

# Statement of Community Involvement

Adopted September 2020

Blackpool Council



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# Statement of Community Involvement

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## 1.0 What is a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?

- 1.1 Under Section 18 (Part 2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to prepare a 'Statement of Community Involvement' (SCI). The SCI should ensure the active, meaningful and continued involvement of the local community and stakeholders throughout the planning processes.
- 1.2 The Council first adopted its SCI in 2007 and updated it in 2014 when the Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy was published. Since then, there have been changes to the planning system including the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF). The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 also introduced a requirement on LPAs to include their policies for giving advice or assistance on making and modifying neighbourhood development plans within their SCIs.
- 1.3 The SCI provides clarity on the extent of community involvement in the planning system and sets out clear consultation procedures and standards that the Council will follow when undertaking planning related consultations. This SCI sets out how and when the community and other stakeholders will be consulted on the preparation and revision of planning documents that make up the Blackpool Local Plan including neighbourhood plans, supplementary planning documents and how the community will be consulted on planning applications.

### Statement of Community Involvement Review

- 1.4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 amended section 10A to include a duty on LPAs to review their SCIs every five years. In addition, Blackpool Council will consider updating or replacing the SCI if there are any significant changes to the planning system.

### How will the general public benefit?

- 1.5 The public will benefit in a number of ways:
  - Local services will be better able to meet local needs
  - Greater community cohesion and inclusion
  - More public ownership, a greater sense of democracy and active citizenship

### What can individuals and organisations expect to achieve by getting involved?

- 1.6 They can expect to achieve:
  - An ability to influence the decision making process and 'make a difference'

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- An increased understanding of how policies are developed and proposals delivered
- Enhanced sense of contributing to the future of the community
- Better quality outcomes through joint working

### **What are the benefits to the Council?**

#### 1.7 Benefits include:

- Wider contributions to problem solving as local expertise, opinions and insight are brought to the planning process
- Increased support for local planning policies
- It alerts policy makers to any concerns and issues not picked up through existing evidence or research
- A contribution to sustainable development by enabling all members of society to be heard and to contribute to the future of their communities.

#### 1.8 The overarching benefit in developing policies and proposals together with the community is the resolution of conflict. The planning system not only recognises the importance of participation, it also ensures that communities are engaged at the outset. This means that communities help shape policies and proposals rather than the traditional style of communities just responding to the ideas of the Council.

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## 2.0 Planning Policy

- 2.1 The following section sets out how we will involve the community in the preparation of planning policy documents. This includes Local Plan documents, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.2 Planning regulations and guidance provided by the Government, sets minimum requirements for involvement with local communities. The guidance allows local authorities to be flexible over exactly who will be consulted depending on the type of document being produced. However, there is great value in going beyond the minimum standards to get greater community involvement.
- 2.3 We believe that everyone has the right to be informed and, where possible, be involved in the planning process. However not everyone wants to, or can be involved. It is important that we consider the different reasons for this and do our best to address them.
- 2.4 We will at all times, endeavour to apply a range of consultation techniques appropriate to the type of consultation being undertaken, whilst ensuring that ‘barriers to participation’ are actively reduced using a range of methods set out below.
- 2.5 The following groups have been identified as being hard to reach:
- Children and young people
  - Older people
  - People with disabilities
  - Ethnic groups
  - Faith communities
  - People who live in the borough but who work elsewhere
  - People who work in the borough but who live elsewhere
- 2.6 The Council will endeavour to consult these groups on all planning documents it prepares, where appropriate. The Council has also sought to include in the planning consultation database, groups which represent hard-to-reach sectors of the community.

**Table 1: Consultation Methods, Considerations and Benefits**

<b>Consultation Method</b>	<b>Main Considerations and Benefits</b>
The consultation document will be made available in accordance with the relevant regulations	The availability of these documents will be advertised in a variety of ways including email, the Council’s website, through social media and where appropriate, via letter.
Emails/letters to specific consultation bodies, as listed in	For the case of specific consultees, this is a minimum requirement. The relevant specific consultees will be

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Consultation Method	Main Considerations and Benefits
the regulations and other general consultees (as appropriate)	<p>notified at the appropriate time during the preparation of planning documents.</p> <p>The Local Plan database contains details of all consultees and is regularly updated as consultation events take place. An email is the preferred means of consulting, we will not send notifications by post where a valid email address is held.</p>
Website – to be used for publishing documents & comment forms	<p>The council website plays an important role in consultation on planning applications and planning documents. It contains a large amount of information including current local plan documents and the evidence base. There is also the facility to view current and determined planning application through <a href="#">the planning applications search function</a> [opens a new window].</p> <p>Members of the public can also able to register online to be notified of planning applications in their area. A wide range of searches can be undertaken online, including simple address or postcode based searches or more advanced spatially oriented searches such as within an electoral ward or within 500m of a specified location.</p>
Printed media – local newspapers, Your Blackpool, leaflets and newsletters	<p>It is no longer a requirement for local authorities to advertise planning documents in the local press. However, there may be occasions when it is considered appropriate to publish a public notice in the local newspaper (The Gazette).</p> <p>In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to create a press release to be published in the local newspaper. However, it is acknowledged that The Gazette now sits behind a pay wall and readers are required to register, reducing the size of the target audience.</p> <p>‘Your Blackpool’, the Council’s newspaper, is distributed to all homes and businesses in the Borough four times a year. We will endeavour to use ‘Your Blackpool’ to inform residents of current consultations. However as ‘Your Blackpool’ is only a</p>

