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1 About this Addendum

- 1.1. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document which sets out how and when the council will consult with and involve the community and other stakeholders in planning matters including in the preparation of Lewisham's development plan, its supporting documents and in the planning application process. The council is required by law to have an adopted SCI.
- 1.2. Since the SCI was adopted in 2006 there have been significant changes to the planning system. These changes establish new legal requirements and processes for consulting with the public on planning matters including the preparation of planning policy documents that include, but are not limited to the Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.3. Following a review of the 2006 SCI, it is evident that updates are required to reflect the new legal requirements but also recognising opportunities and experiences with new methods of public engagement, such as the greater use of electronic forms of communication and social media. This is particularly important in the context of COVID-19 and the latest Government guidance on social distancing.
- 1.4. This addendum to the SCI is primarily focused on amendments required for preparing planning policy documents including but not limited to Lewisham's Local Plan.
- 1.5. Lewisham's new Local Plan will replace the Council's existing suite of development plan documents. It must be prepared in accordance with an adopted and up-to-date SCI. This will be tested at the plan's independent examination, having regard to the statutory tests of 'legal compliance' and 'soundness'.
- 1.6. A summary of the key changes to the SCI within this Addendum are as follows:
 - **Section 2 Stakeholders** – Factual updates to reflect the latest legislation regarding different types of consultee groups and their constituent bodies or persons. This includes the new statutory Duty to Cooperate with prescribed bodies on cross-boundary matters during the plan making process.
 - **Section 3 Consultation Tools** – Update to the range of consultation tools available to the Council in order to:
 - Meet the latest statutory requirements for public consultation;
 - Make factual updates to reflect tools which are no longer used or available (e.g. Planning Newsletter);

- To ensure Council officers can continue to facilitate effective public consultation using a variety of methods, recognising improvements and increasing use of Council's webpage and other digital/online platforms; and
 - In the interests of public health and safety; to ensure sufficient flexibility to respond to the latest legislation and social distancing guidance with respect to COVID-19.
- **Section 4 Important Information** – Factual updates to provide correct information about document access, and contact details for internal and external bodies.
- **Section 5 Local development Framework** – Factual updates and to set out the Council's minimum commitments for public consultation during the preparation of planning policy and guidance documents. The amendments are necessary:
 - To reflect the latest legislation and policy regarding the preparation of planning policy and guidance documents.
 - To set out details of how the Council will fulfil its statutory duty to support neighbourhood planning.
 - To ensure Council officers can continue to facilitate effective public consultation. This includes flexibility to tailor public consultations taking into account the scope and nature of the planning document and communities or other groups likely to be affected by the proposals.
 - In the interests of public health and safety; to ensure sufficient flexibility to respond to the latest legislation and social distancing guidance with respect to COVID-19.
- **Section 7 Resources and Monitoring** – Factual updates to reflect the legislative requirements in respect of SCI reviews and to clarify Council commitments in respect of monitoring the SCI.
- **Appendix 1 Background to the planning system** – Deleted To avoid unnecessary duplication of updated information presented elsewhere in the Addendum
- **Appendix 2 Sustainability / sustainability appraisal** – Factual updates to reflect the latest legislation on sustainability appraisal, including that it is no longer required for Supplementary Planning Documents. Updates references to latest standing guidance (i.e. NPPG).
- **Appendix 3 Tests of Soundness for a Development Plan** document – Factual updates to reflect the revised Tests of Soundness set out in the NPPF (2019) and to provide a new informative on the 'basic conditions' that neighbourhood plans are required to meet.
- **Further information and contacts** - Factual updates To update details regarding Council planning webpages and contact information (email, telephone, post).

1.7. It should also be noted that emergency temporary modifications to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) focused on **Section 6**

Planning Applications were agreed by Mayor and Cabinet on 10th June 2020 and then extended by Mayor and Cabinet on the 16th September 2020 in order to enable the determination of planning applications during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

2 Stakeholders

Introduction

2.1. This section describes the broad categories of stakeholder groups who may engage in the planning process, whether through participation in the preparation of the development plan and supporting documents or through involvement in planning applications. The categories reflect those set out by planning legislation. However within these categories there will be stakeholder groups that are unique to Lewisham, reflecting the number and diversity of individuals, community organisations and other bodies with an interest in the borough.

Who we consult when preparing the Local Plan and its supporting documents

2.2. The procedures and requirements for preparing a Local Plan are set out in legislation. There are several stages of formal public consultation in the plan-making process. At all stages, the Council has a legal requirement to make information available to interested residents and organisations, as well as a duty to consult defined 'specific' and 'general' consultation bodies.

2.3. **Specific consultation bodies** are groups that have expertise and knowledge in a particular subject.

