Wycombe Revised Statement of Community Involvement

Adopted December 2012

GETTING INVOLVED IN PLANNING

WYCOMBE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Getting Involved in Planning – Easy Guide

Why get involved?
Planning matters. It affects our daily lives and shapes the places we live in. This is why it is important to get involved in planning. This Statement of Community Involvement tells you what the Council will do to help you get involved and what we expect others to do.

What can I get involved in?
You can get involved in individual Planning Applications about a site or building, or in "Plan-making" concerning longer terms plans for a larger area.

Click on links from each heading below for web version

Planning Applications
The basic principle is that the bigger the proposal the more we expect people to be able to be involved.

You can get involved in 4 different ways.

Before a Planning application is submitted (Pre-Application)	**During the Planning Application determination**
Where you think there is a breach of planning control (Enforcement)	If you are a **developer or applicant** for planning permission then there are certain things we expect you to do to **help others get involved** too.

Plan-Making

A range of different plans concerning the development of the District are prepared. At the Council we prepare:

Local Plans

Supplementary Planning Documents

Local communities, led for instance by town or parish councils, or locally formed "neighbourhood forums", can also prepare:

Neighbourhood Development Plans

How can I get Involved?

There are three main ways that the Council involves people in planning:

Information – Consultation – Involvement

There are many methods that the Council may use to help get people involved in planning.

Methods of engagement

To find out which ones may be appropriate for the aspect of planning you want to get involved in, click on the links to the relevant processes above.

START

Finding out More

There is a lot more information set out in the main part of this Statement of Community Involvement – follow the links.

In addition the Council prepares additional guidance notes to provide you with more information on getting involved in different aspects of planning, be it in relation to a planning application or about neighbourhood planning.

Go on our website on the Statement of Community Involvement webpage for more detailed guidance notes (see the Documents to download section) on:
- How to Have Your Say
- Pre-application Developer presentations to members

Contents

Introduction

i. This document is the Statement of Community Involvement for Wycombe District. It sets out the Council's approach to community involvement in planning.

ii. This document gives you a clear indication of the extent of the opportunities for getting involved in planning matters as well as the means to do so.

Figure 1: Structure of the document

Section	Pages
Get involved in planning	Pages 8 to 11
Planning Applications	Pages 12 to 19
Plan making	Pages 20 to 33

iii. Following changes in legislation both for Development Management (planning applications) and in the preparation of the Plans, the adoption of the Council's Engagement Strategy (see Chapter 1), and with a new Local Plan about to be prepared, it was the right time to be reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement.

iv. After seeking views on the draft Wycombe Revised Statement of Community Involvement during a six week consultation period, we have updated it in the light of the comments received in this final version.

v. This Wycombe Revised Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in December 2012.

vi. Figure 2 below sets out how this document has been prepared.

Figure 2. Statement of Community Involvement review stages

Stage	What did we do?
Stage 1. Evidence gathering and review of the existing SCI (late spring/ summer 2012)	Assembling information to inform the scope and form of a Revised Statement of Community Involvement as well as engaging with stakeholders / interests groups as appropriate
Stage 2. Preparation and publication of a draft revised Statement of Community Involvement(Autumn 2012)	Public consultation for 6 weeks
Stage 3. Adopt the Statement of Community Involvement (Winter 2012)	Incorporate any changes following consultation. Adopt and publish the Statement of Community Involvement

Format of this document

If you require the information supplied in a different language please come into the Wycombe District Council offices where we can arrange a translation or interpretation as appropriate.

Due to cost implications it is possible that we will not be able to translate this document in its entirety. However, it is possible for the required parts to be translated, or interpreted as appropriate. Please come into the Wycombe District Council offices.

اگر آپ کو مُہیا کردہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہوں تو وکمب ڈسٹرکٹ کاؤنسل کے دفاتر میں تشریف لائیں جہاں ہم آپ کے لیئے حسب ضرورت مناسب تحریری یا زبانی ترجمانی کے انتظامات کر سکتے ہیں۔

اخراجات کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے ممکن ہے کہ ہم اس دستاویز کامکمل طور پر ترجمہ مُہیا نہ کر سکیں۔ تاہم یہ ممکن ہے کہ اس کے اہم ترین حصوں کا حسب ضرورت تحریری یا زبانی ترجمہ کروایا جاسکے۔ برائے مہربانی وکمب ڈسٹرکٹ کاؤنسل کے دفاتر میں تشریف لائیں۔

Jeśli potrzebne jest Państwu tłumaczenie przekazanych informacji na inny język, zapraszamy do biura Rady Okręgowej Wycombe w celu zaaranżowania – gdzie stosowne – tłumaczenia pisemnego lub ustnego.

Ze względu na koszty możliwe jest, iż nie będziemy w stanie zlecić tłumaczenia całości tego dokumentu. Możemy jednak – gdzie stosowne – zlecić tłumaczenie pisemne lub ustne niezbędnych fragmentów. Zapraszamy do biura Rady Okręgowej Wycombe.

Chapter 1 – Get Involved...

What do YOU think?

Why should you get involved in Planning?

1.1 Planning matters. It affects our daily lives, and shapes the places we live in. By getting involved in planning, you can help shape decisions about the future of your area and help create better, more sustainable communities.

1.2 People often have local knowledge of the places where they live, work, and play. This can be invaluable in informing planning decisions.

What can you get involved in?

1.3 The next chapters will detail what you can get involved in and how. In summary, this consists of:

- Planning Applications
    - Pre-application discussions
    - Planning Applications
    - Enforcement
- Plan Making
    - Local Plans
    - Supplementary Planning Documents
    - Neighbourhood Planning

Our Principles

1.4 Central Government sets out minimum requirements for community involvement in planning[1]. As the Council has long recognised the importance of involving the community[2] in making more sustainable choices for the future of our District, it is determined to continue to exceed these basic requirements wherever possible.

Picture 1. Local planning event in the Desborough and Green Street area of High Wycombe

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1 This SCI complies with the legislation in place at the date of its adoption. If the legislation changes, the Council will comply with the new legislation rather than the superseded legislation set out in the SCI.

2 In general terms, people who live, work or are actively involved in the life of the District.

The Engagement Strategy

1.5 The Council has already prepared an Engagement Strategy which sets the Council's core principles for community engagement. This Corporate Engagement Strategy is part of the commitment we have for involving the community in making decisions about the District.

1.6 This revised Statement of Community Involvement, once adopted, will become a daughter document of the Engagement Strategy and follow its **Engagement Standards** (see Table 1).

1.7 This sets out five clear engagement standards which must apply to any consultation exercise / engagement activity: this is true for **planning consultations.**

Table 1. The Council's Engagement standards

Standards
1. When to engage: Formal engagement will take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the decision being taken by the Council.
2. How long to engage: The length of time given for engagement will depend on the scope of the proposal, the target audience and any statutory guidelines applicable to the service concerned.
3. Being clear Information will be clear about the process, what is being proposed and what is not being proposed; the scope to influence, along with the expected costs and benefits of the proposal.
4. Giving people the opportunity to engage: Engagement exercises will be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.
5. Giving feedback: Responses will be analysed carefully and clear feedback will be provided to participants following the engagement exercise within a published timescale.

