

Statement of Community Involvement 2017

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Document Summary

Revisions of the planning process, since the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, have resulted in a more user-friendly, streamlined mechanism with which to bring plans to fruition. In March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and set out the Government's planning policies for England and how they were expected to be applied.

The NPPF replaced over a thousand pages of policy with a much more succinct and uncomplicated structure to follow.

Publication of the NPPF, along with the publication of the Localism Act 2011, means that emphasis is now firmly placed on early engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses, making planning inclusive of people and communities who want to be involved and a dispersal of power from central Government to local authorities.

Every Council in the country is now creating a countywide planning strategy, known as a Local Plan. As a cornerstone of planning and future development, Herefordshire's Local Plan (formally the Local Development Framework) fits consistently with the principles and policies set out in the NPPF. The Local Plan is there to deliver sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspirations of local communities.

The Local Plan sets out the strategic priorities for Herefordshire, taking measured consideration of the impact on every aspect of social, economic and environmental matters through progress and change.

Following extensive research and public consultation, as well as intensive examination by an independent inspector, the Local Plan provides the basis for all future planning within the County until 2031.

As part of the make-up of the Local Plan, a Local Development Scheme (LDS) has been devised in order to set a timetable for production of a series of accompanying documents, known as Local Development Documents (LDDs). A comprehensive list of the different types of documents produced is provided in section 1 of this document.

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is one of the Local Development Documents, and sets out how the Council will engage with the community in respect of planning matters.

A vital part of the Statement of Community Involvement is to identify those groups most at risk of exclusion and to identify how the Council will approach this potential challenge. Section 6 has more details about this. Section 8 gives more information about the selection of general methods and techniques the Council use to engage with people.

In order to fulfil the pledge to award more power to local communities, the NPPF has introduced Neighbourhood Planning. Creating a Neighbourhood Development Plan gives communities the opportunity to shape and direct sustainable development within their area. Section 11 gives more information about this.

The overall ethos behind the SCI is that local planning authorities should be informative and receptive to views right from the earliest stages and throughout the planning process, to give everyone the opportunity to contribute.

The aim of this is to ensure that the outcome reflects a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the ongoing development of Herefordshire.

1. Summary of Planning Documents

1.1 Local Development Document (LDD)

These comprise of: Statement of Community Involvement, Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. Definitions of these documents are provided below.

1.2 Local Development Scheme (LDS)

This is a list of what documents will be included in the Local Plan and timetable for their production. The Local Development Scheme for Herefordshire can be found on the Council's website. The scheme is regularly reviewed. The Local Development Scheme can be found on the Council's website at:
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan

1.3 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This sets out how and when the local community can become involved in the preparation of the Local Development Documents and in the consideration of planning applications. The Council must comply with its adopted Statement of Community Involvement when preparing its Local Development Documents and this compliance will be tested when these are independently examined. The Statement of Community Involvement can be found on the Council's website at:
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan

1.4 Development Plan Documents (DPD)

Development Plan Documents will have the status as part of the development plan for the area. They must be subject to sustainability appraisal and community involvement during their preparation and can only be adopted after independent examination resulting in recommendations which are binding on the Council.

1.5 DPDs will include the following:

- The Core Strategy, which sets out the long term vision for the area and the policies required to deliver that vision.
- Development Plan policies, based on topics such as housing, employment, and retail and will guide development in the County.
- Site specific allocations of land for individual uses e.g. housing, employment
- A Proposals Map illustrating the spatial extent of the policies
- Action Area Plans for key areas of change.

1.6 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

These documents are optional and may cover a range of issues, both theme based and site specific which provide additional detail to the policies in the development plan document. They are subject to sustainability appraisal and community involvement and do not require independent examination.

1.7 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP)

These are also optional and give every parish community the opportunity to shape the way their area develops within the guidelines of the Local Plan. Guidance on how to formulate a Neighbourhood Development Plan and details of the help that is available can be found on the website at:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning

1.8 Sustainability Appraisals (SA)

Sustainability Appraisals are to form an assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the Local Plan. All Local Development Documents are subject to a Sustainability Appraisal to assess the contribution the document or policy makes in achieving sustainable development in terms of social, economic and environmental factors.

1.9 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

The Council are required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report. This report will consider the effectiveness of the policies within the Local Plan and identify what needs to be reviewed/prepared in the future. The Annual Monitoring Report also sets out the Council's performance in achieving the key milestones set in the Local Development Scheme.

1.10 Planning Applications

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages pre-application discussions. In order for the planning process to work as efficiently and fairly as possible, every effort will be made to ensure that all valid planning applications are available for public viewing at the earliest convenience, giving the opportunity to all interested parties to have their say before the final decision is made.

2. Role and purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement

2.1 A key element of the planning process is to ensure more effective community involvement in the planning process, particularly in the early stages of plan preparation. The Council fully embraces the Government's objectives for improving community involvement in the planning system and has embodied in its Statement of Community Involvement ways in which the Council will seek the views of the community and build on existing consultation mechanisms to continue to make community involvement more effective.

2.2 In complementing the above, the Statement of Community Involvement seeks to explain the Council's policy for actively engaging the local community and stakeholders throughout the preparation, alteration and continuing review of planning documents and in the consideration of planning applications.

2.3 The planning system through its Statement of Community Involvement looks to overcome the traditional reactive way people have previously become involved in the planning process by recognising that people who are likely to be affected by new developments should be encouraged to participate more directly in the preparation of the documents which will form this framework and in the processing

of planning applications. For plan documents this will help strengthen the evidence base of Local Development Documents as well as encourage a sense of local ownership and commitment to plan policies and their delivery. For both plan documents and planning applications this front loading approach should help to resolve conflicts and reach a consensus on essential issues in the early stages of the process, thereby reducing the time taken by examinations and revisions in the later stages.

2.4 A statement of community involvement is required under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Planning Act 2008, Localism Act 2011, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and is informed by the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

2.5 **The role and purpose of this Statement of Community Involvement is to:**

- Identify who will be consulted on plan documents and planning applications and when they will be actively involved in plan making and in reaching decisions on planning applications.
- Set out transparent, accessible and meaningful approaches to community involvement in plan preparation and decision making on planning applications.
- Encourage early involvement in decision making between the community, interest groups and stakeholders. This can help to resolve any initial conflicts and can generate a sense of ownership.
- Recognise and understand the different needs of all sections of the community and stakeholder interests and establish the most effective means of enabling all sections of the community to make their views known and help shape planning decisions in their areas.
- Explain how the results of the consultations will be fed into preparation of Local Development Documents and how those involved will be kept informed.
- Set out standards for the Council to achieve and explain how the process will be resourced and managed and how the planning process will be coordinated with other community involvement and consultation initiatives undertaken by the Council.
- Ensure that the Council complies with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement when preparing its Local Development Documents and compliance be kept under review and revised where necessary.

2.6 Statutory consultation requirements are set by the Government in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. This statement demonstrates how these will be met.

2.7 Development Plan Documents will be formally examined by independent inspectors from the Government's Planning Inspectorates team. It is no longer a requirement for Statement of Community Involvement to be independently examined.

