

Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation

Statement of Community Involvement

February 2017

OPDC
OLD OAK AND
PARK ROYAL
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

MAYOR OF LONDON



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Stonebridge Park

LB Brent

Harlesden

Willesden Junction

Kensal Green

Hanger Lane

Park Royal

RBKC

North Acton

LB Ealing

East Acton

LB H&F

1. Introduction

Background to OPDC

1.1 The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) was established on 1st April 2015 as London's second Mayoral Development Corporation and the Mayor's fifth functional body. OPDC is the statutory Local Planning Authority for the area, but also has responsibilities for coordinating delivery and ensuring that the wider area benefits from regeneration.

1.2 The OPDC area covers the Old Oak Common and Park Royal Opportunity Areas in the Mayor's London Plan (2015). The OPDC area is currently home to 1,700 businesses, employing 43,100 workers across a range of employment and sectors and skills levels, generating £2.1 billion annually in gross value added (GVA) to the UK economy. Through regeneration, the OPDC area has the capacity to deliver a minimum additional 25,500 homes and indicative 65,000 jobs. OPDC is developing its Local Plan, which will set out the spatial vision and policies for the OPDC area.

What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

1.3 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) explains how OPDC involves the community in deciding planning applications and preparing planning policy, and sets out how it will effectively utilise the rich wealth of knowledge that the existing communities have, in and around the OPDC area.

1.4 Community refers to residents, businesses, community and interest groups, neighbourhood planning forums, landowners,

developers, London Boroughs within and neighbouring the OPDC area, government agencies and any other individuals, groups and organisations interested in, and affected by, the development and use of land at Old Oak and Park Royal.

OPDC's Duty to Co-operate

1.5 OPDC is under a duty to co-operate with other authorities and agencies when it reviews its planning policies. These authorities and agencies include boroughs within the OPDC area (London Borough of Ealing, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, and London Borough of Brent), neighbouring boroughs (including Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea), the Mayor of London and GLA associated bodies (such as Transport for London), as well as bodies such as the Environment Agency, Network Rail, Historic England, Natural England, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Homes and Communities Agency, the Office of Rail Regulation and Highways England (see Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for the full list of specific and general consultation bodies).

OPDC's approach to delivering effective involvement (ground rules)

1.6 OPDC is committed to achieving a high level of community involvement. As a result, it has incorporated 10 ground rules which are intended to ensure a consistent and minimum standard for community involvement. These have been developed from suggestions from community groups, received during the SCI consultation in September and October 2015.

1.7 OPDC expects organisers and participants of community involvement activities to make reasonable endeavours to follow the ground rules. The ground rules are for:

- a) Prospective planning applicants carrying out pre-application community involvement on development proposals that will be determined by OPDC
- b) Individuals(s), community group(s), and/or organisation(s) having an interest in the planning application or policy; and
- c) OPDC in preparing planning policy

Ground Rules

1. Inclusive invitation

- a) Reasonable attempts should be made by prospective planning applicants and / or OPDC to ensure that a representative cross-section of the community is invited to community involvement event(s) to ensure that all participants are aware of each other's views. Where community groups or individuals are unable to attend events but nevertheless wish to participate, engagement by written dialogue should be pursued.
- b) Invitations should go to existing community groups in and around the OPDC area, e.g. local residents associations, neighbourhood planning forums, amenity societies where they exist or are formed as a result of the proposal. OPDC will maintain a list of these groups both for its own use and to assist prospective planning applicants with their engagement strategies.
- c) It may be necessary to hold additional events for those groups not traditionally involved in the planning process, liaising with trusted organisations to devise activities which cater for difficult to engage groups.
- d) Events should be held in accessible locations and inclusive premises. Accessible locations will enable the highest possible attendance by people affected by the proposal or plan; for example, in the area where a development scheme is being proposed. Inclusive premises are those able to be adequately accessed by all sections of the community. OPDC will maintain a list of suitable venues within the area.

- e) All participants in the involvement process should be provided with a rationale for the development proposals and a plan for how comments will be considered and a response given. Participants should also be asked to provide their contact details to ensure they receive feedback on the results of involvement.
- f) To ensure all sections of the community are able to effectively engage in the involvement process, the use of accessible and diverse range of communication formats and methods should be considered, where appropriate

2. Authorisation

- a) Those representing community groups, the prospective planning applicant and OPDC at community involvement events should be able to demonstrate that they are authorised to speak for their organisations.
- b) The scale and remit of those organisations should also be made clear.

3. Continuity

- a) Involvement should be a continuous process with the timetable for the period of preparing the plan or making the planning application made clear. It is desirable that the timetable should allow adequate time for participants to effectively engage in the involvement process. This includes providing participants with reasonable notice of events and an adequate time period in which to consider and respond to the development proposal or plan.
- b) Where involvement is intended to include a series of meetings or events then, as far as possible, the same individuals that represent the community, the prospective planning applicant and OPDC should continue to be involved throughout the process to ensure continuity of views. Nevertheless, it may be appropriate for other participants or advisers to be involved intermittently.

