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STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

BINDING INSPECTORS REPORT 5TH JANUARY 2006

ADOPTED 7TH MARCH 2006

CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

BINDING INSPECTORS REPORT RECEIVED ON 5TH JANUARY 2006.

ADOPTED 7TH MARCH 2006.

**I.P. Burchill
Director of Environment
Castle Point Borough Council
Council Offices
Kiln Road
Thundersley
Benfleet
Essex
SS7 1TF
Tel: 01268 882200
Email: planning@castlepoint.gov.uk**

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1. INTRODUCTION

What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the high standards to be achieved by Castle Point Borough Council in involving local communities in all planning policy documents and planning applications. This is a clear public statement which will enable people to know how and when they will be involved in the preparation of planning policy documents and how they will be consulted on planning applications.
- 1.2 This document provides an overview of the Council's general approach to community involvement followed by more detailed standards for community involvement in Planning Policy Issues and Development Control. This document will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it responds to the changing needs of local communities.

Why have a Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.3 This document is being prepared as part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory and key document within the LDF because communities should be involved at an early stage in the preparation of planning policy. This participation is essential to achieve local ownership of the policies and decisions that will shape the future of the Borough.
- 1.4 Through involving local communities early on in the plan making process it is anticipated that policy documents will receive a greater level of public support, as they will better reflect the priorities of local people. As a result decisions made on planning applications should reflect the views and wishes of local people better, creating an environment people are proud and happy to live in.

What are the Benefits of the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.5 The overall benefit of community involvement in the planning system is that the decisions made by elected councillors are informed by the views of the public they represent, however, there are a range of other benefits of community involvement, making it an important part of the democratic process.

Benefit to: Wider Community	Benefit to: Participants	Benefit to: The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater public ownership and sense of democracy; • Improved community cohesion and sense of inclusion; • Local services that are better able to meet local needs, and • Obtaining value for money. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ability to influence the decision making process; • A sense of contributing to the community; • Better experiences of using services; • More opportunity to work together; • Greater sense of ownership of local services; • Greater sense of services being user friendly; and • An understanding of the way services & the Council works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of responsibilities; • A contribution to problem solving; • More opportunities to work together; • More access to local knowledge reducing the time and money spent on expensive studies; • Greater public involvement; and • A sense of public ownership and support for Council activities.

Figure 1.1 Benefits of the SCI

What are the objectives of the Statement of Community Involvement?

1.6 The key objectives of the Statement of Community Involvement are listed below.

The Council will, through cost effective, high quality, external and internal communication and public relations, aim to:

- i. Raise awareness locally of planning issues, priorities and services;
- ii. Open and maintain channels of two way dialogue with communities at an early stage in the plan making process;
- iii. Ensure that all people who want or need information have access to it, whatever their circumstances;
- iv. Apply good consultation practice, both through internal and external partnership working;
- v. Respond actively to the needs of people however expressed, and encourage more people of all backgrounds and ages to become involved in their local community and the decisions that affect them;
- vi. Respond actively to regional and national policy; and
- vii. Maximise the potential of electronic communications.

2. THE COUNCIL'S PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation is a powerful tool for improving the quality and value of services by ensuring that policy makers stay in touch with citizens. By collecting the views of members of the public Councillors will be able to make informed decisions on planning matters.
- 2.2 The Council is committed to ensuring that people are consulted, and the planning service will ensure as a minimum, that consultation occurs in compliance with the procedures set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- 2.3 It will not always be possible for the Planning Service to consult every person on all aspect of its work. However, anybody is welcome to comment on any planning issues within the timescales allowed. With the exception of time, constraints placed upon the Authority should not prevent members of the public from expressing their opinions.

Public Participation

- 2.4 The Council will involve the public at earlier stages in the plan making process within constraints on time and resources. Early public participation has an important role to play in ensuring that the planning service is responsive to community needs.

Guiding Principles for Consultation and Public Participation

- 2.5 The Council recognises that there is scope to improve how it listens to and communicates with communities. To improve its performance in this respect the Council has adopted guiding principles for consultation:
 - i. Consultation will be carried out to a high standard with the most appropriate technique being used;
 - ii. Consultation needs will be built into the development of strategies and plan production at the beginning of the process;
 - iii. The Council will use clear questions that will inform real decision-making. The Council will tell members of the public why a question is being asked;
 - iii. Consultation documents will be clear to read with a summary. Contact details will be provided as a point of contact and to assist the public in understanding the document;

- iv. Consultation documents will be made widely available in paper and electronic formats. The Council's partners will be consulted as a mechanism for creating public awareness on planning issues;
- v. Adequate time will be allowed for consultation. For the assessment of planning applications a statutory time frame of 21 days is allowed to ensure adequate opportunity for public comment whilst enabling the Council to make planning decisions in 8 weeks as required by legislation. For the policy documents a greater time period of 6 weeks will be allowed for the public to comment;
- vi. Responses will be analysed carefully, objectively and fairly. Feedback will be provided where possible and the results of surveys will be published on the Council's website and in the Borough News, and
- vii. Consultation exercises will be inclusive. Hard to reach groups will be engaged in an alternative manner if it is found that these groups are under-represented in a consultation exercise.

Consultation and Public Participation Techniques

- 2.6 In order to involve local communities effectively in the plan making and planning application process, the Planning Service will use the most appropriate consultation techniques available subject to cost constraints. A list of techniques that the Council may use is included as table 1.
- 2.7 The list is by no means complete and the Planning Service will consider the use of other consultation techniques as they become available.

Consultation Techniques

Consultation Technique	Pros	Cons	Relative Cost
Newspaper articles, press releases and advertisements to draw to the public's attention issues and the publication of key documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminated to the wider community; Can draw people attention to the Council's website, and Draws media attention to consultation efforts; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access is limited to those who read local press; Responses are limited to narrow interests and will not be representative, and Responses may not be informed. 	Low
Articles in the Borough News posted to all dwellings in the Borough;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminated to all households in the Borough, including hard to reach households; Can draw attention to the Council's website, and Positively promotes the Council's activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access is limited to those who read the Borough News, and Responses are limited to narrow interests and will not be representative. 	
Public exhibition of planning policy documents and the planning service in general at local events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ad-hoc feedback on services and ideas for change; A source of suggestions and comments; Promotes good relationships between the staff and the public; An easy way to publicise services and provide information to users, and Can help to contact non-users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who attend may not be representative; Will not provide statistical information; Human resource intensive; Good venues are needed, and Needs widespread and sustained advertising in the locality if people are to know about them. 	Low
The use of the Council's website to publish documents for consultation and receive electronic responses;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast Feedback; Relatively cheap; Can consult groups such as young people, professionals and business people, and Complies with e-government principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excludes those without internet connections, and Too technologically demanding for some people. 	Low
The dissemination of information through the library service, and other community facilities such as GP surgeries, public notice boards, community halls and leisure centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can raise awareness in hard to reach groups such as older people and young people, and Gives publicity to an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access is limited to users of community facilities, and Responses are limited to narrow interests and will not be representative. 	Low
Advertising the publication of key documents at the railway station/public notice boards etc to raise awareness amongst commuters;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can raise awareness in hard to reach groups such as professionals and business people, and Gives publicity to an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access is limited to those who use the train or look at notice boards, and Responses may be limited to narrow interests and will not be representative, 	Medium

