Foreword

Eden District Council has revised its draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and submitted it to the Secretary of State in December 2005. This revised submission SCI has been produced based upon comments received on the draft SCI from its formal consultation between Monday 27 June and Friday 5 August 2005, together with additional guidance received outside the formal consultation period.

The accompanying Statement of Consultation explains the consultation methods used to develop the SCI together with the Council’s response to the comments made during the preparation consultation on the draft SCI.

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the Council’s approach for involving people in both the preparation of the Local Development Framework and the determination of planning applications. It will cover the whole of Eden District that lies outside the Lake District National Park.

This submission SCI document will now be made available for public consultation for a six week period. In order to ensure that consultation is not hampered by the Christmas break the consultation period will run from Tuesday 3 January to Tuesday 14 February 2006.

Any comments made should relate to the Tests of Soundness that will accompany the comments form. All comments received between 3 January and 14 February will be forwarded to the Secretary of State who will then examine this document based on the Tests of Soundness and comments received. This examination is expected to take place during April 2006.

If you would like to make any comments regarding this submission SCI please complete the comments form that accompanies this document and send it to:

Planning Policy Manager
Planning Policy
Department of Policy and Performance
Eden District Council
Town Hall
Penrith
CA11 7QF

All comments must be received no later than 5.15 p.m. on Tuesday 14 February 2006.

The document and comments form are also available on the Council’s website www.eden.gov.uk

Further information regarding the Statement of Community Involvement and the Local Development Framework generally can be found on the Council’s website.

This document can be made available in large print on request.
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1. Introduction

The new planning system, introduced in 2004, identifies strengthened community involvement as a key objective, and a Statement of Community Involvement is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

This document sets out how communities will be involved in the preparation and revision of planning policy documents and the consideration of planning applications by Eden District Council. This Statement of Community Involvement is intended to clearly identify:

- The types of groups and individuals that will be directly asked to participate in the planning system
- The times that specific consultees and the general public can become involved
- The ways that the Council will enable this community involvement

Many of the activities identified within this Statement of Community Involvement are currently undertaken by the Council, and this document is designed to formalise the methods used and clearly demonstrate to the public and stakeholders when and how they can become actively involved in the planning process, enabling community involvement early in the process. This complies with the Government’s aim of ‘front loading’.

It will set out the minimum standards that the Council will adopt in order to enable communities to become involved in the future of their area, giving details of what they can expect of the planning system in Eden District. There will also be flexibility within the process to exceed these minimum standards wherever possible, and as resources allow.

The Council’s Principles for Community Involvement

Eden District Council has a Consultation Strategy which sets out general consultation principles. These are:

- Eden District Council will endeavour to reach decisions in the light of appropriate and effective consultation, conducted on and off-line with service users and stakeholders.
- The Council will ensure guidance to on and off-line consultation processes is made available via the Intranet, the website and a best practice guide; also via consultation seminars
- We will ensure that consultation supports the principles of community engagement and e-participation, and that processes are recognised as an essential component of service improvement
- We will seek efficient and cost effective methods of consultation which uphold quality standards
- We will implement Consultation Finder, an electronic Consultation Management System, to pursue a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to e-consultation, which will avoid duplication of effort and support sharing of information across the Council and the region as a whole
- We will clearly identify who is being consulted
- We will seek to identify barriers to effective consultation and prioritise inclusion of hard to reach groups, to enable engagement with all those whose views are often invisible
• We will use a variety of techniques and resources, matching methods to specific purpose, to ensure the views of an accurate cross-section of stakeholders are taken into account
• We will set clear objectives for every consultation
• We will explain to people why we are consulting and how their views will be taken into account
• We will aim to provide effective information on consultation issues and matters of public information
• We will seek to explain issues clearly to all the audiences we wish to reach and make responding easy, both on and off-line
• In organising the consultation, we will provide a summary of the main issue, a clear set of questions, and ability to make comment.
• In relation to on-line consultations, we will provide a broad range of background information to ensure stakeholders have good opportunity to deliberate on the basis of balanced information
• We will allow enough time for respondents to consider the issues and make their views known
• We will ensure that all responses are carefully and open-mindedly analysed to reflect a range of views
• We will link findings from the consultation process with decisions, and explain reasons for our decisions, in particular where these go counter to the views expressed during the consultation
• We will feed back the findings of consultation using a variety of methods, in a mix of ways, tailored to the needs of diverse stakeholders
• We will institute the use of emails for both staff and the public who register interest, to inform them about new consultations and/or of the published outcomes of completed consultations in their areas of interest.
• We will ensure evaluation of the effectiveness of the whole consultation process is a fundamental part of consultation design

The Council has now employed a Consultation Officer who is putting in place an e-consultation system and Consultation Finder, and overseeing a review of the Consultation Strategy for the Council. Other duties include broadening and co-ordinating consultation activities on and of-line for the Council as a whole, and providing specialist advice and support to consultation activities during the development of the LDF.

These activities will strengthen the principles within this Statement of Community Involvement, and also ensure that the LDF will be integrated with the Council’s corporate consultation activities.

The Consultation Officer will also link consultation to the Council’s wider strategies, so that communities become more aware that the Council is consulting.

The Council’s Communication Officer will help to co-ordinate publicity and promotion of the Local Development Framework by issuing media releases, producing the Council’s magazine 'Eye on Eden' and assisting to co-ordinate events organised or supported by the Council.

These activities, together with other mechanisms identified within the Council’s Communication Strategy and Table 1 will help to raise awareness and understanding of the process, and we hope will encourage greater participation throughout the development of the LDF.
Planning Aid

Planning Aid North provides a free, independent and professional planning advice service to individuals and groups across the north of England who cannot afford professional fees. Services operate through small staff teams and a network of professionally qualified volunteers and it is supported the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Planning Aid North operates a telephone advice line, telephone 0870 850 9803 or can be contacted by emailing ntcw@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk.

In addition, the organisation also provides a Community Planning Service which helps groups and individuals to understand the planning system and influence what happens in their neighbourhood, village or town. Key elements of the programme include:

- Training events and presentations, such as a ‘Planning Crash Course’.
- Advice and assistance on contributing to local development plans.
- A volunteer service.

The service is targeted at disadvantaged communities, and at groups which represent or work with people who need support and guidance in order to get involved with the planning system, for example young people, people with disabilities, or ethnic minority communities. Planning Aid aims to raise awareness about the planning system within such communities and thus enable groups and individuals to engage more actively with local authorities and the development plan process.

Leaflets with full details of the services Planning Aid can offer are available at Mansion House, Penrith.