3. When can you get involved?

- 3.1 People can participate in all aspects of the planning process, including the preparation and examination of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents and in the consideration of planning applications. Section 11 will have more information on how Communities can come together and play a big part in how the area around them develops in the future by writing their own Neighbourhood Development Plan.

4. Who will be involved in the consultation?

- 4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out those bodies that the Council must consult with when preparing plan documents and planning applications.
- 4.2 The main groups to be targeted are Central, Regional, Local Government organisations, statutory bodies, community, voluntary, resident and interested groups, members of the public, Parish/Town Councils, local businesses and developers/agents. Information with regard to specific consultees can be found in appendix 2 of this document.
- 4.3 The preparation of Local Development Documents will be more relevant to some groups than others. The list will therefore be used as a guide to identifying the types of groups to involve and consult with. The groups and organisations will change over time and the planning consultation database will be reviewed regularly to maintain an up to date and relevant list of groups and organisations to consult.

5. Community Profile

- 5.1 Any meaningful and practical programme of community engagement must have regard to the physical characteristics of the County and the dispersed nature of settlements and communities. Community profiling is a useful tool in understanding the composition of the County.
- 5.2 Herefordshire is a large, predominately rural, landlocked county situated in the south western corner of the West Midlands region, on the border with Wales. It has a close relationship with neighbouring Shropshire and Worcestershire and there are a range of interactions taking place which cross Herefordshire's boundaries in all directions, including service provision, transport links and commuting patterns.
- 5.3 At the county's heart is the city of Hereford which is the main centre for civil and ecclesiastical administration, health, education and leisure facilities, shopping and employment. The five market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and

Ross-on-Wye, surround the city with still almost medieval regularity. Outside of these urban areas, nucleated villages and smaller settlements, farms and other isolated properties characterise much of Herefordshire.

- 5.4 According to the latest official estimate, Herefordshire's resident population is 187,200. The projected estimate by 2031 is 205,400.
- 5.5 Being sparsely distributed, Herefordshire has the fourth lowest overall population density in England (ninth in England and Wales). Just under a third of Herefordshire residents live in Hereford, with about a fifth in the five market towns and nearly half in the surrounding rural areas. Despite other counties having a lower overall population density, Herefordshire has the greater proportion of its population living in 'very sparse' areas (25%).
- 5.6 This scattered population presents many challenges, both for residents in terms of dependence on the private car, increased household costs, access to services, often poor or no broadband access and social isolation, as well as for the delivery of services, particularly to community members already experiencing disadvantage.
- 5.7 Like the national population structure, Herefordshire's population is ageing with one in five people aged 65 or over (compared to one in six nationally). There is a much older age structure in Herefordshire compared to England and Wales, with higher proportions of residents in all age groups from 45-49 upwards and less in the middle aged groups. Both national and local forecasts predict a further rise in the proportion of older people.

6. Diversity of interests and those at risk of exclusion

- 6.1 As a result of previous experiences in engaging with different groups on planning matters, it is understood that no single method of communication is adequate when trying to ensure effective and fully inclusive consultation.
- 6.2 Different ways of communication will suit different people. Using organisations that are there to provide a support network to specific groups of people is also important. With the use of good communication, everyone can find the information they need and will know how to get involved if they choose to. It is important when contact is made that the council invite feedback on what has been the most convenient and successful method of communication for the recipient.

Suggested pro-active approaches are set out in the following table.

Groups at risk of exclusion	Approach
Minority Ethnic Groups	Utilise links with the Council's Equality, Sustainable Communities Team, Integration & Partnership Team and social media.
Travellers/Gypsies	Utilise links with the Herefordshire G & T strategy group, social media, specific publications and national organisations/bodies supporting this specific group.

Disabled People including those with numeracy, literacy disabilities	Utilise links with the Council's Community Involvement Coordinator, organisations/bodies supporting this specific group, local Access groups and social media.
Older people	Make contact with network groups supporting the elderly and social media.
Children and young people	Work with the Children's Wellbeing Directorate & Participation Officer, British Youth Council (BYC), School Councils, and Youth Clubs and social media.
Those following different religions or with certain beliefs	Utilise links with the Council's Equality, Integration & Partnership Team, Sustainable Communities Team and social media
Young single parents	Local community centres, post-natal groups, online forums and social media.
Homeless	Herefordshire Council Homelessness and Housing Advice Team.
People located in dispersed rural areas.	Council website, community forums and groups, Parish Councillor and staff and social media.
Adults with Learning difficulties	Liaison with the Council's Adult Social Care team, organisations/bodies providing specific support for this group, social media.
Those who are too busy to respond	Endeavour to ascertain the most convenient means of communication for future involvement, social media.

* Other organisations representing these groups are included in the consultee list maintained by the planning office.

In all future engagement and consultations, the council will pay regard to broader policies, including: Human Rights Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Race Relations Act 2000.

- 6.3 It is important to recognise that well established local partnerships and communication networks representing many key organisations and groups exist and operate effectively within the County. To make good use of resources the Council will seek to engage with these partnerships and utilise these communication networks whenever it is possible and appropriate to do so.

7. Herefordshire's approach to community involvement

7.1 In producing its Statement of Community Involvement, the Council seeks to promote effective community involvement in the planning system. The Council corporately has a strong commitment to community engagement and has adopted the following objectives through its Strategy for Community Involvement:

- Purpose should be clear
- Consultation should be well planned, timely and inclusive
- Methods should be appropriate and well-managed
- Relevant documentation should be accessible to all, so opinion is fully informed
- Decisions should be based on all relevant evidence
- Results should be acknowledged and fully considered
- Accessible feedback should be given
- Effectiveness should be evaluated
- Opportunity should be given to public wherever possible to register ongoing interest

7.2 In following these principles the consultation approach developed within this Statement of Community Involvement will reflect local circumstances, be deliverable building on existing practice, be meaningful and easy to understand and capable of being resourced and managed effectively.

8. Community involvement methods and techniques

8.1 Section 5 identifies the key characteristics of the County. The dispersed population spread over a wide rural area raises particular problems in devising the most appropriate means of consultation to be used. There may also be problems in identifying representative groups to be consulted on behalf of ethnic minority or socially excluded groups, where fairly small numbers of people are involved. As and when it is deemed necessary by the Council, in order to widen the involvement of the community and especially those at risk of exclusion, a broader range of engagements methods will be used. In preparing this Statement of Community Involvement and in developing the approach, it is necessary to give consideration as to how the authority informs, involves, consults and provides feedback.

8.2 To engage effectively over a range of planning documents the Council will use a combination of consultation methods appropriate to the policy area being prepared and its stage of preparation. The table of engagement methods sets out a range of formal and informal community involvement methods and techniques which will be selected from depending on what is thought to be most appropriate. This is based on the Regulations, advantages and disadvantages of different methods, local circumstances, previous experiences, feedback from the Statement of Community Involvement questionnaires and the resources available to manage the community involvement process.

8.3 There is no significance in the order of the various methods and it is not anticipated that every one of these methods need be used. However, electronic communication will be considered as the principle means wherever possible due to its invaluable potential to circulate large amounts of information to the widest range of the Herefordshire audience. This is especially important, given the county's rural nature; therefore those who may have difficulty accessing information at key sites such as libraries can still take part in the consulting process. It should be noted however that there are parishes with far less access to information; therefore information centres and libraries across the county and well as major county publications and parish council staff will be required to make material available and keep the public informed.

