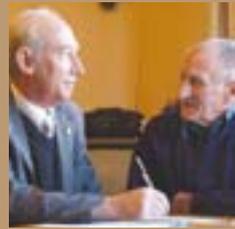


Statement of Community Involvement

Local Development Document



South Gloucestershire Local Development Framework

2008

***Lists of acronyms/abbreviations
commonly used***

<i>SGC</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire Council</i>
<i>AMR</i>	<i>Annual Monitoring Report</i>
<i>DPD</i>	<i>Development Plan Document</i>
<i>LDD</i>	<i>Local Development Document</i>
<i>LDS</i>	<i>Local Development Scheme</i>
<i>PPG</i>	<i>Planning Policy Guidance note</i>
<i>PPS</i>	<i>Planning Policy Statement</i>
<i>RSS</i>	<i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i>
<i>SA</i>	<i>Sustainability Appraisal</i>
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Statement of Community Involvement</i>
<i>SEA</i>	<i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i>
<i>SGLP</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire Local Plan</i>
<i>SGMWLP</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan</i>
<i>SPD</i>	<i>Supplementary Planning Document</i>
<i>2004 Act</i>	<i>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</i>

A glossary containing definitions of these terms is included at Appendix 1. This Statement of Community Involvement will largely avoid using acronyms and abbreviations, however it may be useful to understand what these acronyms mean as they are often used in the planning system.

Planning shapes the places where people live and work and the country we live in. Good planning ensures that we get the right development, in the right place and at the right time. It makes a positive difference to people's lives and helps to deliver homes, jobs, and better opportunities for all, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and conserving the countryside and open spaces that are vital resources for everyone.

From Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, para. 1. 2005.

In September 2004 the Government introduced a new planning system that required a more structured approach to public involvement and engagement in planning than previous systems.

Future planning policies for South Gloucestershire will be set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West and the South Gloucestershire Local Development Framework. The Local Development Framework will be a portfolio of documents.

The Council is required to set out in a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI for short) how it intends to involve the wider community in the preparation of plans and policy documents and in planning application decisions.

A statement of compliance must be submitted with each plan and policy document that we intend to adopt, to show that it has been prepared in line with the SCI. We also expect that planning applications, depending on their level of complexity, will follow certain standards of public consultation before they are determined. How this will be done, by whom and when, is set out in the SCI.

This SCI explains how everyone can be involved in preparing new development plans and in consulting on planning applications. We embrace the Government's aim of involving local people in planning and already have a good record and experience of using participatory techniques.

We have taken account of the comments that were received during the consultations on both the Draft SCI and the Submission Draft SCI in 2007. These comments have helped to shape the final form and contents of the document. We have also taken account of regulations, national policy, a wide range of published material and our own experience.

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The Local Development Framework

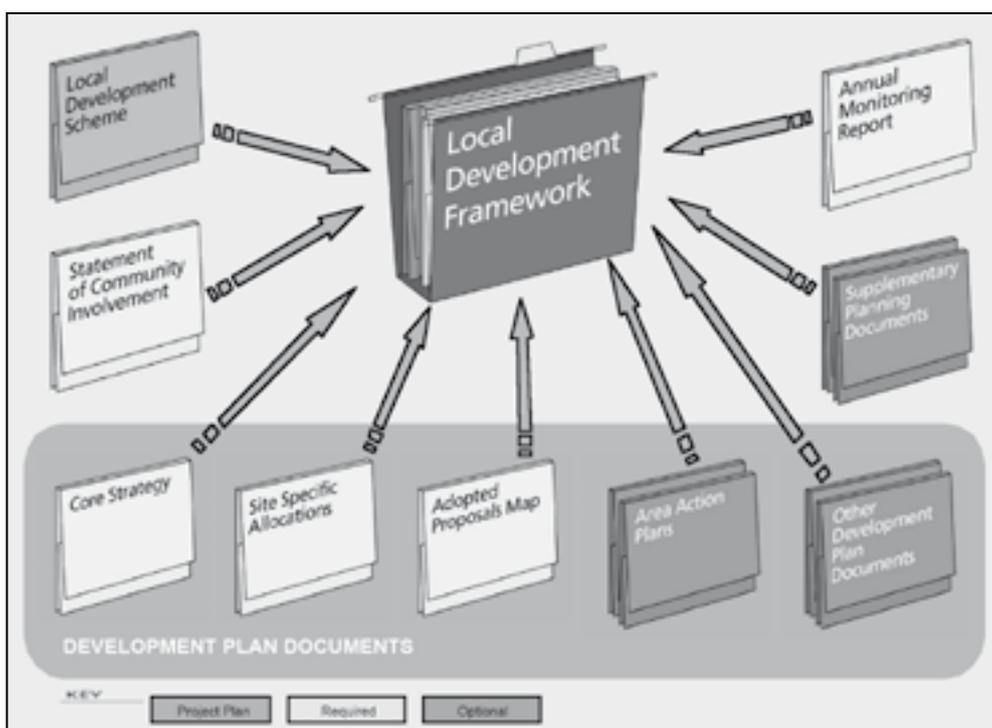
South Gloucestershire Council is currently working on the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), which sets out the overall vision for the future development of the District. This is intended to be adopted in 2011. A Site Specific Allocations DPD will then be produced. The Council is also currently working on a Gypsy and Traveller DPD, which is intended to be adopted in 2010. The Proposals Map will illustrate the land-use/spatial aspects of these documents. More details on these documents can be found at www.southglos.gov.uk/planningpolicy

A new planning system was introduced by the Government in 2004. Under this system, rather than producing a single local plan, local authorities now prepare several planning documents that make up a 'Local Development Framework'. The project plan that sets out the programme for the planning policy documents that the Council will produce over a rolling three-year period is known as the 'Local Development Scheme'.

The Local Development Framework will contain a collection of locally produced documents that set out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land. It will include:

- **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)**
The Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations and Policies, the Adopted Proposals Map and Area Action Plans.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**
SPDs explain in more detail some of the policies in Development Plan Documents.
- **Other LDF documents**
The Local Development Scheme, Annual Monitoring Reports and the Statement of Community Involvement.

More information on the documents that the Council will be producing can be found in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). You can view this document on the Council's website www.southglos.gov.uk or telephone the Spatial Planning Team on **01454 863469** for a copy. Please note that the list of documents and timetables in the LDS can be reviewed on an annual basis when appropriate and necessary.



1 Introduction

- 1.1 The planning system is built around the principle of early community involvement in planning processes. In other words, providing greater opportunity for public discussion and consensus building at the early stages of developing proposals. A local community offers a rich source of knowledge and experience. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will set out a portfolio of community involvement techniques and programmes that will aim to involve the community as early as possible in planning processes. The main objectives of doing this are to:
- Produce better informed planning policies and decisions;
 - Reduce disagreement and conflict;
 - Improve understanding of the scope and limitations of the planning system; and
 - Promote greater involvement of the community in local decision-making.
- 1.2 The main objective of the SCI is to set out a strategy in plain English that aims to ensure that as many people as possible are made aware, as early as possible, of clearly set-out proposals so that they are given the opportunity to comment, have their views taken into account and therefore to influence outcomes. This SCI sets out how the Council will involve local people in the preparation of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents (see Section 3) and in determining planning applications (see Section 4).
- 1.3 The Council views community involvement as a continual learning exercise so that the processes and techniques that we use can be improved and enhanced over time. In order to be truly effective, we view community involvement as needing to be:
- Open
 - Transparent
 - Involving of people
 - Empowering of people
- 1.4 The SCI is a Local Development Document within the overall Local Development Framework (see diagram on page 7). It shows local people:
- how and when they will be involved in the preparation of planning policy documents and in the consideration of planning applications;
 - how consultation will meet their needs and be appropriate to the stage of the planning process to which it relates;
 - how involvement will be as early as possible in the development of proposals;
 - how their involvement will be relevant and continuing;
 - how the Council is innovative and will use experience and best practice to ensure that involvement is effective, transparent and accessible; and
 - how the Council will invite wider participation by involving groups that have traditionally been 'hard to reach'.
- (Taken from Planning Policy Statement 12 - Paragraph 3.4)
- 1.5 Appendices 1 and 7 set out glossaries that give definitions of the more technical terms used in this SCI.

How the community was involved in preparing the SCI

- 1.6 Regulation 25 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires early consultation for all Development Plan Documents and also for the SCI. This regulation sets out that the Local Planning Authority must consult with the following bodies before the draft SCI is submitted:
- (i) the regional planning body (the South West Regional Assembly);
 - (ii) each relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority (Neighbouring Unitary Authorities, County, Town and Parish Councils); and
 - (iii) the Highways Agency.
- 1.7 To comply with Regulation 25, letters were sent to these bodies and other stakeholder organisations in July, October and November 2006. This letter informed the recipients that South Gloucestershire Council was embarking on the production of the SCI and asked for comments on how they felt the Council could best involve the community in the new planning system.
- 1.8 At the same time, an on-line questionnaire using the Council's new iNovem e-consult computer programme was set up to find out, early on, public opinion on the effectiveness of various involvement techniques. The letters also invited recipients to register with the iNovem system and to complete the questionnaire.
- 1.9 A second letter was sent to the same recipients in August 2006, inviting them to attend one of three SCI Workshops that were conducted at Chipping Sodbury, Kingswood and Winterbourne. A total of 41 people attended the workshops. The discussions that took place at the workshops and the results of the iNovem questionnaire survey, together with best practice examples of adopted SCIs from elsewhere in the country and good practice guidance, were used to inform the preparation of the Draft SCI.
- 1.10 Consultation on the Draft SCI ran for six weeks in January and February 2007. The comments received were then used to revise and update the Draft SCI, to form the 'submission' version of the SCI. The Submission Draft SCI was then submitted to the Government in August 2007 and another six week consultation was run on that version in September and October 2007.
- 1.11 61 comments were received on the Submission Draft SCI (20 were either supports or acknowledgements and 41 were objections). The Council then sent these comments to the Planning Inspectorate who appointed an independent Planning Inspector to 'examine' the SCI. The examination of the SCI involved the Inspector assessing whether or not the SCI was 'sound' (or in other words whether or not it was 'good' enough to be adopted by the Council) in relation to the comments that had been received.
- 1.12 The Inspector then issued the Council with his report (known as the 'Inspector's Report') that said he thought the document was sound and should be adopted by the Council. He did however say in the report that the Council had to make some minor changes to the document in order to meet some of the objections made and to make the document clearer.
- 1.13 The Council made the appropriate changes that the Inspector had outlined and adopted the final version (i.e. this version) at the meeting of the Full Council on 21st May 2008.

Help and advice

- 1.14 South West Planning Aid provides free, independent and impartial advice on town planning matters to community groups and individuals who cannot afford professional fees. It is part of the Royal Town Planning Institute, a charity and the professional body for planning. It has paid staff, as well as a strong professional volunteer network.
- 1.15 South West Planning Aid can prepare individuals and communities for their involvement with local authorities and the LDF process (e.g. through advice and training). It also provides help and support on planning applications.
- 1.16 For further details contact their Helpline on **0870 850 9807** if the inquiry relates to a planning application, or **0117 929 7292** if it is about a development plan document. Alternatively you can Email **swco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk** . Visit their Website **www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk** for current information.
- 1.17 Council officers are also available to offer help and advice. Contact details are set out below.

Spatial Planning Team

South Gloucestershire Council
 Thornbury Council Offices
 Castle Street
 Thornbury
 BS35 1HF

Tel: **01454 863469**
 Email: **planningLDF@southglos.gov.uk**

Contact this team for enquiries relating to the Local Development Framework and other planning policy related matters such as the allocation of development sites.

Major Sites Team

South Gloucestershire Council
 Thornbury Council Offices
 Castle Street
 Thornbury
 BS35 1HF

Tel: **01454 863648**
 Email: **majorsites@southglos.gov.uk**

Contact this team for enquiries relating to allocated major development sites (see para 4.21 onwards for information regarding what constitutes a major site).

