

# Statement of Community Involvement

March 2024

## Consultation Statement



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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## 1. [Introduction](#)

### Purpose of this consultation statement

- 1.1 This consultation statement sets out the work involved in preparing the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (March 2024). It includes details of the consultation, the main issues raised in response to the consultation and the council's response to those issues.

### Background

- 1.2 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document the council is legally required to publish under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 in order to explain how effective community involvement at all stages of the land use planning process will be achieved.
- 1.3 Local Planning Authorities are legally obliged to review their SCI's every five years to reflect changes to engagement and to respond to changes in policy. This requirement is derived from Section 10A(b) of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

## 2. [Early engagement](#)

- 2.1 The preparation of a draft SCI was informed by informal discussion with Elected Members and council officers within the planning service and the communications, marketing and engagement team.
- 2.2 The draft SCI was presented to the council's cross party Planning Policy Member Working Group in July 2023.

## 3. [Formal consultation on the draft SCI](#)

- 3.1 Planning law and guidance does not require a local authority to undertake engagement or consultation with external stakeholders when reviewing an SCI. Notwithstanding, the council's Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan approved a draft SCI for consultation, which subsequently occurred for a six-week period between 4 September and 16 October 2023. The consultation provided an opportunity for residents and other external stakeholders to express their views on how the council intended to ensure how effective community involvement would be achieved.
- 3.2 The draft SCI was made available on the council's website, with a paper copy available at the council offices at Shute End, Wokingham.
- 3.3 External stakeholders were made aware of the consultation through notification being sent by email or letter. All individuals and organisations on the council's planning policy consultation database were sent notification. This the database includes all statutory consultees.
- 3.4 The consultation was further publicised through a press release.

## 4. Main issues raised and changes made

- 4.1 A total of 28 responses were received in response to the consultation from a combination of statutory consultees, including other local authorities, parish/town councils, local groups and residents.
- 4.2 A summary of comments made in representations is set out in Appendix A. This includes the council's response to the comment and details of amendments made to the SCI where relevant.
- 4.3 A summary of the main issues raised and any key changes made is set out below.

| Main issue  | Response and Key Changes   |
|---|--|
| Planning documents should be available in paper format at libraries and community hubs.   | Details of how people will be engaged in the planning process is set out in the SCI. It would be impractical and cost prohibitive to make paper copies of planning application plans and documents available.  |
| Actions that are listed as 'may' should be more definitive and included in the 'we will' section  | As set out in SCI paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them.  |
| Representations submitted in response to planning applications and as part of preparing local plans are not fully considered, and questions asked are not answered in full. | <p>The views of all consultees, including Town and Parish Councils are carefully considered.</p> <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| All consultees should be specifically named in the SCI.   | Whilst legislation specifically sets out the bodies a local authority must engage with under the duty to cooperate, it is not considered helpful to provide this with a list only reflecting a point in time, with experience suggesting that it would become out of date over time as bodies are restructured or renamed, e.g. Highways England became National Highways in 2023.   |
| Various updates proposed to correct typographical errors and ensure consistency and clarity.  | Noted and several changes made.  |

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## Appendix A: Summary of representations on the Draft SCI and the council's response

This summary of representations presents individual comments made in representations in the order they relate to the draft SCI, with a separate schedule for each of the main sections of the SCI. The listed paragraph numbers correspond to the draft SCI.

General comments which relate to the draft SCI in general are set out in the first schedule. Other comments are set out in schedules relating to the specific schedule, with comments not relating to any specific paragraph listed first. Responses from individuals and councillors have been anonymised and assigned reference numbers.

List of those who made representations:

### Organisations:

- Arborfield Parish Council
- Barkham Parish Council
- Earley Town Council
- Finchampstead Parish Council
- Historic England
- Loddon Valley Rambles
- Natural England
- Ruscombe Parish Council
- Shinfield Parish Council
- Surrey County Council
- Transport for London
- Winnersh Parish Council
- Wokingham Society
- Wokingham Town Council
- Woodley Town Council

### Individuals:

- 12 respondents (ID1-12)

### Councillors:

- 1 respondent (CO1)

General comments not relating to a specific paragraph of the draft SCI

| <b>Respondent</b>        | <b>Summary of representation</b>  | <b>Council response</b>   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Transport for London     | No comments to made on the draft SCI.   | Comment noted.  |
| Natural England          | Supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement. Unable to comment in detail on the draft SCI. | Comment noted.  |
| Historic England         | Broadly support the SCI.  | Support noted.  |
| Historic England         | Wonder whether it would be helpful to list all consultation bodies?   | Whilst legislation specifically identifies some bodies as specific consultees, it is not practical to provide a comprehensive list of all consultation bodies due to the number of potential consultees and that any list could only reflect a point in time.   |
| Historic England         | Wonder whether it would be helpful to list all consultation bodies the council has a duty to cooperate with?  | Whilst legislation specifically sets out the bodies a local authority must engage with under the duty to cooperate, it is not considered helpful to provide this with a list only reflecting a point in time, with experience suggesting that it would become out of date over time as bodies are restructured or renamed, e.g. Highways England became National Highways in 2023.<br><br>The benefits of providing a list and considered to be limited and of little consequence to ensuring effective engagement. No changes are proposed |
| Shinfield Parish Council | Broadly in agreement with the content of the SCI.   | Support noted.  |

| Respondent              | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Winnersh Parish Council | Has no objections.  | Comment noted.   |
| Wokingham Town Council  | Pleased to be consulted and have no comments.   | Comment noted.   |
| ID2                     | No actions which involve more expenditure than under current procedures, including printing, should be taken. Interested parties will respond in a timely manner. No proposals should delay planning decisions. | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The actions specified within the SCI are considered to be cost effective and allow consultations to be designed around the specific subject.</p>  |
| ID2                     | Actions listed as 'may' are 'nice to have' and not 'essential'.   | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>As set out in paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them.</p>     |
| Barkham Parish Council  | The statements in the SCI give the right impression but there is no indication where the substance is in them.  | The SCI sets out actions that will and may be taken to facilitate engagement. It is unclear what is meant regarding substance, however in all instances, the council will carefully consider the views expressed in representations within the context of planning law and national policy/guidance. |
| Wokingham Society       | Hyperlinks should be used to allow the reader to access referenced documents or legislation.  | Suggestion noted.  |



