

IPSWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL

# STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR IPSWICH REVIEW



**IPSWICH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MARCH 2014

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**Statement of Community Involvement for Ipswich  
Review**

March 2014

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The importance of good community engagement in planning is set out in policy from the Government through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012). Ipswich Borough Council sets out in this Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) how it aims to involve business and all sections of the community in the development of Local Plans and in planning decisions.
- 1.2 The Council's first SCI was adopted in 2007 following public consultation and an independent Public Examination. This SCI Review supersedes that adopted in 2007.
- 1.3 The NPPF promotes early consultation with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses in the production of Local Plans, so the Plan will reflect an agreed vision for the sustainable development of Ipswich. Also, the Council encourages developers to talk to the community before submitting planning applications.
- 1.4 The Council has legal requirements in undertaking public consultation on Local Plans and planning applications. These are explained in Chapters 2 and 3. It is important these requirements are undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient manner and proportionate way.
- 1.5 The Council aims to seek the diverse views of the community and demonstrate due regard under the Equality Duty by involving people with different protected characteristics which include age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, religion or beliefs, gender reassignment, and pregnancy and maternity. In addition the Council will have regard to issues of social deprivation in carrying out consultations.
- 1.6 The Council recognises its consultation measures and communication channels are important considerations to ensure accessibility. The Council will have regard to the following:
  - A range of different formats for planning and consultation documents such as large print, where appropriate;
  - Accessible venues for consultation events;
  - Reasonable adjustments, that is to avoid people being put at a disadvantage, to enable the participation and involvement of disabled people in consultations and feedback;
  - Work proactively with individual members of the public, community groups and organisations including businesses to widen participation and involvement; and
  - Engage with area committees on local plan preparation and significant major planning applications.
- 1.7 Involving the community in the planning process has many benefits. These include:
  - The evidence base and information for plans, strategies and planning decisions is stronger;
  - Issues can be identified early on;
  - Greater business and community understanding of the policies that shape the future development of Ipswich; and
  - Better decisions are made.

1.8 To meet the Government's requirements the Council will do its best to:

- Seek views on the content of the Local Plan document;
- Make background documents available to be used as part of the preparation process for Local Plan documents;
- Publicise the availability of documents;
- Provide opportunities for comments during the preparation of documents;
- Publicise opportunities for views to be expressed in the presence of Councillors at area committees and other meetings;
- Provide opportunities for formal representations;
- Try to build consensus and mediate between parties with opposing views;
- Publish the Council's decisions on representations received; and
- Publicise the arrangements and timing of events in relation to the independent examination of a development plan document.

#### **Note of caution**

1.9 The Council seeks to achieve a balanced and sustainable approach to development. It is rarely possible to find solutions that satisfy everybody. Furthermore issues such as available resources, statutory requirements and national policy guidance also need to be taken into account. **Getting involved does not, therefore, guarantee that all of your views will prevail.** Despite this, the Council will try to address issues that you raise and explain why if it cannot do what you asked for.

## 2. Planning Policy Documents

### The Ipswich Local Plan

2.1 The Ipswich Local Plan will guide the future development of Ipswich to 2027 and beyond and consists of development plan documents which forms the statutory development plan for Ipswich. The Local Plan is supported by supplementary planning documents. Previously these documents formed what was known as the Ipswich local development framework. Diagram 1 below shows the relationship between planning policy documents the Council will produce. More detail on individual documents and the timing of their preparation is included in the Council's local development scheme.

**Diagram 1: The Local Plan and supporting documents**

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS				OTHER DOCUMENTS		
DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS						
Core Strategy and Policies (and Policies Map) adopted December 2011 – to be reviewed	Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) (and Policies Map)	Supplementary Planning Documents	Statement of Community Involvement	Local Development Scheme	Sustainability Appraisal	Authority Monitoring Report
<i>These documents will comprise the Development Plan for the area and ultimately replace the Local Plan (1997). If a neighbourhood plan was to be produced by a community and adopted, this would also form part of the Development Plan.</i>				<i>The Authority Monitoring Report is published at least annually.</i>		

### Community Infrastructure Levy

2.2 In addition to the documents mentioned in Diagram 1, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge levied on certain types of development appropriate to the development's use and size. The developer pays the levy, which is used to fund infrastructure needed as a result of the development, for example schools, open space and health facilities. CIL applies to every development in the CIL charging area subject to exceptions, for example self-build properties or where a use has a nil charge, as having a charge would mean a development could not proceed due to cost.

2.3 The Council can only charge the levy after consulting on the levy, in accordance with the CIL Regulations. Consultation is with neighbouring councils, Suffolk County Council, residents, businesses and bodies the Council considers appropriate.

2.4 The levy is then assessed at an independent examination in public undertaken by an independent examiner appointed by the Council, for example a planning inspector, before the Council can adopt it.

