Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

GENERAL

Support

381/1 UKAEA, 403/1 English Nature, 418/1 Ministry of Defence, 441/1 SEEDA, 486/1 Wm Morrison Supermarkets, 506/1 South East and South West Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust, 513/1 The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Church, 620/1 Charney Bassett Parish Council, 665/1 Sunningwell Parish Council, 728/1 Bovis Homes Ltd, 743/1 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western), 768/1 The Oxford Green Belt Network, 791 Didcot Town Council, 967/1 The Church Commissioners for England, 801/1 Dr H A Dickinson, 968/2 Gallagher Estates and Gleeson Homes, 971/1 Mrs Sheila Cotton All these respondents generally support the SCI and wish to be kept informed on progress on the LDF.

The support is welcomed.

Objections

382/2 Letcombe Brook Project Officer hopes that the SCI will be effectively updated to improve the consultation process on ecology and sustainability.

Comments

386/1 GOSE suggest that for those where English is not their first language or otherwise have optical or literary difficulties the Council may wish to add on the front or back cover of all LDF documents text in English and other locally appropriate languages why the document is important and hence why people would want to read it and the means by which they can do so.

386/2 GOSE suggest it would be advisable to add the Council's name to the footer on each page.

386/3 GOSE consider it would be helpful if the Council could emphasise that the new system has a very different philosophy and practice – it is not a re-branding of the old system. As a result everyone will need to change the way they do things, e.g. councils, stakeholders, developers, etc.

386/1 GOSE suggest that the Council may wish to highlight in some way the words or phrases explained in the glossary and to include text at the beginning of the document to alert users to this practice.

413/1 The Highways Agency expect to be consulted on any Local Development Documents that may impact on the motorway and all-purpose trunk road network. In particular, they would expect to be consulted on all Development Plan Documents. Where a meeting is considered appropriate on issues relating to the trunk road network, they would prefer a one to one meeting.

Agreed

The Council will monitor the LDF process and assess the consultation methods used and how appropriate and effective. RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

The officers in consultation with the Council's communications officer are looking into the possibilities of improving the document along the lines suggested by GOSE and will make an oral report at the meeting.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Amend footer on each page to include 'Vale of White Horse District Council'.

Noted

RECOMMENDATION: Page 1 para 1.4 Add new sentence to end of paragraph 1.4 to read 'The new development plan system has a very different philosophy. Local development frameworks are intended to streamline the local planning process and promote a proactive, positive approach to managing development. As a result all those involved, the public, developers, town and parish councils and local organisations will all need to change the way they involve themselves in the plan making process.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: That the submission document be amended accordingly.

The Highways Agency are a statutory consultee for Local Development Documents, and as such they are listed in Appendix 2. As a statutory consultee, they must be consulted about all planning policy documents considered relevant to them, which is likely to be all of them. However, as they have expressed an interest to be consulted on all development plan

They also note that it is a formal statutory requirement, under the General Development Procedure Order 1995, to consult the Highways Agency on planning applications.

549/1 The British Wind Energy Association welcomes the opportunity to provide comments in response to the consultation. They consider that they are in a unique position to comment on the circumstances which will affect future growth and development of the Sector. In particular they refer to the 'South West Public Engagement Protocol for Wind Energy' which discusses the various options for community involvement at each stage of the planning process and offers guidance on how to deliver these options effectively and appropriately.

They emphasise the importance of local planning authorities highlighting in their SCI what level of community involvement they consider appropriate.

609 South West Regional Assembly have indicated they will respond but have not done so.

625/1 Cumnor Parish Council consider Sections 2-5 contain too much jargon.

627/1 Drayton Parish Council in addition to their comments later in the schedule also comment that:

- They are concerned at the replacement of the Local Plan with a Local Development Framework at all – we do not appear to have been consulted on this issue.
- 'Considerable resources' have been allocated, but an actual budget figure would allow comment on proper use of council tax funding.
- Thinks that the Parish Council should be identified as the main channel for local opinion on all planning matters.

 If this process is to give value for money there needs to be a commitment to a greater responsiveness in the practical context of informed planning, relating to such issues as achieving and maintaining a range of housing matched to local demographic socioeconomic needs and good design.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

documents, this has been noted.

It should be noted that this is only for relevant planning applications.

Noted

It is considered that the draft SCI gives adequate advice on the timing and level of community involvement in the preparation of development plan documents and the consideration of planning applications.

Noted

Their point is understood but this arises from the different documents and different stages of preparation. A number of textual changes have been put forward by officers to bring the document up to date and improve clarity. A complete crib version outlining the changes recommended in this schedule and those textual changes recommended by officers is attached to this schedule.

The Council is required to produce the Local Development Framework under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. There is no scope for consultation on this requirement.

The SCI is required to show that the process of involvement can be resourced and managed effectively. The Council considers that the draft SCI in Section 6 achieves this.