| Respondent          | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|---------------------|--|--|
|                     |  | A review of the SCI has resulted in a number of additional hyperlinks being utilised throughout the document.  |
| Earley Town Council | The adopted SCI makes use of graphics which are not included within the draft SCI. Would like to see the continued use of graphics to aid understanding.   | <p>The respondent appears to be referring to the version of the SCI adopted in 2014, which was superseded in 2019.</p> <p>It is accepted that the inclusion of graphics can aid interpretation, however the draft SCI was drafted to simplify presentation and improve accessibility.</p>  |
| Earley Town Council | The draft SCI appears to be a watering down of the adopted SCI, either omitting things or being more generalised.  | <p>The respondent appears to be referring to the version of the SCI adopted in 2014, which was superseded in 2019.</p> <p>The draft SCI broadly maintains the approach of the SCI 2019, reflecting lawful requirements and extending consultation arrangements for major planning applications.</p>  |
| ID10                | The whole SCI is of no value. Developments are permitted in spite of objections and concern about the lack of technical information on how the building would be constructed, where drains would run, how deep footings would be and engineering figures to demonstrate the building materials would support the weight. | <p>The council wants to involve communities at all stages of the planning process. Community input can assist decision making by highlighting issues that need to be carefully considered or indicating preference for particular approaches.</p> <p>The council will not pretend that planning decisions are free of difficult choices. Decisions need to be made within legal requirements, have</p> |

| Respondent           | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|----------------------|---|--|
|                      |   | <p>regard to national planning policy and guidance, and consider technical evidence.</p> <p>Detailed construction matters fall under building regulations and are outside the scope of land use planning.</p>  |
| ID8                  | There is little in the draft SCI that is not agreed with.   | Comment noted.   |
| ID6                  | Comments that in general, sentences are overly long and complex.  | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The draft SCI was reviewed by the council's Communications, Engagement and Marketing Team and subject to accessibility checking. Notwithstanding, some minor editing has been made to the document to further improve grammar.</p>  |
| Woodley Town Council | Supports the draft SCI. Comments are provided on specific paragraphs.   | Support noted.   |
| ID5                  | <p>The consultation methodology is not appropriate in a modern era. The consultation should be available as an interactive HTML document. The pdf document doesn't open online.</p> <p>Biggest failure is to commit to using social media. Most people rely on this as their primary source of news. The draft SCI only says that social media 'may' be used.</p> | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The ability to download the draft SCI was checked at the launch of the consultation and several times following receipt of this comment. No problems were found at any time on testing.</p> <p>As set out in SCI paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of</p> |

| Respondent | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|--|---|
|            |  | <p>these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them. Publicising via social media is generally utilised for the local plan, supplementary planning, and neighbourhood development plans, however this is not a requirement of law and is therefore appropriately listed as 'may'.</p>  |
| ID5        | <p>Many links to documents do not work in desktop. Please ensure email and website links are accessible.</p>   | <p>The hyperlinks within the draft SCI were checked at the launch of the consultation and several times following receipt of this comment. No problems were found at any time on testing.</p>   |
| ID5        | <p>Whilst inviting contributions where there is scope to influence decisions, it is also made clear that community opinion will not influence the outcome of consultations. Seen many planning applications allowed despite objections from the community. If people aren't able to influence the outcome, then tell them.</p> | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The council wants to involve communities at all stages of the planning process. Community input can assist decision making by highlighting issues that need to be carefully considered or indicating preference for particular approaches.</p> <p>As set out in SCI paragraph 2.2, the council will not pretend that planning decisions are free of difficult choices. Decisions need to be made within legal requirements, have regard to national planning policy and guidance, and consider technical evidence.</p> |
| ID5        | <p>While encouraging site promoters to be open about their proposals, there are cases where developers have excluded large numbers of</p>  | <p>Comment noted.</p>   |

| Respondent | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|------------|--|--|
|            | <p>people. Example given of Barkeley Homes and the promotion of Twyford Gardens. Fines should be imposed on developers who selectively engage and misrepresent opinion.</p>  | <p>Draft SCI paragraph 7.12 sets out that the council would expect people proposing larger proposals to consult more widely before finalising their proposal and the submission of a planning application. There is no lawful mechanism for imposing fines.</p>  |
| ID5        | <p>In encouraging site promoters to engage before submitting a planning application, there is no definition of 'wider area'. Consultation might be with distant communities, allowing support to be claimed despite local opposition. The council should set clear boundaries beyond which a promoter should not be able to seek support.</p> <p>Similarly, comments on planning applications should only be open to people within a maximum radius, say five miles.</p> | <p>Draft SCI paragraph 7.12 sets out that the council would expect people proposing larger proposals to consult more widely before finalising their proposal and the submission of a planning application.</p> <p>There is no mechanism for the council to set boundaries or limits, however if contacted a view can be offered on what might be a suitable consultation framework.</p> <p>Best practice promoted analysis including the locational analysis of where representations were received.</p> |
| ID5        | <p>There are dangers with planning applications being decided by the Planning Committee, with councillors having a vested interest in their community. This may lead to undesirable development being fostered on another community. Councillor input should be advisory, with the final decision taken by a professional officer.</p>   | <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Training is provided to councillors before they can sit on the Planning Committee. Where a councillor has an interest in an item, this must be declared by those on the Planning Committee and other committees. Where necessary, a councillor will be required to take no part in an agenda item.</p>   |

| <b>Respondent</b>                     | <b>Summary of representation</b>   | <b>Council response</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | How will the council engage local community groups and parish councils prior to publishing the draft local plan? | Draft SCI Section 4 outlines the engagement process for the preparation of local plans. |
| Finchampstead Parish Council          | Feels the draft SCI contains helpful information and adds clarity.   | Comment noted.  |