1.8 The Statement of Community Involvement and the work of the Planning & Sustainability department[3] is just one element of this drive for a more inclusive approach.

Reaching out

1.9 The Council recognises that there are some groups in the community that can be more difficult to engage with. Among others, these are disadvantaged communities, ethnic minority groups, the traveller community, but also defined social groups (such as young people).

1.10 We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of our efforts to engage with these "hard-to-reach" groups, and shape our approach based on what is most successful. In doing this, the Council will have regard to and comply with its duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Tools for engagement

1.11 The Council will use the most appropriate types of involvement to make our efforts as effective as possible. Along with existing knowledge on participation methods and techniques, the Planning and Sustainability department has developed a menu of preferred methods, in line with the Council's Engagement Strategy. Appendix B sets out in details the different types of community involvement methods we may use.

1.12 Along with the Corporate Engagement Strategy, the Council has developed an Engagement Toolkit to help officers and members in their engagement activities. This can be downloaded on our Corporate Plan webpage[4] along with the Engagement Strategy.

1.13 The Engagement Toolkit is a live document which will be regularly updated. If appropriate, we may use any future methods added to it along with those already set out in Appendix B of this document. By doing so we will ensure that we maintain flexibility in terms of methods / engagement opportunities.

Where can YOU get started?

1.14 On the next page are some quick ways to find out about planning issues and keeping up with planning matters.

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3   See also the Planning & Sustainability Customer Charter   on our website at www.wycombe.gov.uk > council services > planning-and-buildings > planning service and performance

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4   http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/council-and-democracy/policies-and-plans/our-corporate-plan.aspx

Website
Go on www.wycombe.gov.uk, in our planning and buildings section, and get the latest info from our dedicated planning news page. You can also learn more about planning applications and how to appeal, planning policy and guidance. You can also follow our latest consultations on plans.

Weekly Planning Bulletin
Weekly planning bulletins are a great and simple way to receive regular updates on the latest planning matters within the District. Simply send us an email to spatial_planning@wycombe.gov.uk to request to be added to the distribution mailing list.

The Planning and Sustainability Consultation Database
If you would like to be added to the Council's Planning and Sustainability Consultation Database, so that you are notified of forthcoming stages of consultation and other significant progress on Wycombe Development Documents, please contact the Planning Policy team on 01494 421158 or email spatial_planning@wycombe.gov.uk

My Wycombe
Using 'My Wycombe' on the Council's website allows you to look at the planning history of your location, access planning maps, find out about other local facilities and who your local Councillors are.

http://mywycombe.wycombe.gov.uk

Your representatives
The role of councillors as community representatives is evolving, and they are now seen as champions for their local communities. Elected members are the key decision makers in the Council, identifying the priorities that guide the work of the Council which includes approving the preparation of Local Development Documents and approving or rejecting development applications. Local Ward Councillors are there to make sure the views and opinions of their constituents are heard. Either by contacting them directly or by having your local member involved in local community group meetings, your Councillor can communicate effectively the views of your local community.
Find out who they are and how to get in touch on My Wycombe.

Chapter 2 ... In Planning Applications

2.1 This chapter details how:
- you can view planning applications and make comments
- Wycombe District Council and developers/applicants will inform, consult or involve the community.

Considerations of planning applications

2.2 Many people only come into contact with the planning system when there is the opportunity to be involved in deciding whether or not a particular development can take place in their area.

2.3 Most forms of development require planning permission, following a strict application process. The two main stages where the local community can get involved are the pre-application stage and the application decision stage.

2.4 Planning related legislation is complex and the Council's Development Management teams process various statutory planning applications, consultations, and notifications, for example:

Applications:
- full or outline planning permission,
- listed building consent,
- advertisement consent,
- certificates of lawfulness.

Consultations & Notifications:
- works to protected trees,
- approval for agricultural and forestry buildings and operations,
- notification of telecoms equipment,
- hedgerow removal notices.

2.5 The proposals submitted to the council can also vary in scale, from minor alterations to someone's home, to proposals that have district-wide or even sub-regional importance. As such, the level of community involvement that the Council will seek to initiate will depend on the scale and sensitivity of the application. This is in line with national guidance, and with the Council's wider Engagement Strategy[5].

2.6 If an application conforms to the policies in the Local Plan then it will, in most cases, receive permission.

Applications for sites identified in the Development Plan
There will be instances where Planning Applications are submitted to the Council for the development of sites identified in the Development Plan.
As such, those sites will have some level of planning policy guidance that relate to what is acceptable. Regard will be had to the issues raised through community involvement and comments received.

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5 See Chapter 1

2.7 To make sure all the relevant issues are identified and considered it is important that when appropriate, you have the opportunity to have a say in the proposed development.

2.8 However, note that – depending on the particular legislation involved – public consultation will not always be appropriate or possible, for example listed building consent, advertisement consent, etc.

How to find out?

2.9 You can find out about all planning applications being submitted to Wycombe District Council on a planning portal called Public *Access* (see below). We will also publish other "planning application" related information on the planning pages of the Council website (www.wycombe.gov.uk). You can also use "My Wycombe" which displays Council information about any property on a map.

2.10 Alternatively, you can write to planning@wycombe.gov.uk.

2.11 If you want to appear at a Planning committee, further guidance is available at: http://www.wycombe.gov.uk > council services > planning and buildings > planning applications > speaking at planning committee

2.12 To see further information about getting involved in planning applications decisions and **have your say**, look at the Development Management pages on the website.[6]

Public *Access* for Planning

This is an on-line Internet service that **allows you to access details of planning applications being considered by the Council.**

You can register so that you are automatically **notified** if an application is submitted within your chosen area.

You can also **monitor** the progress of an application, **submit comments** about the application, **search** a constantly **updated list** of applications received each week, **view details** of some historic applications and view property details on a **map**.

http://publicaccess.wycombe.gov.uk

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6   http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-applications/comment.aspx

Enforcement matters

2.13 Planning enforcement relates to anything that requires planning permission but does not have it, or failing to comply with a planning condition. You can find out more on the planning enforcement section of the website at http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-enforcement.aspx

2.14 You can report a breach on planning control on the website at: www.wycombe.gov.uk > council services > planning and buildings > planning enforcement > report a breach

2.15 Please note that these reports cannot be made anonymously.

Categories of Planning Applications

2.16 In most applications, there is the opportunity for you and the rest of the local community to have their say. The extent to which we seek to engage with the local community will depend on how significant the application is considered by the Council to be and the impacts it may have. It should be noted however that planning applications must be determined in accordance with current legislation, appropriate development plan policies in force at the time and other material considerations.

2.17 Representations are important to highlight issues that need to be considered, but applications are not determined simply due to the number of representations in favour or against a proposal.