Figure 1.2 Consultation Techniques

Consultation Technique (cont.)	Pros	Cons	Relative Cost
Use questionnaires to gain a statistical information of the issues and priorities of the people of Castle Point;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If well done can provide reliable statistical data; • Allows changes to be tracked over time; • Large samples can be analysed quickly; • Results tend to be taken seriously, and • Can help get views of non-users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad surveys can give misleading results; • May reflect the Council's agenda, ignoring user priorities; • Can be difficult to get the view of disadvantaged minority groups; • Low response rate, and • Questionnaire may be incompletely answered. 	Variable
Meetings with existing networks and community groups, especially the Local Strategic Partnership;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives access to information being collected by independent organisations; • Access to quantitative and qualitative information; • Can help get views of particular groups; • Relatively quick and cheap; • Gives an opportunity to explore views in depth; • Discussion of detailed solutions with specialists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some organisations may contain particularly motivated people who are not representative of users, and • May not provide statistical information. 	Low to medium
Use of focus groups to discuss specific issues and to determine priorities;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights what is important to users; • Users may feel more confident in groups and say things they wouldn't say on their own; • Groups allow people to "spark" ideas off each other; • Provide information about what people think and why, and • Can help get responses from non-users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must use an experienced facilitator; • Group views can tend to the norm; • Difficult to prioritise issues, and • Don't provide statistical information. 	Medium to high
Consultation with the Citizens Panel to gain a representative view of the issues facing the inhabitants of Castle Point;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative sample of residents; • Wide ranging feedback on a number of topics; • Ready to use consultation group, and • Can check changing attitude across a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to recruit hard to reach groups; • Danger of participant boredom/drop out; • Need to change participants regularly, and • Expensive in human and financial resources. 	Medium to high
Public presentations to many different sectors of the community to discuss issues and the solutions that planning policy can deliver;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone can attend; • Issues can be explained and discussed; • Gives publicity to an issue; • Can bring out new ideas, and • Idea sharing opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May only attach those affected; • Narrow interests may dominate the debate, and • Skilled chairing needed. 	Low

Figure 1.2 Consultation Techniques continued

Accessibility of the Consultation and Public Participation Process

- 2.8 Copies of all planning policy documents will be made widely available at a range of locations throughout the Borough to ensure accessibility. These documents and all planning applications will also be available to view on the Council's website and at the Council Offices.
- 2.9 To ensure that all members of the community can understand the documents the Council produces, it will use plain English as far as possible and avoid using technical jargon. Where English is not the first language of the reader, the document can be translated into other languages on request.
- 2.10 Specific effort needs to be made to enable hard to reach groups to participate in consultation exercises. The Council will endeavour to seek the views of young people, older people, ethnic minorities and those with disabilities by using specific consultation techniques for these groups.
- 2.11 In addition, this Council will seek to ensure that the planning documents it produces are accessible to those with a range of disabilities. Documents will therefore be available in large print and audio formats on request. In addition to this, the Planning Counter at the Council Offices has been made wheelchair accessible.
- 2.12 The public may respond in a number of ways to consultation and public participation exercises. Normally the public would be asked to respond in writing, either in the form of a letter, or as an email so that there is a physical and accurate expression of the person's opinion. The Council does however appreciate that it is not possible for all members of the community to respond in writing and therefore alternative arrangements are available.
- 2.13 The planning service will happily assist any member of the public in expressing their views in writing. They can have the letter read back to them by a third party to ensure that it accurately reflects their views.
- 2.14 Members of the public may prefer to express their views on applications or documents being reported to committee orally. A protocol has been prepared for public comment on planning applications at Planning Committee meetings, attached as Appendix 4. A Separate protocol for planning policy will be prepared during 2007.

Accessing Expert Planning Advice

- 2.15 The Council recognises that not everybody understands planning matters sufficiently to participate in the planning process. Officers of the Planning Service will assist members of the public by producing documents that are easy to understand and free of technical jargon as far as is possible. Officers are also available during office hours to respond to planning enquiries in person, over the phone or via letter/email.

- 2.16 Some members of the public may feel they require further assistance to engage in the planning process. In this instance many people feel it is appropriate to employ a consultant to assist them. The Council encourages the use of consultants in this manner as they aid the public to make informed, and valid comments on planning matters.
- 2.17 Consultants can however be expensive to employ and the Council recognises that this may not be within the means of local community groups and many individuals. The Council will therefore ensure that these people are aware of the advice and support that can be offered by Planning Aid.
- 2.18 Planning Aid offers free, independent and professional advice on planning matters to community groups and individuals who cannot afford to employ a consultant. It enables local communities, particularly those with limited resources, to participate in planning matters. Where Planning Aid is working with groups in Castle Point, the Council will ensure that this service has access to information in order to support the local community.
- 2.19 Planning Aid can be contacted by telephoning 0870 850 9801. Alternatively they can be emailed at eecw@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

Councillors and Community Involvement

- 2.20 Those who believe they will be affected by a planning matter will often seek to influence the outcome through an approach to a local Councillor. However, Members should only give procedural advice, because they may otherwise not be seen as impartial. This will enable decisions on planning matters to be made in a fair, impartial and informed manner, considering all representations made by different people within the community.
- 2.21 A list of Councillors and their contact details is included as Appendix 3 of this document. Alternatively members of the public are welcomed to write to their Councillor at the Council Offices.

Reporting Back to the Community

- 2.22 The Council will contact people who respond to consultation exercise directly to advise them of the outcome. The Council will also publish the outcomes of consultation exercises for wider public information. All planning applications are accompanied by a report explaining the decision. These are available at the Council Offices and on the Council's website. Approved policy documents will also be published in a similar manner, as well as being advertised in the local press.

3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The East of England Plan and the Local Development Framework

3.1 Castle Point has a Development Plan against which all planning decisions are made. Currently this consists of the Local Plan and The Essex Structure Plan. This will gradually be replaced by the East of England Plan and The Castle Point Local Development Framework.

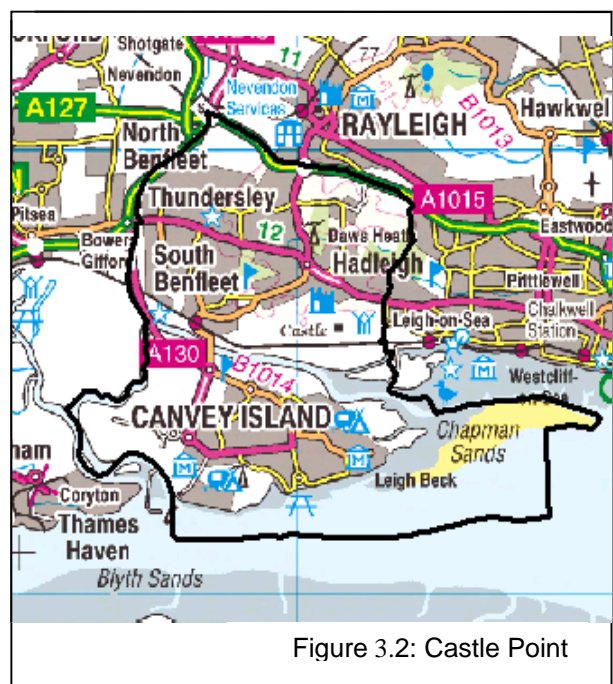
3.2 Castle Point is in the East of England and is therefore covered by the East of England Plan. The East of England Plan will be adopted in late 2006 or early 2007. The Plan promotes sustainable development across the region and includes policies that can be achieved through the planning system and in partnership with other regional strategies.

3.3 The Plan includes sub-regional policies relating to the Thames Gateway South Essex. Castle Point is in the Thames Gateway and is therefore affected by these policies.

3.4 Planning policy for Castle Point will have to be in general conformity with the East of England Plan. It therefore effects decisions made locally.