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General comments not relating to the draft SCI

| <b>Respondent</b>       | <b>Summary of representation</b>   | <b>Council response</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Ruscombe Parish Council | Details of permitted developments should be published to assist town/parish councils in identifying legal building works where planning permission was not required. | <p>An explanation of permitted development rights falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the land use planning process.</p> <p>The national Planning Portal website provides a summary of permitted development rights which town and parish council may find useful.</p>  |
| ID11                    | Development should not be permitted where crops are grown.   | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The decision on where development should be permitted falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the land use planning process.</p>   |
| ID11                    | Infrastructure should be improved to support new houses, e.g. roads, schools, parking, power, sewage and leisure.  | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The decision on where development should be directed and how infrastructure should be improved falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the land use planning process.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the council seeks to ensure infrastructure is improved to support new development. Through the local plan process engagement is undertaken with utility and other infrastructure providers. Where infrastructure need is identified, this is considered in the</p> |

| Respondent             | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|------------------------|---|---|
|                        |   | preparation of planning policy and when determining planning applications.  |
| ID1                    | More doctors' surgeries should be provided.   | <p>The provision of doctors' surgeries falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the planning process.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the Integrated Care Board, and the predecessor organisations, has been and continue to be engaged through the planning process. Where the ICB identifies an infrastructure need, this is considered in the preparation of planning policy and when determining planning applications.</p> |
| Barkham Parish Council | Consultation with parish councils has improved, however matters that do not go through the planning process are not shared directly, with reference to a road closure. All items that affect residents should be shared with parish councils. | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Engagement by other services falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the land use planning process.</p>   |
| Earley Town Council    | Comments that the town council receives complaints from residents saying they didn't know about planning proposals until the consultation period had passed. The requirement of displaying site notices improves local awareness.             | <p>Site notices are sent to all agents/applicants with a request that it is displayed voluntarily. Where the law requires the council to display site notices it does so.</p> <p>The council is investigating the introduction of a new facility whereby local residents could sign up for automatic notifications of new planning applications.</p>  |

| Respondent | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|--|---|
| ID12       | Comments that when the planning system is described as 'not being a democracy' engagement with the council is a waste of time with planning working to its own agenda and schedule.  | <p>The council wants to involve communities at all stages of the planning process. Community input can assist decision making by highlighting issues that need to be carefully considered or indicating preference for particular approaches.</p> <p>As set out in SCI paragraph 2.2, the council will not pretend that planning decisions are free of difficult choices. Decisions need to be made within legal requirements, have regard to national planning policy and guidance, and consider technical evidence.</p>   |
| ID4        | Planning applications are inaccessible to the public. Whilst detail is important to the council, the public require a summary providing a brief description including impacts on environment, transport and infrastructure, and maps showing before and after. | <p>Planning law requires that the full details of a planning application are subject to consultation. Whilst it is accepted that aspects will be highly technical and complex, this information must be available to all.</p> <p>There is no legal basis for the council providing a summary of a planning application at the consultation stage and such a move would open up an area for legal challenge should people respond based on this and not the detailed matters. Providing a summary of planning application would be resource intensive and not possible within budgets.</p> |
| ID7        | Is there a process of continual evolution of the local plan so that the current version doesn't fully expire when there are unavoidable delays to revisions in specific topic areas?   | Under current planning law, it is possible to progress a partial update to a local plan. Notwithstanding, a comprehensive update to planning policy is necessary at this time.  |



| Respondent                            | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| ID                                    | <p>There is insufficient accountability on social and civic infrastructure provision required to guarantee a healthy and safe quality of life. National Health Service, schools, parking facilities, road safety, traffic congestion etc. The council should be satisfied that improved infrastructure will be in place before a new dwelling is occupied.</p> | <p>The provision of infrastructure falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the planning process.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the council engages with a range of stakeholders in preparing planning policy and undertakes technical assessments. Where an infrastructure need is identified, this is considered in the preparation of planning policy and when determining planning applications.</p>  |
| ID5                                   | <p>Communities have been exposed by the failure to maintain a five year housing land supply with developers being more able to overturn a refusal. The delay has also places a burden on parish councils to produce neighbourhood plans without knowledge of what the next local plan will contain.</p>  | <p>The matter of the housing land supply falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the planning process.</p> <p>The council is in the process of preparing a new local plan which will ensure planning policies remain effective. Whilst the council has been unable to demonstrate a sufficient supply of deliverable housing land to meet five years need, this is a result of strong housing delivery which has exceeded requirements and reduced the bank of planning permissions yet to be implemented. The council has successfully argued in planning appeal processes that this bigger picture of delivery is material to decisions.</p> |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | <p>Concerns regarding the Arborfield Green sports facilities and village centre show that consultation is not working. Particular concern regarding the time taken and the lack of</p>   | XXX   |

| Respondent                            | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                       | feedback. How will the council ensure that residents views are taken into account when plans take longer than expected and residents are informed of the reasons for delay? | The matter of infrastructure delivery falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the planning process.  |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | In previous consultations, the council has posted letters in support of a particular site for development in preference to others. Is this not a form of predetermination?  | It is unclear what is meant by letters in support of a particular site being published in preference.<br><br>All written representations in response to a planning application are published once process.  |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | Will SEA cover the full period of the local plan, e.g. where a development is proposed to extend beyond the plan period?  | As set out in draft SCI paragraph 3.9, a sustainability appraisal is a process through which the effects of a local plan on economic, social and environmental objectives are considered. A sustainability appraisal also incorporates a further assessment process known as 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' which focuses on environmental impacts. Sustainability appraisals are iterative (i.e. subject to change and improvement over time), with the appraisal updated alongside each consultation stage of a local plan.<br><br>The SA and SEA will consider the impacts of the proposals contained within the plan. |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | How will the council deal with consultation on locally significant proposed developments in the period to completion of the new local plan?                                 | Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.   |