Planning Aid may also be able to assist the Council in the provision of some of the methods of community involvement identified in Section 2.
2. How the Council Consults

Eden District Council already consults extensively on a range of issues with the public and with stakeholders. It will continue to use existing methods of consultation and communication and adapt, improve and supplement these to ensure that all sections of the community and statutory bodies have wider and deeper opportunities to comment on planning policy documents.

The Council starts the process of consultation early in the policy development cycle, striving to be clear, concise and proactive in reaching those who are hard to reach and also those most likely to be affected by the policy process.

Following best practice, the Council endeavours to be clear and concise about what the consultation proposals are, who might be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses. The Council also ensures that the consultation states the date when feedback will be given and the website address in which it will appear.

The Council will use its new e-Consultation and Consultation Finder software systems to increase community engagement opportunities and streamline consultation procedures.

The Council will ensure that new procedures for e-consultation become a core competence. Where standards are variable, the Council will aim to increase understanding and skills through guidance and training.

The Council expects that e-Consultation and Consultation Finder will support a more transparent and co-ordinated approach across the district and the region, making it easier for officers of the Council and communities to engage with consultations.

The Council is striving to support partnership working between the county and district councils in Cumbria. It is expected that the e-Consultation and Consultation Finder will also assist the Council in relating to partnerships. For example, it will make it easier to support multi-agency consultation approaches, share information and avoid duplication across the region. Moreover, the Council will be able to contribute to a common web presence for all consultations carried out by members of the county partnership. Different agencies will find it easier to share consultation expertise and resources. Fewer and more focused consultations are more likely to lead to higher response rates. This will also help avoid duplication and reduce consultation fatigue across the county.

Using Consultation Finder, the Council is collaborating on the design of an on-line database which will hold details of planned, current and past consultations in the county. This will enable the public and the consultation managers to gain a holistic view of all consultations within the county. Involvement in a co-ordinated consultation approach will provide benefits to the public in relation to cross-cutting concerns, including, for example, crime and health issues.

The Council is also organising the use of email alerts for both staff and the public. The e-Consult system allows those who enquire to register an interest and be notified of new consultations and/or of the published outcomes of completed consultations in their areas of interest.

The Council provides feedback regarding responses, including a summary of responses and how the consultation process has influenced policy.
The Council is putting measures in place to monitor the effectiveness of all consultation processes.

The Council will work closely with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) via the LSP Officer during the development of policies so that the LDF can support the issues and objectives that are identified in the Community Strategy. By doing this the Council will ensure that the LDF is integrated with other local policies and strategies and the work of all departments within the Council.

The Council will be consulting directly with all relevant consultees and the relevant authorities that have been identified in the appendices to this report as appropriate.

Before the Council is able to comply with the regulations set by central government for consultation on the various documents which together will comprise the Local Development Framework (LDF) it must consult the bodies identified in the appendices to this report.

The general public will be able to comment on LDF documents and on planning applications during the formal statutory consultation periods. They will be made aware of these opportunities through the media, the Eden District Council website and by documents made available for public viewing in public buildings. Members of the public will also be consulted on an informal basis during the preparation and production stages. This is explained in further detail later in this draft SCI.

Interest Groups will wish to play an active role not only in responding to consultation but also in assisting with the identification of key issues and options at the earlier stages of the various Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. By undertaking a range of activities in Table 1 the Council will be able to ensure that the wider public interest is maintained and that the whole community has opportunities to be involved.

It is vitally important that the business community within the district is actively involved and fully consulted on emerging Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. This will be undertaken by the means identified, with individual businesses or umbrella organisations where appropriate.

The Council’s Consultation Officer and Communications Officer will be able to support this work and ensure that it is co-ordinated effectively.

**Parish Councils**

Parish Councils provide a great source of local knowledge for the areas within Eden, and are also statutory consultees.

There are 53 Parish Councils and 18 Parish Meetings within Eden that are spread over a large area, which means that the most appropriate form of consultation will usually be written correspondence. This will be in the form of a letter that will give notice of the consultation together with links to the location of documents on the Council’s website. Some Parish Councils make these planning documents available to the public to view. Even though not all of Eden’s parishes are within the Eden LDF area they adjoin it and the
Council feels that they can provide a useful input into the process and will actively consult with them.

Over time the Council will seek to expand the use of electronic communication with Parish Councils as the services available improve and more Parish Councils request information in this way.

In order to improve links with Parish Councils and allow feedback to be given the Council will organise 2 or 3 Parish Forums each year at different locations throughout the district. These Parish Forums will enable groups of Parish Councillors to meet with Eden District Council Members and Officers and discuss relevant planning issues.

The Council intends to adhere to the good practice checklist for undertaking consultations with town and parish councils agreed with Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) in July 2001 for all consultations for the preparation of LDF documents. In addition to this the Council has recently revised its Parish Charter for consulting with Parish Councils on planning applications following discussions with CALC and Parish Councils. This is shown in Appendix 3.

Parish Councils will receive amended and updated LDF documents following the results of public consultation, and will also be made aware of consultations and any resulting outcomes via the CALC newsletter.

**Community Voice**

Community Voice is a panel of approximately 500 residents in Eden who have agreed to take part in consultations from the Council. The panel has been recruited to be broadly representative of the district as a whole, and is a useful sounding board for new ideas and policies.

Community Voice is a partnership between Cumbria County Council, district councils in Cumbria and Cumbria Constabulary, with each of these organisations allocated 2 or 3 ‘slots’ to consult with the Community Voice panel throughout the year. It would therefore be the intention to co-ordinate our use of the panel with Cumbria County Council and the other district councils in Cumbria in order to maximise the resources available.

This shared resource may enable joint consultation to take place on behalf of all authorities in Cumbria on some issues for their respective Local Development Frameworks.

The Council will be able to ask general questions to the whole panel, and can also use it as a basis to recruit focus groups (either broad based, or targeting particular demographic or geographic groups) to explore ideas in greater detail.

For further information about Community Voice please see [www.haveyoursay.org.uk](http://www.haveyoursay.org.uk)

**Eden District Council Website**

The Council’s website is becoming an increasingly useful tool for providing and receiving information. Every document that will comprise the Local Development Framework will be available via the website, including each of the consultation documents produced in their preparation.
The timetable for the production of documents will be available on the website so that the public can see at a glance the stage that each document has reached.

All documents will be available on the website, and there will also be an interactive e-consultation facility that will enable the Council to provide information to the public and receive comments back. This will also keep the public up to date with the results of consultation and what the Council will do next, together with links to relevant external material.

The Council will provide the opportunity for interested individuals and organisations to subscribe to updates of consultation documents via the website when they are made available as a means to maximise resources and enable the public to be kept up to date. This facility is expected to be available from 2006.