2.18 The different categories or tiers of 'significance' are set out in table 2.

Table 2. The different tiers in which planning applications fall

Tier 1A Large scale Major	Tier 1A involves any major development proposal which the Council considers to be particularly controversial with impacts beyond the immediate locality. This applies when: • the number of residential units to be constructed is 200 or more. • the number of residential units to be constructed is not given in the application but the site area is 4 hectares or more. • the floor space to be built is 10,000m2 or more, or where the site area is 2 hectares or more.
Tier 1B Small scale Major	Tier 1 B involves any major development proposal which the Council considers to be particularly controversial with impacts beyond the immediate locality. This applies when an application: • is for residential development of 100 dwellings or more; • involves the provision of 5000m2 of new commercial floor space or more (outside of identified employment areas); • proposes 'significant' development within town centre areas that is of more than a local interest.
Tier 2 Neighbourhood Impact	This Tier concerns development proposals within the following range: • All developments from 10 to 100 residential units, or • Construction or change of use of over 1000m² to 5000m² of non residential floor space, or; • Development on sites between 0.5ha and 2ha in area. Other schemes which because of their strategic or contentious nature have this level of impact.
Tier 3 Street Impact	This includes all forms of development that does not fall within Tiers 1, 2 and 4, including: • new and replacement dwellings and residential developments of less than 10 dwellings, • small commercial development and changes of use, • commercial floor space up to 1000m², • sites up to 0.5ha in area.
Tier 4 Householder Development	This is all residential development including: • extensions and external alterations to dwellings, • garden buildings and structures.

Statutory requirements for the Council

2.19 The legislation sets out minimum requirements for involving the local community in the consideration of planning applications[7]. On receipt of a planning application, the Council consults a range of statutory organisations as the appropriate legislation requires. Other organisations and groups may also be consulted at the discretion of the case officer.

2.20 Legislation currently requires notification of those adjoining a proposed development by either letter or by the posting of a site notice.

2.21 At the Council the prime means of publicising planning applications is by direct neighbour notification, on the basis of letters being sent individually to owners/occupiers of properties which immediately adjoin (share a common boundary with) the application site. Others nearby who are felt to be directly affected by an application can also be notified at the discretion of the case officer.

2.22 In addition to this neighbour notification, legislation also requires site notices to be posted in certain situations:
- Departures from the Development Plan,
- applications for Listed Building Consent

- applications affecting the setting of Listed Buildings,
- Applications affecting a public right of way, etc.

In such cases the Council also usually publishes details of these applications in the local press.

Pre-application discussions

2.23 Community involvement is most effective during the pre-application stage for larger development proposals. At this stage, there is the potential for developers to consider local issues and concerns prior to submitting a formal planning application. This is in the interest of both the developer and the local community.

2.24 A failure by developers to carry out public involvement on major sites before the application decision stage may lead to more objections being made to a planning application.

2.25 Early developer-led engagement of the wider community enhances the chances of buy-in for the project. If this is an open and active process, then the end result can be better, more sustainable development within our District.

2.26 This early engagement is also encouraged between the Council and developers by engaging with the **Pre-application Advice Service** offered. You can find out more on http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-applications/pre-application-advice.aspx

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7 Part 3 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 20107(and Sections 67 and 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

2.27 These pre-application discussions are not available for public inspection, in the same way that planning applications are. This allows developers to approach the Council for frank and confidential advice on their preliminary development ideas and proposals. Ultimately this results in public consultation at the most appropriate stage in the design process when well thought out proposals are available for comments.

2.28 For large scale development a **Planning Performance Agreement** can be reached. It establishes a defined shared vision between the council and the developer/agent and identifies key milestones and timescales for the delivery of a planning decision, **including any consultation exercise.**

Planning Performance Agreements

PPA's are about improving the quality of planning applications and the decision-making process through collaboration. They bring together the Local Planning Authority, the developer and key stakeholders, preferably at an early stage, to work together in partnership throughout the planning process.

PPA's, or similar more informal agreements, are essentially a collaborative project management process and tool that provide greater certainty and transparency to the development of scheme proposals, the planning application assessment and the decision making.

The role of Developers in community engagement

2.29 Table 3 below sets out what the Council expects of developers/agents in terms of engagement in relation to the different "tiers" of application.

Table 3. The role of developers in community engagement

	The Localism Act requires developers of certain major applications to carry out consultation during the pre-application stage. Major planning application would refer to the most 'significant' development proposals formally submitted to the Council, as defined in Tiers 1A and 1B by the Council (see page 15). Other applications that the Council regards as significant, particularly sensitive or of a scale that will have wider impacts, will require a level of public consultation akin to that set out for this tier.
Tier 1A **Large scale Major**	The Council will encourage developers submitting major applications to engage with communities and with the Council[8] at an early stage, as this is seen as a vital element in resolving any issues and concerns raised by the local community.
Tier 1B **Small scale Major**	Developer-led consultations should be fair in the appraisal of the issues that relate to the development proposal. Where appropriate, the use of a third party facilitator will be encouraged. Methods of engagement considered appropriate by the Council include hosting exhibitions and distributing informative flyers/letters[9]. **The Council expects applicants or their agents to:** • **provide an opportunity for identified stakeholders to be involved in the project: this should be carried out before proposals have been drawn up,** • **provide an opportunity for consultation on the proposals** • **make information on the proposals widely available to the identified stakeholders**

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8 See the Notice on Pre- application Developer Presentations to Members and Stakeholders produced by the Development Management team, available on the website and at our main offices.

9 In this respect, the way in which the Council will promote developers to involve the community in preparing development proposals is similar to that implemented by the Council to date. See also Appendix B of this document and the Council's Engagement Toolkit.

	In some instances, Tier 1 proposals will be on sites that have a specific reference in adopted or emerging planning policy, and also have had supplementary guidance prepared and adopted. Where supplementary guidance has not been prepared, the applicant will be asked to ensure that the public involvement is equivalent to that required for the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document[10].
Tier 2 Neighbourhood Impact	At Neighbourhood level, there will still be some community involvement encouraged by the Council.
	A greater level of involvement will in particular be sought where an application is of a sensitive nature, or where there are issues that are likely to be contentious. It may also involve applications for development that is of a scale that will have a greater impact.
	Prior to the submission of an application the Council expects applicants/ developers or their agents to: • **provide an opportunity for consultation,** • **make information on the proposals widely available to the identified stakeholders**
	The purpose of the consultation is to allow stakeholders to identify aspects of the proposals which are, in their view, unsatisfactory, with the opportunity for improvements to be made prior to submission.
Tier 3 Street Impact **Tier 4 Householder Development**	There are already statutory minimum requirements for consultation procedures in planning applications. In some instances, where small scale development may be more sensitive (for example in rural areas), the Council may look to inform more widely. However, in most cases, the statutory requirements are considered sufficient. For Tier 3 or Tier 4 applications, we do not expect the applicant or agent to carry out 'community involvement', although it is courteous to inform those immediate neighbours of the proposals before an application is submitted.