8.4 **Table of engagement methods**

Method	Main Considerations
Council web site	Information can be provided quickly and efficiently and accessed by the public from their own home or office at a time which is convenient to them. This can overcome the problems of trying to consult over dispersed rural communities. However, access to the internet is not universal and therefore may disadvantage certain groups. The Council has web access at all Customer Service Centres and libraries and will continue to consider ways in which access to web based information can be improved. Web pages should be user friendly. Use is likely to continue to increase.
Email	Information and responses can be provided quickly and efficiently. Increased use of this means of communication is sought with Town and Parish Councils, specified consultees and all other parties will be communicated in this way wherever possible. Every effort will be made to gather and maintain email addresses, unless an individual specifies otherwise.
Social media	Use of sites such as Facebook and Twitter keep users informed with regular updates for low cost. Likely to be utilized as a means of keeping people informed, rather than a formal part of consultation. Still many people not using these mediums. Therefore, where appropriate, pages should be referred to on literature & website to raise awareness.
Formal advertisements in local press	Statutory requirements to publish notices advertising certain planning applications

Method	Main Considerations
Press releases	It is cost effective in terms of bringing local issues into the broader local arena. Releases will be sent out to all major county publications. Items may only be reported if they are considered newsworthy by the newspaper editors, therefore publication is not guaranteed.
Consultation documents available for sale, CD or inspection at Council offices, by post and on the web	Traditional means of consultation and the information supplied can be in detail. Information needs to be in plain English with simplified formats. Due to limitations for people with mobility or sight disabilities and where English is not a language that is understood, modified versions need to be made available at no extra cost to the individual.
Leaflet, newsletters and brochures	Can publicise and explain in simple language and invite comment. The Parish newsletters are a good communication link and should be utilised where appropriate. Newsletters can be sent to all residents; however, may be viewed as junk mail and disregarded. Can be expensive to distribute.
Formal written letter	Letters will be sent when there is no other means of communication or a person has requested to be written to by post specifically. High postage and administration costs.
Public Exhibitions/Public meetings/presentations	Can be used to circulate information, seek views and endorse proposals. Gives residents some flexibility in deciding when to visit and can encourage feedback. Takes planning issues to the people and provides an opportunity for people to discuss local issues directly with planning officers in an environment which local people will be familiar and therefore comfortable with. However, people attending may not be representative of the whole community and there is no guarantee of turn out. High staff and material costs. Countywide consultations require extensive coverage and numbers of events. Displaying information in local shops where people frequent should be considered as an alternative, where appropriate.

Method	Main Considerations
Notices displayed on a site	Direct and local notification of proposals to those around a site and in local area, however notices can be vandalised or removed before the end of consultation period.
Through partnership organisations and focus groups, existing forums/panels	Useful for topic based discussions and to find out what specific groups feel. Provides opportunity to discuss issues in depth and to have ongoing dialogue. However high direct costs of facilitating. Important to build on existing networks rather than reinvent with new ones.
Councilor networks	Councillors play a very important role in terms of community engagement. They are a recognised point of contact for the local community to go to with regard to Council matters. It is vital to ensure that Councillors are kept well briefed.
One to one meetings and briefings	Useful for seeking views from targeted groups/individuals however they are time consuming and require costly staff resource.
Parish and Town Council networks	If Town and Parish Councils are effectively involved with consultation exercises they can provide an invaluable contact with local communities. Many have developed their own websites and social media pages and should be used as a platform to provide information relevant to parish residents. There is also opportunity to assist in the preparation and distribution of consultation material e.g. on town, parish and village notice boards and other locations deemed appropriate.
Questionnaire/surveys	Enables quantifiable information to be collected. Questionnaires need to be well designed. There is no guarantee of response rate. Likely to be time consuming and costly.
Workshops	Organised discussion based event to present and gather information. Can be targeted at key stakeholders. Requires skilled facilitators to ensure objectives are achieved. Requires costly staff resource.

8.5 **Resourcing and managing the process**

In preparing this approach to community consultation and to ensure that it is deliverable, consideration has to be given to the resources available to manage the process. Officer time is a key resource issue. Electronic communication will be utilised whenever possible, including regular updates on the council website, and social media. A balance has to be struck between consultation and the various production and management issues associated with the range of Local Development Documents that are to be prepared.

8.6 The budget for Local Plan – Core Strategy preparation will meet the costs of the legal requirements for community involvement in plan making. The Council's Local Development Scheme sets out a phased programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents, ensuring that consultation activities are staggered and that the Statement of Community Involvement's requirements can be met without undue pressure on resources. Resources for the Local Plan are assessed through the Council's budget review process, which will include consultation requirements. Where possible, consultations will be coordinated with other departments, external stakeholders and local communities to lever in more resources.

8.7 In addition as a Local Development Document is being prepared particular issues may arise which may require additional community involvement work and the approach needs to be sufficiently flexible to enable this to be incorporated in the Local Development Document preparation process. An issue that needs serious thought is the possible limitations on the ability of the community to fully engage in the consultation process.

8.8 **Role of elected members**

Herefordshire Council has 53 councillors who are elected to represent the constituents of 53 wards. They have an important role to play in the community involvement process by keeping their local communities informed, representing their views and encouraging and assisting them to engage in the future planning and development of their area.

8.9 It is vital that all elected members are involved in the Local Plan preparation process to provide ownership, leadership and commitment to future implementation. Where appropriate and depending on the issue in question, arrangements will be made with Councillors to involve them in emerging policy work. This approach will be additional to the Council's established procedures for decision making.

9. **Herefordshire's consultation standards for Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents**

9.1 The minimum legal requirements for consultation and public participation for the Local Plan are set down in formal regulations, Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Specified bodies must be consulted if the Council considers that the body may be affected by what is proposed. In addition to the formal bodies, it is the intention of the Council to involve the community at an early stage in the preparation of Local Development Documents. This is essential to work towards the key objectives of openness and consensus and resolving conflicts.

9.2 Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Development Plan Documents are produced in order to set out the local authority's policies and proposals for development and use of land and buildings in the area. Development Plan Documents are subject to mandatory public consultation in order to prepare preferred options, as well as independent examination. Examples of Development Plan Documents include Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

DPD stage: Initial technical consultation – establish evidence base and prepare issues and options – Regulation 18
(Statutory 6 week consultation period)

9.3 Herefordshire Council will:

- Email prior notification to all consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, that issues and options documents are to be published for consultation and are available for inspection. This will give people time to prepare in light of any representation they may wish to make. Communication should include details of where documents will be available to view, start/finish of consultation and how anyone wishing to make representation is able to do so.
- Email copies of any issues and options documents to relevant specified bodies and any other interested party who requests it.
- Send a press release to local papers outlining details of the consultation.
- Make copies of any issues and options documents available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate.
(Regulation 35)
- Publish a notification on Council website and social media, along with links to any issues and options documents.
- Carry out a range of other community involvement methods, appropriate to the scope and potential impact of the Development Plan Document. The programme of such exercises will be set out and publicised prior to the commencement of this consultation stage.

