

# Statement of Community Involvement 2019

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## Contents

	Foreword .....	3
	How we got to this point .....	4
1	Introduction .....	5
2	Why the Statement of Community Involvement has been revised .....	6
3	A corporate commitment to effective engagement .....	6
4	This is Bedford Borough .....	8
	<b>Part 1: Plan-Making - Publicity and Consultation on Plans and Planning Policy Documents</b>	
5	A Planning Framework for Bedford .....	10
6	What types of documents we will consult you on .....	10
7	How we will consult you and keep you informed .....	13
8	When we will consult you and inform you .....	16
9	Who will be consulted on plans and policy documents .....	26
	<b>Part 2: Development Management - Publicity and Consultation in Development Management (Dealing with Planning And Other Related Applications)</b>	
10	Planning permission and other consents .....	30
11	Planning Application Process .....	31
12	What types of planning applications will we consult you on? .....	35
13	How you will be informed and can get involved in the planning applications process .....	38
	<b>Part 3: Publicity and Consultation in The Neighbourhood Planning Process</b>	
14	Neighbourhood planning .....	43
	<b>Part 4: General Information</b>	
15	Your comments and responses to planning applications and plan consultations .....	52
16	Who can help you with planning issues .....	54
17	Review and monitoring .....	56
	<b>Appendices</b>	
	Appendix 1 Statutory and other consultation bodies in plan-making	
	Appendix 2 Minimum consultation and publicity procedures in the preparation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule	
	Appendix 3 Minimum consultation and publicity procedures in the preparation of the Brownfield Land Register	
	Appendix 4 Availability of information, consultation methods and forums of engagement in planning policy	
	Appendix 5 Statutory consultation bodies for planning applications	
	Appendix 6 The Right to Speak Scheme	
	Appendix 7 Availability of information, consultation methods and forums of engagement in the planning application process	
	Appendix 8 Availability of information and publicity methods in supporting the neighbourhood planning process	
	Appendix 9 Glossary of terms	

## Foreword

The Statement of Community Involvement 2019 has been produced in consultation with the local community. It is a factual update and replaces the adopted Statement of Community Involvement 2013.

The Statement of Community Involvement 2019 does not set out planning policy or allocate land for development. It considers how best we can involve different parts of the community at different stages of document preparation and in the determination of planning and other applications.

Community engagement lies at the very heart of many planning activities and Bedford Borough Council takes consultation with all those who live, work and visit the borough very seriously. Our aim is to make the planning system more accessible and relevant to a wide range of people and to take important decisions based on a good understanding of local views and appreciations.

The Statement of Community Involvement 2019 sets out how and when our community can expect to be engaged in the preparation of plans and planning policy documents and the gathering of views about planning applications. It takes account of the requirements of government for community involvement and sets realistic goals that we will strive to achieve.

Thank you to those individuals and representatives who have contributed towards its production.

*Dave Hodgson*

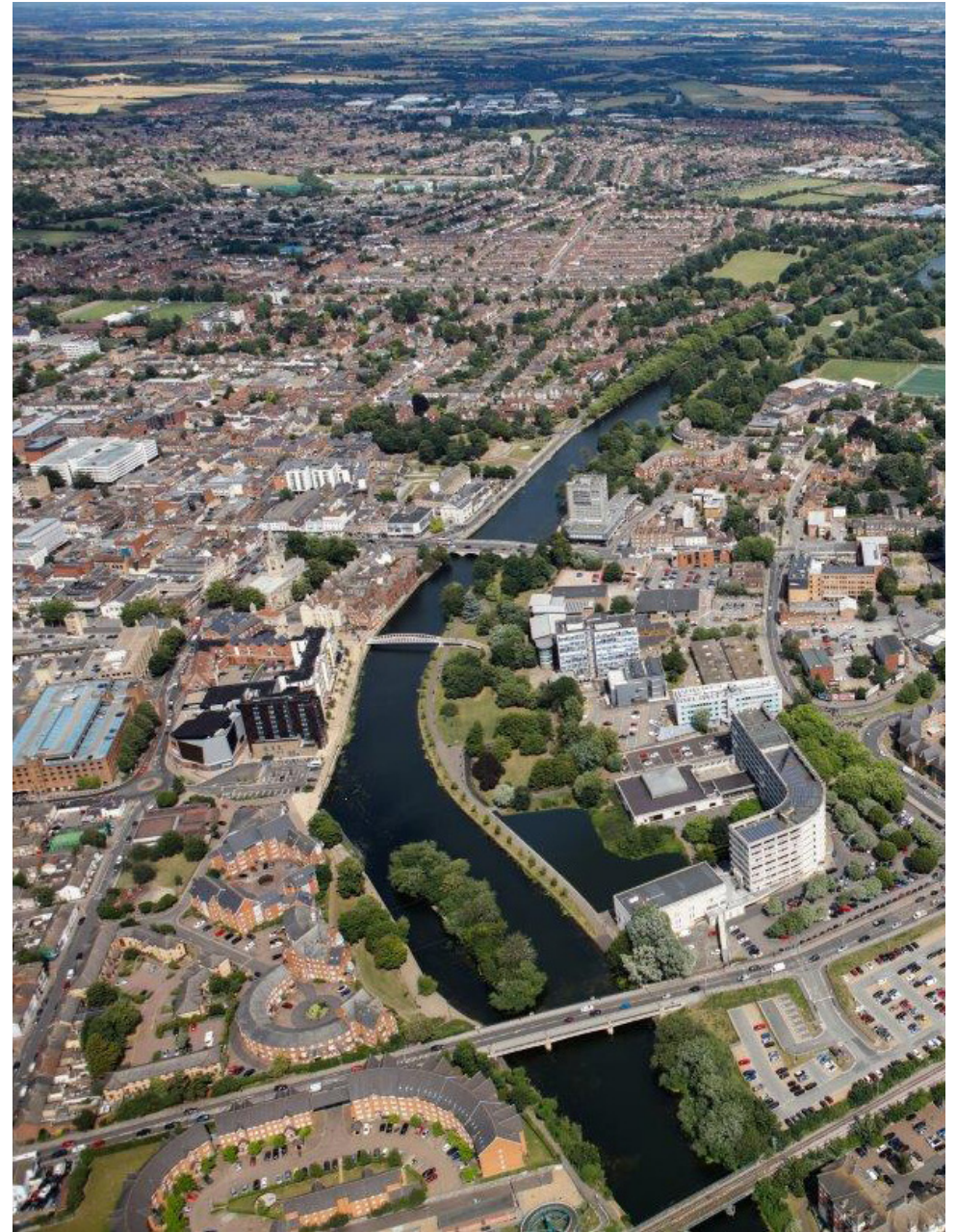




## How we got to this point

Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to have an up to date Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how it will involve the community in plan-making and when considering planning applications.

This revision to the Statement of Community Involvement incorporates a number of factual updates arising from national changes to planning policies and procedures and revised contact details to bring the SCI up to date.



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bedford Borough Council recognises the importance of community engagement and is committed to involving people in the planning process. Community consultation is about more than making sure that the right people are given the chance to comment on individual proposals. It is also about making sure that the whole community is given the chance to influence the wider development framework within which those individual decisions are made.
- 1.2 You can play an important and active role in the planning system by having a say in planning decisions affecting your local community. The main ways you can get involved are:
- *Having your say during public consultation on draft plans and other planning policy documents*
  - *Having your say on planning applications and most other types of consents*
- 1.3 This document, the Statement of Community Involvement 2019, sets out how the many different individuals and groups within the borough will be given the opportunity to become involved. It explains clearly who will be consulted, how that consultation will happen and when it will take place both in respect of new planning policy documents and individual planning applications. In explaining publicity and consultation procedures in the planning process, this Statement of Community Involvement takes account of changed requirements for consultation resulting from recent reforms of the planning system.
- 1.4 The Statement of Community Involvement 2019 is structured in four parts and sets out:
- 1. Your opportunities for involvement in the preparation of plans and planning policy documents.*
  - 2. The publicity and consultation that is carried out in relation to specific applications in what is known as the development management process.*
  - 3. The neighbourhood planning process and opportunities for involvement in the preparation of neighbourhood plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders.*
  - 4. General information in relation to consultation and publicity, including how to make comments and how responses will be dealt with.*

## 2. Why the statement of community involvement has been revised

- 2.1 The Council first produced a Statement of Community Involvement in 2006 which was revised in 2013. Since then, there have been a number of changes to national legislation and regulations, which means that parts of the Statement of Community Involvement 2013 are now out of date.

### **New types of optional documents**

- 2.2 Parish Councils, Town Councils and in non-parished areas neighbourhood forums can prepare neighbourhood development plans or neighbourhood development orders for their local neighbourhoods to bring forward the development they want to see.

### **More emphasis on electronic communication**

- 2.3 We need to reduce expenditure and use the resources available to us as efficiently as possible. Therefore, we are increasingly reliant on electronic communications, such as our website and the use of email/email alerts for publicising documents and information.

## 3. A Corporate Commitment to Effective Engagement

- 3.1 Effective engagement is a corporate priority, which is enshrined in a range of key documents which the Council and its partners produce. The Borough Council recognises the diversity of its population and is keen to undertake consultation in ways that encourage all sectors of the community to take part. This strong commitment to effective consultation flows from corporate aims and strategies, which this Statement of Community Involvement 2019 will help to deliver.

### **The Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2021**

- 3.2 The Sustainable Communities Strategy 2009-2021 was produced by the Bedford Borough Partnership, which brought together representatives from Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire Police, NHS Bedfordshire, parish and town councils, schools, voluntary organisations, business and community groups. It sets out how the Council and its partner organisations will work together to tackle a range of key issues facing the borough, such as issues around employment, housing, crime, skills and education. Whilst the Deregulation Act 2015 removed the duty for local authorities to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy, the existing strategy still sets the overall strategic direction and vision for promoting and improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough. These representatives no longer meet under the umbrella of the Partnership Board but continue to work jointly on a range of strategic and local issues.

### **The Corporate Plan 2017-2021**

- 3.3 The Corporate Plan 2017-2021 sets out the Borough Council's strategic direction, which is focused on enhancing Bedford Borough as a place where people, communities and businesses can grow and realise their potential. It explains how the Council will continue to deliver good public services and strong local leadership by operating in a more focused and efficient way and by continuing to transform the Council's operating model. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's four goals:

- *Support people*
- *Enhance places*
- *Create wealth*
- *Empower communities*

- 3.4 The Council regularly updates the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan is available at: [http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/key\\_plans\\_and\\_strategies.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/key_plans_and_strategies.aspx).

### **The Consultation Strategy 2017-2021**

- 3.5 The Consultation Strategy 2017-2021 explains the principles that underpin all consultation work corporately. It contains guidance on what should be considered when planning and conducting a consultation exercise and sets the framework for a co-ordinated approach to consultation across the Council. The Consultation Strategy 2017-2021 can be found at <http://www.bedford.gov.uk/consultations>.

### **Digital Operating Model**

- 3.6 Part of the Bedford Borough 2020 project is the development of a Digital Operating Model. This encourages the use of digital communication. The way we consult will evolve in line with the Digital Operating Model whilst ensuring all sectors of our community are heard. The methods used will depend on many factors such as the scope of the project, who we are consulting with, and the time and budget.

### **Data Protection**

- 3.7 The General Data Protection Regulation requires the Council to take a proactive approach to data protection and sets out the lawful basis for the processing of personal data. The Council is committed to ensuring that personal data is collected and analysed in accordance with these Regulations. Further information regarding data protection and consultations on planning policy documents and individual planning applications can be found in Section 15 of this document.



## 4. This is Bedford Borough

4.1 The most effective ways to involve residents and other stakeholders in planning issues will be determined to a large extent by understanding the culture and diversity of the borough and the kind of people we are trying to serve. Here are a few key facts. Further information can be found on our website at:

[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/statistics\\_and\\_census.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census.aspx)

- Bedford Borough is located about 50 miles (80km) north of London and is served by regular rail service to London in as little as 35 minutes. Bedford lies 8 miles (13km) from the A1 to the east and 10 miles (16km) from the M1 to the west. The A421 links the A1 and M1 and runs around the southern edge of the town. The A6 enters Bedford from the north and joins the A4280 and the western by-pass, which then joins the A421 to the south-east of Bedford taking through traffic out of the town centre.
- Bedford Borough is predominantly a rural area covering 48,000 hectares (118,608 acres) and comprising the town of Bedford, the adjacent urban area of Kempston and 45 rural parishes. The borough is home to an estimated total of 168,750 residents (in 2016) who make up approximately 73,000 households (in 2017). The majority of residents live in the urban area of Bedford and Kempston.
- Bedford Borough is one of the most ethnically diverse authorities in the East of England with around 100 different black and minority ethnic groups that make up 28.5% of the population. These are mainly concentrated in the urban areas and comprise large numbers of Asian and Other White ethnic groups, primarily those from the EU accession countries.

- Overall unemployment is in line with the national and regional averages and social deprivation is low. Claimant count, which is based on Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit claimants, stood at 2.4% of the working age population in October 2017. This compared to rates of 1.9% in England and 1.3% in the East of England. The broader International Labour Organisation measure of unemployment, which includes people looking and available for work but who are not eligible for Jobseeker's Allowance in Bedford borough was an average of 4.7% of the economically active population for the period July 2016-June 2017. This compared to 4.6% in England and 3.9% in the East of England.
- The borough has persistent unemployment hotspots. At ward level, there are large differences in claimant count unemployment rates, ranging from 0.6% in some rural wards to 5.2% in Castle ward (October 2017).
- Over 70% of people who work in the borough also live in the borough. This rate of self-containment is high. It is also the case that around 70% of those living in the borough work here.
- 24% of residents have jobs in education, health and social work, and 17.0% work in retail.
- 41.3% of residents fall in the managerial/professional and intermediate socio-economic groups – similar to the national average. A total of 28.1% of the population have Level 4 qualifications and above.
- 66.8% of households are owner-occupiers.
- Nearly one in five (20.6%) households has no car or van. This compares with a national picture of more than one in four (25.8%).





# Part 1: Plan-Making

Publicity and Consultation on Plans  
and Planning Policy Documents

## 5. Plan-making - A planning framework for Bedford Borough

### The National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework came into effect in March 2012 and was updated in July 2018 and again in February 2019. It replaces the majority of previous national Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance documents. It sets out the government's vision for the planning system, including how plans should be prepared and how planning policies should be applied in managing development locally.
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework provides the overarching policy landscape for important planning issues such as housing, economic growth and climate change. At the heart lies a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a focus on economic viability in plan-making and decision-taking.

### The development plan for Bedford Borough

- 5.3 The development plan for Bedford Borough is a portfolio of different types of planning documents, which collectively form the statutory basis for planning decisions. The development plan sets out the development strategy for the area and guides and informs day-to-day decisions as to whether or not planning permission should be granted.
- 5.4 The development plan for Bedford Borough currently includes saved policies from the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 and a range of local plans setting out strategic policies and site allocations. The Council expects to replace saved policies as it adopts new local plan documents.

### Other planning policy documents

- 5.5 The Council also prepares other planning documents that do not form part of the development plan for Bedford Borough. These include topic based or site-specific supplementary planning documents and a number of documents that are not policy-based, but are relevant to the development and use of land, such as this Statement of Community Involvement.

## 6. Plan-making - What type of documents we will consult you on

- 6.1 The planning system is a plan-led system. This means that planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses are therefore vital in producing plans that reflect the vision and aspirations of local communities.
- 6.2 The Council prepares various types of documents that involve different plan-making processes and requirements for publicity and consultation. You have the opportunity to be involved in the development or review of the following documents.

### Local plans

- 6.3 Local plans set out policies relating to the use and development of land. These may include overarching policies setting out the development strategy for the local area, policies allocating sites for specific uses, such as housing and employment, or policies guiding the determination of planning applications.

### **Sustainability appraisal and background documents**

- 6.4 A sustainability appraisal (SA) is carried out in parallel with the preparation of local plans. The purpose is to identify any potential social, economic and environmental impacts that the plan may have. Where impacts are identified, the sustainability appraisal process allows for mitigation measures to be considered and fed into the emerging document.
- 6.5 Integrated into the sustainability appraisal are the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive<sup>1</sup>. However, the sustainability appraisal covers wider social and economic effects of plans, as well as the more environmentally-focused considerations of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

### **Supplementary planning documents**

- 6.6 Legislative reforms have redefined what information can be contained in supplementary planning documents. Supplementary planning documents can now contain any environmental, social, design and economic objectives relevant to the development and use of land and take a variety of forms. They may be site specific, such as a development brief guiding development on a large site, or topic-based providing guidance on specific topics, such as parking, open space or design. Supplementary planning documents add greater detail to local plan policies, but do not introduce new policies. Therefore, they do not normally require a sustainability appraisal (which is further explained in paragraph 6.4) and are not tested at examination. Yet, supplementary planning documents are still an important consideration when planning applications are being determined.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule**

- 6.7 The Community Infrastructure Levy is a levy that the Council can choose to charge on all new developments in the borough and that can be spent on infrastructure to support housing and employment growth. A Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule is a document in which the Council sets out the levy rates that are charged on different types of new development and this was brought into effect in Bedford Borough on 01 April 2014. Charges are based on the size and type of the new development. The Charging Schedule is a financial document and does not form part of the development plan for Bedford Borough.