4. Independent advice

a) Where technical or professional advisers or private consultants are employed as independent facilitators to manage the involvement process, they should have a client duty of care to all parties equally and should be instructed to follow these ground rules, irrespective of the party employing them. Where facilitators or advisers are not independent, this should be declared.

5. Early involvement

a) Arrangements should be made for the community involvement process to begin at the early stages of a plan or development proposals process. This should occur before issues such as the height and scale of development are fixed when significant options are still open and while there is still the potential to make a difference to the plans. Where community groups or individuals are unable to attend the initial meeting but nevertheless wish to participate, engagement by other means should be pursued. This may include making presentation material available online and inviting feedback in writing.

6. Presenting options

a) Applicants will be encouraged to set out reasonable options or choices and to have input from local communities on how plans and proposals could be taken forward including those suggested by the community that are reasonable, reflect the community's needs, ambitions and experience.

b) Applicants will be encouraged to ensure that presentation materials will be accessible and clear to allow all the opportunity to understand the proposals. This is likely to include oral, written and visual presentational material. This could also include the use of three dimensional models and drawings, videos and aerial photographs as well as other smart and innovative technology where appropriate, including placing video presentations online to provide opportunities for local communities who are unable to attend consultation events to still provide feedback.

7. Choosing between options

a) The planning criteria against which redevelopment options must be assessed should be made clear and transparent.

8. Consensus

a) Best efforts should be made to reach consensus, making it clear how far the involvement has resulted in agreement to adopt or to alter proposals. Where agreement has not been possible, a clear and reasoned response should be provided

9. Transparent records

a) For major planning applications, a Community Involvement Statement should be submitted by the planning applicant to OPDC as a supporting document to their planning application. The statement should summarise:

- i. the community involvement undertaken; the main issues raised by the community;
- ii. how the proposal has been revised, if necessary, to take account of the issues raised and,
- iii. where the proposal has not been revised, the reasons why not.

b) For Local Plan documents, a consultation statement will be made available alongside the Local Plan published for representations. This will set out:

- i. who was consulted when preparing the Local Plan;
- ii. a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and
- iii. how those issues have been addressed in the Local Plan.

c) For Supplementary Planning Documents, a consultation statement will be published alongside the final document. This will set out:

- i. who was consulted when preparing the draft document;
- ii. a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and
- iii. how those issues have been addressed in the draft document.

d) Participants may provide a written statement of omissions and corrections which will be reported and considered by OPDC along with the Community Involvement Statement and / or consultation statement.

10. Feedback on the outcome of community involvement

a) All planning application reports will include a summary of consultation responses received and all comments received during statutory consultation will be made publicly available and available to Planning Committee members for consideration. For major planning applications, the Community Involvement Statement Report should summarise community involvement undertaken by the applicant at pre-application stage and should explain how it has influenced the application scheme.

b) For applications being considered by Planning Committee, OPDC will notify those people who commented on the application as to when the Planning Committee meeting will be held and when the report will be available online.

c) For Local Plan documents, feedback is provided in the consultation statement referred to under 9b. For Supplementary Planning Documents this will be the consultation statement referred to under 9c.

d) In making decisions on planning applications and planning policy documents, OPDC will carefully consider comments made during involvement and consultation on the application or plan.

2. Involvement in planning policy

Introduction

2.1 This section sets out how OPDC involves the community in preparing planning policy documents, based on the ground rules as guiding principles and follows the statutory requirements for consultation. A list and timetable for the production of planning policy is available in OPDC's Local Development Scheme (LDS) which is available online or can be requested by contacting OPDC.

2.2 As a public authority OPDC must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Under the Equality Act 2010, those with protected characteristics can expect OPDC to take their needs into account. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Approach to Engagement

Consultation database

2.3 OPDC will develop and maintain a database of individuals, groups, and organisations that have an interest in opportunities to get involved. It includes those who Government regulations require OPDC to consult or who have expressed an interest in being informed about the Local Plan. It includes residents, businesses, neighbourhood planning forums, community groups, voluntary organisations, interest groups, landowners, developers, businesses, London Boroughs within and neighbouring the OPDC area and

government agencies. Requested to be added to this database can be made by contacting OPDC by email, telephone or in writing,

Existing local meetings and initiatives

2.4 OPDC has set up regular local meetings and will attend existing community meetings, where viable, to raise awareness about the Local Plan and seek involvement. OPDC will look for local opportunity to raise awareness about planning policy and applications to encourage involvement.

Neighbouring Borough involvement

2.5 For planning policy documents likely to have impacts on adjoining local authority areas, OPDC will engage with relevant London Boroughs at the earliest possible stage in preparing the document. This helps ensure communities in the neighbouring areas are notified and have opportunities in preparing the document.