2.5 Consultation on the levy is outside the scope of this document but will be in accordance with the CIL Regulations.

### **Who the Council will consult on Local Development Documents**

2.6 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 state that certain bodies must be consulted at specific stages in the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs). The minimum requirements for pre-submission consultation are outlined. They require the local planning authority to consult with:

- (a) such of the 'specific consultation bodies' as the local planning authority consider may have an interest in the subject of the proposed local plan;*
- (b) such of the 'general consultation bodies' as the local planning authority consider appropriate; and*
- (c) such residents or other persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area from which the local planning authority consider it appropriate to invite representations.<sup>1</sup>*

2.7 These 'specific' and 'general' consultation bodies are listed in Appendix 1 and are included in the Council's 'Local Plan consultees database'. Appendix 1 also shows those bodies to be consulted in respect of the 'Duty to Co-operate' in relation to planning of sustainable development.

2.8 It should be noted that not everyone will be contacted directly in respect of every LDD, as details of the consultation will be made available by the communication methods outlined in this document. The Council will aim to develop a flexible, sensitive and customised approach to consultation across the whole Borough involving interested and affected parties as noted in paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5. Councillors will be notified directly of consultation on every LDD.

### **Preparation of Local Development Documents and how the Council will consult**

2.9 The process for preparing LDDs is explained in Figures 1(a) and (1b), highlighting the main opportunities for community involvement. The Council may have to consult over the summer holidays and the Christmas period. Where this is the case a further two weeks will be added to the minimum consultation period.

2.10 The particular consultation and communication techniques which the Council will employ at each stage of development plan or supplementary planning document preparation are detailed in Figures 1(a) and 1(b) below. Depending on the document and/or its stage of preparation, the full range includes:

- E-mail or letter to interested parties as identified through paragraph 2.6 above and on the Council's Local Plan consultees database;
- Publishing consultation documents on the Council's website;

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation 18, Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- Making available for inspection paper copies of consultation documents in the County Library, the Council's Customer Services Centre at the Town Hall and the Council's offices at Grafton House;
- Making available paper copies of supporting documentation at the County Library and the Council's offices at Grafton House;
- Making available printed copies of the consultation documents upon request, at cost price plus postage;
- Advertising consultations through a public notice, the Council's website, Twitter channel and Facebook page and Council publications including the Angle where publication dates allow;
- Making available forms for comments on-line, at the County Library, the Customer Services Centre and Grafton House. The Council will also encourage people to submit comments on-line whilst accepting other hand written and electronic responses;
- At least one public exhibition for a draft DPD consultation;
- Where a DPD identifies a development proposal relating to a specific area of land, the Council will post notices in prominent locations within the area;
- Engagement with all councillors and area committees;
- Publishing a summary of the main issues raised through consultation together with an indication as to how they have been addressed.

## Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

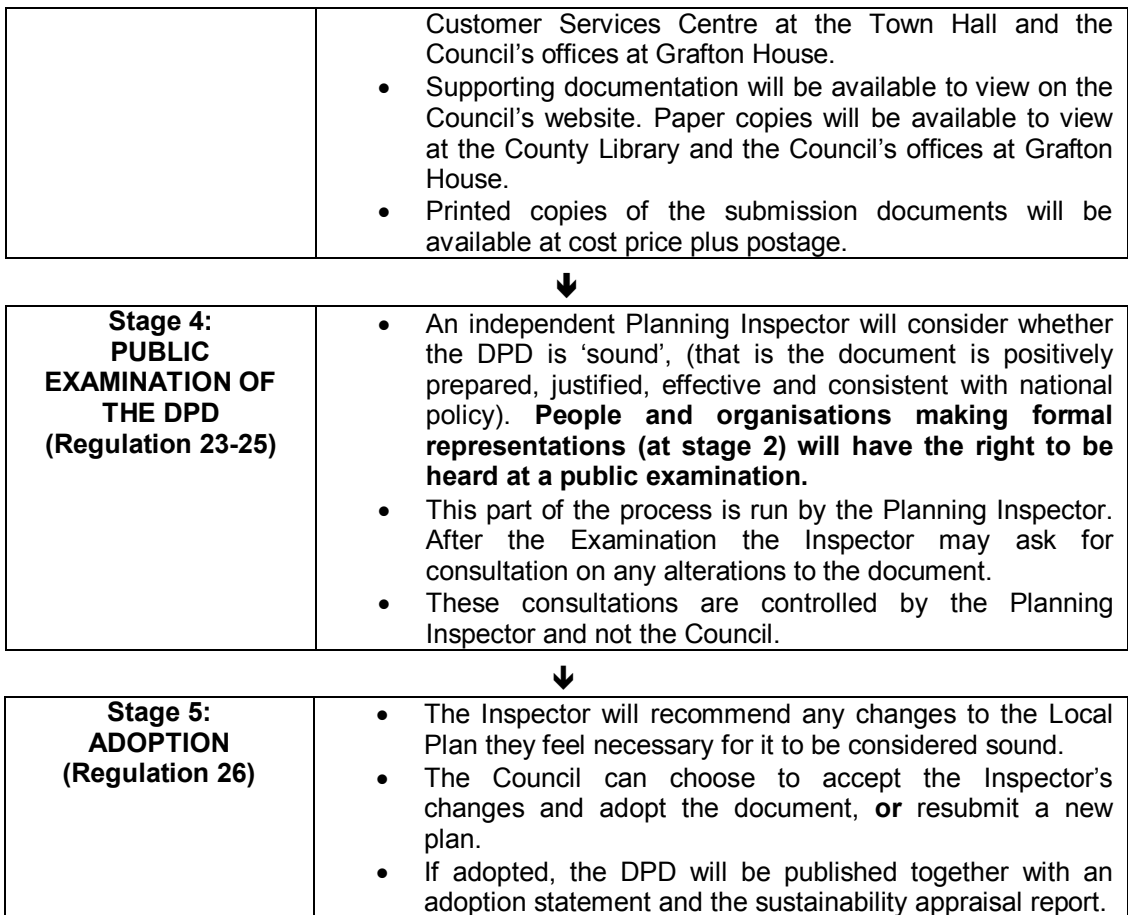
Figure 1(a): Preparation Stages for Development Plan Documents