### **Brownfield Land Register**

- 6.8 Brownfield Land Registers were introduced by the Government in 2017. The Brownfield Land Register lists those previously developed sites within the borough that are suitable for housing development. Brownfield Land Registers are arranged in two parts; Part 1 collates into one list those brownfield sites that are suitable for housing development and Part 2 goes one step further and identifies sites where Permission in Principle is granted. Where sites are placed on Part 2 of a register, the principle of the residential use is effectively granted and only the details need to be agreed. Councils are only required to publish a Part 1 register. Part 2 of the register is discretionary.

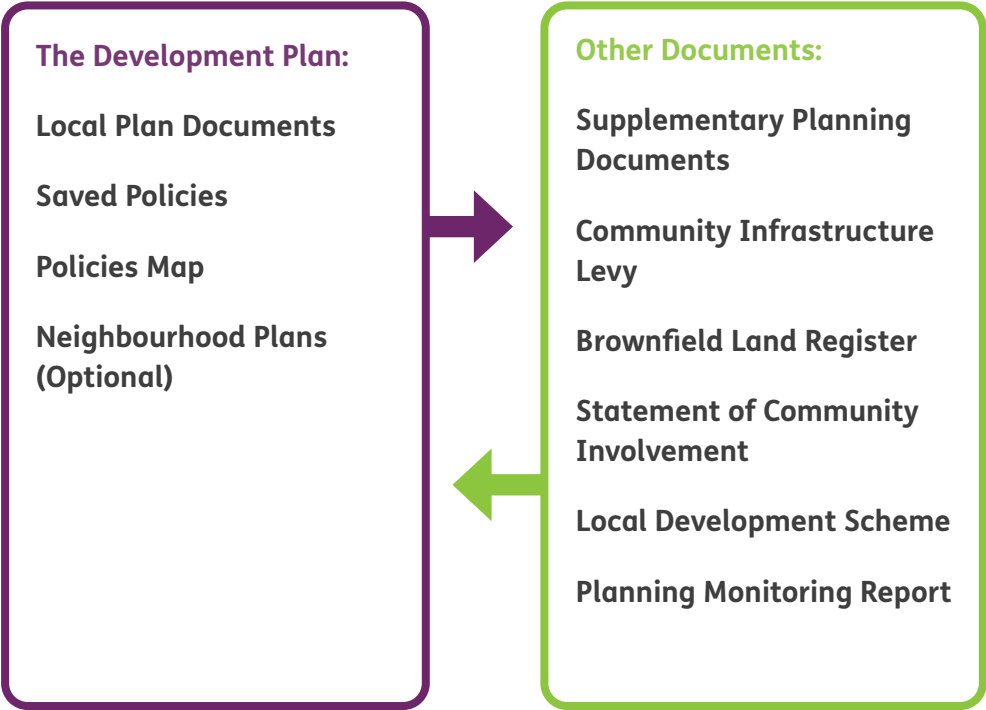
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1. European Directive 2001/42/EC transposed into United Kingdom law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Other documents

- 6.9 The Council produces a number of other documents that are relevant to the development and use of land in Bedford Borough. These include documents for which there are no legislative requirements to consult, such as the Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and the Bedford Borough Planning Monitoring Report.
- 6.10 In addition to sustainability appraisals we carry out a range of background studies and impact assessments to support the formulation of plans and policies. Key background studies are published as part of formal consultation.

Figure 1 The development plan for Bedford Borough and other documents





## 7. Plan-making - How we will consult you and keep you informed

- 7.1 There are opportunities for public involvement at different stages of plan preparation for each type of document. The various stages of plan preparation in relation to different types of documents are explained in chapter 8. To reduce expenditure we carry out as much consultation as possible electronically. Given the diversity of communities in Bedford Borough and the nature of documents the Council prepares, different methods are used flexibly to suit different circumstances, target groups and the type of plan that is being prepared.
- 7.2 Some of the methods we use are intended to publicise information, and aim to raise awareness and provide information about plan consultations that you may be interested in. These are publicity methods. Other methods, such as a questionnaire or online response form, are used to actively seek your comments and provide an opportunity for you to respond. These are consultation methods. Some methods, such as a letter or email for example, may be used both to publicise information and invite your comments.
- 7.3 The key publicity and consultation methods we use to ask for your comments and publicise information are set out below.

### Website

- 7.4 We use our website to publicise information or documents and invite comments. It provides a wealth of information about plans and planning policy documents and is the primary means of publicity and consultation that we use to reach out to the general public. We make draft plans, background documents

and response forms available on our website. We also use our website to publicise consultation on draft plans and other planning policy documents, details of where and when you can inspect documents in hard copy, submission of documents to the Secretary of State for examination, relevant examination details, formal plan adoption and other key information. When sending out letters or emails to individuals or organisations, or publicising information in the local press, we normally direct attention to our website for further information or details about consultation. The planning policy pages can be accessed at [www.bedford.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planningpolicy). Where possible we will provide customised web links to consultation documents and information about consultation.

### Letters

- 7.5 Letters may be used both to publicise information and consult. We normally send out letters by 2nd class post to those statutory consultation bodies and those on our consultation database we do not have an email address for. Where possible we send out letters electronically to publicise ongoing plan consultations or invite comments. We also use letters to direct attention to our website for further information or details about consultation. If you have requested to be notified, we notify you of the submission of documents to the Secretary of State for examination, examination details and publication of the examiner's recommendations or plan adoption in writing, sending out letters electronically or by post where we do not have an email address. We try to make every effort to draft consultation letters clearly, concisely and to the point.

### Availability of consultation documents

- 7.6 We make copies of draft plans and other planning policy documents available at our Customer Service Centre and all local libraries in the borough to publicise documents and provide an opportunity for you to inspect documents in hardcopy. You may also request that a copy of a document is made available to you in hardcopy for a charge.

### Email/email alerts

- 7.7 You can always get in touch if you have any queries and questions in relation to the plans and documents we produce by sending an email to [planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk). You can also request to be included on our consultation database to receive information about consultations by email. If you have provided us with your email address to receive information please ensure that you have added our email address as 'trusted sender'. Similarly, you can at any time request to be removed from our consultation database if you no longer want to receive information about plan consultations.
- 7.8 We use emails and email alerts to publicise information or documents and invite comments. Where we have an email address for an individual or organisation we send out letters by email to publicise ongoing plan consultations and other key information. Where possible we also send emails to statutory consultation bodies, those on our consultation database and those who request to be notified to publicise the submission of documents to the Secretary of State for examination, the publication of examiner recommendations and plan adoption or invite comments.

### Local press

- 7.9 We use the local press to publicise consultation on the Draft Charging Schedule in the Community Infrastructure Levy process, Community Infrastructure Levy examinations and the approval of a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. In addition, we may publicise in the local press local plan consultations, local plan examinations, consultations on other planning policy documents, the publication of examiner recommendations following a local plan examination and the formal adoption of local plans and other documents. When we publicise consultations in the local press we will normally invite comments, explain details of the consultation, where and when documents can be inspected and direct attention to our website for further information and access to consultation documents.

### Additional methods

- 7.10 There are a number of additional consultation and publicity methods, such as the use of social media or workshops, that the Council may use flexibly in addition to those methods set out above depending on the target group, nature and type of documents to be consulted on. Particularly when preparing local plans we are likely to use a wider range of methods than required by the Regulations to reach as many people as possible but taking into consideration the resources available at the time. A list of all publicity and consultation methods that we may use when preparing plans and planning policy documents can be found in Appendix 4.

## Targeted engagement

- 7.11 We recognise that some groups and individuals have particular needs. Where appropriate, we will tailor publicity and consultation methods to specifically address the needs of a target group. This may involve the use of members of staff to facilitate one-to-one consultation with for example Gypsies and Travellers or the use of social media to inform children and young people about plan consultations.
- 7.12 Social media involves social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. It provides a cost effective way of communication and can reach a lot of people.
- 7.13 We know that technical jargon is difficult to understand. We will avoid using jargon and use plain English where possible. A glossary of terms can be found in Appendix 9.
- 7.14 We will make every effort to avoid small font sizes in order to enable more people to read the documents we produce. You can also request consultation letters and a summary of information, publicity and consultation documents to be made available to you in large print, Braille and on audio tape.
- 7.15 When we consult with you in a face-to-face setting, for example in a meeting or through a presentation, we will choose accessible venues. Both Borough Hall and the Customer Service Centre are wheelchair accessible.
- 7.16 We provide an induction loop system for those who are deaf or hard of hearing upon request.
- 7.17 If you speak a first language other than English you can request that a summary of documents is made available in another language.



## 8. Plan-making – When we will consult you and inform you

- 8.1 When we prepare planning policy documents, there are several key stages in the plan preparation process at which we will ask for your comments or publicise the progress we have made in preparing the plan.
- 8.2 The Local Development Scheme sets out the timetable for the local plans and supplementary planning documents that the Council will produce. It shows the key stages of plan preparation, including when consultation will take place. The Local Development Scheme provides a starting point for you to see at what stage you can become involved. It is available electronically on the Council's website and can be viewed in hardcopy at our Customer Service Centre in Horne Lane, Bedford and libraries. The Council does not undertake consultation on the preparation of the Local Development Scheme, as this document sets out the programme for the preparation and review of planning policy documents. The preparation of those individual documents does however include opportunities for engagement and consultation as outlined in this Statement of Community Involvement. When the Local Development Scheme is updated it will be published on the Council's website and copies will be deposited in local libraries and the Customer Service Centre.

### Early involvement

- 8.3 The greatest opportunity for you to genuinely shape plan options and content is at the initial scoping stage prior to plan preparation. We therefore encourage you to get involved at the earliest possible time. Recent reforms of the planning system

place an even greater emphasis on involving residents and other stakeholders early on in the process. This is because it enables potential conflicts to be overcome earlier and lengthy examinations in the later stages can be avoided.

### Sustainability appraisal

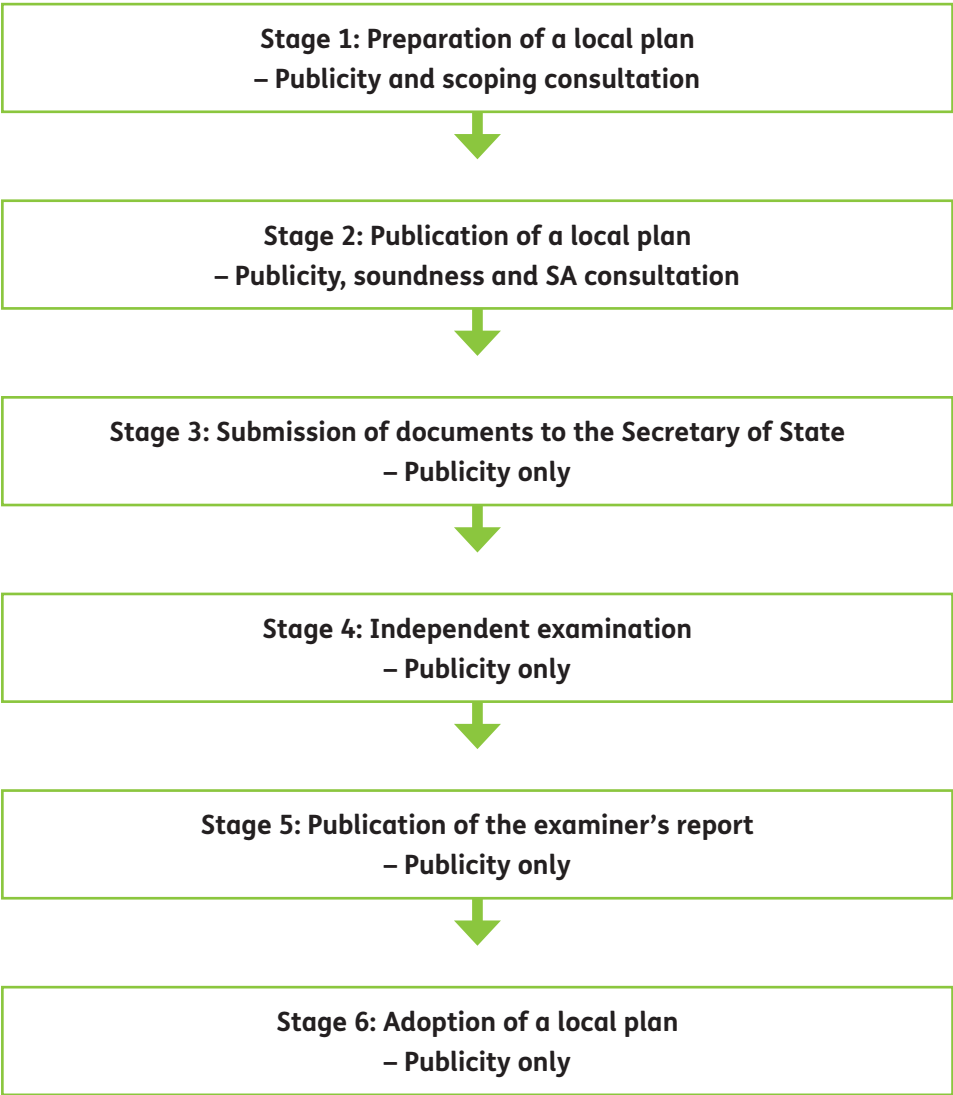
- 8.4 Before starting work on a new plan we have to consider the need for a sustainability appraisal. We prepare sustainability appraisals for local plans and in some cases for supplementary planning documents. Sustainability appraisals (or other types of sustainability assessment) may also be prepared by Parish Councils, Town Councils or neighbourhood forums when developing neighbourhood development plans. Part 3, chapter 14 explains neighbourhood development plans in detail and provides information on the neighbourhood planning process.
- 8.5 At the very beginning of the plan-making or supplementary planning document process, the need for a sustainability appraisal will be considered and where needed, the matters that will need to be covered in the sustainability appraisal will be set out in a sustainability appraisal scoping report. This will be subject to consultation with the Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, which are identified in paragraph 9.7. The sustainability appraisal report will then be prepared as needed and evolve alongside and inform preparation of the plan or supplementary planning document. Formal consultation with the Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, other stakeholders and the public takes place in parallel with formal consultation on draft plans or supplementary planning documents.



**The local plan process**

- 8.6 Local plans are prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 8.7 As a result of legislative reforms the publicity and consultation process that must be carried out in preparing local plans has significantly reduced. Formal consultation is now only required on the scope of the plan to be prepared and the Plan for Submission. Figure 2 illustrates the stages at which we carry out publicity and consultation and those stages at which we carry out publicity only.
- 8.8 The individual stages of the local plan process and the consultation and publicity the Council carries out at each stage are explained in table 1. When preparing local plans we may carry out more extensive consultation than required by the Regulations, depending on the nature and scope of the local plan that we prepare. This may include an additional stage of consultation on the draft local plan we intend to submit for examination in addition to a more extensive range of consultation and publicity methods than required.

**Figure 2** The local plan process



**Table 1** Publicity and consultation in preparing local plans

How we prepare a local plan	Publicity and consultation
1. Preparation of a local plan (Regulation 18)	We will ...
<b>Intent: Scoping consultation and publicity of plan subject</b>	
As a first step we gather evidence and information to identify and evaluate the issues and alternatives for the local plan. Evidence gathered may include technical information and comments received in response to a scoping consultation, which together will form the evidence base for the local plan. Local communities and stakeholders are encouraged to put forward their future plans and proposals at this early stage in the plan preparation process, so that discussions can take place and issues can be resolved.	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify at our discretion the statutory consultation bodies and those on our consultation database of the subject of the local plan we propose to prepare in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>• Publicise on our website the subject of the local plan we propose to prepare, inviting comments on what the plan should contain.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult the statutory consultation bodies and those on our consultation database, inviting comments on what the plan should contain in writing by post or email<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Consult the Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, inviting comments on the scope to be included in the sustainability appraisal report in writing, by post or email.</li> </ul>

2. In relation to a local plan addressing Gypsy and Traveller issues the Council will have regard to the advice in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) when preparing the evidence base.