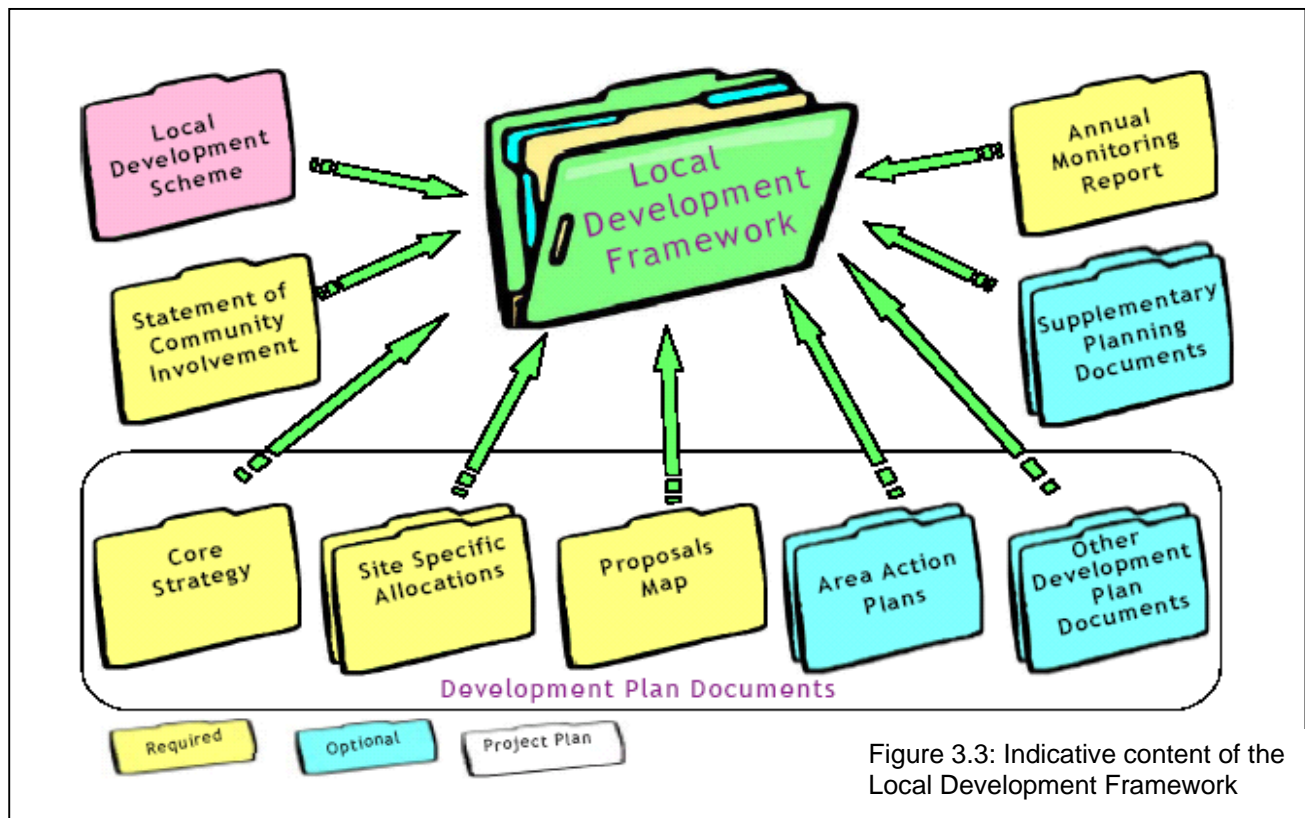
3.5 Local planning policy is currently in the Local Plan. The Local Development Framework (LDF) will gradually replace the Local Plan. It will provide a local vision of how Castle Point will develop. The LDF will integrate with the Community Strategy and other local strategies to provide a framework for positive change in the Borough.

3.6 The starting point for preparing the Castle Point Local Development Framework is the Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides a timetable detailing when each document in the LDF will be produced. A copy of this



timetable is included as appendix 1. People should refer to this timetable when wanting to participate in the preparation of the LDF.

- 3.7 The Castle Point Local Development Framework links a variety of different planning documents as illustrated below.



Target Groups for Consultation on the LDF

- 3.8 To ensure that documents are based on the needs of the whole community of the Borough it is important that a broad range of groups are targeted for consultation.
- i. The local residential community, including hard to reach groups;
 - ii. Businesses;
 - iii. Developers, landowners and agents etc;
 - iv. Central and regional government and neighbouring local authorities;
 - v. Statutory bodies and groups;
 - vi. Voluntary Organisations;
 - vii. Other interested parties; and
 - viii. The media.
- 3.9 Target groups will be contacted throughout the preparation of documents using electronic communication where possible to reduce costs. Interest parties will therefore be encouraged to supply their email addresses, where possible, to be part of this continuous consultation process..

- 3.10 Where possible existing interest or stakeholder groups, such as the Local Strategic Partnership, will be consulted to protect the public from too much consultation. The Council also has an Internal Consultation Group that assists services in combining consultation exercises, to again protect the public from excessive requests for information.

Community Involvement from the Start

- 3.11 For each Local Development Document (LDD), whether it be a development Plan Document (DPD) or a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), community involvement will be welcomed and encouraged. Comments, proposals and other ideas and initiatives will be welcomed throughout the preparation stage of each document. The Project Management Chart shown in the LDS indicates the start dates of all documents.
- 3.12 In order to conform with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the Planning Service must consult with the bodies listed below:
- i. The Countryside Agency;
 - ii. The Environment Agency;
 - iii. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage);
 - iv. English Nature;
 - v. The Strategic Rail Authority;
 - vi. The Highways Agency;
 - vii. The County Council; Local Planning Authorities adjoining the Borough; Town and Parish Councils in and adjoining the Borough;
 - viii. The Regional Development Agency (EEDA);
 - ix. Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies and who owns or controls electronic communications equipment in the area;
 - x. The Strategic Health Authority;
 - xi. Local electricity suppliers;
 - xii. Local gas suppliers;
 - xiii. Local sewerage undertaker; and
 - xiv. Local water supplier.
- 3.13 The regional planning body is also a specific consultation body. By consulting with the East of England Regional Assembly regularly the Council will be able to ensure the documents it produces are in general conformity with the East of England Plan.
- 3.14 The Council will also consult with any other body it believes will be able to provide information or may be affected either positively or negatively by the document under preparation. A list of the bodies is available as Appendix 2.

Consultee	Participation Techniques for Initial Consultation (Regulation 25 for DPDs)	
	DPD	SPD
Statutory Consultee	Send Issues and Options paper. Engage in meetings.	Send Issues and Options paper. Engage in meetings.
Stakeholder/ Interest Party	Send Issues and Options paper. Engage in meetings.	Send Issue and Options paper. Engage in meetings.
Wider Public	Survey local consultation group. Place article in local press. Make document widely available.	Publicise document in local press and make the document widely available.
Hard to Reach Groups	Send learning packs to schools and provide leaflets in doctors' surgeries, community halls, leisure centres, libraries, train stations and post offices. Involve representative groups in informal discussions.	Involve representative groups where appropriate in informal discussions. Provide leaflets in locations appropriate to the SPD.

Note: Further consultation methods will be used where appropriate.

Figure 3.4

Public Participation on DPD Preferred Policy Options

- 3.15 As a result of the ideas, proposals and comments made to the Council during the preparation stage of a document a variety of "Preferred Options" will be identified.
- 3.16 Preferred Options will be identified after considering all background evidence available, the findings of a Sustainability Appraisal (statutorily required), national, regional and sub-regional policies and guidance, and the views and comments of the public and consultees made during the preparation stage.
- 3.17 In accordance with regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, a document detailing the Preferred Options, will be published for public assessment and comment. Supporting documents such as background studies will also be made available to assist the public.
- 3.18 The document will be published on the councils website or on CD, and in hard copy available at the planning counter at the Council Offices. Where possible copies will also be available at local libraries, community centres and leisure centres. An advert will be published in a local newspaper to alert the public to the consultation on the preferred options. The advert will outline the matters covered by the document.
- 3.19 The Preferred Options document will also be sent to the specific consultation bodies and other organisations consulted during the preparation stage of the DPD. This will ensure that the evidence, ideas and concerns of these bodies are effectively considered.