The Council has a responsibility to involve and listen to all sections of the community and to balance all these views. The Government guidance set out in PPS12 stresses that local authorities should be getting more people involved in the planning process as early as possible. The Parish Council's view that it should be identified as the main channel for public opinion runs counter to this advice. The Parish Councils will have a very important role but the District Council has a responsibility to ensure widespread public involvement. It should also be noted that all development plan documents when submitted to the Secretary of State have to be accompanied by a statement setting out how consultation has complied with the Statement of Community Involvement. See para 5.31.

The Parish Council's concerns are noted but this is not an issue for the State of Community Involvement which is concerned with the processes of community involvement.

It is a requirement for the Council to review the SCI. In

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

 It will be interesting to see in future whether all the strategies for consultation are indeed implemented. addition the Council will monitor the LDF process and assess the consultation methods used and their appropriateness and effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

Noted These organisations are all included on the consultation list

RECOMMENDATION: No change be made to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

639/2 Grove Parish Council consider the document repetitious and unnecessarily long.

Some consultation documents are unavoidably technical in nature and have to contain specific information to comply with the regulations. A number of textual changes are proposed to improve clarity and are set out in the attached crib version.

The comment is noted but is not relevant to the Statement of Community Involvement.

715/1 South East England Regional Assembly do not wish to comment at this stage but would remind the Council that its development plan documents should be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy and take account of the emerging Draft South East Plan, Part 1 (Core Regional Policies).

773/1 National Grid while supporting the SCI wish to emphasise the role of the National Grid and to highlight areas and issues where they feel consultation with National Grid would be appropriate in future Development Plan Documents. They consider that as an important stakeholder they should be involved in the preparation, alteration and revision of relevant Development Plan Documents which may affect their assets including policies and plans relating to the following issues

National Grid are included in Appendix 2 and will be consulted on development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

- Policies relating to overhead transmission lines
- Policies relating to the diverting or undergrounding of overhead transmission lines
- Development adjacent to high voltage overhead lines
- Other policies relating to infrastructure or utility provision
- Policies relating to development in the countryside
- Landscape policies
- Allocating of sites for residential development adjacent to their assets
- Waste and mineral plans

In addition they also want to be consulted on significant planning applications, which may affect their assets. This will ensure that the transmission of electricity and gas and the role of National Grid is not compromised.

678/1 Cherwell District Council, 719/1 Gloucestershire County Council, 725/1 Bellway Homes, 800/1 Lime Walk Gospel Trust, 913/1 Vale Strategic Partnership, 938/1 CAMRA Vale of White Horse Branch, 950/1 Mrs M Werrell, Mr J D Werrell and Ms J M Dennie, 959/1 G L Hearn, 960/1 Morgan Cole Solicitors, 961/1 Christopher Strang Associates, 962/1 Broadway Halyon, 963/1 Hids Copse Residents Association, 964/1 Mrs K Bitmead, 965/1 Mrs Lisa Auchinole All these respondents wish to be kept informed on progress on the LDF.

Noted. The posting of all new applications on the website will assist organisations such as the National Grid in monitoring applications and if necessary submit comments.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

Noted. All these respondents are included in the database.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

801/1 Dr H A Dickinson who supports the draft SCI comments that:

 the timing of consultation exercises needs to avoid public holidays because this can cause difficulties for parish councils and other councillors.

The Local Development Scheme is an ambitious and tight programme and it may not be possible to avoid the summer holidays and other public holidays to achieve the timetable. However, wherever practicable the Council will attempt to avoid consultation at such times. A sentence could be included to recognise that the Council will, where practicable, and without prejudice to its Local Development Scheme, avoid public holidays and the summer holiday period.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 14 para 5.12 add new sentence to read 'Where practicable the Council will attempt to avoid public holidays and the summer vacation period when holding public consultation exercises'.

 for the residents of Cumnor there are six main area of concern relating to housing development, preservation of the Green Belt, major housing developments, smaller developments and their cumulative impact, enforcement, appeals and development of gated communities Noted. The Parish Council will be kept informed of the progress on the relevant development plan documents.

 the key for community involvement is that the community is enabled to participate 'meaningfully'.

The draft Statement of Community Involvement seeks to widen community involvement particularly at an early stage, so that the community can make a real difference in terms of influencing policy and the future of the area.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

915/1 West Waddy ADP consider that the SCI is overlong and would benefit from a summary. There is no allowance in the response form for the comments that form neither objection or support.

This is noted. See response to Persimmon below. The form for the submission stage will be modified to take account of this.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the Statement of Community Involvement.

972/1 Persimmon Homes Wessex comment that the SCI is confusing, repetitive and over long and not in accordance with the Companion Guide to PPS12.

For the draft Statement of Community Involvement to adequately set out community involvement, the SCI needs to be of this length. It should be noted that GOSE have not objected to the length of the document.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

The text should be revised to make clear that representations received will be assessed with the overall context provided by relevant planning policy statements and guidance and local consultation cannot override national or regional policy.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Page 11 para 5.2 add after paragraph a new sentence to read 'Views expressed by the community will be considered within the overall context of national and regional guidance and other policies of the District Council.