<p><b>Stage 1: PRE-PRODUCTION, EVIDENCE GATHERING AND INFORMAL CONSULTATION (Regulation 18)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This stage involves gathering a lot of evidence – about employment and housing land, population and job numbers, and so on. All evidence required to support a local plan examination will be published in a Core Document Library.</li><li>• The Council will consult organisations and the local community about issues such as where new housing should be built or what flood risk measures are needed, as appropriate, seeking views on the content of the DPD. The Council will do this through e-mail or a letter.</li><li>• A sustainability appraisal scoping report (which sets a framework for assessing how sustainable a plan is) will also be published for consultation at this time for a period of five weeks and the Council will consult those organisations identified in The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 as noted in Appendix 1.</li><li>• A draft DPD will be produced if appropriate, plus an interim sustainability appraisal report. If so, the Council will consult for a period of six weeks.</li><li>• <b>This would be the main point at which the community, businesses and other bodies with an interest in the planning process can influence the content of the DPD.</b></li><li>• The main consultation documents will be available to view on the Council's website. Paper copies will be available to view at the County Library, the Council's Customer Services Centre at the Town Hall and the Council's offices at Grafton House.</li><li>• Supporting documentation will be available to view on the Council's website. Paper copies will be available to view at the County Library and the Council's offices at Grafton House.</li><li>• Printed copies of the consultation documents will be available at cost price plus postage.</li><li>• The consultation will be advertised through a public notice, the Council's website, Twitter channel and Facebook page and Council publications including the Angle where publication dates allow.</li><li>• Forms for comments will be available on-line, at the County Library, the Customer Services Centre and Grafton House. The Council will also encourage people to submit comments on-line whilst accepting other hand written and electronic responses.</li><li>• The Council will organise at least one public exhibition for a draft DPD consultation.</li><li>• Where a DPD identifies a development proposal relating to a specific area of land, the Council will post notices in prominent locations within the area.</li><li>• Engagement with all councillors and area committees will be undertaken.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will then consider any comments received.</li> <li>• The Council will publish its responses to the comments made. However, the Council will not publish comments that contravene its compliance with the Equality Duty.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• The Council will then begin to decide upon its preferred option, taking into account comments made.</li> </ul>
↓	
<b>Stage 2: PUBLICATION OF THE DPD (Regulation 19-20)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will publish the Submission DPD together with a consultation statement, and the sustainability appraisal report.</li> <li>• <b>Formal written representations will be invited on these documents and will be made publicly available in accordance with Regulation 22 below.</b></li> <li>• There will be a minimum period of six weeks for formal representations to be made.</li> <li>• Consultation will be undertaken in the same way as the draft DPD in stage 1.</li> </ul>
↓	
<b>Stage 3: SUBMISSION OF THE DPD (Regulation 22)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will submit to the Secretary of State: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The DPD;</li> <li>- The Sustainability Appraisal report;</li> <li>- A submission policies map if the adoption of the local plan will result in changes to the adopted policies map;</li> <li>- A consultation statement setting out who was invited to make representations at stage 1; how they were invited to make representations at stage 1; a summary of the main issues raised by those representations; and how the Council has taken these into account;</li> <li>- If representations were made at stage 2, the number of representations made and the summary of the main issues raised (if there is a group representation then the number of individuals supporting that group representation must also be reported where made available by the group to give an accurate reflection of the strength of views, when the Council is satisfied the group legitimately represents those it is claimed);</li> <li>- Copies of any representations made at stage 2; and</li> <li>- Relevant supporting evidence documents.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The submission will be advertised through a public notice, the Council's website, Twitter channel and Facebook page and Council publications including the Angle where publication dates allow.</li> <li>• <b>In line with Regulation 22, the Council will make representations made in accordance with stage 2 publicly available, where practicable.</b></li> <li>• The main submission documents will be available to view on the Council's website and paper copies will be available to view at the County Library, the Council's</li> </ul>