We have two Development Control teams that deal with all planning applications. The East Team covers the eastern half of South Gloucestershire and the West Team deals with the western half. Please contact these teams if you have an enquiry related to a planning application or enforcement issues:

Development Control West Team

South Gloucestershire Council
 Thornbury Council Offices
 Castle Street
 Thornbury
 BS35 1HF

Tel: **01454 868004**
 Email: **PlanningApps@southglos.gov.uk**

The West Team covers:
Thornbury, Patchway, Filton, Stoke Gifford, Almondsbury, Olveston, Pilning & Severn Beach, Alveston, Oldbury-on-Severn, Rockhampton, Falfield, Cromhall, Tytherington, Rangeworthy, Tortworth, Charfield, Hill, Winterbourne, Frampton Cotterell, Westerleigh, Aust.

Development Control East Team

Civic Centre
 High Street
 Kingswood
 BS1 9TR

Tel: **01454 868004**
 Email: **PlanningApps@southglos.gov.uk**

The East Team covers:
Yate, Chipping Sodbury, Kingswood, Hanham, Oldland, Siston, Bitton, Wick & Abson, Wickwar, Horton, Hawkesbury, Marshfield, Tormarton, Dodington, Acton Turville, Dyrham & Hinton, Cold Ashton, Badminton.

2 The South Gloucestershire context

2.1 The Council's guiding principle is:

By working in partnership, our vision is for everyone who lives and works in South Gloucestershire to fulfil their potential, enjoy an excellent quality of life and support others in their communities whilst protecting the environment.

Taken from South Gloucestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008

In planning terms, this means that we view involvement of the wider community as being essential to creating and sustaining communities that offer residents of and visitors to South Gloucestershire the highest quality of life while at the same time conserving and enhancing the environment.

- 2.2 Public engagement, consultation and decisions on planning policy matters and in handling planning applications are central to partnership working and to sustainable development. The Council has already established ways of working with a wide range of interest groups. When preparing the Local Development Framework the aim is to build on that existing good practice, to make best use of existing communication channels and to develop new ways of working with hard to reach groups.
- 2.3 The 2004 Planning Act sets out enhanced processes of consultation and encourages a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to community involvement. This has several benefits including improved decision making, greater ownership by the local community of policies and plans that will shape the future of the area and speedier decisions, as issues can be resolved at an earlier stage.

Involving the local community

- 2.4 The Regulations for the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (see Appendix 8 for minimum consultation requirements under these regulations) set out the groups that must be consulted during the determination of planning applications and the development of the Local Development Framework. These include stakeholders such as neighbouring Local Authorities, Parish/Town Councils, Government Departments and other groups that represent the interests of various parts of the community.
- 2.5 The 'community' includes many other individuals, groups and organisations that live, work, visit or operate here, including local businesses, developers and landowners, residents' associations, the police, schools, amenity groups and service providers. Different groups will have different knowledge and experience of the planning system and their ability to get involved will vary. Those groups and individuals who are known to the Council and have experience of the planning system are easier to involve than those who do not.
- 2.6 Developers will often be familiar with the planning system, as will those landowners who might have been involved with development or been consulted on proposals. Similarly, service providers, including health trusts, schools, emergency services and transport providers are easily identified and may have the capacity to be involved with local planning matters where appropriate and relevant.

- 2.7 The District has a diverse business base. Many companies will need support to understand the Local Development Framework, how it relates to them and how to get involved. They may prefer to be represented by organisations such as GWE Business West or Chambers of Commerce that are active in this area.
- 2.8 Parish and Town Councils, local societies and associations or specific amenity/ interest groups often represent many thousands of local residents and many varied communities. These will have varying experience of the planning system and different capabilities to get involved, as they are largely voluntary organisations.
- 2.9 South Gloucestershire Council aims to provide high quality services and information. We have a Customer Care Charter that sets out the standards we aim to meet. This is available on our website at www.southglos.gov.uk. In respect of responding to requests and queries from members of the public we operate in accord with this Charter unless a more specific target applies for an individual service, for example in the case of a planning application or representation made to a Local Development Document where there can be separate rules for how we respond (see Sections 3 and 4 of the SCI).

Hard to reach groups

- 2.10 Residents such as those in more isolated and rural areas, Gypsies and Travellers, young people, disabled people and ethnic minorities may find it harder to get involved and may require extra support. This will take the form of:
- ensuring documents are as clear and concise as possible;
 - providing a translation service of documents if requested;
 - making sure meetings are held at times and places convenient and accessible to as many people as possible;
 - for children and young people, consulting with local schools and colleges, the University of the West of England, Filton College and the South Gloucestershire Youth Forum;
 - for older people, consulting with the South Gloucestershire Senior Citizens Forum and similar organisations;
 - meeting the needs of disabled people, e.g. making a portable hearing loop available at all meetings, workshops, etc, where required;
 - ensuring that while the use of computer technology for consultation is increased and consolidated where appropriate, paper copies of documents and information are still easily available when needed;
 - giving access to 'Language Line' (see para. 2.14 below).
- 2.11 Wherever possible, harder to reach groups will be involved through existing channels, such as the Council's Corporate Equalities Group. This 'community network' will be encouraged to spread information and knowledge of the planning system.

- 2.12 The Council will ensure that hard to reach groups (for example the Gypsy/Traveller community) are consulted in a direct and accessible manner at appropriate stages in the planning process so that their needs are identified and understood.
- 2.13 The Council recognises that while some groups may actually be 'hard to reach', many groups are in fact not hard to reach but 'hard to engage' in planning matters. The challenge this presents to the Council is that planning issues must be presented as being accessible, clear, relevant and interesting in order to encourage people to become involved.
- 2.14 For those members of the community whose first language is not English, the Council subscribes to a service known as 'Language Line'. This is an instant telephone service that will connect Council officers with an interpreter immediately to allow the officer to communicate with a member of the public. There is no need to book the service and it can be used for face to face or telephone interactions. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- 2.15 The Council will ensure that its consultation and involvement procedures for the production of documents in the Local Development Framework comply with the Race Relations Act 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Council Officer and Member involvement

- 2.16 As well as consulting with the wider community, the Council's own officers are also consulted on planning matters. The views of officers throughout the Council with relevant expertise will be sought on initial drafts of Local Development Framework documents. Section 4 briefly sets out how Council officers are involved in planning applications. Members are also a valuable resource. They are ambassadors for the Council, channels of communication to and advocates for local communities and as such have vital roles to play in the production of the Local Development Framework and in the determination of planning applications. Cabinet members will be involved early when producing documents.
- 2.17 In planning new developments where there is no existing community to work with, the views of existing neighbouring residents, Parish or Town Councils and other statutory and non-statutory groups can be sought. We are committed to the creation of strong communities and aim to ensure that the interests of future residents are taken into account in planning new developments. Professional officers including planners and those in other service departments and elected members are well placed to do this from previous experience and researching best practice found elsewhere.

3 How we will consult on Development Plans

- 3.1 In this chapter we explain the Local Development Framework and how we will involve the local community and statutory consultees during its preparation. We also describe how the results of community consultation will be used and how Sustainability Appraisals will be conducted.
- 3.2 Development Plan Documents are statutory plans setting out policies and proposals for the development and use of land. There will be differing arrangements for consultation at each of the main production stages and these are summarised below.
- 3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents 'amplify' policies that are set out in Development Plan Documents. This means that they do not actually set out policies, instead, where necessary, they help to explain in more detail specific parts of Development Plan Documents. The current set of Supplementary Planning Documents and those under production can be viewed on the Council's website at **www.southglos.gov.uk/planningpolicy**
- 3.4 When raising awareness and advertising consultation periods on both Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents, we will explain what is at stake at each stage and how the community can make a difference and have a say. This will be clear and in plain English.
- 3.5 It is recognised that the statutory six week consultation period allowed under planning regulations can be difficult to meet for some. As a general principle therefore, we will give as much notice as possible of forthcoming consultation periods so that members of the community may plan accordingly. We will also try, but cannot guarantee, to avoid consultation periods falling during the main substantial public holidays, i.e. Easter, the summer holiday period or Christmas.
- Specific consultation bodies and other consultees**
- 3.6 The organisations listed at Appendix 2 will be engaged and consulted with as relevant to each individual Development Plan Document and Supplementary Planning Document. Usually, the broader the range of issues contained in a document, the more consultees will be involved. Each organisation will be written to and/or emailed and invited to make representations at relevant stages of the Development Plan Document process. The list given in Appendix 2 is indicative of the types of organisations that the Council will seek to involve at appropriate stages - it is not a complete or exhaustive list.
- 3.7 Officers will use judgement to write to those that they feel would be interested in and/or affected by the Development Plan Document or Supplementary Planning Document. Those individuals that have requested to be kept informed will also be informed.
- 3.8 The Council maintains an extensive database of voluntary organisations and community groups based in and around the area. Relevant groups will be written to at each key consultation stage and advised of the procedure for making representations. If requested, individual meetings with local interest groups will be arranged where time and resources permit. If you would like to be added to the Council's consultation database so that you are kept informed of the progress of the Local Development Framework, then you can either telephone **01454 863469** or write to:

Spatial Planning Team

South Gloucestershire Council
 Thornbury Council Offices
 Castle Street
 Thornbury
 BS35 1HF

Or email **planningLDF@southglos.gov.uk**

General publicity on Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.9 The Council's website will be a key source of information in this regard and will be kept up to date. All documentation that can be made available electronically will be put online with representations being able to be made via email and the website in addition to posting comments.
- 3.10 In preparing Supplementary Planning Documents and Development Plan Documents the Council will take all representations received into consideration and will perform the following tasks -
- Copies will be sent to those organisations considered likely to have an interest (e.g. Environment Agency, Home Builders Federation, etc) from those listed in Appendix 2.
 - The Document, together with any supporting documentation, will be made available for inspection at South Gloucestershire Council Offices and local libraries (and the mobile library where appropriate).
 - Publish the Document and its supporting documentation on the Council's website.
 - Send a copy to the Government Office for the South West.
 - Publicity or a press notice (depending on the stage of preparation) in a local paper with details of when and where the documents can be inspected. We will ensure that adequate publicity is given to the documents.
 - Any individual or organisation that has asked to be kept informed of the progress of the Development Plan Document/ Supplementary Planning Document will be notified of the publication of draft documents and of adoption.

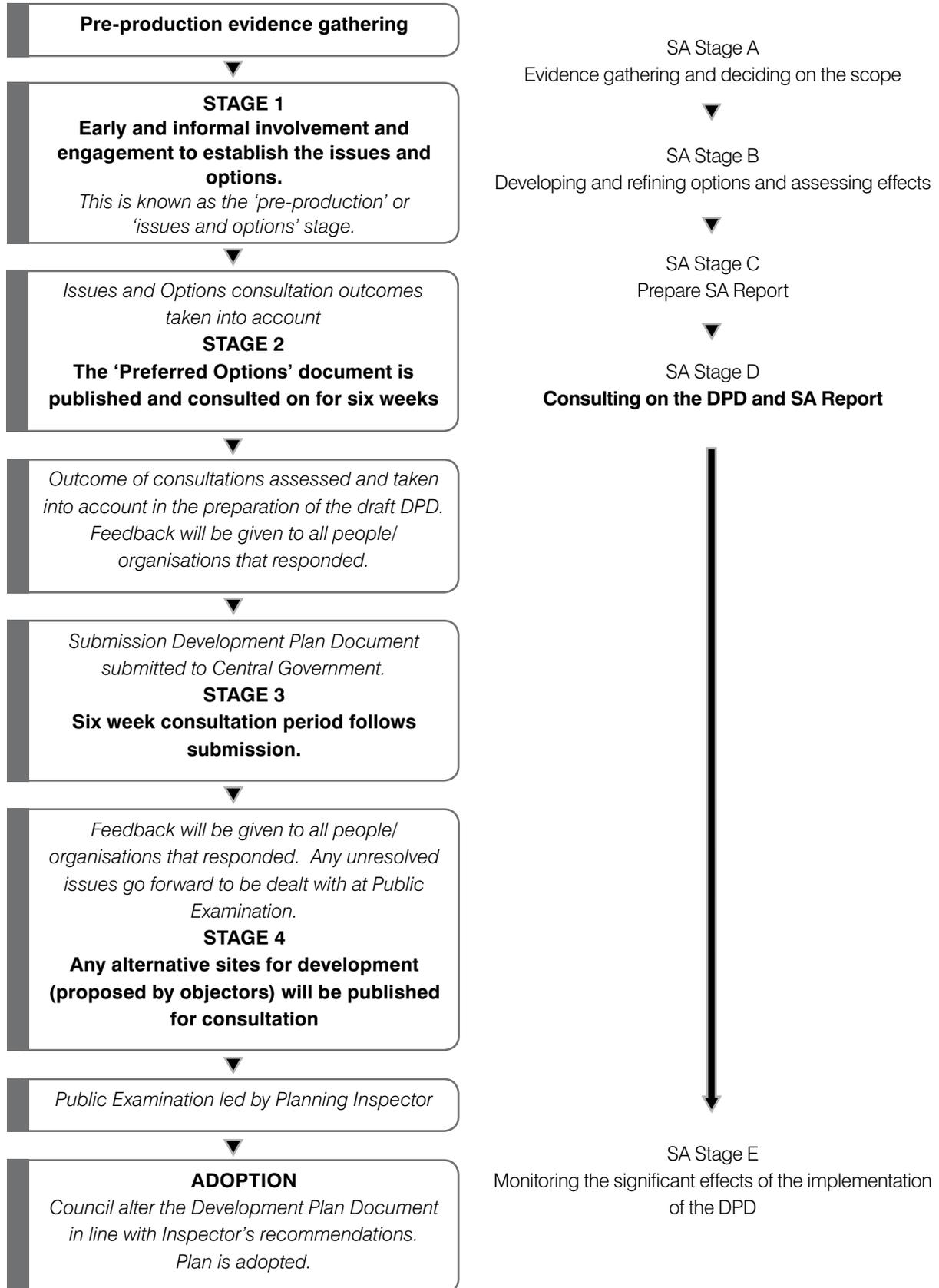
Key steps in producing Development Plan Documents

- 3.11 There are four broad stages of community involvement in the production of Development Plan Documents. The community and stakeholders will be involved in each stage to ensure the documents are effective and reflect community priorities.
- 3.12 Figure 1 summarises the steps involved in preparing Development Plan Documents, with a more detailed written explanation following it. The table also shows how the broad stages of Sustainability Appraisal fit into the process. Sustainability Appraisal is explained in more detail at para 3.25.

Figure 1

SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS OF PREPARING DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS, INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)

(The STAGE numbers indicate the main stages of community involvement)



Stage 1. Issues and Options

3.13 This is the first community involvement stage and follows evidence gathering. Evidence gathering is important as all planning documents should be founded on a clear understanding of the current and long-term economic, social and environmental needs of South Gloucestershire. This involves gathering accurate data that illustrates the characteristics of South Gloucestershire and the issues it faces, such as housing needs studies, population statistics, Parish Plans, biodiversity counts and retail and economic surveys. This data collection is known as the 'evidence base' or sometimes 'baseline data'. The Council will endeavour to ensure that this data is publicly available during consultation periods.

3.14 Once the evidence base has been developed, the Council will seek input from the community and stakeholders on the issues that the Development Plan Document needs to address and the options which are available to deal with those issues. There will be widespread public consultation on the issues and options identified.

Stage 2. Preferred Options

3.15 Once all comments have been analysed by officers, the Council will prepare and publish a Preferred Options Document. This will set out the preferred option(s), together with a summary of the alternatives that were also considered. The document will provide detailed yet concise information including maps, diagrams and illustrations. It will be consulted on for six weeks with the community and statutory bodies to check that suggested options are practical and realistic. At the same time the Sustainability Appraisal Report setting out the sustainability impacts of the Preferred Options Document will also be put out to consultation.

3.16 A report will be produced outlining all representations received during these formal consultation periods as well as setting out the Council's response. This will make clear the link between responses and Council decisions or actions. This report will be published and made available on our website and at Council offices. Individual representations will also be available for inspection at our Thornbury (Castle Street) offices.

Stage 3. Submission

3.17 All representations will be considered before producing a final version of the Development Plan Document which is called the Submission document. This will contain finalised policies and proposals. It will be submitted to the Secretary of State and published for formal consultation for six weeks. A further document describing how the Development Plan Document has taken into account representations on the preferred options, and another outlining alternative options put forward by others will also be published on the website and made available for inspection at our main offices. Any representations made during the formal consultation period will be sent to and considered by the Secretary of State, published and made available in the same way as before.

Stage 4. Alternative Sites and Examination

3.18 If members of the community suggest any alternative sites for development during the submission document consultation period then these must also go out to consultation before the examination begins. However it is hoped that most sites will have been identified and evaluated as part of ongoing stakeholder participation and engagement through the previous stages.

3.19 A Planning Inspector will then be appointed by the Government to consider whether the Submission Development Plan Document is effective and realistic at a public examination. The Inspector will

then write a report that will set out how the Development Plan Document must be changed (if at all). The Inspector's Report will be binding, meaning that the Council must act on its recommendations, and it must be available for public inspection.

Adoption

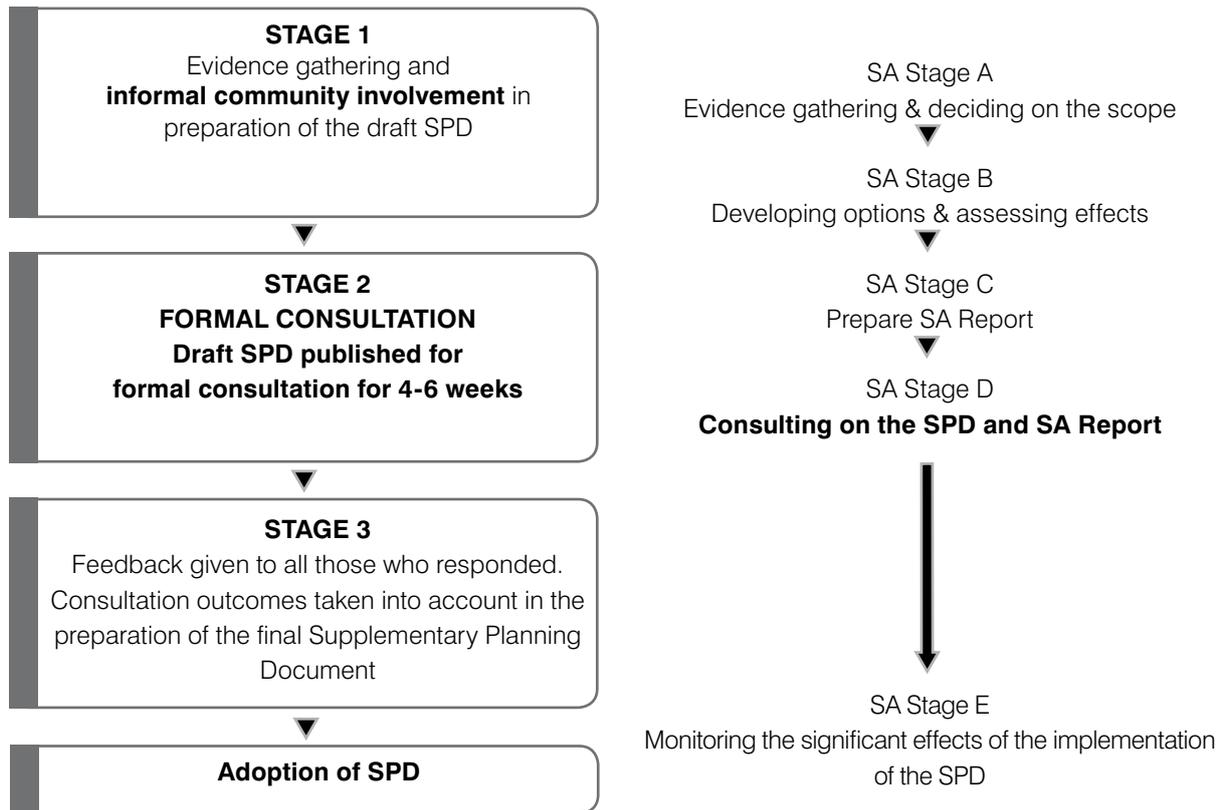
3.20 Following the examination the agreed document, together with its final Sustainability Appraisal Report, will be published. This will be advertised and made available at Council offices, South Gloucestershire libraries and will be put on the website www.southglos.gov.uk Those people who had requested that they be informed of the adoption as well as those that commented will be notified by letter/email.

Key steps in producing Supplementary Planning Documents

3.21 Some of the key steps that exist for the production of Development Plan Documents also exist for Supplementary Planning Documents. However with Supplementary Planning Documents there are fewer stages of production and most notably there is no examination:

Figure 2

PROCESS SUMMARY FOR PREPARING AND CONSULTING ON SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SPD), INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA) PROCESS
(bold type shows main stages of community participation)



Stage 1. Pre-Production (evidence gathering) and informal community involvement

3.22 As for Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents should be founded on a clear understanding of the needs of South Gloucestershire and the potential users of the document. Input may be sought from particular bodies that are relevant to the subject matter of the Supplementary Planning Document prior to preparing the initial draft in Stage 2.

Stage 2. Production of draft and consultation

3.23 The Council will use the information gathered in Stage 1 to produce a draft Supplementary Planning Document that will be put out to formal consultation for between four and six weeks, along with the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

Stage 3. Production of final Supplementary Planning Document and adoption

3.24 The Council will use the comments received during the consultation to make any required changes to the document. The document will then be adopted and feedback will be given to all those who responded as well as those who requested to be kept informed of the outcome and copies will be sent to appropriate organisations.

Consultation on Sustainability Appraisals

3.25 All Supplementary Planning Documents and Development Plan Documents should be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of planning policy. Sustainability Appraisal is an ongoing process that sets out the likely effects of a plan or policy

and the extent to which its implementation will achieve social, environmental and economic objectives. Put simply, it assesses how environmentally, economically and socially friendly a plan or policy is.

- 3.26 The requirement for Sustainability Appraisal came from the requirements of the European 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' Directive 2001/42/EC, which seeks to assess plans to see specifically how they will affect the environment. Strategic Environmental Assessment is a distinct requirement from Sustainability Appraisal, although both processes are combined into a single Sustainability Appraisal process for the purposes of producing Local Development Framework documents.
- 3.27 In developing the Sustainability Appraisal for each policy document the statutory consultees and other relevant stakeholders will be consulted on the 'scope' of the Sustainability Appraisal. This will be done by producing a 'Scoping Report' that will be circulated to interested parties and statutory consultees. A Scoping Report sets out the main issues and how the Sustainability Appraisal will be carried out.
- 3.28 There are three statutory consultees that, as a minimum, the Scoping Report must be circulated to for comment. These are:
- Natural England (formerly English Nature and the Countryside Agency);
 - the Environment Agency; and
 - English Heritage
- 3.29 South Gloucestershire Council produced its Scoping Report in 2007 and early 2008. It was subject to consultation with statutory consultees as well as a wide range of local stakeholders, including all members of the local strategic partnership. After consultation the Scoping Report was updated to reflect the comments received and the Council then approved it in March

2008. South Gloucestershire's Scoping Report acts as the Scoping Report for all documents in the Local Development Framework and can be found on the Council's website at www.southglos.gov.uk/planningpolicy

- 3.30 Following consultation on the Scoping Report, the effects of the Development Plan Document/Supplementary Planning Document will be appraised and followed by wider consultation on a final Sustainability Appraisal Report with statutory consultees, other stakeholders and the general public (although where appropriate an 'Initial SA Report' will be published at the 'Issues and Options' stage of the Development Plan Document). This will be carried out at the same stage as the consultation on the Preferred Options for the Development Plan Document, or at the same time as the draft Supplementary Planning Document. Where necessary, an appraisal will then be carried out of any significant changes made as a result of public participation, including possible alternative site proposals before the Development Plan Document and Sustainability Appraisal Report are submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
- 3.31 The Council recognises that Sustainability Appraisal can be a complex process that is sometimes difficult to understand. Officers from the Spatial Planning Team (contact details on page 10) are on hand to explain the process in more detail if needed.

Methods of involving and engaging

- 3.32 There are many ways that people can be involved and engaged in the planning system. Some methods may be more appropriate than others at certain times in the planning process, depending on who is involved or which stage in the process has been reached.
- 3.33 The tables that follow summarise examples of consultation/involvement methods that could be employed at each document production stage, and which groups will be involved at each stage. Other methods could also be used. Appendix 3 adds to this by setting out in greater detail the use and effectiveness of each of these methods. Appendix 4 then lists how these techniques will be used to target different sections of the community. A specific engagement strategy will be provided with each Local Development Document being prepared that will draw from the various techniques that these tables and appendices set out.
- 3.34 Not all sections of the community will want to be involved in the same way. How people wish to be involved may depend on the issues at stake or the stage in the planning process that has been reached. There may be other methods not listed here that could be used and we would like to hear any other ideas for effective communication (for contact details see page 10).

Table 1

Likely methods used and groups involved at each Development Plan Document involvement stage

Involvement Stage (as referred to in figure 1 on page 16)	Example of likely consultation/involvement methods	Which type of groups can expect to be involved
<p>STAGE 1 Early and informal involvement and engagement to establish the issues and options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questionnaires ● Letters/email ● Media ● Focus groups ● Workshops ● Council newsletters ● Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Representative organisations/ interest groups who can contribute to the identification of issues and options ● Elected members & Parish/Town Councils. ● Statutory stakeholders, e.g. GOSW, Highways Agency, Environment Agency, etc ● General public ● LDF stakeholder contacts ● People/organisations who have requested to be kept informed
<p>STAGE 2 Preferred Options document published and consulted on for 6 weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council newsletters ● Media ● Website ● Focus groups/stakeholder meetings ● Letters/email ● Exhibitions ● Draft document (if appropriate) 	<p>As above, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relevant developers and planning consultants with clients with local land interests
<p>STAGE 3 6 week consultation period on the Submission DPD DPD then submitted after the Council has made appropriate alterations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft document available on website, at one-stop shops and libraries ● Letters/email ● Council newsletter ● Media 	<p>As above at stage 1</p>
<p>STAGE 4 Alternative sites for development published for consultation before examination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Letters/email ● Media ● Information/document available on website, one-stop shops and libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parish and Town Councils ● Local interest and community groups ● Neighbouring and local residents ● Developers and agents

Table 2

Likely methods used and groups involved at each Supplementary Planning Document involvement stage

<p>Involvement stage (as referred to in figure 2 on page 18)</p>	<p>Example of likely consultation/involvement methods</p>	<p>Which type of groups can expect to be involved</p>
<p>STAGE 1 Informal community involvement in preparation of Draft SPD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus Groups ● Letters ● Website ● Workshops ● Questionnaires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific consultees ● All site specific or district-wide groups and stakeholders as appropriate to the particular SPD
<p>STAGE 2 Consultation on Draft SPD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Letters/email ● Council newsletter ● Media ● Draft document available on website, at one-stop shops and libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific consultees ● All site specific or district-wide groups and stakeholders as appropriate to the particular SPD ● Statutory stakeholder groups

Using the results of community involvement and feeding back

- 3.35 Responses made during consultation stages will be considered and the results used to inform decisions and/or shape the documents, alongside government legislation, regulations and national policy. Reports will be prepared at the end of statutory consultation periods on how views have been considered and documents changed in light of community involvement. These will summarise the representations received, officer comments with recommended changes and reasons for these.
- 3.36 Not everyone will support proposals emerging in the Local Development Framework, or have their views accepted by the Council. Some issues cannot be influenced, as there may be national or regional policies that the Local Development Framework must keep to. For other matters there may be scope to take on board changes and amendments that are suggested by the community. We are committed to giving people the opportunity to make their views known and to have them considered. This information will be used to inform decisions alongside other comments we receive, government guidance and/or policies and our evidence base. By involving people from the outset we hope to balance competing needs and reach a consensus. We will be clear from the outset of all community involvement activities, about their scope and possible influence, to avoid raising unrealistic expectations.
- 3.37 We aim to provide feedback on all consultation exercises. Letters/emails of acknowledgement to respondents at the end of statutory consultation periods will be sent out. This will include a summary of how the information will be used and the next steps in the process. We will also advise by letter/email respondents, statutory bodies and anyone who has asked to be notified, when Submission Documents are sent to the Secretary of State, the publication of an Inspector's Report and adoption of the Document. All Submission documents will be accompanied by a 'Statement of Compliance', which will highlight how the Statement of Community Involvement has been followed, the main issues raised by the consultations undertaken and how these have been addressed in the Document.
- 3.38 These reports on the results of consultation will be made available on the Council's website www.southglos.gov.uk and in paper copy at the Council offices, the One-Stop Shops at Yate, Thornbury and Kingswood and at all South Gloucestershire libraries (including the mobile library).
- 3.39 For more information on any of the processes described in this section, please contact the Spatial Planning Team (contact details are set out at para. 1.17).

4 How we will consult on Planning Applications

4.1 Finding out what the community thinks about new development is a fundamental part of our planning service. South Gloucestershire Council is extremely proactive in this regard and does more than just the minimum requirements. Our policy is to ensure every planning application is supported with a level of publicity and consultation that is appropriate to the size and nature of the proposal. If you are unsure as to whether you need planning permission, advice can be obtained from the Council's Planning Contact Centre on **01454 868004** or from the Council's website at **www.southglos.gov.uk/planning**. This section sets out our approach and processes for involving the local community, developers and statutory bodies in consultation on planning applications. Further information on planning application consultation can be found in Appendices 5, 6 and 7.

Our overall approach and service values

4.2 Publicising and consulting on planning applications clearly and in plain English is a key function of the Council's planning service. Consultation allows better understanding of local issues, views and aspirations. It also plays a key role in influencing outcomes and decisions. However, we have to recognise it is not possible to satisfy everyone and achieve consensus all of the time. Nonetheless, as a Council, we feel it is important that people have an opportunity to know what is happening and how decisions on planning applications are being made, even when sometimes others disagree with the decisions of the Council, or those that others have made.

How we publicise and involve people in planning decisions

4.3 The Government has set out statutory requirements that we have to follow. As a Council we undertake more than these statutory minimum requirements.

We have an extensive system for notifying and consulting people that involves web-based techniques alongside more traditional methods. The range of methods we use for all applications is as follows:

- we post a site notice on all sites for Major, Listed Building and Conservation Area applications. We send a notice to all other applicants for them to display on their site themselves;

These are set out in Article 8 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order and Sections 67 and 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- we notify neighbours by letter giving them 21 days in which to comment. Letters tell people the time they have to reply, the officer handling the application and how they can inspect the plans. However, bodies such as Natural England will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation for applications for development potentially affecting a SSSI;
- details of all planning applications are available at the Council's three One-Stop Shops at Thornbury, Yate and Kingswood;
- customer enquiries on planning applications can be made by phoning our Development Services Contact Centre on **01454 868004**;
- details of all planning applications, including the application forms, drawings and any supporting statements are available to view on the Council's website at **www.southglos.gov.uk**. The website also includes an on-line form to allow easy submission of any comments about an application. Details about how to access the Council's website are included in all correspondence we send to people

about planning applications;

- some applications (listed building, conservation area consents and certain types of major applications) legally require newspaper publicity. These will appear weekly in the statutory notices section of the Bristol Evening Post which has full coverage within South Gloucestershire;
- elected district Councillors are notified of all applications. Members of the public are able to contact their local Councillor to discuss planning applications;
- Parish and Town Councils are consulted on all planning applications in their areas. Their views are taken into account alongside other comments made and planning policies before a decision is taken;
- depending on the type and location of the application we are required by law to consult with a range of statutory and non-statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency and Highways Agency;
- professional advice is also sought from teams and departments within the Council who have expertise in landscape design, ecology, trees (arboriculture), environmental protection (noise, pollution, drainage, licensing), transport, urban design, planning policy and legal matters. Where necessary external advice is sought, for example, from/on land contamination, aviation, agricultural and equestrian issues, viability issues, structural engineers and barristers/QCs;
- once a planning application has been decided, the full text of the officer's report and the decision notice, including reasons for approval or refusal, are also published on our website. The report will always summarise any comments received and provide the officer's assessment.

The value of pre-application discussions

- 4.4 The Council offers pre-application advice services to those thinking about submitting a planning application but who want to get an idea of the suitability of their scheme before they actually do submit the application. The benefit of this is that people can get an idea of the likely requirements of their scheme, such as for design and detailing, at an early stage in order to avoid money being spent by applicants on deficient applications.
- 4.5 The South Gloucestershire Local Plan provides the policy framework that sets out expectations for developments and is supplemented by a range of Supplementary Planning Documents and guidance that are available on the Council's website at **www.southglos.gov.uk/planningpolicy**
- 4.6 Prospective applicants can make an appointment with a planning officer to discuss their proposals or the 'Pre-Application Enquiry Advice Form' (available on the Council's website) can be completed and returned to the Council, to which a response will be made.
- 4.7 A charge is made for pre-application advice relating to major development which is defined as follows:
- 10 or more dwelling houses, or the site is 0.5 hectare or more in area, or;
 - the provision of a building or buildings where the floorspace will be 1000 sq metres or more, or;
 - the development will be on a site of 1 hectare or more in area
- 4.8 A list of the current charges can be found at **www.southglos.gov.uk/planning**. All other pre-application advice is given without charge.
- 4.9 For significantly major sites, please refer to page 27 for preferred pre-application processes.

4.10 For further advice please refer to the Council's website at **www.southglos.gov.uk/planning** or contact the planning contact centre on **01454 868004**.

Use of technology

4.11 The use of websites, email and the electronic storage and exchange of information is a part of modern day life for many people. Over the last few years the Council has developed its Development Services website to offer a wide choice of information and advice to people who prefer and expect to receive and handle information via websites and by e-mail. Over time the Council will aim to place more emphasis on electronic consultation. Without having to visit Council offices, users of the planning service can now:

- view all correspondence relating to all applications and weekly lists of new applications;
- choose to comment on-line, as well as the ability to submit and pay for applications on-line;
- submit and track their applications on-line;
- use the Council's 'Local Connection' website facility to find out about planning applications in their area - **www.southglos.gov.uk/planning**
- search our website for application details and correspondence by street name, post code or reference number, or by searching the weekly or monthly list of applications, making it easy to see which applications might affect them;
- view planning appeal weekly lists.

4.12 However, while websites and email provide people with more choice to contact the Council at times and ways that suit them, we know this does not always suit everyone. The Council is keen to promote

the use of its website for handling planning applications. However, this will not be to the disadvantage or exclusion of people and organisations that either do not have access to the internet or prefer to use more traditional methods and techniques.

4.13 As part of the Council's wider Information and Computer Technology strategy, we are intending to move to consulting all Parish and Town Councils (who receive details of all planning applications in their respective areas) by email. Assuming this is broadly accepted, this will help improve the level of service we can offer to them. A support package is available to assist Parish and Town Councils with this transition and has already commenced with support being given by the Council for new computer hardware for Town and Parish Council use. Any Parish and Town Council that does not want to receive planning application details in this way can still choose to receive hard copies but a charge may have to be made to cover production costs.

How is a planning application determined and decisions made?

4.14 Depending on the type of application and level of comments made, planning applications will be decided either under what is known as 'delegated powers' (where the power to determine specified applications has been delegated by the Council to the Planning Department's Director), or by elected Councillors at an Area Committee meeting. The rules that set out which applications are and are not delegated can be found in the Council's Constitution (part 3, section 4, sub-section C) which is available on the Council's website or on request.

4.15 The majority (around 90%) of applications are handled under delegated powers. This involves the case officer preparing a short report, which is scrutinised and authorised by the Team Leader or their deputy. The Council's elected members determine all other applications, although every Council

member does have the opportunity to remove delegated powers from particular applications if they so wish.

- 4.16 For all applications, the case officer prepares a report summarising the consultation responses and other issues that are all taken into consideration when determining the application.

Commenting on planning applications

- 4.17 You don't have to be a developer or an identified statutory consultee to make comments on a planning application. While certain bodies and organisations will make comments in accordance with their public service duties - for example Parish and Town Councils, in terms of representing local communities and the Environment Agency, in respect of flooding and flood risk - anyone is entitled to make comments.
- 4.18 People can also request to speak at the Planning Committee meeting at which a planning application will be discussed. Development Services has published further advice about speaking at a planning committee and how to make sure comments cover valid planning grounds. These are available on request and can also be downloaded from our website.
- 4.19 The Council has established procedures for handling amendments to applications, balancing the need to take decisions within the national guidelines for determining applications and allowing applicants a reasonable opportunity to amend their schemes. Where pre-application advice has been sought and given, but the application is submitted contrary to that advice or without significant amendment to reflect the advice, then no amendments will be sought during the determination of the submitted application. Where an application is submitted which is clearly in conflict with policies this will be refused without negotiation. Where an application is submitted which could be made

acceptable with amendment, if there is sufficient time to secure an amendment, re-consult and determine the application, the applicant will be given 10 days to submit revised plans. If there is insufficient time the applicant will be invited to withdraw the application.

- 4.20 Appendices 5 and 6 provide a summary of the consultation methods for involving people in planning applications. This expands on the procedures set out in the paragraphs above.

Pre-application engagement for major development sites

- 4.21 The Council consults widely for every planning application received but recognises that some proposals because of their size, nature, complexity or likely impact will benefit from early engagement well before an application is submitted.
- 4.22 The Council has developed a managed 'Concept Statement' process to guide the development of proposals for major development sites. This process was originally adopted in 2003 and, based on operational experience, was refined in July 2006 and again with publication of the Draft and Submission Draft SCIs in 2007.
- 4.23 Development sites are grouped into two bands; 'large sites', typically 10 -199 dwellings; and 'major sites' of 200 or more dwellings or a non-residential equivalent.
- 4.24 For large sites the Council will encourage developers to undertake pre-application consultation tailored to the scale and nature of the proposals. This could range from a simple letter to neighbours inviting comment, through to a full exhibition or workshop. The subsequent Design and Access Statement should reflect how any issues raised have been addressed in the proposals.
- 4.25 For major sites the Council will expect preparation of a Concept Statement as an input to the Design and Access Statement.

The Concept Statement should set a vision and broad principles for the development of the site. The Council will expect the Concept Statement to be based on robust surveys of the site and its context and to be generated through a planning workshop involving key stakeholders. The draft Concept Statement should also be the subject of a public exhibition and consultation. Comments made should be recorded and addressed in refining the Concept Statement that should then be submitted for Council 'endorsement' before any planning application is submitted.

4.26 The Council supports the principle of a plan-led planning system and will expect very major sites (typically those of over 1,000 dwellings or equivalent) or those which would depart significantly from established planning policy, to be promoted through the Local Development Framework/Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Document processes for site briefs set out in Section 3. In these circumstances the preparation of a concept statement & development brief would run in parallel with Local Development Framework/Core Strategy production stages and could subsequently be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. In most cases the Council, working closely with relevant stakeholders/promoters, would prepare this.

Consultation requirements for large and major development sites

Stage	Large sites	Major or significant sites*
Planning Policy	Issues report Public engagement/consultation (desirable)	Issues report Public engagement workshop (mandatory) Concept statement Consultation on Concept Statement SGC decision on Concept Statement
Outline planning application	Design and Access Statement	Design and Access Statement Master Plan
Prior to reserved matters application	-	Design Code submitted and agreed where appropriate

Definitions: (See also Appendix 7)

Large Site	10-199 dwellings 1 – 4 ha 1,000 – 10,000m ² commercial floor space
Major or significant sites**	Over 200 dwellings Over 4 ha Over 10,000m ² commercial floor space
Issues report	Sets out factual information about the site including site history, policy context, survey material required, key constraints, opportunities, and likely areas for Section 106 contributions. Succinct format, with site location plan. Prepared by South Gloucestershire Council or the developer/promoter of the site, subject to discussion of the approach being agreed with SGC at the outset
Public Engagement Workshop	Site visit and consultation workshop in which key issues about the site development are presented for discussion with key stakeholders. Workshop to be organised by the developer/promoter using an approach agreed with SGC.
Concept Statement	Sets out the vision and broad principles for the development of the site. The concept statement is a concise, diagrammatic illustration of ideas with the potential to make the most of a site and will set the context for the Design and Access Statement. The Concept Statement will normally be prepared by the Developer.***

Notes:

* This table relates to existing allocated sites and major windfall sites of up to 1,000 dwellings or equivalent. Above this threshold the Council expects sites to be promoted and considered through the Local Development Framework/Core Strategy process.

** Significant impact developments - These are developments which by reason of the nature of the development proposed, the likely impact or the sensitivity of the site or its setting are considered to give rise to significant impacts which have more than local consequences.

*** For all sites of more than 1,000 homes or an equivalent a more detailed development brief will be required to be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document in accord with Section 3 of this SCI.

Proposals for waste and minerals related developments vary in scale, potential impact and design issues. Proposals for public engagement for this type of development should be discussed with officers and agreed at a very early stage based on principles established for other forms of development.

What do we do when people make comments?

- 4.27 Planning application case files contain all of the comments received during public consultation. These are available to view on our website or at our Thornbury and Kingswood Offices where a prior appointment has been made. Members of the public can also call into one of the Council's One-Stop Shops to enquire about arrangements for planning committee meetings. In general, all comments are open to the public for inspection unless they are protected by legal privilege or contain sensitive commercial, financial or personal information.
- 4.28 The Council has targets for determining applications; 13 weeks for major applications and 8 weeks for all others. The Council will use the information received in the application stage to inform the determination of the application. This is considered along with the appropriate development plan/LDF policies, national guidance and other supporting 'material considerations' such as relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents and technical advice.
- 4.29 It is common practice for the case officer, where appropriate and necessary, to advise the applicant of changes required to be made to the planning application following assessment of the application and consideration of the comments made by Parish and Town Councils, consultees or local residents. Applicants do not have to accept this advice, but if it is not followed it could result in the application being refused. Where changes are made and revised plans submitted, these will be re-consulted on or re-advertised as set out in para 4.3.

What happens after a decision is taken?

- 4.30 Whether a decision is made by officers under delegated powers, or by elected councillors at an Area Committee, and in addition to the applicant, anybody who

responded to the consultation is written to and told the decision and the reason for the decision. The Council's website also holds a copy of decision notices.

- 4.31 We include a feedback form with every decision letter that is sent to the applicant. The aim of this form is to assess how satisfied applicants are with the service they receive as their applications are determined. We receive around a 15% response rate and the results are considered by the Development Services management team as part of the team's performance monitoring and the overall satisfaction rate is reported as one of the local indicators of performance for the service. In addition, the results are reported to the regular Development Services agents' forums, which we hold on a six monthly basis with customers who are frequently submitting applications to us.

How are people involved when planning decisions are appealed against?

- 4.32 There are no third party rights of appeal. Only applicants can appeal against a planning decision. The appeal is made to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 4.33 It is our practice to advise anyone who was consulted on the original planning application that an appeal has been received. They will have an opportunity to let the appeal Inspector know their views. These and any copies of previous correspondence will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 4.34 The Government has set out statutory advice that the Council must follow for hearings and Public Inquiries. Where appropriate we will engage with interested parties to see if any benefit can be had from joint statements of case. For hearings and public inquiries a site notice is published giving the date, time and location of the hearing/inquiry. In some instances local people may be able to attend hearings and inquiries by making arrangements with the Inspector.

5 Resource availability, review and linking with other strategies

Other strategies

5.1 Planning decisions are made within the context of South Gloucestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy and a wide range of other corporate and service strategies. The Sustainable Community Strategy outlines plans for improving the economic, environmental and social well-being of the District. It is prepared by the South Gloucestershire Partnership (the local strategic partnership), which includes key stakeholders such as the Primary Care Trust, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Filton College, the Corporate Equalities Forum and South Gloucestershire Council. The South Gloucestershire Partnership is also responsible for producing South Gloucestershire's Local Area Agreement. This is a 'contract' that sets out the priorities for the local area.

5.2 The Local Development Framework is a key way of delivering the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement, especially those relating to the development and use of land and buildings. Furthermore, the process of reviewing the Sustainable Community Strategy and developing the Local Development Framework require enormous community involvement on similar issues. The Council will work with the South Gloucestershire Partnership to make sure that the content of the two documents complement each other. To achieve this we will work collaboratively to ensure that the identified benefits from a policy content and process perspective are fully identified and recognised in the preparation of both the portfolio of Local Development Framework documents and the Sustainable Community Strategy. This will be undertaken by ensuring close liaison with the South Gloucestershire Partnership and with officers preparing the Sustainable Community Strategy.

To achieve this the Local Development Framework will be a regular item on the South Gloucestershire Partnership agenda whereby they will receive Local Development Framework progress updates and are made aware of the statutory constraints and the resources available to the local planning authority. Officers from the two project teams will also work together and share information to ensure issues raised in the Sustainable Community Strategy are taken into account when developing Local Development Document policies and proposals.

5.3 The new Sustainable Community Strategy 'South Gloucestershire 2026: A great place to live and work' was developed by the South Gloucestershire Partnership working with all the people and communities involved in South Gloucestershire. It contains the vision for the area for the next 20 years and will be reviewed in 2011. Both the Partnership and the Council formally adopted it in January 2008. The vision is:

"By working in partnership, our vision is for everyone who lives and works in South Gloucestershire to fulfil their potential, enjoy an excellent quality of life and support others in their communities whilst protecting the environment"

5.4 A range of other strategies are prepared by other organisations and Council Services that will be delivered in part through the Local Development Framework. As with the Sustainable Community Strategy above, the Council will consider how these will be linked in terms of objectives, visions, combining consultations and sharing information obtained.

5.5 The voluntary and community sectors have vital roles to play in engaging communities, helping to give people a voice and reaching marginalised people. The preparation of

Parish Plans and other visioning exercises can be very useful for local communities to identify key issues. They will be taken account of in Local Development Framework documents and the determination of planning applications as relevant and appropriate. We will seek, where appropriate, to use the 'community network' to raise awareness of planning issues, or in other words a 'trickle-down' approach to the dissemination of information. This method will not be solely relied upon and will most likely be encouraged in the earlier, more informal stages of consultation and awareness raising.

Resources

- 5.6 This SCI is based on a realistic and robust assessment of likely resource availability over the coming years.
- 5.7 In short, South Gloucestershire Council does not have either the financial or staff resources with which to undertake community and stakeholder consultation on a massive scale. Instead it has been necessary to devise a programme of consultation that is achievable, continuous and effective, yet will not raise the public's expectations unrealistically high. The programme for consultation set out in this SCI reflects this.
- 5.8 It is envisaged that many of the proposed consultation measures can be met in-house. Should it prove necessary and/or beneficial the Council will investigate the possibility of using external resources, such as consultants, where appropriate, to conduct or assist with community consultation, engagement and involvement processes. Where consultation is led by a developer, the Council must be satisfied that engagement has been appropriate and meaningful.
- 5.9 The Spatial Planning Team Manager will be responsible for managing the overall consultation process for Local Development Documents and its implementation will be the responsibility of the Spatial Planning Team. Public consultation in relation to registered planning applications will be the responsibility of the Council's Development Services Manager.
- 5.10 In some cases, managers and their teams in other Council service departments will be responsible for the production of certain Supplementary Planning Documents, Development Plan Documents, the associated Sustainability Appraisals and the community consultation and engagement involved with their production.
- 5.11 Corporately, the Council aims to ensure that wherever possible consultation on the Local Development Framework takes place in tandem with other consultation exercises in order to avoid 'consultation fatigue' and to make best use of available resources. For example, the Local Development Framework is the principal mechanism for delivering the land use and spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Council will therefore work with the South Gloucestershire Partnership to 'double-up' with consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy wherever the opportunity arises.
- 5.12 In-house resources have been made available for preparing and consulting on the Local Development Framework including staff and budgets. Sufficient funding has been identified from central Council budgets to fund the involvement activities outlined in this SCI. Planning Delivery Grant will supplement this.
- 5.13 It would be counter-productive for the SCI to set out particularly complex processes of community involvement that were too onerous to deliver. The Council will therefore prepare planning consultation programmes which will clearly identify what type of involvement communities can expect, with methods of consultation that target resources to those areas where there will be maximum benefit.

5.14 Individual members of the public and organisations have a range of skills that can be brought into the involvement process. The 'community network' will be encouraged to disseminate information, where appropriate maybe by word-of-mouth, to other members of the community who may not have been aware of consultation exercises and planning issues that might affect them.

Review of the SCI

5.15 The SCI will be revised having regard to any particular problems or successes that we experience in consulting on the individual components of the Local Development Framework. This means that consultation techniques that have not been well responded to may be replaced by alternative tools and processes in the future. Effective monitoring of consultation and engagement exercises can help determine the following:

- Has the community been fairly represented?
- Have techniques been appropriate and successful?
- Has the process been value for money?
- Has involvement contributed to decision making?
- Has involvement helped speed up the process?

5.16 The Council will endeavour to carry out assessments during and at the end of Development Plan Document and Supplementary Planning Document production processes in order to gauge the effectiveness of the involvement techniques used. This would most likely take the form of a questionnaire/feedback form given to respondents and analysis of the type, nature and profile of people, organisations and groups who make representations to Local Development Documents by using our Local

Development Framework representation software.

5.17 The success and progress of the SCI will be assessed through the Annual Monitoring Report, which will be published in December each year. Any changes to the SCI arising from the Annual Monitoring Report will be made and accompanied by appropriate public consultation. Regard will be had to any emerging best practice guidance and/or changes in legislation that have been put in place since the SCI was originally published. Should the SCI need to be subject to a further examination, consultees will be advised of this.

5.18 At the formal submission stage of Supplementary Planning Documents and Development Plan Documents we will produce a statement that explains how the consultation that has taken place has been in-line with the SCI and the resources available. This will help to review the effectiveness of the methods used to involve and engage the community.

Fair interpretation and openness

5.19 We will ensure that representations made during consultation periods are assessed in an objective way without prejudice. Representations made to Local Development Framework documents will be fully accessible to the public. In making comments on any planning document this information will be open to anybody who wants to obtain it. Respondent's details cannot be kept confidential. This is in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

5.20 Once each production and consultation stage has been completed we will publish within a reasonable time period a list of stakeholders and consultees who participated, what they have said and which changes the Council will make as a result.

Complaints

5.21 The Council aims to involve people in an effective way during the preparation of the Local Development Framework and when considering planning applications. Any complaints about the community involvement activities we undertake in relation to the Local Development Framework should be sent in the first instance to:

Spatial Planning Team Manager

Planning, Transport and Strategic Environment
South Gloucestershire Council
Thornbury Council Offices
Castle Street, Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 1HF

5.22 Any complaints about the involvement activities we undertake in relation to Planning Applications should be sent in the first instance to:

Head of Development Services

Planning, Transport and Strategic Environment
South Gloucestershire Council
Kingswood Civic Centre
High Street, Kingswood
BS15 9TR

5.23 A written acknowledgement will be sent within 5 working days of receipt of a formal complaint. A full response will be sent out within 28 days of receipt.

5.24 The complaints procedure is not intended to deal with complaints about the merits of planning decisions. However if any party is dissatisfied with the manner in which a planning application has been handled in terms of its administration, then they can complain to the Council in the first instance (as above), or if this does not lead to resolution of the complaint, then to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Council's procedure for dealing with complaints can be found on our website - **www.southglos.gov.uk** .

Glossary of terms

Annual Monitoring Report

Produced by the Council on a yearly basis, contains data and statistics concerning quality of life, development and sustainability in South Gloucestershire. Also contains progress updates on the production of the Local Development Framework.

Community Network

Any and all people that make up individual communities, or the community as a whole. Often this network will be headed by prominent figures of the community, such as leaders of organisations that could assist with awareness raising of planning issues due to them often having large numbers of contacts throughout the community.

Concept Statement

Sets out the vision and broad principles for the development of the site. The concept statement is a concise, diagrammatic illustration of ideas with the potential to make the most of a site and will set the context for the Design and Access Statement. The developer will normally prepare the Concept Statement.

Development

"The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material changes in the use of any building or other land." (*Town & Country Planning Act (1990) Part III Section 55*).

Development Brief

A document produced to provide information about preferred option(s) for the development of a site. It can be produced by the Council, developer and/or a third party. Ideally it is agreed by all parties and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (these have replaced Supplementary Planning Guidance).

Development Plan Document (DPD)

A Local Development Document that has been subject to independent testing and has the weight of development plan status. Replaces the Local Plans system.

Development Plan System

The system of structure and local plans (including minerals and waste local plans) prepared by local authorities as a framework for development and land use decisions in their area. This system has been replaced by Local

Development Frameworks under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, although structure and local plan policies have been saved until replaced by documents in the Local Development Framework.

East Fringe

The area of land in South Gloucestershire adjoining the eastern part of the boundary with Bristol City including Kingswood, Emersons Green, Staple Hill, Downend, Mangotsfield, Warmley, Longwell Green, Hanham, Soundwell, Cadbury Heath and Oldland Common.

Environment Agency

Government agency responsible for environmental regulation. Its legal duty is to protect and improve the environment of England and Wales. Created in 1996.

Ethnic Minority

Any ethnic group in Britain except White British.

Evidence Base

The data and information about the current state of South Gloucestershire.

Gypsies and Travellers

There are currently two definitions of Gypsies and Travellers, a planning definition and a housing definition. The planning definition is outlined in Circular 01/2006 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites', while the housing definition is defined in section 225 of the Housing Act 2004.

The planning definition covers:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.

The housing definition includes:

(a) persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan; and

(b) all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including

(i) such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and

(ii) members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).

Hard to Reach Groups

Three broad definitions:

Minority groups: The traditionally under-represented groups, the marginalised, disadvantaged or socially excluded. This includes service users who fall into well-used categories, often linked to population characteristics, such as minority ethnic groups, travellers or asylum seekers.

Slipping through the net: The overlooked, 'invisible' or those unable to articulate their needs. This includes those caring for others, those with mental health problems, service users who fall just outside the statutory or usual remit of a provider, or whose needs are apparently not so great as to grant access to a service.

The service resistant: Those unwilling to engage with service providers, the suspicious, the over targeted or disaffected. This includes families 'known' to agencies such as social services, who are wary of engaging with providers, or others who are distrustful and potentially hostile to service providers, possibly due to a link to drug use, alcohol abuse or criminal behaviour.

Housing Need

A level of socially desirable housing, the demand for which is not reflected in the open market, normally due to a lack of income in relation to prevailing house prices or rents. It can therefore only usually be met through an element of subsidy.

Listed Buildings

Buildings of special architectural or historic interest designated by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

A portfolio, or a 'folder', of Local Development Documents which will provide the local planning authority's policies for meeting the community's

economic, environmental and social aims for the future of their area where this affects the development and use of land.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

A public statement identifying which Local Development Documents will be produced by the Council and when.

Local Development Document (LDD)

Sits within the LDF portfolio and comprise Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that have been subject to independent testing and have the weight of development plan status and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which are not subject to independent testing and do not have development plan status.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

A single non-statutory, multi-agency body, which matches local authority boundaries, and aims to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to achieve a common vision for the area.

Minority Group

Traditionally under-represented groups, the marginalised, disadvantaged or socially excluded, e.g. Black and Ethnic Minority Groups, Gypsies and Travellers or asylum seekers.

Mixed Use Development

Developments that include a mixture of more than one of the following; housing, employment, leisure, shopping and community facilities.

North Fringe of Bristol

The area of land in South Gloucestershire adjoining the northern part of the boundary with Bristol City and contained within the M5, M4 and M32 motorways, including Filton, Frenchay, Patchway, Stoke Gifford and Bradley Stoke.

Planning Guidance

Non-statutory strategy and policy documents which inform or amplify policies in planning policy at the local level. These will include old style Supplementary Planning Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents prepared under the new planning system and set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme, town centre strategies, parish plans, design guidance,

concept statements, site development briefs and master plans. These will normally be prepared by the Council, or endorsed by it where they are prepared by third parties.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) / Planning Policy Statement (PPS)

PPSs and PPGs have been issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (and its predecessors) (in some cases jointly with other Government departments) and set out the national planning policy context. PPSs are gradually replacing Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). Local Development Documents have to take PPS/PPGs into account.

Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10)/Regional Spatial Strategy

RPG10 was published by the Government Office for the South West in Sept 2001. It provides the regional framework within which local authority development plans and local transport plans in the South West should be prepared. As the result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, RPG10 now forms part of legal development plan and is known as the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS10).

South West Regional Assembly (SWRA)

The SWRA is, inter alia, the regional planning body for the South West and advises the Government Office of the South West on the content of regional planning guidance. The SWRA has developed a draft Regional Spatial Strategy for 2006 - 2026 that will set out a regional plan for development.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Sets out the local planning authority's policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of Local Development Documents and planning applications.

Stakeholder

A person, group, company, association, etc. with an economic, professional or community interest in the District or specific part of it, or that is affected by local developments.

Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA)

A generic term used internationally to describe

environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

A systematic and iterative appraisal process, incorporating the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

A Local Development Document that has not been subject to independent testing and does not have the weight of development plan status. SPDs replace Supplementary Planning Guidance that was part of the old planning system and help to amplify the policies contained in Development Plan Documents.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Either theme or topic based. Provides additional information to Local Plan policies. Non-statutory. Being phased out and replaced by Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Travelling Showpeople

People who are self-employed business people who travel the country often holding fairs. Most are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain.

The regulations for the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 set out the public participation and consultation required when preparing and revising a Local Development Framework. Regulations 25, 26, 27 and 28 relate to informal and formal consultations for Stage 2 of Local Development Document preparation. Regulation 29 relates to Stage 3 or Independent Examination of the Document.

Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

National planning legislation from central government aimed at improving the planning process and enhancing community involvement in it. Visit www.communities.gov.uk to find out more.

Appendix 2

Indicative list of consultees for the Local Development Framework

(Please note, this list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur)

** indicates likely to receive complimentary copies of LDF documents with consultation notification letters*

Specific consultation bodies

Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority*

British Telecommunications Plc*

Department for Culture Media and Sport*

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs*

Department for Transport*

English Heritage*

Government Office for the South West (GOSW)*

Ministry of Defence*

Natural England*

Network Rail

Relevant Electricity, Gas, Water and Telecommunications Companies*

South West Regional Assembly - 'The Regional Planning Body'*

South West Regional Development Agency*

The Environment Agency*

The Highways Agency*

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England*

Parish and Town Councils in South Gloucestershire:

- Acton Turville Parish Council*
- Almondsbury Parish Council*
- Alveston Parish Council*
- Aust Parish Council*
- Badminton Parish Council*
- Bitton Parish Council*
- Bradley Stoke Town Council*
- Charfield Parish Council*
- Cold Ashton Parish Council*
- Cromhall Parish Council*
- Dodington Parish Council*

- Downend and Bromley Heath Parish Council*
- Doynton Parish Council*
- Dyrham and Hinton Parish Council*
- Falfield Parish Council*
- Filton Town Council*
- Frampton Cotterell Parish Council*
- Hanham Parish Council*
- Hanham Abbots Parish Council*
- Hawkesbury Parish Council*
- Hill Parish Meeting*
- Horton Parish Council*
- Iron Acton Parish Council*
- Little Sodbury Parish Council*
- Mangotsfield Rural Parish Council*
- Marshfield Parish Council*
- Oldbury on Severn Parish Council*
- Oldland Parish Council*
- Olveston Parish Council*
- Patchway Town Council*
- Pilning and Severn Beach Parish Council*
- Pucklechurch Parish Council*
- Rangeworthy Parish Council*
- Rockhampton Parish Council*
- Siston Parish Council*
- Sodbury Town Council*
- Stoke Gifford Parish Council*
- Thornbury Town Council*
- Tormarton Parish Council*
- Tortworth Parish Council*
- Tytherington Parish Council*
- Westerleigh Parish Council*
- Wick and Abson Parish Council*
- Wickwar Parish Council*
- Winterbourne Parish Council*
- Yate Town Council*

Neighbouring Local Authorities and their Parish/Town Councils that border South Gloucestershire:

- Bath and North East Somerset Council*
 - Batheaston Parish Council
 - Charlcombe Parish Council
 - Keynsham Town Council
 - North Stoke Parish Council
 - Saltford Parish Council
 - St. Catherine Parish Council
 - Swainswick Parish Council
- Bristol City Council*
- Cotswold District Council*
 - Didmarton Parish Council

- Forest of Dean District Council*
 - Tidenham Parish Council
 - Tidenham and Woolaston Parish Council
 - Aylburton Parish Council
- Gloucestershire County Council*
- Monmouthshire Council (Wales)*
- North Somerset Council*
- North Wiltshire District Council*
 - Colerne Parish Council
 - Grittleton Parish Council
 - Luckington Parish Council
 - Nettleton Parish Council
 - North Wraxall Parish Council
 - Sopworth Parish Meeting
- Stroud District Council*
 - Alkington Parish Council
 - Ham and Stone Parish Council
 - Hillesley and Tresham Parish Council
 - Kingswood Parish Council
 - North Nibley Parish Council
- Wiltshire County Council*

