

# Local Development Framework

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## Statement of Community Involvement



Adopted October 2006

This Statement of Community Involvement was unanimously adopted at the Council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2006 and is available for downloading at [www.oxford.gov.uk/planning/sci](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/planning/sci).

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Planning Policy Team	Planning website:
Oxford City Council	<a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk/planning/sci">www.oxford.gov.uk/planning/sci</a>
Ramsay House	General website: <a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk">www.oxford.gov.uk</a>
10 St. Ebbe's Street	Tel: 01865 252718
Oxford OX1 1PT	Email: <a href="mailto:planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk">planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk</a>

## Translations available

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# 1. WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

1. This Statement of Community Involvement sets out the City Council's approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of planning policy documents and planning control decisions in Oxford. The 'community' includes all the individuals, groups and organisations that live, work, or operate within Oxford. By 'stakeholders' we mean individuals, landowners and organisations with a direct influence on the subject under discussion.

2. The new planning system introduced under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 replaces local plans with a local development framework. The documents that comprise the local development framework will contain policies and proposals to guide development in Oxford and will eventually replace those in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

3. The local plan was produced as one large document, but the local development framework will consist of a series of documents produced at different times. Initially, one part of the local development framework will be policies in the local plan that are 'saved' until they are superseded by policies in new documents. This change of format means the plans are more flexible and relevant to changes in Oxford as each document can be amended or updated, if necessary, over time.

4. This Statement of Community Involvement is one of the documents in the local development framework. A key difference to the old local plan is that the local development

framework places more emphasis on meaningful community involvement at all stages.

5. We recognise that the community and stakeholders have different needs and expectations. They also have different capabilities and capacity to get involved. We aim to give everyone the opportunity to know what is happening and how they can get involved. We want to contact people and encourage them to take part even if they don't normally get involved with planning, as well as keeping in touch with groups and organisations with whom we have a fairly regular dialogue.

6. The City Council already has a good record of involving the community, such as action planning events in developing local plan proposals. We have also encouraged developers to arrange public exhibitions, leaflets and publicity before they submit major planning applications. We wish to build on this experience in improving future consultations.

This Statement of Community Involvement explains:

- what policy documents we will be consulting on;
- the consultation process;
- who we will involve in the preparation of the documents; and
- how the consultations will take place.

It also sets out the City Council's policy for involving the community and stakeholders in planning control decisions.

## 2. WHY SHOULD THE COMMUNITY BE INVOLVED?

7. Achieving effective community involvement in the planning process is likely to have several benefits including:

- a better understanding of how planning policies are developed;
- more focus on the priorities identified by the local community and stakeholders;
- influencing the provision of local services to meet local needs;
- increased support for planning services and community commitment to the future of an area.

8. Responses to a questionnaire survey carried out by the City Council (see Section 7 and Appendix 3) revealed some of the public's concerns about consultation. Most concerns were about raising expectations, and presenting the public with a decision rather than having involvement at an early enough stage for it to have an influence. Also, as one respondent put it, there is concern about 'the illusion of inclusion' – where consultation takes place but the public are still not really listened to. It is these concerns we want to address.

9. We want to inform and involve the community in the decision-making process. Consultation will start as early as possible to give everyone the opportunity to participate and influence the development of policies and options for an area. We will also encourage consultation on major applications at an early stage. This will give communities and stakeholders the chance to put forward their own ideas rather than simply comment once these are fixed. We hope we will then be better placed to understand the issues and needs that are important to the community.

10. Ongoing community involvement will include feedback and information on progress and outcomes. Involving communities at an early stage and continuing that involvement will help to resolve issues and achieve consensus, where possible, which will in turn avoid the need for lengthy independent examinations. We recognise that this will always be a balancing act and people will have different views. We won't be able to please everyone. However, we will aim to take on board as many views as possible, not just the views of those who shout the loudest!

### 3. HOW DOES THIS LINK WITH OTHER CITY COUNCIL INITIATIVES?

11. One of the City Council's main aims is to improve dialogue and consultation. To achieve this, we have already developed some community involvement strategies. We will ensure that this Statement co-ordinates with the other initiatives in the following ways:

**Community Strategy** – The Community Strategy has been prepared by the Oxford Strategic Partnership, who represent key local organisations developing common goals for the City and improving the quality of life in Oxford. We recognise the benefits of identifying links between the local development framework and the Community Strategy. This can be by:

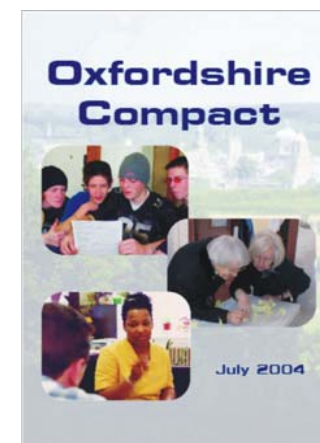
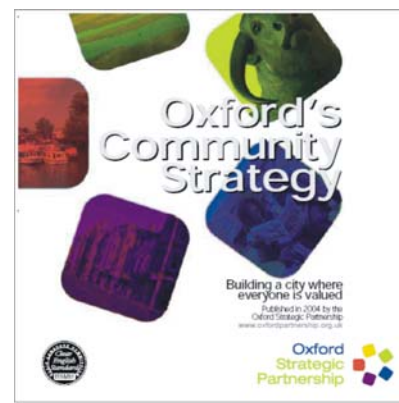
- links in terms of content – such as helping to deliver the themes/objectives of the Community Strategy and relate them to the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. In particular, we will aim to link the land-use aspects of the Strategy with development plan documents; and
- links in terms of process – such as linking consultations where appropriate to avoid duplication of effort and to share information used in monitoring.

**Consultation Strategy** – Consultation will be carried out in liaison with the City Council Consultation Officer and in accordance with the City Council's Consultation Strategy. The aims of the Strategy are set out in Appendix 1.

**Media and Communications Strategy** – We will prepare information in line with the aims of this Strategy by presenting it in our corporate style and issuing it through our City Council newspaper, where appropriate, and website.

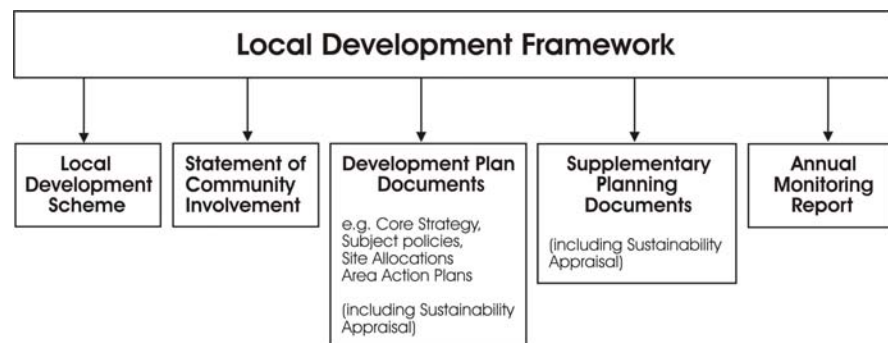
(You can see all the documents mentioned above on our website and at the planning office.)

**The Oxfordshire Compact** – The City Council is a member of a steering group developing an Oxfordshire Compact with representatives of other statutory, voluntary, community and faith groups. Based on the Government National Compact, it seeks to develop partnerships and improve consultation procedures between organisations. The Compact is available from Oxfordshire County Council.



## 4. WHAT WILL WE BE CONSULTING ON?

12. The Local Development Framework includes the following portfolio of documents:



**Statement of Community Involvement** – this document is itself the subject of public consultation and may go through a formal independent examination. When finally approved, all local development documents will need to meet the consultation requirements in this document.

**Local Development Scheme** – this sets out the City Council’s programme over a 3-year period for the preparation and review of the local development framework, including a description and timetable for each individual document. The local development scheme is published and updated annually on the City Council’s website ([www.oxford.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/ldf)).

**Development plan documents** – these include:

- **Core Strategy** – this outlines the vision for the area and how it will be achieved.
- **Subject policies** – these are policies that apply to the whole of Oxford and contribute to developing our vision for the area, for example on transport and the natural environment.
- **Site Allocations** – this will allocate land for specific uses.
- **Area Action Plans** – these relate to a specific area where significant development is expected in the future. The first plan of this type will be for the West End of the City centre.

**Supplementary planning documents** – these documents supplement and elaborate on policies and proposals in development plan documents. Although they will not be subject to independent examination, they will undergo rigorous public consultation, and must comply with national and regional planning policies. Examples of these types of documents are affordable housing, natural resource impact analysis and development guidelines on site specific policies.