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Consultation Method	Main Considerations and Benefits
	quarterly publication, this is dependent on publication dates.
Social media	Social media plays an increasingly important role in the way people communicate and acquire information. The Council uses Facebook and Twitter to communicate with the public including consulting on planning policy documents.
Online newspapers	LancsLive is an online newspaper covering all of Lancashire. LancsLive quite often covers press releases in Blackpool and as it is free to access, LancsLive could be used alongside the Gazette to ensure as many people as possible are aware of the consultation.
Radio	Radio Wave is the local radio station, which covers local news and has a web presence. Where appropriate, Radio Wave will be made aware of consultations.
Public exhibitions/displays	Whilst this method is not appropriate to all consultations, public exhibitions can help engage the community with regards to specific areas/issues or major development proposals. Public exhibitions could be physical or virtual.
Neighbourhood Forums	Contact details of the Neighbourhood Forum Chairs are held on the consultation database and they will be informed of all future Local Plan consultations via email. The Chair will also be consulted on any planning applications that are made within or adjacent to the relevant Neighbourhood Area.
Meetings with selected stakeholders and key interest groups	This brings together representatives to provide direct input on specific issues.

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**Table 2: Barrier and solutions to getting involved**

<b>Barriers to getting involved</b>	<b>What the Council can do about it</b>
The cost of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure availability of material in a variety of public places where possible.</li> <li>• Ensure availability on the Council's website.</li> </ul>
Lack of time to comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce easily understood documents that are not repetitive or too long.</li> <li>• Provide an 'easy-to-use' website.</li> <li>• Provide email friendly comment forms that are easy to use.</li> </ul>
Time (of meetings/activities)	Consider evenings and weekends.
Incomprehensible 'Planner' speak and jargon	Use of Plain English and simplification of text.
Complex procedures and inability to understand matters which will affect them (e.g. people with learning or memory difficulties)	Provide user guides on the planning system and the planning applications procedure.
Perception that only objections are sought	Encourage those that support proposals to express their opinions.
Accessibility of meetings for those with mobility or sensory difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose locations that meet accessibility standards where possible.</li> <li>• Choose locations that provide a hearing loop where possible.</li> <li>• Online meetings.</li> </ul>
Physically unable to attend meetings and non-PC literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure detailed coverage in the local free newspaper (Your Blackpool), The Gazette and local radio (radio Wave).</li> <li>• Contact Disabilities Information Service about reaching those people who are disabled and cannot access buildings, public transport or are unable to read or hear announcements.</li> </ul>
No access to the internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure detailed coverage in the local free newspaper (Your Blackpool) and The Gazette and local radio (Radio Wave).</li> </ul>

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Barriers to getting involved	What the Council can do about it
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ensure availability of material in a variety of public places where possible.</li> </ul>
Accessibility of meetings to those without a car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Use of venues accessible by public transport where possible.</li> <li>•Online meetings</li> </ul>
Apathy and disinterest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Always try to relate issues, particularly strategic issues, to the local level.</li> <li>•Target groups for consultation who do not normally take an interest.</li> </ul>
Mistrust and public cynicism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Make sure that consultation responses are reported fairly and accurately and that full explanations are given for the decisions made.</li> <li>•Present information in a way that does not suggest that decisions have already been made.</li> </ul>
Disaffected groups	Use outreach workers to access information.
Visual impairment	Provide all future planning documents that the Council prepares, in an accessible format online.

### Local Plan Preparation

- 2.7 A Local Plan is the main planning policy document produced at the Local Authority level. The Local Plan is made up of development Plan Document (DPDs) including Neighbourhood Plans. It contains policies to guide the development of the area and includes allocations that set out areas for proposed development that will take place within a 15 year period. A Local Plan should plan positively to meet the areas needs for housing and economic development and deliver sustainable development.
- 2.8 A Local Plan must accord with national planning policy and is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as “The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.”
- 2.9 The Blackpool Local Plan 2012 – 2027 comprises two parts:
- Part 1 is the [Core Strategy](#) [PDF 135.35MB. Opens a new window] which was adopted January 2016
  - Part 2 is the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document (once adopted).

