

INSPECTOR'S REPORT
PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Inspector: Keith Holland BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI ARICS

Date: 5th July 2006

Plymouth Statement of Community Involvement (2005)

INSPECTOR'S REPORT

Introduction

- 1.1 An independent examination of the Plymouth Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been carried out in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Following paragraph 3.10 of Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks, the examination has been based on the 9 tests set out (see Annex A). The starting point for the assessment is that the SCI is sound. Accordingly changes are made in this binding report only where there is clear need in the light of tests in PPS12.
- 1.2 A total of 26 representations were received all of which have been considered. The Council proposed a number of amendments to the SCI in response to representations received (reproduced at Annex B of this Report), and these have been taken into account in the preparation of this Report. Further information was requested from the Council in relation to Test v and this information is contained in Annex C to this Report.

Test 1

- 2.1 The Council has undertaken the consultation required under Regulations 25, 26 and 28 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, and I am satisfied that this test is met.

Test 2

- 3.1 Paragraph 2.12 recognises that the LDF is a way of delivering the aims of the "City Strategy". Furthermore, it is acknowledged that wherever possible the Council will "join up" consultation exercises and community engagement for the Local Development Framework with that for other strategies. On the basis of this information I am satisfied that the Council recognise the links between the LDF and other Council strategies, and appreciate the importance of linking community involvement in order to minimise consultation fatigue. However, it would be helpful if Paragraph 2.12 clarified that the "City Strategy" is the name of the Council's Community Strategy, and I recommend accordingly
- 3.2 Subject to the following recommendation, this test is met.

Recommendation

- R1)** Paragraph 2.12, insert the following after "City Strategy": ", which is the Council's Community Strategy,"

Test 3

- 4.1 The Council has set out in the SCI those groups which will be consulted. This list includes the statutory bodies from PPS12 Annex E. It is stated at Paragraph 6.14 of the SCI that these lists are not prescriptive and that the Council will hold a database of consultees details to be updated as appropriate.
- 4.2 The re-organisation of certain consultation bodies should be acknowledged in the SCI and I recommend an additional sentence be added to this effect.
- 4.3 Subject to the following recommendation, this test is met.

Recommendation

R2) Please note, this list also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.

Test 4

- 5.1 The SCI explains how the Council will involve and inform people from the early stages of DPD preparation and the Tables at Paragraph 6.15 set out the range of methods the Council will employ to do this. It shows that consultation will take place with the key stakeholders during the issues and options stage of DPD production; this is in accordance with Regulation 25. I am satisfied that providing these stages are followed the consultation proposed will be undertaken in a timely and accessible manner.
- 5.2 This test is met.

Test 5

- 6.1 The Table at Paragraph 4.25 sets out the methods that the Council propose to use to involve the community and stakeholders. These cover a range of recognised consultation techniques that will present information via a range of different media. The Council acknowledge the benefits and resource implications of the different methods and indicate at what stages of LDD preparation the various methods might be employed. Whilst the public have the right to appear at the "Independent Examination" listed in the Table on Page 30 it is not a "Method of Involvement" in the same sense as other methods listed here, such as workshops, public exhibitions and focus groups. This is a stage in the process which is already covered in the Table on Page 45, I therefore recommend its deletion from the Table on Page 30.
- 6.2 The Council clarify at Paragraph 6.15 the stages at which consultation will take place and who will be consulted at those stages. However, no reference is made to the additional six-week consultation required for site allocation representations by

Regulation 32. Further information was requested from the Council on this matter and I recommend their response (which can be found at Annex C of this Report) be inserted into the SCI.

- 6.3 The SCI acknowledges that the Council may have to provide extra support to facilitate consultation with certain groups or individuals, and proposes how they might do this. However, I recommend that to maximise accessibility, the statement on page 57, which sets out how the document can be obtained in alternative formats and languages, be moved to the inside front cover.
- 6.4 I am satisfied that the methods of consultation proposed in the SCI are suitable for the intended audiences and for the different stages in LDD preparation.
- 6.5 Subject to the following recommendations, this test is met.

Recommendations

R3) Table on Page 30: delete reference to "Independent Examination".

R4) Move the statement on page 57 to the inside front cover.

R5) Table on Page 45: insert an additional row as set out in the Council's response attached at Annex C to this Report.