3.20 To monitor access to each document a standard response form will be used. This will be used to identify groups that are under-represented in the responses received. A framework form is included as Appendix 5.

3.21 The community will have six weeks to comment on the preferred options document.

Consultee	Participation Techniques for Regulation 26 consultation
Statutory Consultee	Send Preferred Options paper. Engage in meetings.
Stakeholder/ Interest Party	Send Preferred Options paper. Engage in meetings.
Wider Public	Place an article in the Borough News or local press. Make the document widely available.
Hard to Reach Groups	Send Preferred Options paper to local representative groups. Send learning packs to schools and place leaflets in local doctors' surgeries, community halls, leisure centres, libraries, train stations and post offices.

Note: Further consultation methods will be used where appropriate

Figure 3.5

Community Involvement after a DPD is submitted to the Secretary of State

3.22 By involving the community early in preparing documents, they should reflect the community's needs and priorities well. However, after the final document is submitted to the Secretary of State, a six-week period is allowed for the public to make representations on the document.

3.23 The Inspector will examine the soundness of the document. Part of this examination will include an assessment of whether the SCI has been complied with. Landowners, developers and other interested parties wishing to introduce new sites at this stage must provide appropriate sustainability appraisal material and demonstrate comparable consultation to that undertaken by the Council. Otherwise, the Inspector will not be able to make a recommendation about their site in the binding report. Therefore, in order to avoid these onerous requirements, it is imperative that landowners, developers and other interested parties engage with the consultation process early on in the preparation of the document.

3.24 The Inspector, after the examination, will produce a report that is binding upon Castle Point Borough Council. Any changes that the Inspector proposes must be included in the final DPD. This report, along side any other documentation produced regarding a DPD will be made available to the public in a variety of formats. Once the final DPD is altered in accordance with the Inspectors Report this Council will adopt it.

Consultee	Community Involvement after a DPD is submitted to the Secretary of State
Statutory Consultee	Send Submitted DPD
Stakeholder/ Interest Party	Send Submitted DPD
Public Participation Respondent	Send Submitted DPD
Wider Public	Place an advert in the local press. Make the document widely available.
Hard to Reach Groups	Place an article in the local press or Borough News. Make the document available in Local Libraries.

Note: Further consultation methods will be used where appropriate.

Figure 3.6

Public Participation on SPDs

- 3.25 Following initial consultation and participation, the Council will prepare a consultation draft of the SPD. In accordance with Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the Council will make this draft document available to members of the public for a period of 6 weeks.
- 3.26 The document will be made available at the Council Offices, online and at local libraries. It will also be possible to receive a hard copy or CD of the document on request. An advert will be placed in the local press to alert members of the public to the availability of the document and its matters. Statutory consultees, stakeholders and appropriate local representative groups will be sent a copy of the document. Any other party that has registered an interest with the council regarding the SPD will be notified directly by letter of the availability of the document for consultation.
- 3.27 Due consideration will be given to all representations made on the SPD and a summary of the main issues and how they are addressed will be prepared. The SPD will not be adopted until this process has occurred.

Consultee	Participation Techniques for Regulation 17 consultation
Statutory Consultee	Send draft SPD. Engage in meetings.
Stakeholder/ Interest Party	Send draft SPD. Engage in meetings.
Wider Public	Place an article in the Borough News or local press. Make the document widely available.
Hard to Reach Groups	Send draft SPD to appropriate local representative groups. Place leaflets in appropriately located local doctors' surgeries, community halls, leisure centres, libraries train stations and post offices.

Note: Further consultation methods will be used where appropriate.

Figure 3.7

Responding to Consultations

- 3.28 All responses should be made in writing on the standard response form provided with the document under scrutiny as per paragraphs 2.11 and 2.12 of this document.

Reporting back on Planning Policy Consultations

- 3.29 Anyone who makes a comment at any stage will be included on a database, and will automatically be kept informed at all subsequent stages.
- 3.30 The final document will be published on the Internet and on CD. Hard copies will be available at a variety of locations throughout the Borough including the Council Offices and local libraries. An advert will be placed in the local press advertising the Council's intentions to adopt the document stating the date that it will come into effect.

Review of Local Development Documents

- 3.31 Where it is decided to review a LDD, all people who commented on the original document will be contacted, provided their contact details are up to date. Consultation and public participation on the review process will however be extended to all members of the local community, not just those who responded to the original LDD consultation.

Specific Community Involvement Techniques for Planning Policy

- 3.32 Many people may not take part in preparing the LDF, especially in the early stages. The planning service will therefore keep the wider community involved in the planning policy process through the Borough News. Resources allowing, public exhibitions will be held across the Borough also, where possible at pre-arranged events. These options for encouraging community involvement are relatively low cost, although public exhibitions can be human resource intensive.
- 3.33 Public consultation events will be held to encourage members of the public to discuss planning issues and consider possible solutions. The Council will endeavour to ensure that hard to reach groups are able to attend meetings and consultation events by organising them at times and locations that are more accessible. This option for engaging the community may incur higher costs than other options particularly in relation to human resources and data analysis. By ensuring that hard to reach groups are able to attend consultation events and meetings, the risk of under-representation is minimised.

Councillors and Local Development Documents

- 3.34 Members of the Council represent and make decisions on behalf of local people. The members are responsible for deciding the priorities of the Council and promoting the Council's policies and activities locally and regionally. Members will play a key role in forming partnerships with other organisations, community groups and local businesses to deliver the LDF.
- 3.35 It is important that members are involved in the formulation of the policies and can take ownership of them. A member's working party for the LDF will therefore be established. This working party will meet regularly to discuss policy options for the various documents and to consider the results of public consultation exercises and

background studies. This working party will meet in private for free discussion of a wide range of option. The minutes of these meetings will however be reported to the Planning Committee to ensure openness and transparency. The working party will comprise of members representing all the committees of the Council to ensure that the LDF integrates with the work of other service areas.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.36 With the exception of the Local Development Scheme and this document the SCI, all LDDs will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose of these will be to draw attention to the sustainability and environmental impacts that may arise as a result of the document. This will assist Castle Point to identify those policies that bring about sustainable regeneration and development of the Borough with minimal negative environmental, social and economic impacts.
- 3.37 The SA and SEA reports will form part of the consultation process at each stage in preparing documents. Consultation responses will also be invited on the SA and SEA reports themselves, as local knowledge is vital in ensuring that all environmental, social and economic issues are identified and addressed appropriately.

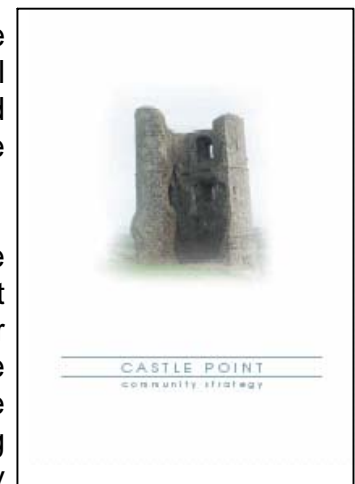
4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LDF & OTHER STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES

Introduction

- 4.1 In the past, planning has concentrated solely on the allocation of land for various uses but this has not always aligned with other strategies and plans. The LDF will bring both elements together to ensure that development improves the places where we live work and play. It is therefore essential that the LDF and in particular the Core Strategy, which will set out the spatial vision and broad policies for development in Castle Point up until 2021, takes account of all relevant strategies and programmes.
- 4.2 There are a range of relevant strategies and plans prepared by the Council and its partner organisations, for example:
- i. The Community Strategy;
 - ii. The Council's Corporate Priorities;
 - iii. The Consultation Strategy;
 - iv. The Housing Strategy;
 - v. The Essex Local Transport Plan;
 - vi. The Thames Gateway South Essex Green Grid Initiative; and
 - vii. The Essex County Council Waste and Minerals Plans.