How we prepare a local plan	Publicity and consultation
<b>2. Publication of a local plan (Regulation 19)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Publicity of the Plan for Submission and sustainability appraisal report and consultation on the sustainability appraisal report and soundness of the Plan</b>	
<p>The Plan we intend to submit to the Secretary of State for examination is subject to a consultation on its soundness. It is important to note that at this stage the Council will only make further changes to the Plan for Submission if major changes are considered necessary as result of comments received in response to the soundness consultation.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise for at least 6 weeks on our website the Plan for Submission, sustainability appraisal report, supporting documents and a statement of representations procedure setting out how and by when representations must be made.</li> <li>Make available for inspection for at least 6 weeks the submission documents and statement of representations procedure at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries.</li> <li>Notify in writing, by post and by email, the statutory consultation bodies and those on our consultation database of where and when the submission documents can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>Publicise for at least 6 weeks on our website details of where and when the submission documents can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult for at least 6 weeks the statutory consultation bodies and those on our consultation database, other stakeholders and the public inviting comments on the soundness of the Plan for Submission in writing, by post or email. Late responses will not normally be accepted at this stage.</li> <li>Consult the statutory Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies and those on our consultation database, other stakeholders and the public on the sustainability appraisal report, inviting comments in writing by post or email.</li> <li>Carry out further consultation before submission to the Secretary of State only if major changes to the Plan for Submission are considered necessary as a result of consultation.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State (Regulation 22)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Publicity of submission documents</b>	
<p>Publicity of submission documents Following the consultation on the sustainability appraisal report and the soundness of the Plan for Submission, we submit electronically (and in hardcopy where requested) all submission documents to the Secretary of State for independent examination.</p> <p>The submission documents include the Plan for Submission, sustainability appraisal report, supporting documents, a summary of all comments received in response to consultation and how comments have been dealt with.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise the local plan, sustainability appraisal report and supporting documents we have submitted to the Secretary of State, making these available on our website, and at the Customer Service Centre and local libraries for inspection in hardcopy.</li> <li>Publicise on our website where and when the submission documents can be inspected.</li> <li>Notify those who requested to be notified of the submission of the Plan for Submission to the Secretary of State in writing, by email or post.</li> <li>Notify in writing, by email or post, the statutory consultation bodies and those on our consultation database who made comments on the soundness of the local plan that the submission documents are available for inspection and where and when they may be inspected.</li> </ul>

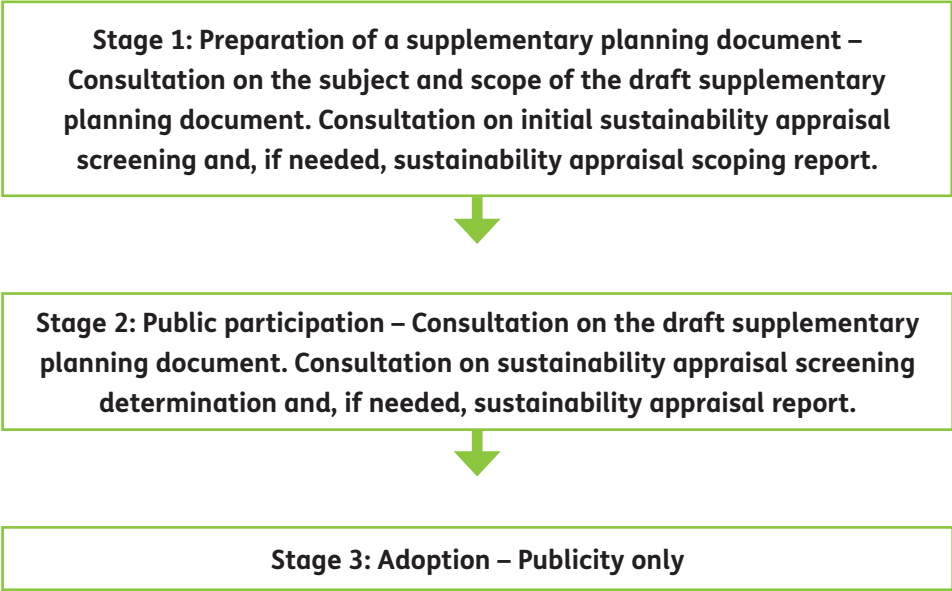
How we prepare a local plan	Publicity and consultation
<b>4. Independent examination (Regulation 24)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Publicity of local plan examination</b>	
The Secretary of State appoints an Inspector, who may conduct the examination by written representations or hearing sessions that are open to the general public to observe. At examination the plan is tested to ensure it has been positively prepared, is effective and contains policies that are justified and consistent with national policy (tests of soundness). The Inspector also considers if the local plan has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement. The Inspector also considers all comments received in response to consultation on the Plan for Submission. If any issues raised in response to the soundness consultation remain unresolved, the hearings provide opportunity to be heard in person by the Inspector or submit a written statement.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise at least 6 weeks in advance of the opening of the examination the details of the upcoming examination, including the name of the Inspector and where applicable the time, date and place at which the hearing will take place on our website.</li> <li>Notify in writing, by post or email, anyone who has provided their comments in response to the soundness consultation of the name of the Inspector and the time, date and place at which the hearings will take place.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Publication of the examiner's report (Regulation 25)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Publicity of the examiner's report</b>	
The examiner will produce a report setting out recommendations, which must be considered by the Council. If the examiner considers that modifications will be required to make the plan sound, these will be included in the report. The Inspector may recommend a range of minor or main modifications to the local plan. If the Inspector recommends minor changes to the local plan, these are incorporated in finalising the local plan for adoption.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make available as soon as practicable the examiner's report on our website, at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries.</li> <li>Notify the statutory consultation bodies, those on our consultation database who commented on the soundness of the local plan and those who have requested to be notified of the publication of the examiner's report in writing, by post or email.</li> </ul> <b>Consultation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out further consultation only if the examination found that main modifications are necessary to make the local plan sound. Following further consultation on the main modifications only, it may be necessary to hold further hearing sessions for the Inspector to consider the consultation responses before the examination closes.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Adoption of a local plan (Regulation 26)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Publicity of the adopted local plan</b>	
Elected members will vote to formally adopt the local plan. We prepare an adoption statement that gives notice of the Council's resolution to adopt the local plan and that legal challenges may be made within 6 weeks of the adoption date. Once adopted the local plan becomes part of the development plan for Bedford Borough.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make available on our website, at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries the adopted local plan, sustainability appraisal report, the adoption statement and a statement of where the adopted local plan is available for inspection.</li> <li>Send a copy of the adoption statement to the Secretary of State and those who requested to be notified in writing, by post or email.</li> </ul>



**The supplementary planning document process**

8.9 The preparation of supplementary planning documents in accordance with the same Regulations follows a similar approach, but does not involve an examination, soundness consultation, or a sustainability appraisal unless a sustainability appraisal screening indicates otherwise. Therefore, supplementary planning documents typically take less time to prepare than local plans.

**Figure 3** The supplementary planning document process



8.10 Table 2 explains the individual stages in preparing a supplementary planning document and the consultation and publicity the Council carries out at each stage.



**Table 2:** Publicity and consultation in preparing supplementary planning documents

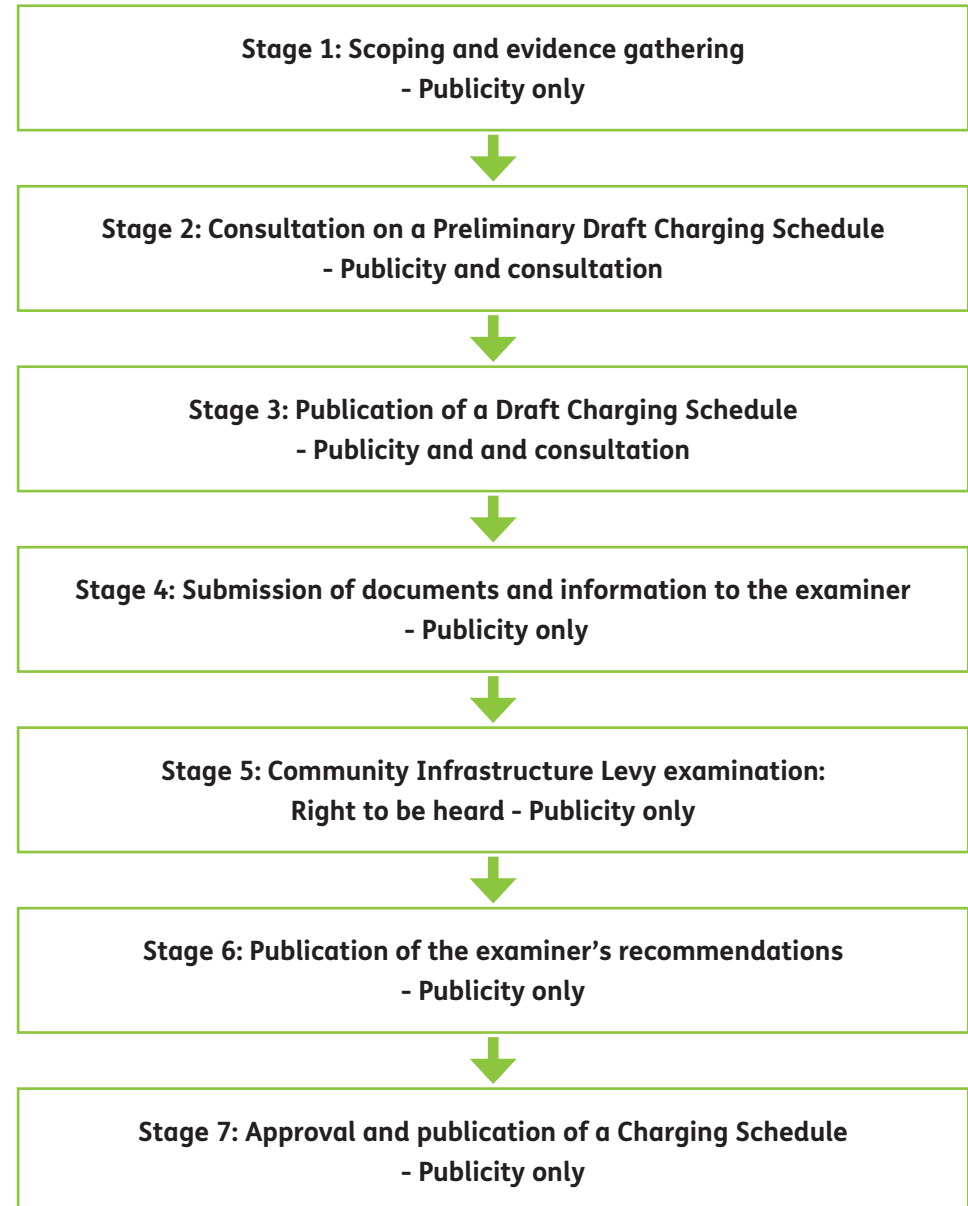
How we prepare a SPD	Publicity and consultation
<b>1. Preparation of a supplementary planning document</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Consultation on initial sustainability appraisal screening and scope of draft document</b>	
<p>We gather information on the scope of the supplementary planning document, which normally comprises technical information and comments received in response to the scoping consultation. The extent and nature of the scoping consultation will depend on the type of document produced. In addition, we carry out an initial screening to identify significant social, economic and environmental effects that are likely to arise from the document.</p> <p>We prepare the draft supplementary planning document considering all evidence gathered and comments received.</p> <p>We prepare an initial sustainability appraisal screening for consultation with the Strategic Environmental Assessment bodies, which considers whether or not sustainability appraisal is required. If it is determined that sustainability appraisal is required, we prepare a sustainability appraisal scoping report which considers the social, economic and environmental matters to be covered in the sustainability report.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify at our discretion relevant stakeholders of the subject of the supplementary planning document we propose to prepare in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>• Publicise on our website the subject of the supplementary planning document we propose to prepare, inviting comments on what the document should contain.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult relevant stakeholders on the scope of the draft supplementary planning document, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>• Invite comments on our website, providing details of how and by when representations must be made.</li> <li>• Consult the Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, inviting comments on the initial sustainability appraisal screening in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>• If it is determined that sustainability appraisal is required, consult the Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, inviting comments on the scope to be included in the sustainability appraisal report in writing, by post or email.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Public participation (Regulation 12)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Intent: Publicity of the consultation statement and consultation on draft document and sustainability appraisal screening determination</b>	
<p>We prepare a consultation statement listing those consulted and the main issues raised, which is subject to publicity as part of the consultation on the draft document.</p> <p>The sustainability appraisal screening determination and, if needed, the sustainability appraisal report, is subject to consultation in parallel to the draft supplementary planning document.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicise for at least 4 weeks on our website the draft supplementary planning document, the sustainability appraisal screening determination and the consultation statement.</li> <li>• Make available for inspection at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries for at least 4 weeks the draft supplementary planning document, the sustainability appraisal screening determination, the consultation statement and details of how and by when representations must be made .</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult for at least 4 weeks relevant stakeholders on the draft supplementary planning document, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>• Invite comments on our website, providing details of how and by when representations must be made</li> <li>• Consult the Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies and relevant stakeholders on the sustainability appraisal screening determination and, if required, the sustainability appraisal report, inviting comments in writing, by email or post.</li> </ul>

How we prepare a SPD	Publicity and consultation
3. Adoption of a supplementary planning document (Regulation 14)	We will ...
<p><b>Intent: Publicity of adopted document and adoption statement</b></p> <p>We will take on board comments received where appropriate, considering whether any changes are needed before finalising the supplementary planning document for adoption. Once adopted through formal Council procedure, we will publicise the adoption of the supplementary planning document.</p> <p>We prepare an adoption statement in order to give notice of the adoption providing details of any modifications made prior to adoption. The adoption statement will be subject to publicity alongside the adopted supplementary planning document.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available the supplementary planning document and adoption statement on our website, at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the adoption statement to those who have requested to be notified of the adoption by post or email.</li> </ul>

### **The Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule process**

- 8.11 The Community Infrastructure Charging Schedule is prepared in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 as amended. The Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule was brought into effect in Bedford on 01 April 2014.
- 8.12 Publicity and consultation in the CIL charging schedule process is likely to be of limited interest to the general public and targets primarily those in the development industry. The individual stages of the preparation/revision process of the CIL Charging Schedule and the consultation and publicity the Council will carry out at each stage are explained in Appendix 2.

**Figure 4:** The Community Infrastructure Levy process

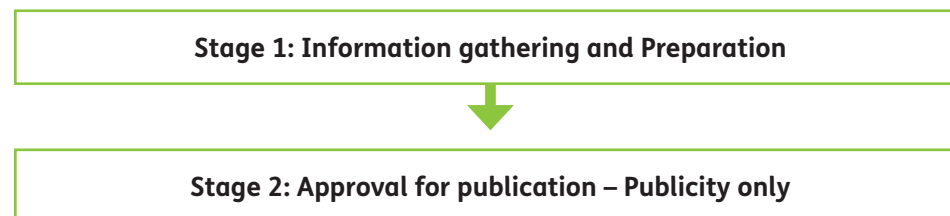


### The Brownfield Land Register process

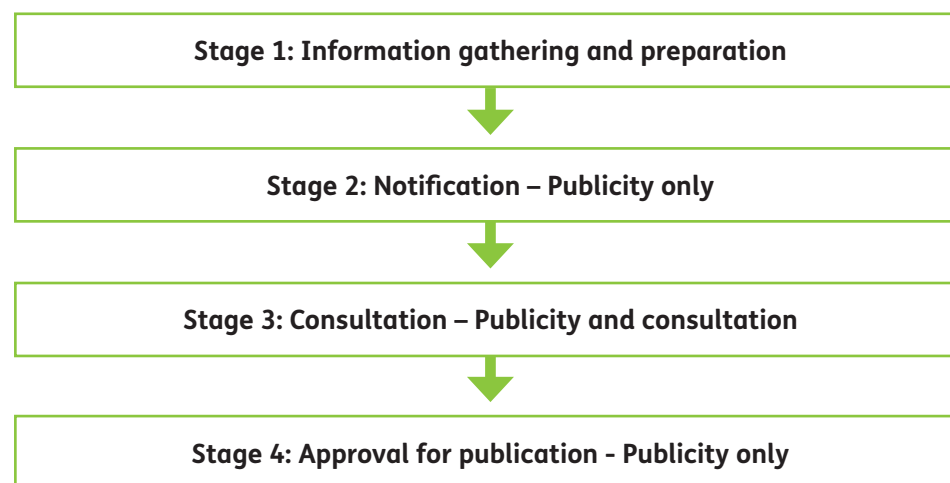
- 8.13 The Brownfield Land Register is prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017. Brownfield Land Registers are arranged in two parts; Part 1 collates into one list those brownfield sites that are suitable for housing development and Part 2 goes one step further and identifies sites where Permission in Principle is granted. Where sites are placed on Part 2 of a register, the principle of the residential use is effectively granted and only the details need to be agreed. Additional publicity and consultation is therefore undertaken in relation to the preparation of Part 2 Registers.
- 8.14 At the time of publishing this Statement of Community Involvement, Bedford Borough Brownfield Land Register contains sites on Part 1 only. In future years the Council may decide to place sites on Part 2 of the Register, so details are given below for the publicity and consultation activities that will be carried out for preparation of a Part 1 Register, and for a Part 2 Register. The individual stages of the preparation/revision process of the Brownfield Land Register and the publicity and consultation the Council will carry out at each stage are explained further in Appendix 3.