| Respondent                            | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|                                       |  | <p>Planning policies contained within the adopted which includes the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans, and made neighbourhood development plans, will be the starting point for considering planning applications.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration and will also be taken into account.</p> <p>The new local plan will become part of the development plan upon its adoption. At this point it will supersede both the Core Strategy and the MDD local plans.</p> |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | Given national uncertainty about housing targets, possible relief of restrictions to building on the green belt and support for more renewable energy generation, how will WBC factor this into the development of, and consultation on, the Local Plan? | <p>The matter of the housing land supply falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the planning process.</p> <p>The council is in the process of preparing a new local plan which will consider the implications of national planning policy.</p>   |
| CO1                                   | How are parish/town councils involved when the council claim they are partners but ignore them in many areas of business?  | <p>Parish/town councils are a statutory consultee in the land use planning system and are consulted in both the preparation of local plans and when determining planning applications.</p> <p>Representations by parish/town councils are carefully considered alongside the views of</p>  |

| Respondent | Summary of representation | Council response  |
|------------|---------------------------|---|
|            |                           | <p>others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>As set out in SCI paragraph 2.2, the council will not pretend that planning decisions are free of difficult choices. Decisions need to be made within legal requirements, have regard to national planning policy and guidance, and consider technical evidence.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |

Section 1: Introduction

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|-------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| ID6               | 1.1                  | Simplify sentence to:<br>'The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) explains when, how, and for what reasons you will be able to be involved. This includes how you can be involved in local plans, neighbourhood development plans, supplementary planning guidance, planning applications, and planning enforcement.'  | The specific proposal has not been taken forward, however paragraph 1.1 and 1.2 have been combined and simplified which accords to the intention of the comment. |
| Wokingham Society | 1.2                  | Insert new paragraph after 1.2 reading:<br>"It also indicates what is expected from those proposing developments."  | Paragraph 1.2 amended as suggested.<br><br>Please note that paragraph 1.2 has been combined with paragraph 1.1 in response to other comments.                    |
| Wokingham Society | 1.4                  | Correct grammar to final three bullets to read:<br>"• Creating a sense of ownership of key planning policy documents.<br>• Removing barriers (physical, language or social) and gives communities access to information and opportunities to voice their needs and opinions.<br>• Creating accountability by generating a wider interest in monitoring outcomes." | Paragraph 1.4 amended as suggested.  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---|--|
| CO1        | 1.4                  | How is there a greater focus on local needs and priorities? How are decisions informed by local knowledge? How is a sense of ownership created? | <p>Paragraph 1.4 outlines a number of benefits of involving communities in planning matters, including reference to needs and priorities and creating a sense of ownership.</p> <p>Through engagement, the council may become aware of needs which were not previously understood, e.g. infrastructure or types of housing).</p>   |
| CO1        | 1.4                  | Increased community understanding in decisions is not achieved. Officers do not answer questions.   | <p>It is incorrect that questions or expressed views are not taken into account.</p> <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| CO1        | 1.4                  | Communities are not given information. Officers do not answer questions.  | It is incorrect that information is not available or that questions or expressed views are not taken into account.   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                     | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|---|---|
|            |                      |   | <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p>   |
| CO1        | 1.4                  | People are not empowered. Officers do not answer questions.   | <p>It is incorrect that information is not available or that questions or expressed views are not taken into account.</p> <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| CO1        | 1.4                  | The council does not aim to make consultation and involvement | It is incorrect to state that consultations and involvement are   |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                     |                      | transparent, accessible, collaborative, inclusive and consistent.  | <p>not transparent and accessible. No example is provided.</p> <p>The SCI clearly sets out the actions the council will take to engagement throughout the planning process.</p>   |
| Earley Town Council | 1.6                  | Comment that 'accessible' is referring to people with access to digital technology and the ability to use it.  | Whilst it is acknowledged that a greater emphasis on digital engagement has taken place, the SCI has been careful to consider the potential impacts of this on particular groups that may have limited access to digital mediums, such as older generations. The recommended approach to engagement has therefore sought to continue utilising a range of consultation methods, including providing paper copies of key documents in specific locations and hosting in-person events. |
| Earley Town Council |                      | Comments that options listed under 'may' will rarely be used on the grounds of cost. Notes that many actions relate to people who are not able to access through digital technology. | As set out in paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them.   |



| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|                              |                      |  | <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that a greater emphasis on digital engagement has taken place, the SCI has been careful to consider the potential impacts of this on particular groups that may have limited access to digital mediums, such as older generations. The recommended approach to engagement has therefore sought to continue utilising a range of consultation methods, including providing paper copies of key documents in specific locations and hosting in-person events.</p> |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 1.7                  | <p>The introduction of the word ‘may’ gives the council an option on what it wants to do which is not helpful. Suggest the use of ‘intend’ which implies the council will take the action.</p> | <p>As set out in paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council ‘may’ do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them.</p> <p>As set out in paragraph 2.4, the approach to consultation will be tailored to the specific issues, audiences and the scale of proposals, so that it is fit for purpose for the subject being</p>               |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---|--|
|            |                      |   | consulted on, making it easier for people to take part.  |
| ID6        | 1.7                  | Simplify sentence to:<br>'We set out what the law says we must do. Any other options we have which go beyond lawful requirements, will be used where practicable or appropriate.' | The specific proposal has not been taken forward, however paragraph 1.7 has been amended to simply the text which accords to the intention of the comment.   |
| CO1        | 1.7                  | Planning officers should stop using the words 'on balance' when making recommendations not compliant with policy.   | <p>Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The structure of planning law therefore requires a decision to be made on balance. This balance may be in accordance with the development plan or towards an exception to aspects of the development plan where material considerations provide justification.</p> |

