



NORWICH City Council

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 05/02/2025

Report title: Adoption of Statement of Community Involvement 2025

Portfolio: Councillor Stonard, Leader of the council

Report from: Head of planning and regulatory services

Wards: All Wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

KEY DECISION

Purpose

To consider the responses received as part of the public consultation and the amended adoption version of the Statement of Community Involvement 2025.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet agree to adopt the revised Statement of Community Involvement 2025.

Policy framework

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.
- An open and modern council.

This report meets the 'A fairer Norwich', 'A future-proof Norwich' and 'An open and modern council' corporate priorities.

This report addresses 'a collaborative council' 'a data and insight driven and people focused council', 'tackle the root causes of disadvantage', 'empowered communities' priorities or actions in the Community-led Plan.

Report details

1. Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs) are codes of practice for setting out how councils intend to involve people in planning decisions. They cover decisions in relation to both planning policy and planning applications (development management). SCIs are required under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004.
2. A draft amended SCI was presented to Sustainable Development Panel in September 2024, and Cabinet in October 2024. Following this, a period of public consultation has been carried out. This report sets out the responses received to the consultation, outlines the changes made to the document and presents a final version of the SCI for adoption.

The need for review

3. SCIs are required to be updated every 5 years under Regulation 10A of [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#).
4. Norwich City Council's latest SCI was adopted in November 2020. That version of the SCI required temporary revision to include provisions to adapt planning services as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The updates largely included text that introduced flexibility on consultation methods so that the public could still engage with planning activities, whilst still respecting social distancing guidelines which were in place at the time.
5. Since then, there have been key changes in the local and national planning context, which means the SCI is now due a further update. A summary of this changing context is set out below:
 - a. There have been a number of important changes to the national planning system which affect how we prepare and consult on plans and proposals in future. The introduction of the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act \(LURA\) 2023](#) will abolish the Duty to Cooperate (the legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant bodies constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis for strategic planning matters) when implemented. The duty was originally introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The previous government intended to introduce a "flexible alignment policy" instead, the recently published updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) retains the Duty to Cooperate through increased strategic planning.
 - b. The LURA (2023) also contains provisions that allow the government to reform the planning system including: Establishing new national development management policies (NDMPs), which will sit alongside local plans in decision-making on planning applications; creating a statutory requirement for local planning authorities to produce a single local plan and update it every 5 years; introduced a statutory requirement for LPA's to prepare design codes, setting design requirements for developments in their local area; and replacing supplementary planning documents with new Supplementary Plans which will have the same weight as local plans and are intended to allow local planning authorities to respond to unanticipated changes in their area. These provisions have not yet taken effect. They require

regulations to be brought into force and the government has not yet confirmed the timetable for bringing the regulations forward. This SCI is drafted on the basis of the current planning system, and will be updated once the new planning system is in place.

- c. Introduction of the concept of street votes where local residents can have direct say in which development can go ahead in their area. This has not been implemented through regulations as yet.
- d. The previous Government required councils to have up to date local plans submitted by the end of June 2025 although the recent NPPF publication extends this to December 2026. There remains an important role for neighbourhood plans prepared directly by local communities.
- e. In March 2024, the [Greater Norwich Local Plan](#) (GNLP) was adopted. This superseded the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (adopted 2011) and the Norwich Site Allocations Plan (adopted 2014). The GNLP sets out the development strategy for the wider Norwich area between 2018 and 2038 and includes sites for the creation of new houses and employment. The Development Management Policies Plan (adopted 2014) has not been superseded and is part of the Norwich Local Plan.
- f. The council and its partners on the East Norwich Delivery Board continue to work together to support future delivery of the East Norwich sites, building on the allocation of the East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area in the GNLP. Work has also started on a new neighbourhood plan for the Norwich Over the Wensum (NOW) neighbourhood area; this is being developed by the NOW neighbourhood forum with support and advice from the council.
- g. The [Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework](#) (NSPF) was set up in 2015 to enable the local authorities in Norfolk to formally cooperate on a range of strategic cross-boundary planning issues to agree shared objectives and strategic priorities. So far, this group has collaborated on issues such as addressing climate change through the planning process and developing a new health protocol for planning applications. The NSPF group was initially set up to discharge the Duty to Cooperate and county wide cooperation will continue through the NSPF building on the county's proven track record of collaborative working. In addition, the Greater Norwich authorities are continuing their well-established collaborative working for plan making through the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP).
- h. The Government has made further changes to national planning rules which means that more kinds of development can be carried out without planning permission (permitted development rights). This includes making it easier for certain town centre and office uses to change to residential properties, as well as allowing upward extension of certain buildings.
- i. The Government and Natural England introduced new environmental initiatives which have impacted on how we plan for and make decisions about new development. This includes Biodiversity Net Gain and Nutrient Neutrality. The council has jointly been involved in the preparation and adoption of the Green Infrastructure Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS) to reduce the impact of

visitor pressure on a number of internationally protected habitats in Norfolk and Suffolk.

6. A number of the proposed planning reforms have not yet been enacted. Therefore, this version of the SCI has been prepared on the basis of the current policy context. The lifetime of this version of the SCI may be limited given the anticipated and recently published planning reforms, however the document will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

Public Consultation

7. The public consultation took place between 18th October 2024 and 1st December 2024, in accordance with the requirements of the currently adopted SCI. This included emailing directly recipients on the planning policy consultation database, providing hard copies at City Hall and Millenium Library, publishing information on the council's website, and for the first time utilising the Get Talking Norwich platform.
8. A total of six responses were received; four of these were sent directly to the planning policy mailbox so are likely to have come from directly emailed recipients or from the council's website; two responses were submitted on Get Talking Norwich. In addition to these submitted responses, on Get Talking Norwich there were:
 - a. 73 visits to the SCI project page – 58 of these were direct, 6 were redirected from the council's website, 8 were through a search engine and 1 was through social media;
 - b. 15 downloads of the one-page summary document;
 - c. 15 downloads of the full consultation version of the SCI;
 - d. 3 visitors classed as "engaged" – participation in the newsfeed and survey;
 - e. 22 visitors classed as "informed" – downloaded documents and visiting multiple of the project pages; and
 - f. 56 visitors classed as "aware" – visited at least one page
9. Get Talking Norwich also has functionality to record demographic information for those that access and engage with project pages. This can help ascertain which sections of the community the consultation is and isn't reaching. Unfortunately, there is no demographic information available for the SCI consultation. In order to collect this information, individuals must register for an account and agree to share this information (demographic information is shared anonymously). When setting up the project, officers were advised that asking individuals to register for an account in this way can reduce participation. The decision was made to not require registration and collect demographic information to maximise participation. Officers will continue to consider the benefits of disadvantages of these options for future consultations.
10. At the closure of the consultation, officers were also advised that the low rate of submitted comments via Get Talking Norwich may be due to there being multiple options for participants to respond to the consultation. Other options included being able to email directly to the planning policy mailbox or submitting comments by post. Consultation on planning policy documents is required to follow specific regulations in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. These requirements, combined with the SCI's aim of making planning consultations as widely accessible as possible,

means that officers do not consider it appropriate at this time to fully switch all planning consultations over to the Get Talking Norwich platform, as this risks those without digital skills/access being able to participate, and also non-compliance with the regulations. However, it is acknowledged that Get Talking Norwich does offer some excellent additional functionality that may prove very useful for future consultations. The best methods for consultation and requirements under the regulations will continue to be kept under review as the SCI can be updated in future as necessary.

11. Below is a summary of the responses received to the SCI consultation. Full details of comments submitted to the consultation can be found in Appendix 2:

- a. Typographical errors
- b. Additional information is needed on how this document could be obtained in different formats or accessed in different ways
- c. The document should expand on ways to reach and engage with diverse communities
- d. Appreciated use of the Get Talking Norwich platform

12. The majority of the submitted comments did not request changes to the SCI, or the comments did not require changes to be made. Typographical errors were corrected as necessary and additional information has been included on the contents page as to how different formats of the SCI can be obtained. The SCI already contains information in multiple places as to how it aims to be inclusive and reach as wider audience as possible.

Conclusion

13. Cabinet is recommended to adopt the 2025 adoption version of the SCI.

14. Should Cabinet agree to adopt the SCI, this will replace the existing version on the council's website and become the formal procedure for planning consultations in Norwich.

15. A summary of the post-consultation process and changes made to the document will also be added to the SCI Get Talking Norwich page, to keep participants informed.

Consultation

16. This draft SCI was reported to the relevant portfolio holder, senior officers, Sustainable Development Panel and Cabinet prior to be subject to public consultation.

17. This report and the final version of the SCI have been reported to the relevant portfolio holder, senior officers and Sustainable Development Panel prior to Cabinet.

Implications

Financial and resources

18. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan "We are Norwich" and budget.

