

APPENDIX 2

Foreword

Help us plan Leicester for the future

You may live in Leicester, commute to work in the city or have business interests here. You may come to Leicester to shop or for entertainment. You may have concerns about the environment of the city or about the needs of particular community groups. There are many reasons for people to have an interest in how the city is developing.

Recently we have seen exciting ideas for regeneration that are changing the face of the city. Work has started already in several areas but there are many more projects in the pipeline. When planning policies and proposals for future development in Leicester are being drawn up the City Council wants to give everybody an equal opportunity to be involved in the process from the start. We want to be sure that you will be consulted about the planning proposals that might affect you. We want you to know where you can find the information to make comments on planning applications, especially those that might affect your quality of life.

The Statement of Community Involvement will be the Council's commitment to public consultation on planning matters. Your comments are needed at this stage to make sure that the final document is a clear statement of the ways in which you will be informed and can become involved in the plan making process in future. Any comments you make now could result in a better Statement of Community Involvement.

We all want a vibrant, prosperous and attractive city and by working together we can achieve it.

I am not asking for your ideas for Leicester now, I just want to know your views on the ways we propose to involve you when we start to produce new planning documents or consider planning applications.

Cllr. Mark Farmer

Cabinet Member for Strategic Community Renewal and Safety

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A commitment to public involvement in the preparation of local planning documents and planning applications

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
CONSULTATION ON PLANNING POLICIES AND PROPOSALS
2. THE NEW PLANNING SYSTEM
3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
4. WHAT WE WILL CONSULT ON
5. WHO WE WILL CONSULT
6. HOW WE WILL CONSULT
7. WHEN WE WILL CONSULT
8. *CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS*

APPENDICES

1. Glossary
2. Consultation Bodies

"The Council is committed to effective participation with the people of Leicester - residents, service users, business, etc., to improve the quality of the decisions it makes on their behalf, and will inform them subsequently of the decision and the reason why."

Statement of commitment adopted by the City Council in 2000

1. INTRODUCTION

All terms shown in **bold** are described more fully in the Glossary at Appendix 1

- 1.1 As part of the new **planning** system brought in under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the City Council has produced a draft **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**.
- 1.2 This document sets out the Council's policy for engaging with and involving the community in the preparation of planning policies and proposals for Leicester, and in deciding planning applications.
- 1.3 Before the SCI can be adopted it will be subject to a process consisting of several stages. We are now at Stage 5 of the process

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| Stage 1 | Pre-submission consultation on the broad issues for inclusion in the SCI. |
| Stage 2 | Formulation of the draft SCI taking account of comments received at Stage 1 |
| Stage 3 | Pre-submission draft SCI published for a period of public consultation, with the intent of involving the community as a whole in the development of policies and standards for its future involvement in the planning process. |
| Stage 4 | All responses received during this pre-submission consultation will be considered and taken into account in the preparation of a submission draft SCI. |
| Stage 5 | A formal six week consultation period when the SCI is submitted to the Secretary of State in November 2005. Only comments made at that stage will be considered at the examination of the SCI |
| Stage 6 | The SCI will be subject to independent examination by a independent Planning Inspector to assess the soundness of the document. |
| Stage 7 | The Council must accept any changes that the Inspector recommends. Once these changes have been made the SCI will be adopted by the City Council. |

2 THE NEW PLANNING SYSTEM

2.1 The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 brought in a radical change to the plan-making system. The new system came into operation in September 2004 and changes the form and scope of planning in Leicester.

2.2 The old system of Local Plans has been replaced by a new system of **Local Development Documents (LDD)** contained within a **Local Development Framework (LDF)**.

Local Development Framework

2.3 The City Council will be responsible for the preparation of the Local Development Framework for Leicester It will include the following documents:

- a **Local Development Scheme** setting out the documents to be prepared during a 3 year period
- **Development Plan Documents (DPD)**. These LDDs form part of the statutory development plan and are subject to independent examination. They must comprise:
 - A Core Strategy
 - Site specific allocations of land
 - Area Action Plans (where needed)
 - A Proposals Map,
- **Supplementary Planning Documents** are LDDs supplementing the policies and proposals of DPDs but not subject to independent examination
- a **Statement of Community Involvement**
- an **Annual Monitoring Report** setting out the progress in producing local development documents and implementing policies.

2.4 As part of the transitional arrangements for the new system, policies in the **Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan** will be 'saved' (i.e. remain in force) for 3 years after adoption. It may be appropriate, depending on circumstances, to save certain Local Plan policies for longer but the City Council must seek the Secretary of State's approval in such cases.

2.5 The Proposals Map will be updated as each Development Plan Document is adopted

2.6 The timetable for the production of the SCI and other planning documents is set out in the Council's **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**, which came into effect on 14th June 2005. All these documents can be viewed on the Council's website www.leicester.gov.uk; in city libraries and at the Council's Customer Service Centres.

3 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 3.1 The new planning system requires the involvement of all sections of the community throughout the various stages of the planning process but particularly at the beginning.
- 3.2 When a Local Development Document is published for consultation it must be supported by a statement setting out the form of community involvement undertaken in reaching that stage. If an Inspector finds that the Council has not followed the standards set out in its Statement of Community Involvement then the planning document could be withdrawn.

