

# Newcastle City Council

## Statement of Community Involvement

August 2018





## Contact Details

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## Introduction

### **What is the Statement of Community Involvement**

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out what consultation will take place with the community and statutory consultees on planning policy documents and planning applications. The SCI states who Newcastle City Council will consult with, when and how.

All local planning authorities must prepare a SCI as defined by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). This SCI has been produced in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The council is legally obliged to comply with its SCI, once it is adopted. The SCI will be kept under review and will be updated as required.

### **Reviewing our Statement of Community Involvement**

Newcastle City Council first adopted its SCI in 2006 and it was last revised in 2013. This document now needs updating to reflect changes to national and local legislation and changing practices in community engagement, including the greater use of electronic communications.

### **Structure of the Statement of Community Involvement**

This document is arranged in 3 distinct sections

#### [Section 1: Background](#)

This section sets the context and purpose of this SCI

#### [Section 2: Community Involvement in Planning Policy](#)

This section sets out the regulations as they relate to community involvement in the plan making process and lists a number of techniques that the council will use, as appropriate, when consulting on emerging planning policy documents.

#### [Section 3: Community Involvement in Development Management](#)

This section sets out the consultation and publicity procedures involved in the decision-making process of planning applications.

## Section 1: Background and Context

Community involvement and public consultation has always been an important part of the planning process; Newcastle City Council encourages local people to get involved in the plan making and the planning application process to make their views known and have a say in the future development of Newcastle.

### **Purpose of the SCI**

This refreshed SCI will enable the community to know when and how they can be involved in the preparation of Local Plan documents and the decision-making process of planning applications. It will help to ensure that plans and decisions are taken with the involvement of the community.

The SCI does not specify the means or extent of consultation that should be used in every case. We will endeavour to use appropriate channels that are available to us to enable community involvement in planning.

### **How I can be involved in the planning process**

You can get involved in planning by:

- Making comments on planning applications that affect your community
- Getting involved during consultation events for the Local Plan
- Registering your details to be added to our Local Plan consultation database, by contacting [planningpolicy@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@newcastle.gov.uk)
- Reporting breaches of planning control
- Taking part in neighbourhood planning

### **Duty to Co-operate**

The requirement for local authorities to work with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies is termed the 'Duty to Co-operate'. This ensures that strategic priorities across local boundaries are addressed and considered in Local Plans. The council will work together on strategic planning issues with the following organisations:

- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Highways Agency
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes England
- Health and Safety Executive
- Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group
- Office of Rail Regulation
- Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority
- North East Local Enterprise Partnership
- North East Combined Authority

- Northumbria Police
- Northumbrian Water
- Northern Gas Networks Ltd
- Northern Powergrid
- Coal Authority
- Marine Management Organisation
- Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
- Nexus
- Newcastle International Airport
- Parish Councils
- Sport England
- Neighbouring Local Authorities inclusive of;
- Gateshead Council
- North Tyneside Council
- Northumberland County Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Sunderland City Council
- Durham County Council

Please note that, as legislation and regulations are frequently updated, the lists of consultees below may change over time and must be checked against the requirements set out in new regulations.

## Section 2: Community Involvement in Planning Policy

### **Local Plan**

The Local Plan is made up of documents produced by the council, which contain policies to guide the development of an area, which the council use to make their decisions on planning applications.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out a requirement that each local authority must prepare a Local Plan for their area. It sets clear expectations as to how a Local Plan must be developed in order to be justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared to deliver sustainable development that meets local needs and national priorities. As required by the NPPF, the Local Plan should be produced in consultation with the community.

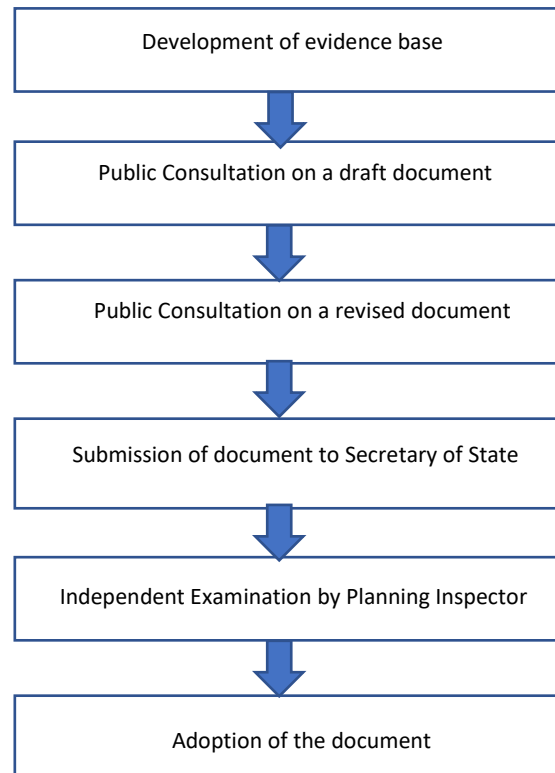
Newcastle's vision for its city includes being a city which has effective public services. This includes public services working together with and to give more power to communities and concentrate on the things that matter to people. The council aims to provide a transparent approach to consultation, providing continuing opportunities for involvement throughout the local plan preparation stages. The methods used will encourage involvement in plan making and will be relevant to the community and policies under preparation.



