

Committee Agenda



Epping Forest District Council

District Development Control Committee Thursday, 27th April, 2006

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Room: Council Chamber

Time: 7.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Simon Hill, Research and Democratic Services
Tel: 01992 564249 Email: shill@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), Mrs M Boatman (Vice-Chairman), Mrs D Borton, M Colling, Mrs R Gadsby, A Green, D Kelly, A Lee, F Maclaine, L Martin, Mrs P Richardson, B Sandler, Mrs P Smith, Ms S Stavrou and K Wright

**A BRIEFING WILL BE HELD FOR THE CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN AND GROUP
SPOKESPERSONS OF THE COMMITTEE AT 6.30 P.M.
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1 ON THE EVENING OF THE MEETING**

**1. ADVICE TO PUBLIC AND SPEAKERS AT COUNCIL PLANNING
SUBCOMMITTEES (Pages 5 - 6)**

General advice to people attending the meeting is attached.

2. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee (attached)

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To declare interests in any item on this agenda.

6. HIGHVIEW FARM, COBBINSEND ROAD, UPSHIRE - ERECTION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKER'S DWELLING (Pages 9 - 18)

To consider the attached report.

7. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (Pages 19 - 50)

To consider the attached report.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs 6 and 25 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution requires that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order 6 (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Committee concerned and the Chairman of that Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Exclusion: To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
Nil	Nil	Nil

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Confidential Items Commencement: Paragraph 9 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00 p.m. at the latest.

- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers: Paragraph 8 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

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Advice to Public and Speakers at Council Planning Subcommittees

Are the meetings open to the public?

Yes all our meetings are open for you to attend. Only in special circumstances are the public excluded.

When and where is the meeting?

Details of the location, date and time of the meeting are shown at the top of the front page of the agenda along with the details of the contact officer and members of the Subcommittee. A map showing the venue will be attached to the agenda.

Can I speak?

If you wish to speak **you must register with Democratic Services by 4.00 p.m. on the day before the meeting**. Ring the number shown on the top of the front page of the agenda. Speaking to a Planning Officer will not register you to speak, you must register with Democratic Service. Speakers are not permitted on Planning Enforcement or legal issues.

Who can speak?

Three classes of speakers are allowed: One objector (maybe on behalf of a group), the local Parish or Town Council and the Applicant or his/her agent.

What can I say?

You will be allowed to have your say about the application but you must bear in mind that you are limited to three minutes and if you are not present by the time your item is considered, the Subcommittee will determine the application in your absence.

Can I give the Councillors more information about my application or my objection?

Yes you can but it must not be presented at the meeting. If you wish to send further information to Councillors, their contact details can be obtained through Democratic Services or our website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk. Any information sent to Councillors should be copied to the Planning Officer dealing with your application.

How are the applications considered?

The Subcommittee will consider applications in the agenda order. On each case they will listen to an outline of the application by the Planning Officer. They will then hear any speakers presentations. The order of speaking will be (1) Objector, (2) Parish/Town Council, then (3) Applicant or his/her agent. The Subcommittee will then debate the application and vote on either the recommendations of officers in the agenda or a proposal made by the Subcommittee. Should the Subcommittee propose to follow a course of action different to officer recommendation, they are required to give their reasons for doing so.

The Subcommittee cannot grant any application, which is contrary to Local or Structure Plan Policy. In this case the application would stand referred to the next meeting of the District Development Control Committee.

Further Information?

Can be obtained through Democratic Services or our leaflet 'Your Choice, Your Voice'

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: District Development Control Committee **Date:** 7 March 2006

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.05 pm

Members Present: Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), Mrs M Boatman (Vice-Chairman), Mrs D Borton, M Colling, Mrs R Gadsby, A Green, A Lee, F Maclaine, L Martin, D Stallan, Councillor Mrs P Smith, Ms S Stavrou, M Woollard and K Wright

Other Councillors: (none)

Apologies: D Kelly, B Sandler and Mrs P Richardson

Officers Present: B Land (Assistant Head of Planning and Economic Development), G Lunnun (Democratic Services Manager) and T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer)

31. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 17 January 2006 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the correction of the following typographical errors:

- (a) substitution of "Councillors" for "Councillor" in Minute 21(2) (Declarations of Interest);
- (b) renumbering of the Resolutions in Minute 25 (Planning application EPF/1643/05 – 5 Avenue Road, Theydon Bois) to (1), (2), (3) and (4); and
- (c) deletion of the second "6" in Resolution (5) of Minute 29 (Tree Preservation Orders – Applications to fell trees and enforcement – procedural changes and delegated authorities).

32. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that Councillor D Stallan was substituting for Councillor B Sandler and that Councillor M Woollard was substituting for Councillor D Kelly.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ms S-A Stavrou declared a personal interest in Item 6 (Wyldwoods, Woodgreen Road, Waltham Abbey – Demolition of existing "coach house" and erection of new dwelling on same footprint (EPF/2208(05)) by virtue of being the Ward Councillor. She indicated that she would remain in the meeting for the discussion and voting on that item.

34. WYLDWOODS, WOODGREEN ROAD, WALTHAM ABBEY - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING 'COACH HOUSE' AND ERECTION OF NEW DWELLING ON SAME FOOTPRINT (EPF/2208/05)

The Committee considered planning application ref EPF/2208/05 for the demolition of the existing "coach house" and the erection of a new dwelling on the same footprint. The application had been referred to the Committee by Area Plans Sub-Committee 'D' with a recommendation that planning permission be granted as such a decision would be contrary to the Council's adopted policy. Members noted that Area Plans Sub-Committee 'D' had been of the view that in practical terms the impact on the openness of the Green Belt would be unaltered by the proposal and that a rebuild was likely to be more energy-efficient than the previously agreed conversion proposals.

The Committee concurred with the views of the Sub-Committee that there were very special circumstances in this case and that planning permission should be granted. The Committee did not consider that a Section 106 legal agreement requiring the dwelling to become an annex to Wyldwoods and be part of the curtilage of that property when the applicant ceased to occupy the building would serve any useful purpose. However, members were of the view that conditions should be imposed regarding the removal of permitted development rights and requiring that there should be no physical separation between the new dwelling and Wyldwoods.

RESOLVED:

That planning application EPF/2208/05 for the demolition of existing "coach house" and erection of new dwelling on the same footprint at Wyldwoods, Woodgreen Road, Waltham Abbey be granted subject to conditions relating to:

- (a) time limit for commencement;
- (b) use of reclaimed materials from the demolition of the coach house and matching, second-hand materials;
- (c) development to be carried out strictly in accordance with drawing numbers 301c and 302c;
- (d) notwithstanding the previous condition, the northern access shall be closed;
- (e) no removal of trees or shrubs without prior consent;
- (f) removal of permitted development rights; and
- (g) no physical separation between the new dwelling and Wyldwoods.

CHAIRMAN

Report to District Development Control Committee

Date of meeting: 27 April 2006

Subject: Highview Farm, Cobbinsend Road, Upshire - EPF/1319/05



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Officer contact for further information: S Andrews Ext 4601
Committee Secretary: S Hill Ext 4249

Recommendation(s):

That the Committee considers a recommendation of Area Plans Sub-Committee D that planning permission be granted for the erection of an agricultural worker's dwelling.

Report Detail

Background

1. This application has been referred to this Committee by Area Plans Sub-Committee D with the recommendation that planning permission be granted.
2. The application was reported to Plans Sub Committee on 26 March 2006 with a recommendation that planning permission be refused and a copy of that report is attached. To grant permission would be contrary to policy and therefore the matter is referred to this Committee for decision.

Planning Issues

3. The main issues in determining the application concern whether very special circumstances exist, which allow an exception to be made to Green Belt policy.
4. The site is located in a remote area of the District along Cobbinsend Road, Upshire.
5. When considering this submission, members of the Area Plans Sub Committee considered that very special circumstances exist because the applicant had demonstrated that a dwelling the size of that being proposed, some 280m², whilst nearly twice the size of the maximum size as laid out in Policy GB17 (iv) (the floor area of the living accommodation should not exceed 150 square metres), was necessary to accommodate the applicant's family and a member of staff. Members considered that the necessity for the family and a member of staff to be accommodated in the proposed dwelling was essential for the viability of the farming enterprise.
6. Whilst officers agreed with the Committee members regarding the viability of the business, they were concerned that this dwelling was too large and would detract from the openness of the Green Belt. It was on this basis that a recommendation for refusal was put forward as it would be contrary to Policies GB2 and GB17 of *the adopted Local Plan*.