In respect of consultation the SCI should clearly state that attendees at interactive consultation events will be sent a comprehensive record of discussions held. Also it should be made clear that the Council will seek to participate in joint consultations in certain circumstances.

The detail of the management of any particular consultation exercises are not appropriate for inclusion in the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

The Council needs to be careful about how different methods of consultation are used.

Noted

SECTION 2 – The Local Development Framework and associated documents

Comments

Summary of Representations Observations & Recommendation of the **Assistant Director (Planning)** Para 2.1 and Fig 1. 386/5 GOSE consider that SCI users may find it helpful if Agreed text were added to explain role/timing and authorship of the RECOMMENDATION: After para 2.1 add new paragraph Regional Spatial Strategy. to read 'The regional spatial strategy is being prepared by the South East Regional Assembly and all the Council's development plan documents must comply with it. Further information is available on SEERA's web www.southeast-ra.gov.uk. Para 2.6 and Fig 1. This will be part of the process of revising the Local **386/6 GOSE** note that the AMR will also review/report upon Development Scheme. There is therefore no need to alter the any particular issues/trends in or affecting the area generally draft Statement of Community Involvement. and/or that may have a bearing on the future need for the RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement timing of LDF documents. of Community Involvement.

SECTION 3 – Consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement

Support

Para's 3.4 and 3.5

551/1 The Theatres Trust are pleased that paras 3.4 and 3.5 explain about the data base and wish to have it confirmed that they are included. They consider a link to the database within the SCI would be useful

Comments

Para 3.1

627/3 Drayton Parish Council are concerned by the 18 month cycle of the Statement of Community Involvement and what scale of projects go through this cycle.

Para 3.9

386/7 GOSE sentence regarding public housing is repeated.

The Trust is included. An electronic link as suggested will be investigated.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

This is the timetable for preparing the Statement of Community Involvement and sets out how the Council will consult on the preparation of the development plan documents. It will only be considering consultation arrangements and not specific projects or documents.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

Noted

RECOMMENDATION: Paragraph 3.9: last sentence delete.

SECTION 4 – The Council's Vision and Principles for Community Involvement

Objection

Para 4.2

386/8 GOSE consider it may be helpful to include a definition of hard to reach groups in the glossary and give some examples.

568/1 Campaign for a Sustainable Didcot consider that many institutions and organisations in or around Oxfordshire have national or international reputation for the work they do, including the University of Oxford, organisations at Harwell Business Centre, the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, CEH Wallingford, HR Wallingford, CABI, the Environment Agency, the Henley Business School, the Culham Science Centre, CEH Oxford, the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) etc. Many employers of these organisations, together with all others who live in the Vale of

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Add to glossary 'Hard to reach groups can be any group of people whose views are difficult to access through regular consultation. They can include people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and young people.'

Many of these organisations are included in the Business and Commerce Section of Appendix 2. Those that are not included will be added to the list for consultation in the preparation of development plan documents. There is no need to amend the statement

RECOMMENDATION: Page 45 Appendix 2: Add the suggested organisations to the Appendix.

White Horse District, can contribute knowledge and experience from their training and other interests to achieving sustainable development within the District. Accordingly a new bullet point should be added to paragraph 4.2

 We recognise the considerable knowledge and experience which is potentially available to VWHDC within the community. Following the principles of Local Agenda 21, we will use this resource when possible and appropriate to inform decisions we make in the planning process.

789/1 The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust object because they have problems in communication over planning applications due to the area covered.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

The Council considers this to be an internal matter for the Trust. However, the inclusion of all new planning application on the Council's web-site should assist the Trust.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

SECTION 5 – Implementing the Vision

Support

Para 5.10 791/2 Didcot Town Council warmly welcome the undertaking to provide copies of documents and details of consultation timetables at Didcot Library.

Para 5.36, 791/3 Didcot Town Council strongly support the proposed notification of relevant consultation bodies who will then be able to take part in a further 6 weeks consultation period.

Para 5.8

787/1 Blewbury Parish Council consider that to help parishes give attention to major issues the Vale can help by marking planning related mail so it can be passed quickly to the parish planning committee.

Objections

Para 5.7

741/1 Martin Grant Homes consider it would be helpful if the Council would meet with other stakeholders in the draft stages of the local development documents preparation where appropriate.

763/2 Michael Hocken objects to paras 5.11 and 5.36 regarding the formal notices being published in the Oxford Mail and the Wiltshire Herald and Gazette and any informal notices in the Oxford Times and Herald Series. But 6.4 refers to the Herald Series, the Oxford Times and the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald. No justification or explanation is given for this discrepancy.

Noted

Noted

While understanding this concern it should be noted that all correspondence relating to planning applications have prominent references to the Town and Country Planning Acts. The Local Plan and LDF consultation letters also have prominent references to the Local Plan or LDF.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

The draft Statement of Community Involvement does indicate that other meetings may be arranged with stakeholders where considered necessary and subject to resource availability.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

The discrepancy arises because of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 that specify for the purposes of development plan documents 'by local advertisement' means publication on at least one occasion in a local newspaper circulating in the whole area of the local planning authority. The use of the Oxford Mail and Wiltshire Gazette Herald most closely achieves this requirement and achieves a balance between meeting statutory requirements and resources. Different regulations allow planning and other applications to be advertised in other local newspapers.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

of Community Involvement.