Section 2: Principles of community involvement

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| CO1                          | 2.1                  | The council tends to ignore residents who have an opposite view.  | <p>It is incorrect that expressed views are not taken into account.</p> <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 2.2                  | More clarity is needed on how the council will engage with the public, how proactive you intend to be and how planning is managed and processed. All documents should be available in paper libraries and community hubs. | <p>Paragraph 2.2 refers to the principles of community involvement. Details of how people will be engaged in the preparation of local plans, supplementary planning and planning applications is set out in the subsequent sections.</p> <p>With regards to planning policy documents, actions include making specified documents available at council offices as well as online.</p>                                     |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
|            |                      |  | <p>It would be impractical and cost prohibitive to make paper copies of planning application plans and documents available at council offices.</p>  |
| CO1        | 2.2                  | <p>Positive engagement, as a general rule, means doing what an applicant wants not what residents might want. Localism plays no part, or very little part, in the council's thinking. The words 'on balance' is how it works in reality.</p> | <p>All planning applications are considered on their merits.</p> <p>Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The structure of planning law therefore requires a decision to be made on balance. This balance may be in accordance with the development plan or towards an exception to aspects of the development plan where material considerations provide justification.</p> <p>It is incorrect that expressed views are not taken into account.</p> <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|                              |                      |   | <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p>  |
| CO1                          | 2.3                  | <p>The minimum is probably the correct unless the words 'on balance' can be used to approve schemes not supported by residents.</p>   | <p>Paragraph 2.3 refers to the council complying with legislation as a minimum. The comment to the minimum being the right thing is noted, however as set out in the SCI there are a number of options which the council may take beyond legislative requirements.</p> <p>The comment of the minimum being right is inconsistent with responses to other parts of the draft SCI.</p> |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 2.4                  | <p>More clarity is needed on how the council will engage with the public, how proactive you intend to be and how planning is managed and processed. All documents should be available in paper at libraries and community hubs.</p> | <p>Paragraph 2.2 refers to tailoring the approach to consultation to the specific topic, audience and scale of the proposals.</p> <p>Details of how people will be engaged in the preparation of local plans, supplementary planning and planning applications is set out in the subsequent sections.</p>  |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|                     |                      |   | <p>With regards to planning policy documents, actions include making specified documents available at council offices as well as online.</p> <p>It would be impractical and cost prohibitive to make paper copies of planning application plans and documents available at council offices.</p>  |
| CO1                 | 2.4                  | The council does not tailor its approach to the specific issue, audience or scale of proposal. Fit for purpose means what planning officers want. | <p>Whilst the council may choose to similar approaches to consultation for matters, it is not correct to state the approach to consultation is not tailored to the issue.</p> <p>Example of where the approach differs include the masterplanning studies.</p> <p>The approach to consultation is discussed with Members who are able to recommend changes if necessary.</p> |
| Earley Town Council | 2.5                  | The document fails to explain how engagement will be designed to be accessible and how better inclusion of everyone will be achieved.             | It would not be practical for the SCI to set out how engagement might be undertaken in all instances.  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|--|--|
|            |                      | <p>Notes that options which are not digital are mostly listed under 'may' and are not used.</p> <p>Notes that reference is made to a small number of groups such as the young, but no reference is made to those who are not computer literate.</p> <p>The statement should consider its relevance to the eleven protected characteristics as defined in equalities legislation.</p> | <p>As set out in paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that a greater emphasis on digital engagement has taken place, the SCI has been careful to consider the potential impacts of this on particular groups that may have limited access to digital mediums, such as older generations. The recommended approach to engagement has therefore sought to continue utilising a range of consultation methods, including providing paper copies of key documents in specific locations and hosting in-person events.</p> <p>The potential disadvantages of relying entirely on digital engagement is expressly recognised in paragraph 2.9.</p> |
| CO1        | 2.5                  | With regard to the principles of involving communities:  | It is incorrect that expressed views are not taken into account.   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---|--|
|            |                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council encourages communities to contribute but then ignores them.</li> <li>• Transparency is not obvious as a whole and particularly in the planning department.</li> <li>• Asks for examples of method used to engage people.</li> <li>• Town/parish councils or councillors are not engaged.</li> <li>• There is no evidence that representations are analysed and, where appropriate, feedback is given.</li> <li>• Agrees that personal data is redacted.</li> <li>• Comments the council may not like but are relevant should not be ignored. The council does not record phone calls which is unprofessional.</li> </ul> | <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> <p>In the case of plan making, reports on consultations are published setting out the main issues raised.</p> <p>The reference to rejecting representations is clearly set out in the context of profanities or statements considered derogatory or offensive to persons sharing a protected characteristic (such as disability, race, religion and others). It is considered correct to reject such representations. It should be noted that the writer of rejected representations will be written to, outlining the reasons why. An amended representation would be accepted.</p> |



| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| CO1                 | 2.7                  | The council is not keeping residents updated with progress while they continue to negotiate with the developer until a decision is made undermines resident involvement and is a lack of openness and transparency. | <p>Paragraph 2.7 relates to landowners that are considering whether to proceed with a proposal. It does not relate to the circumstance of where a planning application has been submitted.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, where a planning application is amended by the applicant, any material amendments are subject to a further period of consultation, allowing residents and other stakeholders to provide their views on any changes.</p> |
| CO1                 | 2.8                  | Public, town/parish council access too this would be good.  | Paragraph 2.8 acknowledges the greater use of digital technology and the benefits it can bring. It is unclear what access is being requested with parish/town councils being able to benefit in the same way as other stakeholders.  |
| Earley Town Council | 2.9                  | It is good that the disadvantages of relying on digital technology is recognised, however most methods that are not digital are listed under 'may'.   | <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that a greater emphasis on digital engagement has taken place, the SCI has been careful to consider the potential impacts of this on particular groups that may have</p>  |

| Respondent           | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|                      |                      |  | <p>limited access to digital mediums, such as older generations. The recommended approach to engagement has therefore sought to continue utilising a range of consultation methods, including providing paper copies of key documents in specific locations and hosting in-person events.</p>  |
| Woodley Town Council | 2.9                  | <p>There should be a strong statement to ensure access to paper copies, e.g. encouragement of Town and Parish Council to publicise information; promote access to internet at libraries and council offices.</p> | <p>Paragraph 2.9 relates to the principles of community involvement. Actions listed under subsequent sections state that paper copies of documents will be available at council offices, with other locations considered.</p> <p>The council supports parish and town council making information available to their communities.</p> |
| CO1                  | 2.9                  | <p>Comments weakness of relying entirely on digital technology must be addressed. Printed information is needed also.</p>  | <p>The paragraph refers to the principles of community involvement. Details of how people will be engaged in the preparation of local plans, supplementary planning and planning applications in the relevant latter sections.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that a greater emphasis on digital</p>                               |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
|            |                      |                           | <p>engagement has taken place, the SCI has been careful to consider the potential impacts of this on particular groups that may have limited access to digital mediums, such as older generations. The recommended approach to engagement has therefore sought to continue utilising a range of consultation methods, including providing paper copies of key documents in specific locations and hosting in-person events.</p> <p>It would be impractical and cost prohibitive to make planning application plans and documents available at council offices.</p> |