The Community Strategy

- 4.3 The Community Strategy is a strategy developed by the Local Strategic Partnership for Castle Point. The Local Strategic Partnership is a group of individuals and organisations from the local community, and who therefore have an interest in how the Borough evolves into the future.
- 4.4 The Community Strategy is a document that identifies the vision and priorities of the community. The Government identifies the LDF as one of the key mechanisms for delivering Community Strategy objectives. Many of the elements of the Community Strategy will have land use implications that can be addressed through the planning system. The vision of the Borough stated in the Community Strategy is:



“A community where everyone can prosper, be safe and live in a high quality environment.”

- 4.5 In order to achieve this vision, the Castle Point Community Strategy identifies eight community priorities as listed below. The LDF has a role in delivering these priorities by providing a framework in which they can be achieved.

LEARNING FOR ALL	REGENERATING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY	BECOMING HEALTHIER	GETTING AROUND
ENVIRONMENT – ‘to maintain a clean and green place to live and work.	HAVING FUN	FEELING SAFER	SERVING YOU BETTER

Figure 3.7: Objectives of the Community Strategy

- 4.6 To ensure that planning policy links effectively with the community strategy and serves the community better, the Planning Service at Castle Point will seek the views of members of the Local Strategic Partnership in the production of the LDF documents.

The Corporate Priorities

- 4.7 The Community Strategy is central to the work of the Council. The vision of the Community Strategy is therefore the vision of the Council. However, Castle Point does not deliver all the services necessary to achieve the Community Strategy. The Council has therefore identified four priorities to maximise the use of its services in delivering the Community Strategies objectives:

ENVIRONMENT – CIVIC PRIDE	COMMUNITY SAFETY
REGENERATION AND HOMES	IMPROVING THE COUNCIL

Figure 3.8: Council Priorities for 2005-2006

- 4.8 The LDF has an important role to play in delivering the priorities of the Council, however it will not be possible for the planning service to address these priorities alone. Integration and partnership working with other services and organisations will be necessary to achieve real change.

The Housing Strategy and the Tenants Empowerment Strategy

- 4.9 These strategies contribute to the priorities of the Council. As part of the Housing Strategy and Tenant Empowerment Strategy, Council tenants are regularly engaged through the Castle Point Council Tenants Association. The Castle Point Tenants Participation Compact set out the standards for involving the tenants association in decisions made about housing services by the Council.
- 4.10 Very little of the housing in Castle Point is Council owned. The Housing Needs Survey Update 2004 reveals a need for additional housing stock for social renting and affordable purchase. The planning service will be responsible for meeting this need through planning policy. It is therefore appropriate to engage current housing tenants in the preparation of planning policy to ensure that new housing meets the needs and aspirations of people who are likely to benefit.

- 4.11 Council housing in Castle Point is very much restricted to those people in most need due to the small number of homes available. These people often fall within hard to reach groups for example elderly people. By working in partnership with the Housing Service to engage with the Tenants Association, it will be possible for the Planning Service to involve these people in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

Other Strategies and Programmes

- 4.12 Other strategies and programmes also have land use implications. Where appropriate the LDF will endeavour to integrate with these other strategies and programmes to achieve positive change in the Borough.

Interdepartmental Communications

- 4.13 Service managers will be kept informed of progress on the LDF, and where possible cross departmental partnership working will be encouraged to maximise benefits to the local communities. The Planning Service will ensure that all documentation produced as part of the LDF process is published on the Internal Intranet to ensure that all members and officers have ready access to the information available.

5. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Development Control

- 5.1 Development Control regulates and monitors development within the Borough in accordance with Local, Regional and National policy on planning. Local policy is currently set out in the Adopted Local Plan. The Local Development Framework will progressively replace this plan. Both the Local Plan and the LDF reflect or will reflect the community strategy. The implementation of the Local Plan and the future LDF by Development Control will therefore ensure that the priorities of the local communities are achieved. Development Control therefore has an important role to play in achieving the community strategy's vision of the Borough.

Community Involvement in Development Control

- 5.2 Community involvement is an important part of the Development Control system as development can significantly affect where people live economically/financially, environmentally and socially. Consultation within the development control process therefore involves notifying and engaging both the wider community and individuals likely to be affected. Government advice sets out clearly defined codes of practice for neighbour publicity. However, no system for publicising planning applications can be perfect. There needs to be a balance between consideration of cost, speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment.

Pre-application Consultation

- 5.3 It is a normal part of the planning process for applicants and/or agents to approach the Council prior to the submission of an application to discuss the proposed development. For small developments the majority of pre-application consultations are received in letter format. In these cases, planning officers offer procedural and policy advice to the applicant/agent, guiding development towards an acceptable form where possible. The Council aims to respond to pre-application queries within 15 working days of receipt. Letters are attached to the planning application file if an application is received and can be viewed by members of the wider public, either at the planning counter or via the Council's website.
- 5.6 For larger applications many developers meet with planning officers before submitting an application. This has benefits to the developer, the wider community and the Council. The developer benefits from advice from the planning officer regarding the most acceptable form of development. The wider community benefits because improvements to the proposal are made at an early stage. Finally, the Council benefits from being able to request information regarding the development in advance of the application, speeding up the application process. Letters related to the pre-application consultation process will be attached to the planning application file on receipt of an application. Where the publication of meeting minutes do not breach the Data Protection Act, these will also be made publicly available.

5.7 For some types of development pre-application discussions are needed to determine what extra information is needed as part of the application. Letters related to this pre-application consultation process will be attached to the application file on receipt of an application. Pre-application discussions must occur when:

- i. An application requires an Environmental Impact Assessment;
- ii. An application is on contaminated land or will increase pollution levels; or if
- iii. An application is in an area of high flood risk, or will increase flood risk.

5.8 The Council is sensitive to the concerns of local communities and is aware that pre-application community consultation by applicants can cause unnecessary alarm among local residents. As a result, the Council does not encourage such consultation. Where an organisation wishes to carry out pre-application consultation, they are advised to discuss this matter with the Council in advance so that it can be done in a manner that is sensitive to local community concerns.

Community Involvement on Planning Applications

5.9 **The Wider Community:** A list of planning applications received by the department is sent each week to local newspapers. This list is also available to view on the Council's planning website free of charge and is accessible 24 hours per day. Where a person does not have access to the website, the weekly planning list can be viewed at the Council Offices. Alternatively, a list can be sent out weekly for an annual charge of £70.

5.10 Development that is likely to create wider concern is advertised in the press, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995. The following list indicates the type of development Likely to require advertisement:

- i. Those developments that are likely to have a significant environmental impact, resulting in the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- ii. Those developments that do not accord with the provisions of the Local Plan (in the future the LDF).
- iii. Development that would affect a right of way designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- iv. Housing developments for ten or more dwellings.
- v. Proposals for large buildings with a floorspace of 1,000 square metres or more.
- vi. Other developments affecting sites of over 1ha in area.
- vii. Development affecting a listed building and/or conservation area.

5.11 **Individual Consultation:** A hand delivered letter notifies occupiers of premises most likely to be affected by a proposal that an application has been received. These consultees are invited to inspect the application and make written

observations by a specified date, which will be no less than 21 days from the date of delivery. Copies of the plans are available to view both at the Council Offices and online on the Council's website. If a neighbour is disabled or elderly, and unable to visit the Council Offices, a copy of the plans can be sent free of charge, on request. If it is uneconomical to reproduce the plans requested, then a Planning Officer will arrange to visit the neighbour.