7. Many farming enterprises operate with just one, reasonably sized dwelling for the farm owner or manager. Relief staff or other specialist staff generally live off farm. Furthermore, despite the stated justification, no control could be exercised to prevent the enlarged accommodation being used just by the applicant's family.

Conclusion

8. Should the Committee be minded to grant permission for this development, it is suggested that consideration be given to the imposition of the following planning conditions:
 - (a) to be commenced within 5 years
 - (b) amended Plans received on 22nd February 2006
 - (c) materials of construction to be agreed
 - (d) GPDO rights restricted – Class A, B, E.
 - (e) submission of landscape details
 - (f) retention of existing trees and shrubs
 - (g) submission of a flood risk assessment (SC84)
 - (h) contaminated land investigation and remediation
9. Nevertheless, officers remain of the view that the proposal seeks to set aside Green Belt policy to an overly significant extent due to the excessive size of the dwelling, and continue to recommend that permission be refused.

Agenda Item 6

APPLICATION No:	EPF/1319/05
SITE ADDRESS:	High View Farm Cobbinsend Road Waltham Abbey
PARISH:	Waltham Abbey
APPLICANT:	G Matthews
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	REFUSE

REASONS:

- 1 The proposed dwelling by reason of its excessive size, height and bulk, would detract from the openness of the Green Belt and has a greater floor area of living accommodation than the normally allowed for agricultural workers dwelling and is therefore contrary to Policies GB2 and GB17 of the adopted Local Plan.

This application has been called before Committee at the request of Councillor Stavrou

Description of Proposal:

Consent is being sought for the erection of an agricultural workers dwelling, with the floor space approximately 280sqm. The applicant states that his private accommodation would extend to only 130.63sqm with the rest being shared accommodation, staff accommodation and office/store rooms.

Description of Site:

A piece of largely unkempt agricultural land located on the eastern side of Cobbinsend Road, Upshire, previously used for a number of small agricultural enterprises. The site currently contains 3 agricultural barns, two of which were approved by this committee in 1999. There is a large area of hardstanding to the front of the barns. The site is on high ground, well screened by existing vegetation along its north, west and eastern flank, but is open with clear views to the south. Access is via a single track linking Cobbinsend Road with Claverhambury. This piece of land makes up part of the wider farm, which extends to approximately 825 acres. The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Relevant History:

EPF/251/99 – Two agricultural barns – Approved with Conditions

Policies Applied:

Government Guidance:

PPS7 – Sustainable development in rural areas.

Structure Plan:

CS2 – Protecting the natural and built environment

CS4 – Sustainable new development

C2 – Development within the Metropolitan Green Belt

H2 – Housing development – the sequential approach

H3 – Location of residential development

Local Plan:

GB2 – Development in the Green Belt

GB17 – Agricultural Workers dwellings in the Green Belt

HC2 – Ancient Landscapes

DBE1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10 – Residential Development Policies

T17 - Highways

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues to be considered here are the need for the dwelling, the viability of the agricultural enterprise concerned, the impact on the Green Belt and amenity.

Need for Dwelling

In support of the application a statement has been submitted which argues the following:

- The dwelling is intended for Mr Graham Matthews, his family and a member of staff.
- Mr Matthews has been farming around Upshire for 25 years.
- The main farming enterprises are beef and arable production.
- Over the next 12 months, Mr Matthews is intending to expand his pedigree Aberdeen Angus herd, which currently comprises of around 100 head of cattle, valued at £41,000.
- Over recent years, Mr Matthews has invested approximately £150,000 in new buildings and a further £700,000 on land purchased in 2005.
- At present Mr Matthews and his family are living in accommodation in Upshire that is rented from the Corporation of London but does not allow adequate monitoring of the beef herd or the estimated £250,000 worth of farm machinery stored on the land. Two incidents of theft have been reported to the Police this year.
- The business currently employs 3 people with working hours varying from 10 – 14 hours per day depending on the season.
- Mr Matthews has been building up stock numbers over the last 5 years and hopes to stock 50 breeding cows in a year's time with a rise in calf numbers occurring.
- At present the cows are served by the herd bull but Mr Matthews is also looking at Artificial Insemination in order to enable selective pedigree breeding to take place and maximise herd efficiency. It is contended therefore that in order to move to this system it is vital Mr Matthews is close to the stock to see when the animals are on heat so that they can be inseminated at their most fertile period. The herd calves all year round so it is important the animals are monitored closely.

- The anticipated increase in cattle numbers highlights the need for Mr Matthews to be resident on site. The business has encountered calf deaths in recent times where nobody has been on site to monitor the progress and assist if necessary. A supporting letter from the applicant's vet states,

“With the proposed increase number of animals that you have calving and with this an increase in the number of heifers calving this problem is likely to increase. In order to provide the required management of the pedigree Angus herd it would be helpful for someone to live on site.... We discussed the improvement of the herd through using artificial insemination...It is unlikely that artificial insemination will work properly unless someone is living on site to catch the cattle on heat and ensure they are served at the right time”.

- The proposed dwelling is a two storey four bedroomed house to accommodate Mr and Mrs Matthews, their young family and a member of staff. It is proposed to be in close proximity to the existing agricultural buildings in an attempt to reduce the visual impact of the dwelling. It would be 14.8m wide by 10m deep by 7.75m high.

Viability of Enterprise

Policy GB17 of the Local Plan requires that an agricultural workers dwelling will only be permitted if the dwelling is essential for the enterprise and that there is firm evidence of viability of the agricultural holding. The application has therefore been subject to a detailed appraisal undertaken by a Land Management consultant employed regularly by Council in order to assess the justification for the development.

The report prepared in respect of this application highlights the following issues:

“The functional test is necessary to establish whether or not it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times. Two circumstances are suggested in the guidance where this situation might arise: in the case of animals or agricultural processes that require essential care at short notice and to deal quickly with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products.

“The protection of livestock from theft or injury by intruders may also contribute on animal welfare grounds for the need for a new agricultural dwelling.....

“Although the existing location of Mr. Matthews dwelling is not unsatisfactory for the supervision of livestock when they are on the grassland, a dwelling located in proximity to the new livestock building will be necessary to improve supervision when stock are housed there in sufficient numbers.....

“..... based on a standard man-days calculation, although a 50 cow unit fattening all young stock, would probably not in itself provide fulltime employment, a 75 cow unit certainly would do. However, if an allowance is made for the other activities taking place on the holding than the farm will already have more than sufficient work for one fulltime employee.

“Profitability and Establishment of the Business:

“As demonstrated in the financial section the overall farm business operated by Mr Matthews is now well established and financially sound...Looking in more detail at the livestock enterprise on its own however this contributes only a modest amount into the overall farm budget. Once a cycle

based on breeding is established then this enterprise on its own would be sufficient to meet the financial test provided the target projections for sales and income were met.

“Because the land purchase and construction of the new building has only recently taken place the breeding herd is being established and therefore a full cycle of production has not yet taken place based on 50 cows. There is however the capacity for considerable growth in the beef enterprise towards the target of a 100 breeding cow unit.

“Other Available Accommodation:

“Mr Matthews and his family currently live in rented accommodation in Upshire. As noted previously, although this dwelling is convenient for the supervision of stock on the various blocks of grazing land it is not well placed to provide satisfactory supervision to the livestock building at the new farmstead. There would also be a benefit to the stability of the business in owning the dwelling occupied by the owner/farmer.

“Conclusions:

“Mr Matthews has many years experience in livestock farming and has been building up his farming enterprise in this district over a long period of time. Operating a mixed farming operation in an area close to urban centres is especially demanding and requires additional time commitment and expertise.

“The business has progressed considerably in the last 12 months with the purchase of two main blocks of land and construction of the new buildings. This has helped give the farming enterprise a better centre of operations and will provide a long term base for the farm.

“The functional need to have accommodation within sight and sound of the main livestock building to meet the welfare and management needs of the stock is recognised and acknowledged.

“The herd is going through a period of rapid expansion at present and in my view there is sufficient work for one fulltime person associated with this enterprise when taken together with the security and other needs of operating a rather fragmented holding; especially with some land which borders the urban fringe.

“Mr Matthews’s farm business has been established for more than three years, although the potential stand alone profitability of the beef enterprise has only just crystallised with the recent acquisition of more pedigree stock. The business however is considered to be financially sound and given the Applicants commitment to the enterprise is likely to have the clear prospect of remaining so in the future”.