10 See section on SPDs in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 … In Plan Making

Picture 2. Wycombe landscape

Plan making and place shaping

3.1 Following national legislation and policy the Council sets out local planning strategies and policies to address important planning issues for the District and implement the spatial element of the Council's vision for the area. This takes the form of Local Development Documents.

3.2 The main planning strategy and policies are set out in **Local Plans.** At present this includes the adopted Core Strategy, the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan (once adopted), and the Wycombe District Local Plan.

3.3 In addition **Supplementary Planning Documents** provide more detailed guidance to further explain policies and proposals set out in Local Plans.

3.4 The scope of and timetable for the preparation of Local Plans is set out in the **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**[11].

You can see the LDS on our website[12].

3.5 In addition to the plans prepared by the Council, the Government have recently introduced powers for local communities to prepare plans for more local areas themselves. These are called Neighbourhood Development Plans (see page 31). Buckinghamshire County Council also prepares plans relating to Minerals and Waste issues.
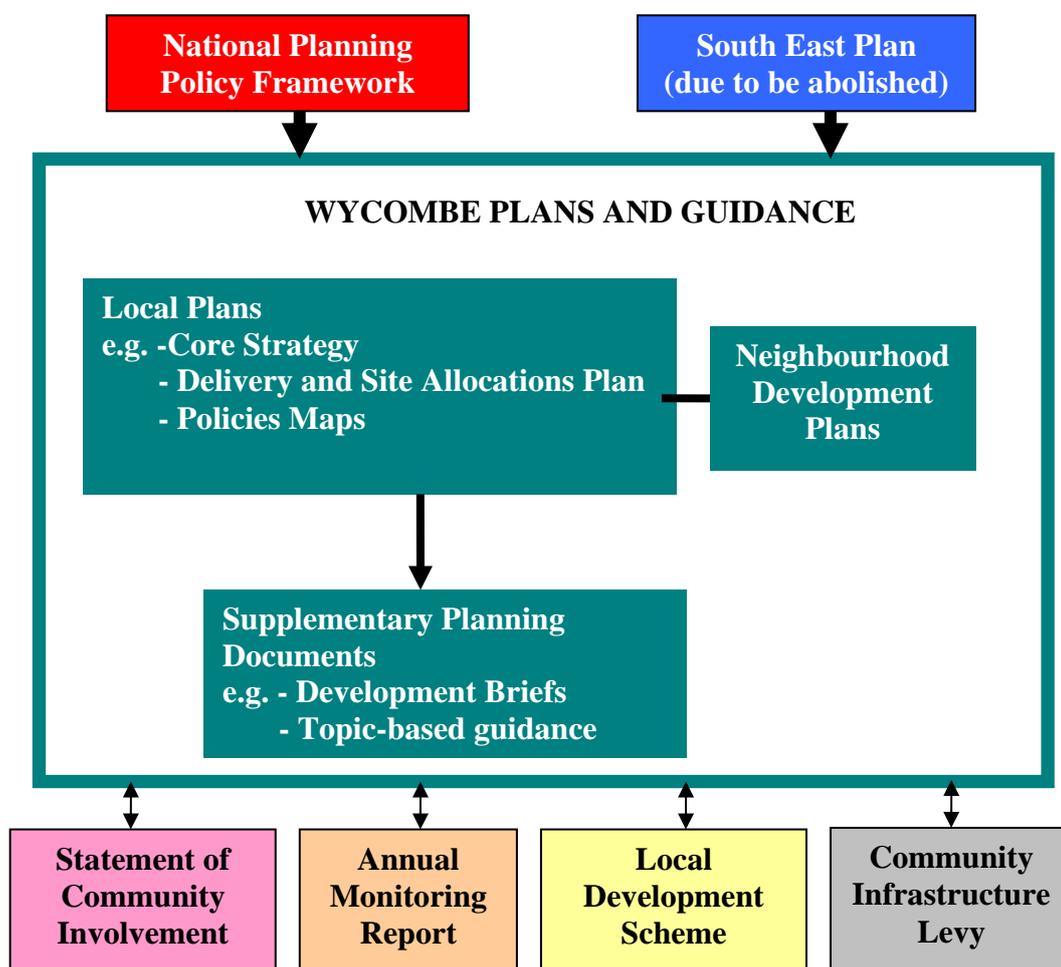
Where can I see the Plans?

The Council will list all emerging and Adopted Local Plans Supplementary Planning Documents, and Neighbourhood Development Plans on the website, under council services > planning and buildings > planning policy.

Free copies can be downloaded on the website. Hard copies are available for purchase from the Council, or to view at the Council Offices in High Wycombe.

3.6 See Figure 3 for a summary of Wycombe's Plans and guidance in relations to other local, regional and national documents.

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11 If the LDS is out of date, we will add information on our website about the revised programme until the LDS is reviewed.

12   http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-policy/wycombe-development-framework/local-development-scheme.aspx

Figure 3. Wycombe's Plans and associated documents

National Planning Policy Framework		South East Plan (due to be abolished)

WYCOMBE PLANS AND GUIDANCE

Local Plans
e.g. -Core Strategy
   - Delivery and Site Allocations Plan
   - Policies Maps

Neighbourhood Development Plans

Supplementary Planning Documents
e.g. - Development Briefs
      - Topic-based guidance

Statement of Community Involvement	Annual Monitoring Report	Local Development Scheme	Community Infrastructure Levy

3.7 The following sections detail how and when you can get involved[13] with the preparation of Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents, and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Involvement in preparing Local Plans

Principles

3.8 Local Plans are the prime consideration when determining planning applications unless material considerations indicate otherwise[14].

3.9 The preparation of a Local Plan goes through 3 main stages before being adopted (see Figure 4). Early involvement in this process is especially important so there is a chance to consider the options and shape the final proposals.
The details of how you can get involved in Local Plans are set out in Table 4.

Figure 4. Process for Local Plan Documents
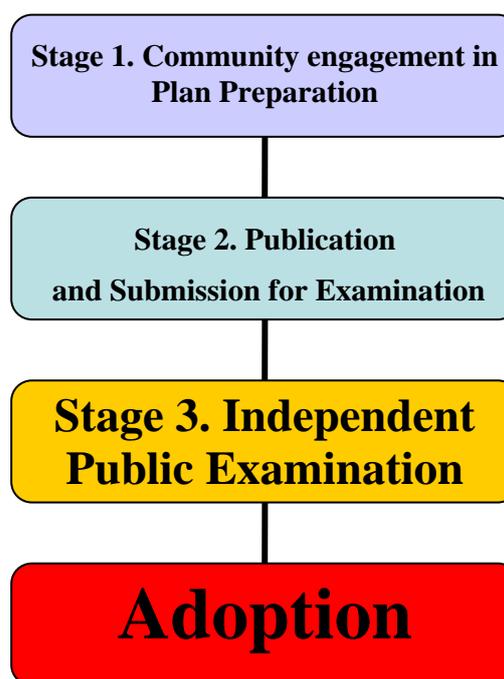
Stage 1. Community Engagement in Plan preparation

3.10 This is the key stage for community involvement. It provides the opportunity for the community and stakeholders to help identify the issues, to consider the various options for addressing those issues and help shape the identification of the most appropriate proposals and policies for inclusion in the Plan. Consideration of options might include the strategy for the development of an area, site development options or options for how particular issues can be addressed in specific planning policies.