Methods of Engagement

Involvement method	Explanation
Consultation documents – paper copies	Planning policy documents will be available to view at City Hall, local libraries and other community locations.
OPDC Website	OPDC's planning webpages will include information, and when appropriate, a dedicated micro-site for community engagement and consultation will be used. We will encourage other organisations to also include links to key information on their webpages.

Discussion events, e.g. workshops	These events are facilitated round-table discussions about emerging planning policy
Drop-in events / exhibitions	These include staffed drop-in events / exhibitions. They provide opportunities for people to gain information, ask OPDC officers questions and provide feedback. Exhibitions can also be non-staffed. They are held at accessible locations and at times aimed at encouraging maximum attendance.
Emails and letters	Emails and, when appropriate, letters are sent to the Consultation Database. OPDC will have regular email newsletters which will notify subscribers about opportunities for involvement
Meetings	These are used to discuss and gain feedback on emerging planning policies. They include OPDC's organised regular local meetings as well as other meetings with interest groups and particular audiences.
Press releases	Produced to raise awareness of opportunities to engage, however dependent on press publishing releases.
Questionnaires / surveys	These are a means for gathering feedback at drop-in events or exhibitions to gathering feedback on emerging policies
Social media	OPDC will use platforms such as Twitter or Facebook which can help to raise awareness and encourage feedback

Involvement in preparing the Local Plan

2.6 The most recent Regulations that came into force in April 2012 (as amended) set out the statutory requirements for the production of Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These requirements include criteria for the preparation and publication of a draft Local Plan, receiving representations, consideration of representations, examination, publication of recommendations and adoption. Throughout these stages of policy production, OPDC will seek to ensure that issues are considered and that policies are drafted that take full account of equality and sustainability considerations. As part of this process there will be appropriate community involvement as set out in this document to ensure that all groups have the opportunity to engage in the planning process.

2.7 Planning law requires that decision on planning applications should be made in accordance with the development plan, which includes the Local Plan, unless other relevant planning matters indicate otherwise. The development plan is therefore the starting point for when OPDC makes decisions on planning applications.

2.8 Information about the Local Plan documents to be produced is provided in the Local Development Scheme which is available on OPDC's website or paper copies can be requested by contacting OPDC.

Stage 1 Preparation of Local Plan (Regulation 18)

Identify and consult on main issues that the Local Plan needs to address and consider alternative policy options.

Stage 2 Publication of proposed Local Plan (Regulation 19)

Local Plan policy options published for a last stage of consultation.

Local Plan and public responses submitted to Secretary of State, who appoints a Planning Inspector

Stage 3 Examination

The Local Plan, public responses and written statements examined by the planning inspector at public examination. There may be further modifications published for consultation, after which a report on the soundness of the Local Plan is issued by the Inspector.

Stage 4 Adoption

The recommendations of the Inspector's report are considered and OPDC adopts the Local Plan.

Diagram: Main stages of Local Plan development

Community involvement in producing the Local Plan

Stage 1 Preparation of the Local Plan

2.9 The main plan-making activities undertaken by OPDC during the preparation stage are evidence gathering, identifying issues and options, and selecting preferred options.

2.10 To ensure the community is effectively involved in these activities, OPDC will carry out a range of community involvement methods:

- a) As required by Government regulations OPDC Invites statutory and general consultees, residents and businesses in the OPDC area to comment on what the Local Plan should contain during a public consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks;
- b) Consults bodies listed in the relevant regulations on the scope of the information and level of detail that should be included in the environmental report which accompanies the draft Local Plan. The environmental report addresses the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

2.11 In addition, OPDC:

- a) Emails and writes to members of the consultation database throughout the Local Plan's preparation;
- b) Makes consultation documents and questionnaires available on its website, at City Hall and public libraries;
- c) Holds meetings, discussion events and drop-in events / exhibitions; and
- d) Issues a statutory press notice, advertises in local press, uses the OPDC email newsletter and its social media sites to raise awareness.

Stage 2 Publication of the proposed Local Plan

2.12 Taking into account feedback from community involvement activities during the preparation stage, OPDC finalises and publishes the proposed Local Plan.

2.13 At this stage OPDC carries out the following participation required by Government regulations:

- a) Makes the Local Plan and supporting documents specified in the regulations available on the OPDC's website and at City Hall for representations to be made for a minimum period of six weeks.
- b) Sends notification to all those bodies invited to make comments at Stage 1 that the Local Plan and supporting documents are available for inspection and provide details about how to make representations.

Feedback on community involvement

2.14 Alongside the Local Plan, a consultation statement is published setting out: who was consulted in preparing the Local Plan; a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and how those issues have been addressed in the Local Plan

Stage 3 Examination

2.15 The Local Plan, along with supporting documents and the representations received, is then submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by a Planning Inspector.

2.16 At this stage OPDC carries out the following actions required by Government regulations:

- a) Makes the Local Plan and supporting documents specified in the regulations available on OPDC's website and at City Hall;
- b) Sends notification to all those consultation bodies invited to make representations under Regulation 18(1) of the Town and

Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2012 that the Local Plan and supporting documents are available for inspection; and

- c) Notifies those who requested notification that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State.