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- 2.10 Alongside the Blackpool Local Plan, Lancashire County Council and the two Unitary Authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen have prepared a [Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan](#) [opens a new window], which consists of a number of documents.
- 2.11 Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.12 A sustainability appraisal will accompany each of the DPDs at appropriate stages, including Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.13 The legislation seeks stakeholder involvement in the plan making process as early as possible. A summary of the key consultation stages for any Local Plan stage along with the consultation methods that will be used are provided in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Local Plan Stages of Consultation**

Local Plan Stage	Consultation Duration	Consultation Methods
Preparation (Regulation 18)	Minimum of 6 weeks (excluding Bank Holidays)	It is anticipated that the following consultation methods will be used at each of these stages, where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written/email consultations with the ‘specific’, ‘general’ and ‘other’ consultation bodies, including where relevant, individuals and organisations who have expressed a wish to be consulted;</li> <li>• Presentation to and consultation with councillors;</li> <li>• Making the consultation document available in accordance with the relevant regulations;</li> <li>• Inviting representation on the document through press advertisements, press releases, on the Council’s website and through social media where appropriate;</li> <li>• Invitations to speak with any individual who is disadvantaged and feels that their comments cannot be</li> </ul>
Publication (Regulation 19)	Minimum of 6 weeks (excluding Bank Holidays)	

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Local Plan Stage	Consultation Duration	Consultation Methods
		adequately conveyed in writing.

- 2.14 Following the stages above, all representations received will be acknowledged and considered. Responses will be summarised in a Schedule of Representations document where similar responses may be grouped together. The Council's responses to the comments made will be presented at Executive Committee and published in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations. Responses received at Regulation 19 stage will be submitted to the Secretary of State together with the Local Plan and other submission documents. The submission documents and the representations received will be considered at an independent examination. The Council will notify consultation bodies and those who have requested to be notified at this stage.
- 2.15 In addition to the above, Blackpool Council will provide details of the progress of the Local Plan on its [Planning Policy webpage](#) [opens a new window].

### Specific Consultation Bodies

- 2.16 In preparing the Local Plan we are required to consult a range of organisations which the Government calls 'specific consultation bodies' as defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) [opens a new window]. For Blackpool, these include:
- Lancashire County Council
  - Fylde Borough Council
  - Wyre Borough Council
  - Neighbouring Parish Councils
  - Environment Agency
  - Natural England
  - Highways England
  - Historic England
  - Homes England
  - Network Rail
  - Coal Authority
  - Marine Management Organisation
  - The National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England)
  - Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group
  - Relevant gas, electricity, water and sewerage companies
  - Relevant telecommunications companies

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2.17 In addition, the Council will also consult the following organisations on the scope of Sustainability Appraisals where relevant:

- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Historic England

### **General Consultation Bodies**

2.18 We are also required to consult 'General Consultation Bodies'. These are defined as:

- Voluntary groups, some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the Borough
- Bodies who represent interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups
- Religious groups
- Groups who represent disabled persons
- Those representing the interests of person carrying on business in the Borough

2.19 Our own consultation database contains over 1000 groups, organisations and companies from the following categories:

- Local Members of Parliament
- Neighbourhood Forums
- Youth Groups, Schools, Colleges
- Ethnic Minority Groups
- Internal Consultees at Blackpool Council
- Disability Groups
- House Builders/Developers
- Councillors
- Religious Groups
- Local Residents Associations
- Local Businesses/Business Groups
- Planning Agents
- National & Regional Conservation/ Preservation Groups
- Older Persons Groups
- Local Conservation, Heritage & Amenity Groups
- Holiday Accommodation Providers
- Major leisure operators
- Other Local Organisations
- Public Transport Operators

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2.20 A database containing contact details of groups and individuals was compiled at the start of the Local Plan process and is continually updated as consultations take place. The database is open for anyone to register and receive notifications of future planning consultation events. Interested parties wishing to be added to or removed from the consultation database should email [planning.strategy@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:planning.strategy@blackpool.gov.uk) [opens a new window].

### Privacy

2.21 To find out how the Council use information and personal data from respondents to planning policy consultations and applications for planning permission, visit the [Privacy Notices page on the Council's website](#) [opens a new window]. Further details regarding Blackpool Council's responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) can be found by visiting the [Data Protection page on the Council's website](#) [opens a new window].

### Duty to Cooperate

2.22 In relation to local plan preparation and as part of the legal Duty to Cooperate, neighbouring councils and other relevant organisations must work together across boundaries on strategic planning issues. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Blackpool Council will work with the following Duty to Cooperate 'prescribed' bodies:

- Lancashire County Council (LCC)
- Fylde Borough Council (as a neighbouring authority)
- Wyre Borough Council (as a neighbouring authority)
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Highways England
- Historic England
- Homes England
- Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Local Nature Partnership
- Marine Management Organisation
- The National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England)
- Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group
- The Office of Rail and Road

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2.23 As part of plan preparation NPPF paragraph 27 requires the production of a Statement(s) of Common Ground (SoCG) documenting the cross boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these to be made publically available throughout the plan making process.

### Supplementary Planning Documents

2.24 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. SPDs are a material consideration in influencing and determining planning applications but are not part of the development plan.

2.25 We will involve the local community in the preparation and development of the SPDs that we produce. A summary of the key consultation stages in the production of Supplementary Planning Documents along with the consultation methods that will be used are provided below. Not all consultation methods will be used for every draft SPD, as it will be dependent on the document being produced. The Council will consider the benefits of all consultation methods prior to the consultation period.

