

Oxford City Council
Statement of Community Involvement
Draft for consultation, November 2014

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
What is the Statement of Community Involvement?.....	4
Using the SCI.....	4
Consultation on the draft SCI, and how you can comment.....	5
2. WHY SHOULD THE COMMUNITY BE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS?	6
3. OUR PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING DECISIONS.....	7
4. CONSULTATION ON PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS.....	9
What will we be consulting on?.....	9
CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR POLICY DOCUMENTS.....	11
Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).....	12
The Neighbourhood Plan process.....	12
6. HOW WILL PEOPLE BE INVOLVED?	13
Keeping you updated throughout the policy preparation process	14
7. CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS	15
Consultations before planning applications are submitted.....	15
Consultations when applications are submitted and are under consideration	16
How planning applications are determined.....	17
Appeals against planning decisions	18
8. HOW WILL CONSULTATIONS BE RESOURCED?	19
Appendices.....	20

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the City Council's corporate aims is to improve dialogue and consultation. This is set out in the [Corporate Plan 2014-2018](#) as a principle, with over-arching principles and actions set out in the [Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-2017](#). The City Council has also produced the [Corporate Equality Scheme 2012-2015](#). This Scheme identifies that having fair access to engage in the planning process is a priority for the City Council.

These strategies apply to all the City Council's services and are not specific to the planning process. There is, however, an additional legal requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) for the City Council to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out how it intends to achieve community involvement in the preparation of plans and in decision-making on planning applications.

The City Council adopted its first SCI in 2006. Since then there have been a number of changes to the planning system. Collectively these changes have produced new requirements and processes for producing local plans, and for dealing with planning applications, and it is now appropriate to update and revise the SCI to reflect legal and administrative changes.

In addition, the City Council is keen to promote greater and earlier public engagement in planning decisions. In 2013 the City Council commissioned an independent review of planning processes, including consultation processes, through the Roger Dudman Way Review (2013)¹ so those recommendations and lessons learnt about community engagement have helped to shape this revised SCI.

The proposed revisions set out in this draft document for consultation go above the minimum statutory requirements for consultation² and promote best practice in the context of the need to make efficient use of Council resources.

¹ Roger Dudman Way review at <http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s16562/RDW%20INDEPENDENT%20REVIEW%20FINAL%20REPORT%20140107%2017th%20Jan.pdf>

² The minimum requirements for consultation on Local Development Documents (LDDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The minimum requirements for consultation on Planning Applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 (DMPO).

What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

Oxford City Council is the planning authority for Oxford. The SCI sets out the City Council's approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of planning policy documents and planning control decisions in Oxford. The 'community' includes all the individuals, groups and organisations that live, work, or operate within Oxford. By 'stakeholders' we mean individuals, landowners and organisations with a direct influence on the subject under discussion.

This Statement of Community Involvement sets out how we (the Council planning service) will involve the local community when preparing planning policy documents and deciding on planning applications.

It:

- Lets you know how you can get involved in planning decisions;
- Sets out how we will engage the wider community in planning decisions; and
- Sets out the level of community engagement that we expect from developers in the planning process.

In summary, it is about how we inform, involve and consult local communities in our planning functions.

Using the SCI

The SCI is less prescriptive and less detailed than the City Council's previous version. This is because one of the main reasons for the update is because government policy and legislation related to the SCI has changed several times in recent years, which has resulted in references in the SCI becoming out-dated. This SCI therefore seeks to avoid content that will inevitably date the document in forthcoming years.

In doing so, it is intended that the SCI be an effective guide to planning consultation, and be flexible enough to apply even if there are shifts in the regulatory framework or operational procedures. The SCI sets out principles for consultation requirements, whilst allowing more details to be provided through supplementary means such as the planning applications validation checklist, or through supplementary guidance and help sheets that will be published on the City Council's website which can be updated more easily and frequently.

Consultation on the draft SCI, and how you can comment

We want to hear your comments about our proposed changes to the SCI. You can send us your comments between **XX and XX 2015**.

We would prefer your comments electronically by email to:
planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk

Or you can also write to us at:
City Development
Planning Policy Team
Oxford City Council
St Aldate's Chambers
109 – 113 St Aldate's
Oxford OX1 1DS

T: 01865 252847

2. WHY SHOULD THE COMMUNITY BE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS?

Achieving effective community involvement in the planning process is likely to have several benefits including:

- A better understanding of how planning policies are developed;
- More focus on the priorities identified by the local community and stakeholders;
- Influencing the provision of local services to meet local needs;
- Increased support for planning services and community commitment to the future of an area;
- Ability to draw upon a local knowledge base.