2.4. **General consultation bodies** include: recognised voluntary bodies; recognised bodies which represent the interests of certain groups (such as racial, ethnic, national, religious, disabled persons, and age groups); and bodies which represent persons carrying out businesses in the borough.

2.5. There are also a range of **Other Consultees** which have an interest in planning. They include local representative bodies who are regularly consulted, including individuals, organisations and businesses that have formally indicated to the Council they wish to be actively engaged in the preparation of Lewisham's Local Plan, or other planning documents.

Duty to Cooperate

2.6. Under the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council has a legal 'Duty to Cooperate' with other local planning authorities, including neighbouring boroughs, and various other public bodies and organisations that address strategic planning matters. The Duty to Cooperate helps to ensure coordination in the approach to planning across

administrative boundaries. It supports partnership working to address key issues through the plan-making process.

- 2.7. To maximise effective working on strategic matters during the preparation of local plans, Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to engage “constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis” with relevant policy makers and bodies. The Council will carry out the Duty to Cooperate and document how it has done so, in line with the legal requirements. The preparation of Statements of Common Ground is one way in which this will be demonstrated.

Planning policy consultation database

- 2.8. The Council’s Planning Service maintains a planning policy ‘consultation database’. This includes Other Consultees, along with contacts from specific and general consultation bodies. It is a live database and regularly updated. Everyone on the database is notified of public consultations for Local Plan documents. Organisations, groups and individuals can choose to be added or deleted from the database at any time by contacting the Planning Policy Team (for details, refer to the ‘Further information’ section at the end of this Addendum to the SCI). Those who have previously responded to a formal public consultation on a specific planning document are automatically added to the database, but can be removed by request.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 2.9. For Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), current legislation specifies that consultation must take place with narrowly defined ‘statutory consultees’. When preparing SPDs and other guidance documents, we will consult with the relevant statutory consultees. We will also seek to engage more widely with the above noted stakeholder groups, ensuring consultation is effective and proportionate in scope to the nature of the document and the communities likely to be affected by the proposals.
- 2.10. Where Strategic Environmental Assessment screening exercises or full SEA assessments are undertaken for an SPD, we will consult with the relevant ‘statutory bodies’.

3 Consultation tools

Introduction

3.1. This section provides information about the range of consultation tools available to the Council, which may be used to support the preparation and implementation of Lewisham's development plan. Further information about the documents that make up and support the development plan are set out in Chapter 5 of this Statement of Community Involvement.

3.2. Consultation with the community and other stakeholders is a vital part of the planning process. The Council will seek to ensure that effective and inclusive consultation with communities and other stakeholders is undertaken. Whilst meeting its statutory obligations, the Council will tailor public consultation using the tools available to it, taking into account:

- **The nature and scope of a policy or guidance document.** For example, development plan documents prepared by the Council (such as the Local Plan) are likely to require a larger program of consultation activities than other planning documents, due to the statutory requirements governing their preparation, as well as their influence on the borough and other local authorities.
- **The nature and scale of a development proposal.**
- **Who the consultation is aimed at.** For example, a more focussed consultation is likely to be appropriate when the Council consults on a neighbourhood plan or an Article 4 direction covering a particular area of the borough.
- **Resources.** This includes an appropriate response to reduce the material costs for the Council, such as printing materials or postage costs.

3.3. In preparing for and undertaking consultation the Council will have regard to changes in legislation and Government guidance. Some consultation tools which have been used previously by the Council may therefore not be appropriate now, or at a future time. For example, COVID-19 and the public health emergency have required the Council to adapt its consultation processes to ensure compliance with the Government's latest standing guidance on social distancing.

Consultation tools available

Physical copies of documents

Physical copies of documents made available for public inspection at the Council's principal office, as well as other offices or facilities the Council considers to be appropriate, for example, public libraries.

Lewisham council website

Electronic copies of documents made available to access on the internet via the Lewisham Council website. The Council will ensure online documents meet the relevant legal requirements and/or standards for accessibility.

Social media platforms

Information publicised through the Councils official social media accounts.

Posters and leaflets

Posters and leaflets which publicise or display information about public consultations. These will normally be sited or made available at prominent visitor and/or community destinations within the borough.

Public notices and press releases

Consultation information published in press outlets (such as Lewisham Life and the News Shopper). Public notices may also be used to publicise information regarding site or area specific consultations.

E-mail and postal correspondence and notifications

Electronic mail (e-mail) correspondence and notifications. This includes notifications to consultees included on the planning policy 'consultation database'. Where an individual or body included on the database expressly does not wish to receive correspondence by e-mail, a postal notification may be sent. The consultation database will be maintained by the Council having regard to the latest legal requirements on data protection, currently the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.

The Council may also send information about consultation and receive feedback or representations from the public by way of e-mail or post.

Public meetings

Meetings which the general public are invited to attend, including forums. The Council will use tools available to notify the public about opportunities to attend such meetings or forums.