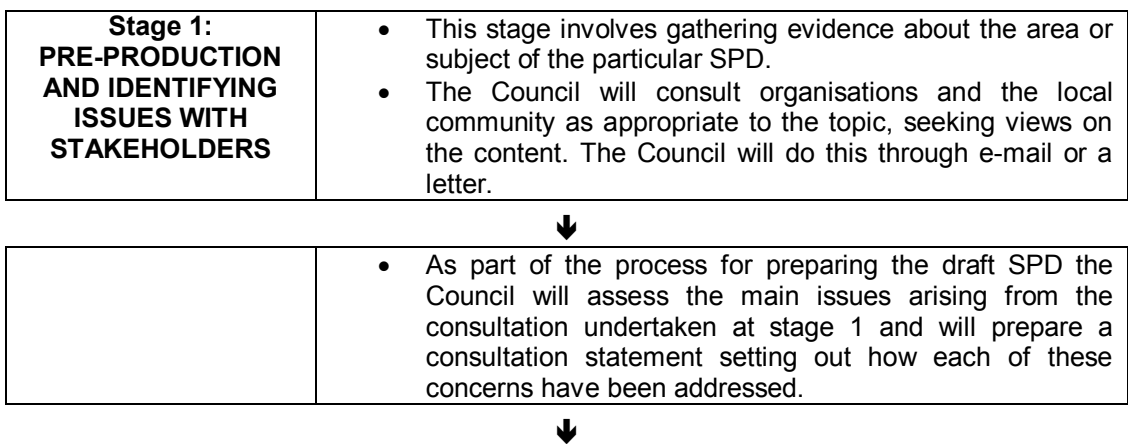
<sup>2</sup> Equality Duty – Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different protected groups; and foster good relations between different protected groups.



### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

2.11 A similar process is undertaken for SPDs (see Figure 1b). The key difference for SPDs is that they do not undergo public examination by a Planning Inspector and are not automatically subject to sustainability appraisal. The same applies to the process for preparing or reviewing a Statement of Community Involvement.

**Figure 1(b): Preparation Stages for Supplementary Planning Documents**



<p><b>Stage 2: PUBLIC CONSULTATION OF THE DRAFT SPD (Regulation 12-13)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will publish the draft SPD together with the statement of consultation and invite comments.</li> <li>• There will be a minimum of four weeks allowed for these comments to be made.</li> <li>• If a sustainability appraisal report is required the Council will also consult on this report at this stage. The Council will undertake a screening exercise to determine if strategic environmental assessment is required.</li> <li>• The Council will publicise any consultation at this stage through a public notice, the Council's website and Council publications including the Angle where appropriate.</li> <li>• The main consultation documents will be available to view on the Council's website and paper copies will be available to view at the County Library, the Council's Customer Services Centre at the Town Hall and the Council's offices at Grafton House.</li> <li>• Supporting documents will be available to view at the County Library and the Council's offices at Grafton House. These will also be available at the Customer Services Centre where practical.</li> <li>• Printed copies of the consultation documents will be available at cost price plus postage.</li> </ul>
<p>↓</p>	
<p><b>Stage 3: ADOPTION (Regulation 14)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will consider all valid comments that are made and make any appropriate changes to the SPD before it is adopted.</li> <li>• The SPD will be published together with a statement of the consultation that was undertaken and an adoption statement.</li> </ul>

## Neighbourhood Planning

2.12 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the facility for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs). NDPs set out policies for the development and use of land in a local area or neighbourhood. They are required to be in general conformity with strategic policies in the local plan for the area, which reflect the council's assessment of need for housing and other types of development. A NDP is required to undergo independent examination and be subject to a referendum of the local community.

2.13 Neighbourhood Development Plans may be prepared by town or parish councils or neighbourhood forums where these do not exist (as in Ipswich). The local planning authority is required to help communities in the process of preparing the plan, but the plan-making process itself must be community-led. For more information on the level and type of support that can be provided by the Council, please contact the planning policy team. Any group preparing a NDP would need to have regard to the approaches to community involvement set out in this SCI review. At present there are no NDPs under preparation within the Ipswich Borough area.

### **3. Planning Applications**

#### **Who will be consulted on planning applications**

- 3.1 The 'statutory' consultees to be involved in each individual case are specified in the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended). These will vary on the basis of the particular detail of the Regulations in force at the time when the application is submitted. The consultees will also vary in respect of:
- the specific nature of the proposals; and
  - the specific consultees required for that class of development proposal.
- 3.2 The Council also seeks the views of a wide range of other agencies from time to time on certain types of applications. In addition it may be necessary to consult adjoining parish councils and local authorities where applications have cross-boundary issues.
- 3.3 Appendix 2 identifies statutory and other main consultees for planning applications. The list in Appendix 2 is not intended to be definitive and can be updated as and when required. Beyond these specified organisations the Council recognises that it should put in place consultation measures that are accessible to all who might have an interest in planning as noted in paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5.

#### **Background**

- 3.4 When people wish to carry out building works or change the use of buildings, this is termed as 'development'. This procedure often takes the form of obtaining permission from the Council. Many development proposals require planning permission. Others need different types of permission, such as listed building consent for works to buildings identified as being of architectural and/or historical interest. Some minor developments, however, require no specific planning permission at all and this is referred to as 'permitted development'.
- 3.5 The Government prescribes legally required minimum standards for publicity on planning applications. It also encourages councils to undertake pre-application discussions for a fee and requires developers to undertake community involvement exercises for major developments. The Council requires these to be done before major applications can be validated.