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13 The Council must consult a series of statutory national and local bodies in all formal consultation stages in the preparation of Plans and in major planning applications. The Council will also seek to involve different local interest groups in preparing different types of documents and for different categories of planning applications. These are groups and stakeholder bodies that represent local interests, as well as voluntary sector organisations.

14 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) (as amended)

3.11 Local Plans need to be based on sound evidence. Some of the evidence to inform a Local Plan may already exist but often new evidence has to be prepared at this stage. This can also benefit from involvement of the local community and/or stakeholders.

Picture 3. Consultation meeting

Stage 2. Publication and Submission for Examination

3.12 At this stage the Local Plan is published by the Council. It is effectively the Council's final version of the plan. The public and stakeholders are invited to make formal written representations on the published plan. The published Plan and the representations received are then submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). Any comments made at the publication stage will be considered at the Independent Public Examination (see stage 3).

Stage 3. Independent Public Examination

3.13 The 'Submitted' Local Plan is then tested by an independent planning Inspector for its 'soundness'. The 'tests of soundness' have been published by the Government[15].
People who have submitted representations at this stage can attend the Examination hearings to discuss issues with the Inspector.

3.14 The independent Planning Inspector will then issue a report with, where appropriate, recommendations for changes that the Council has to accept if it wishes to adopt the Plan. Sometimes the Inspector may ask the Council to consult on the changes he recommends before the examination process is complete.

Adoption

3.15 The document is adopted by the Council, incorporating the changes recommended by the Inspector.

15 These are set out in paragraph 182 of National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012) – see www.communities.gov.uk

Table 4. Involvement in Local Plans

Stage of preparation	Minimum Requirements for community involvement[16]	Possible additional elements (refer to menu in Appendix B)
Stage 1. Community Engagement in Plan Preparation	The Council will notify each of the "specific and general consultation bodies[17]" and residents and businesses in the District as the Council considers appropriate of the Local Plan that the Council intends to prepare. The Council will invite those referred to above to make representations in writing to the local planning authority about what this Local Plan ought to contain. The Council must take account of any representations made in preparing the draft Plan. The Council will consult the statutory bodies[18] on the preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal[19] In addition the Council has a "Duty to Cooperate" on strategic issues with neighbouring local authorities and a range of other defined bodies.	The precise approach to community involvement in the preparation of a Local Plan will be assessed having regard to the nature and content of the Plan. The Engagement Toolkit provides a framework for planning the engagement. At this key engagement stage a range of means of engagement will be employed combining involvement, consultation and information, drawing on the techniques set out in Appendix B. These are likely to include: • Holding events that offer a range of opportunities to be involved. This is likely to include workshop-style events; • Attending externally held meetings to discuss issues, including with appropriate groups, organisations and individuals, utilising existing groups/fora wherever possible;

16 See the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 – Regulations 18-26 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004, as amended)

17 These include a range of national agencies/bodies and groups and stakeholder bodies that represent local interests, as well as voluntary sector organisations.

18 Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency

19 The Sustainability Appraisal is an evaluation of the social, economic and environmental effects of the document. It is a key part of the evidence base, including evaluation of reasonable alternatives.

Stage of preparation	Minimum Requirements for community involvement[16]	Possible additional elements (refer to menu in Appendix B)
		• Holding discussions with key stakeholders, particularly with appropriate bodies under the Duty to Cooperate; • Employing a range of methods to disseminate information, including extensive use of the website and Weekly Planning Bulletin. The website will be a key tool. Use of written electronic communication will be encouraged for disseminating information and receiving feedback.
Stage 2. Publication and Submission for examination	The draft Plan and supporting documents and a statement of how to make representations will be made available for inspection at the main Council office, on the Council website and other places identified as appropriate within the district – for a minimum of 6 weeks. The Council will notify the specific and general consultation bodies and others notified in Stage 1 of the publication of the Plan and inform on how to make representations. Any person may then make written representations on the Plan within the specified consultation period.	As the Proposed Submission Plan is effectively the Council's final plan before it is submitted for examination by an independent Inspector it is not appropriate to undertake extensive additional consultation in addition to the statutory requirements. The Council will however raise awareness of this stage through Weekly Planning Bulletin.

20 If adoption to the Local Plan changes adopted policies maps

21 Regulation 22c of the regulations 2012

Stage of preparation	Minimum Requirements for community involvement[16]	Possible additional elements (refer to menu in Appendix B)
	Following the above the Plan and supporting documents are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The Council then has to publish on the Council's website and make available at the main Council office: • The submitted Plan • Sustainability Appraisal report • Policies maps[20] • Consultation Representations Statement of consultation[21] • Copies of formal representations (made at publication stage) • Relevant supporting documents The Council will notify • the specific and general consultation bodies, • others notified at earlier stages • and those requested to be notified that the Plan has been submitted The Council will also indicate where the document can be inspected.	
Stage 3. Independent Public Examination	At least 6 weeks before the examination starts, the Council will publish details on the Council's website and at its main office and notify people who have made representations at the publication stage, of the date the examination starts and the name of the person appointed to hold examination.	

Stage of preparation	Minimum Requirements for community involvement[16]	Possible additional elements (refer to menu in Appendix B)
	After the examination, the Council will make the Inspector's recommendations report available for inspection at the main Council office and other places identified as appropriate within the district. The Council will notify of the publication of the Inspector's recommendations report to people who requested to be notified	As the examination stage is effectively run by the Independent Planning Inspector, supported by an independent programme officer, the Council will adhere to the statutory requirements and also raise awareness of progress with the examination process through Weekly Planning Bulletin.

Adoption	The Council will make available for inspection[22]:
	    • Adopted Local Plan,
	    • Adoption Statement,
	    • Sustainability Appraisal report
	    • Details of means of inspection (where, when, how)
	
	The Council will send copy of the adoption statement to any person who asked to be notified of the adoption and to the Secretary of State
	
	The Council will make available paper copies of documents (subject to fees)
		The Council will raise awareness through Weekly Planning Bulletin.

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22 in accordance with regulation 35 (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)

Involvement in preparing Supplementary Planning Documents

Principles

3.16 Supplementary Planning Documents (or SPDs) provide more detailed guidance to further explain policies and proposals set out in local plans.

3.17 There are three main forms of Supplementary Planning Documents that the Council prepares:

- Site/Area Specific (for example, Development Briefs); or
- Design Guidance
- District-wide Policy guidance

3.18 The process for preparing this type of document is simpler than for Local Plans, as they are not subject to an independent Public Examination (see Figure 5 below).