We want to inform and involve the community in the decision-making process. Consultation will start as early as possible to give everyone the opportunity to participate and influence the development of policies and options for an area. We will also encourage consultation on major applications at an early stage. This will give communities and stakeholders the chance to put forward their own ideas rather than simply comment once these are fixed. We hope we will then be better placed to understand the issues and needs that are important to the community.

On-going community involvement will include feedback and information on progress and outcomes. Involving communities at an early stage and continuing that involvement will help to resolve issues and achieve consensus, where possible, which will in turn avoid the need for lengthy independent examinations. We recognise that this will always be a balancing act and people will have different views. We won't be able to please everyone. However, we will aim to take on board as many views as possible, not just the views of those who 'shout the loudest'. "It is not intended to enable minority interests to overrule the best interests of the wider community and the city as a whole" ([Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-2017](#)), a principle which is particularly relevant to planning discussions.

The scale and type of community involvement in the planning system also has to reflect the resources that the Council has available, especially in the context of reduced budgets for local councils across the country. To ensure the most efficient use of resources, the approaches used have sought to make use of existing established networks where possible.

3. OUR PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING DECISIONS

The City Council's approach to community engagement contributes directly to the City Council's ambition to build a world class city for all its citizens. Many Oxford residents are highly articulate and very skilled at getting their points of view heard and their voices are always welcome. However, in areas of deprivation where challenges are greatest, the capacity for community involvement is often lower. Oxford City Council wants to open up more opportunities for engagement with people living in the more deprived areas of the city whose voices otherwise might not so easily be heard.

Within this context, the following principles of community engagement have been agreed within the Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-17:

1. Flexibility
2. Proportionality
3. Transparency and clarity
4. Timeliness
5. Feedback
6. Inclusiveness and accessibility

In addition, a key reason for updating the SCI is to be able to review the consultation procedures relating to pre-application processes in light of the recommendations and lessons learnt in the Roger Dudman Way Review (2013), and subsequent Action Plan.

The independent report identifies four key principles for effective engagement in planning:

- **Timely and sustained** – events and activities should start before any planning decisions are made and engagement should last throughout the planning process and beyond;
- **Inclusive for all local people** – those living and working in an area have a right to be involved, all parties are welcome, and process must take account of peoples' varied needs;
- **Two way, open and responsive** – communication should be discursive not prescriptive, so that information can be debated and ideas exchanged; and
- **A matter of public record** – the processes must be documented and published.

Roger Dudman Way Review 2013, para 91

Taking these principles on board, the principles suggested in this SCI for community involvement in the planning process are:

The opportunity to contribute ideas – people will have the opportunity to put their ideas forward, and the Council will consider and respond to these suggestions as appropriate;

The opportunity to take an active part in developing proposals and options – the Council will provide opportunities for people to actively engage in the planning process in different ways and from an early stage. The Council will also encourage others who are promoting proposals to do the same;

The opportunity to make comments on formal proposals – For more advanced proposals/documents, the Council will actively seek views to meet – and in some instances exceed - the Regulatory requirements for community involvement;

The opportunity to receive feedback and be informed about progress and outcomes – the Council will consider all comments, make appropriate changes accordingly, and provide an update of progress for those who commented in a consultation on a planning policy

document and those who have requested to be notified of a consultation. This may be by providing material on the Council website (eg reports or updates); and

To achieve value for money – ensuring consultation is worthwhile and value for money, by balancing cost and time constraints and Council resource

We will deliver these principles through:

- Being open and transparent in our decision-making;
- Using plain English as far as possible;
- Making policy documents easy to read through images, maps, illustrations etc;
- Ensuring that consultation is proportionate to the nature of the document or the planning application;
- Using consultation techniques appropriate and proportionate to the type of issue and the communities affected;
- Front-loading policy involvement/engagement at the early stages of producing new policies and generating options;
- Encouraging early consultation when working up planning applications;
- Promoting electronic methods of communication for efficiency but not excluding people who find it difficult to access material online.

4. CONSULTATION ON PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS

What will we be consulting on?