**Figure 5: The Brownfield Land Register process**

#### The Brownfield Land Register process – Part 1 Register



#### The Brownfield Land Register process – Part 2 Register (if prepared)





## 9. Plan-making - Who will be consulted on plans and planning policy documents

- 9.1 The Council has a long history of engagement with local residents, local councils, businesses, stakeholders, community groups, voluntary organisations and others in preparing local plans. These make up an extensive consultation database.
- 9.2 Anyone can request to be added to our consultation database in order to receive information about consultation documents. It is not practical for the Council to routinely write to everyone in the borough. Therefore, we rely primarily on our website and the local press to reach out to the general public. Unless you are included in our consultation database, you will not normally be notified or consulted directly, and will need to refer to the Council's website and the local press for information about plan consultations. To request inclusion in the consultation database, please email [planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk).
- 9.3 From time to time we will review our database and contact you by post or email to find out if you would like to remain on the database.
- 9.4 Whilst the existing consultation database is the starting point for any consultation, the Council makes every effort to identify and consult organisations, groups and individuals to whom the plan is relevant and of interest. Prior to plan consultations the Council will carry out a stakeholder mapping exercise in order to identify the groups and individuals that are appropriate and may have an interest in the document.
- 9.5 Depending on the subject addressed by the document we intend to prepare a more focussed consultation may be appropriate. We may consider this approach, for example, when preparing a planning policy document that provides guidance on an individual site. In this case, not everyone on the database may be automatically consulted.
- 9.6 Statutory consultation bodies for local plans can be divided in two main groups, specific consultation bodies and general consultation bodies. Specific consultation bodies include government agencies, utility providers, local councils and other local authorities, which we consult if they are considered to have an interest in the plan. General consultation bodies primarily include interest groups, which are consulted with by the Council as appropriate.

**Figure 6** Specific consultation bodies and general consultation bodies for local plans

### Specific consultation bodies

- The Coal Authority<sup>3</sup>
- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Highways England
- Local councils
- Adjoining Local Planning Authorities
- Telecommunications companies
- NHS England, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Health and Wellbeing Board<sup>4</sup>
- Local and adjoining policing bodies
- Electricity and gas companies
- Anglian Water
- Homes England
- General consultation bodies
- Older persons and youth groups
- Religious and faith based groups
- Ethnic and race based groups
- Local business groups
- Local disability groups
- Voluntary groups and charities
- Local residents and tenant groups

3. Has requested not to be consulted because the administrative area of Bedford Borough lies wholly outside of the current defined coalfield.

4. The clinical commissioning groups and the National Health Service Commissioning Board have replaced Primary Care Trusts and strategic health authorities.

- 9.7 Integrated into the list of specific consultation bodies are the three Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, which are the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. These must be consulted with on sustainability appraisal reports and sustainability appraisal screening determinations.
- 9.8 When preparing sustainability appraisal reports and the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule there are a range of organisations and groups that the Council must consult. Appendix 1 lists the statutory and other consultation bodies in relation to each type of plan.
- 9.9 In addition to the statutory consultation bodies, there is a wide range of individuals and groups which we may consult if they are considered to have an interest in the plan. These can be found in Appendix 1.

### Duty to cooperate

- 9.10 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a 'duty to cooperate', whereby local planning authorities are required to work with neighbouring authorities and other public bodies in preparing the development plan for their area. A number of issues, such as transportation, flood risk and waste management, have impacts across borough boundaries and local authorities and other public bodies are required to work jointly on strategic matters of this nature.
- 9.11 One significant cross boundary issue that we are dealing with is the planning of Wixams new settlement. This strategic housing site is located partly in Bedford Borough and partly in Central Bedfordshire and has necessitated close joint working to bring the site forward. The Wixams Joint Development Control Committee was specifically established to coordinate decision-making on planning applications at this site.

- 9.12 In exercising the duty to cooperate the Council is required to co-operate with neighbouring authorities, county councils and the statutory bodies that are prescribed for the purpose of planning for strategic cross boundary matters. These are included in Appendix 1.

### Reaching everyone

- 9.13 We appreciate that there are some groups which have been traditionally underrepresented in consultation exercises. We will try hard to reach these groups through targeted engagement that takes account of their particular needs.
- 9.14 You can help us to find out which groups are not normally involved or less involved than others in consultation exercises by filling out the equality monitoring questionnaire that accompanies formal plan consultations. All data provided for the purpose of equality monitoring will remain anonymous.
- 9.15 As an organisation the Council is committed to eliminating any form of discrimination and considers the impacts of the services we provide and the policies we produce on a range of social groups. Some plans or planning policy documents may affect certain local communities more than others. These need to be subject to an equality analysis to identify any negative or differential impacts and mitigate those that cannot be avoided. All planning policy documents will be screened to establish if an equality analysis is required.
- 9.16 If you have particular needs and want to get involved in the preparation of plans and planning policy documents, please contact us at [planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk) and we will try to help you.







## **Part 2: Development Management**

Publicity and Consultation in  
Development Management  
(Dealing with planning and other  
related applications)

## 10. Development management - Planning permission and other consents

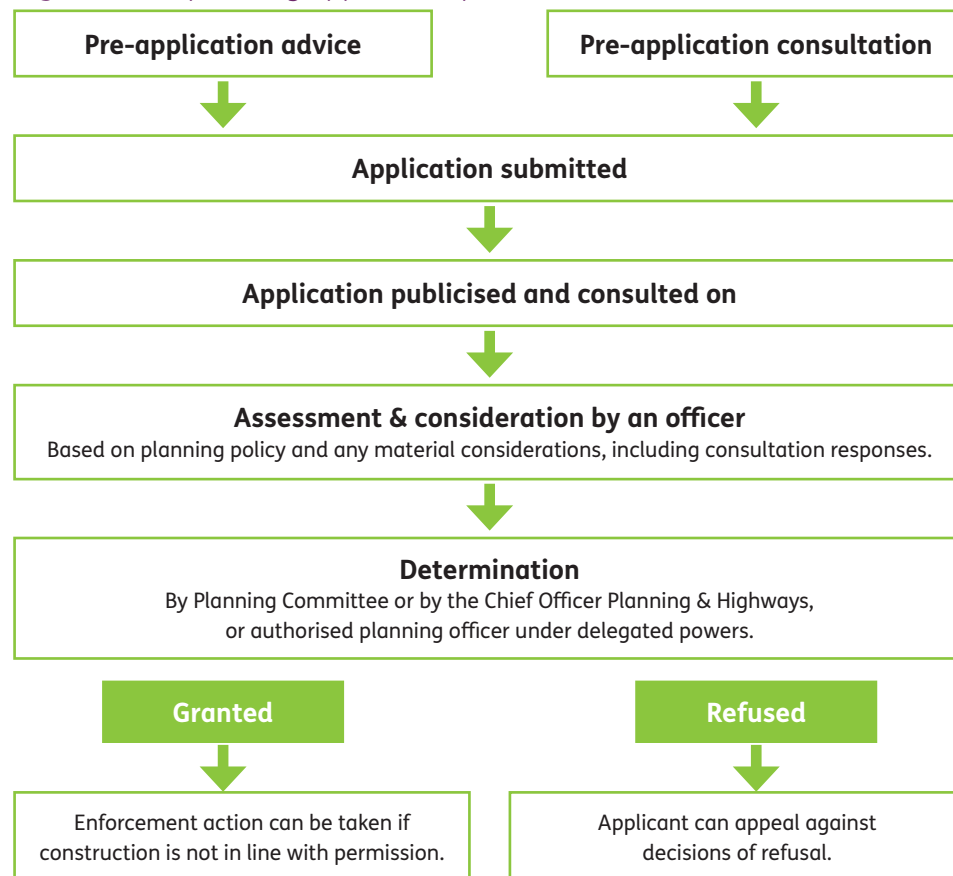
- 10.1 A principal aim of the planning process is to regulate the development and use of land in the public interest. The planning application process involves the making, consideration and determination of applications for “development” which can be either building works or a material change of use. There are also other types of applications that do not involve development but fall under the management of the local planning authority and include applications for advertisement consent and listed building consent.
- 10.2 However, not all “development” requires an application for planning permission. Some can be carried out as “permitted development” where planning permission is granted automatically by order. In some cases permitted development is subject to a ‘prior approval’ process that requires the developer to seek approval that specified elements of the development are acceptable before the work can proceed. Similarly, not all advertisements require consent from the Council; certain types of advert may be displayed with “Deemed Consent”.
- 10.3 If you are unsure whether or not you need planning permission, or other planning related consents, for the development you are contemplating, you can obtain advice from the Council. Please go to [www.bedford.gov.uk/planningenquiries](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planningenquiries) for useful advice including a link to the “Interactive House” (if you are considering works to your house). In addition [www.bedford.gov.uk/planningenquiries](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planningenquiries) explains the Council’s pre- application advice service. If you do not have access to the internet or wish to ask about the service offered, please visit the Customer Service Centre at 2 Horne Lane, Bedford or contact 01234 718068 or [planning@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planning@bedford.gov.uk).
- 10.4 In most cases, where you need to know whether or not an application for planning permission is required, you may be advised to submit a request (in the form of an application) for a “Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use or Development”.
- 10.5 For up-to-date information on how to make a planning application, guidance notes are available on our website and the government’s Planning Portal <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/>.



## 11. Development management - Planning application process

- 11.1 There are various stages in the planning applications process. These are set out in Figure 7 below. Consultation and publicity procedures in the planning applications process are governed by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and other legislation.

**Figure 7** The planning application process



### Pre-application consultation for larger schemes

- 11.2 We encourage those submitting proposals for larger schemes or schemes of a sensitive nature to undertake consultation with the local community and other stakeholders before submitting a planning application, even if not required. This will enable local people to influence proposals at an early stage. Moreover, failure to consult could lead to objections being made that are material to the determination of the application and that could have been avoided if the community had been consulted.

- 11.3 The nature and extent of any pre-application consultation should depend on the scale and sensitivity of the proposed development. In general terms the more controversial the proposal, the broader the range of consultation methods should be in order to allow as many people as possible to have their say. We can support pre-application consultation by commenting on the scope of pre-application consultation strategies. The scope and results of the consultation should be submitted as part of the planning application.

### Pre-application consultation for smaller schemes and other types of planning applications

- 11.4 People asking for pre-application advice for small scale schemes are often encouraged to speak to the immediate neighbours, Parish Councils or other interested parties to try and resolve any issues that can be foreseen.

### Making an application

- 11.5 If you are thinking about making a planning application please visit [www.bedford.gov.uk/planningforms](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planningforms) for information. This contains step by step guidance including: what we need to be

submitted with your application (validation requirements), fee details and how to pay, links for electronic submission and forms to download and submit in paper. Alternatively, you can submit a planning application through the Planning Portal at [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).

### **When an application is received**

- 11.6 A planning application is checked by a validation officer to determine that all relevant forms, plans and documents are received in line with the national requirements, as set out in Part 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and in line with the 'local list' requirements, which are published on the Council's website at [http://bedford.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_town\\_and\\_country/apply\\_for\\_planning\\_permission/planning\\_application\\_forms.aspx](http://bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/apply_for_planning_permission/planning_application_forms.aspx), and that the description of the proposed development is accurate. If we require further information to validate the application we will ask for it and provide a timeframe for submission of that information. Once validated, your planning application will be acknowledged to assure you that your application has been received and allocated to a planning officer. We will carry out consultation with the relevant statutory bodies on all planning applications that we receive and validate. The extent of consultation depends on the scale and nature of the development proposal. In most cases, the consultation period will be 21 days but extended consultation may be carried out for planning applications that are more controversial, complex or involve an Environmental Statement. For a few specific application types the consultation periods are 35 days or more. Please refer to your letter or site notices for more information, or alternatively contact the Customer Service Centre on 01234 718068.

- 11.7 Any comments received in response to consultation will be made publically available unless it contains defamatory or sensitive information, in which case the response will be redacted to remove sensitive information in line with GDPR requirements. The comments will form part of the evidence base for the development proposal and will be a material consideration in the decision-making process. An officer will consider the development proposal against the policies in the development plan, taking account of any material considerations including consultation responses. Having weighed all evidence and material considerations, the officer will make a recommendation to grant or refuse planning permission that will be set out in an officer report.

### **Determining an application**

- 11.8 The determination process involves making the decision on whether or not planning permission for a proposed development should be granted or refused. Any determination must normally be made in accordance with the development plan unless other material planning considerations indicate otherwise. If planning permission is granted, it may be granted subject to a number of conditions. Where the development has an effect on local infrastructure, planning obligations, such as financial contributions, may be required from the developer to offset any related impacts arising from the new development.
- 11.9 Most decisions on planning applications are made by the Chief Officer Planning and Highways or by the Manager for Development Management under delegated powers given by the Council. The Planning Committee Scheme of Delegations explains the types of application and circumstances when applications can be determined without reference to

Planning Committee. It is available to view and download from the Borough Council's website at [http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_town\\_and\\_country/idoc.ashx?docid=6e379fbf-961c-42c8-8938-d4f08ce3aa96&version=-1](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/idoc.ashx?docid=6e379fbf-961c-42c8-8938-d4f08ce3aa96&version=-1) The Planning Committee, which currently comprises 9 elected Councillors, normally meets once every month.

### **When a decision has been made**

- 11.10 If you have made or commented on a planning application, you will be notified of the decision in writing by email or post. For others interested in the outcome, to find out whether a planning application has been approved or refused, you can either track its progress on-line on the Council's planning pages or you can view the weekly lists of decisions, also on the website. Alternatively, you can call the Council's Customer Service Centre in Horne Lane, Bedford on 01234 718068.
- 11.11 Local councils are informed directly about the outcome of applications in their area to which they have objected. Copies of planning decisions are available to view on-line at <http://www.publicaccess.bedford.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=weeklyList>

### **Appeals**

- 11.12 If you have been refused planning permission or you are unhappy with any of the conditions attached to a permission you can appeal against the Council's decision. Appeals are made to the Planning Inspectorate who act on behalf of the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The appeal will be decided by The Planning Inspectorate either through written representations, a hearing or a public inquiry. There is no right of appeal for 3rd parties (ie. objectors to a development).
- 11.13 The Council will consult interested parties when instructed to do so by the Planning Inspectorate. This will vary depending on which procedure is determined by the Planning Inspectorate (ie. Householder/MinorCommercial, Written Representations, Hearing or Inquiry). Typically those who commented on planning applications will also be consulted if an appeal is lodged. However, for Householder/Minor Commercial appeals all parties are notified of an appeal, not consulted, and no further comments are considered from 3rd parties or the council. Appeal comments by interested parties must be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate not the Council.
- 11.14 When an appeal is lodged the Council will make the appellant's grounds of appeal and appeal form available to view on the Council's website at [www.bedford.gov.uk/planningappeals](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planningappeals). Interested parties should be able to locate these documents using the Council's appeal reference (Year/\*\*\*\*\*/\*\*\*). The appeal reference can be obtained by first using the planning application reference number (for refused planning applications). As the appeal progresses further documents will be added including correspondence from the Planning Inspectorate, Statements of Case and Proofs of evidence (where applicable).

- 11.15 Where an appeal is heard at a hearing or public inquiry these will be open to the public. Interested persons may attend, and may participate at a hearing or inquiry at the discretion of the Inspector. There is no requirement for a person to notify the Inspector of their intention to speak prior to the event, but those intending to do so should normally make their request known to the Inspector at the opening of the hearing/inquiry.
- 11.16 Based on all the statements, representations and evidence submitted, the Planning Inspectorate will make a decision to allow or dismiss the appeal, and will upload their decision on their website when it is made [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate). When using the Planning Inspectorate website users will need to 'Search for an Appeal' and enter the last 7 digits of the Planning Inspectorate's appeal reference – this reference starts with AAP and is different to the Council's appeal reference. The council will also upload a copy of the Inspector's decision onto its website. A copy of the decision notice will be available on the Planning Portal website. More information about the appeals process can also be found on The Planning Inspectorate's pages of the Planning Portal website at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/planningappeals>.
- 11.17 The only means to challenge an appeal decision by the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government/Planning Inspectorate is by statutory challenge or Judicial Review in the High Court. Such a challenge must be on a point of law, rather than disagreement with the judgements made. Applications to the High Court to challenge an appeal must be made strictly within 6 weeks from the date of the decision.

