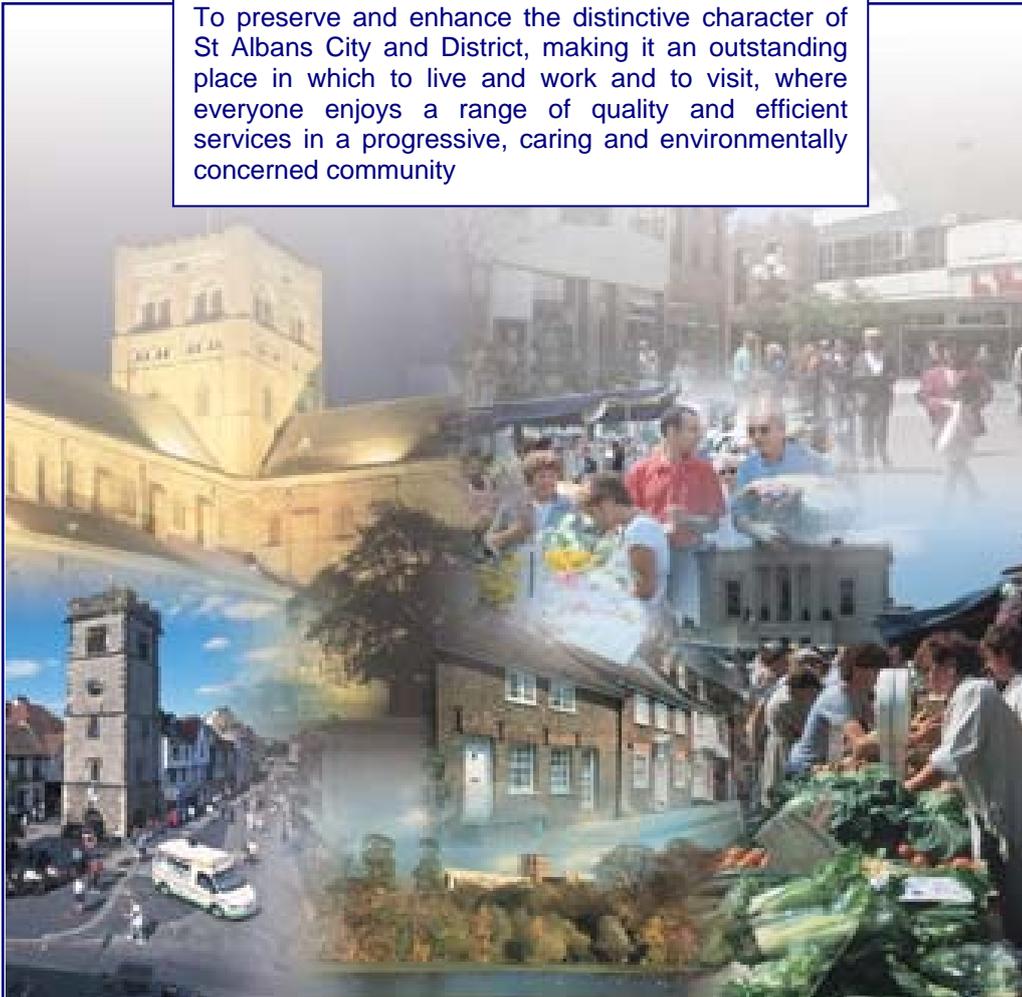


Statement of Community Involvement 2015

Our Vision

To preserve and enhance the distinctive character of St Albans City and District, making it an outstanding place in which to live and work and to visit, where everyone enjoys a range of quality and efficient services in a progressive, caring and environmentally concerned community



February 2015

City and District of St Albans
District Council Offices
Civic Centre
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 3JE

Equalities

The Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity and meeting its duties as a community leader, service provider and local employer.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced a large number of previous equality laws with a single Act. This has helped to simplify the law, remove inconsistencies and make it a lot easier for organisations and individuals to understand. It strengthens the law tackling discrimination and inequality across all of the 'protected characteristics' set out in the Act. The Council must have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- **Improve equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations between people** who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The 'protected characteristics' set out in the Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex (men, women, boys, girls and transgender)
- sexual orientation

These duties will be complied with throughout the plan preparation process and in all aspects of public consultation.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how and when the community and other stakeholders will be consulted on the preparation and revision of documents that will make up the Local Plan and how the community is consulted on planning applications. The SCI seeks to ensure the active, meaningful and continued involvement of local communities and stakeholders throughout the process. This Council first adopted a SCI in 2006 and this document has been updated to comply with new legislation and to take into account the changing ways in which we consult stakeholders and the general public.
- 1.2 The SCI is a 'code of practice' of how the Council involves people in planning decisions. This can include planning policy (plan-making) and decisions on planning applications.
- 1.3 Planning shapes the places where people live and work, so it is important that people are able to take an active part in the process. Community involvement is vitally important to planning. It is also important that the community can be involved from the beginning of the process, identifying issues and debating options from the earliest stages.
- 1.4 The Council has long had a commitment to involve the public in the development of services. Our aim is that by involving the whole community in the planning process we can create a strategy for development within the District that meets the aspirations of the widest possible range of people, communities, organisations and businesses.
- 1.5 Government is committed to increasing the ability of local communities to influence planning decisions and future development in their areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) simplifies the planning system, making it more accessible to local people. It sets out Government's commitment to involve all interested parties in planning;

Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that local plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of an area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that may have been made"

Glossary of terms

Below are brief descriptions of some of the frequently used terms within the Statement of Community Involvement.