The main policy-related documents that the City Council produces are:

Statement of Community Involvement – this document is itself the subject of public consultation. When finally approved, all Local Development Documents will need to meet the consultation requirements in this document.

Local Development Scheme – this sets out the City Council's programme over a 3-year period, including a description and timetable for each document. The local development scheme is published and updated annually on the City Council's website (www.oxford.gov.uk/ldf).

Local Development Documents – these include:

- **Core Strategy** – this outlines the vision for the area and how it will be achieved.
- **Site Allocations** – this will allocate land for specific uses.
- **Area Action Plans** – these relate to a specific area where significant development is expected in the future.

Supplementary planning documents – these documents supplement and elaborate on policies and proposals in development plan documents. Although they will not be subject to independent examination, they will undergo rigorous public consultation, and must comply with national planning policies. Examples of these types of documents are affordable housing, and natural resource impact analysis.

Sustainability Appraisals – whilst this is a separate exercise, sustainability appraisals will be produced by the City Council alongside development plan documents and, where appropriate, supplementary planning documents. The appraisals examine the impact of the policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental factors (including natural resources). The sustainability appraisal will be available for consultation, running alongside consultation at formal stages of consultation on planning documents.

Annual Monitoring Report – The documents in the local plan will be reviewed in an annual monitoring report. There will not be general public consultation on this report but we may consult specific groups in drafting the report. It will review the implementation of the local development scheme and how far we are achieving the policies in development plan documents.

See Figure 1 below which explains how the documents link together to form the Local Plan for the City, and its relationship with the wider planning process.

Figure 1 Components of the Oxford City Local Plan and its relationship to the wider planning process



CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR POLICY DOCUMENTS

Consultation on the Local Plan Local Development Documents

The key stages of document production for the Local Plan (local development documents) are:

Early public involvement³ – Before drafting begins, informal consultations will be held and a process of informal dialogue will commence. This may involve publishing a consultation document, or it may be as wide-ranging as simply asking questions about what the document and policies should include.

During this period, we will gather feedback using a variety of techniques as appropriate to the policy topic, and the type and level of community involvement will be proportionate to the issues and impacts.

This early public involvement is a key stage as it enables people to put forward their ideas and to participate in the initial stages of developing proposals and options. Once we are sure that we have understood and considered all views expressed, we will start to refine this to formulate options and proposals, including input, as appropriate, by City Council committees and full Council.

A specific consultation programme for each statutory planning policy document will be agreed with the committee authorising the document in question. This will set out the detail of which consultation methods are most appropriate for that document and topic, so that members and the public are clear what consultation can be expected for that document.

Consultation on the emerging options or draft policies (as applicable) – as part of the process of refining the options and the policies, the Council may publish preferred options, including a related sustainability appraisal report, for public comment, or for informal circulation with stakeholders. For formal consultation periods then comments forms will be available for people to use, and the period for any formal consultation will normally be for 6 weeks.

Pre-submission – when the City Council has refined the policies to what it thinks is the final versions, it will publish the document for a final stage of commenting before it submits it to the government⁴. Comment forms will be available for people to use, and normally at this stage the key evidence documents that sit behind the plan/policies will also be made available including a Sustainability Appraisal. Following this consultation the Council normally only makes minor changes to the document, collates the comments, and passes them to the government Inspector along with all of the other submission documents.

Independent Examination – this will be held by an independent Inspector (appointed by the Government) who will consider all representations received at the pre-submission stage of consultation. The examination process and operations are determined by the Inspector so it is not for the Council to propose processes here in the SCI, or to replicate what is already set out in government guidance or regulations elsewhere⁵. The examination period commences once the document has been submitted, and ends when the Inspector issues his or her report or conclusions. Within this period there is usually hearing sessions, where people who have commented at the pre-submission stage may be invited to speak in a round-table discussion.

³ At the time of writing this is known in the guidance as 'Regulation 18' stage

⁴ At the time of writing the 'pre-submission' (or 'publication') stage is also known as Regulation 19

⁵ At the time of writing, the examination is known as Regulation 24 stage

Adoption – The final step is for the City Council to adopt the document. The Inspector's report will be reported to full Council and will be published on the City Council website.

Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

The preparation of Supplementary planning documents is a slightly different, less formal, process, as set out below:

Early Public Involvement – As with local development documents, consultation may vary depending on the topic of the SPD, for example it may be focused on those with specific expertise in the subject area, like developers or highway engineers, or on people living and working in a specific geographical area. As with local development documents, the main purpose of this stage of involvement will be information gathering and the consideration of issues and options. A sustainability appraisal will be produced where appropriate but is not always required, depending on the topic.

Consultation on the emerging draft – As with local development documents, we will usually publish a draft for formal consultation and consider all representations received. Following this we will refine and finalise the document before progressing to adoption. There is no examination process for SPDs.

Adoption – the document together with an analysis of comments received (as applicable) will be reported through the City Council committees if appropriate. It will be adopted by full Council and published on the City Council website.

The Neighbourhood Plan process

The preparation for neighbourhood planning documents is led by local communities, in accordance with the Regulations and the principles of Localism. As such, the majority of the community engagement in the preparation of neighbourhood plans will be led by the neighbourhood forum⁶. There are then certain stages where the City Council is required to carry out formal consultation in accordance with the Regulations as follows:

- a) Application to designate a neighbourhood area

The City Council will publish the name of the neighbourhood area, a map, and the name of the relevant body who applied for the designation, on the website, and people will be able to comment on the extent of the neighbourhood area designation.

In addition the neighbourhood planning group will be encouraged to let the local community know through local notices, their own websites, and other means as appropriate.

Following this consultation, the City Council will publish its decision to either designate or refuse the application (with reasons, if refusing) on the City Council website.

- b) Application to designate a neighbourhood forum

The City Council will publish a copy of the application and details about how to comment, on the Council website. If the City Council agrees to designate the forum then it will publish the

⁶ Neighbourhood forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should be the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area

name of the forum, a copy of the constitution, and contact details on the City Council website. If the City Council decides to refuse the designation then it will publish reasons for the refusal on the Council website. We will also encourage the neighbourhood forum to publicise in the local area.

c) Options testing and preparing the plan (carried out by the neighbourhood forum)

During the preparation of their plan the neighbourhood forums will be encouraged to take into account emerging best practice in this relatively new, and still evolving, area of planning policy. See additional guidance and references about best practice for neighbourhood forums on the Council website.

d) Pre-submission consultation (carried out by the neighbourhood forum)

At this final stage of consultation before the plan is submitted, the neighbourhood forums will be encouraged to take into account emerging best practice. See guides on our website for further support.

e) Publicity/submission consultation

The City Council will publish the plan and supporting documents in accordance with the regulatory requirements⁷, and will contact those who we are advised have commented previously on the neighbourhood plan, to invite comments. Documents will be available on the City Council website and also at the main Council offices.

f) Decision on a neighbourhood plan

The Council will publish the decision statement and examiners report on the City Council website and make it available to view at the Council's main offices.

6. HOW WILL PEOPLE BE INVOLVED?

The methods of community involvement we will use depend on the subject and the stage in the plan-making process. There are different levels of involvement including:

- Information-sharing: providing information through leaflets, advertising, on-going awareness, and publicity campaigns
- Consultation: consulting the community and stakeholders through questionnaires, exhibitions, and formal consultation processes
- Participation: such as in workshops, charettes, or 'Planning for Real' type exercises

Sometimes it will be more appropriate to gather a wider-range of less details comments, such as through polls or newspaper articles. The coverage is broad but they do not generally provide much opportunity for an in-depth debate. At other times we will need to talk to people in more detail, such as through focus groups or meetings.

We will include a variety of methods and will look to best practice examples in this evolving field. For example use of social media in consultations is fast-evolving. Further guidance about the methods we are using is provided on the City Council website.

⁷ At the time of writing this is a minimum of 6 weeks

Keeping you updated throughout the policy preparation process

During the policy preparation process, from the earliest stages through to adoption, we will keep the community and stakeholders informed of progress in the following ways:

- The latest version of any formal consultation documents will be published on the website.
- The City Council will acknowledge representations received by electronic means (email or online form) at each consultation stage.
- Reports to City Council committees (including City Executive Board and Full Council) are available on the City Council main website, and these meetings are held in public.
- At Examination stage (for local development documents) we will tell those who asked to be notified when the document has been submitted to the Secretary of State. We will also publish on the website a consultation summary report, and the representations from the pre-submission stage will be made available for public inspection.
- The final adopted versions of the documents will be published on the website.
- Throughout the preparation of the plan, an email address and contact phone number will be available for the public to find out the current position on the progress of documents.