Planning applications can now also be viewed on the website via a link to the Planning Portal and it is anticipated that this facility will be fully interactive by early in 2006 when comments can be made on-line.

**Harder to Reach Groups**

There are a number of groups of people in Eden that may be regarded as harder to reach. These include ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and young people.

The Council will aim to make the planning system as accessible as possible to all sections of the community, tailoring consultations and utilising existing groups and networks as far as possible in order to be as wide reaching as possible. Organisations such as Voluntary Action Cumbria, Cumbria Youth Alliance and Age Concern Eden and their networks can all help make planning more accessible to the community.

Consulting specifically with people with disabilities is something in which the Council has already established a good track record. The Council produced a document entitled ‘Accessible Information – Policy and Guidelines’ in October 2004. This is designed to help staff communicate effectively with all sections of the community.

The Council also works closely with the Eden Access for All Forum and is producing a Supplementary Planning Document - An Accessible and Inclusive Environment.

Eden has a relatively very small proportion of the community from ethnic minorities and as a result resources such as Language Line, that are currently available to the Council, will prove to be very useful. This is an interpretation and translation service, enabling the Council to communicate with people from all communities in the UK, regardless of language, disability or culture.

Providing information in as many different formats (electronic, paper, audio) and using as many different locations as possible will also help to make the planning system more available to all sections of the community. Greater use of the website and e-consultation will also help include people across the geographically large district.
Member Involvement

The role of Members of the Council (Councillors) in both policy formation and the development control aspects of the planning process is important.

Environment Committee will agree all Local Development Documents as a basis for consultation before they are made available for public consultation. It will be made aware of comments received, and will approve any amendments to the final document.

The Council's Planning Applications Committee considers and determines planning applications, where appropriate, and monitors those decisions that are made by officers using delegated powers.

These are public meetings which enables the public to become aware of the issues and decisions that the Council is making.

Methods of Community Involvement

One of the main features of the new planning system is the notion of ‘front loading’. This means involving communities early in the planning process in order to deal with issues at an early stage and ensure a wide range of inputs are heard.

The Council is committed to this approach and will adopt a number of methods of involving the community throughout the preparation and production of LDF documents in order to ensure that all members of the community have the opportunity to have a say under the new planning system.

Table 1 on the following pages identifies a number of approaches that the Council will use, together with suggestions for the type of situation and time that they are expected to be undertaken. These include a variety of formal consultation methods to gather opinions on documents that the Council has produced together with informal activities that will be used to inform the documents before and during their production.

Respondents to consultations will be monitored in order to ensure that all sections of the community, including harder to reach groups, are involved. The Council may adapt and tailor the methods used at different stages of the process in order to achieve this.

Organisations such as Voluntary Action Cumbria and Planning Aid together with existing networks in the district may be able to assist with some of the methods shown in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Involvement</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Stage in the Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Documents available to view in public buildings</td>
<td>The whole community</td>
<td>To make formal proposals publicly available and allow formal comments to be received.</td>
<td>All LDF Documents Planning applications</td>
<td>Each of the formal consultation stages required in the Regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eden District Council website</td>
<td>The whole community</td>
<td>This will provide access to all relevant documents, and enable greater interactivity with the planning system. It will provide up to the minute information It will speed up the process.</td>
<td>All LDF Documents Planning applications</td>
<td>This will provide up to date information for progress with all LDF documents and planning applications. It is available at all stages of the LDF process and for all planning applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Consult</td>
<td>The whole community</td>
<td>This will increase community engagement opportunities and streamline consultation procedures It will provide opportunity to consult with people at a time and place suitable to them. It will be easier to provide background information, promote more meaningful commentary and provide feedback to people on what has happened as a result of their input.</td>
<td>All LDF documents</td>
<td>Each of the formal consultation stages required in the Regulations. It can also be used to support the early evidence gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Finder</td>
<td>The whole community</td>
<td>This will support a more transparent and co-ordinated approach across the Council and the region It will be easier to support multi-agency approaches sharing information and avoiding duplication of effort and consultation fatigue It will be easier for officers of the Council and communities to engage with consultations.</td>
<td>All LDF documents</td>
<td>Pre-production of LDF documents and also possibly during the production stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Media Releases (to local newspapers, radio and television)</td>
<td>The whole community</td>
<td>To improve awareness and understanding of the planning process and specific issues among the public. To publicise consultation documents. To feedback on decisions made.</td>
<td>Targeted towards significant events and documents within the LDF Planning applications</td>
<td>Core Strategy, DPDs and also possibly specific SPDs. A weekly list of all planning applications received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public notices in newspapers</td>
<td>The whole community</td>
<td>Statutory requirement</td>
<td>All LDF Documents Certain planning applications (identified in Section 5).</td>
<td>Each of the formal consultation stages required in the Regulations. Consultation stage for the relevant planning applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters (and documents) to statutory consultees and other relevant stakeholders</td>
<td>Statutory consultees and other relevant stakeholders</td>
<td>This is targeted towards organisations and individuals who can offer their professional expertise about the issue and/or who will be directly affected by the proposal.</td>
<td>All LDF Documents Planning applications</td>
<td>Each of the formal consultation stages required in the Regulations. Consultation stage for planning applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Voice</td>
<td>A Citizens Panel that is broadly representative of the population in Eden</td>
<td>It can provide a useful ‘straw poll’ for public opinion and test ideas.</td>
<td>Certain LDF documents as appropriate</td>
<td>Pre-production of LDF documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>These will either be to represent a cross section of the community or can be for specific interests</td>
<td>Raise awareness and gather detailed feedback in a less formal environment.</td>
<td>Certain LDF documents as appropriate</td>
<td>Pre-production of LDF documents and also possibly during the production stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council produced newsletters, leaflets and posters</td>
<td>The whole community. Leaflets can also be used to target specific groups.</td>
<td>A useful mechanism for informing and feeding back information to all residents of Eden.</td>
<td>Can report on progress with the LDF and significant developments</td>
<td>Eye on Eden newsletter is produced twice a year. Leaflets and posters will be produced as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public meetings</td>
<td>General public and targeted groups.</td>
<td>To raise awareness and gather views in a public arena.</td>
<td>May be used for certain Development Plan Documents. May be used for major planning applications (usually by the developer)</td>
<td>Pre-production of LDF documents and also possibly during the production stage. Pre-application and also possibly to support a submitted application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Involvement</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Reasons</td>
<td>Document</td>
<td>Stage in the Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meetings with local communities</td>
<td>Specific groups of people connected by a geographical area or area of interest.</td>
<td>To give information about the document/application and explain it in detail.</td>
<td>Certain LDF documents as appropriate.</td>
<td>Pre-production of LDF documents and also possibly during the production stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To gather detailed feedback from a particular community to inform the development of documents and proposals.</td>
<td>Certain planning applications</td>
<td>Pre-application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitions and public displays</td>
<td>General public/local communities.</td>
<td>To present proposals, increase understanding and gain informal feedback.</td>
<td>May be used for certain Development Plan Documents.</td>
<td>Pre-production of LDF documents and also possibly during the production stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May be used for major planning applications (usually by the developer)</td>
<td>Pre-application and also possibly to support a submitted application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing networks within the district</td>
<td>Local organisations and communities.</td>
<td>To maximise the Council’s resources when giving and receiving information.</td>
<td>All LDF documents</td>
<td>At each stage throughout the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with key stakeholder groups</td>
<td>Specific stakeholders, which may include statutory consultees and other departments in the Council.</td>
<td>To gather targeted views, and identify and resolve potential issues early in the process.</td>
<td>All DPDs and certain SPDs</td>
<td>Pre-production and production of LDF documents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Documents in the Council’s Local Development Framework