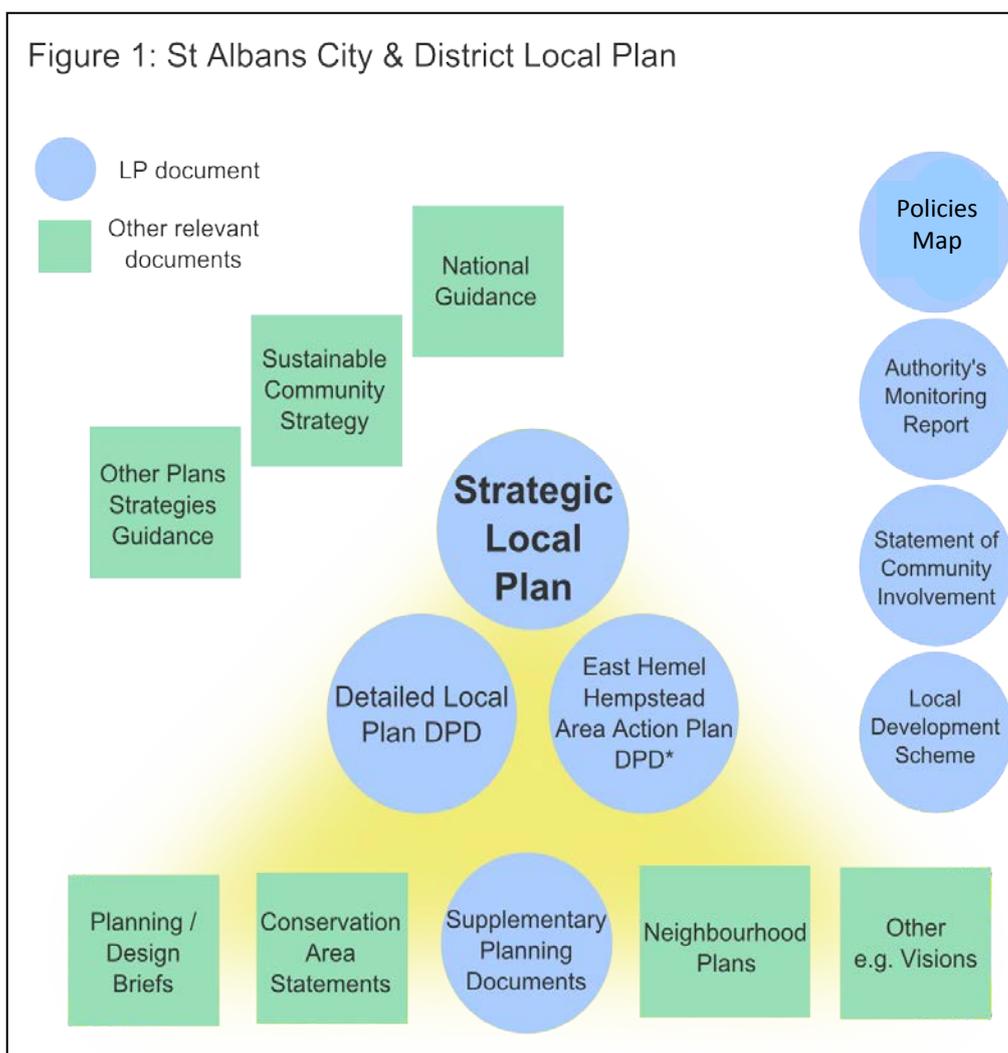
AMR	Authority's Monitoring Report - a report submitted to the government by local planning authorities or regional planning bodies assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Plan.
AAP	Area Action Plan - a type of Development Plan Document focused upon a specific location or an area subject to conservation or significant change (for example major regeneration).
Cabinet	St Albans City & District's Cabinet is the Executive decision making body of the Council. It is made up of a group of Councillors who meet on a regular basis throughout the year. Each cabinet member has a portfolio of services. They work closely with Council officers and heads of service, to make many decisions that affect services.
DPD	Development Plan Document - documents prepared by the local planning authority (including the Local Plan) setting out the main spatial strategy, policies and proposals for the area.
Duty to cooperate	Created by the Localism Act 2011, it places a legal duty on the Council to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with certain specified bodies to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation relating to strategic cross boundary matters.
Examination	Local Plans are subject to public examination before they can be adopted by the Council. An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State has to decide whether the plan is "sound" and can recommend changes. The purpose of the Examination is to consider if the development plan is sound. The majority of representations made at Examination will usually be 'written representations'. However, in some instances a Planning Inspector may allow representations to be examined by way of oral hearings, for example round table discussions, informal hearing sessions and formal hearing sessions.
Full Council	The Full Council is currently made up of all 58 elected members and has the role of setting the annual budget and overall policy framework for the Council.
General bodies	Organisations defined by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 that are required to be consulted at key stages of Plan production. They include bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic, religious or national groups, disabled persons and business in the local planning authority's area.
Issues and Options	The preparation of an 'Issues and Options' document is an early step in the preparation of a Local Plan. At this stage documents will suggest different ways to address the issues facing the District and help guide the preparation of the Local Plan.
LDS	Local Development Scheme – the LDS is the timetable setting out when the Council will work through the various stages of producing the

new planning documents. The LDS looks forward for a period of 3 years.

Legislation	The laws made by Government such as Acts of Parliament. Planning law comprises primary legislation such as the Localism Act and more detailed secondary legislation such as Planning Regulations.
Local Plan	A collective term for the documents that set out the spatial vision and strategy for the District including policies and proposals.
LPA	Local Planning Authority. The Council in its statutory role for planning matters.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework 2012 – sets out Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be carried out.
Neighbourhood Plans	The Localism Act introduced new rights and powers and allows qualifying bodies, including town and parish councils and statutorily defined community fora, to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood.
PPC	Planning Policy Committee – currently made up of 10 elected members, this is a consultative forum whose primary role is making recommendations to Cabinet on the development of the Local Plan.
SA	Sustainability Appraisal - the main purpose of a sustainability appraisal is to assess the social, environmental and economic effects of the new planning documents to ensure that the policies within them are in accordance with the objectives of sustainable development.
SoS	Secretary of State - draft Development Plan Documents should be submitted to the Secretary of State, and representations will be made on the quality and soundness of the DPD.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document – documents that expand on policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.
Specific Bodies	Organisations defined by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 that are required to be consulted at key stages of Plan production. They include neighbouring and Town/Parish Councils, key service providers, Government departments and non-Government organisations.
Stakeholder	An individual, group or business that has a particular interest in the development of the District, or in a particular project.

2.0 Consultation on the Local Plan

- 2.1 This section briefly outlines the planning policy documents that will be subject to public consultation. It is hoped that community and stakeholder involvement at an early stage will enable policies to be developed and decisions to be made that reflect the needs and aspirations of the District's residents. The different stages in the preparation of each planning policy document are also discussed.
- 2.2 The Strategic Local Plan (SLP), together with the Detailed Local Plan (DLP) and other Development Plan Document(s) (DPDs) will, once adopted, form the Local Plan for St. Albans City and District. Once the SLP and the DLP are adopted, the District Local Plan Review 1994 will be wholly superseded.
- 2.3 The Local Plan will be the statutory development plan for St Albans City and District which will guide the future development and use of land, services and infrastructure in the District up to 2031. The Local Plan will also set the parameters for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.4 The Council will engage with the community and stakeholders at an early stage and throughout the process as the Local Plan evolves. In addition to preparing the SCI the Council also produces the Local Development Scheme (LDS) which is essentially a three-year work programme for the production of Local Plan documents. Each Local Plan document is briefly explained below, whilst Figure 1 below shows the relationships between the different components of the Local Plan.



* To be produced jointly with Dacorum Borough Council – see paragraph 2.9

➤ **Strategic Local Plan**

- 2.5 The SLP is the principal DPD and establishes the Council's long term spatial planning strategy for delivering development and infrastructure from 2011 to 2031.

➤ **Detailed Local Plan**

- 2.6 The DLP will contain the Site Allocations (specific designations of land for future development) and Development Management Policies (the general approach taken to detailed decisions on planning applications) for the District. It is through the detailed policies, site allocations and policies maps that the DLP will add detail to the Council's long term spatial planning strategy set out in the SLP.

➤ **Policies Map(s)**

- 2.7 A Policies Map (and any inset maps) illustrating the Council's spatial policies and site specific allocations must be prepared on an Ordnance Survey base and be continuously updated as changes are made to each DPD.

➤ **Area Action Plans**

- 2.8 Area Action Plans (AAPs) are specific to an identified area within the District and would be produced if significant change is required or proposed. The specific proposals for the development or improvement of a site(s) would be outlined, together with a timetable of implementation.

- 2.9 At present, it is not considered that the future development of any sites solely within the St Albans City and District would be of a scale to warrant the preparation of an AAP. However, it is likely that the District Council and Dacorum Borough Council will jointly produce an AAP for the area to the East of Hemel Hempstead, which falls mainly within the Borough of Dacorum, but partly within St Albans City and District. If significant development or redevelopment proposals come forward for smaller sites in the District, these would be subject to specific policies in the Detailed Local Plan and may necessitate preparation of SPDs (below) or similar, but informal, guidance documents.

➤ **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 2.10 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will be used to supplement the policies contained within the DPDs. They can be thematic or site specific and can take the form of design guides, area development briefs, master plans or issue based documents. SPDs will not form part of the statutory development plan or be subject to independent examination, but they will be subject to community involvement.