Test 6

- 7.1 Paragraphs 6.3 to 6.7 of the SCI explain how the Council will seek to ensure that sufficient resources are put in place to achieve the scale of consultation envisaged. On the basis of this information I am satisfied that the Council is alert to the resource implications of the SCI.
- 7.2 This test is met.

Test 7

- 8.1 Section 4.14 explains how the results of community involvement will be taken into account by the Council and used to inform decisions. The Council propose to publish summaries of responses at the end of each stage of consultation which will enable interested persons to monitor the evolution of the plan in response to public opinion.
- 8.2 This test is met.

Test 8

- 9.1 Paragraphs 6.8 and 6.9 of the SCI provide information on monitoring and review and confirms the Council's intent to monitor the effectiveness of consultation methods. Appendix 3 contains a

set of performance indicators and targets which will be used to assess effectiveness. Paragraph 6.9 explains how a review of the SCI will be triggered.

9.2 I am satisfied that the Council has mechanisms for monitoring the SCI and have identified potential triggers for its review.

9.3 This test is met.

Test 9

10.1 The SCI at Section 5 clearly describes the Council's policy for consultation on planning applications. This meets the minimum requirements and provides additional methods of consultation. Distinction is made between the procedures appropriate to different types and scale of application, and information is included on how the consultation results will inform decisions.

10.2 This test is met.

Changes proposed by the Council

11.1 The Council have set out in their Regulation 31 Statement a number of proposed changes to the SCI in response to representations received on the submission document (reproduced at Annex B to this Report). These suggested amendments do not affect the substance of the SCI but they do improve the clarity and transparency of the submission SCI. I therefore agree that they be included.

Conclusions

11.2 Whilst I have attempted to identify as many consequential amendments as possible that may follow from my recommendations, it seems inevitable that issues of consistency may arise. In the event of any doubt, please note that I am content for such matters, plus any minor spelling, formal, grammatical or factual matters to be amended by the Council, so long as this does not affect the substance of the SCI.

11.3 Some respondents claim that the language in the document is not clear enough while others have congratulated the Council on the clarity of the SCI. Taken overall I consider that the Council have made a commendable effort to make the document understandable and I do not find that it is unsound on the grounds of a lack of overall clarity.

11.4 Subject to the recommendations set out in this report, the Plymouth Statement of Community Involvement (December 2005) is sound.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "KHolland". The letters are cursive and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the word.

Keith Holland
Inspector

ANNEX A
TESTS OF SOUNDNESS

INSPECTOR'S REPORT
PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL
ANNEX B – PROPOSED CHANGES

Schedule of Changes resulting from representations

Page	Paragraph or section	Current text	Change
12	2.20	2005	2006/07
17	4.1	(The Table at paragraph 4.25	(The table at paragraph 4.26
22	4.13	The debate will be supported through advertisement and articles in the media, as well as exhibitions and meeting	The debate will be based around the document being made publicly available to view and comment upon and supported through advertisement and articles in the media, as well as exhibitions and meetings
25		none	4.25 In addition to the statutory minimum consultation required for LDD production, English Heritage, Countryside Agency, English Nature and the Environment Agency also have to be consulted in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA)
26	4.25	4.25	4.26
31	Pre-submission Consultation	Consultation by the Developer, on Significant Applications only, prior to the submission of the application.	Consultation by the Developer, on Significant Applications is strongly encouraged at the pre-application stage.
31	5.3	Consultation will take the form of one of the following depending on the nature of the proposal	Consultation will take the form of one or more of the following depending on the nature of the proposal
31	5.3	none	Or other consultation methods agreed with the Council <i>To be added to end para</i>
33	Diagram top far right hand box	For significant applications failure to undertake consultation or inclusion of a detailed report will result in Invalid application	For significant applications failure to undertake consultation or inclusion of a detailed report may result in Invalid application
33	Diagram central column second box down	Developer engages with Community - using LPA agreed facilitator and where necessary with LPA representatives	Developer engages with Community - using a facilitator agreed with the LPA and where necessary with LPA representatives
35	new para 5.20	none	Headed Find out more 5.20 Further information on the planning application process, current planning applications and decisions are available on the Council's website and from the Civic Centre.