Para 5.11

568/3 Campaign for a Sustainable Didcot consider that a publicly available listing of the expected forward programme of consultations will facilitate community involvement in the planning process. This will enable voluntary and community groups to use their limited resources to the best effect in engaging with the preparation of local plans. A new sentence should be added to read "We will maintain an up-to-date schedule of expected consultations (with approximately a 6-month time horizon) on the Council's website."

Para 5.12

568/4 Campaign for a Sustainable Didcot consider that consultations should avoid where possible the need to prepare responses during the summer months when many residents (and Council officers) plan to take holidays. To facilitate participation, particularly from those with family responsibilities, they suggest that for situations where the Council has some control over the timing of consultation a commitment is made by adding the following: "To facilitate participation, particularly of those responsibilities, we will aim to schedule formal public consultations not to cover more than two weeks of the Oxfordshire schools' summer vacation period."

627/2 Drayton parish Council consider 6 weeks is too short for a parish council to make informed comments.

Para 5.13

516/1 Churches Together in Oxfordshire object because "Many 'hard to reach' groups are not literate in English and with the methods of representation given in this paragraph they will be excluded from involvement. Resources should be made available so that these marginalized members of society are included. A new sentence should be added to paragraph 5.13 to read "For those persons unable to communicate in writing or English, the opportunity to make representation should be available by interview using interpreters where necessary."

Para 5.58

741/2 Martin Grant Homes consider the guidance is not entirely clear on who is required to prepare sustainability appraisals and why. It would be helpful if the paragraph contained further guidance explaining when the local planning authority will undertake sustainability appraisals of site provided by developers and at what stage the developers will be required to do this.

Para 5.60

568/2 The Campaign for a Sustainable Didcot consider it

This particular point is addressed by the range of measures outlined in paragraph 5.11. In addition the Local Development Scheme sets out the main consultation stages up to and including 2008. This is available on the Council's website. However the idea put forward would be helpful.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 14 last sentence of para 5.11 add new sentence to read 'The Council will maintain an upto-date schedule of expected consultation exercises on its web site'.

The Local Development Scheme is an ambitious and tight programme and it may be not possible to avoid the summer holidays and other public holidays to achieve the timetable. However, wherever practicable the Council attempts to avoid consultation at such times. A sentence could be included to recognise that the Council, will where practicable, and without prejudice to its Local Development Scheme avoid public holidays and the summer holiday period.

RECOMMENDATION: See response to representation 801 made by Dr H A Dickinson.

While understanding the concerns of the Parish Council, the 6 week period they refer to is set out in the Town and Country Planning regulations. Maintaining a schedule as recommended in response to the campaign for a sustainable Didcot will assist in overcoming Drayton Parish Councils concern.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

The difficulty of 'hard to reach groups' is recognised and this is a helpful comment. The Council has had no requests in the recent past to make documents available in other languages. While the Council will look sympathetically on any requests for interviews to receive comments on development plan documents, resource implications may mean that the Council may not necessarily make this facility available to all those individuals that request it.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 14 para 5.13 add new sentence to read 'People unable to communicate in writing or English the Council may be able to make their comments by interview with officers of the Council.'

The statement at paragraph 5.58 is quite clear that anyone proposing an alternative site at the submission stage will be required to submit a Sustainability Appraisal for that site. That is the only stage at which a developer will be required to submit a sustainability appraisal in support of a site.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

essential for all bodies listed in Appendix 1 to be aware of the publication and availability of the SA reports to facilitate the integrated assessment of the environmental effects of proposed development and instigate the appropriate roundtable discussions. A new bullet point should be added to the end of para 5.60:

 "Inform all statutory consultation bodies, as listed in Appendix 1, of the publication of Sustainability Appraisal Reports: to do this we will use electronic means, indicating the location of the report in question on the Council's website."

Comments

Para 5.19

425/1 The National Trust consider that the draft SCI is well laid out and easy to read, and reflects the operational principles for community involvement as set out by Government in Planning Policy Statement 1 and in the ODPM paper *Community Involvement in Planning: the Government's Objectives*.

They comment that paragraph 5.19 sets out the 'Evidence Base' for the LDF. The National Trust would support the involvement of the public in formulation of this evidence base. It may be useful to briefly explain what is involved in this 'evidence base', in other words the combination of both the assessment of data and statistics as well as opinion of the public. This may assist the public to be aware that their future involvement on the options leading to the core strategy will be highly valued.

The Glossary on page 51 is very useful and may also benefit from the addition of a definition regarding the 'evidence base' as involved in the production of a LDF.

Figs 3 and 4

386/9 GOSE consider SCI users may find it helpful to add the statutory regulation numbers to the diagram.