**Sustainability Appraisals** – whilst this is a separate exercise, sustainability appraisals will be produced by the City Council alongside development plan documents and supplementary planning documents. The appraisals will examine the impact of the policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental factors (including natural resources). Initial consultation will take place on the scope of the sustainability appraisal, alongside early public involvement in development of each development plan document and supplementary planning document. Following this, the sustainability appraisal report into the likely significant effects of all of the options will be available for consultation, running alongside consultation on each draft development plan document and supplementary planning document. Responses to the sustainability appraisal report will be considered as well as responses to the draft development plan document or supplementary planning document.

**Annual Monitoring Report** – The documents in the local development framework will be reviewed in an annual monitoring report. There will not be general public consultation on this report but we may consult specific groups in drafting the report. It will be published by December of each year. It will review the implementation of the local development scheme and how far we are achieving the policies in development plan documents.

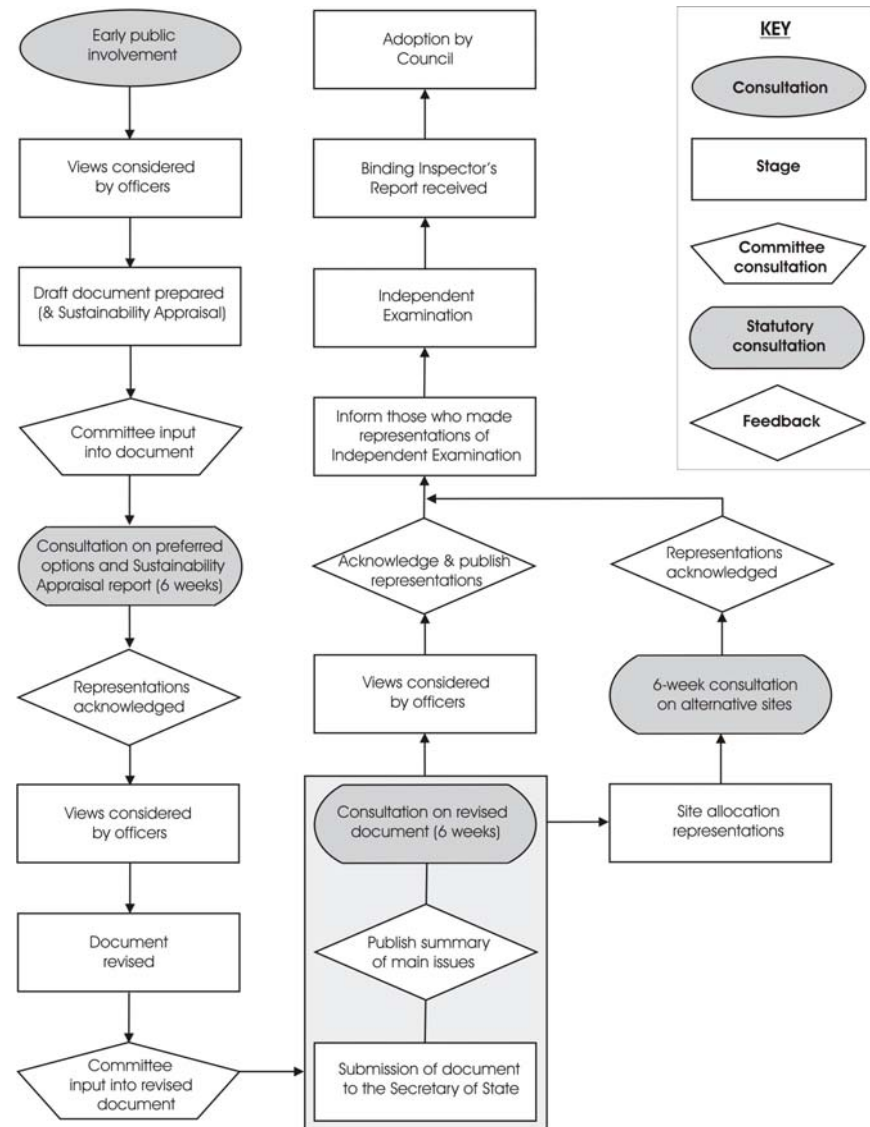
## 5. HOW DOES CONSULTATION FIT IN?

### Development plan documents

13. The key stages of document production are:

**Early public involvement** – Before drafting begins, informal consultations will be held with all relevant organisations/interest groups or individuals. During this period, we will gather feedback using a variety of techniques. The type and level of community involvement will vary. For example, when preparing the core strategy, the involvement will be much broader than when focusing on a specific geographical area to produce an area action plan. At this stage we will also consult on the scope of the sustainability appraisal for at least 5 weeks. This is a key stage as it enables people to put forward their own ideas and to participate in developing proposals and options. Once we are sure that we have understood and considered all views expressed, we will start to formulate preferred options and proposals including input as appropriate by City Council committees and full Council.

**Consultation on preferred options report** – this is a statutory 6-week consultation period within which anyone can comment (also called ‘making representations’) on the preferred options set out in the City Council’s documents, including a related sustainability appraisal report. The local development scheme gives advance notice of the dates for



consultation. Standard forms will be available for people to comment.

After the close of this consultation period, we will carefully consider all comments made on the preferred options report and the sustainability appraisal and take these into consideration in revising the document. Comments made at this stage will not be carried forward to examination. The revised document and the points raised in consultation will be reported to appropriate City Council committees and full Council.

**Formal public consultation on the revised document** – the draft development plan document will be submitted to the Secretary of State, with a consultation statement. There will be a further statutory 6-week consultation period. Community and stakeholders can comment at this stage even if they have not been involved before. Again, standard forms will be made available for your comments. Comments will be analysed and a summary report of the consultations will be published.

**Advertisement of alternative sites** – at this stage, for development plan documents that deal with specific site allocations, we will publish any alternative sites (proposed by objectors) for a further 6 week consultation period. Any representations made on the alternative sites will be analysed and submitted to independent examination.

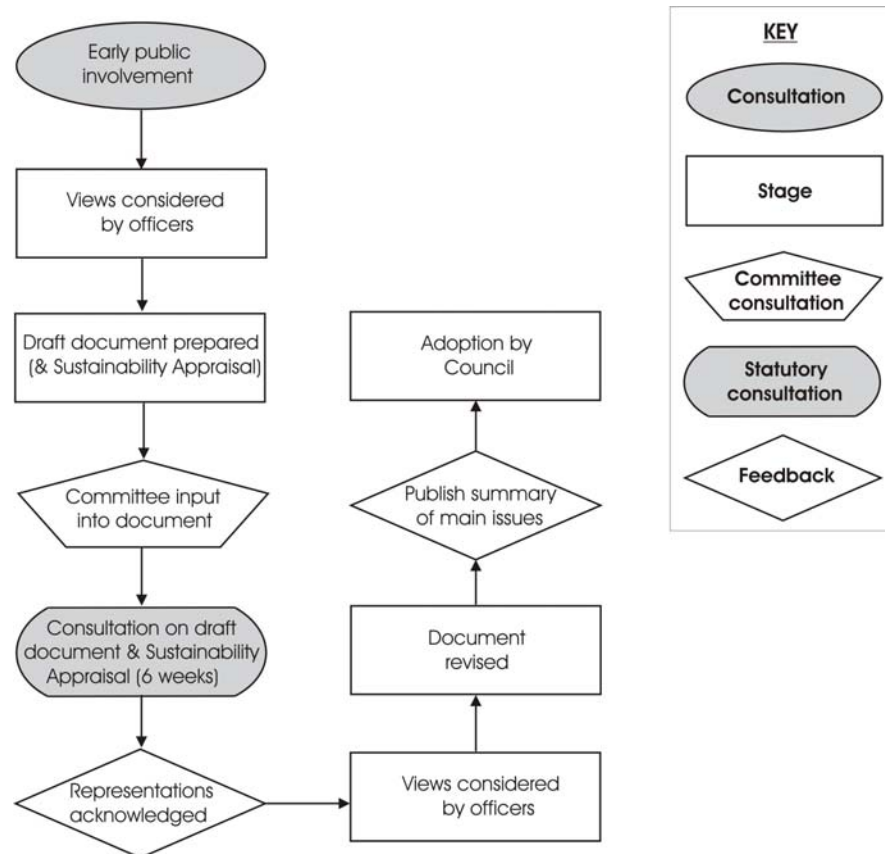
**Independent Examination** – this will be held by an independent Inspector who will consider all objections received at the submission stage. At the independent examination, objections will be considered either in writing,

informal hearings, round table discussions or formal inquiry sessions. Once the inspector has considered the objections, a report will be prepared identifying changes to be made. This report is binding on the City Council.

**Adoption** – The final step is for the City Council to adopt the document as amended by the inspector. This binding report will be reported to the City Council Executive Board and full Council and it will be published (unless in exceptional circumstances the Secretary of State intervenes).

