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Executive Summary



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1.1 The statement of community involvement (SCI) sets out the ways in which you can comment on planning applications, and how and when you can influence the content of new planning policy documents.
- 1.1.2 Surrey County Council is the County Planning Authority (CPA) responsible

- c. Using methods of involvement that suit different people and that are appropriate to the stage of the planning process;
- d. Making sure that all information relevant to plans or planning applications is easily accessible to as many people as possible;
- e. Ensuring the process of consultation is open and transparent;
- f. Giving feedback so that those involved are aware of the contribution they have made to the process; and
- g. Making sure the limits of what we can realistically achieve is fully understood.

1.2.2 The SCI also conforms to statutory requirements<sup>2</sup> and takes account of government planning practice guidance<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Planning Practice Guidance](#)

### 1.3 Who we will involve

- 1.3.1 We will involve groups, organisations and people who may be directly or indirectly affected by planning decisions in Surrey. This may include:
- a. Individuals;
  - b. Community groups, action groups and other voluntary bodies (such as sporting and leisure groups) and environmental groups (such as Surrey Wildlife Trust or The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds);
  - c. Businesses (such as chambers of commerce and minerals and waste companies and trade associations); and
  - d. Statutory organisations such as district and borough councils, parish councils, including those adjoining the administrative boundary of the county, and, for example, the Environment Agency.
- 1.3.2 For more information regarding the organisations we consult see Appendix 1.

### 1.4 Electronic communications

- 1.4.1 Electronic communication provides a way to disseminate large amounts of information. This is especially important for the more rural areas of the county where it can be difficult for some residents to get to local district and borough council offices or Surrey County Council offices.
- 1.4.2 By the end of 2014 more than 99% of premises in Surrey had access to fibre optic network. This will make it easier for people to access information on planning applications, minerals and planning policy documents and make representations to the Council.
- 1.4.3 The Planning Authority is committed to making the most appropriate use of electronic communication when undertaking consultation and notification activities. Where appropriate email or use of the internet will be the primary method of communication when engaging communities during the plan making process or consulting on planning applications.
- 1.4.4 Nevertheless, reliance on electronic communication will not always be appropriate and we will still rely on site notices and letters where these are necessary to ensure effective communication.

## 1.5 Hard-to-reach groups

- 1.5.1 For some people it may be difficult to get involved in planning decisions and plan-making for all sorts of reasons. These bodies are sometimes called -to- Hard-to-reach groups may change over time, but the



SCI we set out the stages of developing these plans and how we will involve the community at each stage.

- c. **Involving the community in the long term:** Involving the community does not end with publishing a plan or making a decision on a planning application. In this SCI we set out how we will continue to work with the community once facilities are up and running and when monitoring how well the minerals and waste local plans are being put into practice.

## 2 Planning applications

### 2.1 Our role as the planning authority

- 2.1.1 Surrey County Council is required to undertake consultation and publicise planning applications and this varies according to type of application. This section sets out how we will involve the local community who may be affected by a proposal in the planning application process.

### 2.2 Pre-application discussions

- 2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages pre-application discussions and states that 'early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties'.
- 2.2.2 Surrey County Council encourages developers to enter into pre-application discussions with the Council to establish the information that will be required, and to identify key issues and policies associated with any potential application. Further information on pre-application discussions is available on the website<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.2.3 The Council operates a charging scheme for pre-application advice relating to Minerals and Waste development only. The pre-application discussions for planning applications webpage also provides more information on the charging scheme in the form of a minerals and waste pre-application advice guidance document. This sets out the benefits to developers of seeking planning advice on applications prior to submission and the arrangements for providing advice.
- 2.2.4 Pre-application discussions take place between the developer and the County Planning Authority as they are largely technical exercises. However, they can provide an opportunity for the local community/local residents to be engaged in the planning application process. The council encourages developers to talk to the community, to inform them of their plans and so

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<sup>4</sup> [Pre-application discussions for planning applications](#)









## 2.5 Amendments to planning applications

### a) All planning applications:

- 2.5.1 Amendments to a development proposal are often made during the process of considering a planning application. There is no statutory obligation on local authorities to consult on or publicise changes to planning applications that are not accompanied by an Environmental Statement. It is up to the local planning authority to decide whether further consultation and publicity is necessary and, when undertaken, to set the timeframe for responses, balancing the need for people to be given time to consider and respond to the amendment against the need for efficient decision making.
- 2.5.2 Where it is decided further consultation is necessary, only those consultees with an interest in the proposed amendment will be consulted. It will be down to the local planning authority to determine in which consultees have an interest, depending on the amendment.
- 2.5.3 All those notified and who have made representations will be made aware of how they can keep up to date with the progress of an application, including whether the application is amended before it is determined. Further publicity will be at the discretion of the case officer depending on the extent of the amendments and the level of public interest.
- 2.5.4 Details of all amendments to planning applications will be placed on the



## 2.8 Appeals

- 2.8.1 If we refuse to give planning permission, the applicant has the right to appeal<sup>19</sup>. Appeals must be made to the Planning Inspectorate<sup>20</sup> who manages the process on behalf of the Secretary of State. If we receive notification of an appeal from the Planning Inspectorate we publicise it in line with the legal requirements. Any written comments received relating to the original application will be forwarded by us to the Planning Inspectorate and the appellant for consideration as part of the appeal process. We must write to statutory and non-statutory consultees, and everyone who was originally notified or made comments on the planning application so that they have the opportunity to participate in the appeal. In addition we may give further publicity by newspaper advert or site notice if this is required by the Planning Inspectorate. Appeal decisions can be viewed on the Planning Inspectorate website

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<sup>19</sup> There are other circumstances when an applicant may make an appeal (i) when a decision on their application has not been made within the statutory timescale (non-determination of an application), (ii) against a planning condition that has been attached to a planning permission. Appeals may also be made in relation to enforcement notices and stop notices.

