



Broadland district community involvement protocol



**For significant
development
proposals**

November 2010
Policy Unit



For any queries relating to this document please
contact:

Richard Squires

Senior Community Planning Officer

Place Shaping Team

t: (01603) 430637

e: richard.squires@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk



If you require this information in large print,
audio, Braille, alternative format or in a
different language please tel: (01603)
430637 - we will do our best to help.

Community involvement protocol



CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. What is the Protocol? | 4 |
| 2. Why have we produced this Protocol? | 5 |
| 3. What is Community Involvement? | 7 |
| 4. Principles for Effective Community Involvement | 8 |
| 5. The Protocol | 9 |
| 6. Making the Protocol Work | 15 |
| Appendix 1: Methods of Community Involvement | 16 |
| Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms | 20 |

1

What is the Protocol?

This Protocol sets out a series of commitments for developers, Broadland District Council, other service providers and Parish and Town Councils within Broadland District.

These commitments aim to ensure that communities in the district, and other stakeholders with interests in the area, are provided with genuine opportunities to shape development proposals that may affect their community before any planning applications are submitted.

The Protocol is aimed at those proposals in the District that could be termed significant to the local community and other stakeholders. This reflects the fact that what feels like a major proposal to a smaller village may not feel so major to a larger community.

The Protocol is supplementary to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out (in chapter 5 of that document) how the Council would expect any developers with major planning proposals to involve communities in shaping those proposals at an early stage.

The SCI provides the Council's definition of 'major development' and splits this into three tiers as follows:



| Tier | Description | Example |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Applications where there are considerable issues of scale and controversy or which are contrary to Development Plan policy. | Proposal to develop an unallocated greenfield site for houses, at variance with policies in the Development Plan. |
| 2 | Applications broadly in accordance with the Development Plan BUT raising controversial detail and other departures from the Development Plan. | A proposal that is likely to have an effect on the environment due to its nature, size and location. |
| 3 | Applications of a scale or development area for which the Council requires wider community involvement; applications that fall within sites that are sensitive to development pressures. | A proposal that involves the Council in seeking the provision of affordable housing (eg. a proposal for 5 dwellings or more). |

This is the framework that shall be used to determine whether a development proposal is 'significant', for the purposes of this Protocol.

2

Why have we produced this Protocol?

In addition to producing planning policies to guide future development in the District, Broadland District Council is keen to ensure that communities and other stakeholders have genuine opportunities to get involved in shaping any proposals for significant development in their communities. One method of achieving this is to produce a Community Involvement Protocol that sets out a joint commitment from developers, the Council and, ideally, other stakeholders to meeting the principles for effective community involvement.

For its own part, Broadland District Council has, in recent years, developed its own guidance relating to community involvement. The Broadland Community Involvement Strategy 2007-2012 sets out how the Council involves communities and stakeholders in the development and review of its services, policies and procedures, in general. The Statement of Community Involvement (mentioned earlier) is a statutory document which forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework. It sets out how the Council will involve communities and other stakeholders in developing planning policy documents, as well as how we would expect developers with any major planning proposals to involve communities in shaping those proposals before an application is submitted - although this Protocol now adds further details on this principle.

Both of these documents are based on a similar set of principles for effective community involvement as can be found within this Protocol. They are both available to view on the Council's website: www.broadland.gov.uk



Broadland District Council is keen to ensure that communities and other stakeholders have genuine opportunities to get involved...

Continued...

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (of which Broadland District Council is a part) has published the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk. The Joint Core Strategy identifies growth locations in which to deliver 22,000 additional homes within the area covered by the three local authorities by 2026.

Broadland District Council will also continue to engage with communities in the district in order to create local plans for determining where particular types of growth could or should be located.

The population of Broadland District is therefore set to grow over the next 15 to 20 years and this reinforces the value of establishing this Community Involvement Protocol for the district.



Broadland's population is set to grow over the next 20 years - this reinforces the value of establishing this Community Involvement Protocol for the district.

3

What is Community Involvement?