Stage 4 Adoption

2.17 Provided the Inspector considers the Local Plan meets Government and Mayoral policy and legal requirements, approval will be sought from OPDC Board to adopt the Local Plan as part of OPDC's development plan.

2.18 Following adoption OPDC carries out the following actions required by Government regulations:

- a) Makes the adopted Local Plan, the adoption statement and other supporting documents specified in the regulations available on OPDC's website and at City Hall; and
- b) Sends the adoption statement to those who asked to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan.

Involvement in preparing Supplementary Planning Documents

2.19 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) add detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They are only produced when OPDC considers them necessary to provide additional guidance for new developments at specific locations or on particular topics.

Stage 1: Preparation of the draft SPD

OPDC officer compile documents and supporting evidence. There is an optional preliminary consultation.

Stage 2: Consideration on draft SPD

OPDC published the draft SPD for public comments for a minimum of 6 weeks

Stage 3: Adoption

OPDC considers comments made and makes any necessary changes.

OPDC adopts SPD as a Local Development Document and prepares adoption statement.

Diagram: Main stages of producing Supplementary Planning Documents

Community involvement in producing Supplementary Planning Documents

Stage 1 – Preparation

2.20 OPDC carries out a range of involvement methods during this stage to ensure effective community engagement in preparing the document:

2.21 As required by Government regulations, OPDC consults bodies listed in the relevant regulations as to whether the Supplementary Planning Document are likely to have significant environmental effects. This will assist in determining whether an environmental report should be produced to accompany the draft Supplementary Planning Document. The environmental report addresses the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC on the

assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

2.22 In addition, OPDC:

- a) Emails and writes to members of the Local Plan Consultation Database about opportunities to be involved in preparing the Supplementary Planning Document;
- b) Where appropriate, holds meetings, discussion events or drop-in events / exhibitions; and
- c) Advertises in local press, uses the OPDC email newsletter and its social media sites to raise awareness.

Stage 2 – Consultation on draft Supplementary Planning Document

2.23 Taking into account the results from the community involvement activities during the preparation stage, OPDC finalises and publishes the draft Supplementary Planning Document. At this stage, as required by Government regulations the OPDC makes the draft Supplementary Planning Document available on OPDC's website and at City Hall for representations to be made for a minimum period of six weeks.

2.24 In addition, OPDC:

- a) Emails and writes to members of the Local Plan Consultation Database seeking comments on the draft document;
- b) Advertises in local press, uses the OPDC email newsletter and its social media sites to raise awareness; and
- c) Considers holding meetings, discussion events and drop-in events / exhibitions to discuss the draft and seek feedback.

2.25 A consultation statement is published setting out:

- a) who was consulted when preparing the Supplementary Planning Document
- b) a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and

c) how those issues have been addressed in the draft document

Stage 3 – Adoption

2.26 Having regard to the comments received on the draft, the final document will be prepared. It will then be presented for adoption at OPDC Board meeting. Following adoption OPDC carries out the following actions required by Government regulations:

- a) Makes the adopted Supplementary Planning Document and the adoption statement available on OPDC’s website and at City Hall; and
- b) Sends the adoption statement to those who asked to be notified of the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document

Involvement in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

2.27 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a statutory, non-negotiable charge on new development. The levy will be used to help deliver a wide range of infrastructure needed to support the development of the area.

Stage 1: Preliminary charging schedule (PDCS)

PDCS published with a minimum 6 week period of consultation

Stage 2: Consultation on Draft charging schedule (DCS)

Draft Charging Schedule published with a minimum 6 week period of consultation

Stage 3: Examination

OPDC considers comments made on the draft Charging Schedule and makes any necessary changes. OPDC submits to the Secretary of State. A Planning Inspector is appointed. The Charging Schedule is examined by the planning inspector at public examination.

Stage 4: Adoption

OPDC adopts the Charging Schuedle and prepares adoption statement.

Diagram: Main stages of developing a charging schedule for Community Infrastructure Levy

Stage 1 – Preparation of a preliminary draft charging schedule

2.28 OPDC carries out a range of involvement methods during this stage to ensure effective community engagement in preparing the document and as required by Government regulations, OPDC consults bodies listed in the relevant regulations to invite them to make representations on the PDCS.

2.29 In addition, OPDC:

- a) Emails and writes to members of the consultation database about consultation on the preliminary draft charging schedule;
- b) Where appropriate, holds meetings, discussion events or drop-in events / exhibitions; and
- c) Advertises in local press, uses the OPDC email newsletter and its social media sites to raise awareness.

Stage 2 - Consultation on draft Charging Schedule

2.30 Taking into account the results from the preliminary draft charging schedule consultation, OPDC finalises and publishes the draft Charging Schedule. At this stage, as required by Government regulations the OPDC makes the draft Charging Schedule available on OPDC's website and at City Hall for representations to be made for a minimum period of six weeks.