## Supplementary Planning Documents

14. Supplementary planning document preparation is slightly more straight forward than for development plan documents, as set out below:



**Early Public Involvement** – this will depend on the nature of the document being produced. Clearly, if a site specific supplementary planning document is being produced for a major development site, early consultation will focus on those who live and work in the vicinity. If, however, the supplementary planning document is more technical, consultation will focus more on those with a specific interest in the subject area, like developers or highway engineers. Like development plan documents, the main purpose of this stage of involvement will be information gathering and the consideration of issues and options. There will also be a consultation period of at least 5 weeks during which comments will be invited on the scoping report of the sustainability appraisal. A draft document will then be prepared including input as appropriate by City Council committees and full Council.

**Consultation on the draft** – the statutory requirements are that the consultation period should be no less than 4 weeks and no more than 6 weeks. In most cases, we will seek to consult for 6 weeks on the draft with the related sustainability appraisal. Again, we will consider all comments. Supplementary planning documents are not subject to independent examination.

**Adoption** – the document together with an analysis of comments received will be reported through the City Council committees if appropriate. It will be adopted by Executive Board and full Council. It will also be published (unless in exceptional circumstances the Secretary of State intervenes).

## Feedback on both types of document

15. After the early community involvement stage, we will keep the community and stakeholders informed in the following ways:

- The latest version of documents will be published in hard copy, and on the website.
- The City Council will acknowledge representations received at each consultation stage.
- Reports to City Council committees are available on the City Council main website.
- A statement will be published in hard copy, and on the website setting out who and how we have consulted, the main issues raised and how those main issues have been addressed (for both the supplementary planning document and the consultation on the draft development plan document) and issue a press release on the availability of this information.
- For development plan documents:
  - tell those who asked to be notified when the document has been submitted to the Secretary of State;
  - a summary outcome of the consultations will be published and the representations made available for public inspection after the statutory consultation on the revised document and for any consultation on 'alternative sites';
  - notify those who commented and anyone else who asked to be notified about the independent examination;
  - notify those who asked to see the inspector's report when it is available for inspection.
- The final adopted versions of the documents will be published including the website.
- Contact directly anyone who specifically asked to be notified when the document is adopted.
- A contact phone number will be available for the public to find out the current position on the progress of documents.

These reports and all LDF documents will be available at the following locations (opening times etc. may be subject to change):

### **Oxford City Council Offices**

- Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbe's Street, Oxford, OX1 1PT (*Mon-Thur 8.30-5.00, Fri 8.30-4.30.*)
- Blue Boar Street Offices (side of the Town Hall, St. Aldates), Oxford, OX1 4EY (*Mon-Thur 8.30-5.00, Fri 8.30-4.30.*)
- St Aldates Chambers: 109-113 St. Aldates, Oxford (9-5 *Monday-Wednesday, 10-5 Thursday and 8.30-4.30 Friday.*)

### **Public Libraries**

- Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Central Library in the Westgate Centre (*Mon 9-5, Tue 9-7, Thur 9-7, Fri 9-5, Sat 9-5*)

In addition, reports and LDF documents may also be available at the following locations. Details of where documents will be available will be provided with each consultation.

**Oxford City Council Local Services Shops**

- Blackbird Leys Local Services Shop: 3 Cuddesdon Way, Blackbird Leys, Oxford
- East Oxford Local Services Shop: 174D Cowley Road, Oxford

*All local services shops open 9-5 Monday-Wednesday, 10-5 Thursday and 8.30-4.30 Friday.*

**Housing and estate management offices**

- Barton Local Housing Office: *Underhill Circus, Barton (Monday and Thursday 9-5, last Thursday of month 10-5)*
- Rose Hill Housing Office: *Ashurst Way, Rose Hill (Monday and Wednesday 9-5)*

**Public Libraries**

- Blackbird Leys Library: Blackbird Leys Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford (*Monday 9-12 & 1.30-5, Tue 9-12, Wed 9-12 & 1.30-5, Thur 9-12 & 1.30-5, Sat 9.30-12.30*)
- Bury Knowle Library: Bury Knowle Park, North Place, Headington, Oxford (*Mon 9.15-1, Tue 9.15-7, Wed & Thur 9.15-1, Fri 9.15-5, Sat 9-4.30*)
- Old Marston Library: Mortimer Hall, Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford (*Tue 2-5 5.30-7, Thur 2-5 5.30-7, Fri 10-12 2-5, Sat 9.30-12.30*)
- Littlemore Peers Library: Peers Campus, Sandy Lane West, Littlemore, Oxford (*Mon 2-6, Tue 2-4.30, Thur 9.30-12.30 & 2-4.30, Fri 9.30-12.30, Sat 9.30-1.30*)
- Summertown Library: South Parade, Oxford (*Mon 9.30-5.30, Tue 9.30-7, Thur 9.30-7, Fri 9.30-5.30, Sat 9-4.30*)

- Cowley Library: Temple Road, Oxford (*Mon 9.15-5.30, Tue 9.15-7, Wed 9.15-7, Fri 9.15-5.30, Sat 9-4.30*)”

## 6. WHO WILL BE CONSULTED?

16. The choice of who to consult depends on the subject of the local development document. This means that anyone with an interest or involvement in the subject should have the opportunity to participate in the preparation and consideration of a document. Statutory regulations set a minimum level of public involvement and specify a number of organisations that should be consulted – and these are set out in Appendix 2. The City Council will go further in involving the community and stakeholders. The individuals, groups and organisations that live, work or operate within Oxford, are as follows:

**Members of the general public** – it can be hard to involve the general public in the development of planning policies. Probably most people take part only if an issue directly affects them, for example when a particular planning application is local to them. We will try to improve the way we provide information, and when we invite consultation we will try to make people aware of the importance of influencing local planning policies before the planning application stage. In this way, we hope to encourage more frequent and active participation.

**Local interest groups** – these include local residents' or tenants' groups, amenity groups, community development groups, specialist interest groups, and groups representing particular sectors of the community. Many of these groups have been actively involved in planning issues in the past. Most will be voluntary groups, with varying awareness of the planning system and varying capacity to become involved.

**National interest groups** – these include groups such as the Environment Agency, English Nature and national transport groups. These are easily identifiable, professional organisations familiar with the planning system. However, as national groups, they can be in great demand and will not always have the capacity to be involved with every local authority activity. Therefore it will be important for the City Council to involve these groups in the subject for consultation when appropriate.

**Businesses** – these range from the self-employed and small businesses to large organisations. Whilst larger organisations may have the capacity to get involved more actively, smaller organisations may need support in understanding the system, how it relates to them, and how they can get involved. The interests of the business sector can be represented by organisations such as chambers of commerce, business groups and retail associations.

**Developers, agents and landowners** – developers and agents are already aware of the planning system and seek to be involved in the process. Most can be easily identified via their previous involvement. Landowners will be keen to understand and consider the implications of any policies/decisions in order to protect their interests.

**Service providers** – these include local health trusts, schools and colleges, local transport providers, emergency services, community development organisations etc. All these organisations can be easily identified, and generally have the capacity to be involved in the planning process. However, the

City Council will seek to involve them only when it is relevant to them and an efficient use of their time.

**Central, regional and other local government** – these include the Government Office for the South East, other Government departments, the regional planning body and development agencies, the County Council, other Oxfordshire district councils, local parish councils and political groups.

**City councillors** – local ward councillors will be involved in all stages of consultation. A Members' Steering Group has been established as an initial sounding board for planning issues. Members will also be involved through the formal committee structure, as consultation will also take place through area committees, scrutiny committees, Executive Board and full Council.

### **'Hard to reach' groups**

17. Within the above groupings, there have historically been a number of groups considered to be 'hard to reach'. 'Hard to reach' groups are traditionally considered to include young people, disabled people, frail older people, homeless people, people with literacy difficulties, people from the traveller community and black and ethnic minority groups.

18. However, in considering the public, it is also the case that the same people get involved in planning issues on an on-going basis either as individuals or as part of a group while other individuals normally do not consider planning issues are relevant to them. In some areas of Oxford interest groups and the public have been relatively inactive in previous public

consultation initiatives. This may be for various reasons including lack of time and/or knowledge of planning issues and the failure of previous consultation exercises to make initial contact with them.