For an up to date list of deposit points (where consultation documents will be made available) and their opening times, see list on the website.

7. CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

In general, planning applications will be determined in accordance with the adopted policies, unless material considerations outweigh these policies. A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision. Material considerations can include (but are not limited to) matters such as loss of privacy, overshadowing, parking, traffic generation, layout, design, noise etc.

We recognise the need to ensure that the community is informed and involved in the consideration of planning applications. The degree of involvement will vary with the nature of the individual application.

Consultations before planning applications are submitted

All applicants and their agents are strongly encouraged to discuss development proposals with the City Council before applying, and to also consult and work with the community to a degree proportionate to the nature of the proposal⁸.

There are significant benefits to early consultation on applications, including:

- early availability of good quality information, enabling issues and problems to be addressed up front;
- better quality applications which are straightforward and can be more quickly processed;
- a means of resolving problems, thereby avoiding possible public objections later;
- overcoming a perceived ‘closed door’ approach to determining applications, ensuring a more transparent approach;
- better design of buildings that are more in keeping with their surroundings and meet the needs and wishes of local communities;
- savings on applicants’ time and resources by avoiding the need to revise proposals at an advanced stage. This in turn saves resources for authorities.

For minor applications, eg house extensions, all applicants are encouraged to let their neighbours know before the application is submitted. You could speak with them or put a note through the door.

If the scheme falls within the definition of a ‘major’ application, officers will strongly encourage applicants to contact neighbours and those in the vicinity, and to consider arranging a meeting with relevant local residents and amenity groups⁹. In some instances this may be made a formal requirement of the application via a Planning Performance Agreement. A short statement setting out how consultation has been carried out and any changes made to the proposals as a result, is encouraged to be submitted with the application.

Whilst there is no legal obligation for consultation to take place, failure to consult properly is likely to lead to objections being made by interested parties such as neighbouring residents which could be material to the determination of the application.

We would also encourage applicants to let the local ward councillors know about the proposals. The City Council’s Code of Practice for councillors on planning applications advises that councillors attending public meetings take great care to maintain their impartial

⁸ See website for further information about community profiles and context in Oxford, and also for examples of good practice in terms of active involvement and consultation on major applications

⁹ See help sheet for the latest list of local groups suggested to contact

role, listen to all the points of view expressed by the speakers and public and not state a conclusive decision on any pre-application proposals or submitted planning applications. Nonetheless we would encourage applicants on major schemes to make local councillors aware so that they can help to bring it to the attention of their constituents at the earliest stages.

In addition, it is noted that Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 requires applicants to carry out pre-application consultations where a proposed development meets criteria set out by the Government in a development order. It is noted that there may be additional development orders published in future in relation to this requirement, which will influence the requirements for applicants. Irrespective of the regulations, the Council is keen to encourage this pre-application stage of engagement.

Consultations when applications are submitted and are under consideration

The Government sets out minimum standards for consulting on planning applications, and these will apply to all applications.

If the Council goes beyond the minimum then there needs to be a balance between cost, speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment. People are therefore encouraged to ‘self service’ where possible, using updates on the Council website and through alert services such as the [PlanningFinder](#) website.

The public will be informed about planning applications by the following methods:

Weekly list – a list is published weekly of all valid planning applications received, as well as other notifications such as those affecting conservation areas. The list is available on the planning section of the City Council website

Advertisements and site notices – site notices in the vicinity of the application (scale proportionate to the application) will be used to let the occupiers of the properties most likely to be affected by a proposal (including those bordering an application site) know. Comments are normally required within 21 days of the notice. In addition the City Council is required to publish in a local newspaper¹⁰ and requires the developer to display site notices for certain categories of applications. In addition, we also advertise certain types of applications involving telecom work and applications to certify the lawfulness of existing development.

Availability of plans – all plans and documents submitted as part of a planning application are available to view at the main City Council office during office hours and there is an officer available to assist. All planning applications are also available to view on the website. The website contains further details of the applications including how and when they are likely to be determined.

Statutory consultees – we are legally required to consult certain organisations as set out in government guidance. The actual organisations consulted will vary depending on the nature of the proposal and location.

Public access – the details of all submitted planning applications are available on the City Council website to view online through the public access system.

¹⁰ Currently advertised in the Oxford Times newspaper

PlanningFinder¹¹ – online facility similar to public access, enables the public to view all planning applications. In addition people can register to receive updates either about individual applications or in relation to a postcode area.