Para 5.21 and 5.58-5.61

386/10, 368/11 GOSE consider it would be helpful if GOSE were added to the list of those consulted on the various stages/iterations of the Sustainability Report. Also it would be helpful if all documents were submitted electronically to GOSE.

Para 5.61

915/2 West Waddy ADP consider the use of the word 'may' implies the Council 'might not' consult other relevant organisations.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

The Council will make the Sustainability Appraisal available all stages of preparing development plan documents and this is set out in the draft Statement of Community Involvement. See Figures 3 and 4.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to be made to the Statement of Community Involvement.

The Council welcomes the support of the National Trust. The Council will be consulting on the evidence base and this is set out in the draft Statement of Community Involvement but it is not considered necessary to change the SCI as suggested as the public involvement in the evidence base is only through consultation.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

RECOMMENDATION: Add to the Glossary the following 'Evidence Base. The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the 'soundness' of the policy approach set out in the Local Development Documents, including physical, economic and social characteristics of an area'.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Amend Figures 3 and Figures 4 to include Statutory Regulation numbers.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Para 5.60 and other appropriate points in the text add new bullet point:

• Send a paper copy and an electronic copy to the Government Office for the South East and the Planning Inspectorate.

There is no specific requirement in the regulations to consult the organisations in Appendix 2 at this stage. The wording is considered appropriate as it indicates that it may only consult organisations if it is relevant to do so.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement

Summary of Representations Observations & Recommendation of the **Assistant Director (Planning)** 639/1 Grove Parish Council consider that: of Community Involvement. notice of at least one week should be given to interested bodies before the start of any consultation period The Local Development Scheme and the use of the Council's web-site will assist in giving advance warning of consultation exercises. See also recommendation made in response to representation 568/3 by the Campaign for a Sustainable Didcot. any changes shown on the Vale's web-site or at public libraries must be made known to interested parties and The Council will look to see what use could be made of e-mail. should preferably be conveyed by e-mail and not solely It has to be recognised however that only a small proportion of in the press. E-mail alerts should also be made available to anyone who requests them the respondents have asked to be notified by e-mail. The preference still seems to be by letter and public notice. **RECOMMENDATION: That the Council endeavour to use** email as a means of communication when requested. Exhibitions - either staffed or un-staffed - should be As far as practicable the Council attempts to hold exhibitions in held at times convenient to the public with adequate notice and also when the buildings are open (the last accessible locations at convenient times, but this is governed by the availability of suitable venues. OCC exhibition was held in Old Mill Hall but the building was shut for most of the time) It is a sample of 1000 people selected to represent the overall How are the 1,000 members of the Citizens Panel profile of the Vale.)This has been changed in the revised selected? draft.) Page 26 bullet point 5 should read 'publish' not public How would any questionnaires be distributed? This is a detailed matter not appropriate for the Statement of Community Involvement. This will be decided for each consultation exercise when decisions have been made about the type of leaflets to be distributed and the area and timescale for their distribution. Paras 5.46-5.57 972/2 Persimmon Homes Wessex consider that the section Agreed of SPDs is unclear in that it does not identify how long the RECOMMENDATION: Page 24 para 5.51 last bullet consultation process will be at each stage. Persimmon point. Add to end of sentence 'which to comply with the consider that it should be six weeks. regulations will last from 4 to 6 weeks'. SECTION 6 – Community Involvement in Planning Applications Support General

622/1 Chilton Parish Council consider the intentions of the SCI are good but its main comment is what notice will be taken of community comments if they are not in line with Government or Council policy or agendas.

Paras 6.1-6.28

627/4 Drayton Parish Council support these paragraphs which are clear and helpful for those who have to make informed comments.

Para 6.3 bullet point 4

625/3 Cumnor Parish Council welcomes access to electronic copies of planning applications.

Para 6.6

625/5 Cumnor Parish Council approves of this initiative.

Para 6.7 bullet point 2

625/6 Cumnor Parish Council approves of this initiative.

All comments will be taken into account but the weight afforded to them will depend upon the need to take into account Government and Council policy.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Noted

Noted

Noted

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

Para 6.23

665/2 Sunningwell Parish Council consider that it would be helpful if there were better channels of communication for the earliest stage of an application, particularly those that could be difficult or contentious.

Para 6.25

741/3 Martin Grant Homes welcome the approach to preapplication consultations but to improve the soundness of the statement it would be better if the text was amended to introduce a degree of flexibility on pre-determined dates for taking applications to Committee.

Para 6.28

791/4 Didcot Town Council consider that this set is a useful explanation of the position regarding the Upper Thames Reservoir Proposal and support the undertaking to develop specific consultation arrangements and would simply ask for an assurance that arrangements will seek the views of close neighbours of the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Para 6.21

625/7 Cumnor Parish Council approve of the initiative to improve the electronic accessibility of the planning service.

Objections

General

763/1 Michael Hocken objects because despite DEFRA guidance no mention is made of mechanisms for integrating development quality issues into the development plan or planning application process. Also no mention is made of access statements.