It is clear that the enterprise is well founded and has developed with a good deal of investment in recent years. A period living in a mobile home is not seen to be essential here since Mr Matthews has already established his enterprise through living in rented accommodation nearby.

Green Belt and Amenity

GB17 states, inter alia, that **“The floor area of the living accommodation does not exceed 150 square metres (measured externally)”**, the reasoning being that these dwellings can be kept available to meet the needs of the types of worker for whom they are intended. Where larger units are granted permission and extended, pressure arises to remove occupancy conditions, because farm workers, whose wages have been historically low cannot afford the property. Therefore restricting the size of the property has been one way in which this can be tackled and reflects the need to protect the Green Belt and countryside.

The floor area of the proposed dwelling is 280sqm. This is clearly over the 150sqm as stated above. Whilst the applicant argues that only 130.63sqm would be for private living accommodation only, with the large entrance hall and kitchen being called “shared accommodation”, the fact remains that the size of the dwelling is much larger than normally permitted, would not be in keeping with the definition of an agricultural workers dwelling and importantly would have a detrimental impact on the open character of the Green Belt.

The applicant states further that the dwelling would house an employee as he has experienced difficulties providing employee accommodation in the past due to cost and scarcity and last year an employee had to live in Bishops Stortford and travel in each day. The added advantage is that it will allow the animals to be checked if the Matthews family are away.

These issues are not considered special circumstances. Many people have to travel a reasonable distance to and from their place of work each day. There is no evidence to show that the employee was not able to live closer to the farm. Furthermore the employee would be able to stay at the Matthews house if they were away. It is not essential that he must live there on a permanent basis. That would be tantamount to providing accommodation for two full-time workers, which is not justified.

Ancient Landscape

The site itself is within an Area of Ancient Landscape but given the current state of the land, it does not positively contribute to the area because of its poor appearance. Two agricultural buildings were granted permission in 1999 on this site and it is not considered that a new dwelling here would be so detrimental to the setting as to justify a refusal on this ground.

Conclusion:

Whilst there appears to be genuine argument for a new dwelling to be located on this site, given the size of the dwelling, some 130sqm larger than those normally permitted, it is considered on balance that not only would this have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt but would be contrary to GB17 in that it would have a greater floor area than that normally permitted which could lead to pressure to remove the agricultural workers’ condition in the future as potential farmworkers may not be able to afford to purchase a property of this size.

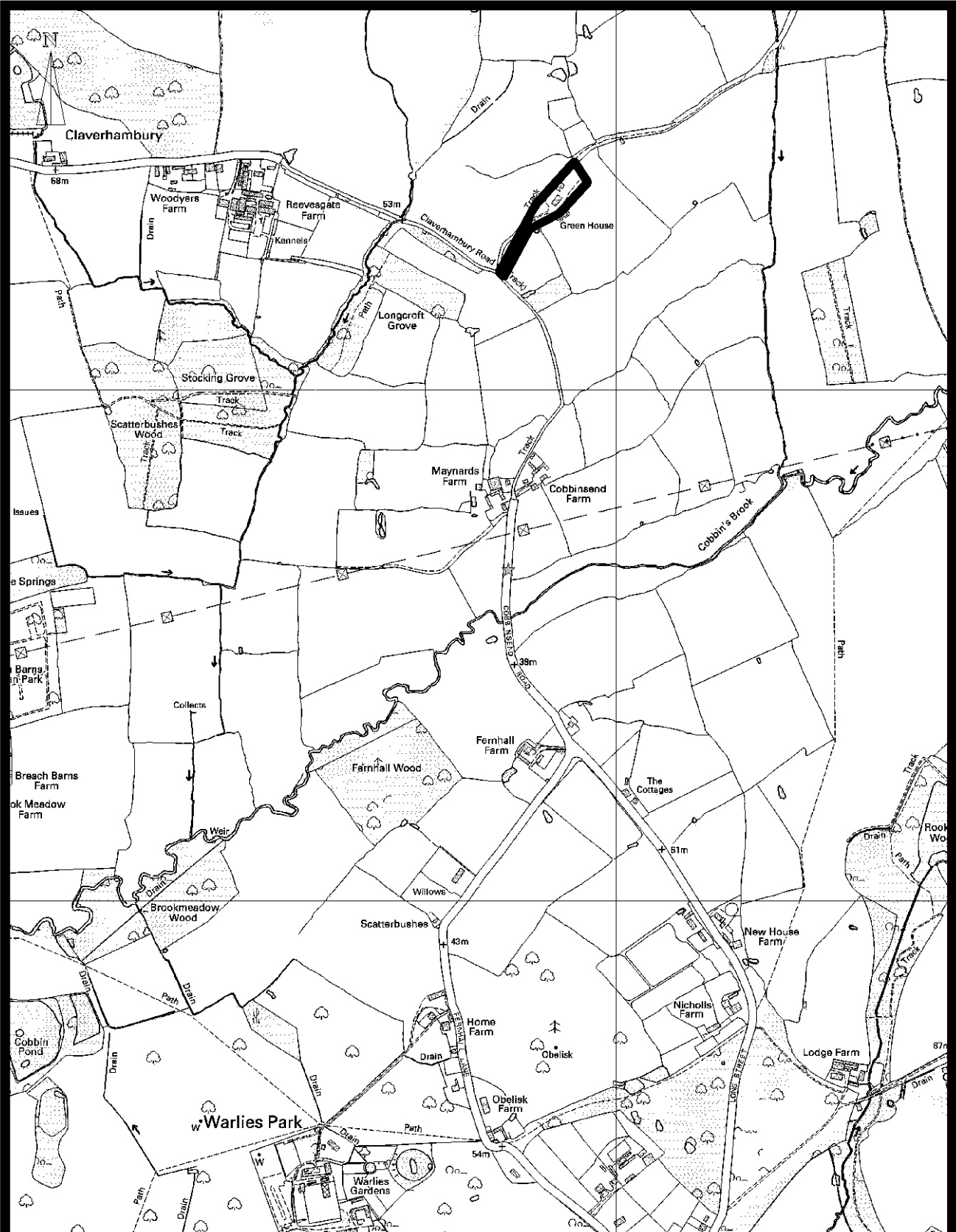
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

WALTHAM ABBEY TOWN COUNCIL – No objection – In view of the reduction in size of the proposed dwelling, the Town council withdraws its objection.

THE FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST - Question whether there is sufficient justification for creating a new large building on a prominent Green Belt site with its concomitant lighting and traffic movements both during and after construction. This applicant would appear to have a genuine agriculture project in train and to be operating on a more viable scale. However this is an exceptionally sensitive and valuable location, bounded by Historic Landscape and a Green Lane, close to Corporation’s Buffer Lands and approached by narrow lane believed to be of great antiquity with verges whose flora requires protection.

CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ESSEX - Object to the application on Green Belt terms and understand that Mr G. Matthews recently sold (July 2005) a house on his adjacent farm

(Maynards) and is now applying to erect a substantial workers dwelling on his other property (High View Farm).



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Report to District Development Control Committee

Date of meeting: 27th April 2006



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Statement of Community Involvement (as part of the Local Development Framework)

Officer contact for further information: Babatunde Adebutu (01992 - 56 4347)

Committee Secretary: Simon Hill (01992 – 564249)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for public consultation (to begin on 30 April 2006) in line with Regulations 25 and 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 be agreed;**
- (2) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development be authorised to take decisions on subsequent changes to the SCI following the first stage of consultation under Regulation 25;**
- (3) That the SCI be included in the annual Consultation Plan for 2006/07.**

Background.

1. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is one of the statutory documents the Council is now required to produce under the new system of development planning, the Local Development Framework (LDF). Its purpose is to explain and describe how the planning authority will involve the community and major stakeholders in the production and revision of Local Development Documents (LDDs), and in considering planning applications.
2. Advice on the preparation of SCIs stresses that a pragmatic approach should be followed which does not unrealistically raise public expectations, but does encourage innovation. There should be a sensible approach taken regarding resources available to the council as a whole and Planning Services in particular. Government guidance and the emerging corporate consultation strategy support joint consultation exercises wherever possible – it would seem sensible to bring the Community Strategy and the LDF closer together to share resources wherever possible. The main principles of the new approach are:
 - To ensure information is accessible
 - To make provision for the community, including “hard to reach” groups, to contribute ideas and take active and continued part in developing proposals
 - To make certain that the community will be consulted and will have the opportunity to comment on, support, or object to policy proposals and planning applications
 - To provide feedback so the community is informed about outcomes and progress.
3. The draft SCI (attached) must initially be sent out for informal consultation to (a) the regional planning body (EERA), (b) each relevant authority, any part of whose area is in or adjoins the district (this includes town and parish councils abutting the district boundary) and (c) the Highways Agency. Following consideration of comments raised on this round of consultation, the amended draft SCI should then be the subject of

formal 'pre-submission public participation' for six weeks – this involves a much wider range of consultees than the first consultation, but includes those from the first exercise. Officers hope that Members can agree to authorise the Portfolio Holder to agree changes as a consequence of the first consultation.