Public exhibitions/drop-in events

Public exhibitions and drop-in events which are open for members of the public to attend. These can be used to publicise information about planning documents or planning applications. Where Council officers are present, they may be available to speak to members of the public regarding proposals or other matters.

Public exhibitions may not always involve the presence of a Council officer. Drop-in events will normally involve at least one Council officer being present.

Internal consultation with Members and Council service areas

Internal consultation in which Council planning officers engage both informally and formally with elected Members, as well as informally with officers in other service areas across the Council. Internal consultation is important to ensure a coordinated approach to preparation and implementation of Lewisham's development plan.

Other digital tools and telephone calls

A range of modern communication tools are now available and which continue to be used more widely by the public. These tools including online conferencing, 'virtual' workshops or meetings, as well as telephone conferencing and calls. These tools can often be useful to engage with hard to reach groups, and others whose circumstances make attending events in person a challenge.

Internet (online) consultation and engagement platforms

Consultation and engagement platforms hosted online. These can be used, for example, to display or publicise information and enable the public to submit comments or formal representations to consultations.

Additional tools for planning applications

- 3.4. The Lewisham website provides information on planning applications and planning appeals, including drawings and plans. It can identify the status of an application as well as a wide range of other information relating to planning applications. It also has a search function which allows the community to search applications in a number of ways (e.g. by ward, by address).

- 3.5. A local meeting is a meeting held between an applicant for planning approval, those third parties who made representations, and the Council to discuss a planning application prior to a decision being made. The purpose of such a meeting is to give all parties an opportunity to discuss the proposals on an informal basis. Whilst some local meetings might need to be managed on a more formal basis involving all those who have made representations, much can be gained (greater and more informed dialogue) by discussing the various issues with a smaller group of third party representatives.
- 3.6. A drop-in session may be held in place of a local meeting, where appropriate. A drop-in session involves interaction between an applicant and those that have made representations on a planning application in an informal setting, allowing greater opportunity for information sharing and one-to-one discussions.
- 3.7. Planning application consultation arrangements – From time to time, the Council may make arrangements with an organisation or group (most likely a statutory authority) to determine how best the Council can consult with that organisation or group on planning applications.
- 3.8. This will only occur where there is a genuine benefit to be derived to the planning application process, having particular regard to resourcing and timeliness. Such arrangements are at the sole discretion of the Council.
- 3.9. The Design Review Panel has been established to provide design advice to the Council on certain planning applications (see Section 6 for the types of planning application that are included in the agendas for the panel). The panel provides advice only, and this advice is one of the factors that is taken into account when determining a planning application for which comments have been made. The weight that is given to that advice is a matter solely for the Council (or senior council officer where a delegated decision is made).

4 Important information

Note: There are a limited number of factual updates to this Chapter of the SCI (2006). Therefore, changes in the Addendum are shown as deletions in ~~strike~~through and additions in underline.

- 4.1. This section outlines important information relating to planning, consultation and how the community can access planning information. It is presented in a 'question and answer' style.

How can planning information and consultation material be accessed?

- 4.2. Information and consultation material can be accessed ~~as follows~~ in a number of ways. To learn more, see the 'Further information' section of this document for details on contacting the Planning Service.

~~Table Deleted~~

Can I obtain written information in alternative formats?

- 4.3. Yes. The Council will provide advice and assistance to ensure all documents can be provided in alternative formats on request. The Council will also advise the community of the existence of this service as part of its consultation documents. Some common alternative formats include languages other than English, large print, audio, CD-ROM, PDF and Braille. Those in the community requiring alternative formats are encouraged to discuss their requirements with the Council.

Is there a mailing list for keeping me informed on planning activities?

- 4.4. Yes. The Council has developed a ~~Local Development Framework~~ planning policy Consultation Database which you can request to be added to if you want to be contacted about planning matters in the borough (~~mainly through the Planning Newsletter~~). Contact the Council if you would like to be added.

Who is on the ~~Local Development Framework~~ planning policy Consultation Database?

- 4.5. The ~~Local Development Framework~~ planning policy Consultation Database contains the names of individuals, groups and organisations on which the Council holds contact information for the purpose of consulting with them on matters relating to the Local Development Framework and Local Plan. ~~The names of the groups and organisations contained on the Local Development Framework Database can be inspected at the Planning Information Office.~~

How can I speak to a council officer?

4.6. The Council ~~operates a system whereby a Planning Information Officer is available to telephone or on a drop-in basis at the Planning Information Office. This officer can assist with access to information and general advice on planning applications (limited to initial enquiries only) and policy planning. See the inside of the back cover of this document for key contact information~~ provides a range of pre-planning application advice services which enable prospective planning applicants to seek and receive advice on their proposals prior to submitting an application. A fee is payable and this will vary depending on the type of service being sought.