19. There are proposals within the revised SCI that are likely to increase resource requirements, for example inclusion of neighbourhood planning processes that require facilitating consultations and a neighbourhood referendum. However, as these are statutory processes these the budgetary needs will need to be identified and considered through forthcoming budget setting processes.

Legal

20. Planning consultations need to be carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory framework, otherwise the council's decisions on planning matters could be investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman or they could be challenged such as through Judicial Review. This SCI sets out that all planning consultations and engagement with the community will be in accordance with these statutory requirements as a minimum.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to the revised SCI. Any issues raised by the EqIA have been considered within the SCI and multiple methods of consultation are carried out to ensure inclusivity of the planning process.
Health, social and economic impact	No impact as a result of this report.
Crime and disorder	No impact as a result of this report.
Children and adults safeguarding	No impact as a result of this report.
Environmental impact	No impact as a result of this report.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Cabinet may not agree to adopt the revised SCI	The city council will have an out-of-date SCI (last fully reviewed in 2016 with an update in 2020) that does not reflect the current planning policy context or include the most up to date national and local consultation requirements and procedures. This could cause confusion for the public, may not appear transparent and could risk the council not meeting statutory requirements.	Members also had the opportunity to comment on the SCI as part of the consultation process to raise any specific issues. The SCI has been subject to public consultation and has been amended as necessary. The Council's Community Enabling team has also been involved in its production. The SCI is a document that is kept until continuous review to respond to changing circumstance. s prior to adoption. This should allay any concerns that the revised SCI is not fit for purpose and should not be adopted.
Failure to consult some sections of the public/community	Some sections of the community may not be able to engage with the planning process as well as others if inclusive methods of consultation are not included.	An EqIA has been completed both prior to the public consultation and prior to writing this report to consider equality and diversity issues throughout the process. The consultation process was designed to be inclusive, which will include contacting organisations on our database that represent equality and diversity issues for the community, and using the Community Enabling team to contact other harder to reach sections of the community. The revised SCI also builds upon well-established community engagement in planning matters.

Other options considered

21. No other options have been considered. SCIs are required to be updated at least every 5 years under Regulation 10A of [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#).

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

22. SCIs are required to be updated at least every 5 years under Regulation 10A of [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#). Cabinet is asked to adopt the Adoption Version of the Statement of Community Involvement 2025.

Background papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Statement of Community Involvement 2025 (Adoption Version)

Appendix 2: Table of responses to SCI Consultation

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment for the adoption version of the Statement of Community Involvement 2025.

Contact officer:

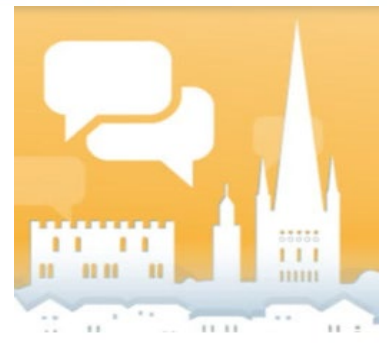
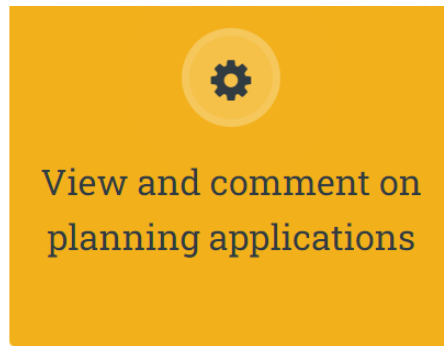
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Statement of Community Involvement

A code of practice for involving the
community in planning issues

January 2025

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1. Introduction

Why we are preparing the Statement of Community Involvement

1. The city council is always looking for ways for the community to become more involved in its plan making and decision taking. We want to encourage more people to be involved and to make that as easy as possible. We hope that your local knowledge will help to make sure that development in the city benefits everyone whilst protecting the special qualities of the city. This statement sets out how we will ensure that you are part of this process.
2. Under Section 18 of the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#), all local planning authorities in England and Wales must prepare a Statement of community involvement (SCI) and must carry out planning consultations in accordance with it. The SCI is a 'code of practice' setting out how the council intends to involve people in planning decisions. This can include both decisions about planning policy (plan-making) and decisions on planning applications.
3. This is the sixth edition of the SCI. It replaces the version published in November 2016 and the temporary version published September 2020.

Need for review

4. SCIs are required to be updated every 5 years under Regulation 10A of [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#). A temporary update was produced in 2020 to respond to the unique circumstances presented by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. A thorough review is required to bring the SCI up to date as much has changed since both 2016 and 2020.
5. The following summarises key changes in the local and national planning context since the SCI was last published in 2020:
 - There have been a number of important changes to the national planning system which affect how we prepare and consult on plans and proposals in future. The introduction of the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act \(LURA\) 2023](#) will abolish the Duty to Cooperate (the legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant bodies constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis for strategic planning matters) when implemented. The duty was originally introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The previous government intended to introduce a "flexible alignment policy" instead, however the current government have confirmed their intention to retain the Duty to Cooperate in some format through more strategic planning.
 - The LURA (2023) also contains provisions that allow the government to reform the planning system including: Establishing new national development management policies (NDMPs), which will sit alongside local plans in decision-making on planning applications; creating a statutory requirement for local planning authorities to produce a single local plan and update it every 5 years; introduced a statutory requirement for LPA's to prepare design codes, setting design requirements for developments in their local area; and replacing supplementary planning documents with new Supplementary Plans which will have the same weight as local plans

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and are intended to allow local planning authorities to respond to unanticipated changes in their area. These provisions have not yet taken effect. They require regulations to be brought into force and the government has not yet indicated the timetable for bringing the regulations forward. In December 2024, the government published an updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which may have further implications for the planning. This SCI is drafted on the basis of the current planning system and will be updated once the new planning system is in place.

- The introduction of the concept of street votes where local residents have a direct say in which development can go ahead in their area.
- Further significant changes in national rules are expected in coming years including the introduction of National Development Management Policies, reducing the time frames within which local plans must be produced etc.
- The previous Government required councils to have up to date local plans by the end of June 2025. The recent consultation on the revised NPPF would extend this to December 2026. There remains an important role for neighbourhood plans prepared directly by local communities.
- In March 2024, the [Greater Norwich Local Plan](#) (GNLP) was adopted. This superseded the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (adopted 2011) and the Norwich Site Allocations Plan (adopted 2014). The GNLP sets out the development strategy for the wider Norwich area between 2018 and 2038 and includes sites for new homes and employment. The Development Management Policies Plan (adopted 2014) has not been superseded and is part of the Norwich Local Plan.
- The council and its partners on the East Norwich Delivery Board continue to work together to support future delivery of the East Norwich sites, building on the allocation of the East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area in the GNLP. Work has also started on a new neighbourhood plan for the Norwich Over the Wensum (NOW) neighbourhood area; this is being developed by the NOW neighbourhood forum, with support and advice from the council.
- The [Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework](#) was set up in 2015 to enable the local authorities in Norfolk to formally cooperate on a range of strategic cross-boundary planning issues to agree shared objectives and strategic priorities. So far, this group has collaborated on issues such as addressing climate change through the planning process and developing a new health protocol for planning applications. The NSPF group was initially set up to discharge that Duty to Cooperate and, the Greater Norwich Authorities intend to continue their well-established collaborative working for plan making.
- The previous Government made further changes to national planning rules which mean that more kinds of development can be carried out without planning permission through permitted development rights. This includes making it easier for certain town centre and office uses to change to residential properties, as well as allowing upward extension of certain buildings.

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- The Government and Natural England introduced new environmental initiatives which have impacted on how we plan for and make decisions about new development. This includes Biodiversity Net Gain and Nutrient Neutrality. The council has jointly been involved in the preparation and adoption of the Green Infrastructure Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS) to reduce the impact of visitor pressure on a number of internationally protected habitats in Norfolk and Suffolk.
6. During this period of rapid change, we must strike a careful balance between meeting our obligations to government to prepare plans and decide applications as quickly as possible and making sure that local people still have a meaningful opportunity to comment on and influence planning policies and proposals. Taken together, the changes in the planning system will inevitably affect the way that local plans are prepared and how planning applications are made and dealt with. This means that the way we involve local people in the planning process also needs to change.

Planning and community involvement

7. The [Norwich 2040 City Vision](#) was developed in 2018 to create a long-term vision of what we want the city to be like in 2040 and what we need to do to make this happen. As part of delivering A Fair City, one of the key aims is to develop an inclusive and joined up approach to service delivery. In 2024, Norwich City council adopted its new [community-led Corporate Plan](#). This plan is the council's most strategic document which sets out the vision for Norwich for the next five years. This plan was developed by engaging with the people of Norwich. Over 900 individuals and organisations were consulted across the city, and views and opinions formed the building blocks of this new plan. The plan outlines the council's five main priorities (Figure 1). A key theme throughout the plan is the importance of the community helping to shape the services the council provides and underpins one of the council's guiding principles to 'Listen to the City'.
8. In order to achieve the council's vision and priorities through the planning service, it is essential that there is effective public involvement in plan-making and decision making on planning applications and that clear standards are set for when and how involvement will take place.