2.26 All representations received will be considered and responses will be summarised in a Schedule of Representations, with similar responses grouped together. The Council’s responses to the comments made will be presented at the Executive Committee and comments will be published in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations. A summary of the key consultations undertaken by the Local Planning Authority in the production of a Supplementary Planning Document along with the anticipated consultation methods are provided in table 4 below:

**Table 4: Supplementary Planning Document Consultation**

SPD Stage	Consultation Duration	Consultation Method
Identifying the issues	N/A	Engagement with local communities and relevant stakeholders to discuss issues proposed to be contained in the draft document and the development of policies, where appropriate.
Draft SPD consultation Regulation 12-13	6 weeks (excluding Bank Holidays)	It is anticipated that the following consultation methods will be used at all of these stages, where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Written/email consultations with the ‘specific’, ‘general’ and ‘other’ consultation bodies, including where relevant, individuals and organisations who have expressed a wish to be consulted;</li> <li>•If a sustainability appraisal report is required, the Council will also consult on this report at this stage. The</li> </ul>

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SPD Stage	Consultation Duration	Consultation Method
		<p>Council will undertake a screening exercise to determine if a strategic environmental assessment is required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation and discussion of the document with councillors;</li> <li>• Making the consultation document available in accordance with the relevant regulations;</li> <li>• Inviting representation on the document through press advertisements, press releases and a prominent invitation on the Council’s website;</li> <li>• Invitations to speak with any individual who is disadvantaged and feels that their comments cannot be adequately conveyed in writing.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3 Adoption (Regulation 14)</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will consider comments that have been made to the Stage 2 Draft Consultation and any sustainability assessment (if required) and make any appropriate changes;</li> <li>• The SPD will be published alongside a Consultation Statement and an Adoption Statement.</li> </ul>

2.27 Further information on SPDs can be found on the [Planning Policy pages](#) [opens a new window] of the Council’s website.

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### Neighbourhood Planning Consultations

- 2.28 Neighbourhood planning gives local communities the power to shape the development and growth of their local area.
- 2.29 Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to:
- make a Neighbourhood Development Plan;
  - make a Neighbourhood Development Order;
  - make a Community Right to Build Order
- 2.30 The first stage in the neighbourhood planning process involves the designation of a Neighbourhood Area. As there are no Town or Parish Council's in Blackpool, an application must be made by a prospective Neighbourhood Forum to the local planning authority for a Neighbourhood Area to be designated. A Neighbourhood Forum must be established (regulations 8, 9 and 10) before work commences on the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 2.31 The Forum can then scope and begin to draft the neighbourhood plan, in partnership with all sectors of the community. The Forum will be responsible for community engagement, and consultation will be necessary at all stages of the plan making process. Once there is a draft plan, it must be subjected to a formal pre-submission consultation (Regulation 14).
- 2.32 The proposed neighbourhood plan should then be submitted to the local planning authority, which will check that the necessary documents have been provided. Following a period of publicity (see table 4 below), the local planning authority will arrange for an independent examination.
- 2.33 Following independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Independent Examiner can recommend the plan to progress to Referendum stage in which the community in the area vote on whether to accept the Neighbourhood Plan. The Referendum may also include the wider community in the adjoining areas. When a Neighbourhood Plan has come into legal force after a Referendum (i.e. a made Neighbourhood Development Plan), it forms part of the Development Plan (along with the adopted Local Plan).
- 2.34 Further details can be found on the [Neighbourhood Planning page on the Council's website](#) [opens a new page].
- 2.35 Whilst the responsibility for producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan rests with the qualifying body (in Blackpool, this will be a neighbourhood forum), there are certain requirements which a Local Planning Authority (LPA) must undertake under The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012. A summary of the key consultations undertaken by the

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Local Planning Authority in the production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan along with the anticipated consultation methods are provided in table 5 below:

**Table 5: Neighbourhood Planning Consultation**

Neighbourhood Plan Stage	The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012)	Consultation Duration	Consultation Methods
Neighbourhood Area Designation consultation	Regulation 6	Minimum 6 weeks	<p>It is anticipated that the following consultation methods will be used at all of these stages, where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written/email consultations with relevant consultation bodies, (in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012) including individuals and organisations who have expressed a wish to be consulted;</li> <li>• Making the consultation document available in accordance with the relevant regulations;</li> <li>• Inviting representations on the document through press advertisements and a prominent invitation on the Council's website and through social media where appropriate;</li> <li>• Invitations to speak with any individual who is disadvantaged and feels that their comments cannot be adequately conveyed in writing.</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood Forum Designation consultation	Regulation 9		
Submission Consultation & Publicity of a plan proposal	Regulation 16		

- Note that Regulation 14 (Pre-submission consultation and publicity) is carried out by the parish/town council or neighbourhood forum.

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- Blackpool Council will publish any decision notices/Examiners reports on its website and in such other manner as it considers likely to bring it to the attention of those who live and work or carry on business in the area, once a decision has been made. (Regulations 7/10/19/20)
- Blackpool Council will provide details of the progress of each Neighbourhood Development Plan (including details of Examination or Referendum arrangements) on its [Neighbourhood Planning page on the Council's website](#) [opens a new window].