➤ **Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment**

- 2.11 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will need to be undertaken for each of the DPDs that the Council intends to produce. These are procedures required by law to explain and assess the economic, social and environmental impact of the Plan. The Council may also undertake SAs and SEAs for some SPDs depending on their scope and nature.

- 2.12 The main purpose of the SA (incorporating SEA) is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in the DPDs and

SPDs. Public consultation on the final SA report will occur at the same time as consultation on the preferred options document for each DPD or on any draft SPDs.

➤ **The plan-making process**

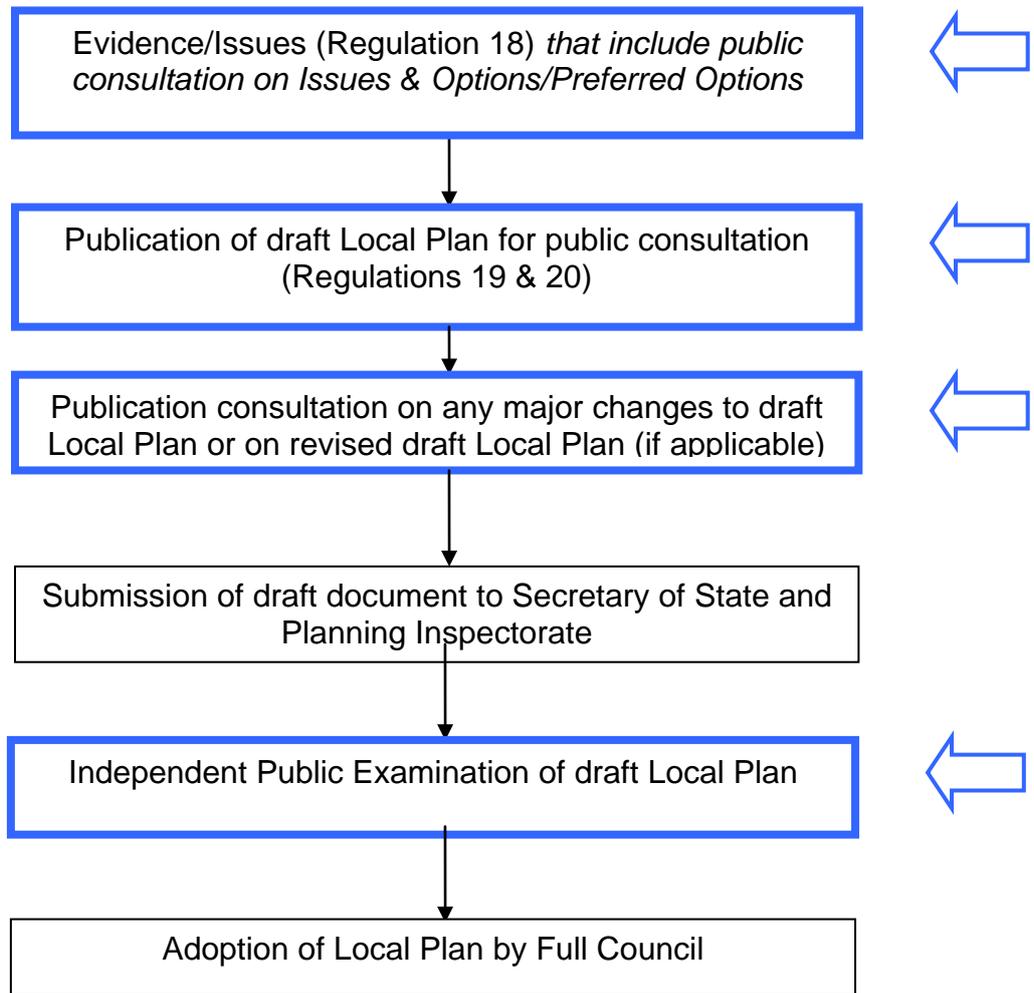
- 2.13 Tables 1 and 2 detail the consultation techniques that may be used at each stage of the DPD and SPD preparation process. These stages are summarised in brief below. Any relevant consultation timescales are also highlighted, whilst the relevant stages and opportunities for public involvement are also identified.

Key stages of plan production

- 2.14 DPDs and SPDs are prepared in distinct, sequential, stages to enable the public to engage and inform the documents as they develop. These may vary between different types of planning document and be subject to review or change over time, so the diagrams below reflect the current general position (including the Council's own internal procedures used for document preparation and adoption). Figures 2 and 3 are indicative in nature and provide a general outline of processes followed and consultation stages/opportunities.

Figure 2

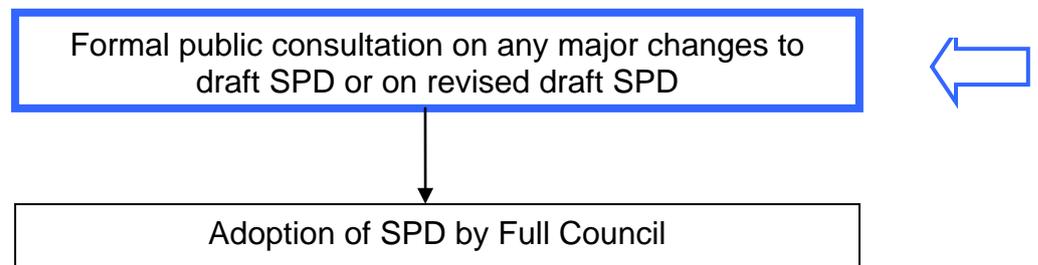
Key stages in the production of DPDs



Opportunity for public involvement

Figure 3

Key stages in the production of SPDs



Opportunity for public involvement

Key stages

- 2.15 Consultation on all Local Plan documents will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the SCI. There are three main stages of DPD production where some form of consultation/community involvement is required by law.

Preparation of a Local Plan (Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)

- 2.16 Certain 'specific' (identified in the Regulations) and 'general' (identified by the local authority) consultation bodies are invited to make representations about what a Local Plan ought to contain.
- 2.17 (National) Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) sets out that there is considerable flexibility for local planning authorities in how they carry out the initial stages of plan making. Regulation 18 is very flexible. The Council can choose to create additional forms and stages of consultation to encourage greater community involvement even though there is no formal requirement to do so. The additional forms and stages of consultation would occur under the auspices of the Regulation 18 stage and be completed before the Regulation 19 & 20 consultation (see below). These extra consultation stages are often termed 'Issues and Options' or 'Preferred Options' stages. The Council is committed to using additional consultation stages where necessary to ensure there is a full opportunity for general public involvement. Consultation at this stage will be used to explain the Plan making choices available to the Council and to allow them to be fully understood and commented on by interested parties.

Publication of a Local Plan (Regulations 19 & 20)

- 2.18 This is a formal statutory stage. Copies of a proposed Local Plan and associated documents are made available for inspection for a minimum of six weeks. The Council invites all interested parties (in addition to the specific and general consultation bodies) to make formal representations at this stage. This stage of consultation involves communities, businesses, Town/Parish Councils, developers and other interested parties. This is effectively the stage when statutorily recognised representations can be made to the Council.

Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State (Regulation 22)

- 2.19 A copy of the proposed Local Plan and associated documents (including any proposed changes to the Plan the Council wishes to make, in response to representations, or for other reasons) is submitted to the Secretary of State for 'examination'. An Independent Inspector is subsequently appointed to examine the soundness of the plan. The Council provides the independent Inspector with the representations made at the Regulation 19/20 stage. At this point, the Council cannot consider new formal representations, although opportunities exist for additional statements to be made to the Inspector to elaborate on representations previously made.
- 2.20 Following the above stages, the plan is 'examined' by an Independent Inspector to ensure that it is 'sound' and has met the appropriate legal and procedural requirements – including whether it has been prepared in accordance with the SCI. In considering the 'soundness' of the Plan, the Independent Inspector will consider any 'duly made' representations. The Inspector may invite the LPA to make modifications to its plan in order to make it sound. Further consultation is normally required in relation to these modifications. The Council will conduct such consultation in accordance with statutory requirements and the principles set out in the SCI.