4.7. Further information on the different types of service offered can be found at:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myserVICES/planning/apply-for-planning-permission/get-planning-advice>

~~Anyone wishing to speak in person to a Planning Officer about a specific matter should call first to make an appointment to ensure that the officer is available. This will allow for that officer to spend time with the person to ensure they have all the information they need.~~

How do I make a written representation to the Council?

4.8. Those wishing to make a written representation/submission on a planning document or planning application can do so in the following ways:

- by sending a letter to the Council
- online via the Council's website (www.lewisham.gov.uk)
- by email (planning@lewisham.gov.uk).

See the ~~inside of the back cover~~ 'Further Information' section of this document for key contact information.

Where can I go for independent advice?

4.9. Planning Aid for London is a registered charity and may be able to provide advice to individuals and groups unable to afford professional consultants. The details for Planning Aid for London are:

Planning Aid for London

~~Unit 2, 11-29 Fashion Street, London E1 6PX~~

Tel: ~~0207 247 4900~~ 030 077 29 808

~~Fax: 0207 247 8005~~

Website: ~~www.pafl.org.uk~~ www.planningaidforlondon.org.uk

Email: info@planningaidforlondon.org.uk

How can I comment on, compliment or complain about the service I receive?

- 4.10. It's the community's feedback that helps the Council improve the way things are done. If you would like to make a comment, give a compliment or complain, you can contact the Planning Service ~~on 020 8314 7400 or fill out a form available on the Lewisham website or from~~ [or](#) the Council [switchboard – see the 'Further Information' section for details](#). The Council can also provide you with information about how to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

How does the Lewisham Community Strategy fit in with the Local Development Framework?

- 4.11. The Lewisham Community Strategy was produced through wide community consultation by the Lewisham Strategic Partnership and it outlines a programme for improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Lewisham. The Local Development Framework provides an opportunity to advance the Community Strategy's directions, particularly those that are land-use based, and have regard to the broader priorities identified for the borough. The Lewisham Community Strategy and the Lewisham Strategic Partnership are therefore important considerations in planning at Lewisham.

What if I have special requirements stopping me from participating?

- 4.12. The Council is conscious of the need to ensure all in the community are able, if they so choose, to participate in planning at Lewisham. The Council also recognises that many have requirements that need to be considered before they are able to participate (e.g. a disability, caring responsibilities, limitations on availability, mobility issues). In order to accommodate any special requirements people may have in order to participate, people can contact the Planning Service so that suitable arrangements (where feasible) can be put in place.

What is meant when the Council says it will do something where/as appropriate?

- 4.13. Planning is very diverse in the issues it deals with and the people it impacts on. It is not possible to determine every possibility and, to this extent, the Statement of Community Involvement is intended to be flexible enough to accommodate various circumstances as they arise. In situations where there will be a need for the Council to exercise discretion in deciding how something should be dealt with, the terms 'where appropriate' or 'as

appropriate' are used to reflect the reality that something will only happen if, having regard to the specific circumstances of the matter being considered, the Council considers it is a suitable and/or reasonable approach to take. Anyone in the community is able to raise and discuss with the Council circumstances where they think an action was not appropriate.

What is the role of my ward councillor?

- 4.14. Ward councillors receive notification of planning applications and are able to initiate the holding of a local meeting/drop-in session by the Council, as outlined in Section 6. The community are able to contact their ward councillor(s) about their concerns in relation to any planning matter. Councillor information can be obtained from the Council and on the Lewisham website.

5 Plan-making

Introduction

- 5.1. The planning system in England is 'plan-led'. Local planning authorities, (including Lewisham Council) must prepare and have in place an up-to-date plan for their area, covering a specified period. The plan sets out policies and guidelines for the development and use of land, taking into account the direction provided by higher-level policies, including the National Planning Policy Framework. Adopted plans are used as the basis for planning decisions, including the determination of planning applications.
- 5.2. Most local planning policy and guidance documents for Lewisham are prepared through consultation with the community and other stakeholders. The following section describes the various types of planning policy documents and the hierarchy of these (see also Figure 5.1). It also sets out the opportunities for the public to get involved in their preparation.

The planning policy framework

National planning policy

- 5.3. The UK government sets out guidelines for preparing local planning policies, and what they should include or take account of, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Further details on how these national policies should be implemented are provided in the associated National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

Regional planning policy - The London Plan

- 5.4. The London Plan, prepared by the Mayor of London, sets out the Spatial Development Strategy for London and forms part of Lewisham's statutory Development Plan. The London Plan includes policies on the development and use of land. It also instructs what the Local Plan should include to address London's future needs, as well as to ensure investment is appropriately coordinated across and within boroughs. The London Mayor also prepares Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents to support implementation of the London Plan.