## Stages in the preparation of Local Plan Documents

Each local plan document must go through various stages of public consultation and an independent examination before it can be adopted, in accordance with the regulations set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The following table sets out the main stages of preparing a local plan document and the consultation methods the council will use.



The table below shows the various stages that are associated with the preparation of the Local Plan, including the requirements to consult with the public at various specified times.

Preparation Stage	What is involved?	Consultation Method	Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012)
Evidence base	The preparation of evidence base documents to support the production of the Local Plan	N/A	N/A
Draft Document – Early Engagement	The council will inform relevant stakeholders and the public that a Local Plan is being prepared and asks for views on the draft plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the draft document available to view</li> <li>• Publish Representation Procedure Notify those on the database and invite comments on the draft</li> </ul>	Regulation 18
Revised Document – Pre-Submission	The evidence base and comments received from the previous stages will inform the preparation of the revised draft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the revised draft document available to view</li> <li>• Publish Representation Procedure Notify those on the database and invite comments on the revised draft</li> </ul>	Regulations 19 & 20
Submission	The council will submit the Local Plan along with the comments received on the revised draft to the Secretary of State for Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the documents submitted to the Secretary of State available</li> <li>• Publish on the website all relevant documents and Consultation Feedback Report Notify those on the database and those requested of the submission</li> </ul>	Regulation 22
Public Examination	The Local Plan is examined by an Independent Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The details of the time and place of the public examination will be publicised on our website Notify anyone who has made comments at pre-consultation stage of the public examination</li> </ul>	Regulation 24
Adoption	If the Local Plan is found sound by the Inspector the council can then adopt the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once adopted the Local Plan document will be published online, a paper copy will be made available to view on request An adoption statement will be published online</li> </ul>	Regulation 25

## Consultation Methods

There are a range of methods that can be used when consulting on planning policy documents. The council will endeavour to use a range of the following methods to involve local people in the planning process, consultation may not be limited to, or include all of the methods listed below. The council will use the most appropriate methods taking into consideration the nature of the documents, the geographical area and the stage of the Local Plan/SPD.

Consultation Method	Description
Emails/Letters	Statutory consultees and those who have requested to be on our local plan consultation database will be consulted. Printed copies of local plan documents at statutory stages of consultation will be made available to view at the City Library.
Consultation Portal	The online consultation portal, Let's Talk Newcastle, can be used to make representations electronically. This is the preferred method for people to comment on local plan documents.
Response Forms	Responses made via letter, emails and petition will also be accepted. However, at Pre-Submission stage comments must relate to legality and the soundness of the plan we will expect all responses to be duly made using our pre submission template.
Targeted Meetings	Targeted meetings with relevant stakeholders and groups will be organised when appropriate throughout the plan preparation stage.
Website	Local plan documents, relevant consultation material and evidence will be published online and regularly updated.
Social Media	We will publish documents online and actively promote consultation through social media.
Local Media	In some circumstances it may be appropriate to use local media such as the television or radio.
Press Adverts	Press adverts will be used at statutory stages and when appropriate
Drop-Ins	Drop in events may be held at selected venues to allow people to view relevant consultation documents and to talk to planning officers.
Unstaffed Exhibitions	Exhibitions displaying information will be organised when appropriate to give people an opportunity to view information. Where unstaffed exhibitions are used, they will normally be available throughout the consultation period in a publicly accessible location.
City Life	The council will publish updates in our magazine, City Life.
Neighbour Letters	Letters may be sent to properties neighbouring (immediately adjacent to) a development site.

The council will try to ensure that events are held at convenient times to reach as wide range of people as possible, including weekdays, weekday evenings and, where appropriate, Saturdays.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide additional detailed guidance on how the council's Local Plan and policies will be implemented for specific topics, areas or sites.

When preparing SPDs Newcastle City Council will use the following methods to consult the local community.