Section 3: Planning for the future of Wokingham Borough

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|-------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| Wokingham Society | 3.2                  | Correct grammar to read:<br>“consulting on [not ‘in’] planning applications”  | Paragraph 3.2 amended as suggested.   |
| CO1               | 3.6                  | If a local plan includes a site where development is scheduled beyond 15 years, then the full infrastructure costs of the whole development must be calculated and allowed for. | <p>Paragraph 3.6 refers to the minimum period for a local plan as set out in national planning policy as being 15 years from adoption.</p> <p>Under national planning policy, all site housing allocations must be developable. This means being in a suitable location with a reasonable prospect they will be available and can be viably developed at the point in time envisaged. Viability considers the costs of infrastructure over the whole delivery period of an allocation, including those delivered beyond 15 years.</p> |
| CO1               | 3.7                  | If a local plan includes a site where development is scheduled beyond 15 years, then the full infrastructure costs of the whole development must be calculated and allowed for. | <p>Paragraph 3.6 refers to the minimum period for a local plan as set out in national planning policy as being 15 years from adoption.</p> <p>Under national planning policy, all site housing allocations must be developable. This means being in a suitable location with a reasonable</p>   |

| Respondent           | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|----------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                      |                      |  | prospect they will be available and can be viably developed at the point in time envisaged. Viability considers the costs of infrastructure over the whole delivery period of an allocation, including those delivered beyond 15 years.   |
| Wokingham Society    | 3.8                  | Reference to 'made' with regard to neighbourhood development plans should be explained. Suggested additional text in brackets after 'made' "(ie adopted)". | Paragraph 3.8 amended as suggested.   |
| Wokingham Society    | 3.9                  | The use of 'iterative' may not be understood. Suggested additional test (ie subject to change and improvement over time)"                                  | Paragraph 3.9 amended as suggested.   |
| Woodley Town Council | 3.9                  | The council should consider the pollution of watercourses and how best to ensure developers are aware of their responsibilities.                           | As set out in paragraph 3.9, a sustainability appraisal is a process through which the effects of a local plan on economic, social and environmental objectives are considered. A sustainability appraisal also incorporates a further assessment process known as 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' which focuses on environmental impacts. Sustainability appraisals are iterative (i.e. subject to change and |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|--|--|
|            |                      |  | <p>improvement over time), with the appraisal updated alongside each consultation stage of a local plan.</p> <p>The SA and SEA will consider the impacts of the proposals contained within the plan. Detailed planning policies on pollution would form part of a local plan.</p>  |
| CO1        | 3.9                  | The SEA must include all the elements of any site scheduled beyond the statutory 15 year plan. | <p>As set out in draft SCI paragraph 3.9, a sustainability appraisal is a process through which the effects of a local plan on economic, social and environmental objectives are considered. A sustainability appraisal also incorporates a further assessment process known as 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' which focuses on environmental impacts. Sustainability appraisals are iterative (i.e. subject to change and improvement over time), with the appraisal updated alongside each consultation stage of a local plan.</p> <p>The SA and SEA will consider the impacts of the proposals contained within the plan.</p> |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| CO1                 | 3.10                 | Understand that Supplementary Planning Documents set out more detailed guidance to further explain policy and that they are a material planning consideration.     | Comment noted.   |
| Earley Town Council | 3.11                 | Is it relevant in the context of 2023 to continue to apply inflation to adjust CIL rates? CIL rates should be overhauled with increased demands on infrastructure. | <p>As set out in paragraph 3.12 the Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge per square metre which can be levied by local authorities on new development to help deliver the infrastructure needed to support growth.</p> <p>The council adopted the current CIL charging schedule in 2015, which have subsequently been adjusted for inflation.</p> <p>The adjustment of rates for inflation is in accordance with planning law. Notwithstanding, a full review of the charging schedule is proposed to run in parallel with the emerging local plan.</p> |
| CO1                 | 3.12                 | Will CIL remain or be replaced?  | The council currently implements a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 enables the government to introduce a new Community Levy system. This is  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
|            |                      |                           | <p>intended by the government to replace CIL in time, however this is expected to occur over a ten year period. It is likely that the council will operate a CIL changing schedule over the medium term. A full review of the charging schedule is proposed to run in parallel with the emerging local plan.</p> |

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Section 4: Engagement process for local plans

| Respondent                            | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | 4                    | The consultation for the Revised Local Plan took place fall over December 2021. Can the council commit to not holding consultations at a time when consultees are likely to be distracted, e.g. Christmas, Easter, August?  | The minimum consultation period for a local plan is six-weeks. Whilst it is recognised that consulting over holiday periods will inconvenience some, the length of the consultation period is of sufficient length to enable interested people to consider the published material and respond. The SCI confirms that the period of consultation excludes bank holidays.  |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | 4                    | The Revised Local Plan consultation included only two public meetings, neither of which included a public question and answer session. Two online meetings also gave very little opportunity to ask questions. How will the council ensure that consultees are consulted early and have a genuine opportunity to influence the outcome? | <p>The Revised Strategy Consultation included two in-person events where the officers from the planning policy, development management, highway teams were available to answer questions. Information on the proposals way available on display boards and supported with maps.</p> <p>Experience has shown that formal question and answer sessions do not allow effective engagement. An informal drop-in or ‘market place’ event allows a greater number of people to engage with officers on a broader range of matters.</p> |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|---|
|                     |                      |   | The two virtual meetings took the form of a briefing followed by questions. People were invited to submit questions in advance.   |
| Earley Town Council | 4.3                  | This section does not mention public consultation.  | Paragraph 4.1 provides lists the five broad stages of local plan preparation. A number of the stages involve consultation as detailed in the paragraphs which follow.   |
| Historic England    | 4.4                  | Support reference to Historic England.  | Support noted.  |
| Wokingham Society   | 4.4                  | How to you define civic amenity groups?   | <p>Paragraph 4.4 lists local organisations and societies, providing the example of civic amenity groups. The example does not relate to any legal definition.</p> <p>The paragraph has been amended to refer to ‘civic or amenity groups’ to avoid any potential for misinterpretation.</p> |
| Earley Town Council | 4.4                  | The list of bodies required by law to engage with does not include residents, only mentioning individuals who have asked to be kept informed. | Paragraph 4.4 lists a range of specific consultees the council is required to engage with in the preparation of a local plan. Residents are not a specific consultee but would be engaged through the requirements to publish   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|--|--|
|            |                      |  | the local plan and invite representations.   |
| CO1        | 4.4                  | All consultees should be listed. Parish/town councils are listed but tend to be ignored. | <p>Whilst legislation specifically identifies some bodies as specific consultees, it is not practical to provide a comprehensive list of all consultation bodies due to the number of potential consultees and that any list could only reflect a point in time</p> <p>It is incorrect that expressed views are not taken into account.</p> <p>Representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> <p>In the case of plan making, reports on consultations are published setting out the main issues raised</p> |