Lewisham's Development Plan

- 5.5. Lewisham's statutory Development Plan is made up of the London Plan, the Local Plan (or Local Development Framework plans) and Neighbourhood Plans. Most applications for new development (with exceptions, such as for

permitted development) are assessed against the Development Plan and the policies contained in the NPPF.

Lewisham Local Plan

- 5.6. The Lewisham Local Plan is the main strategic planning policy document prepared by the Council, in consultation with the community and key stakeholders. It sets out a long-term development and investment strategy for the borough along with strategic planning policies and guidelines to implement this. The Local Plan must be prepared in accordance with the processes and procedures set out by legislation. It is required to be consistent with national planning policy (i.e. NPPF) and in general conformity with the London Plan.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 5.7. Supplementary Planning Documents are prepared by the Council to support Lewisham's Development Plan. They provide further details and guidance on planning policies to help ensure these are implemented effectively. The planning matters addressed by SPDs can vary in scope, for example, by focussing on local areas within the borough, specific sites and/or certain types of development. SPDs do not contain policy themselves and therefore do not carry 'development plan' status. However, they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.8. SPDs are not subject to independent public examination. Although the NPPF and planning legislation make clear that SPDs should be prepared through consultation with the community and other stakeholders.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 5.9. Neighbourhood Plans are planning policy documents that are produced for specific areas by local community groups, called Neighbourhood Forums, which are designated by the Council. Once a proposed Neighbourhood Plan successfully passes through a public examination and local referendum, it is adopted by the Council and forms part of the statutory Development Plan. Neighbourhood Plans set out non-strategic planning policies for their respective designated Neighbourhood Areas. A Neighbourhood Plan can focus on one particular policy area or a number of different policy areas that the Forum feels is necessary to address. Neighbourhood plans must be in conformity with adopted strategic policies in higher-level documents, including the Local Plan.