How planning applications are determined

Applications are assessed against planning policies by planning officers. An officer will write a report outlining the main issues and considering them against the relevant planning policies before reaching a recommendation to approve or refuse permission for the proposal. Before recommending a decision, the planning officer will make a full site inspection and take account of any comments received from neighbours, interested bodies, and statutory consultees. The results of any consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, and on behalf of, the City Council.

Legislation requires that applications are refused only when there are good planning reasons for refusal. In some cases it is appropriate to impose planning conditions in order to render a proposal acceptable. In other cases, officers may ask for small changes to be made to the proposal, and for amended plans to be submitted, in order to resolve issues. Any amended plans will be available on the Council website and subject to consultation. If there are more significant issues to resolve, the application may be determined in its original form and then the applicant is invited to re-apply with revised proposals as a new application.

The majority of applications are decided by planning officers under delegated powers – these are mainly householder applications and small-scale or minor developments. Applications are decided in this way to help ensure that the majority of applications are dealt with promptly.

Other applications are decided by a Planning Committee if:

- the application falls outside officer delegated powers (for example major applications);
- city councillors request that the application is dealt with at committee;
- or the application is submitted on behalf of the City Council or by an officer or city councillor.

Reports for applications decided at Committee are available for public inspection at City Council offices and on the website usually for a week before the Committee meeting.

Planning Committee meetings are open to members of the public to hear the discussion. The following groups will usually have the opportunity to speak at the committee before a decision is reached:

- town or parish council,
- objectors/ representatives of objectors
- applicant or their agent/ supporters.

A maximum of five minutes is available to speak either against or in support of each application, and this must be shared between all those wishing to speak at the meeting.

Committee members will then vote on whether to accept the officer's recommendation in the report, and the outcome will be announced verbally at the meeting. Some applications may be deferred to a later meeting for further information or negotiation.

All decision notices are published on the Council's website (via Public Access), whichever process the decision is made. In addition, for decisions made under delegated powers, a copy is sent to the applicant (or their agent).

¹¹ <http://www.planningfinder.co.uk/about>

Appeals against planning decisions

If an applicant has an application refused, or disagrees with the conditions attached to the granting of permission, or if the City Council fails to decide the application within the agreed timescales, the applicant has a right to appeal. In most cases appeals will be determined by an independent inspector, although in some cases the Secretary of State may choose to determine the appeal themselves. This right of appeal does not extend to a third party (ie, there is no right of appeal to anyone who is not the applicant).

The procedures for notifying people of appeals and for submitting comments during the appeal process is set out by the Planning Inspectorate¹², so it is beyond the remit of this SCI. However for completeness an overview is provided here.

When an appeal is made, the Council will send letters to all those who commented on the original planning application and to adjoining properties, notifying them that an appeal has been made and, depending upon the type of appeal, informing them of how they can submit further comments should they want to do so. There is no need to repeat comments submitted at the application stage as these comments will be forwarded to the independent inspector by the City Council. Local councillors are also notified.

The majority of appeals are dealt with by written representations and where this is the case, the appeal is decided on the basis of the statements submitted by the appellant, the City Council and any third parties. Where a public hearing is to be held to consider an appeal, a site notice is also erected and in some cases information is published in the press. Appeal hearings and inquiries are open to the public and members of the public may also be given an opportunity to speak, at the discretion of the Inspector.

¹² See Planning Portal website for Planning Inspectorate guide to Planning Appeals

8. HOW WILL CONSULTATIONS BE RESOURCED?

Staff resources to deliver City Council-led consultations and the statutory requirements will be mainly from City Development but will involve other officers and external resources as necessary. Consultations relating to planning applications will also require resources from the applicant, and consultations at certain stages of the Neighbourhood Plan process will be led by the relevant neighbourhood forums that are preparing those plans.

We will try to combine consultation activities where appropriate and timetabling allows, to get the best value from them and to avoid ‘consultation fatigue’ among the community.

Evaluation forms will be available after each major planning policy consultation undertaken by the City Council, to assess how successful the methods were. The feedback gathered will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the consultation and to make improvements where needed, either to future consultations or to the SCI if applicable. The results of the evaluations will be reported in the annual monitoring report.