19. The City Council will be proactive in paying particular attention to these groups by making involvement relevant and accessible in order to broaden the number of people who can and, perhaps more importantly, want to be involved. This may include producing documents in different formats where necessary (eg large print, availability of Language line). We will consider location, the timing of meetings and ease of access when arranging events aimed at involving people, and try to avoid holding consultations in the school summer holidays. We will experiment with special ways to attract people in areas of the City where attendance at previous events has been low. We will pay particular attention to producing documents in plain english that are as easy to understand as the jargonistic field of planning will allow. We will try to explain the constraints of the planning system to avoid raising expectations beyond what we can deliver. However, if during consultation exercises non-planning issues are raised, we will try to pass them on to the relevant body or explain why we can't take the issue into account. LDF documents and any related literature can be made available in a variety of formats, e.g. Braille, large print, audio cassette, or languages other than English. If you require documents in another format please contact:

Planning Policy Team  
Oxford City Council  
Ramsay House, 10 St.Ebbe's Street  
Oxford, OX1 1 PT

Statement of Community Involvement

Tel: 01865 252718

E-mail: planning [policy@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:policy@oxford.gov.uk)

Website [www.oxford.gov.uk/planning](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/planning)

20. To help improve representation and participation, we will strengthen relationships with other City Council departments. For example, we will take into account Housing Services'

research on homeless people; talk to the Diversity Co-ordinator, Access Officer and groups such as the Youth Council and Pensioners' Forum to learn from their experience, and gain a better understanding of the needs of all sectors of the community. We will use other existing community contacts such as the County Council Gypsy and Traveller Services Manager to liaise with the traveller community.

## 7. HOW WILL PEOPLE BE CONSULTED?

21. The methods chosen to consult will depend on the particular subject and the preparation stage reached.

We recognise that there are different levels of involvement, including:

- **Information**  
providing information through leaflets, advertising, ongoing awareness and publicity campaigns
- **Consultation**  
consulting the community and stakeholders through questionnaires, exhibitions and formal consultation processes
- **Participation**  
such as in workshops where people are more actively involved in identifying needs and priorities

22. We must distinguish between consultation in-breadth and in-depth:

**In-breadth consultation** methods generally achieve wide, shallow results eg questionnaires, straw polls through e-mail

or newspaper articles. Their coverage is broad but they do not generally provide the opportunity to generate an in-depth debate.

**In-depth consultation** methods will be appropriate where we need to talk to people in detail to understand the needs and aspirations of the community and stakeholders. This could be achieved through focus groups and workshops.



23. The methods of community involvement we will use will include the following:

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Method of involvement	Level of involvement	Who this method is suitable for	Commentary
Media – features in the national press, specialist planning magazines, City Council newspaper, local newspapers, radio, TV	information in-breadth	Everyone	Raising levels of awareness and publicising specific opportunities to get involved. Reaches wide audience and achieves good coverage in a familiar format.
Electronic resources (internet, e-mail shot)	information consultation in-breadth	Everyone in general (although excludes those without access to a computer)	Increasingly the first port of call for the public and professionals seeking detailed up-to-date information. We will ensure that the information provided is user-friendly. This will be our main method of providing feedback to consultation exercises.
Poster campaigns & leaflets	information in-breadth	Particularly good for members of the public and 'hard to reach' groups	Can publicise basic information and inform the public about further opportunities to get involved. Publicity 'in the community' by using local council offices, libraries, shopping centres, sports centres, community centres can be the first step to reach those who wouldn't seek to be involved.
Documents available for inspection at City Council offices (and libraries) during set consultation period	consultation in-breadth	The public, local interest groups, businesses, developers/landowners/agents, those without access to a computer	Minimum statutory requirement – we will make it clear how and when people should respond during consultation periods. We will make sure the offices and documents are accessible to those with disabilities.
Contact phone number	consultation in-breadth	The public, interest groups, businesses, 'hard to reach' groups'	Way of providing up to date information to people without internet access and to explain/clarify issues and provide feedback. This may be particularly helpful for disabled, frail older people and people with literacy difficulties.
Letters to statutory bodies (listed in regulations – see Appendix 2)	consultation to specific organisations	Central, regional and other local government	Minimum statutory requirement.
Formal written consultation, community surveys on-line consultation	consultation in-breadth	Local interest groups, national interest groups, businesses, developers/landowners/agents, service providers, City councillors (general public & some 'hard to reach' groups through community surveys & on-line consultation)	Direct mailings to specific consultees with an interest in particular subject areas. Can provide general information and ask questions – and could ultimately generate opportunities for more in-depth consultation. On-line consultation also provides a quick way to comment.

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Public exhibitions/ displays/stalls/ road shows	consultation in-breadth	General public, 'hard to reach' groups	Outlining specific plans and proposals to target audience. Allows the City Council to take the issues closer to the home of the community. May need to be held over a number of days and varying times to ensure all sections of the community have an opportunity to attend, so resource intensive.
Interactive displays	consultation in-breadth	General public, local interest groups, 'hard to reach' groups	Allows people to make additions or alterations to prepared exhibits. Allows people to engage in the issues and debate and provides a record of preferences. Useful in association with public meetings or as part of interactive workshops.
Public meetings/area committees	consultation in-breadth	General public, local interest groups, 'hard to reach' groups, (City councillors & parish councils through area committees)	Reaching community groups through existing forums dealing with local issues. Especially appropriate for area-based policies. Gaining first-hand views on specific areas although attendees are self-selecting. Can be resource intensive.
One-to-one meetings with selected stakeholders	participation in-depth	Local interest groups, national interest groups, businesses, developers/landowners/agents, service providers	Useful means of identifying key issues, and involving specialist organisations in specific topics. Resource intensive.
Focus groups (selected groups of participants with particular characteristics)	participation in-depth	Local interest groups, national interest groups, businesses, developers/landowners/agents, service providers	Useful for area-based discussions and presentation of options. Can help to gain more understanding of public concerns.
User Panel already established by the City Council	participation in-depth	Developers/landowners/agents, key amenity groups	Use to canvass professional opinion and for consultation on more technical subjects.
City Council 'Talkback Panel'	participation in-breadth and in-depth	The public and 'hard to reach' groups	A panel of 1000 members of the public, replaced regularly, who participate in surveys. There is also a sub-panel that could be used for focus group discussions.
Workshops – interactive such as 'planning for real' exercises	participation in-depth	The public, local interest groups	Generates ideas, improves understanding and develops 'ownership' of proposals. Requires significant preparation to allow a structured approach and report back.
Steering/advisory group	participation in-depth	The public (eg who expressed interest in further participation at workshops), local interest groups, national interest groups, businesses, developers/landowners/agents, service providers, City councillors	A way to get key organisations involved in overseeing or acting as a sounding board for the production of documents. Particularly appropriate for area action plans or topic-based policies. The role of the group needs to be clear and there should be a transparent approach to selecting members.

## Survey Questionnaire

24. In drafting this document, it was important to ask the community how they wanted to be consulted, and what methods they thought would be most effective or convenient for them. 960 questionnaires were sent out to the groups known to the City Council and to individuals with previous contact with the planning service. The questionnaires had the joint purpose of updating details and also finding out how the respondents most wanted to get involved in planning. Poster campaigns, media features and a feature on the City Council website were also arranged to encourage the wider community to participate in the survey. 220 questionnaires were returned (a response rate of 22.9%). The questionnaire results are set out in Appendix 3 and some of the main findings are set out below.

### **“How would you most like to find out what is happening in planning policy?”**

25. The 3 most popular methods to find out what is happening in planning in Oxford were:

- information sent directly by letter (chosen by 63.9%);
- through the local press (chosen by 40.4%);
- information sent directly by e-mail (chosen by 40.2%).

26. In the questionnaire, poster campaigns in various locations were given as options for finding out information. Choices for this option were divided among the different possible locations. Community notice boards and libraries were seen as the most useful places for posters, and sports centres the least.

### **“How would you prefer to give comments on planning policy documents?”**

27. The 3 most popular methods to give comments about planning policy documents were:

- by letter (chosen by 69%);
- paper questionnaires (chosen by 50.7%);
- e-mails (chosen by 48.1%).

28. The results from these sections of the questionnaire show that being sent information directly, by e-mail or letter, is considered the most useful way of receiving information and giving comments on planning policy documents. This is unsurprising, as with these methods there is little chance of missing information. This can obviously apply only to groups already known to the City Council.

29. It must be borne in mind that these are the preferred methods of contact/consultation with groups/individuals known to the City Council and who replied to a questionnaire. Other consultation methods will be needed to make initial contact with the general public and other groups. Some of those who do not reply may find it difficult to write letters or complete questionnaires.

## Register of consultation groups

30. Those who responded to the questionnaire have been included in a register of consultees. This register has not been appended to this document as it is likely to often change. The general categories of consultees are listed in Appendix 4. More groups will be added to the register as they are identified and other groups will be removed from the list on request when they disperse or no longer want to be involved. The list will be updated regularly. If you would like to be added to or removed from this database, please contact the Planning Policy Team using the details on the front of this document to let us know your contact details and the documents you would like to be consulted on. These database entries include those which represent the categories of consultee identified at Appendix 4.”

## When and how we will consult

31. Statutory regulations specify minimum requirements for public participation at each stage of the development of documents. Taking the methods of consultation described in paragraph 23, the following table sets out the minimum requirements and the additional methods of consultation we intend to use depending on the type of consultation document involved. Appendix 5 sets out some practical examples of suggested public consultation for different types of documents.