2.31 In addition, OPDC:

- a) Emails and writes to members of the Local Plan Consultation Database seeking comments on the draft document;
- b) Advertises in local press, uses the OPDC email newsletter and its social media sites to raise awareness; and
- c) Considers holding meetings, discussion events and drop-in events / exhibitions to discuss the draft and seek feedback.

2.32 Alongside the draft charging schedule, a consultation statement is published setting out:

- a) who was consulted when preparing the Charging Schedule;
- b) a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and
- c) how those issues have been addressed in the draft document.

Stage 3 - Examination

2.33 The draft Charging Schedule is then submitted to an independent examiner.

2.34 At this stage OPDC carries out the following actions required by Government regulations:

- a) Makes the draft Charging Schedule available on OPDC's website and at City Hall;
- b) Sends notification to all those bodies invited to make comments at Stage 1 and Stage 2 that the draft Charging Schedule is available for inspection;

- c) Notifies those who requested notification that the draft Charging Schedule has been submitted to the Secretary of State; and

- d) Publishes a consultation statement setting out who was consulted when preparing the Charging Schedule; a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and how those issues have been addressed in the draft document.

Stage 4 - Adoption

2.35 Provided the Examiner considers the draft Charging Schedule to have met Government policy and legal requirements, approval will be sought from OPDC Board to adopt the Charging Schedule.

2.36 Following adoption OPDC carries out the following actions required by Government regulations:

- a) Makes the Charging Schedule and the adoption statement available on OPDC's website; and
- b) Sends the adoption statement to those who asked to be notified of the adoption of the Charging Schedule.

Involvement in Neighbourhood Planning

2.37 Neighbourhood development plans are prepared by designated neighbourhood planning forums. Preparation includes consultation on a draft plan. Following a successful independent examination and local referendum, neighbourhood development plans are brought into legal force and are 'made' part of the development plan. Their policies are then considered alongside the Local Plan, and other planning policies when OPDC makes decisions on planning applications.

2.38 Community involvement in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans is the responsibility of the neighbourhood planning forums producing the plan.

2.39 The Government's National Planning Practice Guidance expects forums to ensure the wider community is kept fully informed of what is being proposed and has opportunities to be involved in shaping the emerging plan. OPDC will continue to offer advice to forums on how effective involvement can take place and, where resources allow, provide assistance in carrying out the involvement.

2.40 Whilst most community engagement in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans will be led by the neighbourhood planning forum, there are certain stages where OPDC carries out formal consultation:

1. Application to designate a neighbourhood planning area

2.41 In advance of the submission of a neighbourhood planning area application, OPDC will expect interim forums to engage proactively with residents, landowners, businesses and emerging or established neighbourhood forums on the proposed boundary of the neighbourhood planning area.

2.42 Once the neighbourhood planning area application has been submitted, OPDC publishes on its website the name and map of the proposed neighbourhood planning area, the name of the relevant body who applied for the designation and details about how to comment. It also notifies and seeks comment from members of the Consultation Database. Following this consultation OPDC publishes on its website the decision to either designate, alter the area or refuse the application (with reasons, if refusing).

2. Application to designate a neighbourhood planning forum

2.43 In advance of the submission of a neighbourhood planning forum application, OPDC will expect interim forums to engage proactively with residents, landowners, businesses and emerging or established neighbourhood forums on the proposed membership and constitution of the neighbourhood planning forum.

2.44 Once the neighbourhood forum application has been submitted, OPDC publishes on its website a copy of the application made by the prospective forum and details about how to comment. It also notifies and seeks comment from members of the Consultation Database. If OPDC approves the proposed area and forum it will publish on its website the forum's name, and various details. If OPDC decides to refuse the designation then it will publish reasons for the refusal on its website.

3. Submission of a neighbourhood development plan

2.45 In advance of the submission of a neighbourhood development, OPDC will expect forums to have engaged positively and proactively on a wide range of stakeholders on the plans production, in accordance with the requirements set out in paragraph 2.33.

2.46 Once the neighbourhood planning forum has submitted their finalised neighbourhood development plan following consultation on a draft, OPDC publishes on its website the draft plan and supporting documents, including details on how to make comments. It also notifies and seeks comment from members of the Consultation Database. Copies of these documents are also made available at designated locations within the neighbourhood planning area.

4. Decision on a neighbourhood development plan

2.47 OPDC sends a copy of the submitted draft neighbourhood development plan, the supporting documents and comments received at the submission stage to an appointed Examiner for independent examination. Hearing sessions may or may not be required at the discretion of the Examiner.

2.48 OPDC then publishes the Examiner's report and decision statement on its website and makes it available to view at the designated locations within the neighbourhood planning area. Subject to the Examiner's recommendation, OPDC then proceeds to arrange a referendum within the neighbourhood planning area on the plan.