4. The results of the second (formal) consultation round, and officer recommendations for consequent changes to the draft SCI, will be reported to a future meeting of this Committee for decision. The final draft SCI must then be submitted to the Secretary of State, coupled with a further six week period for formal consultation. An independent Inspector will be appointed to examine the 'soundness' of the document and to consider any outstanding representations. The Inspector's report will be binding on the Council, so before the SCI can be formally adopted, any changes recommended by the Inspector will have to be incorporated in the final document. It is important that a realistic assessment is made of resources because the SCI will guide how the Council involves the community in the preparation of Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents under the LDF and in consulting on planning applications.
5. Officers are aware of the draft corporate 'Public Consultation and Engagement Policy and Strategy' and the related consultation toolkit 'A Guide to Consultation'. While the SCI has to be prepared in the light of Government guidance and regulations, officers are satisfied that it accords with the emerging corporate strategy.
6. Members will be aware that the Local Development Scheme (essentially the programme for the preparation of the LDF) was adopted in March 2005. This sets 'milestones' by which the Authority will be assessed in terms of future Planning Delivery Grant. The relevant targets for the SCI are (a) informal consultation – April 06; (b) formal consultation – June 06; (c) submission to the Secretary of State – September 06; and (d) adoption – March 07. If the Committee agree the draft SCI (subject ,if necessary, to minor amendments) at this meeting, the first of these milestones can be achieved.



Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Draft Statement of Community Involvement



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This is a consultation document. Comments can be made by one of the following methods:

- Completing the form accompanying the document and returning it to:

**Henry Stamp
Forward Planning Manager
Epping Forest District Council
Planning Services
FREEPOST ANG 2395
Epping
ESSEX
CM16 4YY**

- Sending comments by email to sci@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Via the EDFC website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Sending comments by fax to **01992 564229**

If you would prefer to make comments in person, an appointment can be made with a planning officer at the Civic Offices by calling **01992 564347**

If you require this document in an alternative format such as large print or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the Forward Planning team on 01992 564347 or email sci@eppingforestdc.gov.uk with your specific requirements.

CONTENTS

	page
The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	4
Epping Forest District Local Development Framework	4
Statement of Community Involvement	7
Consultation on the LDF	
Introduction	10
LDF consultees	10
Community Involvement	10
Feedback on consultation	11
Role of members	11
Methods of Consultation & Engagement (Table 1)	12
Development Plan Documents	15
Supplementary Planning Documents	18
Sustainability Appraisal	18
Consultation on planning applications	
Introduction	19
Pre-application discussions	19
Informing people about planning applications	19
Acknowledgement of receipt	19
Information on planning decisions	20
Appeals	20
Enforcement	20
Next Steps – Links with other strategies	21
Reviewing the SCI	21
Figure 1 – The Local Development Framework	6
Figure 2 – Production of the SCI	9
Figure 3 – Schedule of preparation of a DPD	17
Appendices	
1 – Glossary of Terms	24
2 – Consultation Bodies	26

INTRODUCTION

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

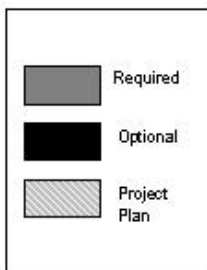
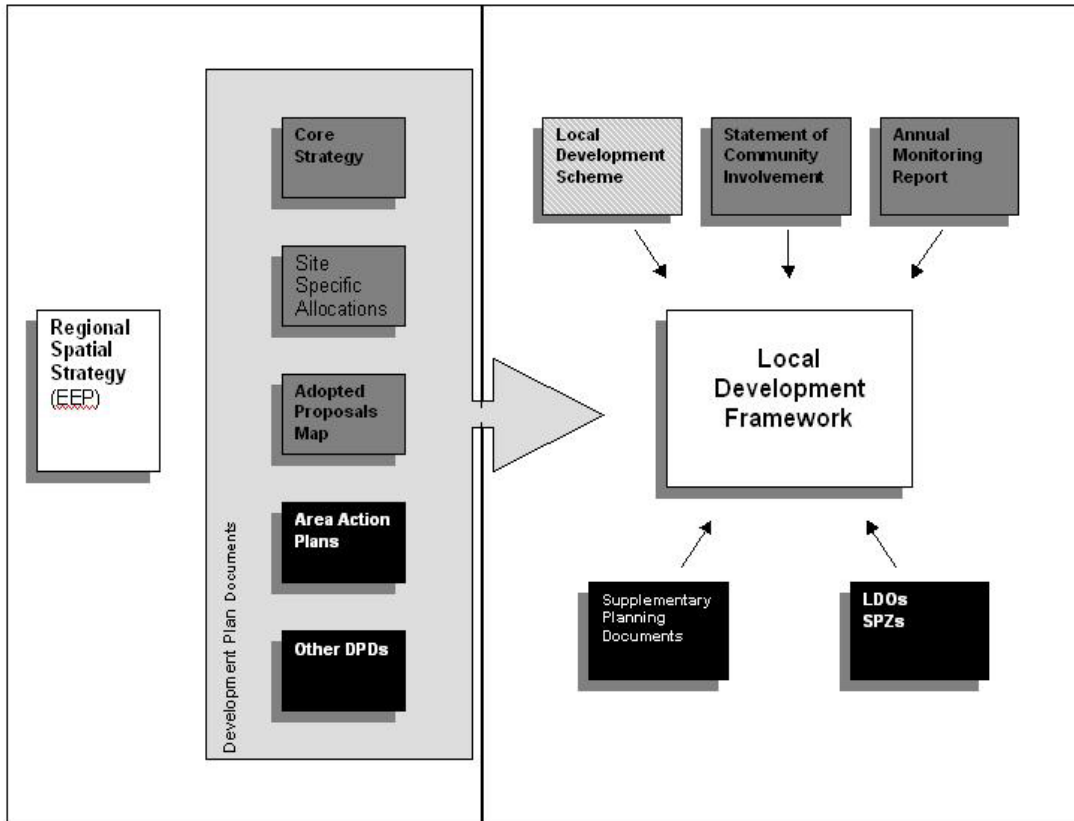
1. The Government has introduced a number of major reforms to the planning system in the above Act, which came into force in September 2004. Most significantly, the Act has introduced a **Local Development Framework (LDF)** to replace the existing system of Local Plans. The LDF will form the development plan for each local authority, along with the **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** for the area. The RSS for this region is the East of England Plan (**EEP**) and replaces the County Structure Plan.
2. The LDF is best described as a portfolio consisting of a number of folders (**Local Development Documents – LDDs**) that deal with various policy issues. It differs from a traditional local plan in that it comprises a series of documents that can be individually reviewed, altered and replaced. This should result in local planning policies that are more responsive to changing local, regional and national priorities.
3. This new system of local planning has introduced several new names or acronyms that we will attempt to explain when they are introduced. For ease of reference, a glossary of terms is included at Appendix 1.

The Epping Forest District Local Development Framework

4. The LDF, along with the EEP, will set out the development strategy for the district, and will replace the existing District Local Plan, Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan and Regional Planning Guidance.
5. LDDs will include specific topic or area based policies and are made up of statutory **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)** and non-statutory **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**. The LDF will also include a **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**, the **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**, the **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)**, and can also include **Area Action Plans (AAPs)**. Figure 1 shows how each of these elements fit together to form the LDF for the district. The LDS is essentially a programme for the production of the other documents.
6. At present (April 2006), preparation of the LDF is heavily constrained by the current position of the Draft EEP. This plan includes proposals for significant increases in the amount of housing and employment land in the district for the period up to 2021. These proposals are politically and locally contentious, and the council cannot undertake detailed work until the EEP is finally adopted, probably in spring 2007. However, work will soon commence on collating the evidence base required to help make informed decisions about the location of additional development in the district.
7. The LDS currently contains proposals for five documents, although these are still subject to change dependent on the final version of the EEP
 - o Core Strategy
 - o Land Allocations DPD
 - o Land at North Weald AAP
 - o Land around south and west Harlow AAP
 - o Section 106 contributions SPD
8. The proposals map will then be amended as necessary in accordance with the approved documents.