Statement of Community Involvement

Stage consultation takes place (from section 5)	What we must do to consult and notify you – (statutory requirements)	Additional methods of consultation (what we will do) – we will select the most appropriate methods from this list according to the specific subject matter
<b>Development Plan Documents (covering core strategy, subject policies, site allocations, area action plans)</b>		
Early public involvement	Consult on issues, options and sustainability appraisals with appropriate statutory consultation bodies listed in Appendix 2 and other general consultation bodies we consider appropriate.	<p>To inform using one or a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issue press release</li> <li>• contact groups on consultation register by letter/e-mail (target consultation if appropriate for subject)</li> <li>• consider using City Council newspaper, website, poster campaigns, leaflets</li> </ul> <p>Consult using one or a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questionnaires</li> <li>• public exhibitions/displays/ stalls/road shows</li> <li>• interactive displays</li> <li>• public meetings</li> <li>• workshops/planning for real</li> <li>• Talkback Panel</li> <li>• involve pre-existing panels and other regular City Council meetings with groups</li> <li>• one-to-one meetings/focus groups</li> <li>• consider special measures to identify and reach 'hard to reach' groups</li> <li>• City Council committees/Council</li> <li>• contact phone number</li> </ul>
Consultation on preferred options report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the preferred options available for inspection (includes website).</li> <li>• Send to statutory bodies listed in Appendix 2 if we consider the document affects them and other general consultation bodies we consider appropriate.</li> <li>• Publish the sustainability appraisal report.</li> <li>• Publish the statutory notice by local advertisement.</li> <li>• Invite comments from everyone during the 6 weeks following the date of notice.</li> <li>• Consider all comments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue press releases or media features.</li> <li>• Contact groups on the consultation register.</li> <li>• Make the report available in appropriate public locations.</li> <li>• Involve pre-existing panels.</li> <li>• Discuss in City Council committees or full Council.</li> <li>• Use focus groups / or one-to-one meetings.</li> <li>• Publish feedback of consultation.</li> </ul>

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<p>Formal public consultation on revised document</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitted document &amp; associated matters, final sustainability report (including statements of consultation and public participation) made available for inspection (includes website).</li> <li>Send to statutory bodies listed in Appendix 2 if we consider the document affects them and other general consultation bodies we consider appropriate.</li> <li>Publish the statutory notice by local advertisement.</li> <li>Notify anyone who requested to be notified of submission.</li> <li>Invite comments from everyone during the 6 weeks following the date of notice.</li> <li>Make copies of representations available for public inspection at our offices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press release/media features.</li> <li>Oxford City Council website.</li> <li>Appropriate groups on our consultation register (target consultation if appropriate for subject matter).</li> <li>Focus group meetings/one to one meetings.</li> </ul>
<p>Consultation on 'alternative sites' for site allocation representations (where relevant)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative sites will be made available for inspection (includes website).</li> <li>Notify the same bodies as consulted on the revised document.</li> <li>Publish the statutory notice by local advertisement.</li> <li>Invite comments from everyone during the 6 weeks following the date of notice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify nearby residents/appropriate interest groups.</li> <li>Publish representations on site allocations on website.</li> </ul>
<p>Independent Examination (including pre-examination meeting(s) if appropriate)</p>	<p>At least 6 weeks before the examination (and pre-examination meeting) starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish the statutory notice by local advertisement.</li> <li>Publish details on website.</li> <li>Notify people who made representations during the statutory period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issue a press release.</li> </ul>
<p>Adoption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopted document and adopted statement, inspectors report &amp; final sustainability report made available for inspection (includes website).</li> <li>Publish the statutory notice by local advertisement.</li> <li>Notify anyone who requested to be notified of adoption &amp;/or inspectors report.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further consultation needed.</li> </ul>

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<b>Supplementary Planning Documents</b>		
<b>Stage consultation takes place</b>	<b>Statutory Requirements for consultation and notification (what we must do)</b>	<b>Additional methods of consultation (what we will do) – we will select the most appropriate methods from this list according to the specific subject matter</b>
Early public involvement	Informally involve local communities and stakeholders (including consultation on sustainability appraisals).	<p><b>To inform using one or a combination of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issue press release</li> <li>• contact groups on consultation register by letter/e-mail (target consultation if appropriate for subject)</li> <li>• contact other relevant groups known to the Council</li> <li>• consider using City Council newspaper, website, posters</li> </ul> <p><b>To consult using one or a combination of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questionnaires</li> <li>• public exhibitions/ displays/ stalls/road shows</li> <li>• interactive displays</li> <li>• public meetings/area committees</li> <li>• workshops/planning for real</li> <li>• one-to-one meetings/focus groups</li> <li>• Talkback Panel</li> <li>• involve pre-existing panels and other regular City Council meetings with groups</li> </ul>
Consultation on draft document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document made available for inspection (includes website).</li> <li>• Send to statutory bodies listed in Appendix 2 if we consider the document affects them and other general consultation bodies we consider appropriate.</li> <li>• Publish the sustainability appraisal report.</li> <li>• Publish the statutory notice by local advertisement.</li> <li>• Invite comments from everyone during the 4-6 weeks following the date of notice.</li> <li>• Consider all comments.</li> <li>• We must prepare a statement summarising issues raised &amp; how the main issues have been addressed in the document.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue press release.</li> <li>• Allow max 6 week period for public participation.</li> <li>• Carry out targeted consultation using consultation register.</li> <li>• City Council committees/Council.</li> <li>• Make the report available in appropriate public locations.</li> <li>• Publish feedback of consultation.</li> </ul>
Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopted document, adoption statement, statement of representations made &amp; final sustainability report made available for inspection (includes website).</li> <li>• Notify anyone who requested to be notified of adoption.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice by local advertisement.</li> </ul>

## 8. WHAT ABOUT CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS?

32. In general, planning applications will be determined in accordance with the adopted policies, unless material considerations outweigh these policies. The earlier sections of this Statement have dealt with how people can influence the drafting of these policies and proposals, but people will continue to have the opportunity to become involved in the decision on individual planning applications.

33. We recognise the need to ensure that the community is informed and involved in the consideration of planning applications. The degree of involvement will vary with the nature of the individual application.

### Survey questionnaire

**“What are the best ways for developers to inform/consult on proposals for major development?”**

34. The results of our survey questionnaire showed that leaflets and newsletters to properties in the area to describe what is proposed, were the most popular methods (chosen by 82.7% of respondents) for developers to publicise their proposals for major development. Several respondents also suggested public meetings to convey information. Other suggestions were for developers to publicise plans through residents’ groups, ward councillors, newspapers and local radio.

35. These results again suggest the importance that respondents place on directly targeted information, guaranteed to be noticed by those it most concerns.

36. The questionnaire asked respondents to choose which methods they thought were the best ways for developers to involve the community when they proposed major development. The most popular options chosen were:

- meetings with directly affected residents and local interest groups (63.1%);
- public meetings (44.7%);
- drop-in exhibition in the area involved (41.8%);
- questionnaire to local residents (37.9%).

37. Therefore developers will be encouraged to use these consultation methods.

### Consultations before planning applications are submitted

38. All applicants and their agents are strongly encouraged to discuss development proposals with the City Council before applying, and to consult the community. There are significant benefits to early consultation on applications, including:

- early availability of good quality information, enabling issues and problems to be addressed up front;
- better quality applications which are straightforward and can be more quickly processed;

- a means of resolving problems, thereby avoiding possible public objections later;
- overcoming a perceived 'closed door' approach to determining applications, ensuring a more transparent approach;
- better design of buildings that are more in keeping with their surroundings and meet the needs and wishes of local communities;
- savings on applicants' time and resources by avoiding the need to revise proposals at an advanced stage. This in turn saves resources for authorities.

39. For minor applications, eg house extensions, or 'other' rather than 'major' applications, applicants are encouraged to consult with their neighbours before the application is submitted.

40. If the scheme falls within the definition of a major application, officers will strongly encourage applicants to contact by letter, leaflet or newsletter adjoining occupiers and consider arranging a meeting with relevant local residents and amenity groups.

41. For major applications that must be decided by the City Council's Strategic Development Control Committee (\* see note at end of the section), we urge applicants to hold early consultations using the preferred options from the questionnaire survey. Whilst there is no legal obligation for consultation to take place, failure to consult properly is likely to lead to objections being made by interested parties such as neighbouring residents which could be material to the determination of the application.

42. Applicants, particularly those proposing larger developments, are encouraged to seek advice from the City Council. For major applications, a development team will be set up to discuss the initial proposals. This team will include officers in other departments of the City Council and may also include outside bodies, such as the County Council and the Environment Agency. However, while planning officers will offer advice, any advice given cannot prejudice the formal consideration of an application.