3. Involvement in planning applications

Introduction

3.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of community involvement in shaping development proposals. Paragraph 66 states:

'Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably.'

3.2 The benefits of pre-application engagement by prospective applicants are also made clear in the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance. It sets out how pre-application engagement can improve both the quality of planning applications and the likelihood of success by:

- a) working collaboratively and openly with interested parties at an early stage to identify, understand and seek to resolve issues associated with a proposed development;
- b) discussing the possible mitigation of the impact of a proposed development, including any planning conditions; and
- c) identifying the information required to accompany an application, thus reducing the likelihood of delays in registering the submitted application.

3.3 It also recognises that the approach to pre-application engagement needs to be tailored to the nature of the proposed development and the issues to be addressed.

3.4 In line with national guidance, OPDC will strongly encourage applicants to involve local communities at pre-application stage. However, it is recognised that pre-application consultation and engagement are not a statutory requirement and OPDC would not be able to refuse planning permission because of inadequate pre-application consultation.

Main stages in the pre-planning application process

3.5 Before an application is submitted, the applicant and OPDC should undertake the following processes:

1. Decide appropriate involvement – Applicant considers approach to pre-application consultation in discussion with OPDC officers. The approach should be proportionate to the development and should reflect the guidance contained within this Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). For the most significant development proposals, a two-stage approach to pre-application consultation will be encouraged, comprising:
 - i) Initial consultation at an early stage, before issues such as the height and scale of development are fixed, and while there is still potential to influence the form of development. Applicants will be encouraged to present a range of options at this stage; and
 - ii) Further consultation when the plans are more advanced but while there is still an opportunity to influence the final design of the development.

In some circumstances there may be a need for more engagement. Applicants should provide evidence of their engagement strategy including information on who their target audience will be, dates and times of the consultation events, locations, what format/s of consultation will be used including a copy of their marketing and communications plan. For the most significant development proposals, it may be appropriate for OPDC to ar-

range a meeting, to give local residents' groups and other stakeholders an opportunity to discuss proposals directly with the applicant and to make suggestions about how schemes could be improved.

2. Involvement – The developer should carry out community involvement in line with the engagement strategy and engages with a range of stakeholders and interested parties.

3. Report on result of involvement – for major planning applications, the developer should submit a Statement of Community Involvement Report which reports on the consultation undertaken and how it has influenced the proposed development. This should include evidence of their communications and engagement strategy and clear examples of how feedback from the community was used to influence plans or an explanation of why they were unable to implement suggestions provided by the community. For applications below the major threshold, developers are strongly encouraged to submit a Statement of Community involvement Report and provide evidence of where and when they consulted and who their target audience was and what communication and marketing methods were used.

Main stages in the post-submission process

3.6 Following the submission of the planning application, the following processes will be undertaken:

1. Publicity and consultation – OPDC publishes the planning application (e.g. website, site notice, letter to neighbours and statutory consultees, press advert) and seeks comments for a statutory period of 21 days. For the most significant schemes, officers will consider the merits of hosting a presentation event during the statutory consultation period, which would be chaired by OPDC officers and attended by the applicant, who would present the scheme to stakeholders and interested parties. This would provide an opportu-

nity for the community to find out more about the proposed development and ask questions of the applicant. In order to preserve the integrity of the consultation process and ensure statutory consultation requirements are met, interested parties will still need to submit representations in writing.

2. Officer assessment – an OPDC planning officer will assess the application against development plan policies and all other material planning considerations. As part of this assessment, the officer will review the applicant's Community Involvement Statement and will take account of representations submitted as part of the statutory consultation process.

3. Recommendation and decision – the Director of Planning will decide whether the application can be decided at officer level under delegated authority, or whether the application should be referred to OPDC Planning Committee for decision. The most significant and / or particularly sensitive or controversial applications will be decided by Planning Committee. Under these circumstances, the officer's report will make a recommendation to Planning Committee to either approve or refuse the application. The officer's report will be placed on the Planning Committee section of OPDC's website no less than 5 clear working days before the committee meeting. Interested parties who have submitted representations on the application can ask to speak at committee, in accordance with OPDC's Guidance note on Public Speaking at Planning Committee.

4. Appeals – In the event that planning permission is refused, or is not determined by OPDC within the statutory period, an applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. A Planning Inspector will decide whether to allow (approve) or dismiss (refuse) the appeal. All comments made on the application are sent to the Planning Inspectorate. OPDC also notifies those parties who have commented on the planning application about the appeal and of the opportunity to submit further comments to the Planning Inspectorate. The exception is appeals for house-

holder development, advertisement consent and minor commercial development; for these the Planning Inspectorate will only consider comments made on the application, and no new representations will be considered on the appeal.

5. Post-occupancy survey – OPDC’s Local Plan will include a policy requiring major developments to undertake a post-occupancy survey. The survey should understand both the occupants of the development (residents, workers and/or visitors) and surrounding residents and workers views on the completed proposals.