Figure 1: Extract from [We Are Norwich: A Community Led Plan 2024-2029](#)

The council's commitment to equality

9. The council has a commitment to equality which is a statutory duty under the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#). This is particularly relevant to planning which has a role to play in promoting equality of opportunity and cohesion by considering the needs of the community. The council recognises that equality of opportunity in practice includes ensuring that vulnerable or disadvantaged groups have their voices heard and their needs considered. This SCI supports that objective through providing guidance on how to get people involved. The impact of planning activities and decisions will be assessed in order to ensure that there are no unintended negative impacts on vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. The assessments will focus on the six protected characteristics of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, but will also consider the wider implications of socio-economic inequalities on community cohesion. This is normally carried out through an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) which takes place at the beginning of and during the plan-making process.
10. All printed material will be offered in Braille, large print, audio and translation options on request and the IN TRAN facility will be publicised in all printed material.

The role of councillors

11. Councillors have three roles: as decision makers, as community representatives and as communicators to exchange and share information and discuss the issues and concerns of local electors with council officers and other stakeholders. Members of the public can make their views known to ward councillors, the relevant council executive member/portfolio holder, or at planning applications committee in a number of ways; by letter, email, or face-to-face discussion.
12. It is also important that there is engagement in the planning consultation process. This is how views are registered in the plan-making or planning application process. This ensures that while councillors hear what you have to say, you will not miss the opportunity to be heard at committees or at any subsequent appeal, inquiry, hearing or examination.
13. Planning committee meetings are held in person at Norwich City Hall. They are made available to watch on the council's YouTube channel. Current information is available here; <https://cmis.norwich.gov.uk/live/Meetingscalendar.aspx>

RTPI Planning Aid England

14. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Planning Aid England offers assistance and advice on the planning system to individuals and groups who are unable to pay for independent professional planning advice. Planning Aid encourages people to get involved in the planning system to help shape their own environment.
15. RTPI Planning Aid England can be contacted via the planning aid advice line:
 - Tel: 0370 774 9494
 - Email: info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
 - Web: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/need-planning-advice/planning-aid-england/>
 - Online form: <https://www.planningaid.co.uk/hc/en-us/requests/new>
 - Postal address: Planning Aid England, RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL

2. Community Involvement in Planning Policy

16. This section outlines the council's approach to involving the community in the preparation of planning policy.

National policy requirements

17. National planning policy makes clear that local planning authorities must seek the views of communities and other stakeholders from an early stage in the plan-making process. [The National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) outlines that Local Plans should be:

- A platform for local people to shape their surroundings
- Shaped early with effective engagement between plan-makers, communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees
- Accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation.

18. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 also set out the community involvement requirements for local authorities to follow in preparing their local planning documents.

What kinds of documents are consulted on?

19. **Local plans** are the formal policy documents which make up the statutory development plan for Norwich. Once adopted, these have full legal weight in decision making. The council's decisions to approve or refuse any development which needs planning permission must be made in accordance with the policies in the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

20. **Supplementary planning documents** (SPDs) help to support and explain in more detail how the city council will implement particular policies and proposals in the local plan. SPDs can also take the form of master plans, detailed design briefs or development briefs for sites identified for future development ("allocated") in the plan, as well as for other emerging sites. SPDs can be reviewed frequently and relatively straightforwardly to respond to change, whereas a review of the policies in the plan is a longer and more complex process.

21. **Neighbourhood plans** were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 to empower local community to become more involved in the planning of their local area. Neighbourhood plans can include allocating additional sites for development, producing more detailed policies on key issues for the area and set out local infrastructure priorities. Neighbourhood plans are produced by designated neighbourhood groups and the local planning authority has a duty to support this process. Further information on the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans can be found in the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). The [Locality website](#) gives advice on financial support and grants as well as general information about producing Neighbourhood Plans.

22. **Guidance and advice notes** are prepared by local planning authorities to offer technical advice and information on particular issues that may help with the

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planning stage of a development proposal or set out the council's approach to assessing a technical issue. Guidance and advice notes can also be reviewed frequently and straightforwardly to respond to change.

23. The planning policy documents to be prepared by the council are identified in the [Local Development Scheme \(LDS\)](#). The LDS includes a timetable of when we aim to produce the documents, and the various stages they must go through to be adopted. The LDS is available on the council's website and is reviewed and updated regularly, most recently in January 2023.

The current local plan

24. The currently adopted development plan (the local plan) for Norwich comprises the Greater Norwich Local Plan (the GNLP) adopted March 2024 and the Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan (the DM Policies Plan), adopted December 2014.
25. The GNLP sets the strategic planning agenda for the wider Greater Norwich area and plans for growth of homes and employment up to 2038. This plan also includes site allocations and a monitoring framework. Upon its adoption in March 2024, the GNLP replaced the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (2014) and the Norwich Site Allocations Plan (2014).
26. The DM Policies Plan sets out detailed planning policies to help guide and manage change and development in Norwich and covers specific issues such as design, protecting trees and parking standards. A review was carried out in 2019 which concluded that the policies were fit for purpose for the current time. A second review was carried out in 2024, also concluding that the majority of policies were fit for purpose, however policies relating to affordable housing and Gypsy and Traveller housing need have been superseded by the GNLP. Given the changes to the planning system referred to above, the council will consider the future of current DM policies following the introduction of national development management policies, anticipated in 2025.
27. The table in figure 2 shows the relationship between these documents, as well as the supplementary planning documents which are already in place to support their policies. More details of supplementary planning documents the council intends to prepare in future are in the LDS. Both the LDS and this SCI are procedural documents that support the production of the local plan setting out what will be produced and explaining how people can get involved with the process.

Emerging supporting documents

28. Norwich City Council and partners commissioned a masterplan for the East Norwich sites, published in 2022, to guide their comprehensive regeneration. The regeneration area comprises approximately 50ha of brownfield land including Carrow Works and Carrow House, the Deal Ground / May Gurney site, and the Utilities site. The majority of the regeneration area is allocated for significant housing and employment development in the GNLP as the East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area (ENSRA), with the eastern portion of the Utilities site allocated for housing and mixed use development in the Broads Local Plan. The council is working closely with the East Norwich Delivery Board, which includes

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Homes England and local authority partners, to support the future delivery of the regeneration area.

29. There are several SPD or guidance documents anticipated to support GNLP policy, including on sustainable communities to support GNLP Policy 2, and in relation to purpose-built student accommodation to support GNLP policy 5.

Procedural Requirements

30. Local plan documents must be prepared in accordance with a nationally prescribed procedure set out in the national Local Planning Regulations for England, which were last reviewed in 2012.
31. At key stages of plan-making there is an opportunity for the public to comment on emerging planning policies and proposals in the documents being prepared. After this, development plan documents must be submitted to the Secretary of State and be independently examined by a government appointed inspector to assess their soundness and legal compliance before they can be adopted by the city council and come into force.
32. Certain other documents must be published alongside each local plan document, including:
- the sustainability appraisal (SA) report of the local plan at each stage (a sustainability appraisal scoping report is prepared and consulted on at the start of the process to set out what sustainability issues and objectives the SA should cover and what evidence it will use);
 - a policies map, setting out the local plan's policies and proposals on a map base (if relevant);
 - a statement of consultation summarising public representations made to the plan and how they have been addressed (called the "Regulation 22(c) statement");
 - copies of any representations made;
 - any other supporting documents considered by the council to be relevant in preparing the plan; and
 - an adoption statement and environmental statement (when the plan is adopted).
33. The local plan is supported by a range of research reports, studies and topic papers making up a detailed evidence base which informs and justifies its policies.

Meeting the Duty to Cooperate

34. For many years Norwich City Council has worked in close cooperation with its neighbouring councils Broadland and South Norfolk to plan for and deliver major growth. This work has been undertaken as part of a formal Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP). The Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk and the GNLP were produced by the GNDP, which includes the Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council working in partnership with the three districts. Other documents produced by the GNDP include the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule for each district/authority

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area. The Community Infrastructure Levy is a statutory charge on new development introduced by the CIL Regulations 2010. It came into force in Norwich in 2013. The spending of CIL, along with wider work on infrastructure delivery, is overseen by the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) and its delivery team.

35. Local authorities have a legal duty to work together to develop effective planning strategies for their areas. Councils are required show that they have met this statutory Duty to Cooperate in order for local plans to be accepted (found “sound” and “legally compliant”) when those plans are independently examined by government.
36. The planning policy documents which have been (and will be) prepared jointly by the Greater Norwich area authorities are set out in the respective Local Development Schemes for each authority. Public involvement in their preparation is guided by the community involvement standards as set by the partnership councils jointly in their respective SCIs. Consultation standards and consultation periods are common across the three local authority areas and all the participating authorities are working to the same consultation timeframes for key documents in their SCIs.