43. The City Council's Code of Practice for councillors on planning applications advises that to maintain impartiality, and to be seen to do so, councillors should not take part in pre-application discussions. Councillors attending public meetings are advised to take great care to maintain their impartial role, listen to all the points of view expressed by the speakers and public and not state a conclusive decision on any pre-application proposals or submitted planning applications.

44. Planning officers will keep councillors informed of progress on more complex and/or controversial applications before finalising their written reports. However, it is also important that planning officers' professional judgement is not compromised. In any exchange of information, councillors will not state a view and so impair their discretion to determine an application.

45. As a result of any pre-application consultation exercise, applicants will be asked to submit a brief statement as part of their submission, outlining what pre-application consultation took place, its results and how these have been taken into

account in the final application. Pre-application discussion may have drawn attention to the likely impact of the development, and suggested ways to mitigate it. If so, information submitted should include proposals for on-site measures or financial contributions to mitigate the impacts.

### **Consultations when applications are submitted**

46. The Government has set down minimum standards for consulting on planning applications and these will apply to all applications. For more controversial applications, additional consultations must be held.

47. However, there needs to be a balance between cost, speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment. The City Council is required to determine 60% of major applications in 13 weeks, 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks, and 80% of other applications in 8 weeks to meet targets set by the Government.

48. People are informed about planning applications by the following methods:

**Weekly list** – a list is published weekly of all valid planning applications received. The list is available on the planning section of the City Council website. In the future, we hope to further refine the information available to provide more targeted information.

**Advertisements and site notices** – the City Council is required to publish in a local newspaper (Oxford Times) and requires the developer to display site notices for certain

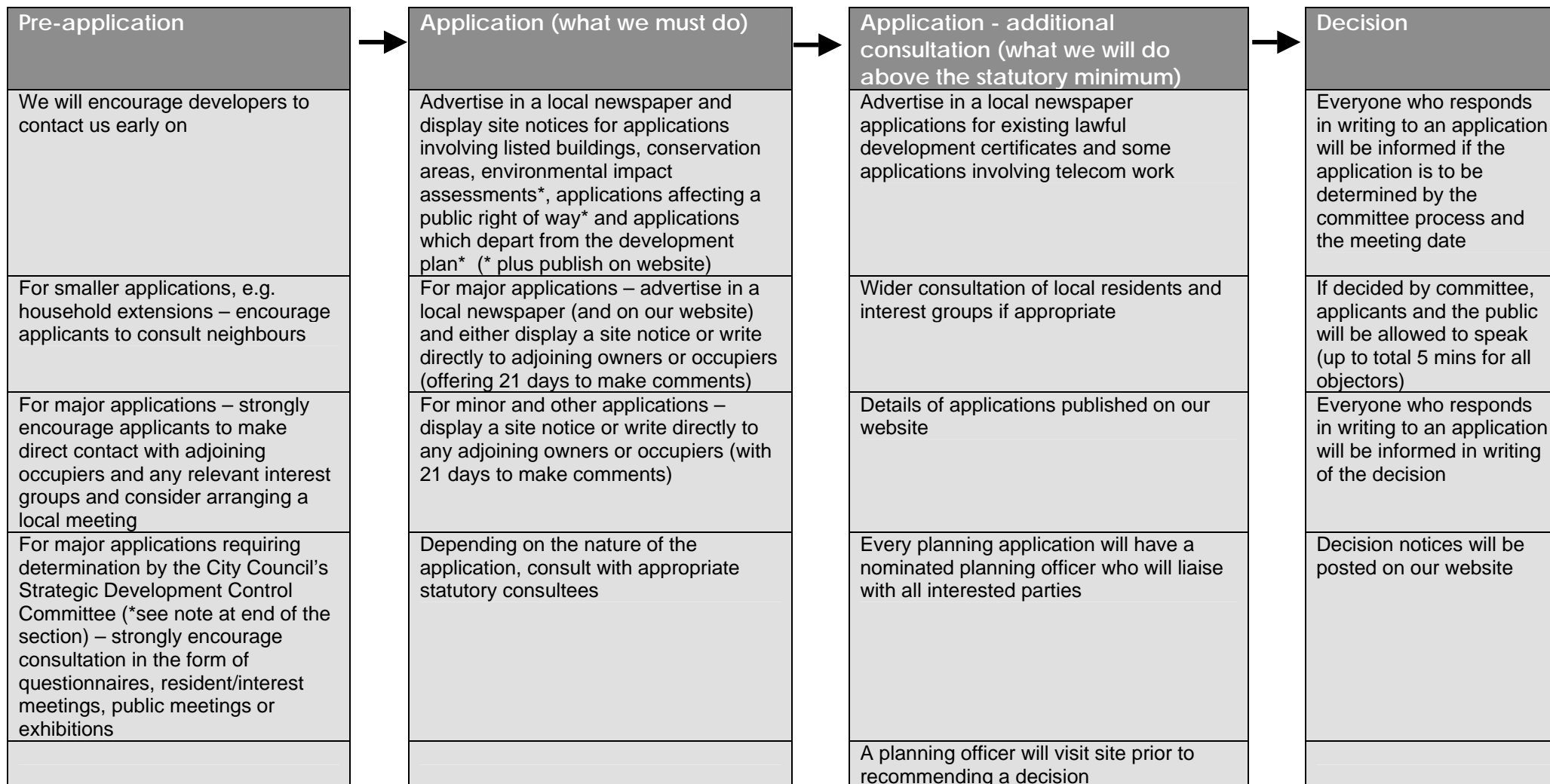
categories of applications. In addition, we also advertise certain types of applications involving telecom work and applications for existing lawful development certificates.

**Direct written consultation** – occupiers of properties most likely to be affected by a proposal (ie bordering an application site) are sent individual letters that an application has been received and are informed where they can inspect the application and make any written comments within 21 days. However, we welcome comments from anyone, not just those consulted direct. In the case of major applications, a broader geographical area of notification may be appropriate including relevant local amenity groups. A leaflet is attached to all consultation letters explaining the planning issues to comment on.

**Availability of plans** – plans are available to view at the planning office during office hours and there is an officer available to assist. All planning applications are also available to view on the website. The website contains further details of the applications including how and when they are likely to be determined.

**Statutory consultees** – we are legally required to consult certain organisations from the list set out in Appendix 6. The actual organisations consulted from this list will vary depending on the nature of the proposal and location.

### Planning Application Consultation



Bodies such as English Nature will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation.

## How applications are determined

49. Applications are assessed against planning policies by planning officers, who take account of all comments received. Legislation requires that applications are refused only when there are good planning reasons for refusal. In many cases, an otherwise unacceptable proposal may be acceptable if certain conditions are imposed. In some cases small issues can be resolved by the applicant submitting amended plans. If there are more significant issues to resolve, needing further consultation, the application is determined in its original form and the applicant is invited to re-apply with the revised proposals and re-consultation is undertaken. Before recommending a decision, the planning officer will make a full site inspection. The results of any such consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, and on behalf of, the Council.

50. Currently, approximately 85% of applications are decided by planning officers under delegated powers – these are mainly householder application developments of up to 5 houses and fairly small non-controversial developments. Applications are decided in this way to help ensure that the majority of applications are dealt with promptly.

51. Applications are submitted to the local area committee\* if: the application falls outside officer delegated powers; city councillors request that the application is dealt with at committee; or the application is submitted on behalf of the City Council or by an officer or city councillor. Currently, the 6 area committees meet monthly\*. All who submitted written comments on applications are sent details of the relevant

committee. Members of the public are allowed to speak for up to 5 minutes per application before a decision is made – and this is also offered to the applicant. Reports on applications decided at committee are prepared and are available for public inspection at City Council offices and on the website about a week before the meeting. As well as an assessment of the application, the reports provide brief details of any legal agreements required to overcome potential reasons for refusal.

52. Applications for very large-scale developments are determined by the Strategic Development Control Committee following consultation with the local area committee\*. Again, all who submitted written comments are informed of applications determined by this committee and there is a procedure for allowing public speaking at this meeting.

53. However the decision is made, letters are sent to all who submitted comments informing them of the decision. Decision notices are also published on the website and are available for inspection and purchase at the planning office.

## Appeals against planning decisions

54. If an applicant has an application refused, or disagrees with the conditions attached to the granting of permission, or if the City Council fails to decide the application within the agreed timescales, the applicant has a right of appeal heard by an independent inspector. In certain circumstances, applications can also be referred to the Secretary of State. This right of appeal does not extend to a third party (ie, there is no right of appeal to anyone who is not the applicant).

\* see note at end of the section

55. If an appeal is made, anyone who received a consultation letter about the application is notified in writing of the appeal and information is provided on how to make their views known. There is no need to re-submit previous information sent in on the planning application as this will be forwarded to the independent inspector. Local councillors are also notified.