Consultation responses at this stage are however considered by the Inspector and not the LPA.

2.21 Subject to receipt of a satisfactory Inspector’s report the Council will be in a position to adopt the DPD.

Issues and Options and Preferred Options

2.22 As noted above, this stage(s) is not formally required by the Regulations. This stage(s) will gather information and evidence and will identify issues and options and set out suggested policy directions for the Council’s emerging ‘preferred options’. Consultation will initially seek the views of specific and general consultation bodies to identify issues and options as part of on-going engagement after Regulation 18. Wider consultation with these bodies, local communities businesses and other interested parties and individuals will take place as ‘preferred options’ are identified.

2.23 This stage will also be used to start an ongoing process of informal discussions with key stakeholders and local community groups. Notwithstanding this, a local standard of no less than 4 weeks consultation will be used in relation to issues and options or preferred options papers. During this time draft versions of a plan (and where appropriate Sustainability Appraisal) will be made available for inspection and comment. Any representations made, and views expressed, at this stage will need to be considered in advance of preparing a ‘publication’ version of a Plan.

2.24 Table 1 summarises the key stages of consultation. It explains what these stages are, who will be consulted, when and how. This table will form the basis of how the Council will conduct its consultation on DPDs.

Table 1 – Preparation of DPDs

Stage/time	Purpose	Who	How
Preparation of a Local Plan (Regulation 18) Minimum of 6 weeks	Evidence gathering Notify and consult on scope of plan	Specific and general consultation bodies	Letter, email, internet “Objective” (via the Council’s website) <i>Note Objective is the Council’s interactive web site based consultation portal (see paragraphs 3.8/10)</i>
Issues & Options / Draft(s) (and SA/SEA) (No regulation requirements but at Regulation 18 Stage) Minimum of 6 weeks (This Council will normally	Consult on and seek views on emerging options before decisions are taken on preferred options	Specific and general consultees Duty to cooperate bodies Those registered on the Council’s Objective database	Letter, email, website, social media, public exhibitions, press releases, stakeholder meetings “Objective” (via the

consult for 6 weeks)		General publicity – to make consultation open to all	Council's website)
Preferred options / Draft(s) and SA/SEA (No regulation requirements but at Regulation 18 Stage) Minimum of 6 weeks	Consult on and seek views on identified 'preferred options'	Specific and general consultees Duty to cooperate bodies Those registered on the Council's Objective database General publicity – to make consultation open to all	Letter, email, website, social media, public exhibitions, press releases, stakeholder meetings, Objective (via the Council's website)
Submission of documents and information to Secretary of State (Regulation 22)	Submission of Local Plan and all associated documents in accordance with Regulation 22. This is a stage where formal consultation is not required	Specific and general consultees Duty to cooperate bodies Those who have responded previously/asked to be notified of submission	Advise of submission by letter, email, website Objective (via the Council's website)
Independent Examination (Regulation 24)	Independent Examination of plan by an Independent Inspector This is a stage where formal consultation is not required	All those who made representations	Advise of Examination Hearing by letter, email, website, public notice Objective (via the Council's website)
Proposed modifications (and SA/SEA) (if required)	LPA produce Modifications to the Plan, as requested by an Independent Inspector	All those who made representations	Letter, email, website, press releases
Adoption (Regulation 26)	Adoption of the Plan by the LPA	All those who made representations	Letter, email, website, press releases

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 2.25 The Council will occasionally produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to add greater detail to the policies in the Council's Local Plan (and other Development Plan Documents). SPDs can be area or topic based. SPDs do not have the same status and weight in planning decisions as Development Plan Documents. However the Council's aim is to prepare such documents in full consultation with interested parties. This will make the SPD relevant and influential.
- 2.26 There are two main stages of SPD production where some form of Consultation/Community Involvement is required by the Regulations. The Council will normally add an informal preliminary stage in advance of this point to provide an initial means to explain the scope of the SPD and obtain views. How St Albans City and District will involve stakeholders in the preparation of SPDs is therefore summarised below:

Public participation stage (Regulation 12)

- 2.27 This involves making a copy of the proposed SPD available for inspection, and representations are invited. This is effectively the final stage when formal representations can be made.

Adoption (Regulation 14)

- 2.28 The Council will be in a position to adopt the SPD once it has considered any representations that have been made at publication stage. Table 2 summarises the key stages of consultation for SPDs. It explains what these stages are, who will be consulted and how. This table will form the basis of how the Council will conduct its consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents.

Table 2 – Preparation of SPDs

Stage/time	Purpose	Who	How
Public participation stage; normally following an additional, informal, scoping and open gathering of views (Regulation 12) Minimum of 6 weeks	Consult on draft SPD	Specific and general consultees Duty to cooperate bodies Those registered on the Council's Objective database	Letter, email, website, social media, press releases
Adoption (Regulation 14)	Adoption of the Plan by the LPA This is a stage where formal consultation is not required	Specific and general consultees Duty to cooperate bodies Those registered on the Council's Objective database	Letter, email, website, social media, press releases

3.0 Community Involvement in the plan making process

3.1 This section lists the range of techniques the Council will employ. Details are also provided on how the Council will acknowledge any comments made and also how comments will be reported internally.

3.2 It outlines techniques the Council will employ for each type of planning document. The first techniques described are those that will be used most regularly by the Council. They mainly deal with how and where information on planning documents will be publicised for the community to view. There then follows information on the more specific techniques that may also be used.

1. CONSULTATION TECHNIQUES

3.3 One of the simplest ways of getting information into the public domain is to make copies of planning documents available for the public to view, inspect and purchase (if applicable). There are a variety of ways the Council can do this to ensure as many people as possible are able to access the information.

3.4 Copies of documents will be available to inspect or purchase during office hours from the District Council Offices in St Albans (Civic Centre) and the District Office in Harpenden (at Harpenden Town Hall, Leyton Road).

3.5 It is considered that making copies available at the Council Offices is a good way of informing those local groups already familiar with and involved in the planning process, for example local conservation, preservation and amenity groups and planning agents.

3.6 Copies of certain documents will be available to inspect at the following local libraries:

- Harpenden
- London Colney
- Marshalswick
- Redbourn
- St Albans Central (The Maltings)
- Wheathampstead

3.7 Making copies available at the various public libraries gives people the opportunity to look at proposals in their own time, without having to travel to the Council Offices. This may benefit those who are unable to journey into St. Albans and Harpenden town centres.

3.8 Documents will be available to view on the Council's "Objective" web based consultation portal which can be accessed via the Council's website <http://stalbans-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>. The high levels of home computer ownership and internet usage mean that making documents available online is now a very valuable and convenient way of giving out information to the public.

3.9 It is a particularly effective way in which to engage with all groups and in particular non-local groups, e.g. national and regional conservation groups, as well as those who use computers in their everyday environment such as schools and colleges.

3.10 The Council actively encourages respondents to make comments using the Objective software. The use of Objective will allow responses to be collated, managed and reported more effectively than in the past. In particular it allows external parties the

facility to input suggest specific changes to draft documents that can be viewed by others.

