this document for an explanation of the stages 1, 2 & 3.

Method	Core & general policies			Development plan documents (e.g. area action plans)			Supplementary Planning documents	
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
Stage	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
Making documents available for review at Council offices and libraries	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓
Newsletter or leaflet available at local venues e.g. supermarkets, surgeries	✓	P	P	✓	-	-	✓	-
Information sent to existing network of organisations and their newsletters	✓	P	P	✓	P	✓	✓	P
Press releases /articles in press	✓	✓	✓	✓	P	✓	✓	P
Exhibition/display in local area(s)	-	P	-	-	✓	-	-	P
Information and documents on website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Questionnaire survey	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	P	-
Public meeting/ surgery	-	✓	P	-	✓	P	-	✓
Focus group with representatives of specific issue area	P	-	-	P	-	-	✓	P
Workshop with representatives of range of issue or interest areas	P	✓	-	P	✓	-	-	P
Participative planning activities	-	P	-	P	-	-	-	-
Community liaison group	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P



## Involving people in planning applications

This Statement of Community Involvement must also outline how our community will be involved in the process of submitting and deciding individual planning applications.

### Minimum requirements

We are already required to consult with our community on all planning applications submitted. The diagram overleaf sets out the minimum action we must take by law to provide an opportunity to put forward views or concerns. Where appropriate this involves placing notices on the relevant site and in the local newspaper to raise awareness of an application that has been submitted. Following this we must allow 3 weeks to make any comments to us about the application.

### Towards good practice

We recognise that, in some cases, it will be beneficial and appropriate to involve more people and/or involve them earlier in the process. As such we have set out in the diagram overleaf the additional actions we will take prior to and at the application stage. The diagram also outlines the action we will take following a decision or outcome.

We will continue to make improvements e.g.:

- As systems are upgraded and resources become available we will provide access to forms, guidance and actual plans on our website. We will also investigate the possibility of submitting representations online.
- As a direct result of a comment at the workshop we have increased the size of lettering used on site notices.

### Supporting Applicants

Involving people before an application is made allows them to influence developments as they are being designed, helping to deal with issues that could become major barriers later in the process. For each stage in the process, and for different types of application, we intend to review whether greater involvement is appropriate and how we can support applicants in involving people more effectively.

For example:

- If appropriate we will facilitate liaison meetings between the applicant and local residents. We will not chair the meeting but will encourage a member of the local community to do so.
- We offer a Development Team Approach to applicants in order to provide co-ordinated information and feedback. We will prepare an Advice Note for applicants on this matter.
- When appropriate we will request a statement of consultation with a planning application relating to major applications. (For a definition of 'major planning applications' please see Appendix 2).

### Pre-application

- Actively encourage pre-application discussions with developers.
- Actively encourage developers of larger schemes to inform and involve the community in shaping their proposals (see Appendix 2).
- For smaller applications, actively encourage applicants to discuss their plans with neighbours prior to submitting their application.



### Application (minimum)

- Circulate details to relevant Parish Council.
- Notify neighbours in accordance with our neighbour notification policy (Appendix 1)
- Place a notice on site where there are no immediate neighbours .
- Place a notice in locally circulating newspaper when statutorily required to do so in regard to specific applications.
- Allow 3 weeks for interested parties to make comments.



### Application (additional)

- Publish a list of applications received on the website.
- Make the list of applications received available to view at local libraries.
- When resources permit we will increase the amount of information on the web site ideally so that the progress of applications can be tracked on line.
- Accept comments after the statutory 21 days where the decision has not yet been made or the item not published on an agenda. (It should be borne in mind that for your comments to receive full and proper consideration they should be submitted within the 21 days).



### Decision

- Notify all those who have submitted a stamped and self addressed envelope with their comments of the outcomes and decisions, including appeals.
- Place decision notices (and any associated legal agreements) on the website along with additional information regarding conditions and reasons and documents associated with planning applications (committee reports, appeals register, telecom register etc).
- Concerns about applications that may not have been implemented as agreed can be raised with our enforcement section for investigation via telephone to the Council's call centre, personal visit or by completing a form available on the website.



## Managing the process

### Feeding information into plan and decision making

The information we obtain through community involvement will be collated and used to inform our decisions and/or shape any documents we produce. A summary report will be produced outlining the consensus responses. Later on, we will add information on how the responses were used to inform any decisions or documents. We aim to make the link between your responses and our decision or action clear. This will also involve explaining why some ideas haven't been acted on. This report will be available on request from the council offices and will also be made available on the website.