The purpose of this Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.3 A Statement of Community Involvement should be a clear public statement enabling the community to know how and when they will be involved in the preparation of Local Development Documents and how they will be consulted on planning applications.
- 3.4 The future development of housing, employment, shops and community facilities in Leicester will affect city residents and businesses as well as people working in or visiting the city. The Council aims to involve all these people at the earliest stage of local development document preparation.
- 3.5 Many elements of plan preparation will require joint working between local communities, interested organisations or individuals and the City Council. It is hoped that involvement at an early stage will help to resolve otherwise contentious issues, thereby avoiding the need for the independent examinations of planning documents to be lengthy and costly.
- 3.6 For community involvement to be successful it should be an inclusive approach based on the differing needs of the various parts of the community. The Council wishes to use the most effective means to enable people to be informed and to contribute throughout the plan-making process.
- 3.7 The benefits of engaging a wide range of people in Leicester's planning process include
- A greater public ownership of planning decisions
 - More attention to the public's priorities
 - More opportunities for the Council and the public to work in collaboration.

How the Statement of Community Involvement will be assessed

- 3.8 At the Examination stage the Planning Inspector will consider whether the Statement of Community Involvement:
- complies with the minimum requirements set out in Regulations.

- links with other community involvement initiatives such as the Community Strategy
- identifies in general terms which community bodies will be consulted and how they can be involved in a timely and accessible manner
- describes methods of consultation that are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of Local Development Documents
- shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of Local Development Documents
- describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning matters.

3.9 In addition the Council must demonstrate that resources are available to manage community involvement effectively and that there is a mechanism for reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement

Leicester City Council's Consultation Strategy

3.10 The City Council issued a consultation policy statement in February 2000. In developing its approach to consultation it adopted the statement of commitment set out at the beginning of this document. The Consultation Strategy sets out how the Council consults and encourages participation with residents and users of its service. It requires full and proper consultation with all relevant parties as a key to informing improvements to the Council's service and providing evidence of user satisfaction.

3.11 A number of forums exist through which officers and Councillors listen to the views of the community, for example Councillors surgeries. In addition the council has recently begun a major new programme to engage more local people in the design and delivery of services.

3.12 A Consultation Toolkit has been developed to help guide and train staff involved in participation and consultation exercises.

Service Delivery Planning

3.13 The City Council has recently introduced a new approach to service delivery planning. Part of this process involves ensuring co-ordination between the various key Local Authority strategies and their objectives, including the LDF, Community Strategy and LTP.

Monitoring and Review

3.14 The Statement of Community Involvement will be kept under review and its effectiveness and relevance will be monitored as part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Review and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report

3.15 Any revision of the Statement of Community Involvement will follow the same procedures as those for this first document.

4 WHAT WILL WE CONSULT ON?

4.1 The City Council's plan-making programme, as set out in the Local Development Scheme, involves the preparation of the following **Development Plan Documents** during the next 3 years:

- **Core Strategy**, setting out the Council's spatial vision and strategy for the development of Leicester. It will enable key choices to be made (such as the broad allocation of land for housing) which will then provide the context for more detailed work. It will require widespread consultation across the city and with national and regional bodies
- **Proposals Map**
- **Waste Core Strategy**
- **Waste Detailed Development Control Policies Document**
- **Waste Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document**

4.2 The Waste DPDs will be prepared jointly with the County Council

4.3 **Site Specific Allocations** and **Area Action Plans** will ~~will~~ may be prepared in the future once the Council has adopted the Core Strategy. These will require more concentration on consultation with the local community.

4.4 In addition **Supplementary Planning Documents** will be prepared. The Supplementary Planning Documents identified in the Local Development Scheme 2005 will be completed before adoption of the SCI but the Local Development Scheme is reviewed annually and additional Supplementary Planning Documents will be proposed in future. The nature and extent of public consultation will depend on the subject of the document.

4.5 Following a quicker and less formal process, site development guidance or mini- masterplans will be prepared as City Council policy for individual sites that have been identified for development. This will be subject to consultation with local people and interested groups.

4.6 Several studies have been or will be undertaken to provide background information for planning policies and proposals. Copies of the relevant documents are available from the Council. Future studies will include:

- Employment needs and quality of employment land;
- City Centre Access Strategy
- Open Space Assessment
- Housing Market Assessments

4.6a Consultation on any revisions to the LDDs will follow the same procedures described above and throughout the document.

Links with other Plans and Strategies

- 4.7 The Local Development Framework must conform with the **Regional Spatial Strategy** for the East Midlands Region produced by the **East Midlands Regional Assembly** and issued by the Secretary of State.
- 4.8 It must also have regard to **national planning policy statements**, the provisions the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan 2005 and relevant Council strategies including the **Community Strategy** which is being produced by the Leicester Partnership

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.9 Strategic Environmental Assessment is a process intended to ensure that significant environmental effects arising from Local Development Framework proposals are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated to decision-makers and monitored. The role of Strategic Environmental Assessment is to:
- Support sustainable development;
 - Improve the evidence base for decision-making; and
 - Facilitate and respond to consultation with stakeholders.
- 4.10 The new Planning Act requires local planning authorities to undertake a **Sustainability Appraisal** (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) to ensure that, in addition to considering the environmental impacts of policies and proposals, an assessment is also made of their economic and social impacts.
- 4.11 The Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of Local Development Framework preparation and will be prepared alongside the Local Development Documents. Its outputs will be consulted upon during the various consultation periods.