38	6.14	none	The Database is available to view at www.plymouth.gov.uk/ldf <i>To be added to end para</i>
39	List A	Wembury District Council.	Wembury Parish Council.
49		2005	2006/07

Schedule of changes resulting from Adoption

Page	Paragraph or section	Current text	Change
Front cover		Submitted	Adopted
Front cover		Submitted December 2005	Adopted August 2006
All even pages	Foot Note	statement of community involvement- submitted december 2005	statement of community involvement- adopted August 2006
2		The Submission Statement of Community Involvement has been submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 28 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The submission SCI and supporting documents as required by Regulation 28 are available electronically from www.plymouth.gov.uk/ldf and hard copies are available to view from the City Council Civic Centre offices (planning section) and Local Libraries.	The Statement of Community Involvement was submitted to the Sectary of State in February 2006, in accordance with Regulation 28 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The SCI was successfully adopted in August with small changes recommended by a planning inspector. The SCI and supporting documents are available electronically from www.plymouth.gov.uk/ldf and hard copies of the SCI are available to view from the City Council Civic Centre offices (planning section).
8	2.6	Once adopted, this Statement of Community Involvement	This Statement of Community Involvement
Back cover		01752 307845	01752 304145

INSPECTOR'S REPORT
PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL
ANNEX B – PROPOSED CHANGES

Examination of the soundness of the statement of community involvement

3.10 The purpose of the examination is to consider the soundness of the statement of community involvement. The presumption will be that the statement of community involvement is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the examination. A hearing will only be necessary where one or more of those making representations wish to be heard (see Annex D). In assessing whether the statement of community involvement is sound, the inspector will determine whether the:

- i. local planning authority has complied with the minimum requirements for consultation as set out in Regulations;¹
- ii. local planning authority's strategy for community involvement links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy;
- iii. statement identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted;
- iv. statement identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;
- v. methods of consultation to be employed are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of local development documents;
- vi. resources are available to manage community involvement effectively;
- vii. statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents;
- viii. authority has mechanisms for reviewing the statement of community involvement; and
- ix. statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications.

From: Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations, 2004.



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Your Ref:

Our Ref: PINS/N1160/429/3

Date: June 28th 2006

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL - STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Dear Mr.Wagstaff,

As the appointed Inspector for your Authority's Statement of Community Involvement I am requesting comments from the Council on the following point in order to assist in assessing the soundness of Plymouth City Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Test v.

Could the Council please provide details to provide clarification on how you propose to undertake the additional consultation required for site allocation representations under Regulation 32. An additional row could be added to the Table on page 44/45.

This answer is to assist in the production of a binding report. Once you have submitted your response to these questions, the report will be produced as quickly as possible. Please reply to Steve Carnaby whose details are given above. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Holland

Keith Holland BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI ARICS



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ANNEX C – CORRESPONDENCE

Document Stage 1-8 (Increase consultation formality)	Consultation Length	Consultees	Type of Engagement	Potential Methods of Engagement
5. Consultation on Preferred Options Report and its Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	6 weeks	List A, relevant organisations lists B and C All	Formally inform and request response Inform and Consult	Letters to statutory bodies and formal written consultation, written representation Documents made available, electronic resources, local media, written representation, public exhibitions and displays, meetings, area committees, workshops, attending existing panels, forums and groups, supporting planning aid, DVD's, leaflets and summary documents, internal corporate discussions, engaging with groups and individuals not normally involved, linking with existing community initiatives, expert panels
6. Submission of Development Plan Document to Secretary of State and publication of Development Plan Document and its Sustainability Appraisal	See LDS	All	Inform	DPD submitted to SOS and letters to statutory bodies and formal written consultation, written representation
7. Period to make representations on Development Plan Document and Sustainability Appraisal	6 weeks	List A, organisations relevant on lists B and C All	Formally inform and request response Make formal representation	Letters to statutory bodies and formal written consultation, written representation Written representations

Document Stage 1-8 (Increase consultation formality)	Consultation Length	Consultees	Type of Engagement	Potential Methods of Engagement
8. Period to make representations on site allocation representations	6 weeks	List A, organisations relevant on lists B and C All	Formally inform of Representations and request response	Letters to statutory bodies and formal written consultation Written representations
9. Examination by Secretary of State on Development Plan Document and it's Sustainability Appraisal	Set by Inspector	All who submitted responses forms on final Development Plan Document	Public Enquiry	Written and verbal representations

Adoption of Development Plan Document