- 5.12 **Extent of Neighbour Notification:** As a general rule, the adjoining occupiers to a proposal site, including those people who live opposite, are notified of a planning application. In some cases it may not be possible to notify all adjoining neighbours or users of a site individually and therefore at the Planning Officers discretion a site notice may also be displayed.
- 5.13 Comments are welcomed from individuals adjoining proposal sites and members of the wider community who wish to express an opinion regarding an application. To ensure that any comment is accurately recorded, the Council requires comments to be in writing. These comments can be submitted either as a letter, or email to planning@castlepoint.gov.uk .
- 5.14 Where a member of the public is unable to express his/hers views on a proposed development in writing for whatever reason, a member of the planning staff will assist that person in producing a written statement of their views on request.
- 5.15 Consultation does not only involve the Public. A range of public and private bodies known as 'statutory consultees' are also consulted, as listed in Appendix 2. Statutory consultees will vary according to the nature of the proposal and its location. Statutory consultees, like neighbours, have 21 days in which to respond.

Community Involvement when Planning Applications are amended

- 5.16 A considerable amount of negotiation can take place on planning applications, particularly the major ones. This is a very important and crucial part of the development control process, steering development towards a more acceptable form that accords with the policies of the Local Plan/LDF, and therefore results in development that reflects the Councils Corporate objectives. This dialogue between planning officers, developers and their professional advisors is something that the Government and this Council actively encourages.
- 5.17 Where proposals attract public objection, developers will often make amendments in order to make the scheme more acceptable and overcome public concerns. Telling neighbours about minor amendments can cause significant delays to the planning application process.
- 5.18 In order to avoid unnecessary delay, there will not be re-notification of minor amendments such as alterations to the design of extensions or individual houses, or where the amendment results in smaller buildings. More significant alterations, such as the re-siting of roads in residential developments, altering the siting of extensions or building closer to neighbouring properties will require re-notification. Due to the pressure to determine applications speedily, significant amendments received less

than 21 days before the expiry of the 8-week period, will not be accepted and a new application will need to be made.

- 5.19 **Wider Community:** Where significant alterations to plans are received more than 21 days before the expiry of the 8-week period, the relevant statutory bodies will be re-notified.
- 5.20 **Individual Consultation:** For significant alterations to plans received more than 21 days before the expiry of the 8-week period, adjoining neighbours will be re-notified. Any other person who has commented on the development prior to the minor amendment being made will also be re-notified.

Community Involvement when Applications are delegated to Officers

- 5.21 Most planning applications are not determined by the Planning Committee. The power to decide applications is delegated to the Director of Environment and Sustainability, as agreed by the Council.
- 5.22 Where a decision on a planning application is made under delegated powers, the Officers will give careful consideration to any written representations received during the consultation period. Where a written representation draws attention to a material planning consideration this will be referred to in the officer's report and professional judgement will be applied. The Officers written report on an application is available to inspect either online or at the Council Offices.
- 5.23 Where it is decided that a material planning consideration, whether it be a consultation response or local, regional or national policy, makes a development unacceptable, three courses of action can be taken:
- i. A condition can be attached to the decision making the development acceptable e.g. a specified window can be obscure glazed to prevent overlooking.
 - ii. A planning obligation can be used to require action beyond the development itself, which makes the development acceptable e.g. a financial contribution towards road improvements near the development.
 - iii. If a condition or planning obligation cannot make the development acceptable it will be refused.

Community Involvement when Applications are determined by the Committee

- 5.24 Written representations are welcomed by this Council as the principal means by which the public can comment on a planning application that is to be determined by the Planning Committee. These representations will be included either within the Agenda for the committee meeting, or in the Late Letters Schedule. These documents are produced and distributed to the Committee Members in advance of the Committee meeting so they can be taken into account in the decision reached. These letters can also be viewed on the Council's website.

- 5.25 Members of the public may wish to express their views in person at the Committee meeting. Castle Point has prepared a protocol for enabling public participation on planning applications at Planning Committee Meetings. A copy of the protocol is attached as appendix 4.
- 5.26 Where material planning considerations are presented to the Committee, either through responses to consultation or from planning policy documents and these considerations make the development unacceptable, the Committee can take the three courses of action outlined in paragraph 5.22.

Reporting on Planning Decisions

- 5.27 All members of the public who commented on an application are advised in writing of the decision reached. In addition to this, copies of the decision notice and the officer's report are available at the planning reception at the Council Offices. Decision notices dating back to 1996 and officer reports dating back to June 2004 are also available to view on the Councils website.

Community Involvement and Planning Appeals

- 5.28 Only applicants have a right of appeal; there is no third party right of appeal in respect of planning decisions.
- 5.29 When a development has been refused or approved subject to conditions, the details on how to appeal against a refusal or condition are issued. Appeals must be made within 6 months of the date of the decision.
- 5.30 All members of the public and statutory consultees who commented on the original application will be consulted on the Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate will write directly to consultees allowing them an opportunity to expand on earlier objections. Wider consultation will not occur at this time, and therefore to be involved in this process it is important that views are expressed at the original application stage.
- 5.31 Once the Inspectorate issues a decision, the Council will publish that decision alongside the original decision notice on its website. The Appeal Decision will also be available to view at the Council Offices.
- 5.32 The Planning Inspectorate will write individually to those consultees who responded to the appeal consultation, advising them of the outcome.

Community Involvement on Prior Approval Applications

- 5.33 "Prior Approval" applications cover detailed matters such as siting and design, for certain forms of development granted consent by national legislation. Prior Approval applications in respect of agricultural development and demolition work must be made within 28 days. In view of the short timescale no consultation is undertaken. Publicity is restricted to publication in the weekly list of applications.

- 5.34 Some telecommunication devices are also granted consent by national legislation subject to approval of matters such as siting and design, these are known as telecommunication prior approval applications, and must be decided within 56 days. Due to the extended timescale allowed for these applications, neighbours and the wider community are consulted in the same manner as for a normal planning application.
- 5.35 Those people who comment on a prior approval application will be advised in writing of the decision reached. In addition the decision notice and officers report will be available to view at the Council Offices and on the Council's website.

Community Involvement on Permitted Development

- 5.36 Not all developments require planning permission. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 sets out those developments that do not require the consent of the Council.
- 5.37 Often developers will write to the Council in advance of commencing works to check that the development they propose does not require planning permission. Additionally, many developments that do not require planning consent do require Building Regulation Approval, administered in the Council Offices. The Council is therefore aware of many of the developments going ahead in the Borough without planning consent, although a complete list is not available.
- 5.38 As the Council has no legal powers to stop permitted development, and developers are not obliged to tell the Council or their neighbours about their proposals, public consultation does not occur for these developments. However, concerned neighbours can contact the Council with regard to these works and if any appropriate details are available the Council will pass these on.
- 5.39 Where information is not available the Council will contact the developer on behalf of the neighbour to identify the type and size of the development. The Council will pass appropriate information on to the concerned neighbour when it becomes available.

Community Involvement and Enforcement

- 5.40 Most enforcement cases arise following a referral from a member of the public. Cases are usually sensitive with the complainant often keen to remain anonymous. The Council respects this wish and will endeavour to protect the identity of the complainant, however, it may be necessary to divulge a complainants name upon request under the Freedom of Information Act or to maintain the transparency and accountability of the Council. Therefore anonymity cannot be assured. If however, a name and address is supplied with a complaint, we will keep the complainant informed of the progress of the investigation.
- 5.41 There is no consultation with the public on enforcement cases as the process is mainly investigative. Often cases are resolved by the submission of a planning application, which is then publicised in the normal way.

- 5.42 Where an enforcement issue cannot be resolved within a reasonable amount of time through the submission of a planning application, the Planning Service will advise the Planning Committee of the breach of Development Control in question. The Committee may at its discretion pursue any breach through legal planning enforcement channels. The Planning and Legal Services will assist the Councillors in this decision by advising them of the implications. By reporting such matters to the Committee, the desired course of action is decided democratically. Where an unauthorised development would impede the Council's vision for Castle Point, it is anticipated that this democratic process will ensure that the Council's limited resources are concentrated on resolving these breaches as a priority.