5 WHO WE WILL CONSULT

- 5.1 The subject matter of a Local Development Document will be the starting point for establishing who should be consulted. Anyone with an interest or involvement in the subject should have an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the document.

Stakeholders

- 5.2 The term 'stakeholder' means anyone and any organisation that has an interest in the services that the Council provides. Frequently these are grouped into sectors, such as private, public, voluntary or community.

- 5.3 In general terms the types of groups that we want to be involved include:

- Special interest groups, such as environmental groups; conservation societies; nature conservation bodies; sports clubs; voluntary organisations,
- Residents groups
- Representatives of the various ethnic and faith communities
- Organisations representing disabled people
- Young people and the elderly
- Asylum seekers/refugees
- People with low literacy
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender groups.
- Those representing the wider community, including the local strategic partnership and area forums
- Landowners, the business community, property and development interests, trade unions and transport bodies
- Small and medium sized businesses and
- Statutory bodies, including adjoining authorities, and regional and national agencies.

- 5.4 **Statutory regulations** set out the minimum requirements for public involvement with which any activity related to the production of the Local Development Framework must comply. The table in Appendix 2 provides a general list of those who must be consulted by the City Council and those who may be consulted. It is not a definitive list and the Council may need to consult other bodies at the appropriate time.

- 5.5 A Planning database with the contact names of all stakeholders who will be involved in the planning process has been compiled by the City Council and will be updated regularly. Individuals or organisations can request inclusion on this Database by phone, letter or email.

Hard to Reach Groups

- 5.6 It is recognised that some sectors of the community may be more difficult to engage in the participation process. These 'hard to reach' groups include those of ethnic minority origin, including the gypsy and traveller

community, disabled people, elderly and young people. Specific efforts will be made to help these groups make a contribution to planning the future of the city.

5.7 In 2001 36% of Leicester's population were from the black and ethnic minority communities. The population of Indian origin formed the largest single ethnic community group with 25.7% of the total population. This has resulted in Leicester having significantly high proportions of residents giving their religion as Hindu, Sikh or Muslim. Measures to involve all the ethnic minority and faith communities will be a major part of the arrangements for consultation on planning issues.

5.8 Leicester also has a relatively young population because of a higher proportion of school age children than the national average and the presence of students attending the two universities in the city. Efforts will be made to involve children in planning issues by holding public consultation exercises in venues frequented by young people, including schools/colleges/ universities and sports clubs. Visits to schools may be a possibility. The Council also sponsors a Young People's Council and Youth Areas Forums that will be useful for discussing planning issues of particular interest to them. These link also to Leicester's Federation of Children's Services (Childrens Trust).

5.9 The Council will comply with its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the emerging Disability Bill by promoting equality of opportunity for people of different races and disabled people to gain access to information and participate in the planning process.

5.10 On city wide policies the Council will consult widely and on local issues it will also consult local stakeholders and residents who are likely to be affected by any proposals.

Local Strategic Partnership

5.11 The Leicester Strategic Partnership (LSP) has been set up to carry out the task of producing a Community Strategy, steering its implementation and updating it once adopted. The Partnership is made up of many organisations covering public, private and voluntary sectors, all who contribute to the quality of life in Leicester. A list of these organisations is included in Appendix 2. LSP produces a newsletter every 2-3 months.

5.12 The Partnership, with the City Council, is negotiating a Leicester Area Agreement for 2006 to 2009. This will rationalise existing government funding to deliver the Community Strategy. It will focus delivery on four key areas: children and young people; economic development; healthier communities and older people; and safer and stronger communities

- 5.13 The Leicester Community Network of voluntary, community and neighbourhood groups supports the LSP and is coordinated by Voluntary Action Leicester. Network meetings are held every two months and will be a useful method of engaging with a cross section of local residents.
- 5.14 It is intended that the LSP will become a means of gathering and disseminating information to the partner organisations during the production and implementation of the Local Development Framework.
- 5.15 The LSP is currently developing an appraisal mechanism, intended for use by all partners across the City to help achieve sustainable development by its application to major projects and policy documents. It will be fundamental to any future development and review of the Community Strategy. The sustainability and strategic environmental appraisal of Local Development Framework documents will reflect this approach to appraisal.

6 HOW WE WILL CONSULT

Minimum Standards for consultation

- 6.1 The legal requirement for consultation on Local Development Documents is set out in the statutory regulations. These Regulations require the Council to:
- Place all documentation on its website www.leicester.gov.uk together with any supporting information needed to enable people to understand what they are being asked to comment upon and where and when this documentation can be inspected;
 - Make all relevant material available for inspection at the Council Offices and other suitable places for the period for which it is open for comment;
 - Send copies to the **Government Office** and **statutory consultees**
 - Put a notice in the local newspaper advertising where the relevant documents can be inspected, how copies of it can be obtained, the closing date for representations and where to send such representations.