The Local Development Framework will guide the development of land within Eden to support the aims and objectives of the Community Strategy. It will comprise a number of documents, which will be developed using the consultation processes identified in order to enable community involvement.

These documents include:

- The Statement of Community Involvement
- The Core Strategy
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs)
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
- Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Reports

The relationship between these documents, together with the regional and national perspective is shown in Diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1 – Relationship between documents in the LDF
Statement of Community Involvement

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) describes how and when the Council will involve the community in the planning process, providing a useful tool for consultation activity regarding planning issues in Eden.

Core Strategy

The Core Strategy sets out the vision and spatial strategy for meeting known and anticipated development requirements to 2016, and will inform the Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents that are produced. It will also have strong links to ‘A Vision for the Future’, the Community Strategy for the district.

As a result the Council will ensure that all departments within the Council, the Local Strategic Partnership, and as wide a range of community and interest groups as possible are involved in the preparation process from an early stage.

Preparation of the Core Strategy will require a great deal of informal discussions in order to reach a consensus before any proposals can be made available for formal public consultation.

The Core Strategy will be the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment in order to ensure that the policies developed will deliver sustainable development in the future.

Development Plan Documents

Development Plan Documents will provide greater detail on specific topics including Housing Development Policy and Housing Site Allocations, Primary Development Control Policies, and a Proposals Map.

They will be in conformity with the Core Strategy and will involve organisations and other departments within the Council who have specialist knowledge, together with the wider community during their preparation and production. Information and comments gathered for the Core Strategy may also inform DPDs.

DPDs will also be the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal/SEA.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents will be produced in order to expand upon or provide further detail to policies in Development Plan Documents.

These will replace Supplementary Planning Guidance produced under the old development plan system. The topics currently in production or programmed for in the LDS are An Accessible and Inclusive Environment, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design and Shopfront and Advertisement Design. Other topics may be added in the future if time and resources permit.

SPDs will also be the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal/SEA, however they are not required to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.
**Parish Plans**

Parish Plans may form part of the LDF if they are in conformity with the Core Strategy and Development Plan Documents, can clearly be linked to a Development Plan policy, have been the subject of Sustainability Appraisal and have been prepared in line with the Regulations.

Any Parish Plans that do not meet the above criteria cannot form part of the LDF itself, but can still be used to inform the Community Strategy for Eden.

The Council can offer advice for any parishes wishing to develop a Parish Plan, and support is available from Planning Aid. Information within Parish Plans will also be taken into account as part of the evidence gathering for LDF documents.

**Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)**

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment is a method of assessing whether policies will enable future development in the district to be sustainable in terms of their social, economic and environmental impacts.

Consultation on this SA/SEA process will run alongside the preparation of each LDF document.

Initially a Scoping Report that identifies the proposed methodology for appraising the sustainability of the LDF document will be produced for consultation with the Issues and Options paper for that LDF document.

Following this a SA/SEA report will be produced for each LDF document and made available for consultation at their formal participation stages (Preferred Options DPD, Submission DPD, or Draft SPD).

It should be noted that a Sustainability Appraisal may be required by the proposer for late site proposals, and possibly also for late policies.

The above documents each have different statutory consultation requirements, and the consultation processes used will vary for each document depending upon these statutory requirements and the issues that are covered.

Section 4 explains the preparation process for each of these types of document together with details of how the community will be involved at each stage.

The timetable identifying the key milestones for each LDF document can be found in the Local Development Scheme. In some circumstances these milestones may need to be amended and any amendments to this are identified in the Annual Monitoring Report produced each year. The most up to date timetable can always be found on the Council’s website.

It should also be noted that informal communication and consultation with specific groups and individuals will take place in addition to the statutory involvement described in the following section.
4. Community Involvement in the preparation of LDF Documents

The documents that form the Local Development Framework are subject to rigorous rules. There are four stages for the Council to undertake in the preparation of each of these types of document. These are:

- Pre-production
- Production
- Examination (not required for SPDs)
- Adoption

It will take approximately 1 year to produce an SPD, 2 years for the SCI and 3 years for Development Plan Documents, and they will be the subject of a number of consultations using a variety of methods that are identified within Table 1 on pages 9 to 11 during this time. The LDF documents are complementary and it will be possible for consultation for one document to inform another, streamlining the process and reducing duplication.

Diagram 2 – Process for Producing an LDF Document

- Pre-Production
  (Develop Issues and Options to consider)
  Consultation on issues and options to formulate preferred options

- Production
  (Prepare Preferred Options and consult – to inform submission document)
  Submit revised LDF document to the Secretary of State and make available for consultation

- Examination
  Make changes following Inspector’s Report

- Adoption
**Stage 1: Pre-production**

This is the scoping stage, during which the Council considers who needs to be involved at the different stages in the planning process and how different sections of the community might be represented. This work includes identifying existing organisations and groups and also the different communication networks and mechanisms that currently exist.

Expertise from different departments within the Council and also from external agencies will be sought at this stage, and topic based working groups may be formed, if appropriate.

Reference will be made to consultation that has been undertaken to inform the Community Strategy and other general research that has taken place or is due to take place within Eden.

The Council can then utilise this information to ensure that all appropriate individuals and organisations have the opportunity to participate and influence proposals at an early stage by using the methods of both giving and receiving information identified in Table 1.

This is also the stage during which the evidence base will be developed.