969/1 British Waterways welcomes its inclusion in the list of other consultation bodies. They consider that British Waterways should e considered as a body that can offer advice on planning applications that will affect future restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal and would wish to be considered on any major applications that affect the agreed line of the canal.

966/1 Stephen Bowley Planning Consultancy object because the SCI is silent on the question of the timescales for determining planning applications. They consider that the application of rigid timescales for the determination of planning applications can limit time for negotiations, consultation submission of amendments and the completion

Noted

The Council encourage, but cannot require, applicants to discuss with residents and local town and parish councils their proposals in advance of submitting planning applications. The Statement of Community Involvement reiterates this and could therefore help to achieve earlier involvement.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

The Council's overriding priority is to ensure applications are determined within the Government's targets and therefore will determine the date for taking applications to committee to ensure the determination period complies with this target. This is particularly important now that the Council has been named as a Planning Standards Authority.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Noted

Noted

The Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared in accordance with the appropriate ODPM guidance. 'Access Statements' are one of a number of suggestions in 'Changes to the Development Control System' Second Consultation Paper issued by the Government in March 2005. The outcome of that consultation process is not yet know, and it is not clear what the Government's timetable is for deciding whether to require the inclusion of 'Access Statements' with planning applications and listed building consent applications.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Noted

consultation, submission of amendments and the completion | While the Council sympathises with this response it is required

of any legal agreements. They suggest that:

- A section of timescales should be included which should provide for 'a local performance agreement'.
 This would provide for timeframes for major application being set locally
- There should also be provision for exclusions of time being agreed at the request of applicants without the planning authority being penalised through planning grant. Applicants are more concerned with a 'good' rather than 'quick' decision.

Para 6.3 – Bullet point 4

627/6 Drayton Parish Council consider 21 days is a very short time for parishes to respond to planning applications.

958/1 Mr P G Holland considers that when the Council sends a letter to residents they should enclose an A4 sheet showing the location and outline drawing indicating the proposed change(s). The District Council is better equipped to do this than the Parish Councils and it would give residents more time to respond.

Para 6.5

349/2 The Ramblers Association object to the third sentence and consider the word 'may' should be substituted by the word 'will'.

443/1 Sport England South East consider that this paragraph should be strengthened to state that the Council will ensure all statutory consultations are carried out on all relevant planning applications. In line with guidance in Circular 08/2005 it should also be stated that the Council will ensure all statutory consultees receive sufficient information to make a substantive reply. This is critical bearing in mind the 21 day deadline will not start until the statutory consultee has received all the information it needs to provide an informed response.

Para 6.15

741/4 Martin Grant Homes consider that this paragraph suggests only those who have submitted written representations will be able to speak at planning committee. It is understood that ordinarily anybody who registers an intention to speak at Committee has the right to do so.

Para 6.16

627/1 Drayton Parish Council object because 10 days notice is not sufficient for a parish council to attend a Development Control Committee.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

to meet the Government's targets for processing planning applications by 2006/2007. There is no flexibility and no provision for any local targets or performance indicators.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

21 days is considered sufficient time for parishes to respond to consultations on planning applications. Any longer would prejudice the Council's ability to determine planning applications within the Government's targets.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

This approach is not practicable bearing in mind the targets the Council is now required to meet and the resource implications of such an approach. However the ability to view applications on the Council's web site will help to address this concern.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

The concern is noted and a change to the sentence could clarify the intention to consult relevant organisations.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 30 para 6.5. Third sentence to read 'A range of relevant local non-statutory bodies who can offer valuable advice will.

Noted

Displaying all planning applications on the Council's web-site will assist this.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Paragraph 6.15 could be amended to make clear that any person may address the Committee if they register a wish to speak.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 31 para 6.15, penultimate sentence add after parish meeting 'and any other person who registers a wish to speak'.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

Comments

10 days notice is considered sufficient bearing in mind the procedures and timetables the Council is required to observe. Dates of forthcoming Committee Meetings are known many weeks or months in advance and are published on the Council's web-site.

General

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

972/3 Persimmon Homes Wessex consider that Section 6 is potentially unsound as it does not refer to other applications such as listed building and demolition of buildings within conservation areas, advertisements, trees, walls etc.

Agreed

446/1 Thames Water Property Services would expect to be consulted on most major applications. They refer to a 'Guide for LPAs on Planning Applications and Development Consultation with Thames Water Utilities as Statutory Water Sewerage Undertaken' as being of assistance to the Council in determining which planning applications to consult Thames Water on and when finalising the SCI. Generally they consider the earlier they are involved in the process the greater the opportunity they have to make known their concerns regarding the ability of infrastructure to support development; ensure any proposed development has no detrimental impact on their assets or their service provision and allow them to work with developers and other agencies to enable the issues caused by development to be mitigated or a compromise to be reached.

RECOMMENDATION: That the text be amended where appropriate to refer to 'applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning legislation'.

Noted

Para 6.3

915/3 West Waddy ADP consider the Statement of Community Involvement should state that the Council will strive to put all applications on the web. A reference to para 6.6 should be included in this paragraph.