Development Plan for Norwich

37. Figure 2 below sets out the suite of documents making up the current development plan for Norwich.

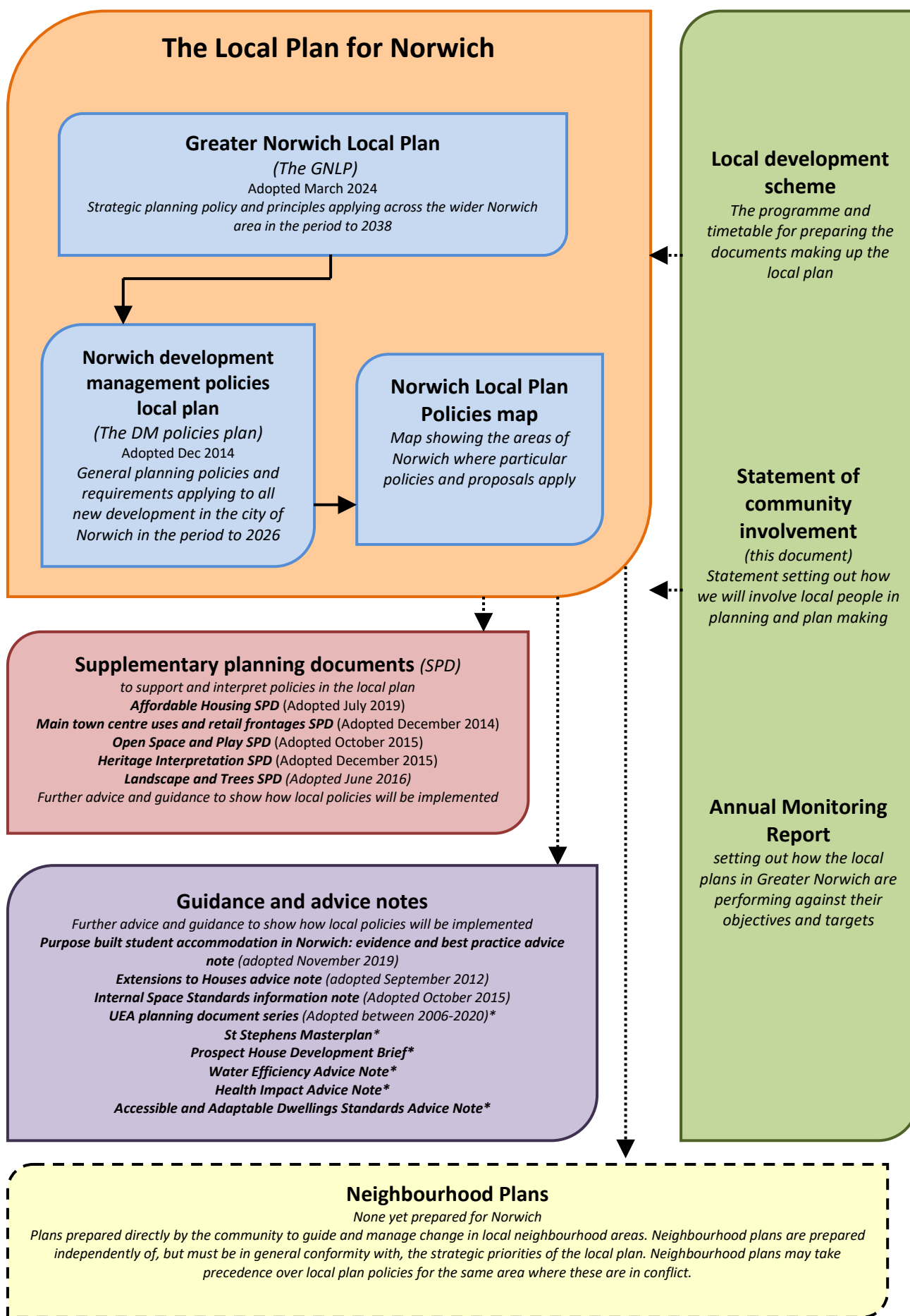


Figure 2: Documents making up the current ‘development plan’ for Norwich.

* Status of documents to be agreed in revised LDS following adoption of GNLP.

Consultation Methods

38. The council has a well-established procedure for involving people in plan-making. We will continue to develop our understanding of different consultation techniques over time and learn from what works, and what doesn't. A variety of methods have and will be used during consultations, taking into consideration issues being consulted on and the needs of the audience. These include the use of appropriate locations, and/or the use of particular presentation media for presentations to blind people, people with impaired hearing, and people with mental health issues or learning difficulties.
39. Consultation is carried out increasingly by electronic means which is still rapidly evolving in the digital age. Although all the documents we consult on are made available electronically, the challenge remains as to how information can be publicised effectively to attract the widest audience. The council is steadily expanding the use of interactive web technology to enable direct access to its services across a range of devices and to allow local people to make payments, submit comments and report issues and problems direct via online forms. In line with national policy which promotes the digitisation of planning, we will endeavour in future planning consultations to integrate these mechanisms where possible and extend the use of social media to help access "hard to reach" groups, especially younger people. This could include making use of the council's new Get Talking Norwich platform. We will also continue to use more traditional methods of consultation to include those without access to the internet or social media.
40. Based on our current success and lessons learned from previous consultations, we will endeavour to use a range of consultation approaches, as necessary dependent upon the type of consultation. These are set out in the following list:
- Letters/emails to groups and individuals
 - Digital platform such as Get Talking Norwich
 - newspapers and Citizen magazine
 - paper documents
 - council's website
 - presentations to community groups
 - public meetings
 - focus groups
 - exhibitions
 - local councillors
 - social media
 - local radio
41. We acknowledge that it is important to make public consultation arrangements as extensive as possible to make sure the public can get their voice heard. However, it is not always possible or appropriate to consult using all the methods listed above. We will make sure that consultations are tailored appropriately to

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the kind of plan, policy or proposal being consulted on and the stages it has reached. We will ensure that people with no access to the internet, email, text or social media are kept informed by traditional, non-electronic means.

How long will consultations last?

42. At all consultation stages the council will comply with the minimum legal requirements.

43. The following timescales will be adhered to for documents consulted on:

Document type	Normal period for consultation	Circumstances in which the consultation period will be extended
Local Plan documents	We will consult for at least the minimum statutory period of six weeks (42 calendar days) on Local Plan documents	Where a normal period of consultation would take in all or part of the Christmas/New Year holiday, the Easter holiday or the July/August summer holiday period in addition to bank holidays, extra days will be added to allow for this, up to a maximum of 14 calendar days over and above the statutory minimum.
Neighbourhood plans	We will consult for at least the minimum statutory period of six weeks (42 calendar days) when proposals for neighbourhood plans prepared by designated neighbourhood planning bodies are published. (Regulation 16 publication stage).	
Future reviews of this Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	We will consult for at least six weeks (42 calendar days) on any future reviews of this SCI	At its discretion, and only in the early, informal stages of Local Plan/SPD production, the council may allow additional time for representations to be made in circumstances where there is a justifiable reason for not responding within the deadline.
Supplementary planning documents (SPD) including planning briefs	We will consult for at least the minimum statutory period of four weeks (28 calendar days) on SPD and on planning briefs which have the status of SPD	In accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, we will not normally run consultations on planning documents in the six-week period immediately before local council elections. ("Pre-Election Period").
Non-statutory planning documents and informal advice notes	We will consult for a period appropriate to the coverage and content of the document concerned	

44. For supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and planning briefs, the Local Development Regulations specify a minimum four-week consultation period, although the period for legal challenge after adoption is longer than it is for Local Plans. Because SPDs typically relate to small geographical areas or subjects of specialist interest, shorter consultation periods are justified, particularly as similar lead-in times and reporting arrangements exist for SPD as they do for Local Plan documents.

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45. For neighbourhood plans a separate period of public consultation by the neighbourhood planning body proposing the plan is required before a draft plan can be formally submitted to and accepted by the council (regulation 14 consultation). At the time of writing there are no 'made' (i.e. adopted) neighbourhood plans in Norwich. A neighbourhood forum has been designated for the Norwich Over the Wensum neighbourhood area, which is currently at an early stage in developing a neighbourhood plan.

Who will we involve, and how?

46. The council's community-led plan identifies a number of guiding principles that will inform everything we do, including:

- Listen to the city
- Put equality and inclusion front and centre of all our thinking
- Use evidence to inform the services we provide
- Work in partnership

These translate into different levels of involvement for residents, groups and other stakeholders where the council will inform, consult and collaborate.