### Community Infrastructure Levy

- 2.36 The Community Infrastructure Levy allows local authorities to set charges which developers must pay when bringing forward new development. The money raised can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the Council and local community want.
- 2.37 The Council commissioned consultants URS Planning and Development along with HDH Planning to undertake a [Viability Study](#) [PDF 6.89 MB – opens a new window] of the Blackpool Core Strategy including assessing the viability of introducing a CIL charging schedule in Blackpool.
- 2.38 Following the publication of this study in February 2014 and consideration of the findings it was decided not to introduce CIL in Blackpool at this time.
- 2.39 Should the Council decide to introduce CIL at some point in the future, the Statement of Community Involvement will be updated accordingly.

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### 3.0 Development Management

3.1 Development Management is the process by which the local planning authority shapes, considers, determines and delivers proposals in order to facilitate the right development in the right locations.

3.2 This is undertaken by the determination of planning and other types of applications. In doing this, local planning authorities will work proactively with applicants and stakeholders in order to facilitate high quality, sustainable development.

#### **Pre-Application Consultations**

3.3 Pre-application consultations are consultations held by the applicant prior to a planning application being submitted.

3.4 Pre-application consultations can be undertaken by applicants with:

- the local planning authority
- statutory and non-statutory consultees
- the community

3.5 Pre-application consultations can:

- Identify and so address problems before an application is submitted, and this may reduce the chance of refusal of planning permission;
- Prevent abortive work, as refinements to the proposal can be made at an early stage;
- Provide an opportunity to explain proposals to the community, reducing the potential for misconceived objections; and
- Reduce the time and cost in obtaining a decision.

3.6 Blackpool Council offers a pre-application advice service (subject to a fee). Details of this service is available to view on the [Council's website](#) [opens a new window].

3.7 Depending on the type of proposal, we may require input from other Council departments such as Highways or Environmental Protection. The Council will remain impartial at all times during the pre-application process.

3.8 Often discussions held between the applicant and the Council are 'in confidence' because they can be commercially sensitive because applications are not at a stage where they will be submitted.

3.9 General planning advice continues to be given, generally over the telephone or by email, and this does not incur a fee. The Development Management team operates a Duty Line during office hours to ensure that basic planning advice is accessible. The [Planning Portal](#) [opens a new window] also provides general planning advice.

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3.10 The Council will encourage applicants and developers to also discuss proposals and engage with local communities. Developers will then be encouraged to submit a consultation statement with their application. A list of recommended pre application consultation measures for applicants to undertake is provided in Table 6 below:

**Table 6: Pre Application consultation methods**

Application type	What we encourage	Appropriate consultation methods
<p><b>Major</b> Major planning applications consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 or more dwellings or a housing site of over 0.5 hectares</li> <li>• 1000 sqm or more gross commercial or leisure floorspace</li> <li>• Minerals and Waste applications</li> </ul>	<p>Developers to canvas local opinion</p> <p>Ward Councillor awareness and involvement</p> <p>The submission of consultation statement setting out pre-application discussions</p> <p>Depending on the proposal undertaken, pre-application consultation will be carried out with key consultees such as Blackpool Council as Local Highway Authority, Environment Agency or Natural England. These all have their own pre-application advice services and using these services will often help at the time of submission of an application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings – physical or virtual</li> <li>• Public exhibitions - physical or virtual</li> <li>• Surgeries - physical or virtual</li> <li>• Workshops - physical or virtual</li> <li>• Media including social media</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Minor</b> Any planning application that is not considered significant, most often involving domestic extensions, changes of use of properties or small infill schemes.</p>	<p>Discussion of proposals with neighbours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal</li> <li>• Letter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conservation/ listed building Consent:</b> Any application that is for listed buildings or development in conservation areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with Blackpool Civic Trust and the Council’s Built Heritage Manager</li> <li>• Consultation with local or national heritage groups appropriate to the scale of project. Many of these all have their own pre-application advice services and using these services will often help at the time of submission of an application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal</li> <li>• Letter</li> </ul>

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## Planning Applications

- 3.11 The Development Management team is responsible for making recommendations and delegated decisions on planning applications. The Council seeks to notify those members of the community most affected by a potential development on individual planning applications. Although members of the community have the opportunity to comment on an application, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.12 There are minimum statutory requirements for public consultation on all planning applications received by the Council and these are set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\)\(England\) Order 2015](#) [opens a new window] and listed below. Further details of publicity requirements for planning applications and a list of when statutory and non- statutory consultees are required to be consulted are provided in [Planning Practice Guidance](#) [opens a new window].