Para 6.3 Bullet Point 1

625/2 Cumnor Parish Council feels that letters should be sent more widely not just for larger proposals but for telecom masts for instance

All new applications under the Town & Country Planning Regulations are now included on the web-site. Updating of para 6.21 as set out in the crib version covers this concern RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

Para 6.4

625/4 Cumnor Parish Council considers the current definition of major development is set too high at 10 or more dwellings.

446/4 Thames Water Property Services stress there is need for realistic consultation periods with water and sewage undertakings in the preparation of Local Development Documents.

Applications with such a wide impact are usually advertised in the local weekly press and by a site notice in addition to the neighbour notification. This is set out in para 6.4 of the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Major development proposals are defined by the Government.

Para 6.19

915/4 West Waddy ADP support the Council's aim.

Para 6.22

915/5 West Waddy ADP consider the Council should be more open and specific about what service will be actually

Agreed. The draft Statement of Community Involvement at various places e.g. paras 5.7 and 5.29 stresses the need not only to consult with, but to meet with key stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

provided at the pre-application stage.

Noted

All matters relating to development proposals are open to discussion with planning officers prior to the submission of applications. It is not considered necessary to change the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Para 6.24

443/2 Sport England South East consider this paragraph should be strengthened to state the Council will expect applicants, where appropriate, to consult with all statutory consultees. This would speed up the whole process and enable any issues and concerns raised by the statutory consultees to be taken into account at the pre-application stage, rather than delaying the Council in determining the application once submitted. This is helpful to Sport England South East in carrying out their statutory consultee duty.

791/6 Didcot Town Council suggest that this paragraph should advise developers to make contact with relevant town/parish councils.

The Council cannot require developers to consult with statutory consultees. A change to the paragraph could refer to statutory consultees.

PECOMMENDATION: Page 33 page 6.24 third contage.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 33, para 6.24 third sentence 'In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to consult with national organisations and statutory consultees such as'.

Para 6.27

814/1 Sunningwell Parishioners Against Damage to the Environment object and suggest that

- 'some' and 'consider' are removed from the first sentence to remove the discretionary aspect of these applications.
- 'relevant and/or appropriate general interest groups be added after 'Parish Councils' to ensure wider diversity of community involvement. If this is accepted the section title should be amended.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Para 6.24 second sentence amend to read 'They could consider involving not just individual residents but town and parish council's, local amenity groups and residents organisations'.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Page 33 para 6.27 delete 'consider making' and substitute with 'make'.

These groups will need to make their representations either through the Parish Council or direct to the Planning and Development Committee. It would not be appropriate for the Committee to establish the principle of meeting with individual general interest groups on planning applications as this could prejudice Council's ability to determine planning applications within the Governments targets.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

Para 6.28

386/12 GOSE understand that Thames Water and DEFRA have had discussions as to the potential options available in the event that an Upper Thames Major resource Development is pursued. GOSE suggest the Council contact Thames Water before submitting the Reg 28 SCI in order that if may reflect the latest position or, if it remains unclear the options.

446/2 Thames Water Property Services stress that at this moment in time whilst re-evaluation and other studies are being concluded, Thames Water is not in a position to confirm the resource scheme option and site that the Company wishes to promote through to application. However, as Thames Water has stated a reservoir to the South West of Abingdon is the Company's provisionally preferred option for a major water resource development in the Upper Thames Area. The decision to proceed or not with this provisional preference will be made in the Spring of

Agreed. Note the response from Thames Water below.

RECOMMENDATION: Page 34 para 6.28 second sentence, amend to read 'Thames Water has indicated that the decision as to whether to proceed will be made in 2006 and if it is decided to proceed, it will be submitting proposals at some time during 2007'. Page 34 para 6.28 fourth sentence add to end 'and if granted the Secretary of State would grant deemed planning permission for the proposed works'.

2006, and as identified by the Council in paragraph 6.28, it is Thames Water's intention to use the Compulsory Works Order Procedure under S167 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to secure the necessary authorisations. However, although no planning application would be submitted to the Council it does not negate the need for planning permission, which is the current inference of paragraph 6.28 – rather, at the same time as Thames Water submits the CWO, the company is able to invite the Secretary of State to grant deemed planning permission for the proposed works at the same time as making the Order by virtue of section 90 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Thames Water is committed to consultation through this procedure and is developing the Company's own strategy for consultation in line with best practice contained within planning guidance published by the ODPM.

Thames Water welcomes the intention of the Council to develop specific consultation arrangements for the development of an Upper Thames Major Resource, and will be publishing the Company's own strategy in the Spring of 2006. The Council is welcome to draw on this it is wishes, and Thames Water will also provide assistance to the Council (as requested and as appropriate) in the development of its own consultation arrangements.

627/5 Drayton Parish Council consider the reservoir proposals seem to by-pass the LDF.