Community involvement is more than just consultation, whereby communities and other stakeholders are presented with a set of options and asked to comment on them.

The process of community involvement, in this context, is one in which communities and other stakeholders are actively encouraged, from an early stage, to contribute their views in shaping development proposals that may affect their area.

In the context of this Protocol, the term 'community' can be defined as any member of the public living or working within Broadland district, as well as any other individual or organisation with an interest in the future development of the area (these may also be known as 'other stakeholders').

This definition therefore includes potential future residents of the district and one of the aims of this Protocol should be to involve representatives of this group, along with existing communities and stakeholders, in shaping any development proposals.



Community involvement is more than just consultation...

4

Principles for Effective Community Involvement

Broadland District Council's Statement of Community Involvement, mentioned earlier, sets out a series of principles for effective community involvement that are based on the priorities of communities and stakeholders that were identified through discussions at the time the document was produced. These can be summarised as follows:

- Adopt an inclusive approach to community and stakeholder involvement, ensuring that anyone who has an interest is given the opportunity to contribute ideas from an early stage.
- Demonstrate, by reporting back on the results of community and stakeholder involvement, that all views are listened to and considered.
- Provide sufficient time for stakeholders and communities to contribute their views on proposals.
- Provide accessible, clear and relevant information relating to proposals and community involvement opportunities.

These principles should similarly form a basis for community involvement in shaping proposals for development. The various commitments within this Protocol aim to ensure that these principles are embedded in this activity.



5

The Protocol

Set out over the following pages are a series of commitments that are to be adopted by signatories to the Protocol, in order to ensure that the principles for effective community involvement, discussed in section 4, are complied with and that the public and other stakeholders with an interest in the future development of an area are given genuine opportunities to have their say in shaping significant development proposals.

These commitments are set out for each of the key stakeholder groups: developers with proposals affecting an area, Broadland District Council (the local planning authority), key service providers and Parish and Town Councils operating in Broadland district.

There is also a section for other stakeholder organisations that may not be directly involved in development proposals in the district, but that may wish to promote and endorse the Protocol in their day-to-day work.



The Protocol -
Developers



The Protocol -
The Council



The Protocol -
Other service providers



The Protocol -
Parish and town councils



The Protocol -
Stakeholder organisations



● ***In signing up to this Protocol, developers with significant proposals affecting a Broadland community (or communities) agree to:***

- Undertake the following stages of community involvement in developing proposals (*ref. Appendix 1):

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Evidence gathering: | to identify the key issues to be addressed |
| 2 | Masterplanning: | to decide the layout and distribution of the development |
| 3 | Pre-application publicity: | to show the public the draft proposals, and take on board any comments, before a planning application is submitted |

- Produce and progress a Community involvement Plan, to include:
 - ~ *Identification of the relevant stakeholders in the area (eg. community groups/service providers/organisations working at a district/regional level).*
 - ~ *Details of a single point of contact within the company that any member of the public can contact for more information on the proposal.*
 - ~ *Guidance on how the outline proposals and community involvement opportunities relating to them will be publicised.*
 - ~ *Agreed timescales for each of the three community involvement stages listed above.*
 - ~ *How the community and other stakeholders will be consulted/ involved during each of these stages.*
 - ~ *Clarification of how the community and other stakeholders will be able to influence benefits arising from the development (eg. through Section 106 agreements.)*
 - ~ *Process for reviewing and reporting on the community involvement process.*
- Let the community and other stakeholders know about any changes in the Community Involvement Plan in good time and provide reasons for those changes.
- Feed back the results of community involvement exercises to the public and other stakeholders and show how they are influencing the development of the proposals.
- Circulate notes of any discussions with service providers, relevant to the development proposals, with Broadland District Council.
- Participate in confirming or checking any particular detail about the proposed development(s), as part of any reasonable request for information.
- Acknowledge and respect the rights of all stakeholders to express their views.
- Help all stakeholders by making it clear that engagement in this process is in no way an indication of support for any application.
- Demonstrate a commitment to ensuring the development of sustainable, liveable communities.