3.19 The Council will encourage involvement at an early stage in preparing a Supplementary Planning Document, identifying the key issues involved. The methods of involvement will vary, depending on the form of document (see above) being prepared. Site specific guidance will clearly have a more localised impact than district-wide policy issues being addressed through a Supplementary Planning Document. See Table 5 for details.
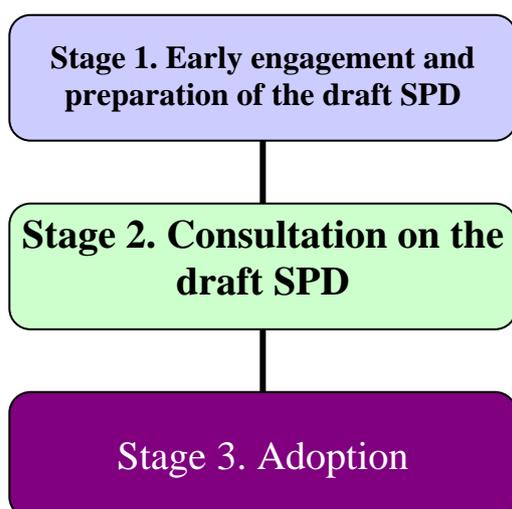
Picture 4. Workshop

Figure 5. SPD process

Stage 1. Early engagement and preparation of the draft SPD

Stage 2. Consultation on the draft SPD

Stage 3. Adoption

Table 5 - Involvement in Supplementary Planning Documents

Stage of preparation	Minimum Requirements for community involvement[23]	Possible additional elements (refer to menu in Appendix B)
Plan preparation and early Stakeholder & Community Engagement	The authority has to prepare a statement (consultation statement) for the next stage, setting out who the Council has consulted in preparing the draft SPD, the issues raised and how they have been addressed in the SPD.	The approach will vary depending on the type of document being prepared. However as a guide this may include for: **'Site or Area Specific' SPDs -** Locally targeted public workshop or other form of locally focused event **'District-wide Policy' SPDs -** Stakeholder event – this may consist of meeting with representatives of relevant organisations to identify key issues the SPD should address
Publication of draft and formal consultation stage	There will be a Consultation period (minimum of 4 weeks) for representations to be made on the Draft. Any person can comment on the Draft Supplementary Planning Document within the specified consultation period.	The Council will raise awareness through the Council's Weekly Planning Bulletin. The Council may hold some form of event (workshop/ presentation/ local meeting) or

23 See the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 – Regulations 11-14 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004, as amended)

24 Regulation 36, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Stage of preparation	Minimum Requirements for community involvement[23]	Possible additional elements (refer to menu in Appendix B)
	The Draft Supplementary Planning Document and consultation statement (see above) together with details of how to make representations will be made available for public inspection at the Council's main office, other places throughout the district as appropriate, and on the website. Paper copies of documents (subject to fees) must be made available on request [24]	discussions with relevant stakeholder group(s) to discuss issues in the draft SPD and to provide an opportunity for direct feedback to be provided. This will be achieved wherever resources for this exist (see Chapter 4). The Council will publish a consultation draft of the SPD and invite comments from the community in line with the statutory requirements.
Adoption	The Adopted Supplementary Planning Document and Adoption Statement will be made available for inspection at Council's main office, other places throughout the district as appropriate, and on the website A copy of the adoption statement will be sent to any person who asked to be notified of the adoption Paper copies of documents (subject to fees) must be made available on request[25].	The Council will not look for further involvement upon adoption of a Supplementary Planning Document. At the time of adoption, the Council will publish on the website a report outlining who was consulted on the draft Supplementary Planning Document and a summary of the main issues raised during consultation and how these were addressed in the adopted Supplementary Planning Document.

25 Regulation 36, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Neighbourhood Planning

Principles

3.20 Communities have long been involved with the shaping of their neighbourhood, through consultation on a specific Development Brief or Village Design Statement for example.

3.21 However, new powers for communities have been introduced by the Localism Act 2011 under the principles of Neighbourhood Planning.

3.22 The three neighbourhood planning tools introduced by the Localism Act 2011 are:
-Neighbourhood Development Plan
-Neighbourhood Development Order
-Community Right to Build Order

3.23 Neighbourhood planning is about communities shaping and delivering new development in their areas, using any – or all – of the existing neighbourhood planning tools.

3.24 The ambition of neighbourhood planning should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area, as set out in Local Plans, including currently the Core Strategy, and other planning documents.

3.25 The National Planning Policy Framework[26] sets out that:

- Neighbourhood plans must in particular be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

- To facilitate this, LPA's should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible.
- Neighbourhood development plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

Qualifying bodies

3.26 The question of which organisation should lead on the process of neighbourhood planning will depend upon whether the neighbourhood is a parished or unparished area.

3.27 Parish and town Councils: In the case of **parished** areas, the parish or town council will be the body responsible for taking forward and submitting the plan. The area covered by the plan may be the parish/town boundary, just a part of it or combined areas.

3.28 Neighbourhood Forum: In unparished areas (i.e. whether there is no parish or town council) a community group known as a Neighbourhood Forum[27] needs to be established to take forward neighbourhood planning work. There can only be one forum per area. Neighbourhood fora can also be set up by businesses in areas which are predominantly of a business nature.

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26 National Planning Policy Framework (2012), para 184

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27 Further guidance on Neighbourhood Planning can be found in the Localism Act 2011 and in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

3.29 Communities are able to establish planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood through a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). It can be detailed, or general, depending on what the local issues are. However, it needs to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

3.30 When adopted, the Neighbourhood Development Plan becomes a statutory document carrying equal weight to the Local Plan and will be used in making decisions on planning applications in your area. Figure 6 summarises the main elements of the process for preparing an NDP.

Neighbourhood Development Orders

3.31 Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) can grant planning permission for specific development in a neighbourhood area. Examples might include extensions to community buildings, affordable housing or local scale renewable energy installations. NDOs can apply to all or part of a neighbourhood area. They can be included as part of a NDP, but can also be brought forward separately.

Community Right to Build Order

3.32 A Community Right to Build Order (CrTB) is a particular type of neighbourhood development order and these are intended to allow local communities to build, design and run a facility which they feel is needed in their neighbourhood.

Your next steps in Neighbourhood Planning

3.33 Further information and guidance on neighbourhood planning is available under the Neighbourhood Planning section on the Council's website.[28]

3.34 As communities involved in Neighbourhood Planning are required to do their own consultation exercises, the Council's Engagement Toolkit can be a helpful guide to consultation. It was prepared in cooperation with the Consultation Institute, and sets out sound principles and guidelines which can be adapted to planning consultation exercises. You can find it on the Council's Corporate Plan webpage, in the documents to download section[29].

3.35 Further help and guidance can be provided by diverse planning bodies, some of them receiving government funding for their support to Neighbourhood Planning.

