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Statement of Consultation Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

May 2017

This statement sets out comments received and the Council's response to the Surrey Heath Borough Council's consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement.

The Consultation ran for six weeks from the 3rd January 2017 to the 14th February 2017.

Letters and e-mails were sent out to residents and organisations on the Council's Local Plan database, neighbouring authorities, Parish Councils and those Specific Consultation Bodies and Local Equality Groups set out in Appendix 2 of the draft Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation was advertised on the front page of the Council's website.

Responses to the Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)		
Respondent	Comment	Council's Response
Natural England	Are supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general community, community organisations and statutory bodies in local planning matters, both in terms of shaping policy and participating in the process of determining planning applications	Noted.
Mr Colin Slatter	Considers the document is clear but raises concern over the lack of consultation in respect of the Frimley Green traffic lights.	Noted. With respect to the traffic light issue this relates to a specific issue rather than the Statement of Community Involvement
Mr David Natolie	Considers inadequate consultation took place with the adjoining villages on Deepcut Development before planning consents were given. Fully supports a more comprehensive arrangement that seeks to identify and consult with those communities which will be affected - no matter how minor. There are with social media a lot more avenues of communication that could be usefully used.	Noted. The Deepcut development was subject to extensive community engagement and consultation both in producing the Supplementary Planning Document for the site and through the Planning Application process. Amend Tables 1-4 in the SCI to better reflect the use of social media.
Mr Graham O'Connell	Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Statement of Community Involvement 2017.	

	<p>I have three main comments:</p> <p>1. In effect the policy seems to be to engage with the community simply in order to meet the minimum requirements of the legislation. Whilst I accept that it can be expensive and time-consuming to consult extensively on all applications, it does seem that a little more towards best practice would be possible and desirable.</p> <p>In particular, to commit to genuine participatory consultation on major projects, perhaps in proportion to their size. Also, to spell out in this document a clear commitment to follow the relevant government guidelines on consultation over and above any legal minimum.</p> <p>2. A continuing major concern from development is the impact on traffic. This was one of the top concerns regarding the Deepcut development, for example. However, the issues and potential solutions are often at the periphery of the planning process and are in danger of being subject to little or no direct consultation. The importance of consultation on S106 agreements, for example, is emphasised in government guidelines but there is nothing in this Statement that makes even an oblique reference to such issues. These issues are important and are not peripheral from the consultees point of view. There should be a clear and direct statement of commitment to embrace consultation on S106 and any other issues of importance to the local community or those further afield that may be affected as a consequence of the development (to avoid any repeat of the Frimley Green Traffic Lights fiasco or similar).</p> <p>3. Whilst this Statement of Community Involvement is a legal requirement it comes over as simply that. One does not get a sense of any heart-felt belief that the council really wishes to engage with the community, to find out what they know, to take account of their</p>	<p>Noted. Consultation on planning applications is undertaken in line with government requirements.</p> <p>Noted. There is no requirement to consult on Section 106 agreements.</p>
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	<p>concerns, to allow them to genuinely influence things. Please, as a minimum, say what will happen with the views of those consulted and promise that they will be given equal weight, and air time, to that of the developer, their experts or other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Noted. All consultation responses are given the same weight by the Council and by Planning Inspectors in examining Local Plans</p>
Mr Richard Browne	<p>Thank you for the email below which prompted me to visit the Public Library and see the wealth of information available.</p> <p>Not knowing where to start I looked at various documents (egg Camberley town centre 2011-2028). Sadly I came away with the conclusion that over the years Camberley has degenerated into a less attractive town in which to live. The addition of the Atrium with Vue has been one of the rare enhancements but where are the better quality shops and restaurants....Carluccios, Brasserie Blanc....Cote etc?</p> <p>The High Street has been allowed to look tired; is the new 'Wok Shop' going to have some new street scene furniture etc and is the area behind it going to be cleared up so we can all be proud of Camberley, the town in which we live?</p> <p>I didn't fully understand how the railway station redevelopment is going to take place and when.</p> <p>Is the redevelopment of Ashburn (?) House opposite to the station really going to house flats/apartments of luxury dimensions etc.</p> <p>It is also sad to see the flats being built in Middle Gordon Rd (opposite Optiplan) have no balconies. Is there an objection to balconies; apart from the occasional Juliet balcony?</p> <p>Could one of the initiatives to keep people better informed be to take one of the empty retail units and have on permanent display plans and models of the town centre and its surrounds with dates attached</p>	<p>Noted. Comments relate specifically to the Camberley Town Centre and associated development rather than to the Statement of Community Involvement.</p>

	<p>to give us hope that improvements are taking place.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>	
Mr David Chesneau	<p>The current draft SCI reflects badly on the borough council. Its writing style will put all but the most 'dedicated' of readers off. Any response to the consultation will therefore be far from representative of the views of the community as a whole. The complex style and language are particularly inappropriate as the document itself refers to the challenge of involving 'hard to reach' sections of the community.</p> <p>The content of the document reflects its origins in another era. It completely fails to recognise how communication has changed in the last decade. It makes virtually no mention of the social media, even though the US president and the Russian authorities use Twitter to exchange opinions. Its references to 'a local newspaper' ignore the fact that local newspapers are less and less relied upon as a source of local information.</p> <p>In my view the document is irretrievable. It may have been written 'in accordance with Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)', but it fails completely as a communication.</p>	<p>Noted. The Statement of Consultation is an update to previously agreed and published Statement of Consultation. Amend introduction to reflect the document has a number of technical references.</p> <p>Noted Amend Tables 1-4 to better reflect the use of social media.</p>
Cllr Graham Alleway	<p>It would be useful to present a document such as a gap analysis or review comparing the existing and the proposed SCI statements. It should also summarise its current effectiveness and any proposals or objectives to enhance its effectiveness. This should give a clearer description of its purpose and effectiveness that people outside of the planning system can understand. The NPPF objective (foreword) is to engage people in Planning and is better done with simple plain English and concise documents. It should be free of repetition and to the point.</p>	<p>Noted. The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the community will be involved in the various stages of plan making and in consulting on planning applications. Amend introduction to reflect the document has a number of technical references</p>

	<p>The SCI lists its consultation bodies and its involvement procedures; but this is normally to comment on something already derived by others without consultation. It appears to suggest that others have decided what we should have as a community, not what the community has said it wants as a place to live going forward. The basis of the Plan should be derived from the community and then presented as a proposal for each specific area where different needs or characters exist.</p> <p>“Links with other documents” alludes to this aspiration but reads “arm’s length” and weak on commitment whereas these documents need to be the base level starting point having been produced by the community which is the biggest stakeholder.</p> <p>The SCI needs to demonstrate how it will lead to a community planning and development policy that meets the aspirations, needs and expectations of that community, then let the other secondary parties, often remote from the community, to comment. This approach is more likely to achieve some harmony and avoid the battles associated with development. The eventual plan with bespoke variations for each distinctive community should result in acceptable appropriate development supported by the community, and fits with the NPPF objectives. Appropriate development can be presumed in favour, inappropriate and detrimental development doesn’t get permission.</p> <p>The SCI process should make the community feel it has been effective in shaping its community as opposed to part of a statutory exercise to satisfy a regulatory requirement.</p>	<p>Noted the Statement of Community Involvement sets out that consultation bodies and communities will be consulted on at the early stages of plan making. Consultation on planning applications reflects national guidance.</p>
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