Potential involvement in and publicity methods for Local Plans

Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>1. Pre-production/evidence gathering The information needed for the plan is prepared and potential issues identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult • Collaborate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing to statutory environment bodies to initiate Sustainability appraisal screening • Early involvement of relevant stakeholders • Hold focus group sessions where necessary to help decide issues to be included in the plan (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance)
<p>2. Draft Local plan (Regulation 18) The information gathered at first stage is taken into account in the drafting of detailed policies and allocations. Depending on the level of complexity, the draft local plan stage may involve more than one period of consultation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish draft documents for consultation for a minimum of six weeks, and, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ publish the Sustainability scoping report or appraisal; ▪ inform specific consultation bodies (email where possible or post); ▪ inform relevant consultation bodies, other interested bodies and individuals on the consultation database, as above; ▪ publish electronic copies of the consultation documents on the council's website ▪ make hard copies of consultation documents available for inspection at the council's office (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance) ▪ provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millenium library ▪ issue a press release in local papers; ▪ add consultation information on the council's social media sites. • Arrange public meetings, exhibitions, focus groups as appropriate (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance)
<p>3. Pre submission publication of the Local plan (Regulation 19) The Local plan is finalised and published for a last stage of consultation. Comments at this stage will only be sought on soundness and legal compliance of the plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the Local plan and relevant documents for consultation for a minimum of six weeks, and, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ publish a statement of the representation's procedure; ▪ publish the Sustainability appraisal report for consultation; ▪ publish a consultation statement summarising all comments received from the previous stages and how the comments have been considered and taken into account; ▪ publish relevant supporting documents; ▪ inform specific consultation bodies, as above; ▪ inform relevant general consultation bodies, other interested bodies and individuals on the consultation database, as above; ▪ publish electronic copies of all the documents on the council's website

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Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ make hard copies available for inspection at the council’s office (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance); ▪ provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millenium library ▪ issue a public notice in local newspapers; ▪ issue a press release in local newspapers; ▪ add consultation information on the council’s social media sites. • Arrange exhibitions or presentations to interest groups if necessary, and where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance.
<p>4. Submission (Regulation 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft Local plan, and all supporting documents and the comments received from public consultation are submitted to the Secretary of State, who appoints an independent planning inspector. • publish electronic copies of all the documents on the council’s website • The hard copy documents are made available at council’s offices (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance). • Inform relevant general and specific consultation bodies, other interested bodies and individuals on the consultation database who requested to be notified of submission, as above (email where possible or post).
<p>5. Public examination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<p>The Local Plan and comments received are examined by the appointed planning inspector, including the public hearing stage. If there are any proposed main modifications, they will be consulted on for at least six weeks. On receipt of the Inspector’s report, it will be published on the council’s website.</p> <p>Public examination publicity methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform those who made Pre-Submission representations about the date of the Hearing session(s), publication of Proposed Main Modifications and receipt of Inspector’s report (as relevant) (email where possible or post) • publish electronic copies of all the documents on the council’s website; • add consultation information on council’s social media sites. • Information available at council offices (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance).

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Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>6. Adoption The Local plan is adopted following the inclusion of the modification required by the inspector's report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the inspector's report available for inspection on the council's website and at the council's office (hard copies will be made available where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance) • Inform 'pre submission publication' respondents who requested to be notified (email where possible or post). <p>Following adoption of the Local plan, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the Local plan, make electronic copies available on the council's website and hard copies available at the council's office (hard copies will be made available where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance) • Publish an adoption statement in local newspapers • • Send the adoption statement to specific and general consultees and those who made representations at previous stages or those who have asked to be notified of the adoption. • Make the Sustainability appraisal and other supporting documents available for inspection for six weeks after adoption. • provide information about the adoption of the plan on the council's social media sites

Public involvement in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and planning briefs

Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential Public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>1. Pre-production/evidence gathering The information for the topic needs to be prepared and potential issues identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult • Collaborate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging relevant stakeholders in deciding the level of detail to be included in the document and to identify key issues that need to be addressed • Where necessary, preliminary engagement will be carried out prior to the publication of draft SPDs
<p>2. Draft SPDs/ Planning briefs A Draft SPD/planning brief is prepared following the initial evidence gathering stage. Consultations at this stage will involve publishing a draft of the SPD/ planning brief for comment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the Draft SPD/planning brief for consultation for a minimum of four weeks, and, at the start of the consultation period, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ make electronic copies of the plan and supporting documents available on the council's website; ▪ make hard copies of the plan and supporting documents available at the council's office for inspection (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance). ▪ provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millennium library ▪ inform relevant specific and general consultees and those on the consultation database who may have an interest on the issues (by email where possible or post); ▪ issue a press release for the matters concerned if appropriate; ▪ provide consultation information on council's social media sites. • Arrange exhibition or presentation to interest groups if necessary (and where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance).
<p>3. Adoption The council will consider the representations received through the consultations and make any amendments necessary before adopting the SPD/ planning brief.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the SPD/planning brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ make electronic copies and any supporting documents available on the council's website; ▪ make hard copies available at council's office (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance). • Publish a consultation statement summarising all comments received from the previous stages and how the comments were considered and taken into account • Send an adoption statement to those who have made representations during the previous consultations and those who have asked to be notified of the adoption of the SPD/planning brief (by email where possible or post). • Provide information on council's social media sites

Publicising Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood plans are prepared independently by the local community. As such, deciding how to involve people about what should be in a neighbourhood plan and determining what issues it will cover is the role of the neighbourhood forum or other designated body¹ actually proposing the plan. The council does not itself have a direct role in preparing a neighbourhood plan but must provide technical advice and support to any group proposing one, to ensure that it will be broadly consistent with the existing development plan for the area. The council is only required to consult formally at key stages, following the legal procedures as described below. The neighbourhood planning body must abide by the neighbourhood planning regulations and must consult “meaningfully” about a proposed plan but is not bound by this Statement of Community Involvement.

Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>1. Neighbourhood Area Application A neighbourhood forum or other prospective neighbourhood planning body applies to the city council to designate a Neighbourhood Area for which they propose to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult 	<p>As soon as possible after receiving the application, publish the Neighbourhood Area proposal and invite representations for a minimum of six weeks, and,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make electronic copies of the proposal documentation available on the council’s website; • make hard copies of the proposal documentation available at the council’s office for inspection (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance); • provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millennium library • inform relevant specific and general consultees and those on the consultation database who may have an interest in the proposal (email where possible or post); • issue a press release relating to the proposal if appropriate; • add information about how to respond to the proposal on the council’s social media sites.
<p>2. Neighbourhood Forum Application</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult 	<p>As soon as possible after receiving the application, publish the Neighbourhood Area proposal and invite representations for a minimum of six weeks, and,</p>

¹ In areas without a parish or town council (such as Norwich), local people will need to decide which organisation should produce a neighbourhood plan. These can be existing community groups or local people forming a new group. In both cases they will need to be formally designated and must meet the basic conditions set out in the Localism Act.

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Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>A neighbourhood group applies to the city to council to become a designated neighbourhood forum.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make electronic copies of the proposal documentation available on the council's website; • make hard copies of the proposal documentation available at the council's office for inspection (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance); • provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millennium library • inform relevant specific and general consultees and those on the consultation database who may have an interest in the proposal (email where possible or post); • issue a press release relating to the proposal if appropriate; • add information about how to respond to the proposal on the council's social media sites. • A statement that as designation is made no other organisation or body may be designated for that area until the designation expires or is withdrawn.
<p>3. Submission of a Neighbourhood Plan The neighbourhood forum submits the Neighbourhood Plan to the city council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult • Inform 	<p>As soon as possible after receiving a plan proposal, publish the submitted plan and invite representations for a minimum of six weeks, and,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make electronic copies of the submitted plan available on the council's website; • make hard copies of the submitted plan available at the council's (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance); • online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millenium library • inform relevant specific and general consultees (including those on the neighbourhood plan consultation statement) and those on the consultation database, (by email where possible or post). • issue a press release relating to the Neighbourhood Plan if appropriate; • provide information about how to respond to the plan on the council's social media sites.
<p>4. Publication of examiners report The city council publishes the report of the examination into the submitted Neighbourhood Plan and the decision of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<p>Publish the examiners report and decision statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make electronic copies of the examiner's report and decision statement available on the council's website;

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Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>the council as to whether or not it accepts the examiner's recommendations.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make hard copies of the examiner's report and decision statement available at the council's office (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance); • provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millennium library • inform relevant specific and general consultees (including those on the neighbourhood plan consultation statement) and those on the consultation database, (by email where possible or post) • Provide information about the examiner's report and decision on the council's social media sites.
<p>5. Referendum information statement The city council publishes the Referendum Information Statement and specified documents, setting out the date and procedure for the Neighbourhood Plan referendum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<p>No less than 28 working days before a Neighbourhood Plan referendum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make electronic copies of the referendum information statement and documentation available on the council's website; • make hard copies of the referendum information statement and documentation available at the council's office for inspection (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance); • provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millenium library • inform relevant specific and general consultees and those on the consultation database, (by email where possible or post); • provide information about the referendum on the council's social media sites • send copies of the Referendum Information Statement to addresses within the designated neighbourhood area by post.
<p>6. Notice of Referendum and Notice of Poll</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<p>Not later than 25 days before the day of the referendum, publish a notice of referendum on the council's website. Not later than 6 days before the referendum, publish a notice of poll on the council's website, including the situation of each polling station and the persons entitled to vote there.</p>
<p>7. Publication of Referendum Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<p>Publish the results of the referendum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the council's website • In hard copy at the council's office for inspection (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance).