At this time the Council will also write to the North West Regional Planning Authority, the Highways Agency, GONW and all appropriate consultation bodies (from those shown in Appendix 1) together with each of the relevant authorities (as described in Appendix 2) asking for issues and options to be considered within the LDF document. This is also the stage at which the initial Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report will be developed and consulted upon. Any Issues and Options DPD paper that is produced will also be available on the Council’s website for comments.

This work and evidence gathering will enable the Council to identify the scope and priorities for the LDF document being produced.

**Stage 2: Production**

All of the work during the pre-production will then be brought together to produce a preferred options DPD or draft SPD. This will describe the issues for the document and how they can be addressed. Additional informal consultations and discussions may take place at this stage if required.

The preferred options DPD/draft SPD will be made available to the public for formal comments during a six week consultation period when the Council will:

- Place notices of consultation in relevant local newspapers and on the Council’s website [www.eden.gov.uk](http://www.eden.gov.uk) giving details of the locations and times that the documents are available
- Make copies of the document available for consideration in Eden District Council offices and libraries in the district
- Place a copy of the document on the Eden District Council website
- Send a letter to the North West Regional Planning Authority, the Highways Agency, all appropriate consultation bodies (from those shown in Appendix 1) together with
each of the relevant authorities (as described in Appendix 2) to notify them that the documents are available together with a link to the document on the Council’s website.

Any comments and representations that are received will be collated and reported to the Council’s Environment Committee. The document will then be amended, taking account of the comments as appropriate to form the submission version of the LDF document.

The submission version of the LDF document will then be made available to the public for formal comments during a six week formal consultation period. Any comments from this will also be presented to the Council’s Environment Committee for information.

In the case of SPD the revised document, together with the summary of comments will be presented to Environment Committee for adoption.

**Stage 3: Examination**

The LDF document is submitted to the Secretary of State, together with a Statement of Consultation describing the consultation processes used and resulting amendments from them for approval.

Once the Council has submitted its LDF document and associated Sustainability Appraisal report, it will consult for a further 6 weeks and:

- Place notices in relevant local newspapers and on the Council’s website [www.eden.gov.uk](http://www.eden.gov.uk) giving details of the locations and times that the Core Strategy (or DPD) and comments are available for the public to view
- Make copies of the Core Strategy (or DPD) and Sustainability Appraisal, together with the comments received available for viewing in Eden District Council offices and libraries in the district
- Place a copy of the documents on the Eden District Council website
- Send a letter to the North West Regional Planning Authority, the Highways Agency, all appropriate consultation bodies (from those shown in Appendix 1) together with each of the relevant authorities (as described in Appendix 2) to notify them that the Core Strategy (or DPD) and comments have been submitted together with a link to the document on the Council’s website
- Notify those persons who requested to be notified

Any comments received regarding the submission document will then also be forwarded to the Secretary of State as soon as possible after the end of the 6 week consultation period for consideration at the Examination.

The submitted information is then considered during an Independent Examination. The basis of the Examination will be the Tests of Soundness, which are listed on the comments form. The presumption is that written representations will form the basis for the Examination, but objectors have the right to be heard at the Examination.

**Note:** Supplementary Planning Documents will not be subject to Examination.
Stage 4: Adoption

Any changes that are recommended in the Inspector’s report from the Independent Examination are binding and will be made by the Council. Once the changes have been made, the final version of the LDF document will be adopted by the Council.

In the case of Supplementary Planning Documents (which are not subject of an Examination) any comments and representations that are received during the formal consultation period will be collated and used as the basis to amend the SPD as appropriate.

The representations received and any resulting amendments are then reported to the Council’s Environment Committee for approval and the adoption of the SPD.

Once the Council adopts the LDF document it will be made publicly available, together with details of any saved plans it replaces:

- On the Council’s website
- For inspection at Council offices and libraries in the district

In addition, a copy will be sent to the North West Regional Planning Authority, the Highways Agency, and all appropriate consultation bodies (from those shown in Appendix 1).

The dates for the formal consultation stages are set out in the Local Development Scheme, and will be reviewed annually in the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report.
5. Community Involvement with Planning Applications

The new planning system is also designed to allow greater public participation in development control (i.e. the process of determining planning applications).

This section of the Statement of Community Involvement is designed to clearly demonstrate in general terms how and when people can become involved in the different stages of a planning application. It will also provide details of when and how notification of any decisions will be made.

It should be noted that the nature and scale of involvement will vary depending upon the nature and scale of the application, and this can be found out from the case officer.

The Council’s Planning Services section deals with planning applications among other things and is split into a north and a south team. This means that the case officers will have greater local knowledge of their particular area and will also provide a clearer point of contact for the public.

The Council has produced a number of leaflets, which are also available on the Council’s website, that describe the requirements, processes and participation at various stages in the application process. These leaflets include:

- In Need of Pre-Application Advice?
- What Happens To Your Planning Application
- Planning Applications: Considerations and Decisions
- Planning Applications That Go To Committee
- Do You Want To Comment On A Planning Proposal?
- The Enforcement Of Planning Control

The Council has adopted a Customer Charter that describes the standards that the Council will work towards when dealing with planning applications. This can be found in Appendix 4.

A register of all planning applications is available to view in Mansion House, Penrith, and is also available to view on the Council’s website.

Pre Application Advice

The Council recommends pre-application discussions with officers so they can offer advice and help make a successful application for appropriate quality development in the district. A duty officer is available at Mansion House from 8.45 to 5.15 Monday to Thursday and 8.45 to 4.45 on Fridays to discuss proposals.

The advice available will inform applicants about who to contact and how to contact them to inform them of their proposals, together with technical advice that will improve the quality of the application. Representatives from other departments within the Council and external consultees may also be a part of these discussions when required.

Pre-application discussions will:

- Help get things right first time
• Identify potential problems at an early stage
• Save time and money
• Speed up the decision making process
• Provide a better quality development

The Council will also encourage potential applicants to publicise and consult on proposals for larger scale projects before they submit an application, and can provide advice and guidance on a number of techniques, including public meetings and exhibitions.

Consultation following receipt of an application

When the Council receives an application it will send a letter to the applicant acknowledging receipt of the application, together with contact details for the case officer responsible for it.

The extent of the consultation that follows will vary but will incorporate consultation with statutory bodies, neighbours and the relevant town or parish council. This will be in the form of a notification letter to the specific consultees.