741/5 Martin Grant Homes It would be helpful and improve soundness of the SCI if fuller clarification of the consultation arrangements for non-planning major infrastructure proposals were included.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

Noted

This is correct. As will be clear from the response from Thames Water, they intend to use the Compulsory Works Order Procedure under 5167 of the Water Industry Act 1991. This is reflected in the draft Statement of Community Involvement at para 6.28.

RECOMMENDATION: See recommendation made in response to 386/12 GOSE.

This is the only such proposal of this scale and the Council is not yet in a position to specify the consultation which will be developed during 2006.

RECOMMENDATION: No change to the draft Statement of Community Involvement

SECTION 9 OTHER COUNCIL STRATEGIES

Objections

Para 9.5 bullet point 3

500/1 North Wessex Downs AONB consider that the third bullet point is incorrect and legally inaccurate. The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan is clearly the responsibility of the Vale of White Horse District Council and the SCI should reflect this. It would be logical to include the AONB Management Plan under the second bullet point relating to documents prepared in partnership with other organisations. They refer to South Oxfordshire's approach is

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Page 38 para 9.5 second bullet point, add to end of sentence 'and the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan'. Para 9.5 third bullet point delete 'the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan'.

Observations & Recommendation of the Assistant Director (Planning)

appropriate.

500/2 North Wessex Downs AONB object because there is no section relating to joint documents and links to other organisations. It would be helpful to have such a section to the SCI, which would reflect the fact that the Council works jointly in partnership with other organisations to devise strategies and policies i.e. the North Wessex Downs AONB.

The SCI should recognise that there may be some instances where the Council may prepare DPDs or SPDs jointly or in partnership with other local planning authorities, or other partners, e.g. the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners. In these circumstances the SCI could make it clear that the Vale's approach to community involvement would need to coordinate with that being undertaken by the other partners involved. This would still however enable the Council to adopt such documents independently. They refer to South Oxfordshire's approach in their SCI.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Page 38 add new paragraph 9.6 to read 'The Council works jointly with other authorities to devise strategies for, for example, the North Wessex Downs AONB and integrated transport strategies. These working arrangements will continue and consultation on any documents will (where practicable) run concurrently'.

Appendix 1

349/1 The Ramblers Association object to the omission of the Ramblers Association which has over 500 members in the Vale from Appendix 1.

446/3 Thames Water Property Services consider it should be referred to in the list of specific consultation bodies at Appendix 1 as Thames Water.

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: Appendix 1 delete 'Water Companies' and substitute 'Thames Water'

Appendix 2

<u>Support</u>

791/5 Didcot Town Council consider this a concise recognition that planning and development matters may have an impact beyond the borders of the district. It is less clear when the Council will consult these adjoining communities and they consider there should be specific acknowledgement of their role in a new paragraph 6.5.

Para 6.5 states that the organisation which the Council will consult will vary with the nature of the proposal and its location. It will be for the Council to consider which neighbouring Councils are consulted when a planning application has been made.

Objections

803 Kemp & Kemp object to the omission of their company from the list of bodies and organisations at Appendix 2 referred to at paragraph 5.5 and 5.19 of the Statement of Community Involvement

Comments

332/1 BBOWT are pleased to be included.

382/1 Letcombe Brook Project Officer suggests that The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre be included under Environmental Interest Group. The error regarding the Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum be amended. Other interest groups be added.

386/13 GOSE noted that it is only necessary to consult central government departments where they have large land holdings in an area. It is not necessary to consult them under other circumstances, given that GOSE acts on their behalf in the South East Region.

Noted

Agreed

RECOMMENDATION: That the entries for the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre and the Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum be amended and the group highlighted by the Letcombe Brook Officer be added to the database.

Noted

Summary of Representations Observations & Recommendation of the **Assistant Director (Planning)** 443/3 Sport England South East comment that as Sport England is the brand name for the 'English Sports Council' only Sport England South East need to be included in the Noted Appendix. RECOMMENDATION: Amend Appendix 2 by deleting 'English Sports Council' and inserting 'Sport England 403/2 English Nature welcome the inclusion of the many South East'. wider consultation bodies concerned with wildlife as nature conservation in Appendix 2. They consider it useful to Noted RECOMMENDATION: Amend Appendix 2 to include the include the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. 500/3 The North Wessex Downs AONB wish their group to be included under General Interest Groups. 550/1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre Noted consider they should be included in Appendix 2 under the Environmental Interest Groups. Abingdon Naturalists Trust might usefully be added. See recommendation made in response to English Nature. 900/1 Radley College suggest that educational establishments are included under their own heading. Agreed RECOMMENDATION: Appendix 2 add new categories 915/6 West Waddy ADP wish their entry to be read West 'Educational Establishments' to include Radley College. Waddy – ADP. Noted 968/1 Gallagher Estates & Gleeson Homes are pleased to be included. Noted Glossary Comments 386/14 GOSE consider SCI users may find it helpful to RECOMMENDATION: A new Appendix 5 be added to include a few contact details where people can find out more include contact details or organisations involved in the about the matters included in the glossary, e.g. The Planning Portal, ODPM web-site and Vale of White Horse web-site. planning process as set out in the attached CRIB version.