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Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>8. “Making” of the Neighbourhood Plan The city council confirms that the Neighbourhood Plan has come into effect (has been “made”)².</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform • Collaborate 	<p>Publish the Neighbourhood Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make electronic copies and any supporting documents available on the council’s website and hard copies available at council’s office (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance). • Provide online access via public PCs at libraries including the Millennium library • notify those who have asked to be informed about the making of the neighbourhood plan. • provide information about the made plan on council’s social media sites.

² Under planning legislation, neighbourhood development plans prepared by the community are referred to as being “made” when they take legal effect. This is distinct from local plans prepared by a council or other local planning authority, which are “adopted”.

Public involvement in future revisions of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Key stages	Involvement Level	Potential public/stakeholder involvement arrangements
<p>1. Draft Statement of Community Involvement A draft SCI is prepared in accordance with any relevant statutory requirements and guidance. Consultations at this stage will involve publishing a draft of the SCI for comment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish draft documents for consultation for a minimum of six weeks, and at the start of the consultation period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make electronic copies of the SCI available on the council's website; • Make hard copies of the SCI available at the council's office Millennium library for inspection; • Inform relevant specific and general consultees and those on the consultation database who may have an interest on the issues (this will be done by email where possible: postal mailing will be used where there is no email address on the database); • Issue a press release for the matters concerned if appropriate; • Provide consultation information on the council's social media sites; • Arrange exhibitions or presentations to interest groups if appropriate (where possible and in accordance with any relevant current regulations and guidance).
<p>2. Adoption The councils will consider the representations received through the consultation and make any amendments necessary before adopting the SCI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the SCI – make electronic copies and any supporting documents available on the council's website and hard copies available at Council's office (hard copies will be made available where possible) • Publish a consultation statement summarising all comments received from the previous stages and how the comments were considered and taken into account • Provide information on council's social media sites.

3. Community Involvement in Planning Applications

Introduction

47. Planning applications are considered through the development management process. It is important that the views of the general public and stakeholders are taken into account to inform decisions.
48. The legal minimum requirements of publicity on planning applications and applications for listed building consent are set out in legislation. These requirements include publication on the council's register, notices displayed near the site and/or neighbours being notified directly by letter. For some applications involving a listed building or in a conservation area, an advertisement is published in a local newspaper. All planning applications are available to view on the council's website and are updated in real time with changes and new correspondence. Detail of the council's application publicity procedure is available in the [Council's Constitution](#).
49. This section sets out the council's approach to encouraging, and requiring where necessary, developers to undertake pre-application consultations and for the involvement of the community in commenting on planning applications.
50. The Planning service standards outline how people can expect to be involved in planning applications and the service they can expect to receive including response times to letters, emails and phone calls. The most up-to-date Planning service standards are available on our website at www.norwich.gov.uk; these will be updated when appropriate to reflect any future changes in legislation or internal processes.

Pre-application consultation

51. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities should encourage other parties involved in the development process to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage, so that prospective developers and applicants who are not already required to do so by law may engage effectively with the local community before they make a planning application. This should improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.
52. The city council strongly encourages developers and agents of all application types to engage with the community at the earliest opportunity. For major schemes this is a requirement. This will give the best information on which to base proposals and enable any planning application that is subsequently made to have the best chance of success.
53. Early involvement between developers, the community, consultees and the local planning authority allows issues and concerns to be discussed before planning proposals are formally submitted for assessment and decisions are made. Pre-application involvement by all parties allows issues and concerns to be raised at an early stage, potentially enabling them to be addressed and giving communities the opportunity to shape or influence the development proposals.
54. There are several levels of pre-application service available, depending on the type of development proposed. A fee will be charged for this service. Further guidance can be found on the council's [Pre-Application webpage](#).

55. The council strongly encourages applicants to consult the local community before submitting a planning application for significant development, in particular:
- Housing developments of 10 or more dwellings;
 - Any other development with a floor area of 1,000 square metres.
56. The [Validation Requirements](#) produced by the council provide details of the pre-application consultation requirements for applications. These will be regularly updated in accordance with legislative requirements.
57. Figure 3 gives some basic advice on how involvement and consultation would be expected to be conducted. If community consultation is impacted by national guidance and regulations (for example social distancing rules that were introduced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic), developers and agents will be expected to consider alternative methods of effective consultation and explain their approach.

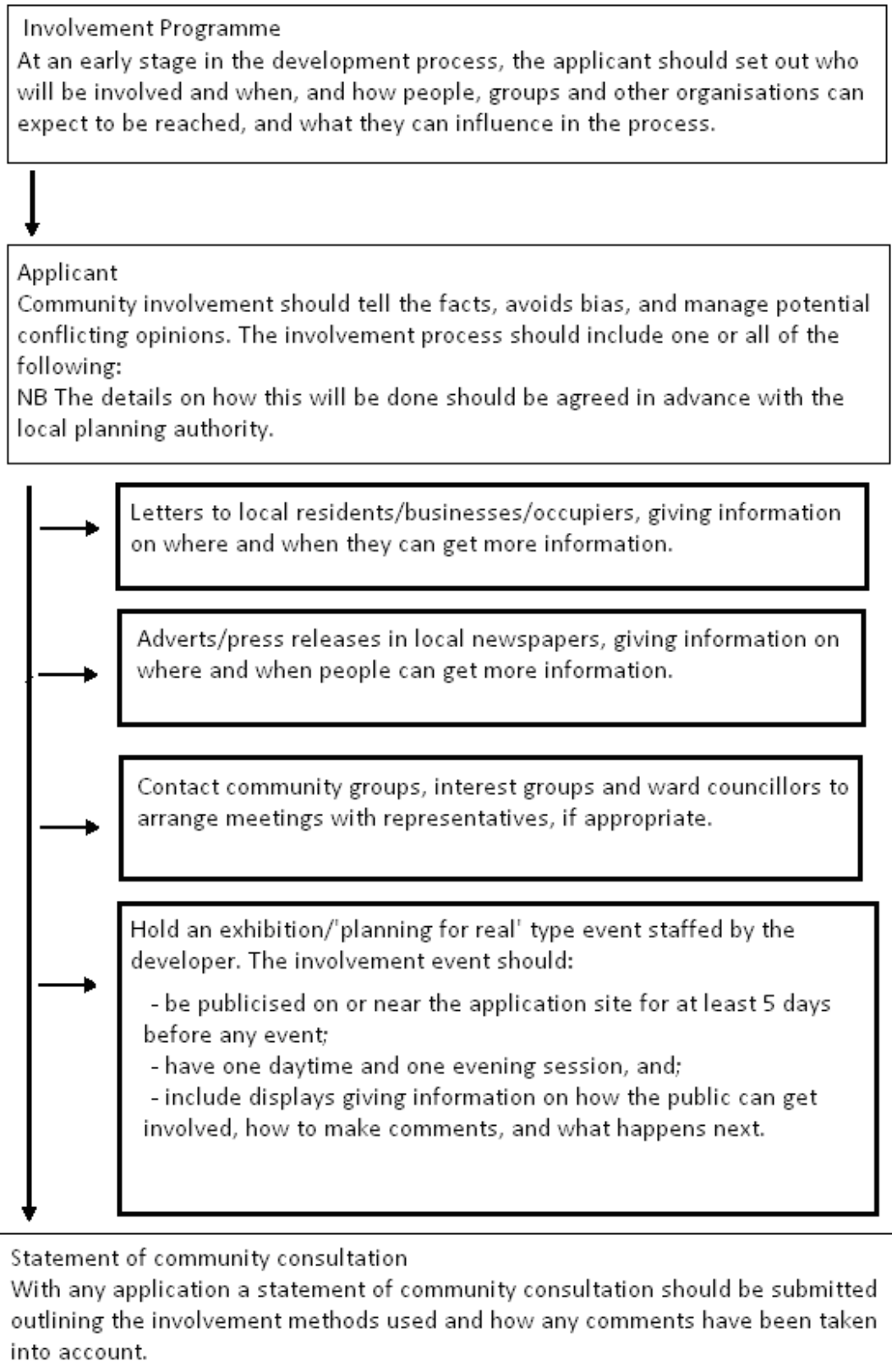


Figure 3: An example of how a pre-application community consultation could be conducted