## Enforcement

- 11.18 In cases where development takes place without planning permission or in breach of a planning permission that has been granted, enforcement action may be taken. If you consider development is taking place without or in breach of a planning consent, a request for a planning enforcement investigation can be lodged through the Council's website using this link [www.bedford.gov.uk/planenforcement](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planenforcement). If you are not able to access the internet then you can also telephone the Customer Service Centre on 01234 718068 or visit them at 2 Horne Lane, Bedford.
- 11.19 The Council has published an Enforcement Plan that addresses how the implementation of planning permissions is monitored, alleged cases of unauthorised development investigated and action taken where it is appropriate to do so. The Enforcement Plan can be viewed at [www.bedford.gov.uk/planenforcement](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planenforcement)
- 11.20 When carrying out an enforcement investigation, officers will not divulge the identity of persons reporting planning breaches, without the consent of the complainant. Exemptions to the Freedom of Information and Environmental Information provisions will be used when appropriate to prevent the release of identities of persons reporting planning breaches.



## 12. Development management - What types of planning application will we consult on?

- 12.1 As some proposals do not need an application for planning permission and some require other types of consent (such as Listed building consent or Hazardous substances consent) not all proposals are subject to publicity and consultation. Table 3 below describes the different types of application and the publicity and consultation that is relevant to each type. The application types and suggested consultees are not an exhaustive list but cover the most common eventualities. Each case will be assessed on its own merits for the level of publicity and consultation required and the Council will ensure that the minimum statutory requirements are met in every case. The minimum statutory requirements are set out in Parts 3 and 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.





**Table 3 Types of planning application and whether consultation is necessary**

Types of planning application	Characteristics	Publicity and consultation
Small scale planning applications	These may include householder applications involving proposals to alter or enlarge a single house, including works within the garden, or minor proposals for non-residential development like small commercial extensions.	Notify adjacent neighbours by letter and/or site notice; consult local councils and the highway authority.
Major planning applications	These may be proposals for: Housing development of 10 or more dwellings, or a site area of 0.5 hectares or more. Other development where the floor space to be built is 1,000 sq m or more, or where the site area is 1 hectare or more. Schemes that are controversial, for example wind farm proposals, or departures from the development plan.	Notify adjacent neighbours, may need site and press notices. Consult local councils and statutory consultation bodies.
Listed building/ conservation area consent applications	These may involve proposals for alterations, extensions or demolition of a listed building or any works for demolition to be carried out on a building within a conservation area.	Notify adjacent neighbours and Conservation Officer; advertise in the press; consult local councils.
Advertisement consent	Certain adverts require express consent from the Council to be displayed and will typically include adverts on shops and other commercial buildings.	Notify adjacent neighbours; consult local councils and highway authority.
Outline consent	This type of application is designed to establish the principle of a particular scheme, the full details are often not given at this stage, for example the full design details of the houses on a residential scheme. The full details are usually considered at the “reserved matters” stage.	Notify adjacent neighbours, may need site and press notices. Consult local councils and statutory consultation bodies.
Reserved Matters consent	This type of application follows on from an outline planning permission and considers the full details of the scheme, for example the house design and landscaping.	Notify adjacent neighbours, may need site and press notices. Consult local councils and statutory consultation bodies.
Change of use applications	This type of application considers an alternative use for a building or land, for example a change of use from grocers shop to a hot food takeaway.	Notify adjacent neighbours, may need site and press notices. Consult local councils and statutory consultation bodies.
Tree Preservation Order applications	This type of application considers works to protected trees.	Site notice. Consult local councils.

Types of planning application	Characteristics	Publicity and consultation
Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area	This type of application is a technical assessment of the work by a tree specialist that is not protected by a Tree Preservation Order.	Notify Tree Officer.
High Hedge Complaints	This type of complaint deals with one neighbour complaining about their neighbour's high evergreen hedge.	Notify adjacent neighbours; consult local councils.
Non-material and material amendments	This type of application involves an amendment to the approved scheme that does not require the submission of a new application.	Consultation at the discretion of the local planning authority.
"Prior Approval" proposals for Telecommunications infrastructure	This sort of application considers the visual impact of the works on the landscape and can include highway safety issues.	Notify immediate neighbours, site and press notices. Consult local councils and statutory consultation bodies.
Lawful Development Certificates for Proposed/Existing Buildings and Uses	This type of application is to establish if development or building works has become lawful through the passage of time or because it did not require planning permission in the first place.	Do not consult for proposed works but do notify adjacent neighbours and local councils for existing development.
Other Prior Approvals	The Government has sought to simplify the planning system by increasing the number of schemes for which only a prior approval is required.	Notification requirements depend on the type of prior notification application. The requirements are set out within the relevant sections of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
Hazardous substances consent	This application is to regulate the locations for storage of hazardous substances so that they cannot be kept or used above specific quantities until the responsible authority has had the opportunity to assess the risk of an accident and its consequences for people and the environment.	Consult Health and Safety Executive, local councils, Environment Agency and Minerals and Waste Authority.

## 13. Development management - How you will be informed and can get Involved in the planning applications process

- 13.1 The Council uses a number of methods to consult and publicise information about planning applications. However, it is not necessary for you to have been directly consulted or notified in order to make comments. In addition, if you have been notified or consulted and wish to draw this to the attention of other neighbours or interest groups, we would encourage this.

### Website

- 13.2 We publish a wide range of information on planning applications on our website to keep you informed and up-to-date. You can access planning application forms, applications received, committee reports setting out officer recommendations to grant or refuse planning permission (five working days ahead of the committee date), upcoming meeting dates, agendas and minutes of previous meetings, planning decisions as well as outstanding appeals and appeal decisions. For application specific information and for assistance please go to [www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans). For further planning details please refer to [www.bedford.gov.uk/contactplanning](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/contactplanning)

### Weekly lists

- 13.3 To inform the public and make transparent the development proposals that are being considered and determined we publish the weekly/monthly lists of planning applications received, decisions that are taken. These appear at <http://www.publicaccess.bedford.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=weeklyList>

## Right to Speak

- 13.4 Normally, those who wish to speak either for or against a planning application at Planning Committee have a right to do so, although that right is restricted by procedural rules. You may be given a set time to speak (currently set at 5 minutes) that has to be arranged with the committee support staff in advance of the meeting. Planning Committee meetings are open to the public and anyone can listen to the debate without making prior arrangements.
- 13.5 Details of the Right to Speak Scheme are found in Appendix 6 or alternatively on the Council's website at [www.bedford.gov.uk/contactplanning](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/contactplanning). Please bear in mind however that most planning applications are not dealt with by the Planning Committee but are delegated to officers for a decision without a public meeting and no right to speak arises in those cases.

## Neighbour notifications

- 13.6 Owners and occupiers of any property adjoining or opposite the land to which the planning application relates are most likely to be directly affected by a proposed development. In most circumstances those owners and occupiers will be notified of a planning application by way of letter; however as we do not know the identity of the owner of any property we always send the letter addressed to "the occupier". Where adjacent land is an empty field/or vacant land, site notices will be erected in lieu of sending letters to empty fields/vacant land.
- 13.7 In instances where we send notification letters this will be by 2nd class post. Individuals who have also commented on an earlier application on the same site (i.e. in the same red line boundary) and within the five years prior to the current application being

made, will also be sent a notification letter by post unless the individual has requested deletion of their contact details from our database. It is at the case officer's discretion to carry out wider notifications in specific circumstances.

- 13.8 The neighbour notification letter will contain a description of the proposal along with information about where the plans can be viewed and how comments can be made on the planning application, allowing a minimum of 21 days for comment in line with statutory requirements. Planning applications will not be determined before the expiration of the latest period for receiving comments, but it should be noted that a decision can be made directly following the close of the consultation period, so representations within the set timeframe are encouraged to ensure that comments can be taken into account. Late comments will be considered only where circumstances allow.

- 13.9 Due to the nature and volume of correspondence we receive we will acknowledge receipt of comments, but will not normally provide detailed responses.

### **Additional Publicity in Respect of Amended Plans**

- 13.10 Where minor amendments to plans are received on a current application those individuals or bodies who have expressed an opinion may be notified of the revisions and given a further limited period (usually up to 14 days) to assess and comment upon the amendments. The number of days within which to respond may be reduced in certain cases where there is insufficient time left within the statutory period for determining the application to allow the full 14 days.

- 13.11 Where amended plans are submitted with significant changes to the original application, full re-notification may be necessary depending on the circumstances of the case. Where full re-notification is considered necessary a further period for comment of up to 21 days will be given.

### **Other letters**

- 13.12 Where we do not have the option of sending an email we use letters to acknowledge receipt of your planning application and to inform those who have commented about the planning decisions we have taken. If you have commented on a planning application that has been decided and is subject to an appeal, we inform you by letter of that appeal and what you need to do to contribute to the appeal process.

### **Site notices**

- 13.13 For the planning applications that have a wider impact and where it is difficult to identify a postal address for neighbours, site notices will be displayed in a publicly accessible location near to the application site where it is easily visible to passers by. The site notice will provide you with a description of the proposed development, where plans can be viewed, and how and by when to make comments. Whilst it is not the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to safeguard the site notice or replace damaged or lost notices, in order to make them as durable as possible all notices will be laminated.
- 13.14 If an appeal is heard at a public inquiry the Planning Inspectorate will require us to post a site notice, giving the time, date and location where the Inquiry is to be held.

### **Press and media coverage**

- 13.15 We place notices in the press to advertise those planning applications that are controversial or likely to be of wider public interest and invite comments on those proposals. In addition, we publish in local newspapers appeal details, proceedings for hearings and public inquiries as well as proposals that require Environmental Impact Assessment.

### **General public**

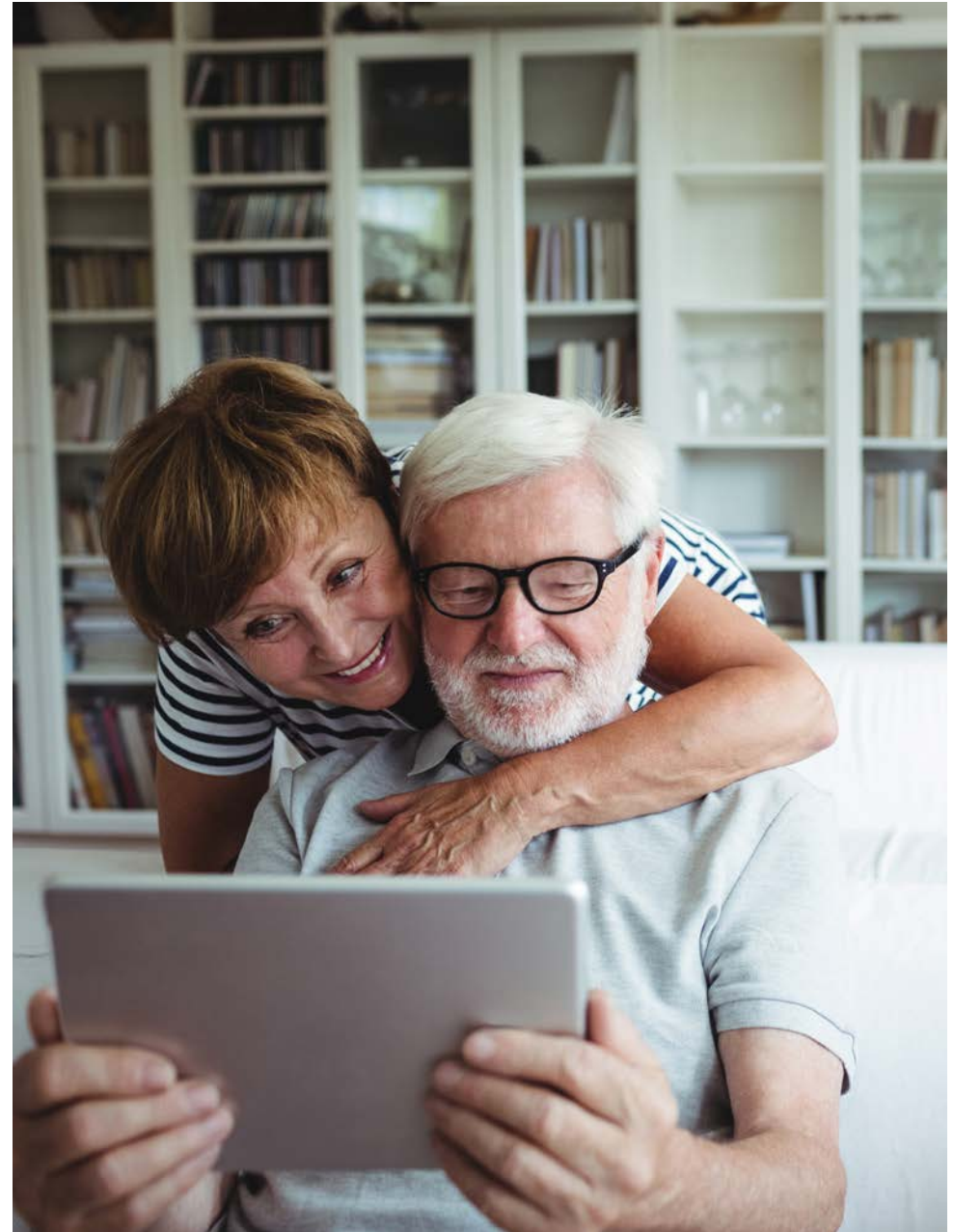
- 13.16 Planning applications received, decided or undecided are available for the public to view online at [www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans), and at the Council's Customer Service Centre. Applications with a wider impact and those affecting a conservation area or the setting of a listed building are also advertised in the Public Notices section of a local newspaper.

### **Statutory consultees**

- 13.17 There are a range of statutory consultees that must be consulted depending on the type and nature of the planning application. The key consultation bodies that are most commonly consulted with and notified of planning applications are summarised below and a more extensive list is contained in Appendix 5.

### **Local councils**

- 13.18 Local councils include Town Councils and Parish Councils. They are consulted on a variety of applications, as identified in Table 3. Planning applications will not be determined before the expiration of the latest period for receiving comments, but it should be noted that a decision can be made directly following the close of the consultation period, so representations from Local Councils within the set timeframe are encouraged to ensure that comments can be taken into account. Late comments will be considered only where circumstances allow.





### **Adjoining Local Planning Authorities and adjoining town and parish councils**

- 13.19 At Bedford Borough Council's discretion, adjoining local planning authorities, town and parish councils are consulted on applications of significance proposed close to the borough boundary.

### **Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Board**

- 13.20 Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Board are consulted if an application affects water and sewerage infrastructure or involves flood risk.

### **Environment Agency and Natural England**

- 13.21 The Environment Agency and Natural England are generally consulted on planning applications that may have impacts on the environment during construction and in the future. These include applications with potential impacts on flood risk, wildlife and green space.

### **Highways England**

- 13.22 Highways England is consulted on planning applications where proposals are considered to affect the main strategic road network.

### **Historic England**

- 13.23 Historic England is consulted in accordance with the arrangements for handling heritage applications - Notification to Historic England and National Amenity Societies and the Secretary of State (England) Direction 2015 when a planning application affects the setting of a Grade I or II\* listed building, a Grade I or II\* registered park or garden, the character or appearance of a conservation area or the site of a scheduled ancient monument.

### **Sport England**

- 13.24 We are required to consult Sport England on any planning application for development affecting playing field land. In addition, we will consult Sport England on applications that involve the creation or loss of major sports facilities, major residential development (e.g. 300+ dwellings) and minerals proposals where sport may be an after use.

### **The local Highway Authority and other Council-based services**

- 13.25 The Council is also the highway authority for the Borough. Its consideration of the highways impacts of a proposal are often central to the decision on whether or not planning permission should be granted.
- 13.26 In addition, we consult other Council-based services such as the Environmental Health Service on matters to do with pollution and land contamination.



# **Part 3: Neighbourhood Planning**

Publicity and Consultation in the  
Neighbourhood Planning Process

## 14. Neighbourhood planning

- 14.1 The government has introduced new powers to enable local communities to bring forward the development they want to see and shape growth in their local area. Local communities now have the option to produce neighbourhood development plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders. These are produced by Parish or Town Councils or in non-parished areas by neighbourhood forums. Community right to build orders may be produced by community right to build organisations that meet a range of legislative requirements.

### **What are neighbourhood development plans?**

- 14.2 The neighbourhood development plan is a new type of community-led plan which communities can use to set out more detailed priorities for development at a local level and address a range of local issues. They must be primarily about the use and development of land and buildings and generally conform to strategic local plan policies.

### **What are neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders?**

- 14.3 Neighbourhood development orders are orders that confer planning permission – in full or in outline – for development in the area covered by the order without a need for specific planning permission from the Council. This could be either a particular development, or a particular type of development, such as retail or housing.
- 14.4 Community right to build orders are types of neighbourhood development orders which have to meet a number of criteria. Any benefit from the resultant development stays within the

community and is to be used for the benefit of that particular community.