Council Standards:

Access to information

- 6.2 The City Council wants to ensure that all interested people have access to information on planning matters. In addition to the minimum statutory requirements for documents to be available on Council's website www.leicester.gov.uk and at Council offices, copies of all relevant documents will be available to view at local libraries and all the Council's Customer Service Centres. Consideration will also be given to a system for document loan from the City Council. This already exists on an informal basis.
- 6.3 Documents will be clearly written. Copies of documents or summaries in alternative formats will be provided on request (eg in ethnic minority languages, on tape, in large print or Braille etc)
- 6.4 The Council will use a variety of methods of communication to ensure that there is appropriate public consultation and participation in planning matters and will aim to avoid main holiday periods for public consultation if possible.

Direct Contact

- 6.5 The Council will maintain a Local Development Framework Consultation Database. This will include all statutory consultees, local organisations with an interest in planning matters and any interested individuals or organisations that have requested inclusion.
- 6.6 At key stages in the production of Local Development Documents information letters or emails will be sent to all people and organisations on the Consultation Database to notify them of the publication of planning documents and inviting discussion about issues that affect or concern

them. This is considered to be a cost effective method of consulting stakeholders.

- 6.7 The Council will write to the occupants of neighbouring properties about proposals that directly affect them, using the Land and Property Gazetteer. This identifies each individual property in the city by address and location.

Area Committees

- 6.8 Leicester City Council is setting up area based arrangements across the city. So far three Area Committees have operated as a pilot. Area based meetings will be open to anyone to attend and provide a forum for public consultation on planning issues. In particular Area Committees will be an effective forum for establishing the key issues and options for Development Plan Documents and for consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents.

Local Media

- 6.9 The Council will endeavour to publicise its proposals, through media releases. These will include details of any events arranged to promote community involvement. Statutory Notices will be published in the Leicester Mercury. Press releases will be made available to all the local media at all key stages in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. They will be circulated to newspapers printed in ethnic minority languages and to the Talking Newspaper.

- 6.10 Where appropriate we will seek to have feature items broadcast on Local Radio stations including the ethnic minority media.

- 6.11 Articles in the Council's newspaper *LINK* will be used to update residents on the progress of the Local Development Framework.

Leicester People's Panel

- 6.12 The Leicester People's Panel Project is a joint initiative between the City Council, Police, Fire Service, health authorities and Leicester Shire Promotions. The Panel is broadly representative of the residents of Leicester. Panel members have consented to be consulted on any matter that may arise where the City Council, or any of its Partners, wish to gain an insight into the ideas and opinions of local residents.

- 6.13 A sample of Panel members can be assembled as a focus group to discuss a planning issue and provide views and ideas that should reflect those of the majority of Leicester residents. There are costs associated with facilitating and operating Panel sessions.

- 6.14 The Leicester People's Panel can be used to access particular groups of Leicester residents e.g. by age, ethnicity or disability. In this way such groups can be involved in shaping planning policies and proposals to meet

their needs. [A Young People's Council and related Youth Area Forums are also being set up in the City.](#)

Exhibitions and Presentations

- 6.15 Exhibitions will be set up at key stages in the planning process to provide information and receive feedback from the public in an informal situation. They will be held in a variety of venues to reach the greatest cross section of Leicester's population. These could include libraries, [schools/colleges/universities](#), community centres, health centres and sports, [youth](#) and leisure centres. Where and when appropriate they will be attended by staff who are proficient in ethnic minority languages. All venues will be accessible and opening times will be varied, to include some evening or weekend events when appropriate.
- 6.16 For city wide consultation an Exhibition caravan may be considered as an effective means of ensuring the widest possible public consultation.
- 6.17 It is intended that a video will be produced to highlight major city-wide issues on which the Council wants the opinion of local residents and community groups during the production of the **Core Strategy**. This can be shown at exhibitions or circulated to meetings.

Workshops

- 6.18 Local Workshops may be held to encourage people to participate in the formulation of policies and proposals for local communities. The objectives of each workshop will be clearly set out beforehand. Careful consideration will be given to venues, timing and participants to ensure that workshops are as inclusive as possible. Organisations will need adequate notice of a workshop to arrange for a group to be assembled.
- 6.19 Workshops will be facilitated using a variety of techniques aimed at promoting discussion and leading to positive outcomes.

Meetings of organisations

- 6.20 Where appropriate the Council will try to engage community groups in planning issues by arranging for an officer to attend and address their own meetings or premises, including schools. This ensures that venues and times are accessible and convenient for those attending, a particularly important consideration for the hard to reach groups.

Opinion Polls

- 6.21 As part of the evidence gathering and identification of issues for the **Core Strategy** the Council will consider commissioning a city-wide opinion poll.