Planning application consultation

58. It is important that the community have suitable opportunities to be involved in commenting on planning applications and that those comments are taken into account as part of the decision-making process.
59. The council has a well-established process of consultation on planning applications. The main way to find out information on planning applications is through the [Planning Public Access service](#) on our website. You can also sign up to receive e-mail alerts of proposed developments in your area through this service. All comments received are published on our website and are attributable to their author. No anonymous comments can be considered. Details of how your information will be held and processed by the council can be found within the [Planning Privacy Notice](#).
60. Consultation will be carried out in accordance with at least the minimum requirements of Section 15 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (or any updated version thereafter). However, full details of the consultation methods on planning applications can be found from page 156 of the [Council's Constitution](#).
61. Other potential methods of planning application consultation are set out below. This list is not exhaustive and may be amended in response to future changes in national planning legislation or regulation:
- i) letters and emails to statutory consultees, other organisations and interest groups;
 - ii) letters and emails to residents, businesses and properties within 10 metres of the boundary of the site;
 - iii) the display of site notices (for some applications);
 - iv) publication in local newspapers (for some applications);
 - v) viewing of all comments received on our website;
 - vi) viewing of all decision reports on our website;
 - vii) presentations at committee (for some applications);
 - viii) committee papers – available a week before each meeting, and;
 - ix) committee minutes – available 7 days prior to the next meeting.
62. If any planning application is amended during the process of its assessment and the amendment would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on neighbouring properties, then the occupiers of properties affected will be re-notified. All revised or additional documentation or plans will be published on the website. If necessary, the case officer for the application will agree a new determination deadline with the developer/agent as required.
63. [The Planning Portal](#) provides information on planning in general, with Norwich City Council's website providing more specific information relevant to Norwich.

Public Access contains details of all planning applications and comments of consultees and the consideration of the application by officers from December 2005 onwards, with some information on applications from January 1988 to November 2005.

Material planning considerations

64. In the process of assessing an application the planning officer must have regard to material planning considerations. Some examples of material considerations and non-material considerations can be found in figure 4 (please note, this list is not exhaustive).
65. More advice on material planning considerations can be found via the [Planning Portal Material Considerations webpage](#) and [Planning Aid England Material Considerations webpage](#).

Material planning considerations	Non-material considerations
National and local policies	Issues considered under Building Regulations
Planning history and previous appeal decisions	Land/boundary disputes, including rights of access
Case Law	Opposition to business competition
Impact on sunlight, outlook, privacy and amenity	Loss of property value
Highways issues (e.g. increased traffic movements)	Loss of view (NB this does not include 'outlook')
Effect on a Listed Building or Conservation Area	Opposition to the principle of a development if permission has been granted by an outline application or appeal decision

Figure 4: Examples of material and non-material considerations³

The post-application stage

66. Once an application has been determined the council will inform the applicant (via a Decision Notice) and update the website with the Decision Notice.
67. Once the council has made a decision on a planning application the person who made the application has a right to appeal the decision if they disagree with it (an appeal can also be made if the council has not made a decision within the statutory or agreed timeframe). Most appeals must be made within 6 months of the date on the decision notice issued by the council (or date that a decision should have been made by). There are different deadlines for appeals under the

³ Source: RTP/Planning Portal/ Planning Aid England

Householder Appeals Service, the Commercial Appeals Service and those linked to enforcement action, further details can be found in [the Planning Inspectorate Procedural Guide](#). Planning appeals are dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate and heard by an independent Planning Inspector.

68. Anyone can comment on a planning appeal and the deadline for comments is 5 weeks after the start date of the appeal. The council has to inform anyone who commented on the original application that an appeal has been lodged to give them a chance to comment. All comments received are passed to the Planning Inspectorate to consider as part of the appeal process.
69. An appeal can be dealt with through written representations or through a hearing or inquiry and there are opportunities for local people to be involved. There is [guidance about taking part in a planning appeal](#) available online.

Enforcement

70. Where development has taken place without planning permission or carried out in a way that is different from approved plans, these are called breaches of planning control.
71. People are encouraged to report unauthorised work to protect the environment of Norwich for people who live, work and visit here. Information on how to [report a breach of planning control](#) and [the council's enforcement process](#) can be found online.

4. Resources, management and monitoring

72. This section discusses the management of the involvement process and the resources available to the council.
73. The local plan is managed by the council's planning policy team and supported by officers from other council departments who will provide expertise, support and advice during the process. The resources are designed to ensure that the Local plan, and other council strategies are linked and that all local community involvement events are coordinated.
74. The council will aim to make the most efficient use of limited staff time and resources to prepare local planning documents and involve people throughout the plan-making process. We will work closely with those involved to understand and agree policies and proposals at an early stage so that outstanding issues can be resolved where possible, meaning that fewer resources are needed at the examination stage to debate outstanding objections. From previous experience of consulting on planning policy documents, the efficient use of time and resources at the earliest stage can reduce the length of examination time. This helps to ensure that emerging policies and proposals have a broad consensus and will be appropriate and effective in bringing forward sustainable development.
75. The council may engage specialised agencies or consultants for specific parts of the planning policy framework such as master planning and evidence studies. Where appropriate, they will be expected to undertake public participation and involvement on their proposals and results which will be consistent with this document.
76. The SCI remains an important local planning document and will be reviewed to check that the methods and techniques being used are still the most appropriate, and any updates to the SCI made as necessary. Planning reforms, including those associated with the LURA which may lead to a change in planning regulations, may mean that there will be a review in the near future.

Appendix 1: Local plan consultees

In the planning policy making process, the council is required to consult organisations which are known as either 'specific' or 'general' consultees. As the legislation and regulations are frequently updated, the lists of consultees below may change over time and must be checked against the requirements set out in any new regulations.

The recent planning regulations set out the specific consultation bodies. Along with relevant government departments, the list contains the bodies below.

Regard will also be had to the consultation requirements indicated in the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations (2012 as amended).

Specific consultation bodies

- The Coal Authority
- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (Historic England)
- The Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- Highways England
- Norfolk County Council
- Broads Authority
- Adjacent local authorities
- Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Relevant telecommunications companies
- Relevant electricity and gas companies
- Relevant water and sewerage undertakers (Anglian Water)
- Homes England
- Local Enterprise Partnership (New Anglia)
- Local nature partnerships

General consultation bodies - examples

Through this Statement of community involvement, we are committed to involving a wide range of other groups, organisations and interested individuals in the planning

process. This will ensure that as many people as possible who are interested are involved in the future development of Norwich.

The list below provides some examples of general consultation bodies:

- Community groups (area based and topic based)
- Parish councils in Norwich Urban Fringe parishes of Broadland and South Norfolk
- Local Members of Parliament
- Housing organisations
- Housebuilders
- Residents and tenants' groups
- Business and commerce organisations
- Economic development agencies
- Educational bodies
- School councils
- Community safety bodies
- Environmental and heritage organisations
- Equal opportunities bodies
- Ethnic minority groups
- Disabled people's organisations
- Older people's groups
- Faith groups
- Health and social care groups
- Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
- Youth organisations
- Agents/developers
- Landowners
- Regeneration bodies
- Tourism bodies
- Transport bodies
- NCC Public Health
- Community centres
- Volunteer development organisations
- Sports and recreation organisations
- Health and Safety Executive

- Royal Mail
- Emergency services.
- Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people organisations
- Design Review Panel
- Norfolk Historic Environment Service
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Utility service providers
- Interested individuals

Neighbourhood Plan - Statutory consultation bodies:

As set out in Schedule 1 to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

- Interested individuals
- Where the local planning authority is a London Borough, the Mayor of London
- A local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority
- The Coal Authority
- The Homes and Communities Agency
- Natural England
- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (Historic England)
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- A strategic highways company, any part of whose area is in or adjoins the neighbourhood area
- Where the Secretary of State is the highway authority for any road in the area of a local planning authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the neighbourhood area, the Secretary of State for Transport
- The Marine Management Organisation
- Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies or who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus in any part of the area of the local planning authority
- Where it exercises functions in any part of the neighbourhood area – a clinical commissioning group established under section 14D of the National Health Service Act 2006; the National Health Service Commissioning Board; a person to whom a licence has been granted under the Electricity Act (1989) or the Gas Act (1986); a sewerage undertaker; and a water undertaker