#### **Pre-application discussions and consultation**

- 3.6 The Council already carries out extensive pre-application discussions with potential applicants for a fee (currently 10% of the normal planning application fee but reviewed from time to time), and intends to continue this in the future. The Council feels that this is a useful way to address planning issues before finalised proposals are drawn up and planning applications made. Thus the standard of applications received is improved, and the time needed to determine applications reduced. Pre-application discussions should be used:
- To clarify whether a development is acceptable in principle;
  - To clarify details concerning what information should be given to the authority to enable it to determine the application; and
  - To determine likely section 106 contributions.

This stage of the discussion should involve authorities, applicants and consultees appropriate to the pre-application being discussed, working together to discuss these preliminary issues along with, as necessary, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Planning & Development Committee chair, vice chair, relevant ward councillors and the Council's legal department. There is no publicity or neighbour notification involved in the pre-application process.

- 3.7 The Council will require applicants via the validation process to publicise and consult on emerging larger scale projects before they submit a planning application, and to include a Statement of Community Involvement in the planning application. In addition to the techniques set out above it may well be appropriate to engage in one or a series of public exhibitions and/or meetings. These events will be at the applicant's expense. This technique has been used successfully previously either with Council officers being present or with the developer alone engaging with the public.
- 3.8 The results of this pre-application consultation process should be seen as a part of the planning application process. The Council welcomes such early consultation for all planning proposals. More extensive pre-application consultation techniques, such as those discussed above, would be expected for all major applications, i.e.:
- 10 or more dwellings (or half a hectare or more if an outline application);
  - 1,000 square metres or more of commercial development (or half a hectare or more if an outline application).

### **Application consultation**

- 3.9 The Council uses a combination of the following methods of consultation on planning applications:

#### *Weekly planning list and local advertisement*

A weekly list of most types of application (not advertisement or discharge of conditions applications) received within the past seven days is produced every Friday. The list is received by all councillors. Copies of the list are available for public inspection at local libraries and the Council offices. The list can also be viewed on the Council's website at [www.ipswich.gov.uk](http://www.ipswich.gov.uk) and in the local press (normally Monday's edition of the Ipswich Star. The public are advised that they have 21 days from the date of the advert to submit any comments.

#### *Site notices*

The Council displays site notices on all applications on the weekly list. This includes cases where the proposal may have an environmental impact over a wider area than just the site in question. A notice is also displayed for applications for prior approvals, applications for telecommunications and demolition works. Notices are fixed to the nearest fixed feature (e.g. a lamp post or fence). The notice includes the date of display and gives details of the site address, description of the proposal, its application number and where further information can be acquired. The notice also states that any comments on the proposal should be made in writing within 21 days of the original display of the notice. Additional notices are displayed for larger proposals.

#### *Neighbour Notification*

The Council seeks to notify any adjoining owner and/or occupier by sending letters to individual premises. 'Adjoining' may include sites opposite, to the side and to the rear

of the proposal site. If a proposal involves a property with more than one occupier, efforts are made to notify all the occupiers of the building. Where it may be difficult to identify landowners, the Council relies on the site notice.

In some instances, notification will be broadened beyond adjoining sites. It is not possible to specify a rule applying to each case as each should be assessed on its own merits. Notification needs to be based on the likely level of public interest and the scale and sensitivity of the case. Examples where wider notification may take place include applications for major development and proposals that may have an environmental effect over a wider area (e.g. proposals considered visually intrusive, fast food takeaways, telecommunication masts). Any amendments to proposals may be the subject of further consultation by letter where it is considered necessary.

#### *Amendments to planning applications*

If an application is significantly amended during its consideration, the Council will normally send a further round of consultation letters. These will be sent to nearby residents and any additional people who have already written in with comments. The letters will inform them of the amendments and invite any further views. The extent of any further consultation will depend upon the nature of the changes made and the extent to which individual parties are affected.

- 3.10 The Council will make copies of applications and accompanying plans available for public inspection on the Council website at [www.ipswich.gov.uk](http://www.ipswich.gov.uk). Applications can also be viewed on-line at the Customer Services Centre. Applicants, their representatives, members of the public or other interested parties are able to seek advice from planning officers at the Council's main offices. A request for information or advice can be made via letter, e-mail or telephone. Once an application has been submitted, officers are unable to express an opinion as to the likely outcome of an application. This remains the case until all interested parties have had an opportunity to submit their views and information.