The Council will usually use a combination of the following techniques in order to publicise an application and engage with the public:

• Site notices will be displayed for all planning and listed building applications, giving details of where the full application can be viewed, the name of the case officer and how and when comments should be made
• Letters will be sent to statutory consultees for all planning and listed building applications
• Letters will be sent to the relevant town or parish council (or Penrith Civic Society in the case of Penrith) for all planning and listed building applications
• Letters will be sent to neighbours in most cases, and this will be widened for larger applications with a wider impact
• Letters will also be sent to non-statutory consultees, including local community groups where appropriate
• The Council will place a public notice in the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald for the following:
  − Major applications
  − Environmental Impact Assessment
  − Listed Building consent
  − Applications within a Conservation Area
  − Applications that affect Public Rights of Way
  − Applications not in accordance with the Local Plan/Local Development Framework (major departures, minor departures)
• The Council publishes weekly lists of planning applications received that are available to view in Mansion House, Penrith
• The weekly lists of applications are sent to a number of interested organisations, including local newspapers, and the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald publishes the weekly planning list
• The weekly lists of applications are also published on the Council’s website www.eden.gov.uk
The applications themselves are available for the public to view at the Council’s Mansion House building during office hours.

Applications are also available to view on the Council’s website (via a link to the Planning Portal) together with accompany plans. Responses can be made electronically and progress can be monitored via the website and.

The deadline for responding to consultations is 21 days from the date of the notification for any written comments to be submitted. If significant changes are made to an application consultees will be contacted again and given a further 14 days to comment. However, the case officer may recommend that the applicant withdraws the original application and re-submits with the amended plan, giving consultees a further 21 days to respond to the new, revised application.

The same principles are used for major and minor applications, although the range of consultees and methods used will usually be wider reaching for major applications.

The Council will send an acknowledgment to everybody who comments on an application. Anybody making an objection, and who wishes to do so, will have the right to speak at the Planning Applications Committee.

**Making the Decision**

There are two ways that an application may be determined:

- Decisions made using delegated powers
- Decisions made by the Planning Applications Committee

**Decisions made using Delegated Powers**

In order to speed up the decision making process the Council has given the Director of Technical Services delegated powers to determine planning applications. Delegated powers exist where the following do not apply:

- There is a recommendation to approve contrary to policy
- Applications are of a major, controversial or sensitive nature
- Applications which have aroused significant public interest on valid planning grounds or an objection from a statutory consultee
- Applications subject to a Parish Council objection on valid planning grounds
- Applications subject to a request by an objector to address the Planning Applications Committee
- Applications requested by a District Councillor to go to Committee

The Council will try to consider comments received after the deadline so long as a decision has not been made.

**Decisions made by the Planning Applications Committee**

Where delegated powers cannot be used, the Planning Applications Committee determines the application. These meetings occur monthly and are open to the public.
Anybody who objects to an application and has arranged to do so, has the right to speak at the Planning Applications Committee, with the applicant then given the opportunity to respond. Following this, the Planning Applications Committee then makes its decision.

Agendas, reports and minutes for all meetings can be found on the Council’s website.

**Informing People of the Decision**

A decisions notice will be sent to the applicant. In addition to this the following will receive notification of the decision:

- Everybody who made a comment
- Objectors are sent a letter together with a copy of the decision notice, giving details of the reasons for the decision advising why an application was approved, if determined using delegated powers
- Parish and town councils are sent a letter together with a copy of the decision notice, giving details of the reasons for the decision
- Neighbours/parish councils told of amendments to an approved scheme (to allow them to comment)

The Council produces a monthly report of all decisions to the Planning Applications Committee. Also, the Council’s website will soon enable applications and decisions to be tracked by the public throughout the entire process.

**Appeals**

In the event of a refusal of a planning application, applicants have the right to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate within 6 months of the refusal date.

Any original consultee or respondent will be notified of an appeal (and they are published on the website and on the Planning Committee agenda each month).
6. Resources

The Local Development Scheme (amendments approved at Environment Committee on 9 June 2005) identified the resources available to undertake the preparation of the various Local Development Documents that will make up the Local Development Framework.

Much of the work identified within this Statement of Community Involvement is already undertaken when policies are developed or during the consideration of planning applications, and can therefore be incorporated within the Council’s existing workload and resources.

However the scale, frequency and breadth of the consultation activities now required for the Local Development Framework has increased, and this will stretch existing resources for staffing, administration, document production and postage. This will be carefully monitored to ensure that cost effectiveness is maximised.

The Council will therefore try to co-ordinate consultation activities with other departments and initiatives such as the Community Strategy, as this will ensure consistency, maximise resources and help prevent consultation fatigue. The appointment of a Consultation Officer to co-ordinate consultation activities for the Council as a whole will help in this respect.

Where possible, and appropriate, Community Voice will be used for consultation on planning matters as the costs of using and maintaining this panel are already budgeted for.

Planning Delivery Grant has been used to strengthen resources (e.g. to provide a new Locals Plans Officer post and a Planning Technician post). The Council is also seeking to create a new post of Environmental Sustainability Officer in order to ensure that SA/SEA receives thorough attention and enable existing staff to focus upon preparing the new LDF documents.

Information on consultation activities will be communicated through partnership networks such as Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) and the Local Strategic Partnership to maximise effectiveness.

Also, external organisation such as Planning Aid and Voluntary Action Cumbria may be able to support the Council’s and community involvement with local groups and communities.

Finally, the website will provide an additional resource as more information is available electronically and interactivity is increased (e.g. the subscription service for LDF updates). This will allow manpower resources to be concentrated elsewhere.
7. Monitoring and Reporting Back

The Council's principles for community involvement highlight the importance of feeding back results and analysing the effectiveness of consultation activities.

The mechanisms identified within Table 1 will enable the feeding back of information throughout the process, and the Council's Consultation Officer and Communication Officer will advise on the most appropriate and effective methods.

A Statement of Consultation will be produced for each LDF document. This will report back on how consultation responses have been considered by the Council and readily identify the subsequent amendments. This will also demonstrate compliance with the Regulations in the preparation of the LDF documents.

In addition, the Annual Monitoring Report that will be produced each year to ensure that this statement remains an effective document.