(* Please refer to Appendix 1 for examples of different community involvement methods that could be used at each of the stages highlighted above.)

● *In signing up to this Protocol, Broadland District Council agrees to:*

- Support the production of developers' Community Involvement Plans by:
 - ~ *Establishing a clear point of contact at the Council that will enable a two-way flow of information regarding the project.*
 - ~ *Agreeing timescales for achieving key stages of the planning process and responding to information requests.*
 - ~ *Helping to identify key stakeholders within the community and further afield, and the methods appropriate for involving them.*
 - ~ *Contributing to discussions on the approach to securing benefits from the development.*
- Provide support in communicating with stakeholders and help in identifying the full range of community views.
- Where requested, consider the presence of staff at developers' community involvement events, to answer any technical questions relating to their services.
- Where available, provide objective, reliable information on any disputed issues (eg. water supply and disposal, health related issues), in order to help resolve those issues.
- Ensure elected members are up-to-date on development proposals affecting their particular ward(s).
- Provide a high quality flow of information within the authority on proposed developments.
- Participate in confirming or checking any particular detail about the proposed development(s), as part of any reasonable request for information.
- Acknowledge and respect the rights of all stakeholders to express their views.
- Help all stakeholders by making it clear that engagement in this process is in no way an indication of support for any application.
- Promote the Community Involvement Protocol in relevant discussions with appropriate stakeholder group that are not already signatories to the document.

NB. By agreeing to the above commitments, Broadland District Council is not indicating its support for any particular planning proposals.

- ***In signing up to this Protocol, other service providers operating within Broadland district agree to:***

- Engage constructively with developers and or Broadland District Council, with a view to achieving consensus on particular issues relating to development proposals. This should include the preparation of an agreed list of infrastructure and service requirements needed to deliver the proposed development.
- Where requested, consider the presence of staff at developers' community involvement events, to answer any technical questions relating to their services.
- Support the production of developers' Community Involvement Plans by:
 - ~ *Identifying a single point of contact that will enable a two-way flow of information regarding the project*
 - ~ *Agreeing basic milestones, specific target dates and deadlines for dealing with reasonable requests for information*
- Ensure any changes in information requirements are communicated swiftly to the developer and to Broadland District Council.
- Where available, provide objective, reliable information on any disputed issues relating to development proposals, in order to help resolve those issues.
- Participate in confirming or checking any particular detail about development proposals, as part of any reasonable request for information.
- Acknowledge and respect the rights of all stakeholders to express their views.
- Promote the Community Involvement Protocol in relevant discussions with appropriate stakeholder groups that are not already signatories to the document.

NB. By agreeing to the above commitments, service providers that sign up to the Protocol are not indicating their support for any particular planning proposals.

● *In signing up to this Protocol, Parish and Town Councils within Broadland district agree to:*

- Be prepared to engage constructively with developers, Broadland District Council and other service providers from an early stage, to consider the issues relating to particular development proposals and present any relevant evidence to support the Parish/Town Council's position.
- Assist in identifying and engaging other interested groups/ organisations operating within their community.
- Help to provide information to the community by identifying local people, places and or means of communication that could be used by developers to publicise their proposals and related community involvement opportunities.
- Seek to understand the full range of community interests the Parish/Town Council is representing with regard to particular development proposals.
- Identify, clearly and at an early stage, the issues relating to the development proposal(s) that are a priority for the Parish/Town Council and the questions that need asking of the developer, Broadland District Council and or other service providers.
- Help in identifying local opinion about potential benefits from development proposals (eg. through Section 106 agreements).
- Acknowledge and respect the rights of all stakeholders to express their views.
- Promote the Community Involvement Protocol in relevant discussions with appropriate stakeholder groups that are not already signatories to the document.

NB. By agreeing to the above commitments, Parish and Town Councils that sign up to the Protocol are not indicating their support for any particular planning proposals.