### Feeding back to those involved

Each document in the Local Development Framework will require a 'statement of consultation'. This must outline how the Statement of Community Involvement has been followed and how doing so has benefited document production. This will provide some indication of the benefits of your involvement. We will feedback summary outcomes and details of specific outcomes and decisions directly to all those who have been involved in the process and its specific activities. General feedback will also be made available for everyone to access on our website or from our council offices on request.

#### **Our feedback commitment**

We aim to provide feedback on any involvement activities or consultation processes associated with local development documents within 4 weeks of their completion.

At minimum, this will include an acknowledgement of your comments, and a summary of how the process is going.

### How will the processes be resourced?

It is clear that more community involvement will require additional resources and time, particularly for more active involvement activities. We receive funds through the Planning Services Budget from the Council and The Planning Delivery Grant awarded by the Government. We have set aside money to make improvements to the planning pages of the website and will apply for all available funding to support our involvement activities.

Although we expect that additional resources will be required, we will also ensure that we optimise resource efficiency. We will do this by:

- Clearly defining the roles of the different individuals and groups involved;
- Learning from and, where possible, utilising the skills of other organisations e.g. LSP, Health Trusts and Planning Aid; and
- Wherever appropriate, combining and integrating involvement activities to ensure we do not over-consult people; making more efficient use of resources and peoples' time.



**Staff** - Officers will be responsible for the delivery of the majority of the activities set out in this Statement of Community Involvement. Where needed, we will draw on support from other Council departments and will also review our capabilities and work to fill any gaps as appropriate e.g. through training.

**Consultants** - Where we feel that the process would benefit from additional support or expertise, for example in facilitating more interactive sessions, we will consider employing consultants. The decision to do so will be informed by a full review of the potential costs and benefits.

**Equipment and material** - We already have in place much of the equipment and material needed to undertake the activities outlined. Where needed we will draw on the resources held by other Council departments.

**Venues and other costs** - We intend to utilise Council facilities, which are available free of charge or, where appropriate, hire accessible, local venues that offer value for money. Where possible, we will combine our activities (and with those of other departments) to ensure that processes are efficient and costs are minimised.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

There are a number of different individuals and groups who have a role to play in achieving effective community involvement in planning.

- **Role of developers** - to promote specific sites for development and, if appropriate for the development, fulfil community involvement requirements to the highest standard.
- **Role of the community** - to raise concerns and/or state support for proposals in order to ensure that development takes place in an acceptable manner. We actively encourage all members of the community, including the business community, to get involved in policy development as it directly affects the area in which they live and/or work.
- **Role of Parish Councils and other community networks** - to provide comment on individual planning applications and development proposals that have implications for their area. These organisations are also likely to be invited to represent community interests in involvement activities.

- **Statutory consultees / specialist bodies** - provide information and comment on specialist matters.
- **Role of officers** - to provide professional advice on planning matters and formulate draft policies and plans for Council approval. Officers will also be responsible for delivering community involvement activities.
- **Role of members** - to make formal decisions regarding planning matters in accordance with the Council's rules and procedures, having taken full account of consultation responses.

## Planning Aid

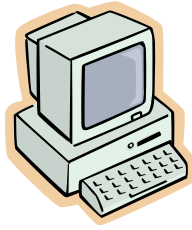
Recognising that Council officers are not always best placed to work with community groups and that some people prefer to seek independent advice, the Council will seek to ensure that people within the District are made aware of the role of **East Midlands Planning Aid Service (EMPAS)**. It provides a free and independent advice service on all planning-related matters for individuals and community groups who cannot afford consultant's fees. The service offers assistance via a helpline and through a proactive community planning programme. Both services are supported by a caseworker, community planners and a network of professional volunteers. (For contact details please see overleaf).

## Making improvements

To make sure the Statement of Community Involvement is successful, we must monitor its value both in informing and shaping the **Local Development Framework** and providing people in South Derbyshire with the opportunity to be more effectively involved in the planning process. It is essential that the content of the Statement of Community Involvement is continually improved as more lessons are learnt. We must review progress on the development of the **Local Development Framework** annually and produce an **Annual Monitoring Report**. This will contain some reference to community involvement undertaken and will be made available on our website.

Additionally, this Statement of Community Involvement will be reviewed every two years to provide an opportunity to build on the commitments made and learn from our ongoing experience. If appropriate the document will be updated to reflect changing priorities. It will also be important to review each individual involvement activity or process. We aim to evaluate community involvement activities according to:

- the usefulness of the information produced in informing the document or decision;
  - the usefulness of the process of involvement, for example in raising awareness, overcoming conflict or building ownership; and
  - how worthwhile the participants felt the process or activity to be.
- Each document produced will require a 'statement of consultation' highlighting, not only how the Statement of Community Involvement has been followed, but also what benefits involving the community has provided to the document's development. Ongoing evaluation of specific activities and processes can be undertaken drawing on that statement and individual evaluation forms.