#### **Commenting on planning applications**

- 3.11 The Council welcomes any comments on all planning applications, whether they support or object to particular proposals. Comments received in writing (including e-mail) will be used to help inform the decision making process and will be open to public inspection. Comments received will help the Council to decide if a proposal is to be determined by the Development and Public Protection service through delegated powers, or by the Planning and Development Committee, which comprises of councillors who consider planning applications received by the Council.
- 3.12 For a comment to be taken into account, however, it has to be considered to be a material consideration. This means that the comment has to be relevant in planning terms (e.g. the loss of light or the over-development of a site). Examples of comments that cannot be taken into account include property devaluation or trespass. Again, each case has to be judged on its own merits. For example, a concern raised in relation to increased traffic is unlikely to be a material consideration for a small extension to a house, whereas increased traffic could be a material consideration in a change of use application to a takeaway restaurant.
- 3.13 Once all relevant information on a particular planning application has been collated, officers prepare a recommendation regarding the proposals within the application. Where appropriate, these reports are presented to Planning and Development Committee.

- 3.14 The decision on whether an application is referred to the Planning and Development Committee is at the discretion of the Town Planning Manager. Controversial applications attracting substantial public interest will usually be referred even if they are policy compliant. Small developments, e.g. householder applications will usually be delegated even where there are objections. All major applications will usually be referred. Councillors can also ask that a planning application is referred. The Service Operational Plan requires 90% of applications to be delegated, which is also a government aspiration.
- 3.15 If it is decided that an application must go to Planning and Development Committee for a decision then there will be an opportunity for an objector and the applicant to present verbal comments to the Committee. Under current arrangements, the applicant (or agent) and an agreed representative of all those who have submitted written objections to the application may address the Committee. In any case, copies of letters of representation are made available to the Committee seven days before the Committee date. Committee reports list all representations received and are considered in the report. The Committee agenda is made available to the public up to a week before the Committee meeting. Agendas are available at the Council's offices and on the website at [www.ipswich.gov.uk](http://www.ipswich.gov.uk). Further details on the arrangements for this are set out in a leaflet available from the development management team at the Council's main offices. Contact details are set out in Chapter 4.
- 3.16 The Council acknowledges the receipt of any written comments by letter or e-mail. Those making comments are advised to keep in touch with the development management team if they wish to follow the application's progress.
- 3.17 At the time when a decision is issued on any application, the Council will send letters to all those who have submitted written comments. The letters will advise whether the application has been approved or refused. A copy of the decision notice is sent to the applicant (agent). Where a decision is reached via delegated powers, a list of all these decisions is reported to the Planning and Development Committee.
- 3.18 As Planning and Development Committee meetings are public meetings, attendance is the quickest way to find out the decision of a particular planning application made by the Committee. An update on the decision can also be obtained by contacting the development management team the day after the meeting. Minutes of each Committee meeting are produced and presented within the papers for the next meeting. Minutes are then confirmed as a true record. This information can be obtained from the development management team.

## **Appeals**

- 3.19 Where a planning application has been refused, only applicants have a right of appeal. A person or organisation that has objected to a proposal (or supported it) has no right of appeal if the application is approved or refused. In other words, there is no third party right to appeal a decision.
- 3.20 Everyone whom the Council originally consulted or who wrote to object or support the application will normally be notified in writing if an appeal is lodged. They will also be informed about how to make their views known. If they had already written to the Council, their letter will be copied and sent to the Planning Inspectorate, which is responsible for handling appeals.

## How to complain

- 3.21 Planning can be a very subjective topic. It is often difficult to ensure everyone is fully satisfied when differing views are put forward relating to a particular proposal. An applicant may feel aggrieved where a refusal is issued. A consultee may feel aggrieved if the representation submitted does not prevent an approval. As a result, whilst the Council makes every effort to offer a professional, high quality service, there may be occasions where people feel unhappy with the way in which the planning process had been undertaken.
- 3.22 Any aggrieved party should consult the Council's Complaints Procedure. This is as follows. They should firstly contact the case officer who has been dealing with the planning application in question. They should describe their concerns and discuss them with the officer. Confirmation of the concerns raised may be requested in writing so that they can be formally replied to.
- 3.23 If, after this, it is felt that the concerns raised have not been fully dealt with, contact with the case officer should continue. However, if this does not resolve the situation, a formal complaint can be made. This should be addressed to the Head of Development and Public Protection, through the Council's complaints procedure. A letter of confirmation from the Council will be sent out within five working days. This letter will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and confirm the name of the officer dealing with it. The Council will also indicate how long it is likely to take to give a full explanation (usually within 28 days). If it is likely to take longer this will be indicated and further notification will be sent. Following this, if there is still no satisfactory resolution, the complaint may then be moved on to a more senior officer. Ultimately, the Local Government Ombudsman may be contacted. Please note that it is important to have gone through the Council's full complaints procedure before referring the matter to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is unable to investigate a complaint unless the Council has had a full opportunity to answer it. The Ombudsman can only investigate claims of mal-administration (whether correct procedures were followed) and cannot consider the merits of, or reverse any planning decision. A leaflet entitled '*How To Complain To The Local Government Ombudsman*' is available at the Council's offices.
- 3.24 Full details of the complaints procedure is available to view on the Council's website at [www.ipswich.gov.uk](http://www.ipswich.gov.uk) and from the details provided in Chapter 4.



## 4. How to Get Advice and Help and Useful Contacts

- 4.1 The planning system can look complicated and can put people off getting involved in plan-making or commenting on planning applications.