3.36 You can start by looking at:
- **Neighbourhood Plans guide** – from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's 'Planning Help' website: www.planninghelp.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/shape-your-local-area/neighbourhood-plans
- An **Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning**, from the Department for Communities and Local Government: http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1985896.pdf

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28   http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning.aspx

29   http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/council-and-democracy/policies-and-plans/our-corporate-plan.aspx

Figure 6. Planning your Neighbourhood

Extensive community engagement in preparing the plan

The Plan is prepared by a Neighbourhood Forum or Town or Parish Council

The Council provides advice and guidance

Independent examination

Neighbourhood Planning

The Council
– **designate an area**
– **validates the Plan**

Community votes at referendum
Simple majority in favour needed to progress to adoption

The Council adopts the Plan as part of the Development Plan

The Council organises
- Examination
- Referendum

Chapter 4 – Resources and Review

Resources for the Statement of Community Involvement

4.1 It is essential we recognise as a Local Planning Authority the level of resource that is required for future engagement in the preparation of the Local Plan and in relation to planning applications.

4.2 The Statement of Community Involvement sets out an approach which the Council considers can be realistically delivered. We want to provide as many opportunities as possible for the community to be involved, and to make the whole process more accessible. However, we have to balance this desire with what is deliverable.

4.3 We recognise that community involvement has resource implication for others too, not least those who are or want to be involved in planning. Good use should be made of people's time and results should be demonstrable. The Council will try to join up consultations organised by the Council in order to avoid consultation overload and fatigue wherever possible.

4.4 There are also resource implications for developers. However, we believe that early engagement with the community at a pre-application stage is a good investment of time and resources to help secure a successful outcome at the end of the process.

4.5 The approach set out in this document allows for flexibility so that resources are allocated most effectively. It is clear that involving the community does not work on a 'one size fits all' basis.

Monitoring and review of the Statement of Community Involvement

4.6 Community involvement and engagement should evolve and develop as circumstances change. The Statement of Community Involvement will be subject to a process of continual monitoring. Once the revised SCI has been formally adopted, it will be subject to review as and when necessary. Through continuing dialogue with stakeholders and local communities, and feedback forms received at events, the Council will examine how effective the approach adopted through this document is working to improve community involvement in planning matters.

4.7 We have endeavoured to make this Statement of Community Involvement flexible enough to deal with changing circumstances. However, if the Council identifies obvious failings in the approach set out in this document, which may include increasing barriers to people getting involved, or failing to involve the community effectively, the Council will seek to make the necessary changes to the Statement of Community Involvement. Other triggers to review may include changes in legislation, demographic changes or changes in methodology.

Appendix A – Glossary

Core Strategy: This document is a type of Local Plan, setting out the long term spatial vision for Wycombe District Council, as well as strategic objectives for the area and core policies.

Delivery and Site Allocations Document: This document is a local plan setting out proposals for 3 main town centres for Wycombe District and a number of detailed policies to manage development.

Local Community: A generic term which includes all individuals (including the general public) and organisations external to the Authority that have an interest in a local area. It includes diverse statutory bodies and other local consultees.

Local Development Scheme: This document sets out the timetable for the preparation of Local Plans. It identifies which Local Plans are to be produced and when.

Local Planning Authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority and the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local Plans: Local Plans are the plans for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. All Planning Authorities must produce Local Plans in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended in 2008, 2009). These documents include for Wycombe District Council the saved Policies of the Local Plan (2004), the Core Strategy (2008), the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan once adopted, and any future local plans. All local plans are subject to extensive community engagement.

National Planning Policy Framework: The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework on 27 March 2012. It replaces previous Planning Policy Statements and Guidance notes[30].

Policies Map: The adopted Policies Map illustrate where relevant policies and proposals in Local Plans apply.

Stakeholders: Stakeholders include any person, group, business or organisation, local or national, which have an interest in what happens in the area.

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30 With the exception of Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management; Minerals Planning Guidance 4, 8, 9 & 14)

Statement of Community Involvement: This Statement of Community Involvement is the formal policy of the Council identifying how and when local communities and stakeholders can be involved in plan-making and in planning applications.

Supplementary Planning Documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the Local Plan and are not subject to independent examination

Sustainability Appraisal: Sustainability Appraisal is a tool for evaluating policies and proposals in plans against sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, economic and environmental factors). It is required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to be carried out as part of the preparation of all Local Plans.

Appendix B – Methods of engagement

The Statement of Community Involvement will follow the principle expressed in the Council's Engagement Strategy to have a clear terminology when it comes to engagement, and apply it to planning.

The following definitions, as set out in the **Corporate Engagement Strategy**, describe three different types/levels of engagement, and the outcomes achieved by the Council as a result:

Involving Acting together – involving people and coming to a joint decision
To work directly with the public to ensure issues and concerns are addressed as part of the decision-making process **Outcome**: The Council works with the public or stakeholders to ensure concerns are reflected in options and provide feedback on how the input influenced the decision-making

Consulting Inviting people to have a say before we make a decision
To obtain public feedback to inform decision-making **Outcome**: The Council keeps the public informed, listens to their opinions and provides feedback on how their input influenced decision-making

Informing Letting people know what we do
To provide information to the public on services and issues **Outcome**: The public is kept informed with balanced information to encourage understanding of issues and solutions.

In any one 'engagement exercise' there could be an element of all three of these different types / levels of engagement.

The key difference between the three is that if a decision has already been taken and there is no scope for change, the engagement type that we would follow would be 'informing', rather than 'involving' or 'consulting'.

See also the **Council's Engagement Toolkit** which includes diverse methods of engagement, some of which are not in the table below. The Toolkit is a live document, regularly updated, and – if appropriate – we may want to use any future method added to it.

The Engagement Toolkit is available to download on our website:
http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/council-and-democracy/policies-and-plans/our-corporate-plan.aspx

Table 6. Methods of engagement – summary table

Note: In any one exercise there could be an element of all three engagement types. This is a menu to choose from.

Method of Engagement	Benefits	Disadvantages	Engagement			Audience this method may appear to
			Inform	Consult	Involve	
Consultation Document: sets out the main issues and proposals that views are sought on	- Is available to all via post, at a variety of public locations and on website - Provides the opportunity to respond both through availability of information and the inclusion of a response form along with each document.	- Can be less engaging for the 'hard to reach' - Not interactive i.e. does not allow for direct engagement between Council officers (to discuss issues; gain more detailed information etc.) and public	✔	✔		Interested parties
Exhibition: an opportunity to see what is being proposed, meet staff and ask questions	- Good method of opening up to a key audience, explaining what's going on and plans for the future - Can present a lot of information in a variety of ways so that the information is accessible for the audience - Can provide an opportunity to feedback views and opinions through questionnaires. - Can be the least intimidating form of participative involvement	- Requires considerable publicity - Can be costly and (if staffed) requires a significant investment in staff time. - If non staffed, does not allow for further explanation	✔	✔		General public, People preferring something visual / being able to speak to officers
Dissemination of information through Local Representatives	- Representatives of panels/committees can 'spread the word' to a wide cross section of the community (for example Parish Clerks / Residents panels, amenity groups)	- Panels are self selective. Groups are often small and unrepresentative - Can be difficult to retrieve informed feedback in time available - Representatives might not cascade information	✔	✔	✔	Tends to be middle-aged and /or older people