Internet: E-government

- 6.22 In accordance with the regulations all documents will be available on the Council's website. In addition a commentary on the documents is provided with information on where and when they can be viewed. An email contact address can be provided for comments to be sent directly to the Council. This is an easy method of communication for people to understand and enables them to retain a copy of their comments.
- 6.23 Representation Forms for the formal consultation stages will be available on the website, with instructions on how to complete them. These could be interactive but the Council will need to ensure that respondents are able to retain a copy of the completed form.
- 6.24 The Council may consider the use of internet forums but there are difficulties in controlling the content of messages that are sent. Discussion must be carefully guided and controlled and this has resource issues. It is recognised that this could be a popular method of informal involvement in the planning process, especially for young people. Further advance in technology may make this a more useful method in future.

Planning Aid

- 6.25 Planning Aid is a charitable organisation providing a national network of volunteers who give free, independent and professional advice and support to individuals and groups who cannot afford a planning consultant. They may be used to give help and advice to communities wishing to put forward their views at the start of the planning process or to respond to particular proposals. Contact details of Planning Aid will be distributed where appropriate.

How to make representations

- 6.26 Comments made verbally or in writing during any of the informal consultation events will be recorded for consideration by the Council.
- 6.27 When written comments are required for the formal stages of consultation, they should be made on a Representation Form provided by the Council. It is intended that the forms can be completed on line.
- 6.28 On request Council officers will complete these forms on behalf of any member of the public who experiences difficulties in making written representations, e.g. for reasons of language or visual impairment.

How the Council will respond to comments on Local Development Documents

- 6.29 Community involvement is seen as a continuous process enabling everyone taking part to see how policies and proposals develop at the various stages. This will require a commitment to effective feedback from the Council.

- 6.30 A report of proceedings at each consultation event will be produced and made available as part of the background information for each LDD. All comments made during the early consultation stages will be considered and taken into account in the production of draft documents for formal public consultation
- 6.31 The Council will acknowledge all representations received at the formal consultation stages and will prepare summaries of such representations and a response to them. In the case of DPDs, all the representations will be considered by the Planning Inspector at public examination. In the case of SPDs, the Council will consider all comments before the document is approved.
- 6.32 Each respondent will receive an individual written response to a representation. Everyone included on the Planning Consultation database will be informed of the availability of the summaries of representations and Council responses. They will be made available with the documents posted on the Council's web site.
- 6.33 Registered persons and bodies will also be informed of Council decisions and will be notified of key dates in the timetable.

Resourcing and Managing Community Involvement

- 6.34 The Development Plans Group of the City Council will lead community involvement on Development Plan Documents and some Supplementary Planning Documents. SPD with an urban design, landscape, ecology or conservation focus will be prepared by the Urban Design Group. The preparation of all documents will require a corporate effort across the Council, involving the Communications Unit and other areas of expertise.
- 6.35 It is intended that the process of involving the community in the preparation of Local Development Documents will be resourced from the Council's Development Plans and Urban Design budgets and most of the work will be undertaken by existing staff as far as possible. Where additional expertise is necessary this will be sought from within the Council if possible.
- 6.36 The resources to be devoted to the preparation of the Local Development Framework are set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme. It is likely that at up to eleven members of staff will be involved in the process. This scheme has been agreed with the Government Office and the Planning Inspectorate. It will be revised annually.

7 WHEN WE WILL CONSULT

Key stages for Development Plan Documents

7.1 The key stages for community involvement in Development Plan Documents are as follows:

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| <p>Evidence gathering and issues identification</p> | <p>Evidence will be gathered with a view to identifying issues, and options for the future. This will involve consulting various bodies on technical and other matters.</p> <p>Consideration will also be given to national, regional and other relevant policies. Evidence will be made available for public scrutiny where possible.</p> <p>Informal consultations will be undertaken with interested parties, Area Committees and the Local Strategic Partnership in order to establish the key issues and options for change.</p> |
| <p>Preferred options</p> | <p>This is a statutory 6 weeks period during which anyone may make representations on the Council's preferred options. Preferred options will be published at an early stage as the basis for public engagement.</p> <p>This stage will may also require wider participation through public exhibitions, media and other events, workshops, group meetings etc as detailed in Chapter 6.</p> <p>The resulting feedback will enable the Development Plan Document to be completed.</p> |
| <p>Submission</p> | <p>This stage involves the final document that is to be submitted to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Each Development Plan Document will be published for a statutory 6 weeks period, during which written representations may be submitted to the Council.</p> <p>Submission will be widely advertised, with documents being circulated to statutory consultees. Area Committees will be consulted and persons and bodies registered on the Local Development Framework Consultation Database will also be informed.</p> <p>In the case of future Site Allocations there will be a further 6-weeks consultation period if developers or others put forward new development proposals during the submission consultation period.</p> <p>The Council will advertise and consult on these alternative proposals in the same way and make the details available for inspection at the Council Offices and on the Council website.</p> <p>At the same time the document will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, together with all background material and the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p> <p>All representations will be summarised and submitted to the independent Examination.</p> |
| <p>Examination</p> | <p>Six weeks notice of the Examination will be given</p> <p>The Planning Inspector's recommendations will be binding on the City Council. The Council will no longer have the discretion to reject any of the Inspector's recommendations.</p> |
| <p>Adoption</p> | <p>The Council will be responsible for the adoption of a</p> |