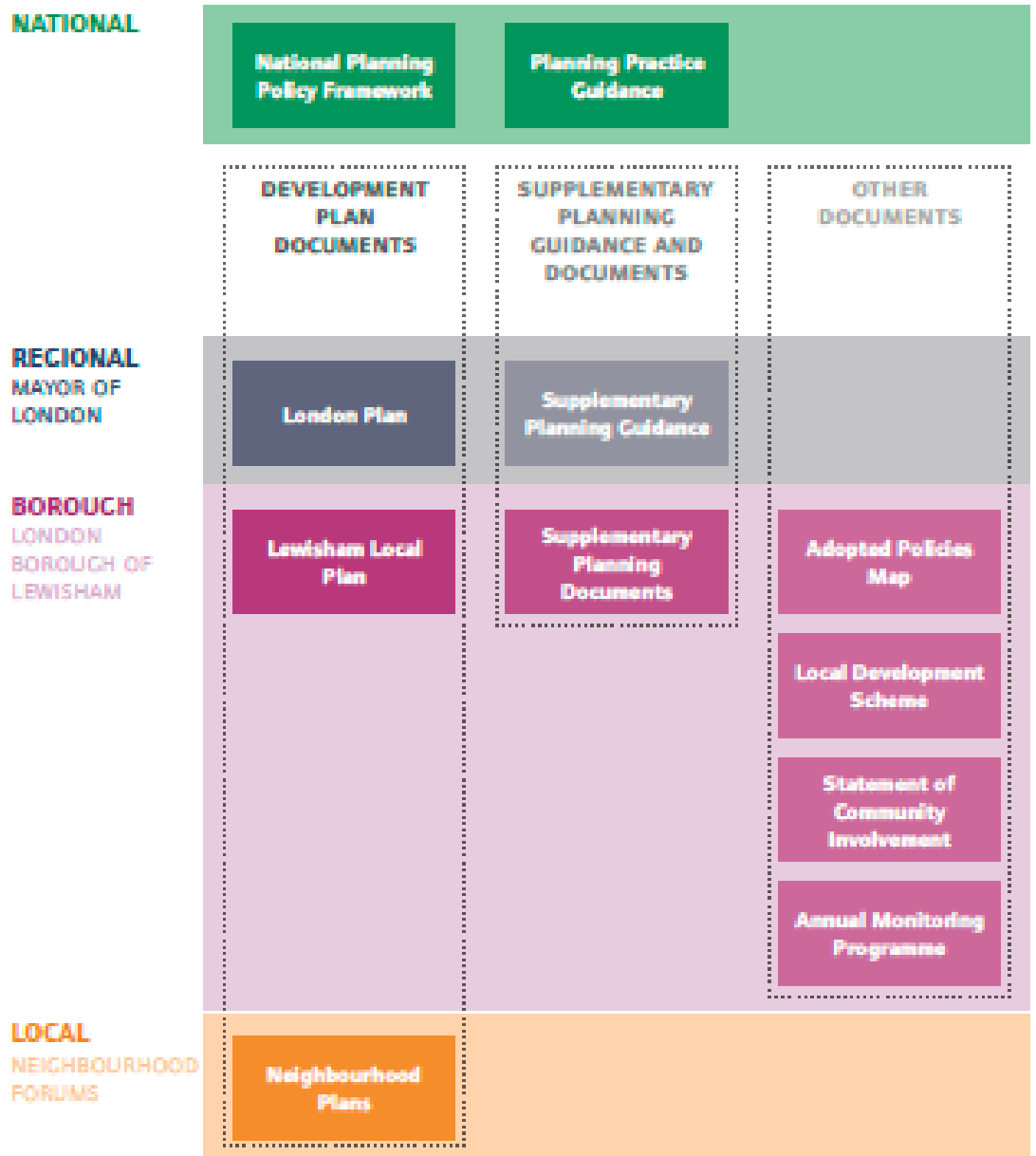


Figure 5.1 Planning policy hierarchy

Plan-making in Lewisham

5.10. This section provides further details about the key stages of plan-making for different types of planning policy and guidance documents and the Council's consultation commitments during their preparation.

Lewisham Local Plan

5.11. The Council is required to prepare the Local Plan in accordance with relevant planning legislation and national planning policy. This includes consultation with specific and general consultation bodies, and other consultees (see Section 2).

5.12. The following table provides a summary of the key stages of the plan-making process and highlights where there are opportunities for communities and other stakeholders to get involved. It also sets out the Council's commitments to public consultation at different stages throughout the process. We will follow the relevant planning regulations for the statutory stages of consultation.

	Stage of preparation	What is involved?	Our commitment
1	Regulation 18 Early engagement, scoping and options appraisal	The Council publicises its intention to undertake the preparation of a Local Plan document. The public is invited to comment on the scope of the document. This is an opportunity for the public to assist with the identification of the main issues for the Local Plan along with possible options to address these. The options, which may be presented as proposed policy approaches, will be informed by technical evidence and where possible, early engagement with stakeholders. This is an options testing stage of the plan-making process, which may be repeated.	A minimum 6-week period of public consultation. Afterwards, a 'Consultation Statement' will be published setting out who was involved in the consultation, the main issues and other matters raised, and how the Council has addressed these in preparing the plan.

	Stage of preparation	What is involved?	Our commitment
2	Regulation 19 Publication	A more complete draft of the Local Plan document, including detailed policy proposals, is published for further public feedback. At this stage, the consultation is more narrowly focussed on matters of 'soundness', as set out in national planning policy, and legal compliance.	A minimum 6-week period of public consultation. Afterwards, a 'Consultation Statement' will be published setting out who was involved in the consultation, the main issues and other matters raised, and how the Council has addressed these in preparing the plan.
3	Regulation 22 Submission	The Local Plan document is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.	There is not a formal public consultation at this stage. The Council will give notice of its submission of the Local Plan, as required by legislation.
4	Regulation 24 Examination	A Planning Inspector, who is appointed by The Secretary of State, undertakes a public examination of the Local Plan document. The Inspector invites participants to the hearings, which are open to the public. The Inspector may require that modifications are made to the Local Plan in order to ensure it is sound and legally compliant.	The Council will publish the dates, times and locations of public examination hearings in advance of them taking place. The Council will consult the public on any modifications to the Local Plan, where required.

	Stage of preparation	What is involved?	Our commitment
5	Regulation 25 Planning Inspector's report	The Planning Inspector issues their recommendations, which are published by the Council.	The Council will publish the Inspector's Report and give notice to those who requested to be notified.
6	Regulation 26 Adoption	Where the Local Plan document is judged to be sound by the Planning Inspector, it can be formally adopted by a decision of Council.	A public meeting will be held, where Council will decide to adopt the Local Plan. If the plan is adopted, the Council will make available the required Local Plan documents. An Adoption Statement will be sent to the Secretary of State and others who asked to be notified of the plan's adoption.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.13. Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal for each of the proposals in the Local Plan and prepare a report of the findings of the appraisal.
- 5.14. Sustainability Appraisals (SA) consider how the Local Plan document and its policies contribute to sustainable development, and assess whether the policies and proposals in the Local Plan document are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives. SAs are required for all Local Plan documents.
- 5.15. In accordance with the regulations, when deciding on the scope and level of detail to be included in a sustainability appraisal report, the Council will consult relevant consultation bodies. Where a consultation body decides to respond, it will be required to do so within a 5 week period after receipt of the request.
- 5.16. The Council will consult and invite public representations on SAs alongside the consultation of Local Plan documents.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

5.17. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) considers only the environmental effects of a Local Plan document, whereas sustainability appraisals consider the wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

5.18. SPDs offer detailed guidance to support the implementation of the Lewisham Local Plan.

5.19. There are three main stages involved in preparing an SPD, as set out in the table below. We will follow the relevant planning regulations for the statutory stages of consultation.