3.11 Wherever practical documents or extracts of documents may be available in alternative formats on request, e.g. in Braille, large print, on audio tape or via e-mail. It may be necessary to use summaries of longer technical documents. It is considered that this facility will be a valuable technique in engaging the often under-represented groups such as the disabled. Information on how alternative formats can be obtained will be displayed on the inside cover of each document.

3.12 Using the local media is another way to inform the public about planning matters. The Council issues press releases on a wide range of subjects, and the publication of planning documents is no exception.

3.13 Press releases can be issued to all local newspapers and radio stations outlining the purpose of documents together with full details of the consultation period and process. Public notices can also appear in local newspapers briefly outlining any documents and how the public can make comments on them. Below are the key media to whom press releases are sent:

Newspapers: St. Albans Review, Herts Advertiser

Local Radio: BBC Three Counties, Heart Radio, Jack FM

TV Stations: BBC London News, London Tonight

Magazines: Hertfordshire Life

3.14 The use of the media is considered a valuable way of getting information across to a variety of sections of the community, including the less mobile members of the public and ethnic minority groups. By including details in free newspapers and radio broadcasts, it is anticipated that more people will hear about the planning process and feel able to get involved. Twitter (Council corporate account) will be used to publicise emerging documents and consultations and to seek views and representations.

3.15 The Council has a legal requirement to consult a number of bodies through the Local Plan process. Appendices A and B of this SCI list the specific and general bodies that the Council will consult at various stages of the planning process. These lists exceed the legal requirements for local authorities set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

3.16 The specific consultees listed in Appendix A include organisations such as neighbouring local planning authorities, the Environment Agency, utility companies and Hertfordshire County Council. The general consultees in Appendix B are defined in the regulations as voluntary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the District and other bodies representing the interests of different racial, ethnic, national, religious, business and disabled persons groups. Appendix C sets out the duty to cooperate bodies that the Council is legally obliged to cooperate with.

3.17 When consulting organisations and groups on both of these lists, it is anticipated that full copies of documents will be sent or where appropriate referenced in electronic form via Objective. For the general consultees this should have the effect of cascading information down to a wider range of the community. Not all Development Plan Documents will necessarily be relevant to every consultation body. The Council will consult with those bodies it considers will be affected by the subject matter in the DPD in question.

- 3.18 The list in Appendix B is by no means exhaustive. Anyone can request that their details are added to this database, which would result in them being consulted at key stages in the plan making process.

Stakeholder meetings

- 3.19 Early consultation with bodies that have specific knowledge relevant to the DPD being prepared is crucial. This applies particularly to landowners and developers or local amenity or specialist interest groups. It is at this stage, and for these groups, that innovative and interactive consultation techniques can be most effectively used. The Council has a particular commitment to use of interactive design workshops where significant urban design and built environment conservation issues arise. These workshops can also be used at an appropriate stage to involve members of the general public. The Council will hold stakeholder meetings as required with the following types of group to discuss possible development options and to facilitate effective discussion on particular key issues of interest:

- Commercial and business interests, including the St Albans Chamber of Commerce
- Housing interests (public and private, including housing associations and house builders)
- Parish and Town Councils in St Albans City and District
- Co-opted members of the City Neighbourhood Committee
- Conservation, Preservation and Amenity Groups
- The Local Strategic Partnership
- Relevant landowners / developers

- 3.20 The list above is not an exhaustive list. Stakeholder meetings are considered an excellent way of providing and receiving information from all sections of the community, especially those who have been under represented in the past. Through the Council pro-actively seeking the views of such groups at an early stage, it is hoped this will provide the stimulus for their continued involvement throughout the plan preparation process.

Community Newspaper

- 3.21 The Council currently publishes a quarterly 'Community News' paper that is delivered to over 58,000 homes in the District. The paper aims to keep local people informed about local issues, and therefore provides another way in which the Council can inform residents about the key stages of the plan-making process and how they can get involved.
- 3.22 The 'Community News' paper is thought to be vital for providing information to the harder to reach groups. The articles produced will be a good way of publicising any public exhibitions and meetings that are taking place.

Public exhibition / surgery meetings

- 3.23 For the major consultation stages of the DPDs a public exhibition combined with open surgery meetings will tour the District, normally visiting St Albans City Centre, Harpenden Town Centre, Redbourn, Wheathampstead, London Colney and Colney Heath. Advance notice will be given in the local media of the specific times and dates. The exhibition and surgery meeting sessions will include daytime and some evening opening as required at each location. Council planning officers will staff the exhibition and Councillors will be invited to attend the sessions. Once the tour has

finished, it is envisaged that the exhibition will remain on display at the Council Offices in St. Albans until the relevant consultation period ends.

- 3.24 The main benefit of a public exhibition with surgery meetings is that it is a good way of raising the profile of the issues and policies being developed and allowing for interaction with and question to councillors and officers. Formal public meetings can have the same effect, however an exhibition is always preferred as it gives those members of the community not comfortable about speaking in public the opportunity to ask Officers questions in person or leave completed comments' forms after viewing the exhibition.

Website Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 3.25 As some of the planning documents are published, there will be a link set up on the Council's website giving answers to a number of 'frequently asked questions'. It is unlikely that the Spatial Planning Team will have the capacity to respond to all feedback if the public were to be given the opportunity to ask questions on-line in addition to submitting written responses. It is considered that the FAQs will provide the community with a valuable point of reference concerning the content of documents or the consultation process taking place.
- 3.26 As with posting copies of documents on-line, the FAQs page will be of use to those groups or individuals within the community who are regular internet users. It is also considered that this technique will be of use to the non-local organisations that may have queries, for example national or regional conservation groups, national housebuilders and design interest groups.

Access to Planning Officer advice

- 3.27 For certain major consultation stages, Council Officers will be available to offer advice and respond to questions. It is likely that a rota officer availability system with set times of availability will be used. At certain times of the week, Officers will be available for members of the public to telephone or meet and ask questions on the content of documents or the consultation process that is taking place.
- 3.28 This facility will give local groups and individuals an opportunity to receive information and pass on their own comments or queries to planning officers. For example, local residents associations or businesses could ask for individual meetings if they felt uncomfortable attending a wider ranging stakeholder meeting.

Alternative formats

- 3.29 As noted above the main summary documents or extracts of documents used in the consultation may be available in alternative formats on request, e.g. in Braille, large print, on audio-tape, via e-mail or in different languages.

2. FEEDBACK / ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Structured Questionnaires and Comments Forms

- 3.30 Getting information out to the community is vital, however equally important is receiving comments back from members of the public. The Council is committed to providing the community with as much input as possible into the planning process. As a result, every document that goes out to public consultation will have a comments form included. This will include details of how and when people should respond by and how best to structure their comments to enable opinions and thoughts to help shape emerging policies. Where appropriate the Council will provide and encourage

use of a structured form of questions to assist in general understanding between all parties of responses made. In some cases formal sample survey methods of seeking public opinion will be used in conjunction with open consultation.

Commitment to reporting back

- 3.31 Any written responses to the DPDs & SPDs will be acknowledged in writing, normally within 5 working days. Comments that are submitted via Objective on the Council's website will receive an electronic acknowledgement. Any person, group or organisation making comments at the first public consultation stage will automatically be consulted at all future stages in the process unless they indicate otherwise.

3. INTERNAL REPORTING

Meetings / liaison

- 3.32 The Council has regular contact with certain internal departments, such as Leisure, Housing and Policy & Partnerships. This liaison will be used to discuss key issues and also each Council department has databases of contacts that can be used by the Spatial Planning Team. For example, the Equalities Officer has contacts with a wide range of ethnic minority groups, whilst the Policy & Partnerships Team has close links with the Community Panel. All of the relevant contacts will be entered onto the Planning Policy consultee database. The overall benefit will be that certain groups that have often been under-represented in the planning process can be contacted and encouraged to participate.