## More information?

### Planning Policy Team

For more information about the preparation of the Local Development Framework and this Statement of Community Involvement, please contact the Planning Policy Team:

South Derbyshire District Council

Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 0AH

Email: [planning.policy@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@south-derbys.gov.uk)

Phone: 01283 595983

### Development Control Team (planning applications)

For more information about Development Control and decisions made on planning applications, please contact the Development Control Team at the same address as above or:

Email: [development.control@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:development.control@south-derbys.gov.uk)

Phone: 01283 228706

### Government Policies and Guidelines

The Government has published a number of different policies and associated guidance about planning policy and community involvement. This is published on the website of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM):

W: [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)

### Planning Aid

For further information on the East Midlands Planning Aid Service contact either the Planning Advice Helpline:

Email: [emcw@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:emcw@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)

Phone: 0870 850 9802

Or, for information about Community Planning:

Email: [emcp2@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:emcp2@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)

Phone: 0115 852 4266

### East Midlands Regional Assembly

Has responsibility for the preparation and review of regional planning guidance (now known as the Regional Spatial Strategy)

W: [www.emra.gov.uk](http://www.emra.gov.uk)





## Appendix

Appendix 1: **Neighbour notification**

Appendix 2: **Types of application**

Appendix 3: **Glossary of terms**



## Appendix 1

### Neighbour notification

Our Neighbour Notification Policy Revised: September 2005.

Objectives:

- (1) The Council is committed to publicising, and will notify neighbours of planning applications, including:  
Full, outline and reserved matters planning applications, advert, Listed Building and Conservation Area Consents, Notifications to carry out work to trees in Conservation Areas, Trees in Tree Preservation Orders, Renewal of Permissions, Removal Of Conditions, powerlines, Applications made under the General Regulations for minor works equivalent to domestic applications from private householders, Development by Government Departments.
  
- (2) In all cases, including those where statutory advertisement is required, the principal means of notifying neighbours will be by a standard letter to neighbours whose property lies closer than 4 metres from the application site boundary and upon whom the proposal(s) can reasonably be said to impinge in a detrimental fashion having regard to :
  1. discrepancy with the Council's adopted planning policies;
  2. loss of privacy, light or sunlight;
  3. overbearing effects;
  4. visual intrusion;
  5. loss of character of the building or street scene;
  6. noise disturbance or other pollution;
  7. traffic generation;
  8. adequacy of access;
  9. adequacy of public services;
  10. loss of important site features.

That the rule be applied as follows:

Any road less than twenty metres width will be discounted as if it was not there and the neighbour opposite consulted. Where a road is greater than 20m then the neighbour on the opposite side of the road is unlikely to be consulted unless the officer on visiting the site considers it appropriate to do so based on the nature of the proposed development. The distance of 4 metres (other than where there is a

road) is sufficient to identify all neighbours immediately adjoining the site. At the discretion of the officer visiting the site neighbours further away may be consulted if it appears that they might be unduly affected.

1. Measurement on site will be approximate by visual assessment.
  2. Notification will not be undertaken in the case of agricultural, unoccupied, or open land.
  3. Notification will not be undertaken of non-residential premises unless there is clearly perceived planning interest at stake.
- (3) That in addition to 2 above, site notices will be posted in exceptional cases at the discretion of the responsible officer having regard to the widespread effect of the proposal on affected residential or commercial properties beyond the four metre threshold in the light of the above criteria. Appropriate cases would normally include:
1. Hot food take away shops.
  2. Airfield developments.
  3. Marinas.
  4. Golf courses and golf driving ranges.
  5. Haulage yards and plant depots.
  6. Livestock units.
  7. Proposals for roads, railway and bus stations.
  8. Motorway/Trunk road service stations.
  9. Private hire/taxi businesses.
  10. Mobile Phone Masts.
- Site notices will be posted in waterproof plastic envelopes on the nearest available lamp post or telegraph pole to the site or across the road using drawing pins or string.
- (4) Statutory advertisement procedures will continue as before pending review in the light of the forthcoming General Development Order amendment.
- (5) Neighbours will be given a minimum of 21 days within which to respond, but responses received by the Friday before the agenda goes out will be taken into account.
- (6) Responses will be acknowledged where accompanied by a reply paid envelope.
- (7) All responses, subject to the delegation agreement, will be considered by the Planning Committee except that where objections result from a clear misreading of the application or are specifically met by amendment of the proposal, they need not be reported to the Committee.