	Stage of preparation	Our commitment
1	Notification and preparation	The Council will publish its intention to produce an SPD. Work will then commence on the preparation of the SPD. This can include the gathering of technical evidence and early engagement with key stakeholders to inform the direction of the document.
2	Public consultation and refining the draft SPD	<p>A draft SPD will be prepared and published for public consultation, for minimum 4-week period. We will notify the community and other stakeholders, including statutory bodies, about the public consultation and details for submitting representations.</p> <p>The Council will take into account feedback received from the public consultation, and use this to inform necessary changes to the draft SPD.</p> <p>Prior to adopting an SPD, the Council will publish a Consultation Statement setting out who was involved in the public consultation, the main issues and other matters raised, and how the Council has addressed these in preparing the SPD.</p>
3	Adoption	Once an SPD is adopted, the Council will make publicly available the SPD and an Adoption Statement.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 5.20. SPDs do not require Sustainability Appraisals but may in exceptional circumstances require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the Local plan or other development plan documents.
- 5.21. Where relevant, the Council will consult and invite representations on SEAs, including for screening reports, or other associated statements alongside the consultation of SPDs.

Neighbourhood planning

- 5.22. Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011. It gives local communities statutory powers to create planning policy documents that can help shape development within a local area. This can be achieved through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders.
- 5.23. The NPPF (2019) states that Neighbourhood Plans “should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies”¹.
- 5.24. Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by local community groups called Neighbourhood Forums, which are formally designated by the Council. The Council has a duty to support those who are preparing Neighbourhood Plans.² To be clear, the responsibility for preparing a plan lies with a Neighbourhood Forum. However, we will support all Forums with a view to ensuring their policy proposals have the best chance of succeeding at independent examination, so that the plan can be brought into force.
- 5.25. The process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan is set out in legislation. In summary, the process involves five main stages:
1. Initiation (including designation of a Neighbourhood Forum and Area)
 2. Preparation of the plan (including public consultations)
 3. Independent examination
 4. Referendum
 5. Adoption by the Council

¹ NPPF (2019), paragraph 13

² A requirement under Section 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

5.26. We will seek to provide the local community and Neighbourhood Forums with guidance and advice at all stages of the plan-making process, and carry out the Council's statutory functions within the resources available it. Some of this support is set out in in planning regulations³, which reflect that the Council will have a more active role at key stages in the plan process. This support includes:

- Checking, publicising and determining applications for Neighbourhood Areas and Neighbourhood Forums;
- Publicising Neighbourhood Plan proposals in order to provide the local community and other stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on them;
- Appointing a plan examiner to undertake a public examination of the Neighbourhood Plan proposals; and where appropriate;
- Coordinating, carrying out and paying for a local referendum, in which members of the public can decide whether to support the Neighbourhood Plan so that it becomes part of Lewisham's Development Plan.

5.27. In addition, the Council will provide Neighbourhood Forums with planning and other technical advice, and share information (such as evidence base documents), to help support preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.28. It is vital that Neighbourhood Plans reflect the aspirations of the wider community. Community groups or other bodies interested in establishing a Forum, as well as designated Forums themselves, will therefore have an important role in engaging with the community at different stages in the plan process. Effective and inclusive consultation with the community (and others likely to be affected by a Neighbourhood Plan proposal) is therefore strongly encouraged, whilst recognising that the nature of consultation will depend on the stage in the plan-making process.

5.29. Further information on neighbourhood planning is available from:

- Lewisham Council's planning webpage
- The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)⁴
- The Locality webpage⁵

³ The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

⁴ The NPPG is issued by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

⁵ Locality also provides information on grant funding that may be available for community groups – see www.locality.org.uk

Other planning documents

5.30. The Council may produce of a number of other planning documents, where there will be an opportunity for the public involvement and/or consultation.

Document	Our commitment
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule	<p>The process of preparing and bringing into force a CIL Charging Schedule is set out in legislation. The Council will follow the relevant legal procedures.</p> <p>The Council will publish a draft Charging Schedule on its website and notify relevant stakeholders (such as local residents, community organisations, land owners and developers). The necessary periods of consultation(s) in line with statutory requirements will be carried out. Relevant Consultation Statement(s) will be published on the Council website, showing who submitted representations and how these representations have been addressed by the Council. A final draft Charging Schedule, which will then be submitted to an independent examiner.</p>
Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL)	<p>To consult on spending priorities with the wider community for a minimum 6-week period. The results of the consultation will be made publically available. Priorities for NCIL spend will be agreed through community meetings, that will be published through the Council website and, where possible, social media.</p>
Brownfield Land register	<p>The Council will consult for 42 days the first time Part 2 is published, and 21 days thereafter. For sites included in Part 2, where the Council receives an application for Technical Details Consent, there is a requirement to display a notice under Article 15(a) of the Permissions in Principle Order 2017 on or near the site.</p>
Other documents	<p>To consult on with the public and relevant stakeholders on planning policy documents according to the scale, details and nature of these documents also taking into account legislative requirements. These documents may include, but are not limited to, Conservation Area Appraisals; Masterplans; Area Action Plans; and Article 4 directions.</p>