### **The neighbourhood planning process**

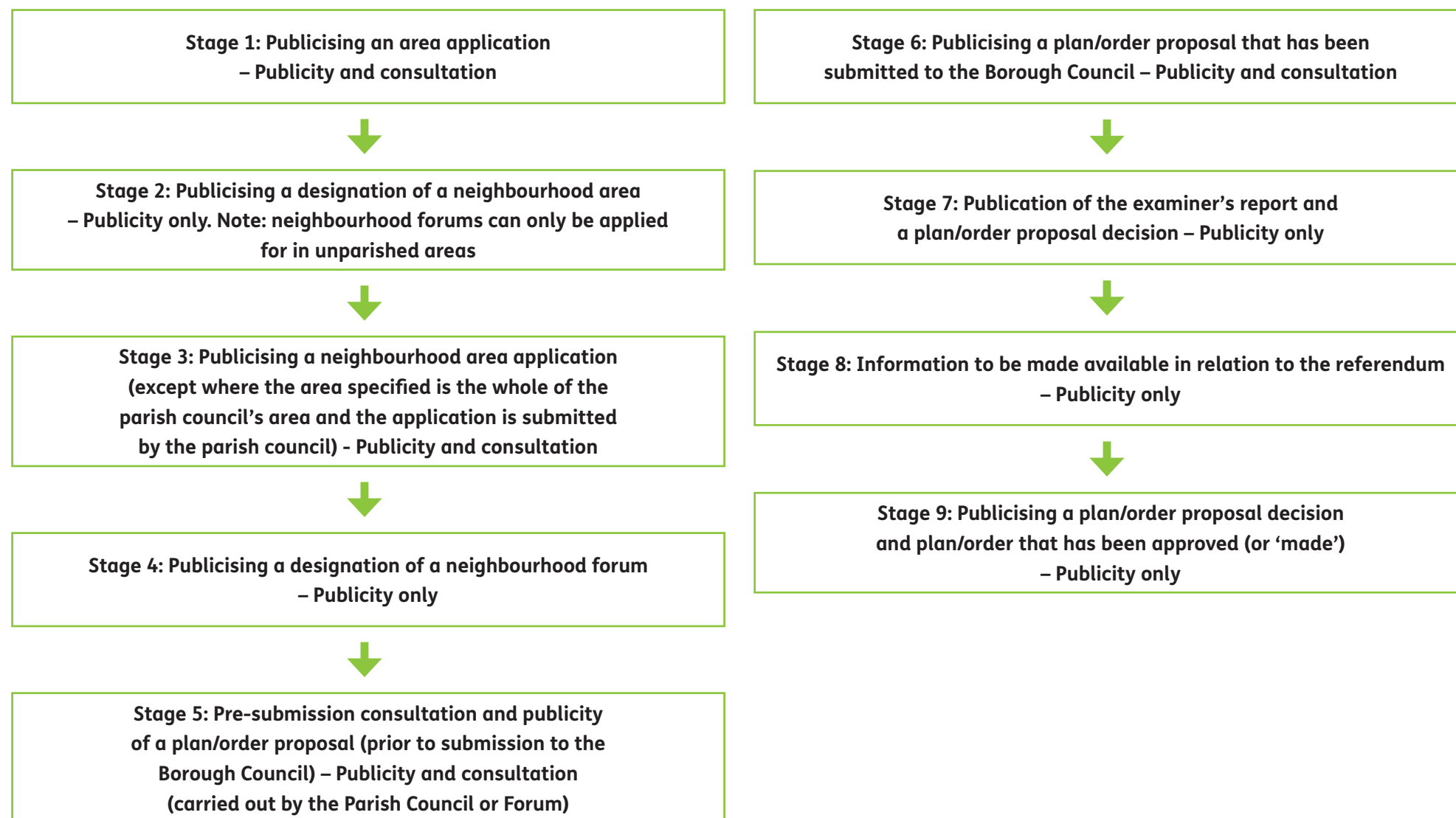
- 14.5 Neighbourhood development plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders are prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Their preparation is community-led and there are extensive opportunities for you to get involved. Information about neighbourhood plans in the Borough can be accessed at the Council's website at <http://www.bedford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning>
- 14.6 Both neighbourhood plan proposals and order proposals are tested at examination and are then subject to public referendum before they can become part of the development plan or take effect. The process is outlined in The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012. Once adopted, neighbourhood development plans form part of the development plan for Bedford Borough and the policies contained therein take precedence over local plan policies if they are more up-to-date.
- 14.7 The preparation of both plans and orders mirrors the plan-making processes set out in part 1, section 8. Therefore, the key publicity and consultation methods set out in part 1, section 7 are applicable to neighbourhood planning and will be used by the Council in supporting local councils or neighbourhood forums in the neighbourhood planning process. Appendix 8 identifies the publicity and consultation methods that the Council may use in supporting the preparation of neighbourhood development plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders at the various stages of the preparation process.

- 14.8 When we support the development of plans and orders by Parish Councils, Town Councils or neighbourhood forums, we will publicise and consult at various stages of the process; and seek to work with local councils in publicising information locally, for example on Parish Council notice boards or in Parish Council newsletters. The minimum publicity and consultation we will undertake in supporting the preparation of plans and orders at the various stages of the preparation process is set out in Table 4.
- 14.9 The key publicity and consultation that informs the content of the plan or order is carried out by Town Councils, Parish Councils or neighbourhood forums prior to submitting a plan or order proposal to the Council. We encourage those producing a neighbourhood development plan or order to carry out consultation and publicity that is proportionate to the nature and subject of the plan or order. This may involve exceeding minimum requirements where necessary. Town Councils, Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums seeking to identify publicity and consultation methods that are appropriate and suitable for the individuals and groups to be involved may wish to refer to Appendix 8 of this document for guidance.
- 14.10 Further information on how to prepare a neighbourhood development plan, including the minimum requirements for pre-submission publicity and consultation to be carried out by Town Councils, Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums, is set out in the Council's guide to preparing neighbourhood development plans. A further guide outlines the Council's policies for providing advice and assistance to qualifying groups undertaking neighbourhood planning. The Neighbourhood Plans Guidance and the Neighbourhood Planning – what the Council will do guidance can both be accessed on the Council's website at <http://www.bedford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning>.
- 14.11 There are a number of statutory consultation bodies that must be consulted by Parish Councils, Town Councils, neighbourhood forums or community organisations when preparing neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders. These depend on the nature of the order and are identified in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 14.12 In areas with a Parish Council, Parish Councils will be expected to liaise with the Borough Council and other Parish Councils to agree infrastructure priorities as part of the neighbourhood planning process. These discussions will also be able to inform the use of the neighbourhood proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy that will be passed to the Parish Councils to use for local priorities. In areas where there is no Parish Council and if there is a neighbourhood forum preparing a neighbourhood plan, the Council will be expected to work with the local neighbourhood to determine how the neighbourhood funding proportion of the levy will be spent. Further information in relation to the neighbourhood fund is set out in the government's Planning Practice Guidance, which can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy> and on the Borough Council's website at [http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_town\\_and\\_country/planning\\_policy\\_its\\_purpose/community\\_infrastructure\\_levy.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose/community_infrastructure_levy.aspx)



Figure 8 explains the neighbourhood planning stages at which publicity and consultation is carried out.

**Figure 8 The neighbourhood planning process**





**Table 4 Consultation and publicity in the neighbourhood planning process**

How a neighbourhood development plan, neighbourhood development order and community right to build order is prepared	Publicity and consultation
<b>1. Publicising an area application (Regulation 6)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Publicity of and consultation on an area application</b>	
Before a plan or order can be prepared an application must be made to the Council for the designation of a neighbourhood area. The application should include a map which identifies the proposed neighbourhood area, a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate for designation as a neighbourhood area and a statement that the applicant body is a relevant body meeting a number of legislative requirements (see stage 3).	
Where the area specified is the whole of the parish council's area and the application is submitted by the parish council and the area is located wholly within the parish council's area, <u>regulations do not require publicity to be undertaken</u> . In other situations we will undertake publicity as set out in this table.	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise for at least 6 weeks on our website, and by local advertisement, the application for the designation of a neighbourhood area and details of how and by when comments must be made.</li> <li>Make available for inspection in hardcopy for at least six week the area application in the Customer Service Centre</li> <li>Encourage local councils or neighbourhood forums to publicise the area application locally.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult for at least 6 weeks relevant stakeholders, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>Invite comments on our website for at least 6 weeks, and by local advertisement, providing details of how and by when comments must be made.</li> <li>Consider any comments that argue for or against the proposed neighbourhood area boundary.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Publicising a designation of a neighbourhood area (Regulation 7)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Publicity of an area designation and decision document</b>	
Having considered all comments received we will make a decision on whether or not to approve the application for the designation of a neighbourhood area, and prepare a decision statement giving the reasons for our decision.	
Where the area specified is the whole of the parish council's area and the application is submitted by the parish council and the area is located wholly within the parish council's area, <u>regulations do not require publicity to be undertaken</u> . In other situations we will undertake publicity as set out in this table.	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If we approve the application, publicise on our website the name of the neighbourhood area, a map which identifies the neighbourhood area and the name of the applicant body; and regardless of whether or not we approve the application, the decision statement and details of where and when it can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>Make available for inspection in hardcopy the decision statement setting out the reasons for our decision on whether or not to approve the application and map of the designated area (if approved) at our Customer Service Centre.</li> <li>Send a copy of the decision statement to the applicant body and those who commented on the neighbourhood area application by post or email.</li> <li>Encourage local councils or neighbourhood forums to publicise the decision statement locally.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Publicising a neighbourhood forum application (Regulation 9)</b>	<b>We will...</b>

How a neighbourhood development plan, neighbourhood development order and community right to build order is prepared	Publicity and consultation
<b>Publicity of and consultation on a neighbourhood forum application</b>	
In non-parished areas an application must be made to the Council for the designation of a neighbourhood forum that contains a minimum of 21 members from the local area.	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise on our website for at least 6 weeks, and by local advertisement, the application for the designation of a neighbourhood forum, a statement that if a designation is made no other body may be designated for that neighbourhood area and details of how and by when comments must be made.</li> <li>Make available for at least six week the neighbourhood forum application at the Customer Service Centre for inspection in hardcopy.</li> <li>Encourage local councils or neighbourhood forums to publicise the neighbourhood forum application locally.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult for at least 6 weeks relevant stakeholders, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>Invite comments on our website and by advertisement, providing details of how and by when comments must be made.</li> <li>Consider any comments that argue for or against the proposed neighbourhood forum.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Publicising a designation of a neighbourhood forum (Regulation 10)</b>	<b>We will...</b>
<b>Publicity of a neighbourhood forum designation and decision statement</b>	
We will make a decision on whether or not to approve the application for a designation of a neighbourhood forum and prepare a decision statement giving the reasons for our decision.	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If we approve the designation, publicise on our website and by local advertisement the name of the neighbourhood forum, a copy of its written constitution, the name of the neighbourhood area to which the designation relates, a contact name and the contact details of the neighbourhood forum.</li> <li>Make available for inspection in hardcopy the decision statement setting out the reasons for our decision on whether or not to approve the application at our Customer Service Centre.</li> <li>Publicise on our website and by local advertisement the decision statement and details of when it can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>Send a copy of the decision statement to the applicant body and those who commented on the neighbourhood forum application in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>Encourage local councils or neighbourhood forums to publicise the decision statement locally.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Pre-submission consultation and publicity (Regulation 14 &amp; 21)</b>	<b>Parish Councils, Town Councils or neighbourhood forums should ...</b>

How a neighbourhood development plan, neighbourhood development order and community right to build order is prepared	Publicity and consultation
<b>Publicity of and consultation on plan/order proposal</b>	
<p>Before submitting a plan or order proposal to the Council, Parish Councils, Town Councils or neighbourhood forums should publicise and consult on the plan/order proposal they intend to submit to the Borough Council.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicise for at least 6 weeks the details of the plan/order proposal in its local area.</li> <li>• Make available for inspection the details of the plan/order proposal.</li> <li>• Publicise where and when the details of the plan/order proposal can be inspected.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the plan/order proposal to the Borough Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>In addition, before submitting an order proposal to the Borough Council, Parish Councils, Town Councils or neighbourhood forums should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send the order proposal to the owner and the tenant of the land proposed under the order.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult for at least 6 weeks the statutory consultation bodies identified in the Regulations and relevant stakeholders as appropriate on the plan/order proposal, providing details of how and by when to make comments.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Publicising a plan/order proposal (Regulation 16 &amp; 23)</b>	<b>We will...</b>
<b>Publicity of and consultation on a plan/order proposal</b>	
<p>When a neighbourhood development plan has been prepared the following documents must be submitted to the Council for publication: The draft plan/order, a map or statement identifying the area to which the plan/order proposal relates, a consultation statement and a statement explaining how the draft plan/order meets basic legal conditions.</p> <p>Where neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders are proposed, an archaeology statement where appropriate and details of relevant enfranchisement right<sup>5</sup> must be submitted to the Council in addition to the above documents.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available for inspection for at least 6 weeks the proposed plan/order and other documents submitted to us at our Customer Service Centre.</li> <li>• Publicise for at least 6 weeks on our website, and by local advertisement, the proposed plan/order, other documents submitted to us and a statement of the fact that representations may include a request to be notified of the making of the plan/order.</li> <li>• Notify all statutory consultation bodies that have been consulted during plan/order preparation in writing by email or post that the plan/order proposal has been received.</li> <li>• Encourage local councils or neighbourhood forums to publicise the submission of a plan/order proposal locally.</li> </ul> <p><b>Where order proposals have been subject to Environmental Impact Assessment we will additionally publicise the order proposal submitted to us by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site display on or near the site for at least 21 days.</li> <li>• Public notice in a local newspaper.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite comments for at least six weeks on the plan/order proposal on our website, and by local advertisement, providing details of how and by when comments must be made and how to request to be notified of our decision on the plan/order proposal.</li> <li>• Consult for at least six weeks the statutory consultation bodies that have been consulted during plan/order preparation and those who have previously commented on the relevant neighbourhood area application, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>• Consider any comments received in relation to the proposed plan/order.</li> </ul>

5. See glossary for an explanation of enfranchisement rights

How a neighbourhood development plan, neighbourhood development order and community right to build order is prepared	Publicity and consultation
7. Publication of the examiner's report and a plan/order proposal decision (Regulation 18 & 25)	We will ...
Publicity of examiner recommendations and plan/order proposal decision	
<p>We appoint an examiner to whom we submit the plan/order proposal, all documents submitted to us and comments received in response to consultation. The examiner considers whether the plan/order proposal has regard to relevant national policies, contributes to the achievement of sustainable development and is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. The examiner will further consider whether the plan/order proposal is compatible with EU obligations and likely to have a significant effect on a European site.</p> <p>The examiner then recommends in a report to the Council whether or not the plan/order proposal should go to referendum.</p> <p>Having considered the examiner's report we will decide whether or not the plan/order should go to referendum or be modified and prepare a decision statement giving the reasons for our decision. Where we consider that the plan/order proposal should be modified or the referendum area should be extended, we will set out the reasons in the decision statement.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicise on our website the examiner's report.</li> <li>• Make available for inspection in hardcopy the decision statement at our Customer Service Centre, setting out the reasons for our decision.</li> <li>• Publicise on our website and by local advertisement the decision statement and details of where and when the decision statement can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the decision statement to the body that has prepared the plan/order by email or post.</li> <li>• Encourage local councils or neighbourhood forums to publicise the decision statement locally.</li> </ul>

How a neighbourhood development plan, neighbourhood development order and community right to build order is prepared	Publicity and consultation
8. Information to be made available in relation to the referendum (Regulation 4)	Subject to any direction from the Counting Officer...
<b>Publicity of referendum</b>	
<p>If we decide that the plan/order should go to referendum, the Counting Officer<sup>6</sup> will organise a referendum that is open to any person registered to vote in the area.</p> <p>We prepare a statement that we are satisfied that the draft plan/order meets basic legal requirements, a statement setting out general background information about planning and an information statement, setting out the details of the referendum.</p> <p>Where it is demonstrated that a proposed plan or order in one neighbourhood could impact on other communities, we may extend the referendum area to include those communities that may be affected. A simple majority of votes in favour of the plan/order proposal is sufficient for the plan/order to be made.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 days ahead of the referendum, the plan/order proposal, the examiner's report, a summary of all representations received, a statement that we are satisfied that the draft plan/order meets basic legal requirements, a statement setting out general background information on planning and an information statement setting out the referendum details is made available on the Council's website and in hardcopy at the Customer Service Centre.</li> <li>• 28 days ahead of the referendum, the information statement is publicised by local advertisement, providing details of the date on which the referendum is to be held, the question to be asked, where and when the documents relevant to the referendum can be inspected, a map of the referendum area (if it is different to the designated neighbourhood area), an explanation of the referendum expenses limit and a description of who is entitled to vote.</li> <li>• Details of where and when the documents relevant to the referendum can be inspected in hardcopy are publicised on the Council's website.</li> <li>• A copy of the documents relevant to the referendum is sent to the body that has prepared the plan/order proposal, the local council (if different) and those consultation bodies and individuals that have been consulted on the plan/order proposal prior to submission to the Council.</li> <li>• Local councils or neighbourhood forums are encouraged to publicise the details of the information statement and the documents relevant to the referendum locally.</li> </ul>
9. Decision on a plan/order proposal (Regulation 19 & 26)	We will ...
<b>Publicity of the decision on a plan/order proposal</b>	
<p>Following the referendum we make a decision on whether or not to bring the plan/order into force through formal Council procedure. We prepare a decision statement, which sets out the decision we have taken and the reasons for making the decision.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available for inspection at the Customer Service Centre and on our website the decision statement</li> <li>• Publicise on our website and by local advertisement the decision statement and details of where and when the decision statement can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the decision statement to the body who has prepared the plan/order and those who requested to be notified.</li> </ul>
10. Publicising a plan/order (Regulation 20 & 27)	We will ...
<b>Publicity of a made plan/order</b>	
<p>Once brought into force, a neighbourhood development plan forms part of the statutory development plan for Bedford Borough and a neighbourhood development order or community right to build order takes effect.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available for inspection at our Customer Service Centre and on our website the plan/order.</li> <li>• Publicise on our website that the plan has been brought into force and details of where and when the plan/order can be inspected.</li> <li>• Notify those who have requested to be notified in writing, by email or post, that the plan/order has been brought into force and where it can be inspected i.e. the details of the decision statement locally.</li> </ul>

6. The Counting Officer is the Returning Officer for principal area elections for the authority, and acts in this capacity independently from the Borough Council.