9. The current LDS can be viewed at www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk. Paper copies are available on request from Planning Services.

Figure 1 The Local Development Framework



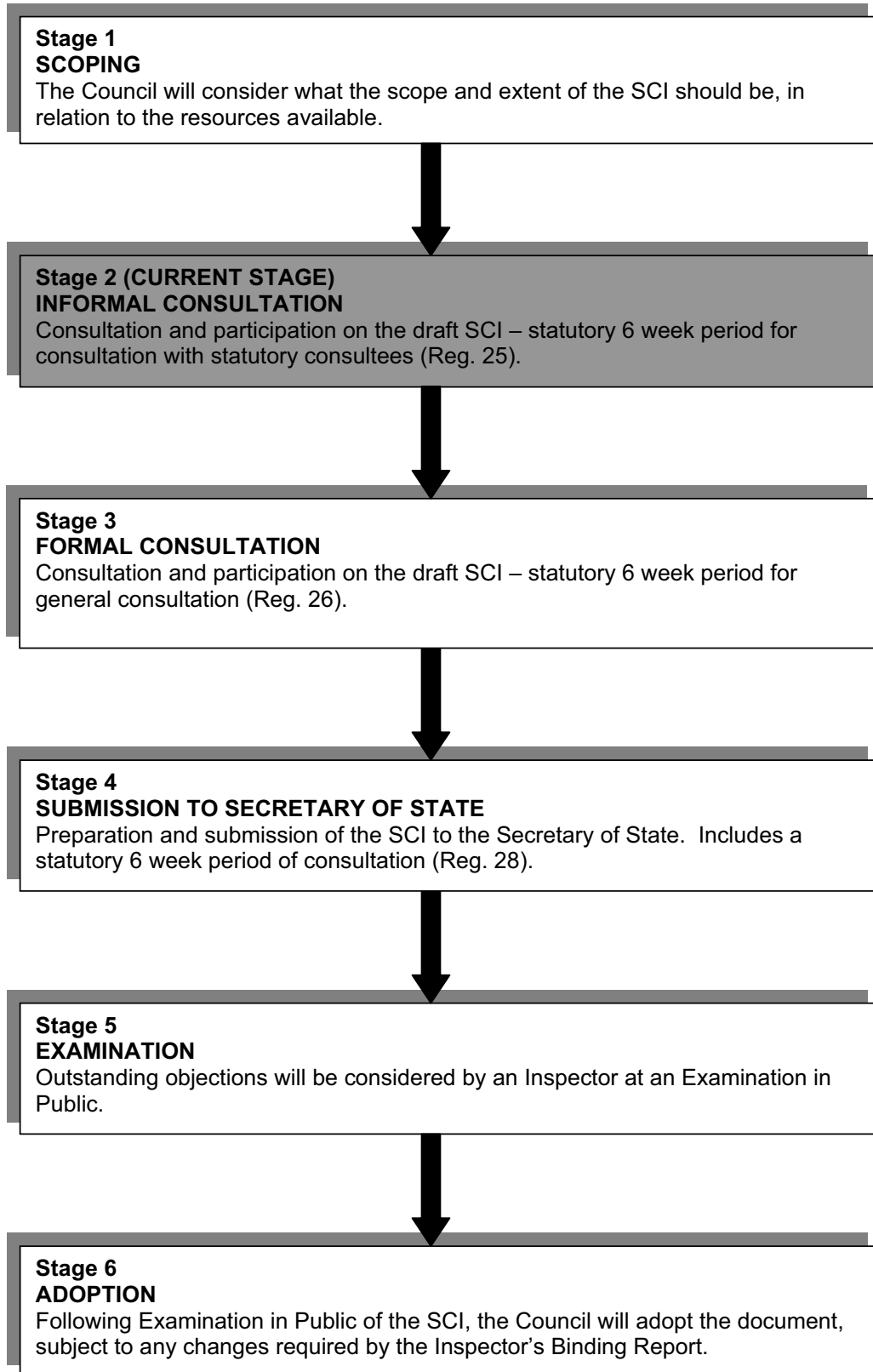
Statement Of Community Involvement (SCI)

10. The SCI explains how the council proposes to involve the community and major stakeholders in the preparation and review of the LDF and in considering planning applications.
11. We hope that the outcomes will include
 - A greater understanding by the community on what is needed for the district, mainly as a direct consequence of the EEP;
 - Improved feedback to consultees on current developments and consideration of how the process of feedback can be improved;
 - Improved representation of “hard to reach” groups;
 - Improved dialogue between the council and the community to achieve continuous, and mutual, learning;
 - A more informed evidence base for policy development and planning decisions
12. The SCI ultimately has to be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination into its “soundness”. Regulations require that the SCI is subject to a number of consultations before this submission. The first (informal) consultation is with (i) the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) – the regional planning body; (ii) any council or borough whose area is in or adjoins the district – this includes county councils and any parish councils which abut the district boundary; and (iii) the Highways Agency.
13. The second (formal) consultation of the amended SCI, for six weeks, includes all the authorities from the first stage as well as a large number of agencies specified in the Regulations. The council will also include any local groups or individuals who have expressed an interest in being involved in future consultations, as well as all those who commented on the recent Alterations to the District Local Plan.
14. The amended SCI is then submitted to the Secretary of State, and there is a further six-week consultation period involving all organisations and individuals from the second stage. The Secretary of State will appoint an Inspector to examine the document, and consider any unresolved representations. In assessing whether the SCI is sound, the Inspector will determine whether:
 - minimum requirements for consultation as set out in Regulations have been complied with;
 - it links with other community involvement initiatives (eg the Community Strategy);
 - it identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted;
 - it identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;
 - the methods of consultation are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of the LDDs;
 - resources are available to manage community involvement effectively;
 - it shows how the results of the community involvement will be fed into the preparation of DPDs and SPDs;
 - the authority has mechanisms for reviewing the SCI; and
 - it clearly describes the council’s policy for consultation on planning applications at various stages.
15. The Inspector’s report will be binding on the council, so the SCI can only be adopted when his/her proposed amendments have been incorporated into the document. We

must make sure that its commitments are implemented in preparing DPDs, SPDs and in considering planning applications.

16. The stages of preparing the SCI are summarised in Figure 2 on page 8.

Figure 2 - Production of the SCI



CONSULTATION ON THE LDF

Introduction

17. Consultation on the development of planning policies is not a new concept but much greater community involvement is now required. We intend that adoption of the SCI will lead to more active, meaningful and continued participation in the preparation and revision of DPDs and SPDs. This is particularly important with the introduction of the concept of “front loading” in the LDF. What this essentially means is that local authorities are now expected to consider all appropriate options earlier in the process and therefore take key decisions much sooner in the preparation of DPDs and SPDs. The aim behind this approach is to seek early consensus on essential issues and options to avoid late changes having to be made. Clearly, front loading requires widespread and proper community involvement right from the start of the process.
18. This, however, needs to be balanced with the resources available to the council. The process of consultation, depending on which methods are used, can be expensive in terms of either staff resources or time or both. The council will therefore always seek community involvement on a basis that is proportionate and relevant to particular issues. A summary of the types of consultation methods that the council may employ and their resource implications are highlighted in Table 1, below.

LDF Consultees

19. The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 require authorities to consult with two separate groups in producing DPDs and SPDs:
- **Specific Consultation Bodies** are agencies that **MUST** be consulted if they will be affected by the DPD in question – these include national agencies, statutory undertakers, local authorities etc;
 - **General Consultation Bodies** are those to be contacted, as the council considers appropriate – these include local and voluntary organisations or groups.
20. These are listed or defined in Regulation 2 and a list is also included in Appendix 2 of this document. We maintain a comprehensive and regularly updated database of all relevant local groups, but please contact us if your details are not correct. We also welcome any suggestions for additions – be they organisations or individuals

Community Involvement

21. Table 1 sets out in detail various methods of involvement that can be used, their benefits and disadvantages, resource implications and appropriate target groups.
22. A key objective of the new planning system is to improve the involvement and contribution of “hard to reach” groups. These are groups which have for one reason or another not historically participated in the planning process. We will make special efforts to involve community organisations that represent these groups in any consultation. They include:
- Black minority ethnic (BME) organisations;
 - Senior citizens organisations;
 - Youth organisations;
 - Faith-based organisations;
 - Community and voluntary sector organisations; and
 - Organisations representing people with disabilities.