- *In signing up to this Protocol, other stakeholder organisations operating within Broadland district agree to:*
- Promote the Community Involvement Protocol in relevant discussions with appropriate stakeholder groups that are not already signatories to the document.

6

Making the Protocol work

This Protocol has been co-ordinated by Broadland District Council which will sign up to the Protocol to demonstrate its commitment to community involvement in planning for growth in the District.

Some of the commitments outlined within the Protocol could be adopted regardless of the position taken by other stakeholders within the area. However, certain other commitments can only be applied if both developers with development interests in the district, and Broadland District Council, in particular, sign up to the Protocol.

The Council therefore believes it to be fundamental to the success of the Protocol for developers who have proposals affecting the district to become signatories to the Protocol. This 'sign-up' can take place at any time following the Council's adoption of the document. Therefore the Council will encourage any developer that approaches the authority with a significant development proposal, at any future date, to sign up to the Protocol before undertaking any pre-application discussions.

However, in order for this Protocol to be truly effective, Broadland District Council is seeking a similar demonstration of commitment from other key service providers and Parish and Town Councils operating within Broadland district.



In signing up to this Protocol, organisations will need to ensure the commitments they are signing up to are embedded within their organisational practice. This will involve:

- Identifying a single point of contact within the organisation who will be responsible for the effective implementation of the Protocol.
- Reviewing the organisation's work with respect to the responsibilities within the Protocol that the organisation has signed up to.
- Adapting organisational procedures and practice, where necessary.
- Monitoring any changes to ensure that they are embedded within the organisational practice.

appendix 1

Methods of Community Involvement

The following table will hopefully provide developers with some useful guidance on the different types of community involvement techniques that could be used during each of the three stages outlined within their Community Involvement Plan – evidence gathering, masterplanning and pre-application publicity.

| Stage | Method | Description |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. Evidence gathering | Questionnaires | Questionnaires can cover a wide range of issues and topics in a structured way, thereby making results easier to analyse. Responses can be incentivised by providing freepost envelopes or by providing raffle prizes. They can be issued in hard copy (by post, inside a newsletter, from a collection point etc.) and/or can be made available electronically, via a website. Whilst questionnaires can examine a range of issues, it is more difficult to examine complex subjects in a lot of detail, where it helps to have professional expertise to hand. |
| | Focus groups/workshops | A small group discussion guided by a facilitator, designed to examine specific issues in more detail. The discussion will feature a range of stakeholders appropriate to the issue(s) being discussed. Participants will usually be invited from stakeholder groups and organisations, including those based within the community. These events may also include interested individuals, particularly those representing parts of the community that do not traditionally engage in such exercises. Where these events are proposed, the exact purpose of the meeting should be made clear from the start. |
| | Stakeholder liaison group | This may be a stakeholder or community forum that already exists in the locality or one that is established to specifically engage in dialogue with developers, service providers and the local authority. Either way, such a group allows for continuing dialogue and discussion on a range of issues relating to the development, allowing local people to raise concerns and issues in a constructive manner. Such a group should be representative of as wide a cross section of the community as possible and should be accountable to the community in reporting back results of discussions and picking up issues to be raised at meetings. |

| Stage | Method | Description |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. Evidence gathering (continued) | Public meeting/Planning Forum | An open event held in the community at which proposals are presented and views are obtained from (hopefully) large numbers of attendees on those proposals. These events benefit from a clear focus and a strong chairperson, as views can often become polarised and it can often be intimidating for people to speak out if their views differ from those who are most vocal. The Planning Forum approach is a specific initiative that is co-ordinated by Broadland District Council that largely follows the format of a structured public meeting. |
| | Private meetings | As part of the process of constructive engagement between all stakeholders, it will be necessary for private discussions to take place between developers, the local authority and other stakeholders from time to time. Private meetings are a necessary part of project planning and provide a space for discussion on specific issues without the danger of distraction. Developers, the local authority and service providers should be careful, however, not to rely excessively on private discussions at the expense of public involvement, as this can give the perception that most of the key decisions are taking place in private, regardless of the views of the community and other stakeholders. |
| | Site visits | Trips may be difficult to co-ordinate but site visits to the land being proposed for development or to similar developments elsewhere can provide a sense of vision for how a particular development might look, for all stakeholders, including community representatives. |