### Where can you turn to for help?

- 4.2 The first point of contact should be a member of the Council's planning staff who can answer queries and offer advice. Contact information for these officers and other useful contacts is shown below.

All enquiries relating to planning policy issues and the Local Plan should be directed to Robert Hobbs, Planning Policy Team Leader:

**Planning Policy Team**, Ipswich Borough Council, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Grafton House, 15-17 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2DE

Tel: (01473) 432019

E-mail: [planningandregeneration@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:planningandregeneration@ipswich.gov.uk)

All enquiries relating to planning applications, the Planning and Development Committee and advice on development proposals should be directed to Lisa Chandler, Development Management Team Leader:

**Development Management Team**, Ipswich Borough Council, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Grafton House, 15-17 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2DE

Tel: (01473) 432913

E-mail: [developmentmanagement@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:developmentmanagement@ipswich.gov.uk)

### Customer Services Centre

Access to information regarding planning applications, as well as other Council services should be sought at:

Customer Services Centre, Town Hall, Princes Street, Ipswich IP1 1BZ

### Councillors

Councillors can also be contacted and their details are available on the Council's website at [www.ipswich.gov.uk](http://www.ipswich.gov.uk).

- 4.3 Other organisations and agencies where you may find help include:

### Planning Aid

- 4.4 A charity offering free and unbiased advice to groups and individuals unable to afford a planning consultant. For more information and contact details please log onto: [www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid).

### Local Government Ombudsman

- 4.5 They will investigate a case if you feel that the Council has made a procedural or administrative mistake in its decision making process. For more information and contact details please log onto: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk).

## **5. Monitoring and Review**

- 5.1 The Council will monitor the effectiveness of its chosen methods for involving the community in planning. For example, the effectiveness of exhibitions can be assessed through the numbers attending and the 'reach' of communications can be assessed through asking how people attending learned of the event. It will report on the findings through the annual authority monitoring report.
- 5.2 Should monitoring reveal the need to further amend the SCI, this would be taken forward through the Local Development Scheme.

## Appendix 1

### Consultation Bodies for a Local Plan

The Government Regulations relating to the preparation of a Local Plan require that certain minimum standards should be met for consulting on a pre-submission Local Plan (Regulation 18). These regulations make reference to:

- such of the specific consultation bodies as the local planning authority consider may have an interest in the subject of the proposed local plan;
- such of the general consultation bodies as the local planning authority consider appropriate; and
- such residents or other persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area from which the local planning authority consider it appropriate to invite representations.

The defined consultation bodies are listed below. The names and make-up of the individual bodies change from time to time.

#### Specific Consultation Bodies:

- A relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority (this includes parish councils, Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, and Suffolk Coastal District Council);
- Coal Authority;
- English Heritage;
- Environment Agency;
- Highways Agency;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Marine Management Organisation;
- Natural England;
- Network Rail;
- Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under Section 106 (3) (a) of the Communications Act 2003 (e.g. British Telecom);
- Any person who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority (e.g. British Telecom, Orange, Virgin Media etc.); and any bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of the local planning authority:
  - NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group represented by NHS Property Services Ltd (Suffolk);
  - Person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989;
  - Person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986 (e.g. British Gas)
  - Sewage undertaker; and
  - Water undertaker.

## **General Consultation Bodies**

- Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities wholly or partially benefit any part of the local planning authority's area (e.g. Community Action Suffolk, residents associations and tenants groups etc.);
- Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area (e.g. Home Builders Federation, Chamber of Commerce, Ipswich Central (Business Improvement District) etc.).

In respect of the Duty to Co-operate introduced by the Localism Act 2011 to be considered in the Examination of a Local Plan, the following consultation bodies are relevant.

### **Consultation Bodies in respect of the Duty to Co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development:**

- Neighbouring local planning authorities (Babergh District Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, and Suffolk Coastal District Council);
- Suffolk County Council;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- English Heritage;
- Environment Agency;
- Highway Authority;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Integrated Transport Authority;
- Marine Management Organisation;
- Natural England;
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership;
- NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group represented by NHS Property Services Ltd (Suffolk);
- Office of Rail Regulation; and
- Wild Anglia Local Nature Partnership.

### **In respect of Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, the designated consultation bodies in the UK are:**

- English Heritage;
- Environment Agency; and
- Natural England.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Consultation Bodies for Planning Applications**

#### ***Statutory Consultees***

Ancient Monuments Society  
Council for British Archaeology  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)  
English Heritage  
Environment Agency  
Health and Safety Executive  
Highways Agency  
Natural England  
Network Rail  
Sport England  
Suffolk County Council

#### ***Main Other Consultees***

Ipswich Borough Council service areas (as relevant)  
Adjoining Parish Councils and Local Authorities to Ipswich Borough Council (as relevant)  
Anglian Water  
Associated British Ports Ltd  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Crown Estates  
NHS Property Services Ltd (Suffolk)  
Suffolk Constabulary  
Suffolk Wildlife Trust  
Sustrans