Method of Engagement	Benefits	Disadvantages	Engagement			Audience this method may appeal to
			Inform	Consult	Involve	
Feedback form or comment box: Pre-printed reply card with a few short questions and space for other comments.	- One of the simplest methods and easy to understand. - Quick to arrange and inexpensive -Commonly used for service users or attendees at meetings and events.	- Consultees rarely see the results of feedback forms. - Seldom seen as anyone's top priority		✔		Service users
Focus group: a discussion group of around 6-8 people to explore attitudes to a set of structured questions and issues	- Allow ideas to be built upon and explored: you can see reactions. - Some detailed discussion of the issues is normally achieved. - Is more representative than many other methods of involvement - Can help in exploring possible solutions to options that face opposition - Sometimes perceived as independent from the Council	- small number of participants - May inhibit frank exchange – strong personalities may dominate - Requires skilled chairing person at the head of each group to allow for effective discussion. - Are not held by Council staff so no clarification of issues / technical matters is possible during this exercise.	✔	✔	✔	Interested parties
Evidence base locations: Places such as Council Offices or libraries where you can see the plans, as well as maps, technical studies and background papers.	- Good method to opening up to a key audience who wants to see a paper version of documents and policies maps. - Can be accessible at various times - Can provide people with the details of how to be involved in more active ways in the future	- Acts more as a 'signpost' and does not usually allow for anything but information giving.	✔			Those who prefer to engage at a time to suit them

Method of Engagement	Benefits	Disadvantages	Engagement			Audience this method may appeal to
			Inform	Consult	Involve	
Mail – outs for example update on consultations	- Can present an easily 'digestible' update for those already involved	- Only accessible to those on the Consultation Database or other distribution lists	✓	✓		Project/ needs driven
Meeting with Stakeholders	- Is an extremely good way of avoiding complaints of 'over-consulting' - Can be an opportunity to consider and address views and concerns at a local level - Improves the Council's links with stakeholders. - A good way of "getting out into the community" and in particular engage with targeted groups, often those that are deemed 'hard to reach' (for example Youth Council)	- Is not representative of the community - Can focus too heavily on a limited range of issues - Is reliant upon an ongoing commitment from groups - To an extent' rely upon the Council identifying those groups that require assistance in getting involved	✓	✓		Interested parties
Newsletters/ Flyers/ Letters/	- Can present an easily 'digestible' update for those already involved or those who would like to know more - Distributed to public locations (e.g. library, councils offices) and to community representatives so can be a first step into the process	- For the large part, this only reaches those already involved in the process.	✓			Interested parties

Method of Engagement	Benefits	Disadvantages	Engagement			Audience this method may appeal to
			Inform	Consult	Involve	
Online discussion, Chat Room, online forum: online meeting where people can discuss question and answer.	- Allows consultees to participate from the comfort of their own home. - May attract young people - Can be advertised very easily on website / via emails	- Only the technology-savvy part of the community participates - Can only be held for a small number of participants - May not attract sufficient participation - Often time constrained	✔		✔	Interested parties
Online Survey: a structured set of questions available online designed to gather and compare information	- Relatively inexpensive, quick, easy to arrange, available 24/7. - Cuts out the need for data in-putting - Can be targeted to all residents in the District - Can provide feedback on some key issues	- Only the technology-savvy part of the community participates - Attention spans on-line tend to be shorter, so fewer questions can be asked. - Need to get it 'right first time' / ask the right questions - Response rate is often low - Difficult to prevent multiple responses from the same person using different email addresses. - Potentially oversimplifies issues		✔		Those who prefer to engage at a time to suit them
Planning Forum: A regular opportunity to meet, present information on an issue and exchange views with a local community.	- Useful update on changes in the planning world - Can help understand local views. - Helps demonstrate good faith and accessibility.	- Only once a year - For the large part, this only reaches those already involved in the process. - Meetings need to be well managed to avoid confrontation when discussing controversial subjects.	✔	✔	✔	Interested parties/ stakeholders

Method of Engagement	Benefits	Disadvantages	Engagement			Audience this method may appeal to
			Inform	Consult	Involve	
Press/media: for example District Times	- Can reach a wide representation of the community. - Can be adapted to the scale of project (press release/ press briefing)	- Can be easily dismissed or ignored - The level of detail in the information provided is often limited.	✔			General public
Public meeting: Enables the public to find out and express their opinion on a particular issue	- Traditional and inexpensive method of engagement with people - Issues can be presented in a structured way and offers an opportunity to ask questions and clarify any misunderstanding - Works well combined with a workshop session.	- Needs to be well managed to avoid confrontation - Only one evening - May inhibit frank exchange – strong personalities may dominate - Perceived as largely informative, with a weak real involvement by debate	✔	✔		General public (tends not to appeal to younger people)
Road shows: A mobile exhibition covering a variety of venues	- Good method of taking an issue to the people it affects	- Requires a significant investment in staff time	✔			All ages, depending on time/venue
Social Media for example Facebook, twitter LinkedIn	- Can provide alternative, more informal ways of passing information - Can reach some hard to reach groups (Youth, Active population)	- Only the technology-savvy part of the community has access to this tool	✔			Content driven

Method of Engagement	Benefits	Disadvantages	Engagement			Audience this method may appeal to
			Inform	Consult	Involve	
Survey/ Questionnaire: a structured set of questions asked of a particular audience	- Captures of views of a large population. - Surveys can be done via self-completion questionnaires and returned by Freepost. - Can provide feedback on some key issues - Can be made available online	- Need to get it 'right first time' / ask the right questions - Response rate is often low - Potentially oversimplifies issues: must be linked with some background information.		✔		Interested parties/ stakeholders
Website for example planning pages, My Wycombe, Public Access	- Can present all information in a variety of formats (visually impaired etc.) - Provides an opportunity to respond or comment on the progress of both the WDF (planning consultations pages) and of planning applications (Public Access).	- Relies on the website user to explore the website - Does not reach those who don't have access to the internet - Responses may not be relevant to issues consultation is focused upon.	✔	✔		General public *(with internet access)*
Weekly Planning Bulletin	- Provides a regular update on all national, regional and local planning issues and is available free via email	- Is only available upon request and so does not engage those not 'involved' already.	✔			Interested parties/ stakeholders
Workshop: a meeting at which a group engage in intensive discussion and activity on a particular planning matter.	- Create the opportunity for plan making - Allows ideas to be build upon : you can see reactions - Often includes a presentation to introduce those not already involved - Can have small groups with managed debate for more inclusive involvement - Can identify a variety of issues and can increase awareness where the community isn't in agreement.	- May inhibit frank exchange – strong personalities may dominate/Can be intimidating for some who don't want to be 'in the spotlight' - Needs skilled chairing person at the head of each group to allow for effective discussion.	✔	✔	✔	Service users