## Statutory Consultees for Planning Applications in Blackpool

- 3.13 The following are statutory consultees in relation to planning applications:
- Lancashire County Council
  - Fylde Borough Council
  - Wyre Borough Council
  - Neighbouring Parish Councils
  - Control of major accident hazards competent authority (the Health and Safety Executive or the Office for Nuclear Regulation and Environment Agency)
  - Health and Safety Executive
  - Environment Agency
  - Natural England
  - Highways England
  - Historic England
  - Sport England
  - Network Rail
  - Rail Network Operators
  - United Utilities
  - Gardens Trust
  - Lead Local Flood Authority
  - National Amenity Societies (ie the Ancient Monuments Society, the Council for British Archaeology, the Georgian Group, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Victorian Society and the Twentieth Century Society)
  - Theatres Trust
  - Forestry Commission
  - Blackpool Airport
  - Designated Neighbourhood Forums
  - Marine Management Organisation

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- Office for Nuclear Regulation
- 3.14 Other statutory consultees which would rarely be consulted on planning applications in Blackpool include; the National Parks Authorities; Office for Nuclear Regulation; the Coal Authority; the Canal and River Trust; Crown Estate Commissioners; Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy.

### Non-Statutory Consultees for Planning Applications in Blackpool

- 3.15 The local planning authority regularly consults different departments in the Council on planning applications, depending on the nature of the application. The Council will also seek the advice and opinions from non-statutory consultees, including (but not limited to):
- Police Architectural Liaison Officer
  - Emergency Services
  - Emergency Planners
  - Design Council
  - Campaign to Protect Rural England
  - Blackpool Civic Trust
  - Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group
  - Blackpool Transport
  - County Archaeologist
  - Ecological Consultants
  - Lancashire Wildlife Trust
  - Ramblers Association
- 3.16 A summary of the key consultations undertaken by the Local Planning Authority on planning applications are provided in table 7 below:

**Table 7: Planning Application Consultation**

Method of Consultation	Consultation
Neighbour Notification	Whilst there is no requirement for the Local Authority to write to individual neighbours, we recognise that this is a useful way of making nearby residents aware of a development proposal. The Local Authority will generally write to the occupiers of any property that shares a common boundary with the application site or property, which could be directly affected by the proposal, informing of the application and inviting comments. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis. In some instances the Local Authority may consider the display of a site notice to be the most efficient and effective way to notify members of the public about a planning application.
Site Notice	A site notice will be displayed close to the application site for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline applications of more than 1 hectare</li> <li>• Major developments (10 or more dwellings or more than 1000 square meters of floorspace)</li> <li>• Applications subject to Environmental Impact Assessment</li> </ul>

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Method of Consultation	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications, which if approved, would be a departure from the Development Plan</li> <li>• Applications affecting public rights of way</li> <li>• Development affecting Listed Buildings or their setting</li> <li>• Development affecting the setting of a Conservation Area</li> <li>• Proposals which are considered to affect people in the wider area</li> <li>• Where there is open land adjacent the site</li> <li>• Where neighbouring properties contain multiple flats.</li> </ul>
<b>Press Notice</b>	<p>A notice will be published in the local press for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline applications of more than 1 hectare</li> <li>• Major development (10 or more dwellings or more than 1000 square meters of floorspace)</li> <li>• Applications subject to Environmental Impact Assessment</li> <li>• Applications, which if approved, would be a departure from the Development Plan</li> <li>• Applications affecting public rights of way</li> <li>• Development affecting Listed Buildings or their setting</li> <li>• Development affecting the setting of a Conservation Area</li> </ul>
<b>Weekly Lists</b>	<p>The weekly list of applications received and decisions made will be available on the <a href="#">Council's website</a> [opens a new window].</p>
<b>Website</b>	<p>All applications, supporting documents and other relevant details are available online on the <a href="#">Council's website</a> [opens a new window]. It is possible to search by application number or address and the public can register to receive alerts when applications are made in their area.</p>

- 3.17 In addition to the community, consultation is undertaken with various statutory and non-statutory consultees and, depending on what the application is, these will vary. For example, we would consult the Council's Highways team on an application for a new vehicular access.
- 3.18 There is now a wide range of developments and uses which are permitted development but, in some cases, before the development or use commences the prior approval of the Council must be sought. Generally, in such cases, the range of issues the Council is permitted to consider is strictly limited and specified in the legislation. The Council will display a site notice near to the site, in order to notify neighbours of the prior approval application, where required. The adjoining owners or occupiers are given 21 days to comment on the proposals and any objections have to be made in writing, online or by email.
- 3.19 Prior approval is also required for larger householder single storey extensions. A householder wishing to build a larger extension will notify the Council, who will then consult the adjoining neighbours in relation to the potential impact on amenity. If the neighbours

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raise any objections, the Council will determine whether the impact on the amenity of adjoining properties is acceptable and whether the work can proceed.

- 3.20 Permission in Principle (PIP) consent is an alternative route for obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. PIP comprises an application for permission in principle followed by an application for 'technical details consent'. Granting technical details consent has the effect of granting planning permission.
- 3.21 The Council can grant permission in principle to a site upon receipt of a valid application or by entering a site in Part 2 of its brownfield land register which will trigger a grant of permission in principle for that land providing that the statutory requirements set out in Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 are met. Proposals to grant permission in principle will be subject to consultation in line with the Regulations.