Appendices

Table 1 Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Local Plan documents

Table 2 Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Supplementary Planning Documents

Table 3 - Summary of Planning Application Consultation

Table 1 Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Local Plan documents

Stage of consultation	What we must do to consult and notify you – (statutory requirements)	Additional methods of consultation– we will select the most appropriate methods from this list according to the specific subject matter
Development Plan Documents (covering local plan, site allocations, area action plans)		
<p>Early public involvement</p> <p>And</p> <p>Consultation on emerging options</p> <p>(at time of writing, this is Regulation 18)</p>	<p>Notify bodies listed in the Regulations about the subject of the local plan, and invite comments about what it should contain.</p> <p>Consult on sustainability appraisal Scoping Report with appropriate statutory consultation bodies listed in Regulations, and other general consultation bodies we consider appropriate.</p>	<p>Inform at appropriate stages using a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue press release • contact groups on consultation register by letter/e-mail (target consultation if appropriate for subject) • consider using City Council newspaper, website, poster campaigns, leaflets <p>Consult using one or a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • questionnaires • public exhibitions/displays/ stalls/road shows • interactive displays • public meetings • workshops/planning for real • Talkback Panel • involve pre-existing panels and other regular City Council meetings with groups • one-to-one meetings/focus groups • consider special measures to identify and reach ‘hard to reach’ groups • City Council committees/Council • contact phone number <p>Each time that we publish a document for formal consultation we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the report available on the City Council website and in appropriate public locations/deposit points. • Also consult on accompanying Sustainability Appraisal • Discuss in City Council committees. A specific consultation programme for each document will be agreed with members, to set out the detail of which consultation methods are most appropriate for that document and topic, so that members and the public are clear what consultation can be expected for that document. • Consider all comments and publish feedback of consultation.

Statement of Community Involvement – draft for consultation, November 2014

<p>Formal public consultation on pre-submission document (at time of writing this is Regulation 19)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted document & associated matters required by the Regulations, and Sustainability Report, will be made available for inspection at the Council's main offices and published on the City Council website. Notify the statutory bodies listed in Regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite comments on the proposed submission documents, normally for a period of 6 weeks (or may be extended over Christmas or summer holidays) Issue a press release.
<p>Submission to Government and Independent Examination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make available for inspection a copy of the documents required by the Regulations Notify the statutory bodies listed in the Regulations, as well as other people who have required to be notified of the submission of the local plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide details of the hearing sessions and Examination progress, via an examination website or dedicated page on the City Council website.
<p>Adoption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final document and adoption statement, inspectors report & final sustainability report will be made available for inspection at the Council's main offices and published on the City Council website. Notify anyone who requested to be notified of adoption and send them a copy of the adoption statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further consultation needed.