The mechanisms used and their effectiveness will be monitored for each consultation and any improvements required will be fed into the SCI. A thorough review of this Statement of Community Involvement will take place three years following its adoption. This will consider all aspects of the process, and consider the effects of new policies and technology.
Appendix 1 – List of Consultees

The following is a list of organisations that must be consulted as part of the development plan process:

1. **Specific Consultation Bodies**

   The following bodies are specific consultation bodies and must be consulted in accordance with the Act and Regulations:

   a) The North West Regional Assembly
   b) A relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority (See Appendix 2 for list of relevant authorities for Eden District)
   c) The Countryside Agency
   d) The Environment Agency
   e) Highways Agency
   g) English Nature
   h) The Strategic Rail Authority
   i) A Regional Development Agency whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority:
      i) Northwest Development Agency
      ii) OneNorthEast
      iii) Yorkshire Forward
   j) Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under Section 106 (3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003
   k) Any person who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority
   l) Any of the bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of the local planning authority, including:
      i) Strategic Health Authority
      ii) Person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986
      iii) Sewage undertaker
      iv) Water undertaker

2. **Government Departments**

   The Government Office for the North West will also be consulted and will often be the first point of contact for consultation with central Government Departments. In addition, Eden District Council will consult any Government Departments or agencies where those departments or agencies have large land holdings in the area covered by a local development document (LDD). This will ensure that the Council is fully aware of the possible need for expansion of existing facilities or, more importantly, the likelihood of large-scale land disposals taking place within the period of time covered by the LDD.

   a) Home Office
b) Department for Education and Skills (through Government Offices)
c) Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
d) Department for Transport (through Government Offices)
e) Department of Health (through relevant Regional Public Health Group)
f) Department of Trade and Industry (through Government Offices)
g) Ministry of Defence
h) Department of Work and Pensions
i) Department of Constitutional Affairs
j) Department for Culture, Media and Sport
k) Office of Government Commerce (Property Advisers to the Civil Estate)

3. **General Consultation Bodies**

a) Local Strategic Partnership
b) Penrith Civic Society (as there is no parish council for Penrith)
c) Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC), Eden Association of Local Councils
d) Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the authority’s area including:
   i) Voluntary Action Cumbria
   ii) Eden CVS
   iii) Alston Moor Partnership
   iv) Appleby Alliance
   v) Penrith Partnership

e) Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the authority’s area
f) Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the authority’s area
g) Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the authority’s area including:
   i) Eden Access for All Forum
h) Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the authority’s area including:
   i) Alston Moor Business Association
   ii) Appleby Chamber of Trade
   iii) Cumbria Tourist Board
   iv) Eden Economic Forum
   v) Eden Tourism Network
   vi) Kirkby Stephen Town Forum
   vii) National Farmers Union
   viii) Penrith Chamber of Trade
4. **Other Consultees**

Eden District Council will also consider the need to consult, where appropriate the following agencies and organisations in the preparation of local development documents.

a) Age Concern  
b) Airport operators  
c) British Chemical Distributors and Traders Association  
d) British Geological Survey, Cumbria RIGS  
e) British Waterways, canal owners and navigation authorities  
f) CAMRA  
g) Centre for Ecology and Hydrology  
h) Chambers of Commerce, Local CBI and local branches of Institute of Directors  
i) Church Commissioners  
j) Civil Aviation Authority  
k) Coal Authority  
l) Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)  
m) Commission for New Towns and English Partnerships  
n) Commission for Racial Equality  
o) Crown Estate Office  
p) Cumbria Youth Alliance  
q) Diocesan Board of Finance  
r) Disability Rights Commission  
s) Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee  
t) National Grid Transco, United Utilities  
u) Environmental groups at national, regional and local level, including:  
   i) Council for the Protection of Rural England, Friends of the Lake District  
   ii) Cumbria Biodiversity Action Partnership  
   iii) Cumbria Wildlife Trust  
   iv) East Cumbria Countryside Project  
   v) Eden Rivers Trust  
   vi) Friends of the Earth  
   vii) North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)  
   viii) Royal Society for the Protection of Birds;  
   ix) Tourism and Conservation Partnership  
v) Equal Opportunities Commission  
w) Fire and Rescue Services  
x) Forestry Commission  
y) Freight Transport Association  
z) Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group  
aa) Health and Safety Executive  
bb) Help the Aged
cc) Housing organisations including:
   i) Housing Corporation
   ii) Housing Associations
   iii) Cumbria Rural Housing Trust
   iv) Tenants and Residents Associations

dd) Learning and Skills Councils

eе) Local Agenda 21 including:
   i) Civic Societies
   ii) Community Groups
   iii) Local Transport Authorities
   iv) Local Transport Operators
   v) Local Race Equality Councils and other local equality groups

ff) National Playing Fields Association

gg) National Trust

hh) Network Rail

ii) Passenger Transport Authorities

jj) Passenger Transport Executives

kk) Police Architectural Liaison Officers/Crime Prevention Design Advisors

ll) Post Office Property Holdings

mm) Rail Companies and the Rail Freight Group

nn) Regional Development Agencies

oo) Regional Housing Boards

pp) Regional Sports Boards

qq) Road Haulage Association

rr) Sport England

ss) The House Builders Federation

tt) Traveller Law Reform Coalition

uu) Water Companies

vv) Women’s National Commission
Appendix 2 – ‘Relevant Authorities’ for Eden District Council

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 describe ‘relevant authorities’ as being:

a) local planning authority  
b) a county council referred to in section 16(1)  
c) a parish council

From this, the following list represents the relevant authorities (as required in part 1 b of Appendix 1) whose area lies within or adjoins Eden District:

- National Parks:  
  - Lake District National Park Authority  
  - Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

- County Councils:  
  - Cumbria County Council  
  - Northumberland County Council  
  - Durham County Council  
  - North Yorkshire County Council

- District Councils:  
  - Carlisle City Council  
  - South Lakeland District Council  
  - Allerdale Borough Council  
  - Tynedale Council  
  - Teesdale District Council  
  - Wear Valley District Council  
  - Richmondshire District Council

- All Parish Councils within Eden District
- All Parish Meetings within Eden District

- Relevant Parish Councils in Neighbouring authorities:
  - All Parish Councils in the Carlisle City Council area that adjoin Eden District  
  - All Parish Councils in the South Lakeland District Council area that adjoin Eden District  
  - All Parish Councils in the Allerdale Borough Council area that adjoin Eden District  
  - All Parish Councils in the Tynedale Council area that adjoin Eden District  
  - All Parish Councils in the Teesdale District Council area that adjoin Eden District  
  - All Parish Councils in the Wear Valley District Council area that adjoin Eden District  
  - All Parish Councils in the Richmondshire District Council area that adjoin Eden District
1. The Parish Council/Parish Meeting will be consulted upon all applications for planning permission, for Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent but not for ‘prior notification determinations’

For notifications of telecommunication apparatus and ‘agricultural notifications’ the Council only has 28 days in which to respond. These developments have ‘deemed consent’ and therefore do not require planning permission.

2. A copy of the submitted application will be sent to the Parish Council/Parish Meeting

The Parish/Parish Meeting will receive all the information submitted in respect of each planning application with the exception of bulky technical reports e.g. ground contamination or traffic impact assessments. In this instance a non-technical summary or the conclusions from the report will be sent with an explanatory note explaining what we have done.