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| | Development Plan Document as soon as practicable after receiving the Inspector's binding recommendations. |
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NB. These stages are as set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

Key stages for Supplementary Planning Documents

7.2 The key stages for community involvement in the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents are as follows:

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| Evidence gathering and issues identification | <p>Evidence will be gathered with a view to identifying issues and options for the future. Consideration will also be given to national, regional and other relevant policies.</p> <p>This will involve consulting various bodies on technical and other matters. Evidence will be made available for public scrutiny where possible.</p> |
| Consultation | <p>The draft proposals will be the subject of community involvement in a similar way to that of Development Plan Documents. <u>This will include consultation with the relevant Area Committees.</u></p> <p>Topic-based documents <u>which apply city wide</u> will be the subject of wider consultation, whilst <u>consultation on</u> site-specific documents will be more local in scope, <u>involving residents or businesses who could be affected by the proposals.</u></p> <p>Documents will be subject to 6-weeks consultation after which responses will be considered.</p> |
| Adoption | <p>Supplementary Planning Documents will be adopted by the City Council.</p> <p>A statement of the representations received and the responses to those representations will be published.</p> |

NB. These stages are as set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 .

8. CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

What We Do Now

- 8.1 The City Council receives applications for planning permission to construct new developments, to allow an existing building to be altered, and for changes of use to land and buildings. The Development Control Group is responsible for dealing with planning applications.
- 8.2 Lists of all received applications and decisions reached on applications are available on the Council's web site, along with copies of the Development Control Committee agenda and minutes. The weekly list of applications received are either e-mailed or posted to community and amenity groups.
- 8.3 Planning applications may be advertised by site notices, which are brightly coloured laminated notices placed on or near the application site. Where letters of notification are sent it is a statutory requirement that the owners or occupiers of all land adjoining the site must be notified. ~~Letters are usually sent to all neighbouring properties that share a boundary, or are opposite the site and will be affected by the proposal (including those in flats).~~ In certain circumstances, planning applications are advertised in the Leicester Mercury.
- 8.3a Adjoining land should be taken to include any land or property which:
- has a common boundary with the application site, however short
 - touches' the application site at any point e.g. at a corner
 - is across an entry' from the application site
 - any flat directly above the application property.
- It may include separate units within the application site, for example a self contained flat above a shop.
- 8.3b Complying with the statutory requirement will not necessarily ensure that all owners and occupiers who might reasonably consider themselves to be directly affected will be notified. At the discretion of the planning case officer additional notifications will be sent in some cases, for example, to property on the opposite side of the road from a front extension to a house.
- 8.4 Planning Applications are available for the public to view at Customer Service Centres during office hours. It is also proposed that applications will be available to view on the Council's website. This will make applications more accessible but plans shown on line may not be easy to read and staff will not be available to help residents interpret and fully understand them.
- 8.5 Statutory regulations specify the organisations that must be consulted about types of development. For example Sport England are consulted on applications involving playing fields and the Environment Agency for flood risk and other environmental matters. Also it is normal practice to consult a

range of other important organisations as appropriate. For example the Police are consulted on matters with crime and disorder implications.

Publicity on planning applications can be summarised as follows:

| Type of Planning Application and summary. | Stakeholders | What government regulation say we must do. | What additional publicity we do, where appropriate. |
|--|---|---|--|
| Major Applications: Housing: 10 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectares, Other development: 1000 m ² floorspace or 1.0 hectares | Neighbours, general public and wider community Government and Statutory consultees | Notice in Leicester Mercury, either post a site notice or neighbour notification. | Posting site notices <u>and</u> notifying neighbours. |
| Application that is a departure from the local plan, and/or has an environmental impact assessment | Neighbours, general public and wider community Government and Statutory consultees | Notice in Leicester Mercury and post a site notice. | Notifying neighbours. |
| Development affecting the setting of a listed building | Neighbours, general public and wider community English Heritage | Notice in Leicester Mercury and post a site notice. | Notifying neighbours. Conservation Area Panel consulted. |
| Development affecting the character of a conservation area. | Neighbours, general public and wider community English Heritage | Notice in Leicester Mercury and post a site notice. | Notifying neighbours. Conservation Area Panel consulted |
| Other applications. | Neighbours and general public | Post a site notice or notify neighbours. | Normally notifying neighbours in adjoining properties. Posting site notices where there is likely to be wider public interest or where it is not practicable to notify adjoining properties |
| Advertisement Applications | General public. | There are no statutory requirements | A site notice may be displayed or a letter sent to neighbouring properties if it is considered that the advertisement may affect neighbouring residents or have a significant effect on the surrounding area |
| Listed Building consent | Neighbours, general public and wider community | Site notice. Press notice in Leicester Mercury. | Letters are sent to adjoining properties, Conservation Area Panel may be consulted. |

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| Conservation Area Consent | Neighbours, general public and wider community | Site notice. Press notice in Leicester Mercury. | Letters are sent to adjoining properties, Conservation Area Panel may be consulted. |
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8.6 All representations received on planning applications are summarised in the report on the application and are considered before a decision is made. Applications will not be determined before the 21 days allowed for responses has expired. Representations should be made in writing or by email.