Stage	Consultation Method	Duration of Consultation
Scoping Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Scoping report will be prepared where considered appropriate for new SPDs</li> <li>• Updates to existing SPDs will not usually require the preparation of Scoping report before the preparation a draft SPD</li> </ul>	Minimum of 4 weeks
Draft SPD Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory consultees and those who have requested to be on our local plan consultation database will be consulted via Emails/Letter.</li> <li>• The consultation document will be made available on the council's website. A hard copy will be made available to view on request.</li> </ul>	Minimum of 6 weeks
SEA Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screening involves seeking an opinion from statutory bodies; Historic England, Natural England and Environment Agency whether the SPD would require a SA / SEA</li> </ul>	Minimum of 4 weeks

### **Guidance to Consultees**

The council will acknowledge the receipt all the responses we receive by email, letter or the consultation portal in a timely manner. After consultation has closed, we will consider all the comments made throughout the public consultation process and they will help inform the next stage in the preparation of the local plan document. The council cannot accept confidential or anonymous comments.

Following consultation, a Consultation Feedback Report will be produced. This will summarise the activity of the consultation process, an overview of the key themes emerging from comments and provide feedback on the comments. The Consultation Feedback Report will be made available on the council's website.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

Unlike Local Plan Documents, Neighbourhood Plans (and Neighbourhood Development Orders) are produced by communities themselves through Neighbourhood Forums and Parish and Town Councils. The council as a local

planning authority will provide planning advice as part of ‘the Duty to Support ‘ neighbourhood groups at key stages of plan preparation.

Neighbourhood Plans must be in conformity with the Newcastle Local Plan and National Planning Policies and guidance, and can set policies for the development of land within the neighbourhood area. Neighbourhood Plans must look to enable development and should not be used to attempt to restrict the building of new homes or businesses.

The council will support neighbourhoods in the preparation of their plans where appropriate. The type of support that the council may be able to offer could include; providing guidance and advice in the plan making process, giving advice on general conformity with the Local Plan and other planning policy documents and providing feedback on draft plans.

The consultation procedures for Neighbourhood Plans are set out in the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Neighbourhood Plan Stage	Consultation Method	Duration of Consultation
Neighbourhood Area Designation Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory consultees and those who have requested to be on our local plan consultation database will be consulted via Emails/Letter as a minimum</li> <li>The consultation document will be made available on the council’s website. A printed copy will be made available to view on request.</li> </ul>	Minimum of 6 weeks
Neighbourhood Forum Designation Consultation		Minimum of 6 weeks
Submission Consultation and Publicity of a plan proposal		Minimum of 6 weeks

### **Brownfield Register**

The local planning authority is required to prepare and maintain a register of brownfield land (also referred to as previously developed land) that is suitable and available for residential development, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017.

Some sites included in the Brownfield Register may be granted ‘Permission in Principle’. This sets out the principle that residential development can take place on that site, subject to a further technical consent before the permission can be implemented. Consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017.

### **Other Supporting Documents**

The Local Plan is supported by other planning documents which include;

- **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – This document sets out how the council will involve the community and other stakeholders
- **Local Development Scheme (LDS)** – This sets out the timetable for the production of the Local Plan
- **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** – This document provides information and data to assess the extent to which planning policies set out in the Local Plan documents are being achieved.
- **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) /Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** – This is an assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the Local Plan, undertaken alongside the preparation of the plan and is subject to consultation, in accordance with the requirements of Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Part 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

## Section 3: Community Involvement in Development Management

### Development Management

Development Management is the stage at which decisions are made on proposals for the use and development of land and buildings. Guidance on submitting planning applications is available via the council's website and the Planning Portal.

An important part of this process is to provide information and advice to applicants and take into account the views of the community and statutory consultees. There are many different methods that the council uses to consult the community on planning applications.

The extent of community involvement will depend upon the type of application that is being considered and more extensive consultation may be required for major applications or applications with a significant interest. There are three main stages of a planning application – pre-application, application and post-application.

### Pre-Application

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of Local Planning Authorities working pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Newcastle City Council encourages pre-application engagement prior to the submission of planning applications.

Pre-application discussions can provide a number of benefits, including;

- Providing an understanding of the relevant planning policies and other material considerations associated with a proposed development
- Identifying the information required to accompany a formal planning application, thus reducing the likelihood of delays at the validation stage
- It can give a greater degree of certainty of whether an application is likely to be supported
- Identifying and addressing issues at pre-application stage, this can save time when an application is submitted and may result in a quicker decision

Any views or opinions given during the pre-application process are informal and are not binding on any future decision made. For further information and details regarding the charges for this service please visit our website or contact:

[planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk)

## **Planning Application**

Once an application has been submitted, validated and entered in the planning register, local planning authorities are required to undertake a formal period of public consultation prior to deciding a planning application.

The statutory requirements for publicity for applications for planning permission are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

### **Who we will Consult**

Upon receipt of a planning application the council will undertake a period of formal consultation. Depending on the type of planning application being considered, the council is also required to consult various organisations and bodies and to invite them to make representations.