Reporting to Council Committees, Cabinet and Full Council

- 3.33 The Spatial Planning Team will, at certain key stages of the plan preparation process, report the views and comments expressed during consultation to relevant committees. All reporting of consultation will involve summarising of full responses and will allow all interested parties to understand the range of responses received. These reports will be influential in shaping policy in draft planning documents. Cabinet or Full Council will approve draft and final documents at certain relevant stages of the plan making process.

4.0 Community involvement in planning applications

- 4.1 As well as the preparation of new Local Plan documents, the community can also be involved in the process of determining planning applications considered by the Council. This section will briefly explain the consultation process that the Council may undertake for the three types of planning application; 'major', 'minor' and 'other', for which the definitions are given in Appendix D.
- 4.2 To briefly summarise, on the receipt, acceptance and registration of a valid planning application, the Council will enter details onto the weekly list, which includes information on all applications registered over the previous 7 days. This list, together with all the application documents and related information, is available for public inspection at the Council offices and on the Council's website:

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/planning/Searchforplanningapplications/>

- 4.3 Other statutory consultation techniques include neighbour notification letters, site notices and advertisements in the local press. Not every planning application requires all, or even any of these techniques to be carried out. A number of factors will determine how an application is dealt with and these include whether there are major

issues of scale or controversy, whether the application is in a conservation area, is a listed building or whether the application is contrary to development plan policies. Applications are open to public comment for a set period and all comments are taken into account in decision making.

- 4.4 Table 3 summarises all of the consultation techniques discussed in this section and when they will be used by the Council in relation to the various types of planning applications received.

Table 3 – Consultation on Planning Applications

Type of application	Consultation
Major development (10 or more dwellings, 1,000 sq m of floorspace or 0.5 hectares site area)	Neighbour notification Site Notice Public notice in local newspaper Inviting comments within 21 days
Development affecting a setting of a Listed Building	Neighbour notification Site Notice Public notice in local newspaper Inviting comments within 21 days
Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area	Neighbour notification Site Notice Public notice in local newspaper Inviting comments within 21 days
Other full, outline and householder development:	Neighbour notification Site Notice Inviting comments within 21 days
Lawful development certificates (Existing)	Neighbour notification where required
Lawful development certificates (Proposed)	None
Advertisement consent applications	None
Prior notification applications	Neighbour notification where legally required
Hedgerow removal notices	None
Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) / works to trees protected by TPOs	Site Notice
Works to trees in a Conservation Area	None
Discharge of Conditions	None
Minor non-material amendments to approved schemes	None
Environmental Assessment 'scoping opinion'	None
Environmental Assessment 'screening opinion'	None
Time extension to extant planning permission	None

Pre-application discussions

- 4.5 To ensure an inclusive and transparent approach to the determination of planning applications the Council, where appropriate and resources permitting, welcomes pre-application discussions between Officers, applicants and interested parties.
- 4.6 The Council is committed to developing discussion and dialogue at an early stage to ensure that benefits can be realised. Some of the key overall objectives of both pre-application discussions and pre-application consultation are listed below:
- A means of resolving problems, thereby avoiding possible public objections at a later stage
 - An open and transparent approach, overcoming any perceived 'closed door' approach to determining planning applications
 - Results in the submission of applications which are straightforward and can be quickly processed
 - Early availability of information enables issues to be addressed up front – paragraph 188 of the NPPF states:

'Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'

Pre-application consultation

- 4.7 The Localism Bill makes it compulsory for developers to consult local communities before submitting certain planning applications. The requirement set out in the Bill covers three points;
- Developers must consult communities before submitting certain planning applications, having regard to any advice that their local planning authority may provide.
 - They must consider any responses they receive before they finalise their proposals and submit their applications.
 - When submitting their application they must account for how they have consulted the local community, what comments they have received, and how they have taken those comments into account.
- 4.8 In other cases voluntary consultation may be appropriate and is recommended. Findings are reported by the applicant as part of their planning submission. Where this pre-application occurs, the Council will maintain a 'watching brief' to ensure impartiality, i.e. we can provide guidance on the process but not offer an opinion on the proposals. One of the aims of highlighting pre-application consultation in this SCI is to encourage potential applicants to undertake some community dialogue before 'major' applications are made to avoid objections at a later stage, some of which may not be of material planning relevance. In some cases it may be appropriate and helpful for Council officers and members to be involved in aspects of an applicant's pre-application consultation process. This should always be achieved through structured and pre-agreed / open arrangements. Applicants should discuss ideas for this form of consultation with the Council well in advance of setting up their pre-application consultation.

- 4.9 The Council encourages and recommends that applicants take an approach to pre-application consultation that accords with the principles embodied in the SCI. Factors to consider include:
- a) The extent to which the process and outcomes of consultation can be 'validated' by the Council
 - b) The degree to which potential problems and possible public objections identified in the consultation have been addressed
 - c) The extent to which the developer has undertaken consultation in accordance with the principles of the SCI
 - d) The submission of a consultation supporting statement with the application
 - e) The extent and scope of the pre-application discussions with the Council and the wider community
- 4.10 In relation to point c) above, the Council expects that the techniques to be used by the applicant may include neighbour notification letters, site notices, meetings with local community groups / residents associations and public notice / newspaper advertisement. This is to ensure that the consultation is in line with that which the Council itself would carry out.
- 4.11 In some cases it may be appropriate to use more intensive / interactive techniques. Where significant proposals are concerned and major design and conservation issues arise the Council recommends use of community design workshop techniques. With regard to point d), the statement accompanying the planning application should detail the techniques used, the timescales for response, lists of people consulted, and if appropriate, how the applicant has amended the scheme in light of the responses made.

Planning Applications

- 4.12 When the Council receives a planning application it will notify those people most likely to be affected by it. This usually includes the occupiers of land neighbouring the proposal. The Council will use one or a combination of the following methods to obtain the public's views on applications for planning permission.

Neighbours' notifications

- 4.13 All planning applications have to be publicised by either a site notice or neighbours' notification. Our procedure is to publicise planning applications by notifying individual owners or occupiers of land neighbouring the proposal. The only exceptions are:-
- 1) When neighbouring land is unoccupied or where the occupier of the land cannot be readily identified, for example an open field. Then a site notice is placed instead.
 - 2) Where the proposal relates to a rear extension only the neighbours to the side and rear will be notified.
 - 3) When the neighbour is a significant distance from and is judged by the Council to be unaffected by the proposal.
- 4.14 The letter will contain information on how to view the planning application, together with the timescales involved in terms of returning any comments on the application being determined and how to make comments. The Council's website allows interested parties to comment online for each planning application.

4.15 Sometimes the Council will use its discretion and notify more properties than it is statutorily required to do.

Advertisements in a local newspaper

4.16 Major development proposals have to be publicised by placing an advertisement in a local newspaper. Major development here means:

- Erection of ten or more dwellings or housing development on a site of 0.5 hectare or more
- Erection of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created is 1,000 square metres or more
- Development on a site of 1 hectare or more
- Applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement

4.17 Other applications are also advertised in a local newspaper when covered by:

- **Section 73** - All planning applications in a Conservation Area
- **Section 67** - All planning applications on or adjacent to a listed building
- **Departure** - Where an application is contrary to the development plan (e.g. new dwelling in the Green Belt)

Site notice

4.18 As well as requiring a local advertisement, the following types of planning application must also be publicised by a site notice placed on or near the site:

- Applications for listed building consent
- Development affecting the setting of a listed building or the character and appearance of a conservation area
- Applications accompanied by an environmental statement
- Applications which do not accord with the development plan
- Development affecting a public right of way.