Feedback on Consultation

23. Any decisions or actions taken as a result of consultation must be reported back, with reasons, to the community – this is a key factor to encourage continuous community involvement. Even if the end result is not what is wished by particular sections of the community (and it will be impossible to please everybody), it is important that respondents learn about the outcomes.
24. We will acknowledge all representations made in writing within 8 working days. Following the end of a consultation period and subsequent analysis of responses, we will produce a report for public circulation that will summarise all responses received and the actions taken on them. The report will be made available on the Council's website and at all places where the draft document was displayed. All respondents will be sent a copy of the document once it has been approved by Members.
25. Where appropriate, we will respond directly to the points raised by the representations received. Due to the resource requirements involved, in cases where a significant number of representations are received it will not be possible to respond individually to all representations. However, where possible and appropriate we will endeavour to respond individually to respondents.
26. On a periodic basis, we will ask a sample of respondents for their views on the success of our consultation procedures. These will be fed into the Annual Monitoring Report, and subsequently into any future reviews of the SCI. The results will also be considered in the light of the council's corporate Consultation Strategy.

Role of Members

27. Members are the council's decision makers, and rely at least partly on the professional advice of officers. Planning decisions can have very significant implications for land values, and landowners and developers can seek to influence such decisions by lobbying individual Members or committees. This is an accepted part of the decision-making process, but the council must ensure that any such decisions are based solely on planning grounds.
28. Major policy decisions will be taken by Cabinet or Full Council, with minor decisions possibly being delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development. Applications are mostly dealt with at the four Area Plans Sub Committees, each dealing with a different part of the district. Applications which raise policy issues may be considered at District Development Control Committee or Full Council. (Decisions on most householder applications and other minor forms of development are delegated to the Head of Planning and Economic Development.)
29. As local residents Members will have the opportunity to take part in community involvement exercises, and to encourage their ward residents to contribute.

Table 1 – Methods of Consultation and Engagement

Method/ Technique	Benefits & Disadvantages	Resource Implications	Implementation	Inform	Involve	Consult
<p>Publicity – articles & advertisements (including statutory notices) in local newspapers, parish magazines, The Forester (the council's quarterly magazine for all district residents)</p> <p>Internet – EFDC website will include all details of consultation documents. Submission of comments online will be available.</p>	<p>Reaches a relatively wide audience, but lead in times for article publication can be troublesome. Information in press releases not always taken up by editors.</p> <p>Reaches a relatively wide audience, meets requirements for encouraging "e-government". Not all people or groups have access to computer/ web.</p>	<p>Low – staff time to prepare material, minimal financial costs</p> <p>Low – staff time in keeping website updated.</p>	<p>All LDF documents – statutory notices at all stages. Press releases to local papers for all stages. Length of articles dependent on issue being considered.</p> <p>All LDF documents will be available online during consultation periods, and once adopted. Website will carry up-to-date information on the progress and next steps for the adoption of any documents.</p>	☆		☆
<p>Email – dedicated email addresses will be established for DPD/SPD consultations</p>	<p>Reaches relatively wide audience. As above, not all people have access to computer/ web. Allows direct communication between officers & the public.</p>	<p>Low/ medium - dependent on use of email addresses, as responses will take staff time.</p>	<p>Separate email addresses will be established for development of each DPD/SPD etc. Where possible, email will be used to consult those on the consultation list, rather than sending paper copies of documents.</p>	☆	☆	☆

Method/ Technique	Benefits & Disadvantages	Resource Implications	Implementation	Inform	Involve	Consult
Leaflets & posters – to be distributed to libraries in and close to the district, Civic Offices & EFDC Information Centres	Potentially reaches a relatively wide audience, particularly those without internet access.	Low – staff time to produce leaflets/ posters	To be sent out with all consultation documents to libraries etc for display and information purposes. Can be used for all LDF documents	☆		☆
Questionnaire/ Surveys – paper & electronic versions to measure opinions and gather statistics on key issues	Can focus on key or specific questions, or target specific groups (including hard to reach groups). However, response rates are often low.	High – specialised skills required designing questionnaires, collating and analysing responses	More likely to be used at Issues & Options stage of highly contentious issues	☆	☆	☆
Exhibitions & Road Shows – held in places that are accessible to the community, at various times of the day and on various days of the week	Theoretically encourages the community to participate, including hard to reach groups. Response rate/ attendance can be very low.	High – costly, requires significant staff time for preparation and display of material. Venues, equipment hire and the use of facilitators (if necessary) can be expensive.	More likely to be used at Issues & Options stage of highly contentious issues	☆	☆	☆
Meetings: parish/ town councils - to gauge views on options/ drafts and inform of progress etc	Active involvement from local councils may help spark further interest from the community in general. Relatively formal nature of such meetings may discourage general public attendance	Medium/ high – There are 24 parishes in EFDC, and if officers were required to attend meetings for all of these it would be beyond available resources. Use will be made of the Local Councils Liaison Committee in addition to individual meetings that may be required.	Can be used throughout the development of LDF documents. Officers will attend meetings at the request of Parish/ Town Councils.	☆	☆	☆

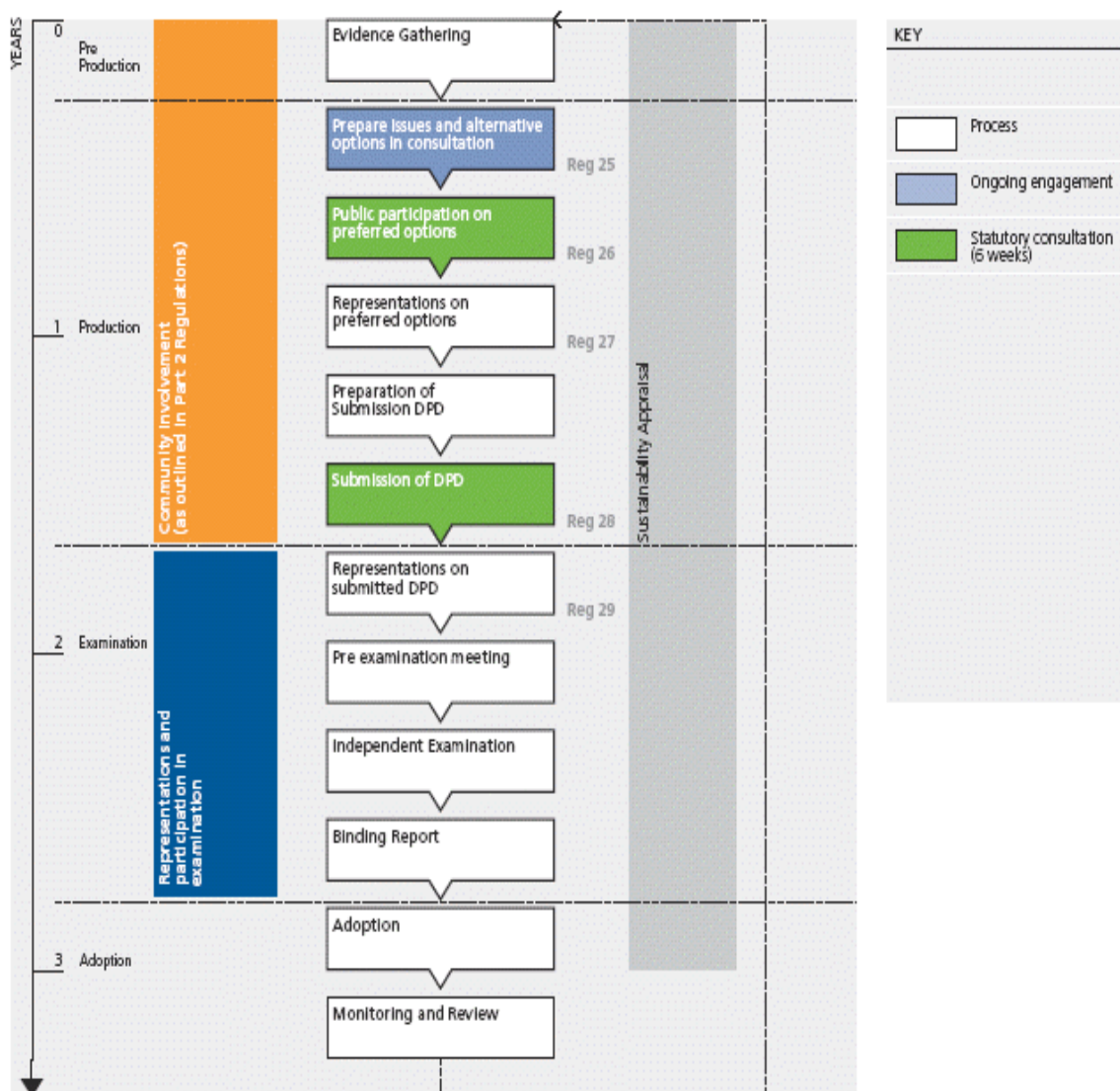
Method/ Technique	Benefits & Disadvantages	Resource Implications	Implementation	Inform	Involve	Consult
Meetings: Local Groups - to gauge views on options/ drafts and inform of progress etc	More informal nature of local groups may encourage more people to attend and voice opinions.	Medium/ high – as above, there are many local interest groups in the district, and resources may be stretched if officers were to attend meetings with all groups.	Can be used throughout the development of LDF documents. EFDC will attend meetings at the request of local groups.	☆	☆	☆
Public meetings – to inform the public of issues and seek their views	Encourages two-way discussion and debate, an effective means of disseminating information and gaining feedback. Can be dominated by vocal groups/ individuals, and very large meetings can be too intimidating for some to want to speak out.	High – requires significant staff time. Hiring equipment and possibly facilitators. Additional costs may include venue hire, publicity, refreshments, transport costs for particular groups, crèche, etc.	More likely to be used at Issues & Options, and Pre-Submission stages of highly contentious issues	☆	☆	☆
Mail shots – to advise of upcoming events, and to feedback on other involvement methods, and to consult on particular issues	Keeps the public informed and alerts those on the consultation list to the start of a consultation period.	Low – staff time to administer. Possible costs for any translation or alternative formats required.	Can be used throughout the development of LDF documents	☆		☆
Specific mailings – as for mail shots above	As for mail shots, but possibly a way for targeting hard to reach groups.	Low – staff time to prepare and distribute correspondence.	Can be used throughout the development of LDF documents	☆		☆
Telephone	The public and professionals can contact a member of the Forward Planning team to discuss queries they may have etc at almost any time	Low – staff time to research (if necessary) and answer queries	Can be used at any time	☆		