The main types of groups consulted include;

- Public
- Statutory Consultees – where there is a requirement to consult specific bodies, e.g. the Environment Agency, The Coal Authority
- Non-Statutory Consultees – where advice is sought from bodies likely to have an interest in the proposed development

### **How we will Consult**

The level of consultation carried out for planning applications, will be proportionate to the type and scale of application being determined. In all cases, publicity will meet the legal requirements. If significant amendments are made to an application, neighbours will be re-notified and allowed a minimum of 7 days to make comments. Neighbours will not be re-notified of relatively minor changes.

Notifying neighbours by letter is the main method used to consult on the majority of planning applications. This involves letters being sent out to all adjoining neighbours (properties that share a common boundary with the application site). Further discretionary neighbour notification may be carried out for applications likely to generate wider interest. If the council is unsure who owns the adjoining site, a site notice will be displayed. A site notice and a press notice may also be used when considered appropriate.

### **How to Comment on a Planning Application**

On receipt and registration of a valid planning application, the council will enter details of all the application documents and related information on the council website.

Comments must be made in writing and submitted through one of the following ways:



- Online at: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning-applications/search-and-comment-on-planning-applications>
- Emails at: [Planning.Control@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.Control@newcastle.gov.uk)
- Letters should be sent to: Development Management, Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

The council can only take land use planning issues into account when it makes a decision on an application. These will vary depending on the proposal and site circumstances, but may include:

- Local Plan Policies
- National Planning Policies
- The size, appearance, layout and density of the proposed development
- Daylight, sunlight and overshadowing
- Overlooking or loss of privacy
- Means of access, parking, servicing, traffic generation, highway safety
- Impact on landscape and ecological habitats
- Effect on listed buildings, conservation areas and archaeology
- Air quality and odours
- Contamination
- Renewable energy, sustainability of the proposed development
- Crime prevention and community safety
- Flood risk
- Noise and disturbance

The following issues cannot be taken into account:

- Effects on property value
- Trade competition
- Loss of view
- Civil issues such as boundary and access disputes, damage to property during construction, capacity of private drains
- Building Regulation matters

## **Determining Applications**

Decisions on planning applications submitted to the council are usually made by either; Planning Officers, or by Planning Committee. Decisions are usually made within 8 weeks for minor and other applications or 13 weeks for major applications.

More than 90% of applications are decided by Planning Officers in accordance with the scheme of delegation as set out in The Newcastle Charter. For applications that are determined by Planning Officers, once the consultation period has ended, a report is prepared recommending that the application is given consent or is refused. This recommendation is based on an assessment of the proposal against the

relevant planning policies and other materials considerations, taking into account comments that have been received.

However, most major and or controversial planning applications are reported to the Planning Committee for a decision to be made by Members of the council. Any comments during the consultation period will be detailed in the report taken to the Planning Committee. The committee report is available before the meeting and will be made available to download from the website. For further information about Planning Committee please visit our website at:

<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning-applications/planning-guidance/planning-committee>

## **Post Application**

### **Appeals**

The planning system allows an applicant to appeal against a refusal of planning permission, against conditions imposed on a planning approval or against a non-determination of a planning application. There is no third-party right of appeal.

The Planning Inspectorate deals with planning appeals on behalf of the Secretary of State and this process can be dealt with through written representations, a hearing or an inquiry. Newcastle City Council will inform consultees and those who expressed an opinion on the original application when an appeal is made, with the exception of appeals which are heard through the householder fast-track service. Any additional comments which objectors or supporters wish to make should be sent direct to the Planning Inspectorate.

### **Planning Enforcement**

Planning enforcement plays an essential role in delivering an effective and efficient planning service. Its role involves monitoring ongoing development and investigating possible breaches of planning control and seeking resolutions to planning problems.

All enforcement complaints will be investigated by the council's enforcement team. Report of alleged breached of planning control can be made through a number of sources, such as in writing, online, in person, through local councillors, via email or by telephone. There is no public consultation process undertaken on enforcement cases. Complainants will be kept informed of the process and the outcome of the complaint. Where breaches of planning control are suspected, the council has a full range of enforcement powers and where expedient will take appropriate action to ensure compliance.

### **Customer Feedback**

The council hopes that you will be satisfied with the service that we provide. If you have any suggestions, concerns or difficulties we want to hear from you.

*Contact Details*

## Development Management

Write to:

Development Management  
Civic Centre  
Barras Bridge  
Newcastle  
NE1 8QH

Email: [planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk)

## Planning Policy

Write to:

Planning Policy  
Civic Centre  
Barras Bridge  
Newcastle  
NE1 8QH

Email: [planningpolicy@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@newcastle.gov.uk)

Members of the public who have submitted on-line comments on applications will be contacted after the determination of an application seeking their views on the service provided and the handling of the case. This feedback is then reported to the Planning Committee on a quarterly basis and used to review and improve the service provided.