## **Part 4: General Information**

Your Comments and Responses  
to Planning Applications and  
Plan Consultations

## 15. General information - Your comments and responses to planning applications and plan consultations

### Making effective comments

15.1 The Council welcomes the views of everyone and will consider and take into account any comment that it receives in response to consultation, provided it relates to valid planning matters. When making comments on planning policy documents and planning applications please bear in mind the do's and don'ts set out below.

15.2 Do...

- ✓ Always provide any comments in writing by email or post, so that there is a written record of what you have said. In considering comments on planning applications, we cannot take into account comments that are anonymous and/or not in writing.
- ✓ Keep your responses short and to the point. This helps the Council to record and report your comments.
- ✓ If you are commenting on a draft plan, think about what might be missing in addition to commenting on what is there.
- ✓ Respond early during a consultation period because it gives the Council more time to consider your comments. Late submissions to planning applications will only be considered where circumstances allow.
- ✓ Ensure that your comments on a planning application or a draft plan relate to planning issues only. Valid planning matters are generally issues of public rather than private interest and may

for example relate to the following issues.

- Impact on the amenities of neighbours (loss of light or privacy, noise and disturbance, etc.).
- The adequacy of means of access.
- Parking provision.
- Likely traffic generation, etc.
- Whether or not there are any government policies that are relevant.
- Design issues.
- The planning history of a particular site.
- ✓ Be aware that the following matters are NOT material to planning and cannot be taken into account in the decision-making process.
- Trade objections (e.g. where the complaint directly relates to anticipated competition from the development proposed).
- Objections relating to trespass on the objector's property.
- The question of future maintenance of the objector's property.
- Perceived loss of value to the objector's property.
- Drainage and other issues covered by Building Control procedures.
- Issues which are covered by other legislation and over which planning controls do not exist.
- Alleged unauthorised activities or works not directly relating to the proposal under consideration and which might be dealt with through other planning investigations.

- *Matters of a personal nature including of a discriminatory nature.*
- *The wording or content of a proposed advertisement.*

15.3 Don't...

- ✖ *Provide any comments that you do not want published, because all material consultation responses received are published and attributed to source subject to the data protection issues as detailed below. However received, responses to plan consultations are all entered onto the consultation database and stored against the name of the person who made the response. Responses are either summarised in a report or reproduced in full; and form part of the evidence for the relevant plan or development proposal.*
- ✖ *Submit racist or other discriminatory responses. The Council cannot disclose or consider any consultation responses that are defamatory or likely to incite racial hatred. We are bound by the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful for anyone to induce or attempt to induce another person to discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religious belief, sex and sexual orientation. This means that any comments in respect of a draft plan or planning application based on discriminatory grounds are unlawful and cannot be considered or disclosed. They may also constitute a criminal offence for which the author of the comments may be prosecuted. Where a consultation response is received that is partly discriminatory, it will be returned with an explanatory letter.*

## Data protection

- 15.4 As an organisation we are bound by data protection legislation and will store and use the personal data you provide as part of your consultation response in accordance with the Council's data protection duties and policy, which can be viewed at [www.bedford.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/dataprotection). The Council's approach accords with practice and guidance issued by the Information Commissioner.
- 15.5 If you have made comments as part of a planning policy document consultation we will retain your details on our consultation database if you have requested for your details to be added, so that we can keep you up-to-date about the progress of the plan that is being prepared. Anyone who is part of the consultation database can at any time request to be removed by sending an email to [planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk). The exception would be if you have made a consultation response to a plan intended for submission (Reg.19), then we will retain your details and pass them to the Planning Inspector to fulfil our legal obligations.
- 15.6 The personal information we hold on our consultation database is used for the purpose of publicity and consultation only. Where we ask for personal data, such as names, addresses or telephone numbers, we ensure that the data we ask for is proportionate to the purpose of publicity and consultation.
- 15.7 We appreciate that some personal information we ask for as part of planning policy consultations, such as information about your ethnic background, religion or disability, is sensitive data. We ask sensitive questions to understand and monitor the impact of our policies, procedures and services on groups with protected

characteristics. All sensitive data as mentioned above will not be attributed to source, in other words it will be anonymous.

- 15.8 Personal data held for the purposes of consulting on planning policy documents will be held on a password protected consultation database and will not enter the public domain.
- 15.9 A name and private address that is given as part of a response to a planning application will be in the public domain, though we will not publish signatures, private e-mail addresses or private phone numbers.

### Reporting back

- 15.10 We always acknowledge receipt of comments provided to assure you that we have received your comments. We will engage in further discussions where this will assist the Council in developing the document. As it is not practicable for the Council to individually respond to all comments received, we produce a consultation report, detailing the comments we have received and explaining how we have dealt with the comments received and how they have affected the development of policy, for each document at each stage of the plan preparation process. These reports will be available on the Council's website.
- 15.11 We will not generally be able to respond to comments made on planning applications or questions raised in letters about planning applications. You can contact the case officer directly if you want clarification of a proposal in order to make further comments.

## 16. General information - who can help you with planning issues?

- 16.1 If you have any questions or would like to find out information about planning, there are a range of different sources of planning advice that you can use. In the first instance we encourage you to use available Council resources to find the answer or information you are looking for. There are also a range of organisations that provide assistance to community groups and individuals who are interested about finding out more on planning.

### Planning Officers

- 16.2 For ways to contact planning please refer to the details on [www.bedford.gov.uk/contactplanning](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/contactplanning). For more information on planning applications please refer to [www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans).
- 16.3 It is also possible to research and view Appeals and their documentation at [www.bedford.gov.uk/planningappeals](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planningappeals). However, if you have any enquiries in relation to appeals proceedings in general, please use the email address below. Planning Appeals: [planning@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planning@bedford.gov.uk)
- 16.4 Planning Officers from the Planning Policy Team will be available to deal with enquiries about statutory plans and other planning policy documents. Planning Policy: [planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk)
- 16.5 To report a breach of planning control and request an investigation the online form should be completed on the Council's website. Those unable to use the internet may call the

Customer Service Centre where staff will complete the online form on their behalf.

Planning Enforcement: [www.bedford.gov.uk/planenforcement](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planenforcement)

Tel: 01234 718068

### **The Customer Service Centre**

- 16.6 The Customer Service Centre provides a single point of contact for a broad range of services, including planning enquiries and payments. It is located in the town centre at 2 Horne Lane, Bedford MK40 1RA and is open during the following hours.  
Monday – Thursday 8.45 – 17.00 in person or by phone until 17.15  
Friday 8.45 – 16.45 in person or by phone until 17.00  
Tel. 01234 718068  
Email: [customerservices@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@bedford.gov.uk)

### **The Council's website**

- 16.7 The Council's website provides information on all elements of the planning process, including planning policy, development management, appeals and enforcement. You can access our website at [http://bedford.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_town\\_and\\_country.aspx](http://bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country.aspx)

### **Elected representatives**

- 16.8 Councillors provide another point of contact for you to express your views on planning issues. They serve on the Council's Committees, represent their communities, bring their views into the Council's decision-making process and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns. The Council's website provides information on all local Councillors and is regularly updated. Search and find your Councillor's contact details at [http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy.aspx)

### **Planning Aid**

- 16.9 Planning Aid provides free, independent and professional help, advice and support on planning issues to people and communities who cannot afford to hire a planning consultant. Planning Aid complements the work of local planning authorities but is wholly independent of them.
- 16.10 For initial planning enquiries visit the Planning Aid website [www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid). Alternatively, you can contact Planning Aid on 020 7929 8338 or email [advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk).

### **Planning Portal**

- 16.11 The Planning Portal is the government's gateway to planning information throughout the UK. It provides information across all areas of planning and is aimed at the general public and professional planners alike. You can access the Planning Portal services at [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).

### **Planning Inspectorate**

- 16.12 Appeals against Bedford Borough Council's planning decisions are to the Minister for Housing, Communities & Local Government, and are administered by the Planning Inspectorate. Those receiving a planning decision which can be appealed will receive details of how to appeal with the Council's decision. Information is also available at the planning inspectorate website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate).



## 17. General information - review and monitoring

### Review and monitoring of plans and policies

- 17.1 All planning documents the Council prepares including this Statement of Community Involvement are monitored. This is done primarily through the Bedford Borough Monitoring Report which uses a range of indicators and targets to evaluate the performance of policies and documents. The Bedford Borough Planning Monitoring Report is published on the Council's website and provides a comprehensive basis upon which to monitor the implementation of policy. It monitors contextual indicators, progress made on the documents the council is producing and progress made in relation to key policy targets, such as completions of housing and employment development.
- 17.2 A range of circumstances may lead to a review of plans and policy documents.
- *Changes in legislation, national policy or statutory procedures*
  - *The end of a document's time horizon*

### Monitoring of the planning applications process

- 17.3 We aim to deal with planning applications in a timely manner and our current targets reflect those set by Government. From 2018 our targets are to determine 60% of major applications within 13 weeks, 65% of Minor applications within 8 weeks and 80% of "Other" applications (including small-scale applications) within 8 weeks.

### Resources

- 17.4 Like all local authorities, the Borough Council is facing an unprecedented challenge in reducing its expenditure while still maintaining vital services for local residents. At the same time, we are committed to securing value for money through continuous improvement in the way in which we exercise our functions, including our 'Duty to Consult'. Effective engagement is a resource intensive process, which is reflected in work programmes and officer time, particularly in times of formal public consultation on plans and extended consultation on large or controversial planning applications. Therefore resources will be continually monitored.
- 17.5 Officers from the Planning Policy Team will progress the continued preparation of plans and planning policy documents. In addition, other departments within the Council such as the Communications Team and Consultation Team may support consultation processes in planning.
- 17.6 Officers from the Development Management Team will consider the planning applications that are being received. The Planning Technical Support Office supports the Development Management Team in a range of work areas, including validating incoming planning applications, identifying relevant consultation bodies, sending out consultation letters and issuing decision notices.
- 17.7 The organisation of neighbourhood planning referendums will fall to the Chief Executive as Counting Officer who will be supported in this role by the Registration and Records Unit (Electoral Services).

## Appendix 1 - Statutory and other consultation bodies in plan-making

- ✓ Will be consulted, notified or informed      😊 May be consulted if considered to have an interest in the subject of the plan or appropriate  
 😞 Consulted on Sustainability Appraisal Report/Sustainability Appraisal Screening Determination

Statutory Consultation bodies – Those we have to consult and inform in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Regulations 2 and 4)	Local Plans		SPDs		CIL	Neighbourhood Plans
Specific consultees						
The Coal Authority <sup>8</sup>						
The Environment Agency*	✓	☹	😊	☹	😊	✓
Historic England*	✓	☹	😊	☹	😊	✓
Natural England*	✓	☹	😊	☹	😊	✓
Network Rail	✓		😊		😊	
Marine Management Organisation*	✓		😊		😊	
Highways England*	✓		😊		😊	
Adjoining Authorities (Boroughs, Districts, Counties) *	✓		😊		✓	😊
Parish, Town and Urban Community Councils	✓		😊		✓	✓
Local and adjoining policing bodies	✓		😊		😊	
Telecommunications companies	✓		😊		😊	
NHS England, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Health and Wellbeing Board*	✓		😊		😊	
Electricity and gas companies	✓		😊		😊	
Sewerage and water undertaker	✓		😊		😊	
Homes England*	✓		😊		😊	
Mayor of London*	😊		😊		😊	
Transport for London*	😊		😊		😊	
Integrated Transport Authorities*	😊		😊		😊	
Highways Authorities*	😊		😊		😊	
Office of Rail Regulation*	😊		😊		😊	
Civil Aviation Authority*	😊		😊		😊	

<sup>7</sup> The Council will notify those consultation bodies that are referred to in the consultation statement submitted by the Town Council, Parish Council or neighbourhood forum and that have been consulted in accordance with Regulation 14 (Pre-submission consultation and publicity) that the plan proposal has been received.

<sup>8</sup> Have requested not to be consulted.

Statutory Consultation bodies – Those we have to consult and inform in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Regulations 2 and 4)	Local Plans	SPDs	CIL	Neighbourhood Plans <sup>7</sup>
<b>General consultation bodies</b>				
Voluntary organisations	😊	😊	😊	
Ethnic and racial groups	😊	😊	😊	
Religious and faith groups	😊	😊	😊	
Disability groups	😊	😊	😊	
Groups representing businesses	😊	😊	😊	
Local residents, tenants and representative groups	😊	😊	✓	
Local businesses	😊	😊	✓	

Additional groups, individuals and organisations – Those we may consult and inform	Local Plans	SPDs	CIL	Neighbourhood Plans <sup>9</sup>
Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership	😊	😊	😊	
South-East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership*, other partnerships and networks <sup>9</sup>	😊	😊	😊	
Hard-to-reach groups, including those with protected characteristics	😊	😊	😊	
Members/Councillors	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landowners & Developers	😊	😊	✓	
Emergency Services	😊	😊	😊	
Members of Parliament/Members of European Parliament	😊	😊	😊	
Wildlife and biodiversity organisations	😊	😊	😊	
Sport and Recreation groups	😊	😊	😊	
Amenity, recreation and countryside groups	😊	😊	😊	
Environment and conservation groups	😊	😊	😊	
Schools and colleges	😊	😊	😊	
Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	😊	😊	😊	
Health care groups	😊	😊	😊	
Registered Social Landlords	😊	😊	😊	
Transport Groups	😊	😊	😊	

<sup>9</sup> The Council will notify those consultation bodies that are referred to in the consultation statement submitted by the Town Council, Parish Council or neighbourhood forum and that have been consulted in accordance with Regulation 14 (Pre-submission consultation and publicity) that the plan proposal has been received.