Community Involvement on Applications to Lop, Top or Fell Trees

- 5.43 Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area, or to those trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) will be determined within 8 weeks from the date of receipt of an application.
- 5.44 The environment is a priority for the Council. The preservation of good specimen trees obviously has a key role to play in the achievement of this priority and it is therefore important that the public are allowed to comment on the effects that works to, or removal of such trees may have. As a result, neighbours and the wider community are consulted in the same manner for works to trees as for normal planning applications, with the additional use of a site notice attached to or near the tree/s, to allow all those who would regularly view the tree to be aware of the application.
- 5.45 People who comment on a "tree work" application will be advised in writing of the decision reached. In addition the decision notice and officers report will be available to view at the planning reception at the Council Offices and on the Council's website.

6. RESOURCING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Resourcing Issues

- 6.1 There are three types of resources likely to impact on the ability of the Council to involve local communities in planning matters which are:



Financial Resources

- 6.2 The Council has achieved a balanced budget over the medium term. This means that the Council's expenditure, including the revenue implications of the Capital Programme, in any one-year does not exceed the income received during that year. This position is maintained by ensuring that sound budgetary control procedures are in place to monitor any variations from approved budgets. It is therefore essential that consultation requirements are programmed in advance so that community involvement activities can be considered during the budget cycle. This document in association with the Local Development Scheme will assist the Planning Service in identifying consultation requirements for the preparation of Local Development Documents.
- 6.3 The Council works within a culture of best value and will therefore use the techniques that produce the best results for the most competitive cost. The Council will monitor the results of consultation exercises to ensure that money is being spent on consultation exercises that are inclusive and informative.
- 6.4 With regard to development control, consultation is an integral component of the process and the financial cost has been included in budgetary considerations for a number of years. A substantial proportion of the cost for this consultation process is met through planning application fees. Recently the Council has endeavoured to make cost savings in this regard, whilst improving the service, by advancing the use

of electronic communications technology. Planning Delivery Grant has been used for this purpose.

Human Resources

- 6.5 Customer service is a priority for the Council and as a result human resource has been managed throughout the Council to ensure that people with a range of needs can engage with the Council effectively. Access to services is monitored to ensure that this continues to be the case.
- 6.6 The Council has also prepared a consultation strategy and operates a Consultation Group. This encourages joint working between services on consultation exercises. This is aimed at preventing duplication of work and therefore reducing the human resource demand of community involvement.
- 6.7 Inter-service cooperation regarding community involvement is particularly important in planning. In recent years the number of qualified Planners has declined as demand has increased, particularly from the private sector. As a result Local Authorities have experienced difficulties in retaining key skilled staff. This is true of Castle Point where difficulties have been experienced in attracting Planning Officers, particularly for Planning Policy. It is likely that where human resource difficulties arise, more remote types of community involvement will be used such as surveys. Meetings will be focused on specific groups to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved with as little human resource as possible.
- 6.8 The Council has employed several unqualified planners over the last 2 years and is providing training to ensure they have the skills necessary to provide a high quality planning service. However, turnover has remained relatively high and human resources can be clearly identified as a potential risk in effective community involvement and the delivery of the Local Development Framework as a whole.

Time

- 6.9 Time is a resource in relatively short supply. As discussed above human resources requirements can be restrictive on time available for community involvement. However, timescale stipulated in planning legislation also restrict community involvement in planning matters.
- 6.10 Planning Applications must be decided within 8 weeks, with some exceptions. This clearly limits the time in which the public can become involved with and comment on an application. Further financial resources are attached to achievement of this target and therefore there is no opportunity for Local Authorities to be flexible in this matter.
- 6.11 In theory, Local Planning Authorities set their own timescales for the preparation of Local Development Documents. However, Planning Policy Statement 12 and the associated guidance "Creating Local Development Frameworks" sets out an indicative three year timeframe for the preparation of Development Plan Documents and a one year timescale for the preparation of Supplementary Planning

Documents. As the Local Development Framework process has yet to be tested it would be inappropriate to anticipate that the times specified in the above documents are insufficient to effectively involve communities, however, it may arise that this is the case.

- 6.12 Consultation will be timetabled to occur within the appropriate timeframe for the preparation of local development documents. As the timeframes have several stages it would be appropriate to use techniques that continuously engage the community, for example focus groups or the citizens panel. Use of the citizens' panel is however restricted to prevent consultation fatigue.

7. REVIEWING THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Statement of Community Involvement

- 7.1 This Statement of Community Involvement shows that Castle Point is committed to improving involvement in the planning service. The document is relatively general in the techniques it proposes for engaging people. This enables the Council to trial more creative techniques when preparing the first round of Local Development Documents.

Monitoring Consultation Activities

- 7.2 Participation in consultation activities will be carefully monitored to what is successfully engaging local communities. The Council will discontinue the use of those methods that receive a poor response.
- 7.3 Participation will be monitored in terms of quality and accessibility as well as quantity. It is important that consultation results are usable and representative. Where results are not representative, the Council will seek to identify new methods for engaging hard to reach communities.
- 7.4 The Council will not restrict itself to methods of community involvement discussed in this document. Where a new technique is used the results will be monitored as above.

Reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement

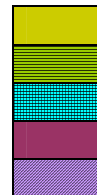
- 7.5 The Statement of Community Involvement will be reviewed five years from the date of adoption, or earlier if necessary. An earlier review of the SCI will be triggered if monitoring reveals:
- 1) That the public engagement techniques are proving to be ineffective.
 - 2) That the public engagement is failing to be inclusive.
- 7.6 Should it be necessary to review the Statement of Community Involvement early this will be reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.

APPENDIX 1: Local Development Framework Timetable

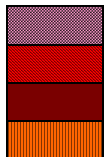
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LDS																																								
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT																																								
CORE STRATEGY & GENERIC DC POLICIES																																								
ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT																																								
AREA ACTION PLAN - SOUTH & WEST CANVEY																																								
DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SPD																																								
CANVEY TOWN CENTRE PLAN (SPD)																																								
HADLEIGH TOWN CENTRE PLAN (SPD)																																								
SOUTH BENFLEET TOWN CENTRE PLAN (SPD)																																								
TARPOTS TOWN CENTRE PLAN (SPD)																																								

KEY:

- Preparation – issues and options (including reg. 25 consultation for DPDs)
- Public participation on preferred options (reg. 26 for DPDs and reg. 17 for SPDs)
- Consider public comments and prepare final document
- Submission to the Secretary of State (reg. 28 for DPDs and reg. 19 for SPDs)
- 6 week post submission consultation (regs. 29-33 for DPDs)



- Pre-examination meeting
- Examination
- Inspectors binding report
- Adoption of the Development Plan Document (reg. 36 for DPDs)



APPENDIX 2: Standard Consultation Groups

- Adjoining Local Authorities eg. Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
- Local Service Providers eg. Essex County Council Highways, Essex Police, Age Concern
- Infrastructure Providers eg. Anglian Water
- Professional Organisations eg. English Nature
- Local Interest Groups eg. Essex Wildlife Trust, Castle Point Access Group
- Residents Groups eg. Thundersley Common Residents

Organisations operating under these headings, along with neighbouring residents, will be consulted as necessary on planning applications. The case officer dealing with a planning application will, following the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedures) Order 1995 select those consultees that must be consulted on a particular application. The case officer will also select other standard consultees as appropriate to provide expert information regarding a topic related to the application in hand.