## Appendix 3

### Glossary

	<b>Adopt</b>	The final confirmation of a plan as a statutory document by the local planning authority.
	<b>Allocation of Land</b>	The identification of how land should be developed or built on in the future (e.g. new housing development).
	<b>Appeals</b>	The process whereby an applicant can challenge a refused decision on an application by means of written representations, hearing or public inquiry.
<b>AMR</b>	<b>Authority Monitoring Report</b>	Report on the progress of preparing the Local Plan and the extent to which policies are being achieved.
	<b>Circular</b>	A Government publication setting out policy approaches.
<b>CIL</b>	<b>Community Infrastructure Levy</b>	A charge levied on certain types of development appropriate to the development's use and size, which is used to fund infrastructure needed as a result of development.
	<b>Consultation</b>	Seeking people's views to guide decision-making.
	<b>Consultees Database</b>	A list containing details of groups, organisations and individuals to be consulted on planning policy documents. To be included on the list, contact Planning Policy on 01473 432019 or e-mail: <a href="mailto:planningandregeneration@ipswich.gov.uk">planningandregeneration@ipswich.gov.uk</a>
	<b>Core Strategy</b>	A Development Plan Document setting out the spatial vision and objectives of the planning framework for the area.
<b>DCLG</b>	<b>Department for Communities and Local Government</b>	Government department responsible for town and country planning.
<b>DEFRA</b>	<b>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</b>	Government department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues.
<b>DPD</b>	<b>Development Plan Document</b>	A local development document in the Local Plan which forms part of the statutory development plan. The core strategy, documents dealing with the allocation of land, area action plans and the policies map are all development plan documents.
	<b>Independent Examination</b>	The process by which an independent Planning Inspector publicly examines the soundness of a DPD and any representations made against it before issuing a non-binding report.

	<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Organisation governing the area (e.g. the Borough Council and County Council).</b>
<b>LPA</b>	<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	<b>The Local Authority that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions. Normally this is the Borough or District Council.</b>
<b>LDD</b>	<b>Local Development Document</b>	<b>An individual document that either forms or supports the Local Plan. It includes Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement.</b>
<b>LDS</b>	<b>Local Development Scheme</b>	<b>A public statement setting out the programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents.</b>
	<b>Local Plan (1997)</b>	<b>A statutory development plan prepared under previous legislation (the old planning system. It is a legal document containing saved policies currently used to determine decisions on planning applications received by the Council.</b>
	<b>Local Plan (formerly Local Development Framework) post 2011</b>	<b>The overarching term given to the collection of Local Development Documents which collectively will provide the local planning authority's policies for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social aims for the future of the area where this affects the development and use of land and buildings.</b>
	<b>Material Consideration</b>	<b>A matter which should be taken into account in deciding on a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision.</b>
	<b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b>	<b>Government policy that replaced majority of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS).</b>
	<b>Planning Application</b>	<b>An application for permission from the local planning authority to commence building work or change of use of buildings.</b>
	<b>Planning &amp; Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</b>	<b>Government legislation introducing a different approach to development planning to that before.</b>
	<b>Planning &amp; Development Committee</b>	<b>A panel of elected Council members whose role is to consider difficult or complicated planning and other applications. Normally meets every three weeks.</b>
	<b>Policies Map</b>	<b>Illustrating on an Ordnance Survey base the policies and proposals of development plan documents and any 'saved' policies of the Local Plan (1997).</b>
	<b>Saved Policies</b>	<b>Policies within the Local Plan that remain in force for a time period pending their replacement as necessary by development plan documents.</b>

<b>SSSI</b>	<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest</b>	<b>An area of land which, in the opinion of Natural England, is of special interest at a national level due to its flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features.</b>
	<b>Soundness</b>	<b>In the process of examining a planning document an inspector assesses whether the document is positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy (i.e. sound).</b>
	<b>Spatial Planning</b>	<b>Taking into account the economic, social and environmental implications when weighing up competing demands for land.</b>
<b>SCI</b>	<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>	<b>Sets out the standards to be achieved in involving the community and other stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and review of local development documents and in significant development management decisions.</b>
	<b>Statutory</b>	<b>Required through written law, usually through an Act of Parliament.</b>
<b>SEA</b>	<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment</b>	<b>A term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes.</b>
<b>SPD</b>	<b>Supplementary Planning Document</b>	<b>A local development document which provides further detail of policies in the development plan documents or of saved local plan policies. They do not have development plan status.</b>
<b>SPG</b>	<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance</b>	<b>Providing additional guidance expanding policies in a local plan. SPGs will remain relevant where they are linked to saved policies but will ultimately be replaced by supplementary planning documents.</b>
	<b>Sustainable Development</b>	<b>Development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability to meet those of future generations.</b>
<b>SA</b>	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>	<b>Identifies and evaluates social, environmental and economic effects of strategies and policies in a local development document from the outset of the preparation process. It incorporates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.</b>
	<b>Vision</b>	<b>A long term view, an image of how things might be in the future.</b>
	<b>Voluntary Sector</b>	<b>Non-statutory organisations controlled by people who are unpaid and usually elected.</b>



IPSWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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