3. The Parish/Parish meeting will be given 21 days in which to reply

The speed and efficiency of dealing with planning applications is scrutinised and at least 80% of all applications need to be determined within eight weeks. The Parish Council/Parish Meeting can help Planning Services achieve this target by responding promptly to consultations. Responses received after the 21 day consultation period will be taken into account except where the application has already been determined

4. An extension of the Parish Council consultation period can be agreed by the Case Officer

The Case Officer may be able to offer the Parish Council an extended period in which to respond. The consultation letter we send has the contact details for the Case Officer and the Parish Clerk is encouraged to use this facility in order to maintain contact between ourselves.

5. If during the consultation period the Parish Council/Parish Meeting require further information or advice, the Case Officer will liaise with the Parish Council Clerk

The Case Officer is available to offer the Parish Council/Parish Meeting further information or advice. It is preferable if requests can be put in writing by emailing the Case Officer at planning.services@eden.gov.uk. It is also helpful if the Parish has one contact point for the Case Officer.

6. Where the Parish/Parish Meeting raises issues that are not regarded as material to the consideration of the planning application, an explanatory letter will be sent.

Planning applications can only be determined on material planning considerations and this specifically excludes such things as loss of value or loss of view. A
guidance note on matters which can and cannot be considered ‘material’ is available from Planning Services. The delegated powers of the Director of Technical Services allow him to determine whether a comment or objection upon a particular application is a ‘material’ planning matter or not.

7. Where the view of the Director of Planning Services upon a particular application differs from that of the Parish Council/Parish Meeting, the application will be referred to the Council’s Planning Committee for a decision.

This provision is specifically included in the schedule of delegated powers given to the Director of Technical Services, to ensure that the views of the Parish Council/Parish Meeting are heard by Committee in all cases where they may be contrary to his own. The Parish view is reported in full to Committee.

8. The Parish Council/Parish meeting will be sent a copy of the report appearing on the Planning Committee Agenda.

A copy of the Committee report will be sent to the Parish Council/Parish Meeting to ensure that they are fully aware of the recommendation made to Committee by the Director of Planning Services and the justification for this recommendation. The Committee Agenda is also available on the Council’s website at least 5 days before the meeting.

9. A representative of the Parish/Parish Meeting will be invited to attend any Site Visits undertaken by the Planning Committee within their Parish.

From time to time the Planning Committee will undertake a site visit before reaching a decision on a particular application and in this case the Parish Council will be invited to attend. The decision on whether to hold a site visit rests with the Committee.

10. Where a decision is made by the Council against the view of the Parish Council/Parish Meeting, a written explanation will be given upon request.

Where a decision is contrary to the Parish view i.e. approval when the Parish object or refusal when there is support from the Parish, an explanation in addition to the Committee report can be requested.
Appendix 4 – Customer Charter for Planning Services

Our Customer Charter sets out a standard of service that we aspire to deliver. In order to meet our Customer Charter, we will:

General Service Quality

1. ensure that all staff are helpful, well informed and properly trained;
2. have a duty-officer, making advice available every working day between 8.45 and 17.15;
3. ensure that up-to-date information on the Service, and current applications for planning approval are made available for inspection;
4. ensure that enquirers can contact an Officer responsible for their area during office hours over the telephone. Officers will respond to left messages within 24 hours (or the following Monday);
5. ensure all letters are responded to within 10 working days of receipt;

Pre-application Discussions

6. actively promote pre-application discussions;
7. involve both Building Control and Development Control Officers when appropriate;
8. provide a free pre-application consultation service for Planning and Building Control;

Processing Applications

9. process applications in accordance with the various relevant statutory requirements including publicity and consultations and apply consistently the provisions of the Eden Local Plan and the Building Regulations throughout the Eden District area;

Processing Building Regulations Applications

10. provide an answer phone service for site inspection requests outside office hours;
11. provide a same day inspection service for requests received before 10.30 am, or within the statutory time period where this is not possible;
12. inspect all key elements of work, and adapt our inspection service to meet developers’ needs;
13. provide advice where contraventions are found and issue a completion certificate on request when works are satisfactorily completed

Processing Planning Applications

14. acknowledge in writing the receipt of all applications within 3 working days;
15. advise in writing if an application is incomplete or invalid within 5 working days;
16. make available the Council’s publicity policy;
17. persons advised of a planning application will be given 21 days to comment. If significant changes are made to the application, neighbours will be contacted again and given a further 14 days to comment;
18. acknowledge any written representations made on proposals within 3 working days, and subsequently advise those who have made such representations of the eventual decision within 10 working days of it being issued;
19. place copies of valid applications in the statutory register within 3 working days of receipt;
20. ensure that sites of planning proposals are visited by the Case Officer within 2 weeks of the receipt of the valid application;
21. provide the opportunity for making a Committee presentation to any person objecting in writing to a planning application within the time period given;
22. determine at least 80% of all planning applications within 8 weeks;
23. forward decision notices on determined applications within 3 working days;
24. notify applicants in writing where it is not possible to give a decision within 8 weeks of receipt and notify the outcome to those making representations;
25. comply with the timetables set down by Central Government concerning appeals;

Integrated Enforcement

26. act pro-actively to reduce the likelihood of breaches occurring;
27. approach and address alleged breaches of control with an open mind;
28. make available the adopted Enforcement Policy;
29. acknowledge all complaints within 3 working days;
30. inspect alleged breaches of control within 15 working days;
31. notify complainants of the decision to authorise formal enforcement action within 10 working days;

Dangerous Structures/Buildings

32. provide a 24-hour call out service;
33. deal with all notifications received concerning demolitions within ten days;

Feedback and Performance

34. collect and publish performance statistics;
35. carry out satisfaction surveys;
36. monitor complaints and amend our procedures accordingly.
## Appendix 5 – Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DPD</td>
<td>Development Plan Document. The documents that a local planning authority must prepare, and which have been subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Framework. The LDF will contain a portfolio of Local Development Documents which will provide the local authority’s policies for meeting the community’s economic, environmental and social aims for the future of their area where this affects the development of land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDS</td>
<td>Local Development Scheme. The management tool for the production of the LDF identifying the work to be undertaken and timetable for completing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSP</td>
<td>Local Strategic Partnership. An overall partnership of people that brings together organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector within a local authority area, with the objective of improving people’s quality of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Spatial Strategy. The RSS, incorporating a regional transport strategy, provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of local development documents, local transport plans and regional and sub regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land use activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal. Assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the LDF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI</td>
<td>Statement of Community Involvement. Document explaining to stakeholders and the community, how and when they will be involved in the preparation of the LDF, and the steps that will be taken to facilitate this involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment. Assessment of the environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the LDF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Supplementary Planning Document. Documents that are produced to provide greater clarity and detail to a DPD.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>