Effective pre-application involvement

3.7 OPDC will strongly encourage applicants to take a positive and pro-active approach to engaging the community and applicants in the planning process. This should include engagement with established community network organisations, such as but not limited to local residents’ associations, the Grand Union Alliance and Park Royal Business Group, and when appropriate will take place before an application has been submitted, as well as during the formal application process.

3.8 Developers for all major schemes will be encouraged to engage fully with OPDC, residents and businesses to discuss proposals at an early stage before the submission of any planning applications. They will need to submit their engagement and communications strategies and any supporting evidence of how or when they engaged with the local community and what the outcomes were. Early discussions with all sections of the community can help avoid problem areas and improve the quality and acceptability of a planning application.

3.9 OPDC offers a pre-application advice service. Pre-application advice is confidential until a planning application is submitted. However, any advice given is without prejudice to future decisions

of OPDC. Where appropriate, external consultees may be asked for their comments on proposals at pre-application stage.

3.10 Applicants for all major schemes will be strongly encouraged to engage with the community before submitting a planning application. There are a number of formats applicants can use to engage with local residents. Different formats may be appropriate for different schemes. They include:

Public exhibitions

3.11 These are run by the applicant and typically give residents the opportunity to see and comment on emerging proposals. OPDC will liaise with applicants to determine whether a public exhibition is an appropriate consultation format but it is the responsibility of the applicants to plan and deliver the exhibition. The applicant will also need to ensure that venues, times of day, as well as publicity material, are accessible and inclusive to all.

Planning forum

3.12 OPDC may recommend holding a planning forum for significant development proposals at the pre-application stage. These could include representatives from local resident and amenity groups, and community network organisations, and ward councillors who are invited to participate in a round table discussion with the applicants, facilitated by a chair person who acts impartially. A planning forum enables local resident groups and others to discuss proposals directly with the applicant and to make suggestions about how schemes could be improved.

Involvement when an application is submitted

Publicity and consultation by OPDC

3.13 OPDC wants to involve the community in decision making and will work with residents groups and amenity societies to ensure appropriate forms of consultation are undertaken with the right groups depending on the type and location of the development. Each application is subject to a statutory consultation period of 21 days. In some cases, the consultation period may be extended at the discretion of OPDC's case officer. Where significant amendments to planning applications are made before they are decided, a further round of consultation will be undertaken, to give interested parties an opportunity to comment on the amended scheme.

3.14 The methods of consultation that will be used by OPDC on planning applications include:

- a) Neighbour Notifications - notifications of planning applications will normally be sent to properties that are immediately adjacent to an application site and directly affected by an application;
- b) Site Notices - where required, a site notice will be put up near the site. For the most significant applications, several notices may be placed in the vicinity of the site.
- c) Press Notices - where required a public notice will be placed in the local press. Depending where the application site is located, this will normally be the Brent and Kilburn Times or the Ealing Gazette.
- d) Planning Register – all applications will be made available to view on OPDC's online Planning Register.
- e) Consultation letters being sent to local community groups or organisations who work with the local communities
- f) For the most significant schemes, a summary of the application scheme will be placed on the OPDC website, including a link to the application documents on the Planning Register.

3.15 Weekly lists of planning applications received and decided by OPDC are published on the online Planning Register. The Planning Register also allows interested parties to search for planning applications on a number of criteria including location (street/post-code) date received and date decided.

Making a decision on the application

3.15 Following the end of the consultation period, OPDC considers the comments received and makes a decision on the planning application having regard to development plan policies and all other relevant planning considerations. Some applications are decided by planning officers under delegated authority from OPDC Planning Committee. The most significant and / or particularly sensitive or controversial development proposals will be decided by OPDC Planning Committee. This is a public meeting with the opportunity for members of the public to speak by prior arrangement.

3.16 Officers' reports setting out delegated decisions or recommendations to OPDC Planning Committee summarise the comments received from consultation on the planning application. For major applications, officers' reports will also summarise consultation undertaken by the applicant and how it has influenced the proposed development.

3.17 Officers' reports and planning decision notices are published on the OPDC Planning Register.

Appeals

3.18 In the event that planning permission is refused, the applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. When OPDC is notified of an appeal by the Planning Inspectorate, it will notify all interested parties of the appeal and provide a copy of all comments made on an application to the Inspectorate. Interested parties are advised of how they can be involved in the appeal process.

3.19 If an appeal is to be considered at an informal hearing or public inquiry, OPDC will also notify all interested parties of the venue and time of the hearing in line with the Planning Inspectorate's requirements. The venue will be accessible and inclusive.

Post-Occupancy Survey

3.20 Continual learning and dissemination of acquired knowledge holds the key to shaping the future of projects and practices. OPDC's Local Plan will include a policy requiring that soon after completion and occupancy of the development, major planning applications will be encouraged to submit a post-occupancy survey. The required contents of the survey will be included within the policy and should help identify, inter alia:

- a) How successful its delivery was;
- b) How successful the completed development is;
- c) Where there is potential for further improvement; and
- d) What lessons can be learned for future projects.