56. The majority of appeals are dealt with by written representations and where this is the case, the appeal is decided on the basis of the statements submitted by the appellant, the City Council and any third parties. Where an informal hearing or public inquiry is to be held to consider an appeal, a site notice is erected and in some cases information is published in the press. The hearings and inquiries are open to the public and members of the public have an opportunity to speak. In all appeal cases, the independent inspector will make a full site inspection before coming to a decision.

\* The Committee process for deciding planning applications is currently being reviewed.

## 9. HOW WILL THIS BE RESOURCED?

57. Staff resources will be mainly from the Planning Business Unit but will involve other officers and external resources as necessary. Consulting the public in an appropriate and effective way requires specific skills and we will address any skills gap with appropriate training.

58. In terms of funding, we will increase investment in planning under the Government's revision to planning application fees towards some community involvement initiatives such as using consultants to facilitate appropriate workshops or exhibitions.

59. We will also try to combine consultation activities where appropriate and timetabling allows, to get the best value from them and to avoid 'consultation fatigue' among the community.

## 10. WILL THIS BE REVIEWED?

60. All local development documents will require a statement of compliance showing how they have been produced in accordance with the measures set out in this Statement of Community Involvement. If a development plan document fails to comply with the Statement, this could lead an inspector to recommend re-consultation to comply with the Statement.

61. Evaluation forms will be available after each major consultation exercise undertaken by the City Council, to help assess how successful the methods were. The information obtained will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of consultation exercises, and to make improvements where needed. The results will be reported in the annual monitoring report. However, as this Statement is designed to be flexible, it should only be necessary to revise it when the types of consultation groups, or the methods of consultation change significantly.

## Appendix 1 - City Council Consultation Strategy

The aims of the Consultation Strategy are:

- ensuring a clear understanding of a commitment to effective consultation;
- adopting a co-ordinated, strategic approach to consultation which avoids duplication;
- ensuring that consultation is inclusive and representative;
- improving standards in consultation practice;
- considering the circumstances of consultees;
- working in partnership;
- ensuring that consultation is used in decision making and translates into action;
- feeding back the consultation findings to consultees, and disseminating the results more widely;
- using resources effectively; and
- monitoring and review.

## Appendix 2 - List of statutory consultees for Local Development Documents and sustainability appraisals

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 sets out the following list of bodies local planning authorities should consult (in addition to submitting documents to the Secretary of State via the Government Office for the South East) if the local planning authority thinks that the proposed subject matter of the document in question affects the body:

- English Nature
- Environment Agency
- Highways Agency
- Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England - (English Heritage)
- Strategic Rail Authority
- A relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority.

Relevant authority is defined as:

- A local planning authority; (Cherwell, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils), (plus West Oxfordshire District Council although this is not an adjacent authority)
- A County Council; (Oxfordshire County Council)
- A parish council; (in the City Council area - Old Marston, Risinghurst & Sandhills, Blackbird Leys and Littlemore Parish Councils) (adjoining the City Council area - Gosford and Water Eaton, Woodeaton, Elsfield, Beckley and Stowood, Stanton St. John, Horspath, Garsington, Sandford on-Thames, Kennington, South Hinksey, North

Hinksey and Wytham Parish Councils)

- Regional Development Agency whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority (South East England Development Agency - SEEDA)
- Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106 (3) (a) of the Communications Act 2003
- Any person who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority.

“Government Departments”:

- Department for Education and Skills (through Government Offices)
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department for Transport (through Government Offices)
- Department of Health (through relevant Regional Public Health Group)
- Department of Trade and Industry (through Government Offices)
- Ministry of Defence
- Department of Work and Pensions
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- The Countryside Agency

Also if any of these operate in any part of the local planning authority's area:

- a Strategic Health Authority (Thames Valley)
- a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989
- a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986
- a sewage undertaker – Thames Water
- a water undertaker - Thames Water

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Paper – Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents – requires consultation with the following bodies for undertaking sustainability appraisals:

- Countryside Agency
- English Heritage
- English Nature
- Environment Agency

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

### Appendix 3 – Summary tables of questionnaire results to survey

Question: “How would you most like to find out what is happening in planning in Oxford?”

Method of providing information	Number of responses stating this a preferred method	% of responses stating this a preferred method	
Information sent directly by letter	140	63.9%	
Local press (Oxford Times)	89	40.4%	
Information sent directly by e-mail	88	40.2%	
Website	69	31.5%	
City Council newsletter (Your Oxford)	65	29.7%	
Area committee meetings	35	16.0%	
Public exhibitions/stalls	30	13.6%	
Local radio/TV	23	10.4%	
Posters and leaflets	on community notice boards	19	8.7%
	in libraries	16	7.3%
	in doctors' surgeries	14	6.4%
	in local shops	13	5.9%
	in community centres	11	5.0%
	in council offices	9	4.1%
	in schools/youth clubs	4	1.8%
in sports centres	3	1.4%	

Question: “How would you prefer to give your comments on planning policy documents?”

Method of providing comments	Number of responses stating this a preferred method	% of responses stating this a preferred method
Letter	152	69.0%
Paper questionnaire	111	50.7%
E-mail	106	48.1%
Public meetings/area committees	62	28.3%
Online questionnaire	39	17.8%
Interactive workshops	23	10.5%
Interactive displays	18	8.2%
Focus groups	17	7.8%

Question: "Which of the following are the best ways for developers to publicise their proposals for major development?"

Method of providing information		Number of responses stating this a preferred method	% of responses stating this a preferred method
Leaflet/newsletter to properties in the area describing what is proposed		182	82.7%
Advert/article in the local paper		136	61.8%
Poster campaigns	on community notice boards	44	20.1%
	in libraries	33	16%
	in local shops	35	15.6%
	poster campaigns & leaflets in council offices	29	13.2%
	in community centres	26	11.9%
	in doctors' surgeries	17	7.8%
	in sports centres	4	1.8%
	in schools/youth clubs	2	0.9%

Question: "How should developers involve the community when they propose a major new development?"

Method of providing consultation	Number of responses stating this a preferred method	% of responses stating this a preferred method
Meetings with directly affected residents and local interest groups	139	63.1%
Public meetings	98	44.7%
Drop in exhibition in the area involved	92	41.8%
Questionnaire to local residents	83	37.9%
Presentation to area committee	70	32.0%
Workshop to identify local issues	51	23.3%
Door-to-door consultation	26	11.9%

960 questionnaires were sent out of which 220 were returned. This represents a response rate of 22.9%.

## Appendix 4 - List of general consultation groups for consultation on local development documents

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 defines 'general consultation bodies' to mean the following bodies:

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

The following list indicates in general terms the different groups the City Council will involve in consultation on documents (depending on the subject matter for consultation):

older people's groups;  
young people's groups;  
minority ethnic;  
residents'/tenants' associations;  
education groups;  
health/welfare/disability groups;  
faith groups;  
groups representing culture/heritage/arts;  
amenity/environment groups;  
sports/leisure organisations;  
business/retail groups;  
developers/consultants/agents;  
landowners;  
media;  
tourist;  
housing;  
emergency services/utilities;  
telecommunications;  
transport;  
central, regional, or other local government/parish council;  
political groups.

## Appendix 5 – Development plan documents and supplementary planning documents – suggested practical examples of consultation

(1) for an area action plan development plan document:

<p>Early public involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- set up a workshop/planning for real event in the local area</li> <li>- inform about the event by leafleting properties in the local area and/or posters erected in local area, letters to area committee members, press release (as people outside the area may have an interest)</li> <li>- possibly some form of exhibition/display in local community building with questionnaire response leaflet</li> <li>- investigate if there are active ‘hard to reach’ groups in the area and work through existing contacts to identify best method of reaching these groups</li> <li>- City Council committees/Council</li> <li>- publish contact number</li> </ul>
<p>Consultation on preferred options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statutory advertisement</li> <li>- press release</li> <li>- information available for public inspection in local area</li> <li>- letters to statutory bodies with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- letters/e-mails to community groups and stakeholders in the area, and/or with an interest, with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- City Council committees/Council</li> <li>- focus group meeting if appropriate (selected from those who expressed an interest in further involvement at workshop)</li> <li>- publish feedback of consultation on website/issue press release</li> </ul>
<p>Formal public consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statutory advertisement</li> <li>- press release</li> <li>- information available for public inspection in local area</li> <li>- letters to statutory bodies with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- letters/e-mails to all who made comments at previous stage with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> </ul>

(2) for a development plan document on site allocations throughout the City:

<p>Early public involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- set up a series of workshops/planning for real events (focusing on potential site allocations in the local area of the event)</li> <li>- inform about the events by a combination of press release, possibly formal press adverts, features in City Council newspaper, website, area committee agenda items, letters/e-mails to community groups</li> <li>- possibly one-to-one meetings/focus groups with stakeholders including Local Strategic Partnership</li> <li>- Talkback Panel if appropriate for more in-depth views from a representative section of the public</li> <li>- involve pre-existing panels if appropriate and other regular City Council meetings with groups, and focusing on making the issue relevant to them</li> <li>- liaise with other officers in contact with 'hard to reach' groups for best ways of making a particular effort to involve these groups</li> <li>- City Council committees/Council</li> <li>- publish contact number</li> </ul>
<p>Consultation on preferred options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statutory advertisement</li> <li>- press release</li> <li>- information available for public inspection</li> <li>- letters to statutory bodies with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- letters/e-mails to all who made contact at initial consultation stage, with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- City Council committees/Council</li> <li>- focus group meeting if appropriate (selected from those who expressed an interest in further involvement at workshop)</li> <li>- publish feedback of consultation on website/issue press release</li> </ul>
<p>Formal public consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statutory advertisement</li> <li>- press release</li> <li>- information available for public inspection</li> <li>- letters to statutory bodies with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- letters/e-mails to all who made comments at previous stage with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> </ul>

**(3) for a supplementary planning document on a technical subject:**

Early public involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one-to-one meetings/focus groups with stakeholders &amp; groups with a particular interest in the subject area</li> <li>- questionnaire survey</li> <li>- involve pre-existing panels if appropriate</li> </ul>
Consultation on draft document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statutory advertisement</li> <li>- press release</li> <li>- information available for public inspection</li> <li>- letters to statutory bodies with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- letters/e-mails to those involved at initial consultation stage with questionnaire/comment forms to return</li> <li>- City Council committees/Council</li> <li>- publish feedback of consultation on website/issue press release</li> </ul>

## Appendix 6 - List of statutory consultees for planning applications

Article 10 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995 requires the local planning authority to consult particular organisations when certain categories of planning applications are submitted. These statutory consultees are:

British Waterways Board  
Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)  
English Nature  
Environment Agency  
Health and Safety Executive  
Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England  
Local Highway Authority (Oxfordshire County Council)  
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister  
Network Rail/Strategic Rail Authority  
South East England Development Agency  
Sport England  
Theatres Trust  
Highways Agency

Article 13 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995 requires that the local planning authority consult parish and community councils.

The County Council should be consulted before determining an application for certain types of development (schedule 1, paragraph 7(3)), specifically those confined to County interest such as minerals and waste, or those that have implications for the Structure Plan.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to consult regional planning bodies as statutory consultees where a planning application may impact on the implementation of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 requires that the licensing authority is consulted about applications for new caravan parks.

The specific consultees that have to be consulted varies with the type and location of development. It is also the case that there are consultees whom the City Council would always consult about certain types of applications, for example the public utilities where an application would affect them.

Statutory consultees are required to respond to consultation within 21 days under the provisions in section 54 and article 11A of the General Development Procedure Order 1995.

## Glossary

This glossary is intended to be a simple explanation of the terms used within the rest of this document.

<b>Adoption</b>	Final approval of document.
<b>Annual Monitoring Report</b>	Report produced annually to assess the implementation of the local development scheme and the extent to which policies in local development documents are being achieved.
<b>Area Action Plans</b>	Plans for a specific area where significant development is expected in the future.
<b>Code of Practice for Councillors</b>	This is a specific section in the City Council's Constitution setting out advice for councillors in deciding on planning applications.
<b>Community Strategy</b>	A strategy produced by public, private and community stakeholders to improve the quality of life in Oxford.
<b>Conservation area consent</b>	Consent for the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building or structure in a conservation area.
<b>Consultations Strategy</b>	A strategy produced by the City Council to guide public consultation initiatives in a consistent way.
<b>Core Strategy</b>	This outlines the vision for the area and how that vision will be achieved.
<b>Determination</b>	A decision on a planning application.
<b>Development Plan</b>	This is a collective term for development plan documents and regional spatial strategies. The development plan is the starting point for the consideration of planning applications.
<b>Development Plan Documents</b>	Statutory documents which form part of the local development framework.

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b>	This is a detailed assessment of the likely environmental impact of a proposed development and is only required for certain types of development where the potential impact is likely to be significant.
<b>Independent Examination</b>	An assessment made by an independent inspector
<b>Inspector</b>	A Government-appointed independent professionally qualified person who has no direct links with the City Council.
<b>Language Line</b>	This is a translation service to provide an efficient means of communication with non-english speakers.
<b>Listed building</b>	A building or structure of special architectural or historic interest that is included on a statutory list compiled by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport with advice from English Heritage.
<b>Listed building consent</b>	Consent to alter, extend or demolish a listed building and certain buildings and structures within its curtilage where these works affect its special character.
<b>Lawful Development Certificate</b>	This authorises development or a use which has not been granted planning permission when it can be demonstrated that the use or development has continued over a period of time and is immune from formal planning or enforcement action.
<b>Local Development Framework</b>	A non-statutory term used to describe the portfolio of local development documents. It consists of development plan documents, supplementary planning documents, a statement of community involvement, the local development scheme and annual monitoring report.
<b>Local Development Scheme</b>	A project plan for the preparation of local development documents.
<b>Major planning application</b>	Definition of major applications in the General Development Procedure Order 1995: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a residential development of 10 or more dwellings;</li><li>• residential development on a site of 0.5 hectares or more;</li><li>• development involving a building(s) with a floorspace of 1000 square metres or more;</li></ul>

- any other development on a site of 1 hectare or more.

**Material consideration**

Something that should be taken into account when preparing development plan documents or determining planning applications, but they must be genuine planning considerations e.g. the type of development, site, layout, siting, design, access and landscaping.

**Media and Communications Strategy**

A strategy produced by the City Council to promote the use of corporate styles and methods of consultation.

**Minor planning application**

This includes any development that does not meet the criteria for major, change of use or householder applications.

**Natural Resource Impact Analysis**

A document to accompany a planning application for large-scale development outlining how the use of natural resources has been minimised in the project through energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, recycling and use of recycled materials.

**Other development**

Development not within the definition of major or minor applications is 'other development' and includes:-

- change of use applications – where
  - it is not a major development;
  - no building or engineering work is involved;
  - building/engineering work would be permitted development if not change of use (e.g. removal of internal wall);
- householder applications within the curtilage of a residential property but not change of use and not change to the number of dwellings within a building;
- applications for advertisement consent;
- Listed Building Consent applications to extend or alter a listed building;
- Listed Building Consent applications to demolish whole or part of a listed building;
- Conservation Area Consent applications;
- Other development involving:
  - Certificates of Lawfulness;
  - Circular 18/84 (crown land) and 14/90 (electricity generating stations and overhead lines)

applications.

<b>Oxford Strategic Partnership</b>	A group of significant stakeholders, including public, private and voluntary sectors, who produce the Community Strategy.
<b>Oxfordshire Compact</b>	This is a framework against which the relationship between statutory, voluntary, community and faith sectors can be monitored and evaluated. It aims to assist in the development of effective partnerships between organisations including consultation procedures.
<b>Regional Planning Body</b>	The body that will produce the regional spatial strategy. In the case of Oxford, this is the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA).
<b>Regional Planning policies</b>	Those policies contained in the Regional Spatial Strategy (South East Plan).
<b>Regional Spatial Strategy</b>	The type of planning policy produced at the regional level that forms part of the statutory development plan.
<b>Representation</b>	A comment or set of comments made in response to a planning consultation or application.
<b>Secretary of State</b>	The person in Government with responsibility for planning in England (currently the First Secretary of State)
<b>Statutory Regulations</b>	For the purpose of this document are The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
<b>Strategic Development Control Committee</b>	A City Council appointed-Committee that determines the following categories of planning application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• any housing development consisting of 70 or more dwellings;</li><li>• any commercial or retail development consisting of 4000 square metres or more;</li><li>• any health or university development consisting of 4000 square metres or more;</li><li>• student accommodation consisting of 150 units or more;</li><li>• for mixed schemes, an assessment of the cumulative scale of the development that would be comparable for the above categories;</li></ul>

- applications with an impact beyond a single area committee's area;
  - applications with a City-wide impact;
  - any departures to the Local Development Framework that are notified to the Secretary of State.
- The Committee also determines applications referred to the Committee under an Area Committee Procedure Rule (that allows 4 members to refer an application to this Committee on planning grounds within 2 days of publication of the area committee summary of decisions).

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Internationally used term to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European 'SEA Directive' (2001/42/EC) requires a formal 'environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use'.

**Supplementary Planning Documents**

A type of local development document that supplements and elaborates on policies and proposals in development plan documents. Supplementary planning documents do not form part of the statutory development plan.

**Sustainability Appraisals**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local development documents to be subject to a sustainability appraisal, which examines the impact of the policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental factors (including on natural resources).