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

Organisation	Ref	Section	Comment	Action	Response/change required
Gareth Roderick-Jones	1	General	'You obviously do not understand how to communicate. Your email does not tell us what LDF is.'	No action	The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document does not include reference to the LDF. Reference is only made to this term in the planning policy shared inbox email address LDF@norwich.gov.uk LDF refers to Local Development Framework which is an old term for a set of planning policies and guidance, which we now commonly refer to as the Development Plan. No changes required.
Natural England	2	General	'We regret we are unable to comment, in detail, on individual Statements of Community Involvement but information on the planning service we offer, including advice on how to consult us, can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-planning-authorities-get-environmental-advice '	No action	No changes requested.
Lead Local Flood Authority	3	General	'The LLFA has reviewed the report and has no substantive comments to make at this time. However, we note there are a few minor typos that you may wish to take the opportunity to correct.'	Amendments made	The document has been reviewed for typographical errors and amended as necessary.
Historic England	4	General	'While we do not currently have the capacity to comment, we will be interested in receiving future consultations on this and related projects.'	No action	No changes requested.
Anonymous response from Get Talking	5	General	The document should expand on strategies to reach and engage with diverse communities particularly those who may not	Amendments made	A section has been added to the bottom of the contents page including information about how the SCI can be

<p>Norwich</p>			<p>participate in typical planning consultations. For example, younger generations, non English speakers, people with disabilities).</p> <p>It could also include clearer information on the council's commitment to providing accessible consultation materials and formats. Accessible in plain English is important!! Planning should be an area we can understand and influence and access</p>		<p>obtained in different formats and languages.</p> <p>Planning can be a very technical subject area and there is government legislation and regulations that must be followed in planning processes. This can sometimes limit the accessibility of planning. However, Norwich City Council is committed to making this more accessible. The use of Get Talking Norwich and the commitment to more digital tools in the revised SCI is one step the planning team are taking to improve the accessibility of planning for its citizens.</p> <p>In addition, paragraph 40 of the SCI outlines a variety of different ways that the council aims to reach the widest audience possible. For example, as part of this SCI consultation, the council's Community Enabling team were asked to inform any local groups that the consultation was under way and how to comment.</p>
<p>Anonymous response from Get Talking Norwich</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>General</p>	<p>pls use more digital consultations on here and promote on social media! No time to come into city hall to read documents. I am interested in planning and this is first consultation I've found</p>	<p>No action</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

What is being assessed	Revised Statement of Community Involvement 2025	Status	5 yearly review of document (statutory review timescale) Second review of EqIA after public consultation.
Officer completing	Charlotte Rivett	Role	Planner (Policy)
Team	Planning Policy	Directorate	Development and City Services
Senior leadership team sponsor	Sarah Ashurst	Role	Head of Planning and Regulatory Services

What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function? *(include links to project briefs, cabinet reports etc)*

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how councils intend to involve people in planning decisions. They cover decisions relating to planning policy and planning application. SCIs are required under legislation.

How does it fit with other services and policies, and how does it support our [corporate objectives](#) and [City Vision](#)?

The production of an SCI meets several corporate objectives including, 'A future-proof Norwich', 'A fairer Norwich', and 'An open and modern council' by setting out clearly how the community will be engaged on planning issues and using multiple and inclusive methods of consultation to ensure everyone can access planning consultations and have their view. A new corporate communications/engagement strategy is in preparation – officers have worked together to ensure the revised SCI will be in line with this new emerging strategy.

What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, legal etc)?

Under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, all local planning authorities in England and Wales must prepare an SCI and undertake planning consultations in accordance with it. The SCI is being updated so that the most effective and appropriate community engagement in planning takes place and to ensure planning consultations are undertaken in accordance with the latest statutory requirements.

Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function?

The planning service (Planning Policy and Development Management).

What outcomes do we want to achieve, why and for who?

- Ensuring planning consultation and engagement accords with statutory planning processes.
- Inclusive consultation processes so that all sections of the community can engage in planning.

Equality Impact Assessment

- Improving digitisation of planning consultations and engagement in line with government policy.

Will anyone be disproportionately affected by the programme, and/or will it create any benefits? (*customers, employees, groups in the wider community etc*)

The amendments to the SCI are likely to increase the level of participation and engagement in planning through the following additions:

- Making provisions for consultations to be available online through public computers
- Making use of new digital tools such as Get Talking Norwich
- Retaining other non-digital forms of engagements such as issuing press releases and having hard copy documents available.

If yes, complete the relevant sections below for any benefits and adverse impacts identified.

Affected group	Key findings from analysis of data and evidence. Identify any gaps in data here	Level & type of impact: low/medium/high, positive/adverse	Justifiable if adverse	Actions to mitigate impacts, maximise benefits or address identified gaps in data	By when
Age	<p>There tends to be lower engagement in planning from younger generations. For Norwich we only have anecdotal information, although as part of the GNLP consultation process, an increase in engagement from young people was noted through increased use of social media.</p> <p>Through the consultation of the draft SCI, one comment noted their appreciation for using Get Talking Norwich, as they had never seen planning</p>	Adverse low		<p>The consultation methods proposed in the revised SCI include better use of digital tools for engagement in the planning process, including the use of interactive maps etc. The aim is to improve accessibility of planning and to appeal to/engage a wider audience, including younger peoples.</p> <p>In addition, the use of some of these digital tools (eg Get Talking Norwich) provides anonymised data about those who have engaged with the planning content so should assist in providing</p>	<p>Proposed additions of digital planning tools are included in draft SCI.</p> <p>Lessons learned from the SCI consultation are also included in the SD Panel and Cabinet</p>

	consultations before but were keen to be involved.			evidence for future planning workstreams.	reports to ensure the best use of digital planning tools in future.
Disability	Anecdotal information that those with disabilities may not be able to access planning information in certain formats.	Low adverse – the planning service already aims to use a wide range of consultation methods		Proposing to use a wider range of consultation methods for and within the SCI to ensure there are options for people to engage with the planning process. This includes having multiple contact methods available, having online tools, using accessibility checkers on all documents produced and the option to provide documents in large print/braille/other formats.	Proposed additions of digital planning tools are included in draft SCI.
Gender reassignment	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Race/ethnicity	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion and belief	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sex/gender	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

Equality Impact Assessment

<p>Other groups</p> <p>Those without or with low digital skills</p>	<p>The Essential Digital Skills Survey 2022 suggests that 89% have essential full or partial digital skills for life. This leaves a proportion of the population without or with low digital skills. The risk is that this proportion of the population may not be able to engage in the planning process as easily, as it becomes further digitised.</p> <p>Officers were advised after the closure of the SCI consultation that low participation rates on digital platforms could be due to there being multiple options for responding.</p>	<p>Low adverse - the planning service already aims to use a wide range of consultation methods.</p>		<p>Proposing to use a wider range of consultation methods for and within the SCI to ensure there are options for people to engage with the planning process. This includes having multiple contact methods available, having online tools and the option to provide documents in alternative formats.</p> <p>Planning consultations are also required to be undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Act 2012 which would prevent the total shift of planning consultations to Get Talking Norwich.</p>	<p>Proposed additions of digital planning tools are included in the draft SCI.</p> <p>Lessons learned from the SCI consultation are also included in the SD Panel and Cabinet reports to ensure the best use of digital planning tools in future.</p>
<p>What evidence and data has been used for this assessment, including community engagement and consultation?</p> <p>The consultation on the SCI aimed to be inclusive and seek to gauge the view of as broader cross-section of the city as possible. This workstream tested the using of Get Talking Norwich as a new digital tool for this planning consultation. The reports available after the closure of the consultation showed that although direct comments were low (only 2 received through this platform) a significant number (nearly 60 people) were “aware” of the project and had seen some of the content available online. This has been helpful information to gauge level of interest.</p>					

The decision was also made not to collect demographic information for this project as doing so requires consent from individuals and can reduce participation. This will also be kept under review for future projects and it is possible that another test project that does choose to collect demographic information could be used as a comparison.

The lessons learned from this test run have been included in the Sustainable Development Panel and Cabinet reports and this will inform future approaches to consultation. This does not change the content of the SCI itself, as it is worded to be flexible to allow the best communication methods to be used for each project.

How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

The EqIA has helped inform the design of the Get Talking Norwich tool for this project and ensured considerations from this document informed the process throughout. One of the comments received in response to the consultation has prompted the inclusion of information on how alternative formats of the SCI can be obtained.

What actions have been identified going forward?

Revisit the results of this EqIA and the results of the public consultation when designing future projects public consultation. This is likely to include testing the collection of demographic data for another project.

The SCI has been updated following the public consultation and this will be in the public domain as part of committee reports and on the council's website.

Information on the post-consultation process will also be added to the Get Talking Norwich page.

How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

Through continued use of digital tools to consult on the SCI, we will be able to gather and analyse data as to who is engaging with planning content which will help evidence how successful the service is at reaching all sections of the community.

Officer completing assessment	Charlotte Rivett	Date	09.12.2024
Senior leadership team sponsor	Sarah Ashurst	Date	02.01.2025
Equality lead (strategy team)	Joe Siggins	Date	11.12.2024