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

30. Development Plan Documents (DPDs) will contain the main policies and proposals of the LDF. The general procedure for producing DPDs is shown in Figure 3. In essence there are four stages (as defined in Planning Policy Statement 12 – Local Development Frameworks (2004)) – (i) Pre-production; (ii) Production; (iii) Examination; and (iv) Adoption.
31. Pre-production basically involves evidence gathering from surveys and analysis of information. Ongoing input from the community and stakeholders is essential to ensure the evidence base is as relevant and up-to-date as possible.
32. Production deals with (a) the identification of issues and options and (b) the selection of preferred options. “Front loading” is key to (a) as the full range of issues and options should be identified to avoid the possibility of alternatives being introduced later in the process. Selection of a preferred option (or options) for (b) is essentially a process of refinement, but clearly community involvement is crucial to both phases. The Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 establish minimum standards for consultation and public participation for this stage (Regs 25 and 26). Any modifications to the preferred options, as a result of consideration of representations, will lead to the preparation of the DPD which will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
33. Throughout the pre-submission consultation stages, sustainability appraisal (SA) of the issues and options must be undertaken, and the council must consult on an initial sustainability appraisal report. The main purpose of SA is to assess the environmental, economic and social implications of policies and strategies. One of the key aims of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act is to promote the achievement of sustainable development.
34. As has been shown earlier in this document, the DPDs to be produced by this council will depend heavily on the final content of the East of England Plan. It seems inevitable that the district will be expected to accommodate housing numbers far in excess of natural growth, and that particular locations for this growth may be specified. Decisions on the principle of development will therefore have been taken at a regional level where local community involvement has (perhaps) necessarily been very limited. In dealing with the detail of DPDs related to the EEP requirements, the council therefore believes this may make provision for meaningful involvement over and above the minimum requirements rather difficult. Many sectors of the community will undoubtedly be well-informed about the EEP and may accept, however reluctantly, the outcomes. Other sectors will not be so aware, and different methods of communication may be needed to persuade them to become involved, particularly if they are unhappy about the EEP policies. As things appear at present, awkward questions remain about the provision of adequate infrastructure for the proposed housing, and it is difficult to see how the requirements of sustainable development can be achieved, or indeed how these issues can be satisfactorily addressed, in SAs.
35. At this stage, it is therefore quite difficult to be precise about methods or techniques for encouraging community involvement. In areas where significant housing growth will be located, the council expects resources to be focused on explaining the background and trying to describe what greater community involvement can achieve in the future. This could be very resource-intensive, relying on public meetings and facilitated focus groups. A lot of face-to-face contact may be needed. This would apply to the Land Allocations DPD, and the North Weald and south & west Harlow AAPs.

36. The Core Strategy DPD is likely to be a more strategic style of document, and while its contents are just as significant, the council believes that other methods of encouraging community involvement may be more appropriate – eg consulting by letter or e-mail the Local Strategic Partnership and everyone or group on the LDF database, articles in the local press and parish magazines, and advertisements or other displays (leaflets, posters etc) at the full range of public outlets.
37. Examination Submission of the DPD, and its supporting SA, to the Secretary of State requires a further period of public consultation under Regulation 28. The tests of soundness in the examination have been described earlier. Ideally front loading should mean that no new options or issues are going to appear, so the requirements for consultation, display, advertisement and other forms of publishing may be sufficient to ensure continuing community involvement. Given the likely level of interest in the DPDs, however, the council will reserve judgement on taking further action, and will employ any of the methods listed in Table 1 as may seem appropriate at the time, subject to the availability of suitable resources.
38. Adoption The Inspector appointed to hold the Examination will prepare a report which is binding on the council. The DPD will therefore be adopted once any amendments proposed by the Inspector have been included. There is no provision for community involvement other than to inform all participants of the outcome of the Examination and to ensure that the publication of the document is suitably advertised. Community involvement should continue with monitoring and review of the DPD and updating the evidence base.

Figure 3 Schedule of preparation of a Development Plan Document



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Supplementary Planning Documents

39. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will not be subject to examination, and there is not the requirement to prepare preferred options, but they still need to be subjected to similar but simpler procedures of community involvement as for DPDs, including sustainability appraisals (Regulations 17 and 18). While SPDs can cover a range of issues which can expand policy or provide further detail, they cannot be used to allocate land. They can be site-specific or topic based.
40. Currently, there is only one SPD in the council's LDS – Section 106 contributions. This should have wide interest, including landowners and developers, service providers and other agencies, local councils and voluntary groups. The most appropriate methods of community involvement for this SPD, over and above the minimum requirements, probably include written communication, presentations and working meetings with all interests involved. Preparation of the SPD will have to take account of any information on Planning Gain Supplement and 'roof taxes'.
41. When other SPDs are prepared the council will consider other methods of involvement and update the SCI accordingly.

Sustainability Appraisal

42. All LDDs produced by the Council must meet the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC). This was transposed into English law by virtue of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004. LDDs must also take into account economic and social factors. By meeting the government's requirements for the **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** the requirements of the SEA will also be met.
43. The SA is a continuous learning process, which systematically feeds into and influences the development of local planning policies. The SA is developed alongside DPDs and SPDs, and is subject to public consultation through the process.
44. A draft SA will be made available for public consultation at the Issues and Options stage in DPD production, and at the draft stage of SPD production. Comments will be invited on both the DPD/SPD and the SA, with the subsequent actions taken reported as part of the feedback on the consultation process.

CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Introduction

45. Development Control is concerned with the determination of planning applications, enforcement of planning controls and representing the council in defending appeals related to those two functions. It is the arm of planning with which most people are familiar and where there is certainly day-to-day contact with applicants, residents and local councils or groups.

Pre-application discussions

46. The council advises in written notes and on the website that pre-application discussions are recommended to provide advice to prospective applicants and to help avoid submission of proposals that have no chance of success.

47. Council planning officers are available to discuss proposals, preferably by appointment. Advice given at this stage cannot be binding on the council because issues may arise later that could not have been foreseen at pre-application stage, or only become apparent following a site visit.

48. Details of the council's adopted policies from the District Local Plan and its Alterations are available on the council's website, together with advice notes from various published leaflets, including a series on householder applications and the need for planning permission.

Informing people about planning applications

49. Legislation requires that occupiers of property immediately adjacent to application sites are notified of the receipt of applications (Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995). The council has, however, adopted guidelines which widen notification in some cases. A leaflet (Making Your Views Known – a guide to commenting on planning applications) is sent out with all neighbour letters. In some instances, site notices are posted in addition to neighbour notification.