4.19 With a site notice, 21 days are allowed for comments to be received from the date that notice was put up.

4.20 The notice will be on or around the application site and contains details of where plans can be viewed, how to make comments and relevant Council contact information. For large sites and major applications, multiple site notices may be put up at various locations on or near the site.

Deadline for making comments

- 4.21 We will take account of any representations received within the time specified in the notice, letter or advertisement. Failure to meet the deadline could mean the comments will not be considered.
- 4.22 Any comments must be in writing otherwise the comments cannot be considered. Any comments made also have to be related to planning issues. An objection to an application does not mean that an application will be refused.
- 4.23 When comments are made on an application the letter/email will be acknowledged and the sender notified in writing of the outcome of the application. By law, all comments received must be open to public inspection and could be made available for viewing on the Council's website.

Amendments to applications

- 4.24 A planning application may be amended before a decision is made. However, this is at the discretion of the local authority and will depend upon the time left in which to determine the application and whether neighbour notification is required as a result of the amendment.
- 4.25 Each case is dealt with on its own merits when deciding whether or not publicity is necessary about proposed amendments or changes to applications. We will take the following factors into account:
- Will the change proposed affect a neighbour?
 - How substantial were objections received at an earlier stage?
 - Does the change overcome a problem previously raised?
 - How significant is the proposed change?

Previous Objectors

- 4.26 Previous objectors to a planning application relating to a particular property or site may be notified about a further application because they fall within the neighbour notification arrangements described above. The Council will not notify previous objectors as a matter of course.
- 4.27 The Council's website allows interested parties to comment online for each planning application.

Internal / External Consultation

- 4.28 In addition to the neighbour notification letters mentioned above, the Council may also consult a number of internal and external bodies when considering planning applications. The scope of consultation can be extensive. Each body has its own criteria as to when they need to be consulted. Consultees and interest groups include the Environment Agency, English Nature, Parish Councils, English Heritage and various Council departments including Leisure, Housing and Environmental Health.

This list is not exhaustive. However, appropriate consultation is undertaken as the nature of the application dictates. Appendices A & B list other possible consultees. These consultations are undertaken as those bodies involved have a specialist interest in the application, for example the Environment Agency would be consulted on applications for development in a flood plain area. Any comments received from these bodies in response to the consultation will assist the Case Officer in determining the application.

Development Briefs

- 4.29 For certain major sites, the Council may seek to prepare a Development Brief. Any potential Development Brief will outline the key issues affecting the site and surrounding area, the relevant policies from the Local Plan and identify what the Council would seek to achieve from any future redevelopment. The aim of Development Briefs is to provide developers with a clear understanding of what the Council considers is appropriate for a site. This in turn should ensure any planning application submitted has addressed all of the issues raised in the brief. This should speed up the determination of any proposals. Development Briefs may be informal documents or may be produced as statutory SPDs and, if so, will be included in the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) (see above).

Duty Officer

- 4.30 Informal planning advice can be provided over the telephone, at the Civic Centre, or more formally by a pre-arranged meeting with a Council Officer.
- 4.31 The Council also offers a planning duty officer service (phone-in access for general advice without appointment) to members of the public. This entails a professional Planning Officer being available to answer queries, offer advice and discuss key issues with applicants, neighbours, developers or people interested in the planning process. The purpose of such meetings is to provide initial, informal and private advice. The meetings are a specific form of consultation for interested parties only.
- 4.32 For advice on householder applications (extensions, loft conversions etc) we offer a drop-in service (15 minute slots) with a planning duty officer. This service is available on Monday afternoons between 1pm and 4pm and on Wednesday mornings between 9am and 12.30pm in the Customer Service Centre. This service is recommended for householder extensions where queries can be answered and advice given on all aspects of the application.

Pre-application meetings with planning officers

- 4.33 In addition to the drop-in service provided by the Duty Planning Officer for householder applications, pre-application meetings for all other schemes are available by pre-arranged appointment only. Meetings with specific application case officers can also be made for a mutually convenient time, by direct contact with the relevant case officer (the professional officer dealing with a specific application). The purpose of such meetings is to provide initial, informal and private advice to applicants. The meetings are a specific form of consultation for applicants only.
- 4.34 Further information on pre-application meetings with officers, including the costs involved, is available at:

<http://stalbens.gov.uk/planning/makingaplanningapplication/pre-application-advice.aspx>.

Planning Committees

- 4.35 The majority of planning applications received by the Council are dealt with under delegated powers by the Head of Planning & Building Control. The Planning (Development Control) Committees decide planning applications that have either been called in for consideration by a District Councillor, or raise major planning issues. Applicants can contact the case officer to enquire how the application will be decided. There are three Area Committees - North, South and Central, which meet every four weeks. District Councillors have the facility to 'call-in' any application to be decided at Committee. Applications submitted by the Council itself are also decided by the Planning Referrals Committees.
- 4.36 Committee Meetings are held in public so that interested parties can attend to hear the discussion. It is also possible to register a request to speak for 3 minutes on a particular application. Public speaking at Planning Committee is conducted in accordance with detailed procedures which are reviewed from time to time. Details are available on request.

Revisions to applications

- 4.37 Occasionally, planning applications are revised after they have been submitted. Often this is in response to concerns or objections that have been raised. In the majority of cases, the amendments are minor and do not necessitate re-consultation (for example, a limited change in design of a house extension to satisfy a neighbour's concern). For more major amendments, for example highway changes in a residential scheme, the Council will re-consult all those people originally consulted with details of the amendments. Given the time deadlines on deciding applications, the response period for re-consultations will be reduced. It may be that the revisions necessitate a new application and full re-consultation.

Reporting consultation responses to planning applications

- 4.38 The appointed Case Officer will consider any responses received by the Council either supporting or objecting to a planning application before a recommendation is made to either approve or refuse the application. The Officer report for each application will mention all of the representations received and summarise the main planning issues that were raised. These will then be addressed in the main body of the report. Should the application be decided at the relevant Planning Committee, then objectors / supporters have the opportunity to present their response. A letter of support or objection will not necessarily mean a proposal is approved or refused. Any responses received are only one aspect of all the factors that Planning Officers and Councillors take into account when dealing with an application. Decisions have to be made in line with the policies in the current adopted Local Plan. As planning files are public documents, any responses received will be placed on the relevant file and available for inspection.

Planning application decisions

- 4.39 Once a decision has been made on a planning application, the Council will notify the applicant / agent and any person(s) making representations, via a letter informing them of the decision. The Council also publishes a weekly list of applications and decisions that have been made, and this is available every Friday for the previous week on the Planning section of the Council website. Individual decision notices are also available to view on the Council website and these can be accessed via the Planning Application Search page.

Planning Aid

- 4.40 Planning Aid is a free, voluntary service that offers independent professional advice and help on town planning. It is aimed at individuals, community groups and other voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for private consultants. Planning Aid can help people with their own planning applications, and can help them to comment on other people's. It aims to give people the confidence to help themselves and to become involved in wider planning issues.
- 4.41 Planning Aid is NOT part of St. Albans City & District Council. It is a separate service that complements the advice and information provided by local authorities. For further information and details of how to get in touch with the local Planning Aid service that covers this District, contact the National Planning Aid Unit using the details below:

The Royal Town Planning Institute
 41 Botolph Lane
 London
 EC3R 8DL

Telephone: 020 7929 9494
 Email: info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
 Online: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>

5.0 Summary table of consultation techniques for planning applications

- 5.1 Table 4 below illustrates all of the consultation techniques discussed in this section and when they will be available / carried out by the Council in relation to the three types of planning applications received. Applicants proposing large-scale development schemes are encouraged, and in some cases statutorily required, to carry out their own pre-application consultation and report any findings as part of their submitted application.