DPD Stage: Pre-submission draft consultation – Regulation 19 & 20
(Statutory 6 week consultation period)

9.4 Herefordshire Council will:

- Email prior notification to all consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, that the draft document and accompanying sustainability appraisal report will shortly be published for consultation and be available for inspection. This will give people time to prepare for the formal consultation. At this stage, the emphasis is on exploring the legality and 'soundness' of the document, rather than content.

- Email copies of the preferred options document and accompanying sustainability appraisal report to those relevant specified bodies and any other interested party who requests them.
- Send a press release to local papers, outlining details of the consultation.
- Make copies of the preferred options document and accompanying sustainability appraisal report available for inspection at the Councils offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate. (Reg 35)
- Publish the documents on the Council website. Include guidance notes on how to make a representation and what will happen when a representation has been received. Produce a standard response form to enable people to make representations in writing or on line via the Council website.
- Publish consultation details, dates and links on social media.
- Issue press release with details of consultation dates, where and when documents will be available for inspection, as well as how representation can be made.
- Use additional, more targeted community involvement methods if deemed appropriate to do so by the Council.
- Acknowledge receipt of all representations submitted and publish them on the Council website.
- Consider all representations received within the specified 6 week period (Reg 20)
- Publish a summary of the representations received indicating how they have been considered and whether any changes are proposed as a result.

Site allocations representations.

Where developers or individuals submit representations during the consultation that promote alternative sites for development

9.5 Herefordshire Council will:

- Email notification to all potentially affected consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, (including those who made other representations during the draft consultation stage) that the representations promoting alternative sites have been received. Include information on where these can be viewed and confirm start/finish date of consultation.
- Send a press release to local papers, outlining details of the consultation.
- Make copies of any site allocation representations received available for inspection at council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were displayed and if practical publish them on the Council website. (Reg 35)

- Publish a formal notice on Council website and social media, detailing how to make representations within a specified 6 week period, indicating where and when the site allocation representations will be available for inspection.
- Send to the Secretary of State at time of submission of the Development Plan Document a statement of the additional representations received, a summary of the main issues raised and copies of all additional representations. (Reg 20)

DPD Stage: Submission of the DPD to Secretary of State – Regulation 22

9.6 Herefordshire Council will:

- Submit a statement of compliance demonstrating how the Council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement along with accompanying documents. This will set out whom and how the Council consulted at pre-submission stage, the representations received and the main issues raised and how these have been addressed in the Development Plan Document.
- Email notification to all consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, (including those who made representations at the draft submission stage) that the submission Development Plan Document and accompanying sustainability appraisal report is published and submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Include information advising where hard copies of all documents submitted can be viewed.
- Make copies of the Development Plan Document, the accompanying sustainability appraisal report and other supporting documentation available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were displayed.
(Reg 35)
- Email copies of the submission Development Plan Document and accompanying sustainability appraisal report to those relevant specified bodies and any other interested party who requested them.
- Publicise the submission on Council website and social media.

DPD stage: Independent Examination – Regulation 24

(Anyone with an outstanding objection has the right to have their representation considered by an Independent Planning Inspector at an examination into the soundness of the DPD)

9.7 Herefordshire Council will:

- Email any person who made a representation on the submission document (where the representation has not been withdrawn), or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means. Notification should be at least 6 weeks before the time and place at which the independent

examination will take place and the name of the person appointed to carry out the examination should be included.

- Written representations, round table discussions, informal hearings or formal examinations may be involved, with each carrying equal weight. Only those seeking changes to the Plan have the right to appear and the Government anticipates that written representations can deal with the majority of cases. (Reg 23)
- Publish information on the Council website and social media.

DPD Stage: Inspectors Report – Regulation 25

(After examination, the Inspector will produce a report which is binding upon the Council, with specific recommendations as to how the document must be changed)

9.8 Herefordshire Council will:

- Email notification to all relevant consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, that the Inspector's report has been received and when it will be published.
- As soon as is reasonably practical, publish the Inspector's report and make it available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were displayed. (Reg 35)
- Publish the Inspector's report on the Council website.
- Publish a notification on social media.

DPD stage: Adoption and publication – Regulation 26

(The Council must adopt the submitted document as changed by the binding Inspector's report)

9.9 Herefordshire Council will:

- Email notification to all relevant consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, that the Development Plan Document has been adopted and include a copy of the adoption statement. A reasonable charge will be made for any hard copies requested to be sent to consultees personally.
- As soon as is reasonably practical, publish the adopted Development Plan Document, the adoption statement and accompanying sustainability appraisal report and make these documents available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were displayed. (Reg 35)
- Publish notification and documents on the Council website.

- Publish a notification on social media.
- Send out a press release to local newspapers stating that the adopted Development Plan Document and the adoption statement are available for inspection, indicating where and when they can be inspected.

The Council may make a reasonable charge for a hard copy of a document. Specially modified versions can be made available in large print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English for those that require it at no cost.

9.10 **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

Supplementary Planning Documents are produced to expand on policy and provide additional information and guidance in support of policies and proposal in Development Plan Documents. They can be site specific or topic based. The process for preparing a Supplementary Planning Document is similar to that for a Development Plan Document, but simplified. There is no requirement to prepare preferred options and Supplementary Planning Documents are not subject to independent examination. As with Development Plan Documents, their preparation is informed by community involvement and sustainability appraisal.

SPD Stage: Preparation of draft plan – Regulation 12 & 13 (statutory 4-6 week consultation period)

9.11 **Herefordshire Council will:**

- Email notification to all consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, of issues to be addressed in the Supplementary Planning Document. Information sent should include details of consultation period, where any background information can be viewed and how representation can be made.
- Where a site specific Supplementary Planning Document is being prepared, undertake more targeted consultation with the local community in the vicinity of the site. This should only be undertaken if the council deems it to be a necessary part of the process, in order to gather sufficient feedback from interested parties.
- Make copies of any issues and options documents available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate. (Reg 35)
- Publish a notification on Council website, along with any issues and options documents.
- Publish a notification on social media.

SPD Stage: Adoption and publication – Regulation 14 (The Council will adopt the SPD having considered any representations received)

9.12 **Herefordshire Council will:**

- Prepare a statement setting out the main issues raised by representations received and how they have been addressed in the Supplementary Planning Document the Council intends to adopt.

- Email notification to all consultees on the main planning database, or send letter if email addresses are unavailable or they have requested communication by other means, that the Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted and send them a copy of the Supplementary Planning Document and adoption statement.
- Make copies of the adopted Supplementary Planning Document and adoption statement available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate.
- Publish a notification and these documents on the Council website.
- Publish an update on social media.

Decision Making Processes

The Council will maintain a record of consultation responses received during the preparation of planning documents and will present a transparent decision making process to the community. Consultation responses are one of the matters to be taken into account by Councillors when making decisions on plan making.

A summary of consultation responses will be made available prior to any decision being made upon planning documents.

A Statement of Compliance will be produced for every planning document which will include a summary of consultation responses and details of where the document has been amended in light of responses received.