These types of organisations will also be consulted as required and necessary throughout the Local Development Framework process. However, other groups will also be included during this work including:

- The Local Strategic Partnership
- Local Representatives Panel
- Local Forums
- Planning Inspectorate

In addition to this, Planning Aid will also be sent a copy of all documentation produced regarding the Local Development Framework on request, to enable them to assist local community groups effectively.

The list of consultees is not conclusive and is subject to change and addition. If your organisation is interested in being consulted regarding either planning applications or the development plan process please contact the Planning Department with details.

APPENDIX 3: Councillors

WARD	NAME	TELEPHONE	EMAIL	PARTY
Appleton	Eoin Egan	01268 759237	Cllr.eegan@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Pam Freeman	01268 683518	Cllr.pfreeman@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Tom Skipp	01268 565732	Cllr.tskipp@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
Boyce	Mrs Gail Boland	01268 680330	Cllr.gboland@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Wendy Goodwin	01268 752416	Cllr.wgoodwin@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Jeffrey Stanley	01268 695939	Cllr.jstanley@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
Cedar Hall	Peter Burch	01268 750940	Cllr.pburch@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Norman Ladzrie	01702 557885	Cllr.nladzrie@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Norman Smith	01268 756793	Cllr.nsmith@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
St. George's	Andy Cole	01268 759140	Cllr.acole@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Miss Elizabeth L. Govier	01268 794928	Cllr.egovier@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Jackie Govier	01268 794928	Cllr.jgovier@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
St. James	Godfrey Issacs	01702 556388	Cllr.gissacs@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Bill Sharp		Cllr.wsharp@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Tony Thomas	01702 554902	Cllr.tthomas@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
St. Mary's	David Cross	01268 514174	Cllr.dcross@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Kathleen Meager	01268 795328	Cllr.kmeager@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Lisa Preston	01268 512062	Cllr.lpreston@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
St. Peter's	Mrs Pam Challis	01268 743252	Cllr.pchallis@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Bill Dick	01268 775784	Cllr.wdick@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Beverley Egan	01268 759237	Cllr.began@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
Victoria	Cliff Brunt	01702 557436	Cllr.cbrunt@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Enid Issacs	01702 556388	Cllr.eissacs@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Colin Riley	01702 552775	Cllr.criley@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
Central	John Anderson	01268 682514	cllr.janderson@castlepoint.gov.uk	CIIP
	Dave Blackwell	01268 512165	Cllr.dblackwell@castlepoint.gov.uk	CIIP
	Mrs Jane King	01268 694904	Cllr.jking@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
East	Geoffrey Coates	01268 515636	Cllr.gcoates@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Shirley Coates	01268 515636	Cllr.scoates@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Anne R. Wood	01268 684988	cllr.awood@castlepoint.gov.uk	CIIP
North	Mrs Pat Haunts	01268 694856	Cllr.phaunts@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Matthew Howard	01268 683698	Cllr.mhoward@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Martin J.A. Tucker	01268 684576	cllr.mtucker@castlepoint.gov.uk	CIIP
South	Mark Howard	01268 683698	Cllr.mjhoward@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Sylvia Waymark	01268 512062	Cllr.swaymark@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Brian S. Wood	01268 684988	cllr.bwood@castlepoint.gov.uk	CIIP
West	Tony Belford	01268 440264	Cllr.abelford@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Ray Howard	01268 682588	Cllr.rhoward@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
Winter Gardens	Norman Bambridge	01268 685459	Cllr.nbambridge@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Mrs Dorothy Best	01268 683800	Cllr.dbest@castlepoint.gov.uk	Conservative
	Barry F. Dixie	01268 685563	cllr.bdixie@castlepoint.gov.uk	CIIP

APPENDIX 4 - PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. The Council welcomes the general principle that the public should be able to participate in the decision making process by commenting on planning applications verbally at planning committee meetings. This document will outline the procedure under which such comments may be made, in order to ensure that the decision-making process remains fair and effective.
2. A letter will be sent to all people who commented on a planning application advising them that the application will be decided at a Planning Committee meeting. This letter will indicate the date of the meeting and specify the procedures for public comment at these meetings.
3. A list of planning applications to be decided at a Planning Committee Meeting will also be published in paper and electronic format at least five working days before the meeting. The Agenda may be viewed at the Council Offices.
4. Two members of the public will be allowed to speak at the committee per planning application. One person may speak in objection to the planning application. This person may speak for a maximum of three minutes, and should restrict comments to material planning considerations. Where a person speaks in objection to an application, the applicant or his/her agent may also speak for a maximum of three minutes in support of the application, again restricting comments to material planning considerations.
5. Where a member of the public wishes to speak in objection to a planning application they must contact Committee Services by 4pm on the Friday prior to the Planning Committee at which the application is to be decided.
6. Where more than one person wishes to speak in objection to a planning application, the 'objectors' will be advised to work collectively to formulate one three minute statement between them to be delivered by a spokesperson. Their wish to make a representation will be indicated to the Chairperson of the committee as a "multiple objectors representation." The name of the spokesperson must be given to the Committee Services representative before the start of the Committee Meeting.
7. Prior to the members of the public speaking on a planning application, the Planning Officer will deliver his report. This will ensure that the members of the committee are aware of the nature and issues related to the application in question, and will ensure that the public speakers do not have to waste their 3-minute time slot in describing the application.
8. The objector will then be invited to speak by the chairperson. The objector's three-minute period will be strictly timed, and the objector must stop speaking when the end of the time period is indicated. Where an objector does not respect this rule, they will

be asked to leave the chamber and future opportunities to speak at the Planning Committee will be restricted.

9. Where an objector speaks regarding a planning application, the Chairperson will then ask the applicant/agent if he/she wishes to speak. They will be bound by the same rules as the objector.
10. Whilst a member of the public is speaking, other members of the public, Councillors and Officers must respect the right of the speaker to express their opinion. The Chairperson will ask anybody who interrupts or heckles the speaker to leave the chamber for the remainder of the meeting.
11. Once the objector and the applicant have addressed the meeting, the Planning Officer will sum up the material planning considerations contained within each of the representations.
12. The committee will then debate the application, taking into account the representations made by the members of the public. Members of the public must not interrupt or heckle during this debate, and will be asked by the chairperson to leave the chamber should such activity occur.
13. Committee Members must explain how they reached a decision. Where the decision follows the Officers recommendation, the reasons contained within the Officers report may be cited. Where the Committee does not agree with the Officers recommendation, the Committee must identify material planning considerations for reaching that decision.
14. As a response to those members of the public who addressed the committee, the explanation must be made within one week of the Committee Meeting at which the planning application is decided.

APPENDIX 5 – FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM FOR LDD'S

CONTACT DETAILS:

1. Name and Address Telephone: Fax: Email:	2. Agents Name and Address (if applicable) Telephone: Fax: Email:
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It is not essential to provide your name or contact details, however, we cannot respond to you if you do not provide them.

If available, please supply your email address, as this will enable us to contact you quickly and efficiently in the future and reduce expenditure on postal services.

Reason for Consultation:

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS:

Reason for asking Specific Questions:

Specific Question no. 1. (repeat box as necessary)

Space to Comment (Leave at least 8 lines)

Please continue on separate labeled sheet if necessary

OTHER COMMENTS:

Please make any further comments in this box:

(Leave at least 1 side of A4)

Please continue on separate labeled sheet if necessary

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

To help us monitor whether the consultation is reaching all sectors of Castle Point's population, please give us the following details:

1. Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age Under 20 ☐ 21-40 ☐ 41-60 ☐ Over 60 ☐

3. Ethnicity

White <input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	
Indian <input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>	African <input type="checkbox"/>	

4. Work Situation

Employee <input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/>	Student <input type="checkbox"/>
Self-employed <input type="checkbox"/>	Homemaker <input type="checkbox"/>	Retired <input type="checkbox"/>

5. Do you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to access planning information?