<sup>20</sup> For more information on the Planning Inspectorate visit the [Planning Inspectorate webpage](#).



## 3 Planning policy documents

### 3.1 Development Plan Documents (Local Plans)

3.1.1 Surrey County Council has adopted a full set of Development Plan Documents (Local Plans) as follows:

[Surrey Waste Plan](#) adopted 6 May 2008

[Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy DPD](#) adopted 19 July 2011

[Surrey Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates DPD](#) adopted 19 July 2011

[Aggregates Recycling Joint DPD](#) adopted 12 February 2013

3.1.2 The [Minerals and Waste Development Scheme](#) (MWDS) sets out the arrangements for the monitoring and review of the Local Plans listed above.

3.1.3 When Local Plans are reviewed, we will undertake consultation at the key stages of the plan making process as required by statutory requirements<sup>21</sup> and government planning practice guidance<sup>22</sup>.

3.1.4 The following illustrates those key stages and shows when you can get involved in the process of preparing planning documents. We will ask for your views as early as possible so that you have the greatest opportunity to influence the policy making process. The stages and consultation periods are set out below:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Consultation period (minimum):</b>
Gathering of evidence and public consultation on what the Local Plan should contain	12 weeks
Public consultation on the soundness of the Local Plan prior to submission of the local plan (known as the Local Plan submission draft) to the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate	6 weeks
Independent public Examination of submitted Local Plan	6 weeks
Publication of modifications to the submission draft Local Plan if required	6 weeks
Adoption of local plan by County Council	N/A

3.1.5 We will publicise details of formal consultation by:

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<sup>21</sup> [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Planning Practice Guidance](#)

Sending an email<sup>23</sup> or letter to all statutory organisations and other organisations or groups on our minerals and waste database<sup>24</sup>;

Updating our website with details of current consultations and upcoming consultations.

3.1.6 We may also use other methods including: media e.g. Surrey Matters magazine, social media and workshops or meetings to make you aware of consultations.

3.1.7 We will make it clear in our communication details of:

- The consultation period,
- How to comment
- Where and when we will make documents available.

3.1.8 In order to submit comments individuals will be required to give their name and address. All representations will be acknowledged and treated as public documents. It will not be possible to respond to every letter in detail. What we will do is publish a summary of the results of consultations on our website and show how we have considered them. For more information about how we process your data please refer to our privacy policy (ref95.32 84u9(o)-3(p)-hetings-3(p-3( geW\*(0

### 3.3 Local Development Scheme

- 3.3.1 The Council is responsible for producing and keeping up to date a Local Development Scheme.

Agency, and Historic England (as identified under Regulation 4 of those Regulations). Regulation 12 specifies a period of 5 weeks for consultation on the SEA scoping report.

- 3.4.7 The length of time for which consultation should be carried out in respect of draft plans for which environmental reports have been prepared under the SEA Regulations is not specified in those Regulations

Highlight where the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)<sup>29</sup> investment could help fund improvements to county council infrastructure and services for the local community.

#### 4.2.3

[Neighbourhood Planning Guide](#) available on our website.

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<sup>29</sup> Further information is available on the

## 5 Longer term engagement

### 5.1 Monitoring the Statement of Community Involvement

5.1.1 Involving the community does not end with adopting a local plan or making a decision on a planning application. This section covers opportunities for involving people to help measure the effectiveness of the planning process and improve the quality of our decisions.

### 5.2 Annual Monitoring Report

5.2.1 The annual monitoring report is a useful way of keeping people up to date on how effectively we are achieving the planning objectives in our minerals and waste local plans.

5.2.2 We will produce an annual monitoring report that provides information on:

Preparing and reviewing the Minerals and Waste Local Plans and other planning documents;

Planning applications for minerals and waste development and our own proposals for development; and

Monitoring minerals and waste policies and enforcement work.

5.2.3 The annual monitoring report is available to download on our [website](#).

### 5.3 Liaison Groups

5.3.1 We will continue to liaise with local communities through bodies such as action groups, parish and town councils and where they exist, community liaison groups, in dealing with any issues arising at minerals and waste sites.

5.3.2 Liaison groups are an effective way of involving the community in dealing with issues at minerals and waste sites. These groups meet regularly and may be chaired by a county councillor. Planning officers, county councillors, the site operator and other interested people (such as representatives of local communities) take part in these groups. The liaison groups provide a forum for discussing future developments and an opportunity to deal with any ongoing issues at the site.

5.3.3 They are generally organised by the applicant or site operator for large sites, or for developments that were particularly controversial during the planning process.

### 5.4 Monitoring and enforcement

5.4.1 The Council carries out monitoring and enforcement of minerals and waste sites in order to ensure compliance with planning permissions. Regular site visits and other contact with both mineral and waste operators helps us to identify possible issues and address them as early as possible. Where development is taking place without planning permission it will seek to resolve the situation in the most appropriate way through one or more of the following:

encouraging the submission of a retrospective planning application

negotiating the cessation of activity and the restoration of the site