## Appendix 2 - minimum consultation and publicity procedures in the preparation of the CIL charging Schedule

How we prepare a CIL Charging Schedule	Publicity and consultation
<b>1. Scoping/evidence gathering</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Publicity of intent</b>	
We gather technical information, identify infrastructure needs and the funding gap, and test the economic viability of potential levy rates on development.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise on our website that we intend to prepare/revise our Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Consultation on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (Regulation 15)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Consultation on Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule</b>	
We prepare a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule based on the evidence gathered, setting out the levy rate we propose to charge. Alongside the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule, we prepare an Infrastructure Project Plan and viability assessment.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send a copy of the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule to the statutory consultation bodies by email or post.</li> <li>Make available for inspection for at least 6 weeks the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and background documents at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries.</li> <li>Publicise for at least 6 weeks on our website, and by local advertisement, where and when the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and background documents can be inspected and details of how and by when representations must be made inviting comments on the proposed levy rate.</li> </ul> <b>Consultation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult for at least 6 weeks the statutory consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders on the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li> <li>Take comments on board where appropriate in preparing the Draft Charging Schedule.</li> </ul>

How we prepare a CIL Charging Schedule	Publicity and consultation
<b>3. Publication of a Draft Charging Schedule (Regulation 16)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<p><b>Publicity of and consultation on a Draft Charging Schedule</b></p> <p>We prepare the Draft Charging Schedule we intend to submit to the Secretary of State for examination, taking into account comments received where appropriate. Alongside the Draft Charging Schedule and background documents, we publicise a statement of representations procedure, setting out how and by when representations must be made and that representations may include a request to be heard in person by the examiner and to be notified of the submission to examination, the publication of the examiner's report and the adoption of the Charging Schedule.</p> <p>If modifications to the Draft Charging Schedule are necessary as result of consultation prior to submission to the Secretary of State, these will be set out in a statement of modifications prepared by the Council.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available for at least 4 weeks the Draft Charging Schedule, relevant evidence and the statement of representations procedure at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries for inspection.</li> <li>• Publicise for at least 4 weeks on our website the Draft Charging Schedule, relevant evidence and the statement of representations procedure including details of where and when documents can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>• Publicise by local advert the Draft Charging Schedule, relevant evidence and the statement of representations procedure including details of where and when documents can be inspected in hardcopy.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the Draft Charging Schedule and the statement of representations procedure to the statutory consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders by email or post.</li> <li>• Send a statement of modifications to the statutory consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders by email or post only if modifications have been made to the Draft Charging Schedule following the consultation and prior to submission to the Secretary of State</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult for at least 6 week the statutory consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders on the Draft Charging Schedule in writing, by post or email, inviting comments and providing the opportunity to request to be heard in person by the examiner and to be notified of submission to the Secretary of State, the publication of the examiner's recommendations and the approval of the Charging Schedule by the Council.</li> <li>• Take comments on board where appropriate in finalising the Draft Charging Schedule for submission to the examiner.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Submission of documents and information to the examiner (Regulation 19)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<p><b>Publicity of submission documents</b></p> <p>We submit the Draft Charging Schedule, relevant evidence, a consultation report, all comments received and where appropriate a statement of modifications made following publication. As soon as reasonably practicable following the submission we will publicise and make available the documents we have submitted to the examiner</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available the Draft Charging Schedule and other documents submitted to examination, on our website, at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries.</li> <li>• Publicise on our website where and when the submission documents can be inspected</li> <li>• Give notice to those who have requested to be notified of the submission to the Secretary of State in writing, by email or post.</li> </ul>
<b>5. CIL examination: Right to be heard (Regulation 21)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<p><b>Publicity of examination</b></p> <p>At examination the Draft Charging Schedule is tested to check that the necessary procedures have been complied with and it is supported by appropriate available evidence, and the proposed rates would not put at risk overall development in the area.</p> <p>The examiner may decide to conduct the examination by hearings or through written representations.</p>	<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 4 weeks in advance of the examination publicise on our website and by local advertisement the details of the upcoming examination, including the name of the examiner and where applicable the date and time at which the hearings are to be held.</li> <li>• At least 4 weeks in advance of the examination notify those who have made representations at the publication stage and those who have requested to be heard in person by the examiner of the upcoming examination in writing, by email or post.</li> </ul>



How we prepare a CIL Charging Schedule	Publicity and consultation
<b>6. Publication of the examiner's recommendations (Regulation 23)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Publicity of examiner's report</b>	
The examiner will produce a report setting out recommendations, which must be considered by the Council. Having considered the examiner's recommendations we will finalise the CIL Charging Schedule.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the examiner's report available on our website, at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries for inspection.</li> <li>• Publicise on our website where and when the submission documents can be inspected.</li> <li>• Notify those who have requested to be notified of the publication of the examiner's report in writing, by email or post.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Approval and publication of a charging schedule (Regulation 25)</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Publicity of approved Charging Schedule</b>	
Elected members will vote to formally approve the charging schedule. Once approved, the Charging Schedule will take effect from the day specified therein.	<b>Publicity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicise the approved Charging Schedule on our website.</li> <li>• Make available the approved charging schedule on our website, at our Customer Service Centre and local libraries.</li> <li>• Give notice by local advertisement of the approval of the Charging Schedule.</li> <li>• Notify those who have requested to be notified of the approval of the Charging Schedule in writing, by email or post.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the approved Charging Schedule to the Secretary of State by post or email.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3 - minimum consultation and publicity procedures in the preparation of the Brownfield Land Register

How we prepare a Part 1 Register in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017	Publicity and consultation
<b>1. Information gathering and preparation of a Part 1 Register</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Preparation of a Part 1 Register</b>	
We gather information and prepare a Part 1 Register.	
<b>2. Approval of a Part 1 Register for publication</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Approval of a Part 1 Register</b>	
We approve the Part 1 Register for publication.	
<b>3. Public inspection of the Register</b>	<b>We will ...</b>
<b>Public inspection of the Register</b>	
We will make available a copy of the Register for public inspection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available a copy of the Register at the Customer Service Centre and on our website.</li> </ul>

How we prepare a Part 2 Register in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017		Publicity and consultation
1. Information gathering and preparation of a Part 2 Register		We will ...
Preparation of a Part 2 Register		
We gather information and prepare a Part 2 Register.		
2. Publicity of proposal to enter land in a Part 2 Register		We will ...
Publicity of proposal to enter land in a Part 2 Register		
We consider whether any of the sites identified in a Part 1 Register should be entered into a Part 2 Register. If a Part 2 Register is prepared, we will publicise the proposal to enter land into a Part 2 Register and invite representations to be made following publicity.		<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Display a notice on or near the site for at least 21 days and publicise the proposed entry of the site in a Part 2 Register on our website for at least 14 days, including details of how and by when representations may be made on the proposed Register and where and when the proposed Register may be inspected.</li><li>• Where the land is situated within 10 metres of relevant railway land, we will publicise the proposal to enter it in a Part 2 Register by notifying the infrastructure manager of any relevant railway land.</li><li>• Where a parish or neighbourhood forum within the Borough have requested to be notified of a proposed entry in a Part 2 Register and the land to which the proposed entry relates is within the area of the relevant body, we will notify the relevant body of the proposed entry.</li><li>• Make available the proposed entry of land in a Part 2 Register on our website for at least 14 days, including details of how and by when representations may be made on the proposed Register and where and when the proposed Register may be inspected.</li></ul> <p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where notice has been given by site display we will consult for at least 21 days. When consulting on information made available on our website we will consult for at least 14 days. When consulting with an infrastructure manager of any relevant railway land, a parish council or a neighbourhood forum we will consult for at least 42 days for the first publication of Part 2, or at least 21 days where the first publication has taken place. We will invite comments in writing, by post or email.</li><li>• Take comments on board in deciding whether to enter land into a Part 2 Register.</li></ul>
3. Consultation on proposal to enter land into a Part 2 Register		We will ...
Consultation		
We will consult with other persons, bodies or authorities.		<p><b>Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult with persons, bodies or authorities with whom we would be required to consult for an application for planning permission for residential development of the land. We will consult for at least 42 days for the first publication of Part 2, or at least 21 days where the first publication has taken place, inviting comments in writing, by post or email.</li><li>• Take comments on board in deciding whether to enter land into a Part 2 Register.</li></ul>
4. Approval and public inspection of Register		We will ...
Approval of the Register and public inspection		
We approve the Register for publication. We will make available a copy of the Register for public inspection.		<p><b>Publicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make available a copy of the Register at the Customer Service Centre and on our website.</li></ul>

## Appendix 4 - Availability of information, consultation methods and forums for engagement in planning policy

Methods of consultation and publicity/ Opportunities for involvement	Publicity (P) or consultation (C) ?	Local Plan						Supplementary Planning Document			Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule							Brownfield Land Register			
		Preparation of a local plan	Publication of a draft local plan	Submission of documents to examination	Independent examination	Publication of the examiners report	Adoption of a local plan	Preparation of a supplementary planning document	Public participation	Adoption of a supplementary planning document	Scoping/evidence gathering	Consultation on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule	Publication of a Draft Charging Schedule	Submission to the examiner	CIL examination	Publication of the examiner's recommendations	Approval <sup>11</sup> and publication of a CIL Charging Schedule	Information gathering and preparation	Part 2 Publicity of a proposal to enter land in a Part 2 Register	Consultation of a proposal to enter land into a Part 2 Register	Approval and public inspection of register
* Required by statute																					
Website*	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☺	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Response forms/ Questionnaires	C	✓	✓					☺	✓		☺	✓	✓								
Letters (where email not possible/appropriate)	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☺	✓	✓	☺	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Telephone	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Emails/email alerts*	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☺	✓	✓	☺	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Availability/ deposit of documents*	P	☺	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Meetings/ Workshops/ Focus Groups	P/C	☺	☺	☺				☺	✓			☺	☺								
Posters/ Displays	P	☺	☺	☺					☺												

		Local Plan						Supplementary Planning Document			Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule							Brownfield Land Register			
Methods of consultation and publicity/ Opportunities for involvement	Publicity (P) or consultation (C) ?	Preparation of a local plan	Publication of a draft local plan	Submission of documents to examination	Independent examination	Publication of the examiners report	Adoption of a local plan	Preparation of a supplementary planning document	Public participation	Adoption of a supplementary planning document	Scoping/evidence gathering	Consultation on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule	Publication of a Draft Charging Schedule	Submission to the examiner	CIL examination	Publication of the examiner's recommendations	Approval <sup>11</sup> and publication of a CIL Charging Schedule	Information gathering and preparation	Part 2 Publicity of a proposal to enter land in a Part 2 Register	Consultation of a proposal to enter land into a Part 2 Register	Approval and public inspection of register
* Required by statute																					
Social media <sup>12</sup>	P	☺	☺	☺			☺		☺	☺							☺				
Leaflets/ Newsletters	P	☺	☺	☺					☺												
Targeted engagement	P/C	☺	☺	☺				☺	☺			☺	☺								
Site notice																			✓		
Media coverage*	P/C	✓	✓	☺	✓		☺		☺			✓	✓		✓		✓				



## Appendix 5 - statutory consultation bodies for planning applications

(Based on the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and other legislation<sup>13</sup>)

- The Canal and River Trust
- Civil Aviation Authority -
- National Air Control Transport Services and operators of Officially Safeguarded Civil Aerodromes
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Health and Safety Executive
- Highways England
- Internal Drainage Board
- Natural England
- Rail Network Operators
- Sport England
- Theatres Trust
- Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
- National Amenity Societies, including
  - The Council for British Archaeology
  - Ancient Monuments Society
  - The Georgian Group
  - Society for the Protection on Ancient Buildings
  - The Twentieth Century Society
  - Victorian Society

## Appendix 6 - The right to speak scheme

### How to have your say

The Borough Council is committed to extending public involvement in the planning process and, to make this easier, an opportunity will be given to objectors and applicants who request this facility to speak directly to Councillors at meetings of the Planning Committee.

If you wish to speak about an application you should contact Committee Services, by email [RighttoSpeak@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:RighttoSpeak@bedford.gov.uk) to find out when the application is due to be heard. The case officer will not normally contact you to tell you that the application is going to the Committee. In order to speak about an application you must have notified Committee Services by the end of the working day (17.00 Mondays to Thursdays and 16.45 on Fridays) before the date of the committee meeting, i.e. if the meeting is on the Monday you must ring by the preceding Friday.

A summary of the Rules is set out below. Full details may be obtained from Planning Services (01234 718068) together with information regarding the progress of a planning application and the name of the case officer.

- It is your responsibility to enquire as to whether and/or when an application will be heard by the Committee (most applications do NOT go to the Committee for a decision).
- The scheme, where the officer's recommendation is for approval, remains objector led. Supporters or the applicant can only speak where an objector takes up the opportunity first.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant or his/her representative to enquire as to whether objectors are intending to speak and the date of the Committee (enquiries to Planning Services). If objectors are attending, then a similar facility will be granted to the applicant or his/her representative.
- The Committee will hear representations from all parties where the officer's recommendation is for refusal.

## Appendix 7 - Availability of information, consultation methods and forums of engagement in the planning application process

✓ Will be used

		Types of planning and other applications						Planning and other application stages			
Means of publicity, consultation and information	Publicity (P) or consultation (C)?	Small scheme planning applications	Major planning applications	Those of wider interest	Those with no identifiable neighbour	Those affecting listed buildings, conservation areas, footpaths or a right of way	Those contrary to the development plan and those of wider concern	Pre-application	Application	Determination	Appeals
Website*	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Telephone (Customer Service Centre)	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Neighbour Notification	P/C	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		
Other letters	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Site Notice	P/C		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Meetings	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Email	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Weekly lists	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Availability/deposit of documents*	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Planning Committee	P	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Press and media coverage*	P/C		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓

## Appendix 8 - Availability of information and publicity methods in supporting the neighbourhood planning process

✓ Will be used      😊 May be used if considered appropriate

		Preparation stages of a neighbourhood development plan, neighbourhood development order and community right to build order <sup>16</sup>								
Methods of consultation and publicity/ Opportunities for involvement	Publicity (P) or Consultation (C)?	Publicising a neighbourhood area application	Publicising a designation of a neighbourhood area	Publicising a neighbourhood forum application	Publicising a designation of a neighbourhood forum	Publicising a plan/ order proposal	Publication of the examiner's report and a plan/order proposal decision	Information to be made available in relation to a referendum <sup>17</sup>	Decision on a plan/order proposal	Publicising a plan/ order
Website*	P/C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Response forms/ Questionnaires	C	😊		😊				😊		
Letters*	P/C	😊	😊	😊	😊	✓	😊	😊	✓	✓
Telephone	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emails*	P/C	😊	😊	😊	😊	✓	😊	😊	✓	✓
Availability/deposit of documents*	P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Media coverage*	P	😊	😊	✓	✓	😊	😊	😊	✓	😊
Site notice*	P/C					✓ <sup>10</sup>				

10. Where order proposals have been subject to Environmental Impact Assessment only.

## Appendix 9 - Glossary of terms

**Adoption** – A process whereby the final version of a document is formally approved and brought into effect.

**Bedford Borough Planning Monitoring Report** – Assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in planning policy documents are being successfully implemented.

**Community Infrastructure Levy** – A levy that the council can choose to charge on all new developments in the borough and that can be spent on providing infrastructure to support growth.

**Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule** – A document that sets out the levy the Council charges on new development.

**Community right to build order** – A type of neighbourhood development order that can be created by any local community organisation (meeting a number of criteria), parish or town council or a neighbourhood forum.

**Development plan** – Forms the statutory basis for planning decisions and consists of local plans, neighbourhood plans and saved policies.

**Development Management** – The control of development in the public interest by means of pre-application engagement and advice, the consideration and determination of planning applications and the use where necessary of enforcement powers.

**Enfranchisement rights** – The right of the occupier of rented or shared ownership housing to buy the property.

**Examination** – A scrutiny process by an independent Inspector examining closely the documents produced.

**Local Councils** – Town and Parish Councils

**Local Development Scheme** – Sets out the programme for preparing planning policy documents, including timescales and consultation.

**Local plans** – Spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination.

**Material consideration** – Factors considered in the determination of applications for planning permission and other consents, alongside the statutory development plan. Includes central government policies and guidance, non statutory plans and the relevant planning comments made by consultees.

**Neighbourhood development order** – An order whereby planning permission will be granted for a particular type of development in a particular area.

**Neighbourhood development plan** – Sets out policies that are relevant to development and use of land within a neighbourhood.

**Proofs of Evidence** – A document containing the written evidence about which a person (expert witness) appearing at a public inquiry will speak. The purpose of an expert's proof of evidence is to identify the relevant issues in a case on which expert opinion is needed. The expert then sets out the factual basis for each of these issues and provides supported opinion upon them.



**Policies Map** - The adopted proposals map illustrates on a base map all spatial policies contained in local plans, together with any saved policies

For a full glossary of planning terms, please visit the Planning Portal at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/glossaryandlinks/glossary>.

**Referendum** - A direct vote in which those on the electoral register in a defined neighbourhood area are asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal.

**Statement of Community Involvement** - A document that sets out a Local Planning Authority's intended consultation strategy for different elements of the planning process. This is a requirement that was brought in by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and retained by subsequent legislation.

**Statement of representations procedure** - A statement providing details of how and by when representations must be made.

**Statutory** - Prescribed by a legislative authority

**Strategic Environmental Assessment** - An evaluation process for assessing the environmental impacts of plans and programmes.

**Supplementary planning documents** - Provide supplementary information in respect of the policies in local plans. They do not form part of the development plan and are not subject to independent examination.

**Sustainability appraisal** - An evaluation process for assessing the environmental, social, economic and other sustainability effects of plans and programmes. This is a statutory requirement.

## Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion	معلومات کے لئے	برای اطلاع	للمعلومات	Za Informacije
ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ	Per Informazione	Informacja	তথ্যের জন্য	



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