Table 4

Consultation Technique	Application type #		
	Major	Minor	Other
Pre-application discussions	✓	✓	✓
Pre-application consultation	✓*	✓*	
Neighbour Notification	✓	✓	✓
Site Notices	✓	✓*	✓*
Advertisements	✓	✓*	✓*
Development Briefs	✓*		✓*
Duty Officer			✓

Planning decision	Committee	✓*	✓*	✓*
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* = depends on circumstances, please refer to Section 4 explanations of consultation techniques for more information

= please refer to Appendix D for definitions of application type

5.2 As every planning application is individual, and is treated as such, the consultation techniques for each will vary. It is impossible to group every type of planning application into a table. Table 4 above outlines the Council's broad approach to consultation on planning applications. Further information on the planning application process is available on the Council website (www.stalbans.gov.uk/planning). There are a number of useful guidance notes and links available, either on-line at the web address above or in paper form from the Council Offices. These include:

- Making a Planning Application
- How to respond to Planning Proposals
- Pre-application discussions
- Guide to the planning process
- Public speaking procedure at Planning Committee meetings

6.0 How the Council will identify and engage different community groups

6.1 Any person, organisation, business or voluntary group is welcome to make comments on the various documents that the Council will produce for public consultation, and/or get involved in individual planning applications. St. Albans City and District Council is committed to involving as many people as possible in the process of formulating the planning policies for the District.

6.2 Traditionally, certain groups within the community have been under-represented in the planning process. These include the elderly, ethnic minorities, youth groups, gypsies and travellers, the disabled and homeless. In line with the Council's Equalities Scheme, every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that these hard to reach groups are involved, as often their specific needs are vital to the development of a policy or scheme.

The Community Strategy for St. Albans District

6.4 The St. Albans Community Strategy is a partnership document that was produced in 2009 by the St Albans & District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), a group of key local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations working together to improve the quality of life for everyone in the District. The partnership is now known as the St Albans & District Strategic Partnership (SP).

6.5 The SP's aim is to encourage joint working and community involvement and is responsible for developing and implementing the '*Sustainable Community Strategy – Shaping our District Together for 2021*'.

6.6 St. Albans City and District Council is a member of the SP, together with a number of other groups and organisations listed at Appendices A and B. Its members will be consulted on the DPDs and any relevant SPDs.

- 6.7 The Community Strategy has a time scale of 2009-2021 and contains specific issues that the community would like to see addressed. The Community Strategy contains a great deal of information about what local people would like to see improved and carried out within the District. Whilst some of these issues are not planning related, a number of them are and it is vital that these are carried forward into the planning work of the Council.

7.0 Reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement

- 7.1 It is considered that the SCI represents a clear picture of how people can get involved in the planning process. However the appropriateness of the content may change over time and the Council must be able to react to this.
- 7.2 The Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) states that the Council will review the relevance of Local Development Documents, including the SCI, and identify any changes that are necessary.
- 7.3 This SCI will be reviewed periodically to ensure that the procedures set out are engaging the local community as effectively as possible.

Appendix A - Specific Consultees

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 state that the following “specific consultation bodies” must be consulted if the local planning authority thinks that the proposed subject matter of the Development Plan Document (DPD) in question affects the body. St Albans District Council will consult all the following specific consultees on the DPDs. In addition, relevant organisations will be consulted on SPDs.

Specific consultation bodies set out in the Regulations

- The Coal Authority
- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage)
- The Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- The Highways Agency
- British Waterways Board
- Relevant Water Undertakers
- Relevant Electricity Undertakers
- Relevant Sewerage Undertakers
- Relevant Gas Companies
- Relevant Telecommunications Companies
- Local clinical commissioning groups and the National Health Service Commissioning Board
- Homes and Communities Agency

Other local authorities

- Hertfordshire County Council
- Adjoining / neighbouring local planning authorities (Three Rivers District Council, Dacorum Borough Council, North Hertfordshire District Council, Welwyn Hatfield Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Watford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire District Council, Luton Borough Council)
- All town and parish councils in St. Albans City and District
- Parish Councils in other Districts, where the Parish Council boundary adjoins St. Albans City and District

Government Departments

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department for Transport
- Department of Health
- Department for Business Innovation and Skills
- Ministry of Defence
- Department of Work and Pensions
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport

All of the organisations and companies above are held on the Council's consultee database. Any additions / deletions to the list above provided by Central Government in amended regulations will be implemented immediately. Official confirmation of any changes will form part of the review of the SCI.

Appendix B - General Consultees

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 state that certain “general consultation bodies” must also be consulted where the local planning authority considers it appropriate. The regulations define this group as voluntary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the District and other bodies representing the interests of different racial, ethnic, national, religious, business and disabled persons groups. Below is a provisional list of all the types of national and local groups St. Albans City and District Council considers to fall into these categories. Any type of group or organisation not listed who wish to be consulted on any part of the planning process should respond to this draft document as such. The list will be updated as the SCI is reviewed.

The Council will consult all the following types of general consultees on the DPDs and SCI. Relevant general consultees will also be consulted on SPDs.

- Local Members of Parliament
- Internal Consultees at St. Albans City and District Council
- County Councillors representing St. Albans City and District wards
- Other Local Authorities
- National & Regional Conservation / Preservation Groups
- Local Conservation, Preservation, Sustainability and Amenity Groups
- Ethnic Minority Groups
- Housing / Design Interest Groups
- Housebuilders / Developers
- Local Residents Associations
- Co-opted members of the City Neighbourhood Committee
- Planning Agents
- Youth groups, schools, colleges
- Disability Groups
- Local Businesses / Business Groups
- Older Persons Groups
- Other National / Regional Organisations
- Other Local Organisations
- Public transport operators
- Public transport Users Groups
- Recreational User Groups
- Local Constabulary

All of the types of organisations, associations, businesses and individuals above are held on the Council’s consultee database. Requests for any amendments to contact details or additions / deletions can be sent to the Council at any time.

Appendix C – Duty to Cooperate Bodies

- The Environment Agency
- Natural England
- The Mayor of London
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Homes and Communities Agency
- Local clinical commissioning groups and the NHS England
- The Office of Rail Regulation
- Transport for London
- Each Integrated Transport Authority
- The Highways Authority (Hertfordshire Highways)
- The Marine Management Organisation
- Neighbouring local planning authorities in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire

Appendix D - Definitions of types of planning application

Planning applications received by the Council are split into 3 main categories, major, minor and other. The definitions of each are set out below:

Major

- Dwellings - 10 or more or more than 0.5 hectare
- Offices/ research and development/light industry
- Heavy industry/storage/warehousing
- Retail, distribution and servicing
- Agricultural, leisure, clinics, parking, education



Where floorspace created is 1,000 square metres or more (including any change of use)

Minor

- Dwellings - less than 10
- Offices/ research and development/light industry
- Heavy industry/storage/warehousing
- Retail, distribution and servicing
- Agricultural, leisure, clinics, parking, education, telecoms



Where floorspace created is less than 1,000 square metres

Other

- Minerals
- Change of use
- Householder developments
- Advertisements
- Alterations / extensions to Listed Building
- Demolition of Listed Building
- Conservation Area consent