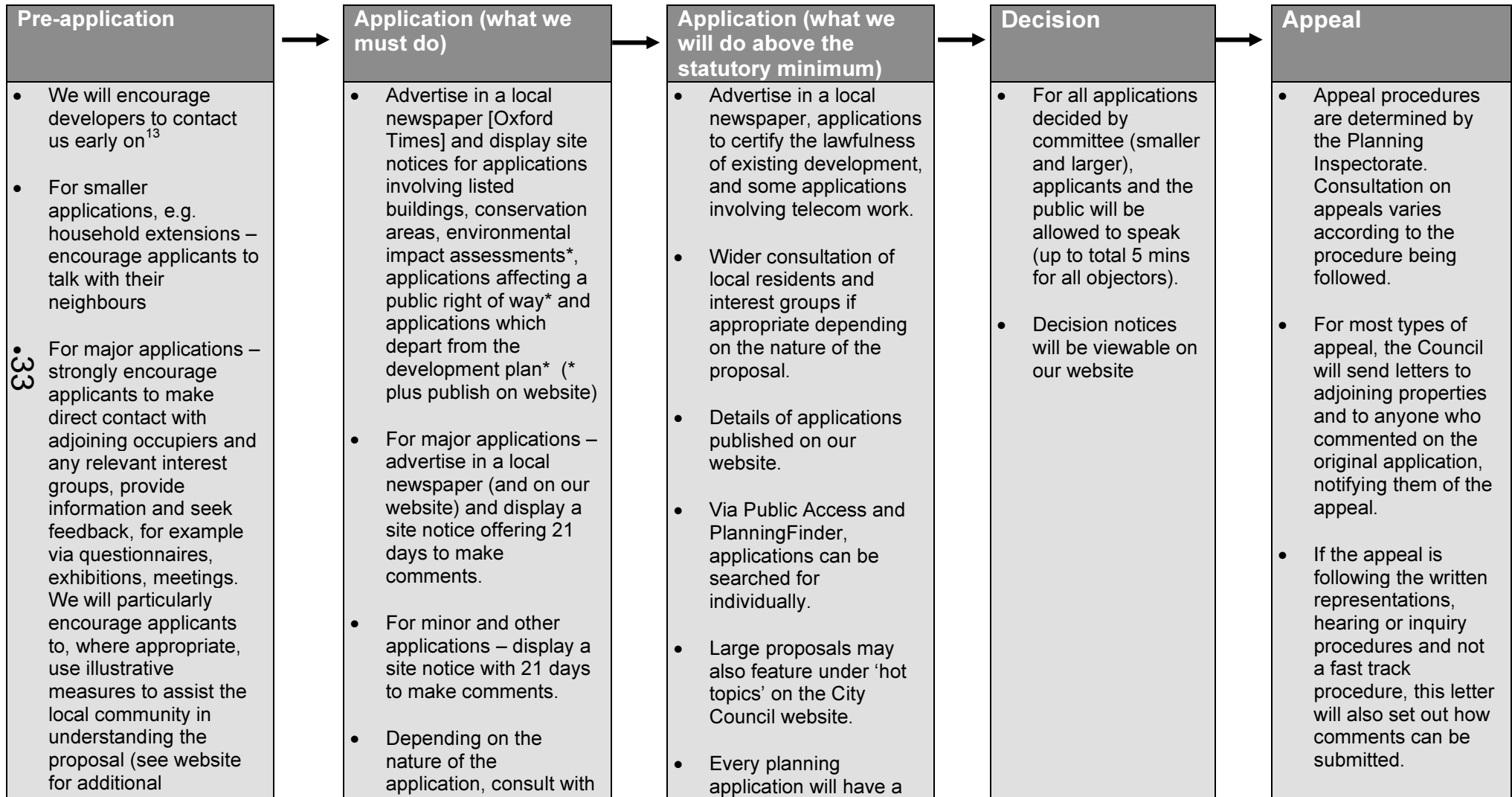
Table 2 Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents		
Stage consultation takes place	Statutory Requirements for consultation and notification (what we must do)	Additional methods of consultation (what we will do) – we will select the most appropriate methods from this list according to the specific subject matter
Early public involvement And Consultation on draft document	No requirements	Informally involve local communities and stakeholders (including consultation on sustainability appraisals). To inform at appropriate stages using a combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue press release • contact groups on consultation register (target consultation if appropriate for subject) • consider using City Council newspaper, website, posters To consult at appropriate stages using a combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • questionnaires • public exhibitions/ displays/ stalls/road shows • interactive displays • public meetings/area committees • workshops/planning for real • one-to-one meetings/focus groups • Talkback Panel • involve pre-existing panels and other regular City Council meetings with groups If document is published for formal consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss at City Council committees. A specific consultation programme for each document will be agreed with members, to set out the detail of which consultation methods are most appropriate for that document and topic, so that members and the public are clear what consultation can be expected for that document. • Make the report available on the City Council website and in appropriate public locations/deposit points Publish the

Statement of Community Involvement – draft for consultation, November 2014

		sustainability appraisal (if applicable for the subject topic).
Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare and publish a summary of consultation, and make it available for inspection along with the SPD, and the adoption statement, at the main Council offices and on the City Council website.• Notify anyone who requested to be notified of adoption and send them a copy of the adoption statement.	No further consultation needed.

Table 3 - Summary of Planning Application Consultation



¹³ There may be additional fee for this service, details on the Council website

<p>information about examples). This may also be applicable during period of the application being considered, depending on the technique used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will encourage applicants of major applications to engage with the Oxford Design Review Panel, both at pre-application stage and at the point when a more detailed proposal is set out.	<p>appropriate statutory consultees</p>	<p>nominated planning officer as a main point of contact for interested parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A planning officer will visit site prior to recommending a decision.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no opportunity to submit comments on appeals following a fast track procedure (such as the householder appeal procedure).• Copies of all comments received at the application stage will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate.• Members of the public may also be given the opportunity to speak at a hearing or inquiry.
--	---	---	--	---

Statutory consultation bodies will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation