

How to get involved

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) covers community Involvement in plan making (planning policy documents, such as Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents) and on planning applications, and sets out how and when consultation should take place, and who should be consulted.

Waverley's existing SCI was adopted in 2006, and now requires updating to take account of changes in National Policy, and Government Guidance/Legislation.

We are now seeking views on any aspect of the revised SCI, and a 6-week consultation will run from 10 February 2014 to the 21 March 2014.

The revised SCI can be inspected at Waverley Borough Council offices, The Burys, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1HR.

Comments can be made in number of ways:

- Through the planning consultation portal:
- Or you can email to: localplan@waverley.gov.uk
- Or you can put your comments in a letter to Jennie Falconer, Planning Policy Team, Planning Service, Waverley Borough Council, The Burys, Godalming, GU7 1HR

Following the consultation, any comments received will be reported to a future Council meeting (the Executive) and taken into account in preparing the final version of the SCI.

You will be able to see all of the comments made on the Council's consultation portal at <http://consult.waverley.gov.uk/consult.ti>

If you have any queries, or would like paper copies of the response form, please contact the Planning Policy team on 01483 523291 or email localplan@waverley.gov.uk

1. What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1. Planning affects everyone. It shapes the environment that we live, work, shop and play in; planning decisions determine where new homes, offices, shops and leisure facilities will be built and what happens to our countryside, open spaces and historic environment.
- 1.2. By law, we have to produce a Statement of Community Involvement¹. It sets out how and when we will involve and consult with you on planning matters. The Council already has a Statement of Community Involvement, but this is now 7 years old.² Legal requirements and the ways in which we engage with the community have changed and so we need to replace our current statement with an up to date document, which is clear and easy to understand, using new ways to engage and empower people about the future planning of their local areas.
- 1.3. For many people, planning is something that they only get involved with when a development directly affects them, and this can sometimes be too late to really influence the process. You can be involved in how the borough develops from the early stages of local plan policy formulation to the end stage of commenting on planning applications. This document sets out how.
- 1.4. The new document answers the following key questions;
 - Why is community involvement important?
 - What do we do with your comments?
 - How can you become involved?
 - Who do we consult?
 - Which sort of planning issues can you comment on?
 - When should you let us know your views?

¹ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

² Reaching Out to the Community: Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement 2006

2. Why is community involvement important?

- 2.1. The Government is committed to increasing the ability of local communities to influence planning decisions and future development in their areas by making the planning system much more simple and accessible. The National Planning Policy Framework, published on 27 March 2012, has a stated aim of simplifying the planning system, making it easier to understand and much more accessible to local people. It sets out the Government's commitment to involve all interested parties in planning.

“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that local plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of an area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that may have been made.”³

Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.2. The Government has also introduced the option for a Parish or Town Council or a Neighbourhood Forum to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.⁴ These plans need to deliver growth within the area. They cannot promote less development than is set out in the Council's Local Plan, but they can promote more. In addition to, and unlike Council prepared plans, a Neighbourhood Plan must undergo a local referendum prior to being adopted. Once adopted it would form part of the Local Plan. The applications for the designation of a neighbourhood plan are listed on the Council's website at [Neighbourhood Planning](#).
- 2.3. The approach taken to engaging and involving local residents, business and other stakeholders is a matter for the Parish or Town Council or the Neighbourhood Forum if you have one. As local communities are responsible for the development of these plans, it is up to them to decide how they involve people and undertake any consultation. However, the Council does have some statutory functions regarding the development of Neighbourhood Plans, which are set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.⁵

³ National Planning Policy Framework 2012 paragraph 155

⁴ Localism Act 2011 paragraph 113

⁵ These regulations can be viewed at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

3. What do we do with your comments?

- 3.1. What you think matters; we will try to reflect this in the documents that we produce and the decisions that we make. We do have to make some very difficult decisions at times, and have to follow guidance set by others, for example planning law and Government guidance. There are certain things that we can't change or influence and we will let you know when this is the case.
- 3.2. This document reflects the current planning situation, but we recognise that Acts and regulations may change. We will consult in line with new legislation and update the document to reflect this. See www.legislation.gov.uk for the latest information.

4. How do you find out what difference your comments have made?

- 4.1. If your comments relate to a planning document, such as the Local Plan, we will prepare a responses document setting out how and why the comments made during the consultation have either been taken on board and influenced the final document or have not been considered as appropriate for inclusion. This document will be placed on the Council's website.
- 4.2. If your comments relate to a particular planning application, these are summarised and responded to within the planning officer's report.
- 4.3. This document now explains the two main types of planning document that you can comment on: **Planning Policy documents and Planning applications.**

5. Planning Policy Documents

- 5.1. There are two main types of policy documents that involve the consultation process, Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). There is more information on these documents at para 9.3. Waverley also has a programme of Conservation Area Appraisal which involves consultation (para 10.3).

The Local Plan

5.2. The Local Plan is central to delivering Waverley's vision for the future. It sets out how the Borough will grow over the next twenty years. It includes planning policies for how much housing we need to provide as well as broad policies for land uses such as employment, town centres and transport. Details of Waverley's new Local Plan documents are set out in our [Local Development Scheme](#) for Waverley Borough Council on the website.

6. Who do we consult?

- 6.1. There are certain organisations that the Council has a statutory duty to consult. When developing Local Plans, regulations state the types of groups that must be included in consultation processes. They are grouped into 'specific' and 'general' consultation bodies (See appendix 1).
- 6.2. **Specific bodies** are those organisations the Council is required to consult on all planning policy. They include organisations such as the Environment Agency, health care providers and neighbouring local authorities.
- 6.3. **General bodies** include voluntary groups, business interests and amenity groups who may be interested to find out how the proposed changes may affect them. Unlike specific bodies there is no definitive list of general bodies with whom the Council must consult.
- 6.4. In addition the Council works closely with neighbouring boroughs and districts and the County Council with regard to strategic priorities and areas of common interest. These partnerships help us to meet our Duty to Co-operate, established by the Localism Act 2011.
- 6.5. There are also statutory consultees that need to be notified on specific planning applications before the grant of permission. Consultation depends on the application type and location of the proposed development.

The Wider Waverley Community

- 6.6. Waverley has a resident population of 121,572. There are also some 7,700 businesses⁶, and many local interest and residents groups. It is important to understand who the local community is in order to ensure that we engage and consult in the most effective way, and that the views received are representative of the community as a whole and do not just represent the views of a vocal minority.
- 6.7. Whilst involvement in the preparation of Local Plan Documents is open to everyone, the Council will try to target consultation towards those most likely to be affected, for example by setting up workshops on particular topics or holding events in particular areas.
- 6.8. **Interest Groups:** The Council has a large database of organisations and community groups active in the Borough, which has been developed through previous consultation exercises. It includes amenity groups, conservation bodies, local residents associations, disability groups, business interests, landowners and developers. The Council will involve these organisations and groups in the preparation of relevant Development Plan Documents. We will endeavour to keep the database up-to-date and will actively encourage other organisations to register their interest.
- 6.9. **Hard to Reach Groups:** Waverley recognises that certain groups in society have specific needs or have less chance than others to get involved and are therefore under - represented in the planning process. In Waverley such 'hard to reach groups' may include young people, elderly people, rural communities, people on low incomes, people with disabilities, gypsy and traveller communities and ethnic minorities. The Council will continue to promote social inclusion by actively seeking to involve 'hard to reach groups' in the planning process.
- 6.10. **Individuals:** Waverley intends to keep individuals, who have expressed an interest previously, involved at each stage of the process. We will raise awareness about the preparation of new Local Plan Documents through a range of activities including social media. Individuals can register an interest in the preparation of individual Local Plan Documents in writing, by telephone, by e-mail and through the Council's website at www.waverley.gov/haveyoursay

⁶ Waverley's Economic & Community Development Framework 2007-2012

- 6.11. It is important to recognise that it's not just residents that make up our community. The Borough's many businesses located in the town and village centres and industrial estates, all make a significant contribution to the local economy. Some 40% of the population that work in the Borough commute from other areas. We also have a high proportion of people who work from home and a high number of micro businesses that employ less than 10 people.
- 6.12. There is also a strong voluntary and community sector that provides a number of valued services across Waverley. These organisations are important in delivering services to local people and, as such, are a key consultee on planning issues.
- 6.13. Utilities companies, Surrey County Council and other service providers such as the Waverley and Guildford CCG ⁷and the Environment Agency, are consulted on all planning policy and, where necessary, planning applications.

7. Waverley's Approach to Consultation on the Local Plan

- 7.1. Waverley recognises the different individuals that make up its community, their differing needs and expectations, and the various roles they perform. There is no 'one size fits all' and the methods of engagement may need to be tailored to maximise their opportunities to influence the way in which their local area should develop.
- 7.2. In order to maintain high standards of customer service and continually improve engagement with the community, we will use the following principles:

Make it relevant

- Focussing on issues that matter to particular groups
- Explaining the role of planning and the way in which people can have an influence

Avoid Consultation overload

- Maintaining our planning consultation database to keep it as up to date as possible, and making it accessible to allow consultees to update their own records
- Ensuring regular information on what we are doing is provided through the website, press articles and Council newsletters

⁷ Clinical Commissioning Group (formerly Primary Care Trust)

- Joining up with other consultation events whenever possible and use the results of other consultations as evidence

Make it readable and easily accessible

- Providing clear and jargon free consultation materials
- Recognising the importance of the internet in improving accessibility to information but also its limitations for consulting with some groups or individuals

Give you the information you need, when you need it

- Providing documents for inspection at the Council Offices and public libraries
- Providing the ability to respond online via the Planning Policy consultation portal
- Publishing all documents on the Council's website
- Informing all specific and general consultation bodies that the draft and associated documents are available for consultation
- Via the Town and Parish Councils, we will place notices on community notice boards in the Borough giving information on consultations
- Issuing a press release to publicise the consultation
- Using other events or publications, where available and appropriate, to publicise any consultation, including attending local community group meetings on request

Provide feedback

- Publishing consultation statements following all consultations
- Publishing reports following any research
- Waverley's Annual Monitoring Report also provides feedback through policy analysis and assessment, allowing people to see whether specific policies are working in practice.

Be clear about what we will do and what we will not do

- We will not accept any anonymous or confidential responses
- We will make all responses publicly available
- We will not take into account comments received after the consultation period
- We will not accept any responses which are considered to be offensive or prejudiced
- We will not provide individual responses. A generic consultation statement will address any issues raised.

8. How can you be involved in the Local Plan?

- 8.1. Every local authority is required to produce a Local Plan for its area. The Waverley Local Plan will guide the future development and use of land, buildings and infrastructure up to 2030. All planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Local Plan.
- 8.2. The new Local Plan for Waverley is being prepared in two stages. Part 1 will contain strategic policies and site allocations and Part 2 will contain the day-to-day development management policies. The Council must consult residents, businesses and other stakeholders on these documents and this section outlines the stages at which you can become involved.
- 8.3. There are two principal types of document that set out and explain policy. Each has different statutory arrangements that dictate what they can cover and how they are prepared.

Local Plans. These set out policies that will be used to manage development within the Borough. They are consulted on and examined by a Planning Inspector through a public examination.

Supplementary Planning Documents. These provide additional guidance on policies in the adopted Local Plan. They cannot introduce new policy. Although they are consulted on, they are not examined by a Planning Inspector.

- 8.4. In addition to Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents, you can also comment on:
 - The Statement of Community Involvement
 - Conservation Area appraisals

These documents are explained in greater detail at section 9.

- 8.5. The progress and success of these documents is monitored annually through the Annual Monitoring Report. The diagram overleaf illustrates how these different documents make up the Waverley Local Plan.
- 8.6. As a minimum for all public consultation on a draft document we will normally email or write (depending on stakeholder preference) to the relevant consultees on our database, issue a press release, post notices (if required) and other information on our website. For development plan documents we may have exhibitions or drop-in sessions. All documents will be available on our website, at the Council Offices and in most cases at all local libraries.
- 8.7. We will also use social media sites if appropriate.

9. Preparing Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents

- 9.1. All planning policy documents are required to be based on evidence. The evidence used in preparing a plan includes 'hard' statistical evidence such as census data, population projections, housing and accommodation needs, land supply and economic growth expectations. In addition 'soft' data can also be used to inform planning documents. This includes public opinion from consultation, surveys and workshops etc, which are used to ensure that any policy that is prepared reflects local opinion as far as possible.
- 9.2. In addition the Council needs to ensure that policies are compatible with national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Therefore the Council must balance the need to ensure that its policies not only reflect local opinion, as far as possible, but that they are justified by the empirical economic, social and environmental evidence whilst supporting the broad national aims of the Government.
- 9.3. In producing Local Plan documents a four-stage process will be used. The diagram overleaf illustrates the key stages in the plan making processes which are:
1. Preparation
 2. Production/ Publication of final draft document
 3. Submission and examination
 4. Adoption
- 9.4. Whilst all these stages will be undertaken for the production of Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) do not require an examination in public. As such, stage 3 does not apply. Each of these stages is discussed in the next section detailing what the Council will do to engage people.

Sustainability Appraisal

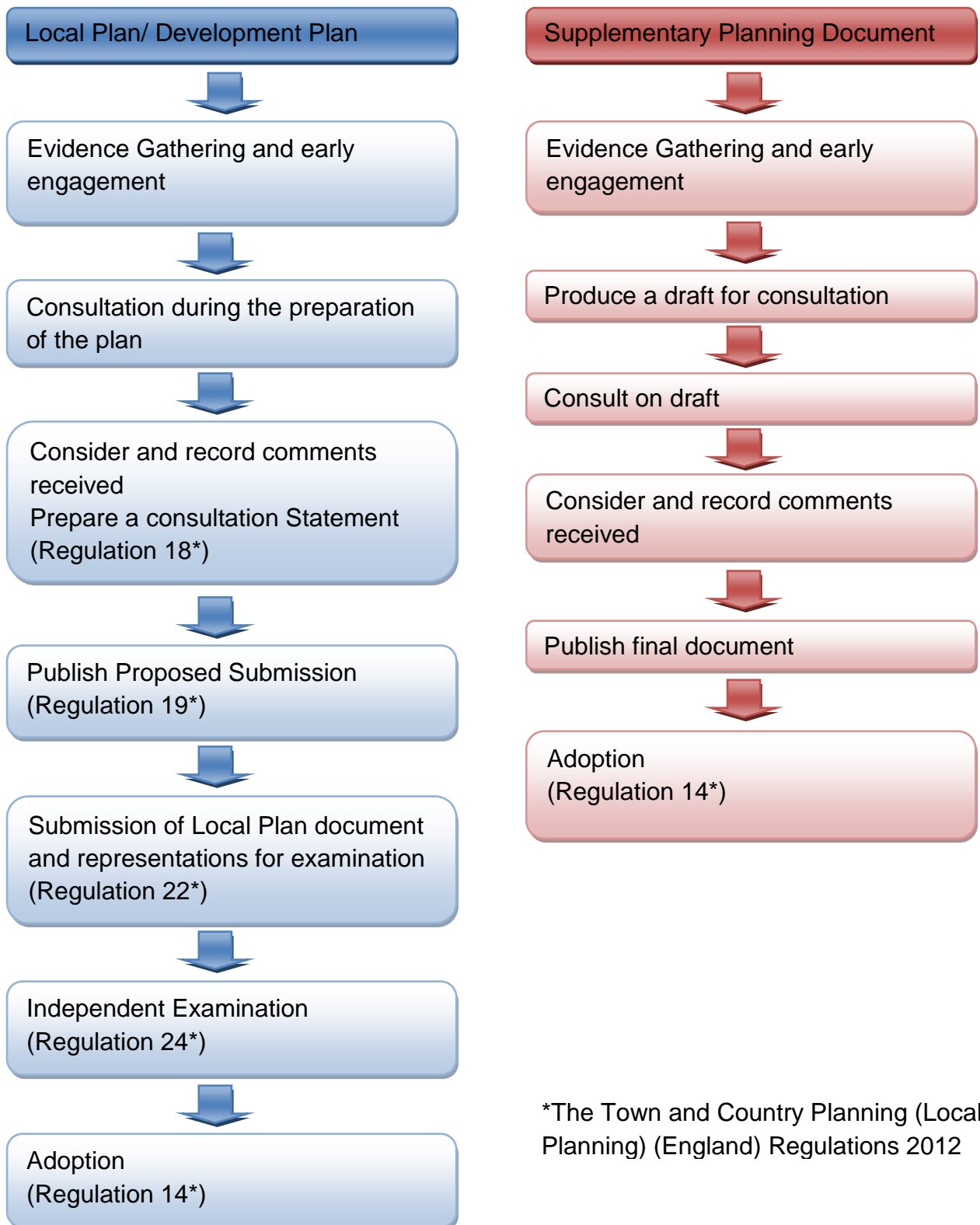
- 9.5. Throughout this process the Council is required to assess the social, environmental and economic implications of planning policies and proposals. Sustainability Appraisal takes place alongside the preparation of the Local Plan.

In undertaking sustainability appraisals, the Council will:

- Consult key stakeholders, including the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage on the scope of the appraisal

- Consult key stakeholders and the public as part of public participation in the preparation of a Development Plan Document
- Undertake public consultation on the final Sustainability Appraisal which supports the Proposed Submission Local Plan
- Sustainability Appraisals are not required for Supplementary Planning Documents.

Processes for Preparing Local Plan documents and Supplementary Planning Documents



Stage 1: Preparation

9.6. This stage applies to Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents.

What this stage involves

9.7. This stage involves the gathering of evidence and identification of the main issues relating to the document's purpose. This is where the process of engaging with residents, businesses, service providers, utilities and all other stakeholders will begin. This stage also involves considered options and alternatives, leading to the development of the plan that is published at Stage 2.

How you can be involved

9.8. This is the best time to be involved in the plan making process, as your comments and views form part of the evidence base that supports the Council in setting the policy direction of the proposed plan.

9.9. The methods used in engaging stakeholders will depend on the type of document being produced, the target audience and the Council's resources. Legislation does not set out how the Council should approach early engagement and any approach taken by the Council will be limited by the amount of financial and staff resources available. The Council will seek to use the most effective approach both in terms of cost and outcome.

9.10. The following list details some of the activities and methods we will consider using. It is not exhaustive; nor does it represent a list of activities that will be used in every instance. All engagement activities being undertaken will be published on the Council's website.

9.11. For Supplementary Planning documents there will be a consultation period of four to six weeks.

Providing information:

- Information on the Local Plan pages of the Council's website
- Public exhibitions
- Publication and distribution of posters, fliers and promotional leaflets, using the Town and Parish Councils to raise awareness
- Articles in the quarterly Waverley publication 'Making Waves'
- Present information at public events when the timing is coincidental

Consultation:

- Using the Council's online consultation portal

- Questionnaires and surveys
- Surveys of the Council's Citizens panel when appropriate

Involvement:

- Community planning workshops
- Stakeholder focus groups
- Meetings with community groups and other key stakeholders
- Many of the above activities are also dependent on timing. If the consultation or early engagement exercise falls within the timeframe of a Town and Parish Forum, Planning Agents forum or a 'Making Waves' publication date, then it will be possible to use these to support any consultation or engagement activity being undertaken.

Stage 2: Production/ Publication of final document

9.12. This stage applies to Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents.

What this stage involves

9.13. In the case of a local plan, the Council will publish the plan, and if necessary any changes to the adopted policies map or key diagram⁸, that, in its view should be the final version.

9.14. In the case of a Supplementary Planning Document, a final version will be produced and presented to the Council for adoption (see Stage 4). **There is no scope to make further comments on a Supplementary Planning Document at that stage.**

How you can be involved

9.15. The published local plan document will be subject to consultation for 6 weeks. This consultation stage is a statutory requirement⁹. The way in which you respond becomes much more formal at this stage. Representations can only relate to whether it has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, the relevant legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is considered to be 'sound'. **As such, your representation at this stage should only make reference to these matters.**

⁸ A policies map illustrates the policies, proposals and designations in the local plan documents. A Key Diagram shows the most strategic policy areas and broad designations.

⁹ The statutory requirements set out in Regulation 19,20,35 and 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

National Planning Policy Framework- Tests of soundness

Positively Prepared- the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;

Justified- the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;

Effective- the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross boundary strategic priorities; and

Consistent with national policy- the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the framework.

- 9.16. The consultation methods used will be advertised on the Council's website and will accord with the Core principles set out in section 7. To support anyone making a representation the Council will publish guidance notes setting out clearly how representations should be made. In addition the Council will provide an appropriate form on which representations can be made. We do prefer to have representations made via our consultation portal, but we will have paper copies of any forms available in appropriate places. Those making the representations should indicate if they would like to attend and give evidence at a public examination.
- 9.17. Following consideration of the comments made during the consultation, the Council will give consideration to making minor changes in the light of comments received prior to submission. If we decide we want to make more significant changes in the light of your comments, we will re-publish and re-consult.

Stage 3: Submission and examination

- 9.18. This stage applies to Local Plans only.

What this stage involves

- 9.19. All representations made at stage 1 are then submitted to the appointed inspector together with the document itself, and all supporting evidence used in its preparation¹⁰.

¹⁰ In accordance with statutory requirements set out in Regulation 22,35 and 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- 9.20. The independent inspector will consider whether the document meets the tests of soundness set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (as explained in 9.15).

How you can be involved

- 9.21. The Council will publicise the examination in accordance with statutory requirements¹¹, giving people at least 6 weeks notice before the opening of any hearing session. We will let you know where and when the hearing will be held and the name of the independent inspector via letter or email. This will also be publicised on the Local Plan Examination page of our website.
- 9.22. The Government encourages representations to be dealt with in writing. However, if people would like to present their evidence in person, a public hearing will be held. Written representations carry equal weight to those presented orally at the examination. The inspector will decide how any oral representations will be heard, and this can take place as a round table debate chaired by the inspector.

Stage 4: Adoption

- 9.23. This stage applies to Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents.

What this stage involves

- 9.24. Both Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents need to be formally adopted by the Council before they carry any weight¹². Once adopted, they become statutory planning policy or guidance and form part of the Waverley Local Plan.
- 9.25. Following examination of a Local Plan, the inspector will produce a report with their recommendations. On receipt of the Inspector's Report, the Council will make a copy publicly available and inform those persons who asked to be notified of its publication as soon as reasonably practicable.¹³ Where necessary, the document will be amended to reflect the Inspector's recommendations prior to being presented to the Council for adoption.

¹¹ The statutory requirements set out in Regulation 24, 35 and 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

¹² The Council must adopt in accordance with Regulation 14 or 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

¹³ In accordance with statutory requirements set out in Regulation 25,35 and 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- 9.26. With regards to Supplementary Planning Documents, the Council will consider the comments made at Stage 1 and make any appropriate changes before formally adopting the document.

How you can be involved

- 9.27. There is no scope to comment at this final stage of the process unless you wish to legally challenge the document being adopted¹⁴. The application must be made promptly, and in any event, not later than the end of the six weeks from the date set out in the Adoption Notice.

10. What other planning documents can you comment on?

Conservation Area Appraisals

- 10.1. We are currently reviewing our conservation areas through Conservation Area Appraisals and aim to complete two appraisals per year, with the first five years focusing on the larger towns and villages in Waverley.
- 10.2. The appraisals usually contain suggestions for improvements, changes to the conservation area boundary etc, and are consulted on locally and also on the Council's website. A consultation statement is also made available for each. [Conservation Areas](#)

¹⁴ Any aggrieved person can make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 on the grounds that the document is not within the appropriate power or that a procedural requirement has not been complied with.

11. How can you be involved in Planning Applications?

11.1. The Council's Planning Services is responsible for the processing of all planning applications within the Borough. This Section sets out how you can be involved in planning applications at the preplanning stage, application stage and once a decision has been made.

General advice and assistance

11.2. Detailed information on the Borough's Planning Service is available on our website, on the [Planning and Building Regulations home page](#). Information about whether planning permission is required (permitted development), what has to be submitted with a planning application (the local Validation List) and seeking advice before submitting an application (pre application advice), is available. There is also specific advice on how to view and comment on a planning application. For those without internet access, Surrey County Council libraries have computers available for the public to use. In addition, the Reception and Customer Team are available by telephone on 01483 523583, by e-mail planningenquiries@waverley.gov.uk and in person at the Planning Reception in the Council Offices, The Burys, Godalming, GU7 1HR. Officers will assist you in gaining access to the information and provide advice that you may require.

11.3. The Planning Portal is the UK Government's online planning and building regulations resource for England and Wales and also provides advice and services for the public and professionals www.planningportal.gov.uk . It provides information regarding the whole planning process as well as giving access to more detailed Government guidance.

11.4. Additionally, Planning Aid England provides free, independent and professional planning advice to communities and individuals that cannot afford to pay professional fees. This service encourages people to become involved in the planning system.

The contact details for [Planning Aid](#) are:

Telephone: 0330 123 9244

Email: advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

Stage 1: The pre-application stage

11.5. Formal procedures for dealing with pre application enquiries were introduced by the Council in 2008 with charging introduced in 2009. The development of this service, with appropriate fees, allows us to dedicate time to applicants to

improve the quality of development schemes prior to submission without this cost being borne by the Council. Early discussions on proposed schemes with the local community and relevant organisations and groups, before an application is finally put together and submitted as an application, benefit local communities as well as helping applicants identify areas where improvements or change might be beneficial to their proposal.

- 11.6. The Council will encourage developers/applicants to consult with the community about their initial schemes. Depending on the size and scale of the development proposal, the Council suggests developers/applicants use some or all of the follow methods of consultation:
- Letter/or discussion with neighbours about plans;
 - Presentations to Parish/Town Councils;
 - Exhibition events to discuss proposals with interested neighbours, community
 - groups and consultation bodies. This should also include media advertisement to publicise the event and development.
- 11.7. For very large scale developments, subject to the appropriate fee and at the discretion of the Head of Planning Services, Development Control Consultative Forums may be organised and held to allow the developer to present their proposal and for interested parties to express what they believe to be the key issues to be addressed in any planning application. In some cases, the consultation with the community prior to submitting an application for certain developments is compulsory under the Localism Act.
- 11.8. Pre application consultation should provide all groups, statutory and non-statutory, and specialist interest groups, with an opportunity to participate in the development of proposals. It gives local people a chance to comment when there is still an opportunity to influence the proposal.
- 11.9. Applicants are especially encouraged to liaise early with infrastructure providers (i.e. water/electricity/gas) for new developments at the pre-application stage.
- 11.10. When applicants have undertaken community consultation, it is advisable to include a full Statement of Community Involvement in the planning application submission. This will allow the Council to understand how the community and other stakeholders have been involved and how the feedback from this consultation has been incorporated into the application proposals.

Stage 2: The application stage

11.11. Opportunities for formal community involvement occur when applications are lodged, regardless of any pre application process that has occurred. These may be planning applications include tree applications and proposals, telecommunications proposals and listed building applications.

11.12. It is at this point when the majority of residents first become involved in the planning system, especially if the proposed development affects them directly. The Council determines some 2000 applications a year, ranging from householder applications (extensions and alterations to individual dwellings) to new housing schemes and retail and office developments. These decisions are important to local people as they have a direct impact on their own amenity as well as the way an area grows and develops.

11.13. The requirements for advertising and consulting on planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010. As well as meeting these statutory requirements, the Council has a well-established process for publicising planning applications. These include:

- Letters to residents/businesses/properties adjacent to the red line of the application site for most types of applications
- Letters to statutory organisations and interest groups
- Site notices (under certain circumstances)
- Newspaper adverts, where required
- A weekly list of applications sent to the local papers for them to publish at their discretion.
- Notification of this list to the relevant Parish and Town Council - who may display lists of local applications on their notice boards
- Planning applications with plans uploaded on the web to enable online consultation and tracking
- People signing up for alerts to applications via twitter
- Interactive [Waverley Planning maps](#) on the website which allows searching for recent applications in an area.

11.14. Applications, including all of their supporting information, are made available online. Comments can be made in writing direct to the Council or through the online consultation option or via e-mail to planconsult@waverley.gov.uk. There is information regarding how to comment on the reverse of the neighbour notification letters and on our website [How to view and comment on planning applications](#). Unfortunately, due to the volume of representations that are received, we do not provide acknowledgements. Full consideration will be given, and due weight attached, to the views of the community and stakeholders. The comments received and additional information, including the officer report (which includes a summary of comments received), are published on the website so that anyone can view the information upon which a decision is made.

Stage 3: The decision stage

11.15. Time scales: the majority of applications are dealt with within 8 weeks, or 13 weeks for 'major' applications. The applicant can appeal to the Secretary of State after this time. Applications are decided either by the relevant Area Planning Committee or the Joint Planning Committee (for larger scale or strategic level applications) or by the Development Control Management Team under delegated powers for small scale and householder development. (This means that certain categories of applications are decided by or on behalf of the Head of Planning rather than elected members). A Councillor can, however, request that an application that would normally be dealt with under delegated powers, be reported to the relevant Area Planning Committee for the decision to be made.

11.16. Planning Committee meetings are open to the public and are usually viewable on line as a webcast. The agenda showing the applications is available on line to view before the meeting and will include the officer's report and recommendation. There may be further written or oral reports at the meeting. For any application that will be determined by a Committee, the application may be subject to public speaking where there are a certain number of objections or support received. See the [Public Speaking Scheme](#) on the [Councillors and democracy](#) page of the website for details. Details regarding how planning committees are conducted, access to previous and current agendas and minutes can be found on this page too.

- We provide notification of decisions using the following methods:
- Decided applications can be viewed on the website either under the particular application or by looking at recently decided applications.

Stage 4: The post application stage

- 11.17. If an application is refused, or the decision includes a condition that the applicant/developer is not satisfied with, or the application has not been determined within the statutory time period, the applicant/developer may appeal the decision or non-determination to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) The Council will contact all those who made representations during the application to notify them of the appeal and, for some types of application, invite further comments. All views are taken into account during an appeal. The Planning Inspectorate will inform the Council and objectors of the outcome.
- 11.18. The appeal decision will be available on the website once the Council is notified. It can be viewed either under the particular application record or under the recently appealed application list.
- 11.19. The planning portal website contains information on how the appeal process works and includes a range of downloadable leaflets and appeal information from the Planning Inspectorate. [Planning Portal - Appeal Guidance](#).
- 11.20. If you are not the applicant or the developer you have no right of appeal.

12. Planning Enforcement

- 12.1. There will be occasions when individuals, companies or organisations may carry out work or use land or buildings in ways that may give rise to concerns that they may not have the necessary planning or other consents in place. The Planning Enforcement team investigates potential breaches of planning control.
- 12.2. To lodge a complaint see the [How to report a breach in planning](#) page on our website. Some people may be reluctant to lodge a complaint because of fears regarding potential confrontation. However, the identity of the complainant is kept confidential.
- 12.3. Waverley undertakes to keep the complainant updated on what is happening during the investigation of the complaint and the final outcome. However, public access to complaint investigation information can be restricted for legal reasons. If formal enforcement action is taken then the Enforcement Register, which is a public document, can be inspected.

- 12.4. The Waverley Borough Council [Local Planning Enforcement Plan](#) was adopted on 4 June 2013. The main function of enforcement action is to protect the environment in the public interest. The Plan identifies local priorities for enforcement action to ensure that the Council's resources are put to the best use in dealing with breaches of planning control, in a fair and consistent manner.

13. How well are we doing?

- 13.1. The Government recommends assessing resources for managing community involvement. Involving the community during all planning processes has time, staff resource and funding implications and must be a key consideration when planning any form of engagement or consultation.
- 13.2. Therefore whilst Waverley is committed to providing a high level service to the community making sure everyone has the opportunity to be involved in the planning process the Council will look to achieve this in the most resource efficient way. Therefore any approach used when engaging with stakeholders will reflect the type of work being undertaken. Any non-statutory approaches used during engagement or consultation activities will also be reviewed to assess whether such an approach was effective and achieved value for money.
- 13.3. The Statement of Community Involvement will be monitored on a regular basis and the outcomes of any consultation or engagement activity reported through the Annual Monitoring Report. This will include assessing whether the community involvement techniques indicated in this document have been effective and efficient in achieving a good level of public involvement and participation across all sections. As a result of monitoring, the Council will consider what changes, if any, need to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

14. Appendix 1: Consultation Groups Involved in Local Plan production

Specific Consultation bodies

The council must involve the following statutory organisations in the Local Plan process. These along with the government departments listed below form the specific consultation bodies as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. These are:

- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- Secretary of State for Transport
- Highway Agency
- Surrey County Council- Strategy, Transport and Planning
- Other adjacent local authorities
- M3 Local Enterprise Partnership
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Waverley and Guildford Clinical Commissioning Group (formerly Primary Care Trust)
- Surrey Police
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Relevant telecommunications companies
- Relevant electricity and gas companies
- Relevant water and sewerage undertakers
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Town and Parish Councils

General consultation bodies

- Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of Waverley Borough Council's area.
- Bodies that represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in Waverley Borough Council's area
- Bodies that represent the interests of different religious groups in Waverley Borough Council's area
- Bodies, which represent the interests of disabled persons in Waverley Borough Council's area.
- Bodies, which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in Waverley Borough Council's area.

Duty to co-operate bodies

- Environment Agency

- English Heritage
- Natural England
- The Mayor of London
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes and Communities Agency
- NHS Surrey
- Office of Rail Regulation
- Transport for London
- Surrey County Council
- Highway Agency
- M3 Local Enterprise Partnership

Other Consultees

Some 3,000 bodies and individuals are registered on the Waverley Planning Service database. These have been grouped and include:

- Individual Residents, residents associations, local strategic partnership, parish councils, community groups, societies, political parties
- Councillors- Local and County
- Local businesses, business associations, chamber of commerce, commercial companies
- Adjoining local authorities, developers, agents, planning consultants, architects, surveyors, landscape architects, housing associations
- Landowners, Estate agents (residential and commercial)
- Disabled groups, public agencies, charity organisations, voluntary organisations, care providers, health providers, leisure groups, minority groups, religious groups, sports bodies, young people, older people, faith groups, equalities, community support.
- Environment and nature, historic groups, Conservation Area Advisory Committees
- Infrastructure providers, schools and education institutes, transport groups
- Members of Parliament
- Government Departments