### How to comment

- 3.22 All planning applications can be viewed online on the [Council's online planning system](#) [opens a new window].
- 3.23 Comments may be made by anyone, regardless of whether they were consulted individually. We welcome any comments, whether in support of an application or objecting to it, although the Council can only take account of 'planning considerations'. These include matters like the impact of a proposed development or use on traffic or parking, appearance of the proposal, overlooking, environmental impacts etc. We cannot take into account matters such as devaluation of property, private disputes between neighbours, the potential for damage caused during construction and business competition.
- 3.24 Comments should be made in writing in the form of a letter, petition, e-mail or via the Council's planning applications page. The normal period allowed for making comments on planning applications is 21 days, however some statutory consultees may be allowed a longer period in which to comment where appropriate. The results of any such consultation along with any public representations will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by the Council.

### Determining Planning Applications

- 3.25 Most decisions have been delegated to officers by elected members. Major or controversial applications are generally decided by the Planning Committee and any planning comments are drawn to the committee members' attention before a decision is made. The Committee agendas are published on the [Council's website](#) [opens a new window] in advance of the meeting (meetings are usually held monthly on a Tuesday). Where members of the public have commented on an application to be determined by the planning committee, they will

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be notified of the date, time and venue of the meeting (including virtual meetings) and be advised on how to arrange to address the Committee at the meeting. Requests to speak at Planning Committee need to be made by noon, one working day prior to the meeting.

- 3.26 Consultation responses will be taken into account when determining planning applications, however decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations suggest otherwise. Public opposition or support by itself is not a valid reason to refuse or approve a planning application.

### Letting people know the outcome

- 3.27 It is not possible to respond individually to all comments received. Once a decision is made, the decision notice is emailed to the applicant (or agent if one is nominated) and can be viewed on the [Council's website](#) [opens a new window]. If an application has been approved, the decision notice will show any conditions that may have been attached to the permission.

### Applicants Right to Appeal

- 3.28 In terms of right of appeal, only the applicant can appeal against refusal of planning permission. There is no third party right of appeal. If an appeal is made, neighbours will be notified and will have the opportunity to make further representations to the Planning Inspector dealing with the appeal
- 3.29 Details of the appeal will be available on the [Council's website](#) [opens a new window] under the planning application reference.
- 3.30 There are strict time limits to appeal, and it is critical that these are complied with. An appeal against a refused householder or minor commercial application must be made within twelve weeks of the Council's decision. Advertisement appeals must be made within eight weeks and all other appeals within six months.
- 3.31 Planning Appeals are determined by one of three methods:
- Written Representations - these are determined by an exchange of written statements and where necessary, a site visit by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate;
  - Hearing – these are less formal than an inquiry, centred around a discussion between the appellant and the Council about the merits of the case and are chaired by an appointed Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate; and
  - Inquiry – these are more formal in their set up, again the appointed Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate will chair the inquiry which could last a number of days/weeks and are often used for more major cases.
- 3.32 The Inspector will make a decision to dismiss or allow the appeal or send a report to the Secretary of State. A copy of the decision notice will be sent to the appellant, the Council

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and any interested person who has requested a copy. It will also be available to view on the [Planning Inspectorate's website](#) [opens a new window].

- 3.33 The government has produced a detailed guide on the appeal process on the [GOV.UK website](#) [opens a new window].

### Neighbourhood Development Order

- 3.34 A Neighbourhood Development Order is defined in the NPPF as:

“An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.”

- 3.35 A Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) can grant planning permission for specific types of developments in a specific neighbourhood area. A Neighbourhood Development Order can therefore:

- Apply to a specific site, sites, or wider geographical area;
- Grant planning permission for a certain type or types of development;
- Grant planning permission outright or subject to conditions.

- 3.36 Once established, there would be no need for anyone to apply to the local planning authority for planning permission if it is for the type of development covered by the order. Neighbourhood Development Orders can therefore speed up the process of development in certain areas, however a Neighbourhood Development Order must meet any legal requirements and be in general conformity with national and local planning policy.

### Community Right to Build Order

- 3.37 A Community Right to Build Order (CRTBO) is defined in the NPPF as:

“An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.”

- 3.38 A Community Right to Build Order is a type of Neighbourhood Development Order with the slight difference that any community organisation, made up of individuals who live or work in the area for which the organisation is established, (not just a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum) can produce the order.

- 3.39 To be eligible to produce a Community Right to Build Order, the community organisation must be a corporate body and meet minimum membership requirements as set out in Regulation 13 of The Neighbourhood Planning (Regulations) 2012.