The comments received will be made publicly available so they can be viewed by others with an interest in the matter.

When a Development Plan Document is submitted to the Secretary of State, the Regulations require that the Statement of Compliance is also provided.

The Inspector when testing the soundness of the Development Plan Document at examination will use the Statement of Compliance to determine whether the Statement of Community Involvement has been correctly followed.

If there has been a failure to comply with the Statement of Community Involvement or the Regulations, in a way that undermines the Development Plan Document, the Inspector can recommend that the document be withdrawn.

10. Community involvement in the planning application process

10.1 This section sets out how you can find out about and get involved in the planning application process in Herefordshire.

Herefordshire Council is responsible for the processing and decision making of planning applications. This work which is undertaken by the development management team involves handling a wide range of planning and related applications ranging from house extensions to large housing and employment development and minerals and waste proposals

The operation of the development management process is governed by requirements that are set out in national legislation. With respect to publicity and consultation on planning applications the requirements are set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015 (as amended)

This part of the Statement of Community Involvement sets out in detail how public involvement in the planning application process will operate in Herefordshire. It sets out:-

- The approach to consultations and publicity for planning applications
- The approach to decision making
- The approach to pre-application advice

10.2 **How can I find out about planning applications in Herefordshire?**

When a planning application is received the Council are firstly required to confirm that it is a valid application; that is to check that it contains all the correct documentation. If it does not then the application will not be processed and it will not be publicised. Once the application is confirmed as being valid the Council are required to carry out certain publicity.

The following sets out the publicity given to planning applications:-

Planning applications online

- 10.3 Details of all applications that are received are displayed on the Council website. During the processing of the application these details are updated with any new information received, such as consultation responses. The record will include the officer's or Planning Committee report, the decision notice, the discharge of conditions and any subsequent appeal.

If you do not have internet access you are able to use the facility at one of our Customer Service Centres.

Site Notices

- 10.4 For every planning application at least one site notice will be displayed; in some cases there will be more than one notice. The notices are coloured yellow and are displayed at public vantage points on and/or near the site.

Press Notices

- 10.5 Certain types of application will additionally be advertised in the local press. Currently the adverts are placed in the Hereford Times. The types of application are:-

- Those which affect the character or appearance of a conservation area
- Those for works to listed buildings and development which affects the setting of a listed building
- Those which affect a public right of way
- Those for ten or more houses
- Those for 10,000 square metres or more of employment floor space
- Those for sites with an area of one hectare or more
- Those for waste management or minerals extraction

- Those which are a departure from development plan policy
- Those which are likely to be of a wider community interest, such as wind turbines
- Those which are subject to an environmental impact assessment

Weekly Lists

10.6 A weekly list of applications received is available on the Council website www.Herefordshire.gov.uk

City/Town/Parish Council notification

10.7 The local council are notified of all applications within their area. Neighbouring parishes are consulted on applications where it is considered they will be impacted.

How can I comment on a planning application?

Once you become aware of a planning application the complete details of the proposal can be viewed on the Council's website.

If you wish to comment on any application then you can:-

Use the online comment form on the website

E-mail: planning_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk

Write to: Planning Services, PO Box 230, Hereford, HR1 2ZB

(Oral/verbal or anonymous comments cannot be taken into account)

We recommend that when you make a comment that these relate to relevant planning matters

10.8 **Relevant planning matters include:**

- Planning policy
- The design and visual impact
- The impact on privacy/daylight/sunlight
- Environmental factors - noise, smell, pollution
- The economic benefits
- Highway issues - access, traffic, parking
- Impact on the landscape and ecology (nature conservation)
- Impact on the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting.

10.9 **Matters which are not normally relevant:**

- Loss of a view
- Impact on property value
- Land ownership/property covenant
- Effect on trade/competition
- Personal circumstances of the applicant (except in exceptional circumstances)
- The number of representations

10.10 Any comments you may wish to make should be received within the time period which will be specified on the website or the site/press notice. Following the specified date the Council is able to make a decision on the application. If we do receive a comment after the specified date it will only be considered if it is received before the decision is issued and raises material issues.

Any comments you make will be open to public inspection. They will be published on the application record on the Council's website. In this we will include your name and address but your signature, e-mail address and telephone number(s) will be redacted.

The Council will not accept responsibility or liability for the comments received and reserves the right to withdraw and/or redact comments from public inspection where they are not of a valid planning nature.

All comments made are taken into account in the making of the decision.

10.11 **How and when are decisions made?**

The majority of decisions on planning and related applications are made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation – that is the decision is made by an Officer on behalf of the Council. It is important to note that the officer who makes the decision will not be the officer who has dealt with the application.

A number of applications will be determined by the Planning Committee. The types of application are set out in the Council's Constitution. The Committee meets on a three weekly cycle with meetings starting at 10.00am. The agenda, including reports on all the planning applications to be considered, is published five working days before the meeting. The dates for the meetings and the agenda is available to view on the Council website.

10.12 **Which applications are determined by Planning Committee?**

- Those agreed to be called in under the Ward Member redirection procedure
- Those made by the Council itself where material objections have been received
- Those by Council Members
- Those by certain Council Officers
- Those which if approved would be a departure from Council policy
- Significant or strategic applications

Note: The above is a summary with the precise wording set out in the Constitution (currently set out in paragraph 4.8.4.2)

10.13 The Planning Committee encourages public speaking at its meetings. For any application on the agenda the applicant, parish/town council and those making representations will be invited to speak for three minutes. If you have made a representation within the required consultation period we will invite you to speak.

10.14 Please note that if there are a number of representations from the public the speaking time will need to be shared.

Full details of the role and functions of the Planning Committee and the Public Speaking Procedures are set out in the Council's Constitution. This can be viewed on the Council's website.

10.15 **Significant planning applications – Community engagement**

The Council encourages anyone seeking planning permission to discuss their proposal first. The Council believes these are valuable as they allow discussions to take place around the likely acceptability of a proposed development.

As part of this process the Council always recommend that anybody seeking planning permission should discuss their proposal at an early stage with those potentially affected. There will be certain developments which in the view of the Council are likely to generate public interest which should be canvassed prior to any formal application. The following list, which is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, lists those more significant applications.

10.16 **What are “significant” applications in respect of initial discussion with potentially affected parties?**

- Housing schemes for ten or more houses
- New buildings greater than 1,000 square metres
- Development on a site greater than 1 hectare
- Minerals development
- Waste development
- Those which are likely to be of a wider community interest, such as wind turbines
- Those which are subject to an environmental impact assessment

The Council itself does not undertake any form of public/community consultation at pre-application stage but if the development proposed is considered to be significant, it would strongly encourage the applicant to involve the community.

10.17 **Applicant's duties for Community Consultation**

- Identify groups and/or individuals who should be involved
- Agree a method for their involvement
- Agree a timetable for their involvement
- Set out how any feedback from the consultation will be assessed
- Identify where the feedback has resulted in a revision to the proposal
- Include in the planning application a statement on the consultation exercise

11. Neighbourhood Development Planning

The Localism Act 2011 has reformed the planning system to give local people new rights to shape the development of the communities in which they live.