Other consultees

Avon Wildlife Trust
 Black Development Agency
 Bristol International Airport
 British Legion
 British Waterways
 Church and Faith groups
 Church Commissioners
 Civil Aviation Authority
 Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
 Commission for Racial Equality*
 Community Associations
 Cotswold Conservation Board
 Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)*
 Department of Health South West Regional Office
 Diocese of Gloucester
 Disability Rights Commission*
 Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee

English Partnerships
 Equal Opportunities Commission
 Federation of Small Businesses
 Forest of Avon
 Forestry Commission
 Freight Transport Association
 Friends of the Earth*
 Friends, Families and Travellers
 Gypsy Council
 GWE Business West
 Health and Safety Executive
 Home Builders Federation*
 Housing Corporation
 Learning and Skills Council
 Local MPs and MEPs
 National Farmers' Union
 National Playing Fields Association
 Outdoor Advertising Council
 Post Office Property Holdings
 Ramblers Association
 Relevant bus and rail operators
 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds*
 Scout/Guide Groups/Youth Clubs
 South Gloucestershire Asian Group
 South Gloucestershire Chinese Association
 South Gloucestershire Partnership
 South Gloucestershire Safer and Stronger Community Groups
 South West Alliance of Nomads
 South West Regional Housing Body
 South West Registered Social Landlord Planning Consortium
 Sport England South West
 The Barton Trust
 Traveller Law Reform Coalition
 Various South Gloucestershire Regeneration Partnerships
 Woodland Trust*

Appendix 3

Ways of consulting, involving and informing

Methods of consulting

Consultation method	Use and effectiveness
Internet/Website	Documents for viewing/downloading and on-line forms for submitting comments. Can submit comments via email as well. Reduces the need for paper usage, thus more environmentally friendly and cost saving.
Letters/email	Direct provision of information with interested parties.
One-to-one meetings	Able to obtain detailed comments and possibly resolve potential issues.
Questionnaires	Able to obtain preferences and comments. Unlikely to be used by those without an interest in the planning system.
Written material available for inspection and comment	Documents and comment forms made available at key locations such as libraries and Council offices.

Methods of involving

Involving method	Use and effectiveness
Focus Groups	Participants invited to semi-structured interviews, meetings or workshops. Useful for area-based discussion and the presentation of options. Views of representative groups can be obtained.
Public Meetings	Meetings held at a public venue for the community to receive information and express their views on relevant issues. Allows engagement with a large number of people at once and they can receive direct feedback. However some people may be uncomfortable expressing their views in front of a large number of people.
Workshops	Invitation only event for those people most involved with the document/application. Aim of identifying issues and possible solutions. Can be held in different locations with different sectors of the community. A variety of activities, styles and techniques of engagement can be used in workshops, depending on the audience attending, the subject matter and the aims of the workshop. They can be run by Council officers or by external facilitators.
Planning Aid	Government funded service aimed at targeting communities which do not normally get involved in the planning system.
Steering/Advisory Groups	Include internal and external stakeholders. Focus on consideration of options and/or providing guidance.
Citizens' Panels	Representative groups of residents from across the district asked for their views.

Methods of informing

Informing method	Use and effectiveness
Internet/Website	Can provide detailed information on a regular basis at minimal cost.
Letters/email	Direct provision of information with interested parties
Leaflets	Cost effective means of informing a large number of people.
Media Coverage	Regular press releases for the local press, radio and TV. Good for raising awareness across a wide audience. Can utilise free newspapers, Council and partner publications.
Exhibitions	Visual displays of information put up in public venues. Good for generating awareness and face-to-face dialogue.
Posters	Effective for publicising events and generating awareness.

N.B. This list of methods is not exhaustive. Further methods may also be drawn upon at various stages of involvement, consultation and informing.

Appendix 4

Target groups and how they will be involved

Target group	Typical groups	Potential issues	Main consultation methods
Local residents and neighbours of site allocations and development sites	Individual residents and families and residents' associations	May not be familiar with the planning process. Likely to have strong views and early involvement important to promote understanding on all sides.	Direct mail, media coverage, public meetings, leaflets, posters, public exhibitions, questionnaires, internet/website
General public	Residents, commuters, visitors to the district, people who work in the district	General awareness raising of planning issues often required.	Media coverage, public meetings, leaflets, posters, public exhibitions, questionnaires, internet/website, citizens panel.
Councillors	South Gloucestershire Councillors	Need to be fully engaged throughout the plan preparation process particularly through steering groups, working parties and participation in public meetings.	Steering/Advisory groups, workshops, letters/email, Councillor briefing sessions/meetings, Council intranet.
Town and Parish Councils	All Town and Parish Councils in and neighbouring South Gloucestershire	Likely to participate effectively in direct consultation, public meetings and focus groups. Important contacts for a range of local organisations and residents.	Media coverage, public meetings, letters/email, leaflets, posters, exhibitions, internet/website, workshops.
Adjacent local Councils	Bristol City Council, Bath and North East Somerset, North Wiltshire, Stroud, Forest of Dean, Monmouthshire (Wales)	Familiar with planning and consultation processes; they will respond to consultation letters and are likely to maximise opportunities for electronic communication.	Internet/website, letters/email, joint working.
Central and regional Government and development agencies	GOSW, South West Regional Assembly, SW Regional Development Agency	Familiar with planning and consultation processes. They will respond to consultation letters and are likely to maximise opportunities for electronic communication.	Internet/website, letters/email.
Statutory bodies	All those listed in Appendix 2 as specific consultation bodies	Familiar with planning and consultation processes. They will respond to consultation letters and are likely to maximise opportunities for electronic communication.	Internet/website, letters/email.
South Gloucestershire Council officers	Officers with relevant expertise from across the Planning Department as well as all other departments where appropriate	Familiar with planning/consultation processes; are likely to maximise opportunities for electronic communication.	Internet/email, workshops, meetings.

Business community	Local businesses/retailers, Chambers of Trade and Commerce, Town Centre Managers	Spatial planning has key impacts on businesses but employers have traditionally not given priority to planning policy issues.	Media coverage, leaflets, internet/website, focus groups.
Developers, landowners and agents	Home Builders Federation, individual house builders and developers	The input of key landowners will be critical, so they may need to be identified and contacted directly.	Media coverage, leaflets, public meetings, internet/website, focus groups, one-to-one meetings.
Planning consultants	Various firms with offices in the sub-region as well as other national firms	Familiar with planning and consultation processes. They will respond to consultation letters and are likely to maximise opportunities for electronic communication.	Internet/website, letters/email.
Other housing groups	Housing Associations, Avon Travellers Support Group, Housing Corporations	May be variability of experience with the planning system, so a wide range of methods will be used.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters/email, one-to-one meetings, focus groups, workshops. Consultation documents available in alternative appropriate formats.
Voluntary and community groups, residents and community associations	Yate Voluntary Link, Filton People	Might not be familiar with planning issues, but will be an important source of local knowledge.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters/email, focus groups, workshops.
Religious, racial, ethnic and language groups	Equal Opportunities Commission, South Gloucestershire Asian Group, Black Development Agency, South Gloucestershire Chinese Association, Bangladeshi Association, Corporate Equalities Forum	May need to target format and language of consultation documentation. May not be familiar with planning issues.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters/email, focus groups, workshops, one-to-one meetings.
Disability groups	Disability Rights Commission, other groups representing particular disability groups	Might not be familiar with planning issues, but will be an important source of local knowledge.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters/email, one-to-one meetings, focus groups, workshops. Consultation material should be available in alternative formats.
Elderly	Help the Aged, Age Concern, South Gloucestershire Senior Citizens' Forum	Might not be familiar with planning issues, but will be an important source of local knowledge.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters/email, facilitated focus groups, workshops.
Young people and the learning community	Youth Clubs, school governing bodies, Learning and Skills Council, University of the West of England, South Gloucestershire Youth Forum	Might not be familiar with planning issues, but will be an important source of local knowledge.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters/email, focus groups, workshops.

Health and welfare	Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, emergency services, South Gloucestershire Partnership	Important source of specialist knowledge.	Letters/email, one-to-one meetings, focus groups, workshops.
Hard to reach groups	Children and young people, Gypsies and Travellers, homeless groups and people who traditionally haven't engaged with consultation programmes, such as those on low incomes, ethnic minorities, etc	Groups representing sections of the public that have traditionally been more difficult to reach than the rest of the population. Unlikely to respond to traditional consultation techniques – need for innovative approaches and careful targeting.	Specially tailored and arranged focus groups and workshops, media coverage, posters and exhibitions, one-to-one meetings where appropriate.
Arts and sports representatives	Sport England, Art SW.	Important source of specialist knowledge. May not be familiar with the planning system.	Media coverage, leaflets, letters, email, focus groups, workshops.
Interest groups	National and local groups covering varied or single issue interests	Important source of specialist knowledge.	Media coverage, leaflets, internet/website, letters/ email, focus groups, workshops.
Transport	Coach, train and bus companies, Highways Agency, sustainable transport groups, footpath and bridleway groups.	Important source of specialist knowledge. Groups will vary in their knowledge of planning processes and are therefore likely to be involved in a variety of consultation methods.	Media coverage, leaflets, internet/website, letters/ email, focus groups, workshops, questionnaires.
Environment	Conservation groups, e.g. Natural England, RSPB, Avon Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission, farming groups, archaeological groups, historical bodies and groups.	Important source of specialist knowledge. Groups will vary in their knowledge of planning processes and are therefore likely to be involved in a variety of consultation methods.	Media coverage, leaflets, internet/website, letters/ email, focus groups, workshops, questionnaires.
Utilities, telecoms and infrastructure	Environment Agency, gas and electricity suppliers, water and sewerage companies, renewable energy groups, telecommunication groups/companies.	Important source of specialist knowledge. Groups will vary in their knowledge of planning processes and are therefore likely to be involved in a variety of consultation methods.	Media coverage, leaflets, internet/website, letters/ email, focus groups, workshops, questionnaires.
South Gloucestershire Partnership	Representatives from local public services, private business, community and voluntary groups.	Important body in terms of a wide range of relevant organisations. Membership would provide contacts for focus groups and a means to identify best methods of engaging with hard to reach groups.	Media coverage, leaflets, internet/website, letters/ email, focus groups, steering groups.

Advertising Planning Applications

The following procedures support the guidance set out in Section 4 of this SCI.

Neighbourhood notification letters

When the Council is asked to determine a planning application it will publicise to local residents that a planning application has been received by a neighbourhood notification letter.

Site notices

Planning applications received will be publicised by a site notice or a notice in a local newspaper, or in some cases both.

Site notices will be posted by the case officer or applicant and usually on the main entrance to the proposed development in a position where the public can easily read it without entering the application site. Site notices contain basic information which can assist people to know what's proposed in their area and can help them to know where they can find out more information. A notice will give a date by which comments should be made, the name and telephone number of the case officer, as well as a website for viewing the application online.

Local planning authorities are legally required to publicise certain applications by notice in a local newspaper in which the land is situated in the statutory notices section of one of our newspapers circulating in the district. The newspaper used depends on the parish in which the application is made.

Anybody originally notified about an application, and everyone who has made comments on it, will be notified of amended plans that are received, and which require further publicity.

Time periods

Only when the publicity period has expired can the planning applications be decided. 21 days needs to elapse after the site notice has been posted, any statutory press advertisement was published, or the date on the neighbour notification letter for this to take place.

Information contained in either the neighbourhood notification letter, notice or press advertisement explains where and how people can view planning applications.

Making comments

Comments on applications should always be made in writing/email. In circumstances where the publicity period has expired it may not be too late to make comments. This can be established by telephoning the Customer Enquires Team.

We have two area development control teams; for contact details please see page 10.

Comments can also be emailed using our website www.southglos.gov.uk/planning

When sending letters or e-mail please quote:

- the planning application number;
- the address of the property to which it relates;
- your own address.

All comments will be acknowledged in writing and will be taken into account before a decision is reached provided they are received in time. All comments are placed on the application file and published on our website and are available for public inspection.

If the application is to be considered by the Development Control Committee, anyone making written comments will be notified of the date of the meeting and how they can address the Committee if they wish. Once a decision has been reached, people who have made comments will also receive details of the decision notice.

Public speaking

Where an application is to be determined by a Development Control Committee, an opportunity is provided to address the committee. The opportunity to speak is provided for:

- the applicant or supporters of the application;

- objectors to the application who have already made written objections;
- each of these groups is entitled to speak for three minutes.

One-Stop Shops/Customer Enquires Contact Centre

The Council offices at Kingswood, Thornbury and Yate all contain 'One-Stop Shops' where trained staff are available to answer general planning queries. A telephone contact centre is also available with trained staff to answer planning queries. The telephone number of the contact centre is **01454 868004**.

Minimum consultation methods for Planning Applications

Type of Application	Group consulted	METHOD existing and (proposed) Proposed methods relate to the gradual introduction of electronic consultation which will move at a different pace in various areas
<p>MAJOR DEVELOPMENT (10 or more residential units, or over 0.5 ha, other development over 1000 square metres in floorspace or over 1 ha in site area). To include most waste and mineral schemes.</p>	<p>Statutory consultees – as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).</p>	<p>By letter with plans (electronically).</p>
	<p>Parish/Town Councils – within whose area the site falls.</p>	<p>By letter (electronically by agreement).</p>
	<p>Neighbours –all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the site, and properties directly opposite. All occupiers of land within 100m of the vehicular and pedestrian access points (measured linearly along the road, including properties on the opposite side of the road). If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.</p>	<p>By letter (press notice published and site notice posted for major developments). Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line.</p>
<p>MINOR DEVELOPMENT (9 or fewer residential units, or residential development of less than 0.5 ha, other development less than 1000 square metres floorspace or less than 1 ha in site area).</p>	<p>Statutory consultees –as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).</p>	<p>By letter with plans (electronically).</p>
	<p>Parish /Town Councils –within whose area the site falls.</p>	<p>By letter (electronically by agreement).</p>
	<p>Neighbours – all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the site, and properties directly opposite. All occupiers of land within 30m of the vehicular and pedestrian access points (measured linearly along the road, including properties on the opposite side of the road). If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.</p>	<p>By letter (press notice published and site notice posted for certain types of development). Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line. Applicant also requested to post on site a site notice for 21 days.</p>

CHANGES OF USE/ CONVERSION	Statutory consultees – as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).	By letter with plans (electronically).
	Parish/Town Councils – within whose area the site falls.	By letter (electronically by agreement).
	Neighbours – all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the site, and properties directly opposite. If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.	By letter (press notice published and site notice posted for certain types of development). Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line. Applicant also requested to post on site a site notice for 21 days.
HOUSEHOLDER DEVELOPMENT	Statutory consultees –as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).	By letter with plans (electronically).
	Parish /Town Councils –within whose area the site falls.	By letter (electronically by agreement).
	Neighbours – all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the site, and properties directly opposite. Rear extensions: owners/ occupiers on both sides and to the rear. Front extensions including porches: owners/occupiers on both sides, and immediately opposite if development within 21 metres. Side extensions: owners/ occupiers immediately adjacent to the proposal and any property directly to the front or rear if within 21 metres of the proposal. If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.	By letter (press notice published and site notice posted for certain types of development). Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line. Applicant also requested to post on site a site notice for 21 days.

ADVERTISEMENTS, CONSERVATION AREA CONSENTS, LISTED BUILDING CONSENTS, WORKS TO TREES, OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Statutory consultees – as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).	By letter with plans (electronically).
	Parish/Town Councils – within whose area the site falls.	By letter (electronically by agreement).
	Neighbours: all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the application site, and properties directly opposite if considered appropriate by the case officer. If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.	By letter (press notice published and site notice posted for certain types of development, e.g. all conservation area and listed building applications). Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line. Applicant also requested to post on site a site notice for 21 days (if not a statutory requirement).
CERTIFICATES OF LAWFULNESS	Statutory consultees – as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).	By letter with plans (electronically).
	Parish/Town Councils – within whose area the site falls.	By letter (electronically by agreement).
	Neighbours: all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the application site, and properties directly opposite if considered appropriate by the case officer. If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.	By letter (press notice published and site notice posted for certain types of development, e.g. all conservation area and listed building applications). Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line. Applicant also requested to post on site a site notice for 21 days
PRIOR NOTIFICATION – AGRICULTURAL, DEMOLITION	Statutory consultees – as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).	By letter with plans (electronically).
	Parish/Town Councils – within whose area the site falls.	By letter (electronically by agreement).
	Neighbours: all adjoining occupiers having a common boundary with the application site, and properties directly opposite if considered appropriate by the case officer. If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.	By letter Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line

PRIOR NOTIFICATION – TELE-COMMUNICATIONS	Statutory consultees – as set out in the General Development Procedure order 1995 (as amended).	By letter with plans (electronically).
	Parish/Town Councils – within whose area the site falls.	By letter (electronically by agreement).
	Neighbours: all neighbours within 100 metres of the site, schools within 400 metres. If the subject of an enforcement investigation, the complainant.	By letter Application details available to view at the Council's offices, and on-line. Site notice posted.

Definitions of design documents for significant planning applications

Issues Report (formally Position Statement)
Sets out factual information about the site including site history, policy context, survey material required, key constraints, opportunities, likely areas for Section 106 contributions. Succinct format, with site location plan. Prepared by South Gloucestershire Council or the developer/promoter of the site, subject to discussion of the approach being agreed with SGC at the outset.

Public Engagement Workshop

An event, including a site visit and planning workshop, in which key issues about the site development are presented for discussion with key stakeholders. Workshops are to be organised by the developer/promoter using an approach agreed with SGC.

Concept Statement

A concise, diagrammatic document, which illustrates ideas with the potential to make the most of a site and its surroundings. It should be imaginative, positive, ambitious and practical, opening up design opportunities. The interpretive notes may refer to 'design requirements', but it is important to remember that the concept statement is not the design solution. It should emphasize creative opportunities and prompt designers and their clients to demonstrate their design skills. It is up to the designer to interpret and refine the concept, within the spirit of the overall quality objectives.

Design and Access Statements

A Design and Access Statement is a document accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way. A Design and Access Statement must be submitted with most types of planning applications, but not with 'householder' applications. They provide an opportunity for developers and designers to demonstrate their commitment to achieving good design and ensuring accessibility, as well as allowing

them to show how they will meet the various obligations placed on them by legislation and policy. The level of detail required in a Design and Access Statement will depend on the scale and complexity of the application, and the length of the statement will vary accordingly.

Development Brief

A Development Brief is a document prepared by a Local Planning Authority, a developer, or jointly, providing guidance on how a specific site, or a combination of adjacent sites, of significant size or sensitivity should be developed in line with the relevant planning and design policies. It will usually contain some indicative, but flexible, vision of future development form and should precede and inform the preparation of an illustrative master plan. It should also describe the proposed development process, as well as outlining Section 106 agreement requirements. Ideally it is agreed by all parties and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Illustrative Master Plan

An illustrative master plan is a document that sets out a vision for a site and a strategy for implementing that vision. It is 'illustrative' in the sense that it shows clearly the principles of design, which underpin the proposed development. An illustrative master plan is prepared by the applicants as the basis of an outline planning application. It will usually be produced by the applicant's design team, working in consultation with officers, during the course of the outline planning application. An illustrative master plan builds upon the Environmental Statement and upon preceding urban design guidance, such as a development brief to show in more detail how a site will be developed in line with relevant planning and design policies. Its content will vary depending on the size and complexity of the site in question, but it will usually contain: a three dimensional vision (plans, sections, elevations, three dimensional drawings); a character description; preliminary designs for landscape and key public open spaces; movement to and through the site (public transport, cycle, walking and cars); together with a detailed phasing regime. The illustrative master plan will also contain a suite of supporting strategies including

those for: the provision of affordable housing; distinctive architecture; waste reduction, recycling and collection; resource minimization; and public art.

In the case of a very large site, which will be developed over a long period of time, the illustrative master plan will also set out the proposed master planning process; i.e. the process to protect design quality from the outline planning permission stage through to the implementation of reserved matters applications. In such cases the illustrative master plan will show the geographical phases for which detailed master plans will be prepared post the granting of outline planning permission, as well as establishing the parameters for design coding.

Detailed Master Plan

A detailed master plan is a document that shows how the principles established in an illustrative master plan are to be implemented across a particular geographical phase of a large site. A Detailed Master Plan is prepared by the applicants post the granting of outline permission for the development of a large site, but prior to the submission of reserved matters applications for the geographical phase in question. It builds upon preceding design work to establish a greater degree of certainty and fix on matters such as siting, height and massing. Its contents vary depending on the size of complexity of the site, but it will usually contain: a three dimensional vision (plans, sections, elevations, three dimensional drawings and possibly a model); direct sunlight analysis; diffuse daylight analysis; a character description; and detailed designs for key public open spaces. It will also show how the supporting strategies contained in the illustrative master plan will be implemented across the site in question.

Design Codes

Design Codes are a distinct form of detailed guidance comprising a set of written and graphic rules that establish with precision the two- and three-dimensional design elements of a particular development or area. The provisions within design codes are technical and precise. They instruct (and sometimes

advise) the user upon the physical components of a place. Design codes are delivery tools. To be effective they need to be based upon a specific design vision for a site or an area. The design vision is usually established in a master plan. In effect design codes are an extension of the master planning process: i.e. the master plan sets out the vision for the development and the strategy for implementing that vision. The design code sets out the precise rules that must be adhered to in order to deliver the vision set out in the master plan.

Minimum consultation required by regulations for the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Minimum requirements for Development Plan Documents

Stage of DPD production		Reg No.	Minimum requirements required by regulations
Stage 1 Pre-Production	Evidence gathering		
Stage 2 Production	Pre-submission consultation on Issues/ Options Development Plan Document (DPD)	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consult statutory consultees* on proposals for a DPD
	Pre-submission public participation on Preferred Options (DPD)	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send to statutory consultees* the DPD, Sustainability Appraisal, Proposals Matters and supporting documents ● Make available at principle offices and main libraries ● Publish on Council website ● Put advert in local press
	Representations on Proposals for a DPD	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6 week formal consultation period
	Publish Submission DPD	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submit to Secretary of State ● Send to statutory consultees* with supporting documents, Sustainability Appraisal, Pre-submission Consultation Statement, DPD Matters ● Make available at principle offices and main libraries ● Publish on Council Website ● Put advert in local press ● Give notice to anyone who has requested to be notified
	Representations on DPD Submission Document	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6 week consultation period
	Conformity with South West Regional Spatial Strategy	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make request to South West Regional Assembly

continued...

Stage 3 Examination	Handling of Representations	31 32 33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make copy of representations available on website, at main libraries and principal offices ● Send copies with a summary of representations to the Secretary of State ● In addition, for Site Allocations DPD, send copies to relevant statutory consultees* and put advert in local press
	Independent Examination of DPDs	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6 weeks before Examination, publish details on website, notify persons/bodies who have made representations and put advert in local press
	Publication of Inspector's Report)	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make Inspector's Report available on website, at main libraries and principal offices ● Give notice to anyone who requested to be notified
Stage 4 Adoption	Adoption of DPD	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make DPD and supporting documents, Sustainability Appraisal and Adoption Statement available at principle offices, main libraries and publish on website ● Put advert in local press ● Send to Secretary of State ● Give notice to anyone who requested to be notified

Minimum requirements for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Stage of SPD production		Reg No.	Minimum requirements required by regulations
Stage 1 Pre-production	Evidence gathering		
Stage 2 Production	Public participation on Draft SPD	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send to statutory consultees and other organisations as appropriate*. ● Make available at principal offices and main libraries. ● Publish on Council website. ● Put advert in local press
	Representations on SPD	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4-6 week consultation period. ● Publish Statement of Compliance, Sustainability Appraisal and relevant supporting documents.
Stage 3 Adoption	Adoption of SPD	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make SPD and supporting documents available at principal offices, main libraries and publish on website. ● Give notice to anyone who requested to be notified.

Other regulations

Annual Monitoring Report (1 April – 31 March)	48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publish annually on website. ● Submit to Secretary of State.
Local Development Scheme	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make available at principal offices, main libraries and publish on website.

*Statutory consultation bodies (i.e. specific consultation bodies) are listed in Appendix 2
Regulation 4 enables documents to be made available and representations to be received in writing or by electronic communications (email).



This information can be made available in other languages, in large print, Braille or on audio tape.

Please phone 01454 868004 if you need any of these or any other help to access Council services.