7 Resources and monitoring

- 7.1. Resourcing consultation activities is important if the Council is to achieve the consultation standards set out in this document. The Statement of Community Involvement envisages using consultation tools which operate at a corporate level and at the Planning Service level.
- 7.2. Corporate consultation tools are undertaken by other departments and by the Council's partners, such as the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, community groups and statutory authorities. It is considered that this consultation will not have any resource implications, as it is not funded by the Planning Service and is consultation that would take place anyway.
- 7.3. Consultation operated and funded by the Planning Service generally comprises planning-specific consultation exercises. The Council anticipates savings (time and cost) on consultation by investing in consultation early in the plan-making process and achieving savings towards the end of the process. Where appropriate, the Council will seek to link community involvement initiatives on different Local Development Documents, for example where a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and a Development Plan Document (DPD) are prepared in parallel because the details set out in the former are fundamental to the early delivery of the policies in the latter. Overall, it is expected that consultation will be resourced within existing budgets but this will be continually monitored.
- 7.4. The Statement of Community Involvement will be subject to periodic review in accordance with the statutory requirements and updated where necessary, for example, to respond to changes in legislation or local circumstances. The Council will seek to use the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to report back to the community on consultation undertaken throughout the year. To facilitate meaningful information, the Council will also periodically seek information from those participating in consultation activities on who they are so as to ensure consultation is reaching all of the community. The Council will refer to and use good practice guidance to inform the gathering of this information.
- 7.5. There is no requirement in legislation for local planning authorities to consult when reviewing and updating their Statement of Community Involvement. However as a matter of good practice the Council will seek to inform the public of its intentions to update this document and of the changes that have been made.

Appendix 1 Background to the planning system

This appendix is deleted to avoid unnecessary duplication of updated information presented elsewhere in the Addendum.

Appendix 2 Sustainability / sustainability appraisal

1. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council, in its capacity as a local planning authority, to carry out a sustainability appraisal of each of the proposals in a plan during its preparation.
2. Sustainability appraisal is a process that is carried out during the preparation of local plan documents. Its main purpose is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when considered against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives. Sustainability appraisal is undertaken as an iterative process throughout the plan-making process. It is an opportunity to consider ways by which the plan can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse impacts. Sustainability appraisal reports are prepared and made publicly available at key stages throughout the plan process.
3. Sustainability appraisal normally incorporates the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (also known as the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations'). The scope of SEA is focussed on assessment of environmental effects. Where SEA is fully integrated with the sustainability appraisal, this ensures that potential environmental effects are considered alongside social and economic issues.
4. Strategic Environmental Assessment can be required in some circumstances, even where sustainability appraisal is not needed. This is usually only where either neighborhood plans or supplementary planning documents could have significant environmental effects. To establish whether a document requires a full SEA, a 'screening' exercise is carried out in line with the relevant legislation.
5. This Appendix has been compiled drawing from the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which should be referred for further information. The NPPG is regularly updated to reflect changes in legislation and policy.

Appendix 3 Tests of soundness

Local plans

1. Local plans are subject to an independent public examination, where a Planning Inspector will assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound.
2. Paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out that plans are 'sound' if they are:
 - Positively Prepared – Providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development
 - Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence
 - Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross – boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with policies in this framework
3. The NPPF (2019) also provides that 'non-strategic' policies will be subject to the test of soundness in a proportionate way, taking into consideration the extent to which they are consistent with relevant strategic policies for the area.

Neighbourhood plans

4. Before a neighbourhood plan can come into force, it must meet certain 'basic conditions' and other legal requirements set out in paragraph 8, schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning act 1990 (as amended). These are tested through an independent examination before the neighbourhood plan may proceed to a referendum.

Further information

Further information about planning consultations and accessing consultation materials, the Statement of Community Involvement, and other planning policy documents is available:

Online

By accessing our planning webpages at <https://lewisham.gov.uk/planning>.

Email

By contacting the planning policy team at planning.policy@lewisham.gov.uk.

Telephone

Alternatively, you can request to speak with an officer by calling the Council's automated switchboard on 020 8314 6000.

Post

Planning Service - Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, London, Se6 4Ru.