- (8) Amendments to applications will be re-notified by the appropriate procedure at the discretion of the Officer responsible for consultations where neighbours are likely to experience an increased effect from the amended proposal. Re-notification will allow 10 days for response.
- (9) Decisions will be notified to neighbours by means of a copy of the decision notice on receipt of a reply paid envelope specifically provided for the purpose accompanying their representation.
- (10) Neighbours will be notified of the facilities under (6) and (9) above by means of the neighbour notification letter and site notices.
- (11) For the purposes of (2) and (8) above, under the direction of the Head of Planning Services, the officer responsible for consultations is the Development Control Manager.
- (12) Post permission amendments will be considered by the Officers having regard to any objection received whilst processing the application on their merits without re-notifying neighbours i.e. not in any way dependant upon the letter of endorsement from neighbours.

## Appendix 2

### Types of application

#### Defining applications

For the purpose of this document when referring to consultation on planning applications the term ‘larger schemes’ uses the definition in accordance with Article 8 of the Town & County Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 as follows:

The winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits  
Waste development (defined as any operational development designed to be used wholly or mainly for the purpose of, or a material change of use to, treating, storing, processing or disposing of refuse or waste materials)

The provision of dwellinghouses where :-

- the number to be provided is 10 or more;
- the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectare or more and it is not known whether the development is for 10 or more dwellinghouses;

The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or

Development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.

Although larger schemes must involve greater involvement, some schemes that do not fall into the categories described above may also be considered as ‘significant’. Where schemes have the potential to be controversial and/or are likely to be of significant local interest, for example the erection of telecommunications masts we will actively encourage developers to undertake pre-application consultation. If you are unsure as to whether your proposed development would be considered as significant, we would encourage you to contact the development control team for advice.

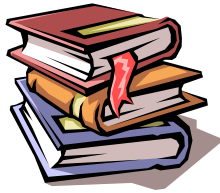
#### Expectations for pre-application consultation

The developer will be encouraged to meet with Council officers to discuss potential issues relating to the development and their proposed approach to consultation.

If the development is considered to be of the categories described above, a supporting statement will be requested to accompany the application. This should include:

- the potential issues relating to the development and the purpose of the consultation;
- a description of the approach taken including the methods used (and rationale) and the stakeholders/community groups involved;
- an outline of the key outcomes;
- an explanation of how the outcomes were considered by the developer and/or how they will be addressed in the development; and
- an outline of the benefits of the consultation exercise i.e. how the activity has benefited the development or the process of development.

We will actively encourage the developer to make the statement available to those who have been involved.



## Appendix 3

### Glossary of terms relating to the planning system

#### What does it mean?

<b>Adopted Local Plan</b>	The South Derbyshire Local Plan formally adopted in May 1998
<b>AMR</b>	Annual Monitoring Report to chart progress of producing and implementing policies and proposals making up the Local Development Framework
<b>DP</b>	Development Plan previously made up of the Structure Plan and Local Plan that will eventually be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy and those Local Development Documents that set out planning policy and land use allocations at the strategic and local level respectively
<b>Development Team Advice</b>	An approach where the Local Planning Authority provides a single contact point to co-ordinate responses from a range of services such as planning, building control, environmental health, housing, County highways etc. Also referred to as a 'one-stop-shop'
<b>LDD</b>	Local Development Documents comprising Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents that together make up the Local Development Framework
<b>LDF</b>	Local Development Framework a portfolio of maps and documents that sets out the Council's planning policy framework
<b>PPS</b>	Planning Policy Statements produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that sets out Government policy on specific topics (previously called Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG))

<b>Proposals Map</b>	A map that identifies those areas to which specific policies apply
<b>Regulations</b>	The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
<b>RSS</b>	Regional Spatial Strategy to be produced by the Regional Planning Forum to replace Regional Planning Guidance
<b>SA</b>	Sustainability Appraisal - a tool to ensure that policies in all Local Development Documents reflect sustainable development principles
<b>SCI</b>	Statement of Community Involvement that sets out how the Council will consult the community and stakeholders on the preparation of planning documents and the determination of planning applications
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment is a requirement of EU Directive 2001/42/EC and applies to plans and policies where impacts will be of a strategic nature
<b>SPD</b>	Supplementary Planning Documents that provide additional detailed guidance to support policies in Development Plan Documents (contained within the Local Development Framework)
<b>SPG</b>	Supplementary Planning Guidance that provided additional detailed guidance to support the old style Local Plan policies
<b>Structure Plan</b>	Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan produced jointly by the Derby City & Derbyshire County Council
<b>The Act</b>	The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that sets out new procedures for the preparation of the Local Development Framework

If you would like this document in another language, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please phone 01283 595795 or email [customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk)  
This information is also available in large print Braille or audio format upon request.

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