| Stage | Method | Description |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. Master planning | Design workshop | These are hands-on sessions involving a range of professional and non-professional stakeholders in planning and designing-out ideas for development. They may take place over one or more days and will feature intensive periods of activity whereby stakeholders and developers try to achieve consensus on design issues. Charrettes and ‘Enquiry By Design’ are processes which include design workshops. |
| | Public exhibitions | These are open exhibitions in the community that can be used to display project proposals to the public and at which views can be gathered in an anonymous and less intimidating manner than, say, public meetings. Exhibitions are usually run in a ‘drop-in’ style which means that they can take place over an entire day or several days, making them accessible to a greater proportion of the community. Enough people need to be on-hand to deal with queries and questions from the public. |

| Stage | Method | Description |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. Pre-application publicity | Direct leafleting/ newsletters | Leaflets provide a basic level of detail regarding a project proposal but offer a good way of sending a clear message to a large number of residents and businesses at the same time. A regular newsletter is a good way of keeping the community up-to-date on how proposals are shaping-up, as details change over time. |
| | Local media | Local media includes the regional press, radio and TV, but also parish magazines, newsletters and websites that may already exist in the locality. Using media will allow basic messages relating to the proposals to be distributed to the public. |
| | Internet | Using the internet to broadcast proposals is an invaluable approach, but it should always be used in addition to more traditional methods and the fact that they are available to view on the internet should be publicised using traditional methods. Exchanges and dialogue could also be encouraged via email groups or bulletin boards etc. |
| | Private meetings | See above. |
| | Stakeholder liaison group | See above. |
| | Public exhibitions | See above. |

appendix 2

Glossary of Terms

Broadland Community Involvement Strategy 2007-2012

A strategy produced by Broadland District Council that sets out how the Council seeks to involve communities and other stakeholders in the development and review of Council services, policies and procedures, in general (where statutory regulations do not apply).

Community Involvement Protocol

A joint agreement between developers, Broadland District Council, key service providers and Parish and Town Councils within Broadland to ensure that communities and other stakeholders have genuine opportunities to influence any significant development proposals before planning applications are submitted.

Developer's Community Involvement Plan

A plan produced by developers with any significant proposals affecting a community, which sets out how and when they will involve the community and other stakeholders in the shaping of their development proposals before a planning application is submitted.

Greater Norwich Development Partnership

A partnership of the local authorities making up the Greater Norwich area (Broadland District, Norwich City and South Norfolk District Councils), including Norfolk County Council. The GNDP is developing the Joint Core Strategy for Greater Norwich as well as other pieces of work relating to the growth of the Greater Norwich area.

Joint Core Strategy

A planning strategy being produced by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership that contains long term plans for housing and employment growth in the Greater Norwich area, made up of Broadland District, South Norfolk and Norwich City Councils.

Local Development Framework

The 'portfolio' of planning policy documents which collectively will replace the current, adopted Local Plan as the spatial planning strategy for Broadland.

Section 106 Agreements

A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

Service Providers

General term used, in this context, to describe a public, private or voluntary sector organisation that delivers a service to the community (eg. NHS, Police, Anglian Water). All of these bodies work to create sustainable communities.

Stakeholders

(As used in this context) Any individual or organisation that has an interest in the future development of Broadland. At an organisational level, this might include local bodies such as a chamber of trade or a parish council, or organisations working at a wider level, such as Norfolk Wildlife Trust or Norfolk County Council. At an individual level, this might include existing residents within a community or potential future residents.

Statement of Community Involvement

A statutory document produced by Broadland District Council that sets out how the authority will involve local communities and other stakeholders in the development of the various planning policy documents that will make up its Local Development Framework. The SCI also sets out how the authority expects developers with any major proposals to involve local communities and other stakeholders in shaping those proposals at an early stage, before a planning application is submitted.