8.7 In the case of significant applications, Member briefings are conducted when appropriate.

8.8 Sometimes the Council will carry out further consultation when amended plans are received.

8.9 A senior officer under “delegated powers” determines approximately 90% of Planning Applications. The other 10% of applications, which are either particularly significant or receive a certain number of objections, are determined by the Development Control Committee, made up of elected city councillors

8.10 Ward Councillors may speak on an objector’s behalf at Development Control Committee.

8.11 When a decision has been made on a planning application, all members of the public who made comments are informed of the decision. If planning permission is refused the applicant has the right of appeal to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. There is however no third party right of appeal in the British Planning system. If a member of the public has any objections to the process of decision making the City Council has a Complaints Procedure and recourse to the Ombudsman.

8.12 For major development schemes it is the responsibility of developers to undertake pre-planning application discussions and consultation with the public and other interested bodies. In the case of very significant major applications, e.g. the extension to the Shires Shopping Centre, a project team is assembled to help secure a high quality development. Standards for the conduct of such consultations will be evolved to guide developers as experience is gained of pre-application consultation.

What We May Do In The Future To Improve The Service

8.13 Opportunities for the public to speak at Development Control Committee.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|--|
| This could provide a fuller understanding of the nature and | May cause meetings to run on longer than is appropriate, and it may be |

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|---|---|
| depth of the public's concerns. It gives applicants confidence that their views will be heard | difficult to keep meetings focused on the planning issues relevant to the planning applications |
|---|---|

8.14 A new planning reception in New Walk Centre.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|--|
| Public would have easier access to plans. Better accommodation for meetings between officers and developers or objectors. | It would require expenditure of already tight resources. Officers may have to be employed to deal with public enquiries. It could undermine the corporate benefits of a 'one-stop-shop'. |

8.15 Representation Forms available on the website.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|--|
| it may be easier for officers to summarise and consider objections if they are presented in a standard format. | Objection form would not be available to all members of the public |

8.16 Liaise with community groups on very large or significant applications. This may be an appropriate use of Area Committees or with the involvement of the applicants, especially at the pre-application stage to allow people to take an active part in the development of proposals. As described in paragraph 8.12, standards for the conduct of pre-application consultations where carried out by developers will be evolved.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|--|
| Better understanding of community priorities and objectives for improving an area. The application may receive fewer objections. | It could be a time consuming exercise, which may become very draining on resources. The timing of Area committees may not fit with government targets for considering planning applications. |

8.17 The Council will investigate whether a system can be put in place to inform a complainant in planning enforcement cases that a resultant planning application has been submitted to the Council.

Appendix 1; GLOSSARY

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|------------|--|--|
| AAP | Area Action Plan | Establishes site specific plans for key areas of opportunity, change or conservation |
| AMR | Annual Monitoring Report | Part of the LDF, the Annual Monitoring Report will assess the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which policies in LDDs are being successfully implemented |
| | Community Strategy | Local Authorities are required under the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare these, with the aim of improving social, economic and environmental well-being of their areas. Through the community strategy, authorities are expected to coordinate the actions of local public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Responsibility for producing the Community Strategy for Leicester lies with Leicester Partnership |
| | Core Strategy | Sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority's area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy will have the status of a DPD |
| DPD | Development Plan Documents | The LDDs that carry Development Plan status. These documents contain the policies against which any planning applications for new development will be considered |
| | East Midlands Regional Assembly | The authority responsible for carrying out the planning function at a regional level |
| | Examination | Consideration of public views on a draft DPD held before an independent Planning Inspector |
| LDD | Local Development Documents | Documents that set out the development plan policies and supporting guidance that are in force in Leicester. There are two types of LDDs:- Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) |
| LDF | Local Development Framework | A portfolio of LDDs that will establish the City Council's policies for meeting the economic, environmental and social aims for Leicester as it affects the development and use of land |
| LDS | Local Development Scheme | Sets out the programme for the preparation of LDDs |
| | Planning | The planning system exists to ensure that we achieve a balance between our need for new development and conserving what we value about our environment such as green spaces, wildlife, historic buildings and places |
| | Planning Inspector | A Planning Inspector is a person appointed on behalf of the Planning Inspectorate (an executive agency of Government) to conduct the examination, oversee and to carry out site visits, and consider both written and |

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| | | oral evidence in order to reach a reasoned decision on the soundness of proposed DPDs |
| | Proposals Map | The Proposals Map illustrates on a base map (reproduced from, or based upon a map base to a registered scale) all the policies contained in DPDs, together with any saved policies. It must be revised as each new DPD is adopted, and it should always reflect the up-to-date planning strategy for the area. Proposals for changes to the adopted Proposals Map accompany submitted DPDs in the form of a submission Proposals Map |
| RSS | Regional Spatial Strategy | Statutory strategy document that gives the spatial expression to the social, economic and environmental future of the region. All DPDs must conform generally with the RSS |
| | Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan | The city wide plan which will replace the adopted City of Leicester Local Plan 1994. Policies in the Plan will be 'saved' for three years after it is adopted as part of the Leicester LDF. |
| | Secretary of State | The head of the government department responsible for planning matters |
| | Site Specific Allocations | Allocations of areas of land for specific purposes (e.g. housing or employment land) or for mixed uses or development to be contained in DPDs. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals |
| SCI | Statement of Community Involvement | This outlines how the City Council plan to engage the community in the preparation of LDDs and in considering significant planning applications |
| | Statutory Regulations | Regulations set out by the Government in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 |
| SEA | Strategic Environmental Assessment | Process laid down in European law to ensure that environmental issues are taken into account at all stages in the process of preparing the LDDs |
| SPD | Supplementary Planning Documents | The LDDs that do not carry Development Plan status. The guidance that they contain may be used as material considerations in the consideration of planning applications |
| SA | Sustainability Appraisal | Process that identifies the extent to which the LDDs will achieve environmental, economic and social objectives |