50. Parish and town councils have to be given opportunity to comment on planning applications, and a protocol has been developed with local councils to ensure consistency in terms of communication and consultation. The council also publishes a weekly list of planning applications that is circulated to local councils and newspapers, libraries, residents' associations and other similar groups. The weekly list also goes on the website.

51. Some applications have to be advertised in the local press as Public Notices.

52. Applications are available to view at the council's main planning office and at its information centres in Loughton and Waltham Abbey. In addition, some of the local councils allow the general public to view their copies at their offices.

Acknowledgement of receipt

53. Every person who makes a comment upon a planning application receives an acknowledgement and is informed about the process. Any revisions to the application are notified to them, and they are informed if the application is to be reported to committee. There is opportunity for any supporter or objector to speak to the committee.

Information on planning decisions

54. The council has adopted a scheme of delegation that sets out when applications can be determined by officers and when applications have to be referred to committee for decision. This pays great regard to public views - all commercial applications with more than one objection are referred to committee. All applications where a local council's view differs from that of an officer also have to be referred to committee.
55. Upon determination of an application, the applicant or his/her agent is obviously informed of the decision, as is each person who made representation.
56. Decisions are published on the website on a regular basis.

Appeals

57. Local residents generally, as well as those who showed an interest at application stage are fully informed of the appeal and the appeal process.

Enforcement

58. Whilst some aspects of enforcement have to be confidential, those who notify the council of breaches of control are informed of the progress of the investigation into their complaint, and the officers of the council keep the operator/occupier informed of the steps the council considers it must follow in order to regularise the situation.

NEXT STEPS

Links With Other Strategies

59. The policies of the new LDF will relate directly to the aims and objectives of other community initiatives. These being:
- The Epping Forest District Community Strategy 2004-2021
 - The East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy)
 - The EFDC Public Consultation and Engagement Policy and Strategy
 - The Epping Forest District Council Customer Charter
60. **The Epping Forest Community Strategy** was developed by the Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership, and considers all aspects of services which affect daily life in the District. The aim of the strategy is to improve the co-ordination of public service delivery and to ensure that these services reflect the needs and aspirations of the district. A key objective of the LDF will be to act as the spatial mechanism by which the objectives of the community strategy will be implemented. It is therefore very important that links between the LDF and the Community Strategy are maintained and strengthened. Other authorities, however, have experienced practical problems of maintaining linkages, because the Community Strategy is not a statutory document and is therefore not subject to the procedures and processes which the SCI has to go through.
61. **The East of England Plan** is prepared by the East of England Regional Assembly. It is a strategic plan intended to address the planning issues of the six constituent counties and address the requirements of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan, particularly in relation to the growth areas. This council's LDF must be in general conformity with the East of England Plan.
62. **The EFDC Public Consultation and Engagement Policy and Strategy** is still in draft form but it describes the council's overall approach to public consultation, and will eventually be backed up by a 'Consultation Toolkit'.
63. **The EFDC Customer Charter** highlights the council's aim and objectives in all aspects of our operation. The primary aim being ***"we will consult with our customers, listen to what they say and respond in the best way we can."***
64. **Parish Plans** It is likely that these will grow in number and importance. We are keen that the information in these plans should be incorporated into the LDF, either as evidence base, or as policy material, but local councils need to understand the requirement for wider consultation which is key to the new development planning system, and the need to programme work via the LDS.

Reviewing the SCI

65. It is our intention to revise the SCI on an ongoing basis having regard to any particular problems or successes that we experience in consulting on the LDF. This means that consultation techniques that have not been well responded to may be dropped and other alternative methods and processes may be brought forward.
66. The Council will assess and review the SCI through its **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)**, which will be published in December each year. Any necessary changes to the SCI arising from the AMR will be made thereafter with further appropriate public consultation carried out accordingly. 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.

67. Should the SCI be subject to a further examination, consultees will be advised accordingly.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Term	Abbrev.	Explanation
Annual Monitoring Report	AMR	Annual report that charts the implementation of policies and performance against the milestones published in the LDS
Area Action Plans	AAP	Will be used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. Will focus on implementation.
Development Plan Document	DPD	Spatial planning documents, that together with the RSS (see below) will form the development plan for Epping Forest District. They are subject to independent examination and will be shown geographically on an adopted proposals map.
East of England Plan	EEP	RSS (see below) for East of England region
East of England Regional Assembly	EERA	Regional body responsible for planning and drafting (but not approving) Regional Planning Guidance
Local Development Document	LDD	Collective term for DPDs and linked SPDs, including the SCI
Local Development Framework	LDF	A portfolio of LDDs (see above) which make up the spatial plan for the local authority area, and aim to meet the community's economic, environmental and social objectives for the future of their area where this affects the development of land.
Local Development Order	LDO	An order made by a local planning authority extending permitted development rights for certain forms of development, with regard to a relevant LDD (see above)
Local Development Scheme	LDS	Sets out the programme/ timetable for preparing the LDDs over at least a three year period. Is reviewed when significant local circumstances dictate (e.g. the adoption of a new/revised RSS), or when there is less than 3 years left of the timetable.
Local Strategic Partnership	LSP	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
Regional Spatial Strategy	RSS	The RSS, incorporating the Regional transport Strategy, provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of LDDs, local transport plans and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land-use activities.
Simplified Planning Zones	SPZ	An area in which a local planning authority wishes to stimulate development and encourage investment. It operates by granting a specified planning permission in the zone without the need for an application for planning permission and the payment of planning fees
Statement of Community Involvement	SCI	Sets out the LPA's policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of LDDs and in significant Development Control decisions. It includes who should be involved and methods to be used.
Strategic Environment Assessment	SEA	Requirement by European Directive 2001/42/EC to assess the effects of plans and programmes on the environment.
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	Provide supplementary information for the policies in Development Plan Documents. They do not form part of the Development Plan and are not subject to independent examination.

Term	Abbrev.	Explanation
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An assessment that considers social, environmental and economic effects, which fully incorporates the requirements of the SEA directive (see above).

Appendix 2 Consultation bodies

Below is a list of Specific and General Consultation bodies. The Council holds a detailed database of all relevant bodies.

Specific consultation bodies

The following bodies are specific consultation bodies, which must be consulted in accordance with the Act and regulations

- (i) East of England Regional Assembly
- (ii) Government Offices for the East of England
- (iii) Essex County Council
- (iv) Hertfordshire County Council
- (v) City of London Corporation
- (vi) Adjoining councils (and parish/ town councils where appropriate)
 - 1. Brentwood Borough Council
 - Blackmore, Hook End & Wyatts Green PC
 - Doddinghurst PC
 - Herongate & Ingrave PC
 - Ingatestone & Fryerning PC
 - Kelvedon Hatch PC
 - Mountnessing PC
 - Navestock PC
 - Stondon Massey PC
 - West Horndon PC
 - 2. Chelmsford Borough Council
 - Highwood PC
 - Roxwell PC
 - 3. Uttlesford District Council
 - Little Hallingbury PC
 - Hatfield Heath PC
 - White Roding PC
 - Leaden Roding PC
 - Margaret Roding PC
 - 4. Borough of Broxbourne
 - 5. East Herts District Council
 - Eastwick and Gilston PC
 - Hunsdon PC
 - Stanstead Abbots PC
 - Stanstead St Margaret's PC
 - Bishop's Stortford TC
 - Sawbridgeworth TC
 - 6. Harlow District Council
 - 7. London Borough of Havering
 - 8. London Borough of Redbridge
 - 9. London Borough of Enfield
 - 10. London Borough of Waltham Forest
- (vii) The Countryside Agency
- (viii) The Environment Agency
- (ix) Highways Agency
- (x) The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage)
- (xi) English Nature

- (xii) The Strategic Rail Authority
- (xiii) East of England Development Agency
- (xiv) London Development Agency
- (xv) BT Plc.
- (xvi) Mobile Operators Association (on behalf of the 5 major mobile operators)
- (xvii) NTL
- (xviii) Epping Forest Strategic Health Authority
- (xix) National Grid/Transco
- (xx) Thames Water
- (xxi) Three Valleys Water

Parish/ town councils within Epping Forest District will also be consulted at this stage.

General Consultation Bodies

These are agencies to be consulted, as the Council considers appropriate. These include voluntary organisations, business, racial, ethnic, religious and disabled groups all of which represent the interests of the communities within the district.

Other Consultees

We welcome suggestions for additions to the list of general consultation bodies.

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