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- 3.40 A Community Right to Build Order can grant planning permission for small-scale, community-led developments for community benefit on a specific site or sites in a Neighbourhood Area without going through the normal planning application process, providing it complies with the Order. Developments could include for example, housing, community facilities, playgrounds or business and enterprise hubs. Any profit generated by the project or development stays within the community to be used for the community's benefit.
- 3.41 Community Right to Build Orders must be subject to an independent examination, and then be approved by the community in a referendum, before they can come into force.
- 3.42 The responsibility to produce a Neighbourhood Development Order/Community Right to Build Order is with the qualifying body (parish council/ neighbourhood forum/community group). However, there are certain requirements which a Local Planning Authority must undertake under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012). A summary of the key consultations undertaken by the Local Planning Authority in the production of a Neighbourhood Development Order/Community Right to Build Order along with the anticipated consultation methods are provided in Table 8 below:

**Table 8: Neighbourhood Development Order and Community Right to Build Order Consultation**

<b>Neighbourhood Development Order/ Community Right to Build Order Stage</b>	<b>The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012)</b>	<b>Consultation Duration</b>	<b>Consultation Methods</b>
Neighbourhood Area Designation consultation	Regulation 6	Minimum 6 weeks	It is anticipated that the following consultation methods will be used at all of these stages, where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Written/email consultations with relevant consultation bodies, including individuals and organisations who have expressed a wish to be consulted;</li> <li>•Making the consultation document available in accordance with the relevant regulations;</li> <li>•Inviting representations on the document through press</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood Forum Designation consultation	Regulation 9		
Publicity of an order proposal	Regulation 23		

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Neighbourhood Development Order/ Community Right to Build Order Stage	The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012)	Consultation Duration	Consultation Methods
			advertisements and a prominent invitation on the Council’s website and through social media where appropriate; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitations to speak with any individual who is disadvantaged and feels that their comments cannot be adequately conveyed in writing.</li> </ul>

- Note that Regulation 21 (Pre-submission consultation and publicity) is carried out by the neighbourhood forum/parish council/community group.
- In addition, Blackpool Council will publish any decision notices/Examiners reports on its website and in such other manner as it considers likely to bring to the attention of those who live and work or carry on business in the area once a decision has been made (Regulations 25/26/27).
- Blackpool Council will provide details of the progress of each Neighbourhood Development Order /Community Right to Build Order (including details of examination or referendum arrangements) on the [Neighbourhood Planning pages on the Council’s website](#) [opens a new window].

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## Glossary

**Adoption** - Formal adoption of a planning document by the Council for forward planning and in the determination of planning applications.

**Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)** - Report produced annually which sets out progress against the Council's Local Development Scheme and analyses the impact and effectiveness of current planning policies.

**Community** - A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common (Oxford Dictionary).

**Community Infrastructure Levy** - A payment made to the Council by developers to fund infrastructure that is needed to serve the development and wider area. This can include new transport schemes, community facilities, schools and green spaces.

**Core Strategy** - This is the plan that sets out the long-term spatial vision for Blackpool, the spatial objectives, and the strategic policies that will deliver the vision.

**Development Plan Document (DPD)** - Planning documents that form the Development Plan. These are subject to independent examination by a Planning Inspector before adoption.

**Examination** - Independent public examination to test the 'soundness' of a Development Plan Document and to ensure that the necessary legal requirements for its preparation have been undertaken.

**Hard-to-reach-group** - Group of local residents or individuals, who may represent a particular sector of society, who are identified by the Council as experiencing particular barriers to participation. Additional effort may be required to ensure these individuals can contribute effectively to the planning process.

**Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan** - A folder of documents produced by the Joint Authorities (Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen along with Lancashire County Council) to guide mineral and waste related development in Lancashire.

**Local Development Document (LDD)** - The collective term for Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)** - A project plan and timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan. It can be amended and updated as necessary.

**Localism Act** - The Localism Act has devolved greater powers to local government and neighbourhoods and given local communities more rights and powers over decisions in their area.

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**Local Plan** - The collection of development plan documents setting out the overall planning strategy, policies and proposals for Blackpool.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - The document setting out the Government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. The NPPF is a material consideration in the preparation of planning documents and when considering planning applications.

**Neighbourhood Plan** - A duty under the Localism Act 2011 which gives authorised groups the power to prepare a development plan for their area. This plan could include general planning policies and allocations of land for new development.

**Planning Aid** - Voluntary service provided by planners. It provides free and independent professional advice on various planning matters to individuals or groups unable to afford to pay for the full costs of such advice.

**Planning Inspectorate** - The organisation which processes planning appeals and holds examinations of DPDs, Local Plans and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

**Public consultation** - A process through which the public is informed about proposals prepared by a planning authority or developer and invited to submit comments on them.

**Site Allocation and Development Management DPD** - Document that allocates sites for specific developments/uses e.g. housing and business land. It also sets out a number of more detailed Development Management policies which are used to determine planning applications.

**Specific/Statutory Consultees** - Individuals/organisations which the Council must consult on planning matters to accord with government regulations.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** - Document that sets out the Council's approach for involving the public and other stakeholders in the preparation of planning documents and the determination of planning applications.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - A formal process which analyses and evaluates the environmental effects of a plan or programme (carried out in conjunction with Sustainability Appraisal).

**Submission** - Submission of the final draft of a document to the Secretary of State for independent public examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** - Supporting planning guidance related to a policy contained within a Development Plan Document.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - The formal process which analyses and evaluates the environmental, social and economic impacts of a plan or programme.