There is no compulsion for parishes to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), however there are a number of benefits to having one:-

- It will help a community play a greater role in shaping the future of its surrounding area.
- It will bring together local residents, businesses, local groups, landowners and developers to share ideas and build consensus about what needs to be done within the local community. It can also build relationships between the local community and service providers.
- Neighbourhood planning offers communities the opportunity to set priorities for planning within their area.
- Areas with adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans will also be entitled to a larger share of any Community Infrastructure Levy to put towards infrastructure projects in the area.

11.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans will set out the vision for an area and the planning policies for the use and development of land within a parish or neighbourhood area. The policies within a Neighbourhood Development Plan are intended to support the strategic policies within the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy, and should focus on guiding development, rather than stopping it.

11.2 Once a plan has been adopted, it will become a statutory plan carrying equal weight to the Core Strategy and be part of the Local Development Framework to be used in making decisions on planning applications in your area by Herefordshire Council.

11.3 Plans will need to conform to planning policies and guidance at a local, national and European level and meet the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. This will be tested in an independent examination. They will also need to demonstrate involvement of the local community in decision making and be subject to a community referendum.

11.4 Neighbourhood Development Plans can:

- Decide where and what type of development should happen within a parish
- Promote more development than provided for within the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy
- Provide less development in exceptional circumstances where justified.
- Include detailed planning policies for the parish which do not conflict with the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy

11.5 Neighbourhood Development Plans cannot:

- Conflict with the policies of but rather sit within general conformity of Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy
- Be used to prevent development
- Be prepared by a body other than a parish or town council in Herefordshire

- Include County Matters such as Minerals and Waste

11.6 Who can create a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

Within Herefordshire, only the parish or town council is the 'relevant body' who have the responsibility for producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for their area. The parish/town can enlist help from others within the community but only the parish council can make a neighbourhood area application and submit the relevant draft documents to Herefordshire Council for consideration.

11.7 What might a Neighbourhood Development Plan include?

Neighbourhood Development Plans can contain a variety of issues and policies which are most relevant to a specific parish. Following this is a list of possible issues which could be covered. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list and parishes do not need to include every item. The plan should be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the relevant community.

- Identify sites for housing, including affordable housing
- Provision of a settlement boundary
- Provision for businesses to set up or expand in the parish
- Provision of cycle ways and footpaths
- Identify sites for community use, such as schools, village halls, health centre, leisure facilities
- Design guidance for your parish
- Protection and creation of open space, green amenity areas, nature reserves, allotments, play areas
- Protection of important local buildings and other historical assets
- Promoting of renewable energy schemes and projects
- Restrict the types of development or change of use, for example; non retail uses in town centres
- Provide sites for gypsies and travellers

11.8 Creating a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Defining the Neighbourhood Area – Regulation 7 (Statutory 4 week consultation period)

- The Neighbourhood Development Plan will cover an area defined as the Neighbourhood Area. The council would encourage the area to follow the parish boundary; however part of the parish would be considered, if reasonably justified. It is also possible for neighbouring parishes to team up and create a joint plan, but it should be noted that areas/plans cannot overlap and there can only be one plan per Neighbourhood Area.

- An application can be found at:
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>
The application form should be accompanied by an ordnance survey map, illustrating the designated area and a statement explaining why the area is considered to be appropriate. (Reg 5)
- The Council will publicise the application online, along with site notices across the Neighbourhood area, informing interested parties how a representation can be made. (Reg 6)
- Following consideration of any representations received within the 4 weeks and consultation with the Ward Member, the decision on designating a Neighbourhood Area will be made at Assistant Director level.
- Following the decision, the Council will inform the parish council/s and publicise the Neighbourhood Area on the Council website and within the Neighbourhood Area. This will form the 'decision document' (Reg 7)
- If the Neighbourhood Area is refused, the Council will publish 'the decision document' outlining the reasons why, along with details of how to re-submit.

Write and publicise the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan – Regulation 14
(Statutory 6 week consultation period)

- It is up to the parish to decide the level of detail that will make up their Neighbourhood Development Plan. Views of the local community, interest groups and stakeholders should be sought, in order to form a well evidenced foundation for the plan. A consultation statement detailing how this has been achieved will be required for the final submission of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- The Ward Member is a valuable source of information with regard to Council policy and existing community issues, and therefore should be involved early in the process.
- The Council's Neighbourhood Planning team are there to provide guidance and advice throughout the plan making process to ensure the plan is in line with the regulations and legislative requirements and conforms to planning policies.
- Evidence and information from existing documents used to form the Local Plan-Core Strategy are available from the Council. Alternatively, the parish will need to provide any evidence more specific to their area.
- The draft plan should be published locally for a minimum period of 6 weeks in order for any representations to be made. Consultation must also be made with specified consultees. A checklist is available on the Neighbourhood Development Plan web page, to assist compliance with Reg 14. (It is advisable to send a copy of the draft plan to the Council Neighbourhood Development Plan team at this stage, in order to check for conformity with national planning policy and the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy, as well as any other relevant Development Plan Documents.
- Any amendments required to the plan should be made based on representations made during the consultation period.

Submission of the final plan – Regulation 16

(Statutory 6 week consultation period)

- The final plan should be submitted to Herefordshire Council Neighbourhood Planning team.
- In accordance with Reg 15, the plan should consist of:
 1. A map showing the area in which the Neighbourhood Development Plan covers.
 2. The proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.
 3. A consultation statement detailing how the opinions of interested parties have been sought.
 4. A written statement explaining how the Neighbourhood Development Plan has met the basic conditions. This includes, having regard to national policy, general conformity with the Herefordshire Local Plan-Core Strategy, contribute to sustainable development, have regards to the desirability of preserving and enhancing listed buildings and conservation areas and compatible with any European obligations.
 5. Any required environmental assessments (Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitat Regulation Assessment)
- The Neighbourhood Planning team will publish the plan for a minimum 6 week consultation period.
- Following conclusion of the consultation, the Neighbourhood Planning team will make a recommendation regarding progress of the plan. Final approval for the plan to move forward to examination stage will be given by the Director of Economy, Communities and Corporate or the Programme Director - Growth.

Independent Examination – Regulation 17

- The Council will organise and pay for an independent examination of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and supply the relevant documents to the examiner, including any details of any representations during the final consultation. Many examinations will be dealt with by written representation; however there may be some via hearing or public examination, depending on the circumstances.
- The examiner will recommend either:
 1. The plan move to a referendum
 2. Following a few minor amendments the plan move to a referendum
 3. The plan should be refused
- The examiner's report is not binding and consideration will be given to the recommendation within it. A decision statement will be produced by Director Economy, Communities and Corporate or the Programme Director – Growth, outlining the decision reasons, where it can be inspected and any modifications made to the plan. The report and Council decision will be published on the website and within the Neighbourhood Area.

Referendum – Regulation 18

- Once the plan is finalised and any amendments have been made, Herefordshire Council will arrange and pay for a referendum, including all those on the electoral roll within the designated Neighbourhood Development Plan area. This may also include those from neighbouring parishes if the examiner has deemed it to affect them directly also.

- If the referendum result rules in favour by 50% or more, then the Neighbourhood Development Plan will move on to the final stage in the process.

Adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan – Regulation 19/20

- Recommendation will be made to Herefordshire Council’s Cabinet to adopt the agreed Neighbourhood Development Plan and this will form the basis of development and determine planning applications as part of the Local Plan-Core Strategy.
- Adopted plans will be published on the Council website and made available for viewing at local customer service centres and libraries.
- Copies of the decision to adopt will be sent to the parish/es and any person asking to be notified.

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

11.9 Community Right to Build

The Community Right to Build enables community organisations to progress new local developments without the need to go through the normal planning application process, as long as the proposals meet certain criteria and there is community backing in a local referendum.

Communities may wish to build new homes or new community amenities, and providing they can demonstrate overwhelming local support, the Community Right to Build will give communities the powers to deliver this directly.

All profits derived from a Community Right to Build Order proposal must be used for the benefit of the community, for example to provide and maintain local facilities such as village halls

11.10 Neighbourhood Development Order

A Neighbourhood Development Order allows communities to grant planning permission for development they want to see go ahead in a neighbourhood. For example, it enables them to allow certain developments, such as extensions to houses, to be built without the need to apply for planning permission.

Herefordshire Council conform to a Service Level Agreement developed specifically to ensure that all parishes wishing to take an active role in the shaping of their area will receive sufficient advice and support throughout the process.

12. Monitoring and reviewing

Preparing this Statement of Community Involvement has enabled the Council to give significant thought to how the authority is best able to involve people in planning matters from an early stage in the process.

The Council will keep the adopted Statement of Community Involvement under review by:

- Monitoring the success of community involvement techniques by assessing the representations received during the planning process
- Any problems raised by consultees. Consultation surveys are accompanied by an equality monitoring questionnaire in order to ensure participants are given the opportunity to raise concerns relating to fair representation. Individual feedback is used to inform and improve all future engagement.
- Advice on best practice by consulting with relevant council departments, such as Communications and Equality Monitoring.

The document will be examined every year through the Herefordshire Council Monitoring Report. Any proposed review will be identified within the Council's Local Development Scheme with a clear timetable for its production.

For further information or clarification on any aspect of the Statement of Community Involvement please contact 01432 260500 or email: ldf@herefordshire.gov.uk

www.facebook.com/hfdscouncil

www.twitter.com/HfdsCouncil

www.flickr.com/photos/hfdscouncil

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Glossary of terms

Adoption - The final formal stage in the evolution of a statutory planning document. Once a plan is adopted it has full legal weight in the determination of planning applications.

Communities and Local Government (CLG) - The Government department with responsibility for planning and local government.

Core Strategy (CS) - A type of development plan document, which should set out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority area and the strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision.

Development Management - Alternative name for development control. The act of determining planning applications (and similar) in conformity with the development plan and material considerations.

Development Management Standards of Service - The Council's detailed approach to involving people in the process of making decisions on planning applications. It goes beyond the principles and legal requirements as set out in Section 3 of the SCI.

Development Management policies - A set of criteria-based policies required to ensure that all development within the area meets the vision and strategy set out in the core strategy.

Development Plan - The suite of development plan documents that collectively provide the planning framework used to assess development proposals for a given local planning authority area.

Development Plan Document (DPD) - Spatial planning documents that set out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. In two-tier areas it may include adopted district local plans, adopted county local plans for minerals & waste, core strategies and / or area action plans (where these have been prepared) and neighbourhood plans. All DPD's are subject to independent examination. There is a right for those making representations seeking change to be heard at an independent examination.

Elected Members - Locally elected community representatives that form part of the decision making body in a local authority.

General Consultation Bodies - These organisations are listed in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

Independent Examination - The process by which a planning inspector may publicly examine a Development Plan Document.

Inspector's Report - This will be produced by the Planning Inspector following the Independent Examination.

Localism Act - The Localism Act devolves greater powers to local government and neighbourhoods and gives local communities more rights and powers over decisions about

development. It also includes reforms to make the planning system more democratic and more effective.

Local Community - A generic term which includes all individuals (including the general public) and organisations external to the Council. It can also include statutory and other consultees.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) - Sets out the programme for the preparation of the development plan documents.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - A document setting out the Government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. It replaces much of the national advice previously contained within Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance and Circulars. The NPPF is a material consideration in the preparation of planning documents and when considering planning applications.

Pre-application Community Engagement - The process by which a prospective developer will give local people an opportunity to help shape development proposals before they are formally submitted to the planning authority as a planning application.

Planning Inspectorate - An organisation which processes planning appeals and holds examinations into DPDs or Local Plans and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Public Consultation - A process through which the public is informed about emerging plans or proposals put forward by a planning authority or by development promoter, and are invited to submit comments upon them.

Specific Consultation Bodies - These organisations are listed in Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

Appendix 2 – Specific consultation bodies

Please refer to current Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations

General consultation bodies

Other bodies representing the environmental interests of the county

Voluntary bodies, some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the authority's area

Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the authority's area

Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the authority's area

Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the authority's area

Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the authority's area

Parish Councils

A comprehensive list of specific and other consultees will be maintained by Herefordshire Council planning department.

Appendix 3 - Guidance Notes on making a representation

Throughout the planning process, opportunities will be given in the form of consultation for all interested parties to be involved and make their views known.

At the start of a consultation period, a form will be made available for anyone wanting to make a representation. Dates of the consultation will be made clear and only representations received inside these dates, will be taken into consideration.

A completed form should include contact details and the comments on the form should relate directly to the aspect of the Development Plan Document as indicated on the form by the planning office.

Only names and/or organisations will be published on the Council website, as well as comments made on the form. However, other information will be shared with the Planning Inspector, who may want to contact those who have made a representation to discuss comments and concerns prior to concluding the formal examination.

All representations will be considered by the Planning Inspector as part of the examination of the plan. The purpose of the examination is to enable the inspector to decide whether the plan is 'sound'. For a plan to be sound, it must be:

- Positively prepared – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development
- Justified – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence
- Effective – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities
- Consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

The above points should be considered when making a representation.

Appendix 4 - Public speaking procedure at meetings of the planning committee

Herefordshire Council is committed to public involvement in the planning process. As part of this commitment there is a scheme of public speaking for applications that are being determined at a meeting of the Planning Committee. There are already extensive consultation and neighbour notification procedures for applications, but the ability to speak at the committee meeting enables an even wider opportunity for the applicant/supporters, objectors and the Parish/Town Council, to put forward their views directly to the Members of the Committee, before the decision is made.

How does the scheme work?

This scheme only operates for planning applications that for various reasons are the subject of a report to the Planning Committee. In order to have the opportunity to speak you will have:

- Made an application being the applicant or agent, or
- Made your views known as the Parish/Town Council
- Made your views known as a member of the public on an application within the period specified for receipt of representations.

The right to speak applies equally to those who are objectors or supporters or their representatives.

If the application is to be considered by the Committee you will be notified in writing and advised of the procedure for registering your wish to speak. Time will be allowed for speaking after the Chairman of the meeting calls the item and officers have given their presentation. After speaking is completed Members will normally debate the merits of the application and make a decision. In the case of some applications, Members may decide to defer determination. In these instances only those who registered to speak at the first meeting will be permitted to do so when the deferred item is considered at a subsequent meeting.