APPENDIX 2: CONSULTATION BODIES

Specific Consultation Bodies

In accordance with the Statutory Regulations the following specific consultation bodies must be consulted where the City Council considers that the Local Plan Document affects them:

- East Midlands Regional Assembly;
- Government Office East Midlands (GOEM);
- Leicestershire County Council;
- Adjoining Local Planning Authorities: Blaby District Council, Charnwood District Council, Harborough District Council and Oadby and Wigston District Council;
- East Midlands Development Agency;
- Strategic Health Authority;
- The Countryside Agency;
- The Environment Agency;
- Highways Agency;
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England;
- English Nature;
- The Strategic Rail Authority;
- Electronic communications companies and those who own or control apparatus in Leicester;
- Relevant gas and electricity companies;
- Severn Trent Water PLC;

General Consultation Bodies

In accordance with the Statutory Regulations the following general consultation bodies must be consulted on Local Development Documents where the City Council consider it appropriate:

- voluntary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the city,
- bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic, or national groups in the city,
- bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the city,
- bodies which represent the interests of disabled people in the city,
- bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the city,

Leicester Partnership

The Leicester Partnership will be consulted during the preparation of Local Development Documents. The following organizations make up the Partnership with the City Council and where appropriate they may be consulted individually:

- Business Link
- Connexions Leicestershire
- De Monfort University
- Eastern Leicester Primary Care Trust

- Institute of Directors (Leicestershire Branch)
- Job Centre Plus
- Learning Skills Council
- Leicester City West Primary Care Trust
- Leicester Chamber of Commerce
- Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC)
- Leicester Shire Economic Partnership
- Leicester Shire Promotions
- Leicestershire Asian Business Association (LABA)
- Leicestershire Constabulary
- Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service
- Leicestershire Racial Equality Council
- National Probation Service – Leicestershire and Rutland
- University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
- University of Leicester
- Voluntary Action Leicester

Government Departments

The following Government Departments will be consulted where appropriate:

- Home Office
- Department for Education and Skills (through GOEM)
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;
- Department for Transport (through GOEM)
- Department of Trade and Industry (through GOEM)
- Department of Health (through relevant Regional Public Health Group);
- Ministry of Defence
- Department of Work and Pensions;
- Department of Constitutional Affairs;
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport;
- Office of Government Commerce

Other Consultees

The following agencies and organisations will be consulted in the preparation of Local Development Documents where appropriate. Some of these will be consulted as 'general consultation bodies'.

- Age Concern;
- British Chemical Distributors and Traders Association;
- British Geological Survey;
- British Waterways
- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology;
- CBI (Leicestershire County Group))
- Church Commissioners for England (Peterborough)
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment;

- English Partnerships;
- Commission for Racial Equality;
- Crown Estate Office;
- Diocesan Board of Finance;
- Disability Rights Commission;
- Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee;
- Electricity, Gas, and Telecommunications Undertakers, and the National Grid Company;
- Council for the Protection of Rural England (Leicestershire Branch)
- Friends of the Earth;
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Leicester)
- Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust
- Equal Opportunities Commission;
- Forestry Commission; Forestry Commission (Midlands Conservancy)
- Freight Transport Association; Freight Transport Association Ltd. (Midlands Branch)
- Organizations representing Gypsies and Travellers, including Gypsy Council, Traveller Law Reform Coalition and ACERT;
- Health and Safety Executive;
- Help the Aged;
- Housing Corporation;
- Leicester Civic Society;
- Community Groups;
- Local Transport Authorities
- Local Transport Operators;
- National Playing Fields Association;
- Network Rail;
- Passenger Transport Authorities;
- Passenger Transport Executives;
- Police Architectural Liaison Officer and Crime Prevention Design Advisors;
- Post Office Property Holdings;
- Rail Companies and Rail Freight Groups
- East Midlands Development Agency
- Leicestershire Development Agency,
- East Midlands Regional Housing Board;
- Regional Sports Boards;
- Road Haulage Association; National Freight and Road Haulage Association,
- Sport England (East Midlands Region)
- The House Builders Federation;
- Women's National Commission.
- [The Woodland Trust](#)
- [Leicester College](#)
- [National Offender Management Service](#)
- [Local Access Forum](#)
- [The Victorian Society, Leicester Group](#)
- [Local Tenants and Residents Groups](#)
- [CAMRA](#)