3.21 The survey should look at buildings' and the public realms' performance in use against OPDC's environmental standards and other agreed indicators. This will help to:

- a) Highlight any immediate teething problems that can be addressed and solved;
- b) Identify any gaps in communication and understanding that impact on the building operation
- c) Provide lessons that can be used to improve design and procurement on future projects
- d) Act as a benchmarking aid to compare across projects and over time

3.22 The survey should also involve a questionnaire of the occupiers of the building and surrounding the development to understand perspectives on the quality of the internal and external design and function of new developments, to help identify quick wins that can be rectified and to help provide lessons to both OPDC and the developer for further projects.

4. Assessment and monitoring

4.1 The purpose of this document is to ensure that the most effective techniques are being used to deliver the optimum levels of community involvement and that all groups in the community have the opportunity to get involved in planning policy and planning decisions.

4.2 As such, it will be important for OPDC to assess the effectiveness of the SCI periodically and monitor the success rates of the various methods being used. This will be carried out through the analysis of feedback to consultation on policy and applications requested via feedback forms or other methods which make it easy and quick for participants to give feedback

4.3 The SCI will be reviewed and regularly updated to reflect any changes required as identified through this monitoring as well as through any changes to national legislation. The first review date is proposed to be following the adoption of the Old Oak and Park Royal Local Plan. Where material changes are made, the SCI will be re-consulted.

4.4 OPDC will undertake this task to maintain its goal of actively involving as much of the community as it can reach in the development of policy and in the assessment of planning applications as well as increasing the quality of engagement through monitoring and surveying of individuals/groups involved.

5. Glossary

CIL: The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new power which enables a charge to be levied on the net increase in gross internal area floorspace arising from development in order to fund infrastructure that is needed to support development in the area.

Development Plan: as set out in Section 38(6) of the Act, a London local authority's development plan consists of the London Plan and the Development Plan Documents contained within its Local Plan and neighbourhood plans.

Development Plan Documents: spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination, and together with the London Plan, will form the development plan for the borough for the purposes of the Act. They can include a Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of land, and Area Action Plans (where needed). Other Development Plan Documents, including Development Management Policies, can be produced. Individual Development Plan Documents or parts of a document can be reviewed independently from other Development Plan Documents. Each authority must set out the programme for preparing its Development Plan Documents in the Local Development Scheme.

Development management policies: these will be a suite of criteria-based policies which are required to ensure that all development within the areas meets the spatial vision and spatial objectives set out in the Local Plan. They may be included in any Development Plan Document or may form a standalone document.

Issues and Options: produced during the initial stage of the preparation of Development Plan Documents.

Local development document: the collective term for Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning.

Local Development Scheme: sets out the programme for preparing Local Development Documents.

Local Plan: The Local Plan consists of Development Plan Documents drawn up by the Local Planning Authority to guide the future development of the local area. It also consists of Neighbourhood Plans for Neighbourhood Areas, where these have been examined and approved at referendum.

London Plan: the Spatial Development Strategy for London. The Plan came into effect in February 2004 and set out an integrated social, economic and environmental framework for the development of London for 15-20 years. The most recent iteration was adopted in July 2011, which provides the London wide context within which individual boroughs set their local planning policies as part of their Development Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan: A Neighbourhood Plan is prepared by a designated Neighbourhood Forum (or parish or town council) for their Neighbourhood Area. It sets out the policies for development and use of land for all or part of the neighbourhood area. Neighbourhood plans are subject to examination and referendum, after which they are adopted as part of the Development Plan for the local area. As such, they must be in conformity with OPDC's Local Plan.

OPDC: The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation. This is a Mayoral Development corporation and therefore directly accountable to Londoners through an independent Board. OPDC is a functional body of the Greater London Authority. Launched on 1 April 2015, OPDC's purpose is to secure the maximum benefits for London and Londoners from the transport investment planned for the Old Oak and Park Royal area.

Planning Inspectorate: is a government body whose main work involves processing planning and enforcement appeals and holding examination in public on local plans

Planning Portal: A national website that offers a wide range of services and guidance on the planning system advising on planning permission, online planning applications, planning appeals and how the planning system works (see <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/>).

Planning Obligations: Legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken. For example, the provision of highways. Sometimes called "Section 106" agreements or Planning Agreements.

Proposals map: the adopted proposals map illustrates on a base map all the policies contained in Development Plan Documents. It must be revised as each new Development Plan Document is adopted, and it should always reflect the up-to-date planning strategy for the area.

The Regulations: Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Supplementary Planning Documents: provide supplementary information in respect of the policies in Development Plan Documents and may take the form of design guides, development briefs, master plans or issue based documents that supplement the policies in a DPD. They do not form part of the Development Plan and are not subject to independent examination.

Sustainability Appraisal: tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required in the Act to be undertaken for all Local Plan documents. This can be included within an integrated impact assessment.