What is the registration period?

The letter to you will set out the date and time of the meeting that will consider the application(s) you are interested in. In order to register your wish to speak you must contact Committee Services no later than 48 hours before the start of the meeting by telephone, fax or e-mail. The telephone/fax number and e-mail address will be set out on the letter.

Please be prepared to give details of a telephone number and times when you can be contacted to the Committee Services Officer. Where more than one person registers to speak for or against a proposal, speakers will be encouraged to share the time allotted. Where no agreement is reached the Committee Services Officer will allot the time to the first person to register. If you have any special needs, please advise the Committee Services Officer on registration.

Where and when are meetings held?

Normally meetings are held at The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square Hereford HR1 2HX at the time stated on your letter. If an alternative venue is chosen then you will be given notice.

At the meeting

If you have registered to speak you are asked to arrive at the Council Chamber 30 minutes before the meeting starts. Committee Services Officers will be in attendance to advise on seating and to answer any other queries that concern you.

Order of speaking and time allotted

The order of speaking will be:

1. Parish/Town Council or appointed representative(s) - 3 minutes in total
2. Objectors - 3 minutes in total
3. Applicant/Agent/Supporters - 3 minutes in total

Please note that in each case there is just one 3 minute slot per category. Speakers are welcome to share a 3 minute slot. In exceptional circumstances the Chairman has discretion to allow a longer period for speaking.

Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off at the meeting and note that the following are not permitted: Visual aids such as plans or photographs, the circulation of material at the meeting, the taking of photographs, and the use of voice recording equipment

What can I say?

Your comments should be limited to relevant planning issues already raised in your representation such as:

- planning policies, including those in the relevant Development Plan; (These can be viewed on the Council's website – www.herefordshire.gov.uk or, at Hereford Customer Services, Franklin House, Commercial Road, Hereford, HR1 2BB)
- appearance and character of the development
- traffic generation, highway safety and parking
- overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy
- noise disturbance or other loss of amenities
- layout and density of buildings

You should avoid matters that cannot be considered by Committee such as:

- boundary disputes, covenants or other property rights
- personal remarks (i.e. the applicant's motives)

You may not ask questions of others at the meeting, nor, other than for clarification, will the Chairman ask you questions.

Once you have spoken you will take no further part in the meeting.

Important information

It is advisable to contact the planning application Case Officer a few days before the meeting to confirm the application is still to be considered. Applications are sometimes withdrawn at short notice. You do not have to attend a meeting since the points you have raised will be summarised in the report. The Committee Agenda is available for public inspection at least 5 working days before the meeting. You should note that the Committee does not always agree with the recommendation of the Case Officer.

Committee Services can be contacted on:

Telephone No: 01432 260239

E-mail address: Publicspeaking@herefordshire.gov.uk

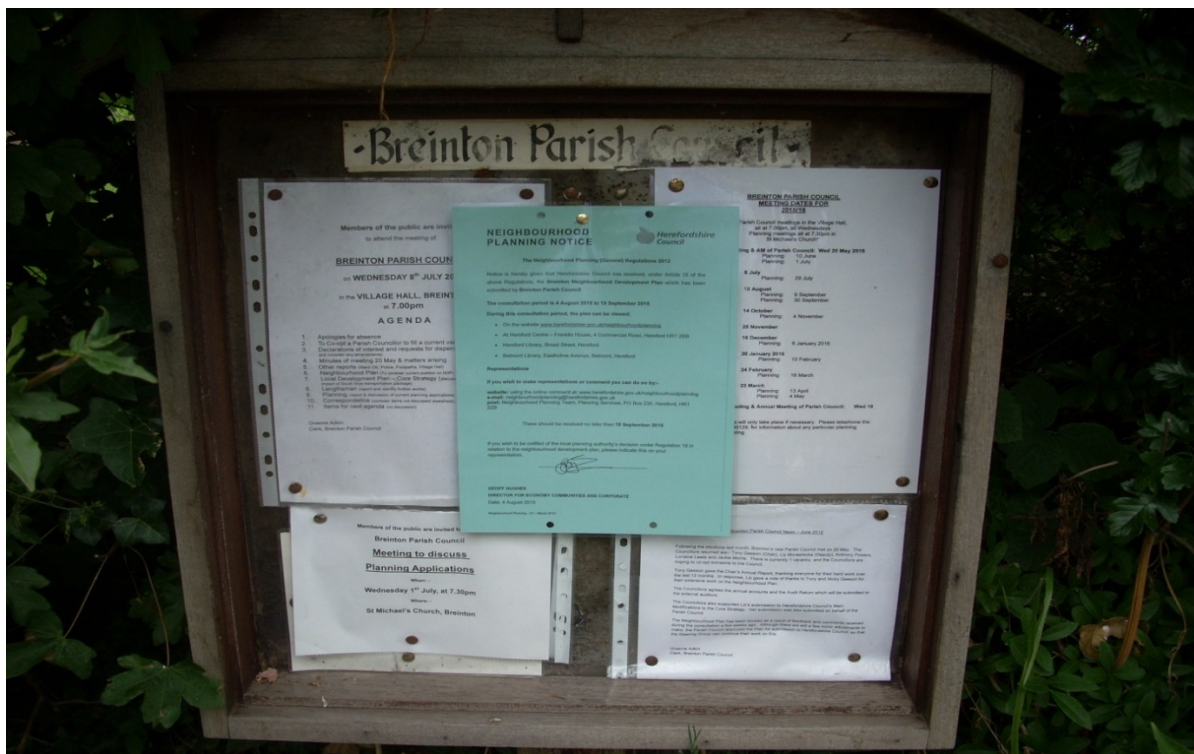
Location of the Meeting The Shirehall, St Peter's Square, Hereford HR1 2HX

Appendix 5 – Planning notices

Planning application notice



Neighbourhood planning notice



Appendix 6 – Useful information

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied.

www.gov.uk

The Localism Act 2011, introduced in order to shift power away from central government and towards local authorities and neighbourhood communities in the planning decision making process.

www.gov.uk

This guide outlines how planners can better understand the important role that planning can play in supporting the Government's commitment to tackling disadvantage by reviving the most deprived neighbourhoods, reducing social exclusion, and supporting society's most vulnerable groups

www.gov.uk

With the aim of an integrated and well-rounded approach, the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement has been informed by a number of Council strategies.

These include: Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan 2013-2015, Economic Development Strategy for Herefordshire 2011-2016, Herefordshire and Shropshire Housing Strategy 2015-2016, Herefordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2016-2031

Further information

www.Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2012

www.Planning Inspectorate

www.planningportal.gov.uk

Appendix 7 – Sources of help and advice

Forward Planning section
Blueschool House
Blueschool Street
HR1 2LX
Tel no 01432 383357
Email: ldf@herefordshire.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Planning
Tel no 01432 260386
Email: neighbourhoodplanning@herefordshire.gov.uk

The Royal Town Planning Institute
41 Botolph Lane, London,
EC3R 8DL
Tel 020 79299494
Email: online@rtpi.org.uk
Website: www.rtpi.org.uk