| <b>Respondent</b>   | <b>Section or paragraph</b> | <b>Summary of representation</b>  | <b>Council response</b>  |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Historic England    | 4.6                         | Suggests reference to early engagement on plan-making and early engagement with statutory consultees is referenced, perhaps via the addition of a new bullet.   | New bullet added to refer to engage with statutory consultees on evidence base and the consideration of potential policy direction.  |
| Wokingham Society   | 4.6                         | Change grammar to insert a comma after 'for example' was replaced by 'by'.  | Bullet amended as suggested.   |
| Earley Town Council | 4.6                         | Comment that there is no mention of other ways of notification other than the council website.  | <p>Paragraph 4.6 requires that the council provide notice of its intention to prepare a local plan on the council's website. Reference is also made to a range of other actions including engagement and the use of press releases, e-newsletter, and press releases.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.7 identified several additional actions that may be taken. These includes the use of posters, leaflets, or postcards.</p> |
| CO1                 | 4.6                         | <p>With regard to actions that will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More engagement is needed with town/parish councils where a plan is dragging on.</li> <li>• Issuing information through press releases, e-newsletters</li> </ul> | <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>It is recognised that a local plan process may extend over a number of years. Updates on planning policy, including activities relating to the local plan have been provided at planning training events which are</p>   |

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|                   |                      | and social media is helpful but more is needed.  | open to Borough Members and parish/town council.   |
| CO1               | 4.7                  | Actions listed as 'may' should be amended to 'should'.   | As set out in paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them.  |
| CO1               | 4.8                  | Keep interested parties informed regularly.  | It is recognised that a local plan process may extend over a number of years. Updates on planning policy, including activities relating to the local plan have been provided at planning training events which are open to Borough Members and parish/town council. The planning policy newsletter has been used to update interested parties on a periodic basis. |
| Wokingham Society | 4.9                  | Insert hyperlink to the National Planning Policy Framework.  | Paragraph 4.9 amended to make National Planning Policy Framework a hyperlink.  |
| CO1               | 4.9                  | Comments it is good that the council will publish the proposed submission plan and invite representations. | Comment noted.   |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|                     |                      |   | Publication of the proposed submission local plan is a statutory requirement.  |
| Wokingham Society   | 4.10                 | Suggest revisions to improve clarity of fifth bullet. Suggest:<br>“Make all statutory publication documents, including the consultation statement, available for inspection electronically or in paper form or both at the council office”. | Bullet amended as suggested.   |
| Earley Town Council | 4.10                 | Comments that documents should be available both electronically and in paper.   | Bullet amended to clarify that statutory documents will be available in paper form at council offices.   |
| CO1                 | 4.10                 | Paper copied of statutory documents also to parish/town councils.   | <p>The bullet referred to making paper copies of statutory documents available at the council office. Paragraph 4.11 refers to considering making documents available ay main libraries.</p> <p>The council would support parish/town councils printing and making information available to their communities.</p> |
| CO1                 | 4.11                 | A press notice should be published in all newspapers.   | Planning law does not require that local plan consultations are publicised in newspapers.  |

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                   |                      |  | <p>Notwithstanding this action has been taken in the past.</p> <p>The issuing of a press release enabled newspapers and other media outlets the opportunity to note the publication.</p> <p>It is impractical and cost prohibitive for notice to be placed in all newspapers.</p>   |
| Wokingham Society | 4.12                 | <p>Suggest revisions to improve clarity: “the Inspector will consider all representations and evidence and then identify areas to be investigated further. The Inspector will set specific questions...”</p>   | <p>Paragraph 4.12 amended as suggested.</p>   |
| CO1               | 4.13                 | <p>With regards to actions that will be taken at examination stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice of the hearing should ideally be earlier than 6 weeks.</li> <li>• Paper copies of examination documents should be available at council offices, libraries and parish/town councils.</li> </ul> | <p>Planning law requires that 6-weeks’ notice is required. Whilst earlier notification may be possible, this is dependent on the receipt of information from the appointed Planning Inspector.</p> <p>It is impractical and cost prohibitive for paper copies of examination documents to be available in paper copies.</p> |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| Earley Town Council          | 4.14                 | Comments that 'may' options will rarely be used. Reconsideration is required given the importance of the examination. | <p>Paragraph 4.14 refer to the plan examination stage. At this stage the Inspector appointed to examine the local plan will carefully consider the representations made at the previous stage. People who have made representations at the previous stage will be notified of the examination process.</p> <p>The SCI indicates that press releases and e-newsletters may be used, however it cannot be guaranteed that it will be practical or appropriate through this stage. Listing the actions under 'may' is considered appropriate, allowing the council to consider when such actions will be beneficial.</p> |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 4.14                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.  | <p>Paragraph 4.14 refer to the plan examination stage. At this stage the Inspector appointed to examine the local plan will carefully consider the representations made at the previous stage. People who have made representations at the previous stage will be notified of the examination process.</p> <p>The SCI indicates that press releases and e-newsletters may be used,</p>  |



| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
|            |                      |  | <p>however it cannot be guaranteed that it will be practical or appropriate through this stage. Listing the actions under 'may' is considered appropriate, allowing the council to consider when such actions will be beneficial.</p>   |
| CO1        | 4.14                 | Amend actions listed as 'may' to 'will'.   | <p>Paragraph 4.14 refer to the plan examination stage. At this stage the Inspector appointed to examine the local plan will carefully consider the representations made at the previous stage. People who have made representations at the previous stage will be notified of the examination process.</p> <p>The SCI indicates that press releases and e-newsletters may be used, however it cannot be guaranteed that it will be practical or appropriate through this stage. Listing the actions under 'may' is considered appropriate, allowing the council to consider when such actions will be beneficial.</p> |
| CO1        | 4.16                 | With regard to the Inspectors report of examination and actions that will be undertaken: | <p>The bullet referred to making paper copies of the examiner's report available at the council office. Paragraph 4.17 refers to considering</p>  |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                              |                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper copies of the Inspectors report should be available at parish/town council offices.</li> </ul>  | <p>making copies available at main libraries.</p> <p>The council would support parish/town councils printing and making information available to their communities.</p>   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 4.17                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.   | <p>Paragraph 4.17 relates to the publication of the Inspector report into the examination of a local plan. Planning law requires direct communication with those who asked to be notified of the publication of the Inspectors report. Additional actions include making copies available at the council office and online and the issuing of a press release.</p> <p>Making copies available at libraries and the use of social media would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p> |
| CO1                          | 4.17                 | <p>With regard to the Inspectors report of examination and actions that may be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper copies of the Inspectors report should be available at libraries.</li> </ul> | <p>Paragraph 4.17 relates to the publication of the Inspector report into the examination of a local plan. Planning law requires direct communication with those who asked to be notified of the publication of the Inspectors report.</p>  |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|                              |                      |   | <p>Additional actions include making copies available at the council office and online and the issuing of a press release.</p> <p>Making copies available at libraries and the use of social media would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p>  |
| CO1                          | 4.19                 | <p>With regard to actions that will be taken on adoption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper copies of documents should be available at libraries and town/parish council offices.</li> </ul> | <p>Paragraph 4.19 relates to the actions the council will take at the adopted local plan stage. This includes making the local plan and other statutory documents available at the council office and online.</p> <p>There is no requirement to make the documents available at town or parish council offices. The costs of orienting would be significant.</p> |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 4.20                 | <p>Remove as unnecessary. It is accepted that these documents are likely to be too big for a library read and that press release or e-newsletter is sufficient media coverage.</p>                          | <p>Paragraph 4.20 states that the council 'may' make copies of the adopted local plan available in libraries and use social media to inform people. These actions would be additional to those required by planning law and are reasonable action to consider.</p>   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
| CO1        | 4.20                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'. | Paragraph 4.20 states that the council 'may' make copies of the adopted local plan available in libraries and use social media to inform people. These actions would be additional to those required by planning law and are reasonable action to consider. |

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Section 5: Engagement process for supplementary planning documents

| Respondent            | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Earley Parish Council | 5.2                  | What status does the Design Guidance have as I is often ignored through statements that a proposed development broadly complies.  | <p>Supplementary Planning Documents are a material consideration when determining planning applications. Such documents are used to provide more information on the application of policies set out in local plans.</p> <p>Advice contained within Supplementary Planning Documents is taken into account when considering planning applications as evidenced within the officer report.</p>   |
| CO1                   | 5.2                  | Where Supplementary Planning Documents and design guides fail is the planning department tends to ignore them as they are considered advisory. Where possible aspects should be incorporated into a local plan to ensure they carry weight. | <p>Supplementary Planning Documents are a material consideration when determining planning applications. Such documents are used to provide more information on the application of policies set out in local plans.</p> <p>Advice contained within Supplementary Planning Documents is taken into account when considering planning applications as evidenced within the officer report.</p> <p>It would be impractical to incorporate the level of detail included within a Supplementary</p> |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|---|
|                     |                      |   | Planning Document within a local plan.  |
| CO1                 | 5.5                  | <p>With regard to actions that will be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In identifying specific groups, greater exposure is needed.</li> <li>• In undertaking specific engagement, greater exposure if needed.</li> </ul> | <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Earley engagement will be designed with regard to the scope of the particular SPD being proposed.</p>   |
| CO1                 | 5.6                  | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.  | <p>Paragraph 5.6 relates to inviting views from the public on the preparation of SPD, prior to consultation on a draft document. Whilst it is recognised that this may be a suitable step in the preparation of SPD covering some topic areas or sites, it will not be appropriate in many cases. Listing the action as 'may' allows the consultation framework to be designed to suit the document being produced.</p> |
| Earley Town Council | 5.7                  | Comments that the documents are often deeply technical and consultation should be for 6-weeks.  | <p>Paragraph 5.7 refers to draft SPD being published for a minimum period of 4-weeks. This period corresponds with planning law.</p> <p>In practice, the council has often consultation on draft SPD for 6-weeks as suggested or for a longer</p>   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|---|---|
|            |                      |   | <p>period. A longer period would be appropriate for more complex guidance, with a shorter period more simple guidance or minor updates.</p> <p>Retention of the minimum 4-week period is considered reasonable, allowing the consultation framework to be designed to the project.</p>  |
| CO1        | 5.7                  | <p>With regard to consultation on a draft SPD and actions that will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why not consult for 6-weeks for continuity?</li> <li>• Paper copies should also be made available in parish/town council offices and libraries.</li> </ul> | <p>Paragraph 5.7 refers to draft SPD being published for a minimum period of 4-weeks. This period corresponds with planning law.</p> <p>In practice, the council has often consultation on draft SPD for 6-weeks as suggested or for a longer period. A longer period would be appropriate for more complex guidance, with a shorter period more simple guidance or minor updates.</p> <p>Retention of the minimum 4-week period is considered reasonable, allowing the consultation framework to be designed to the project.</p> |

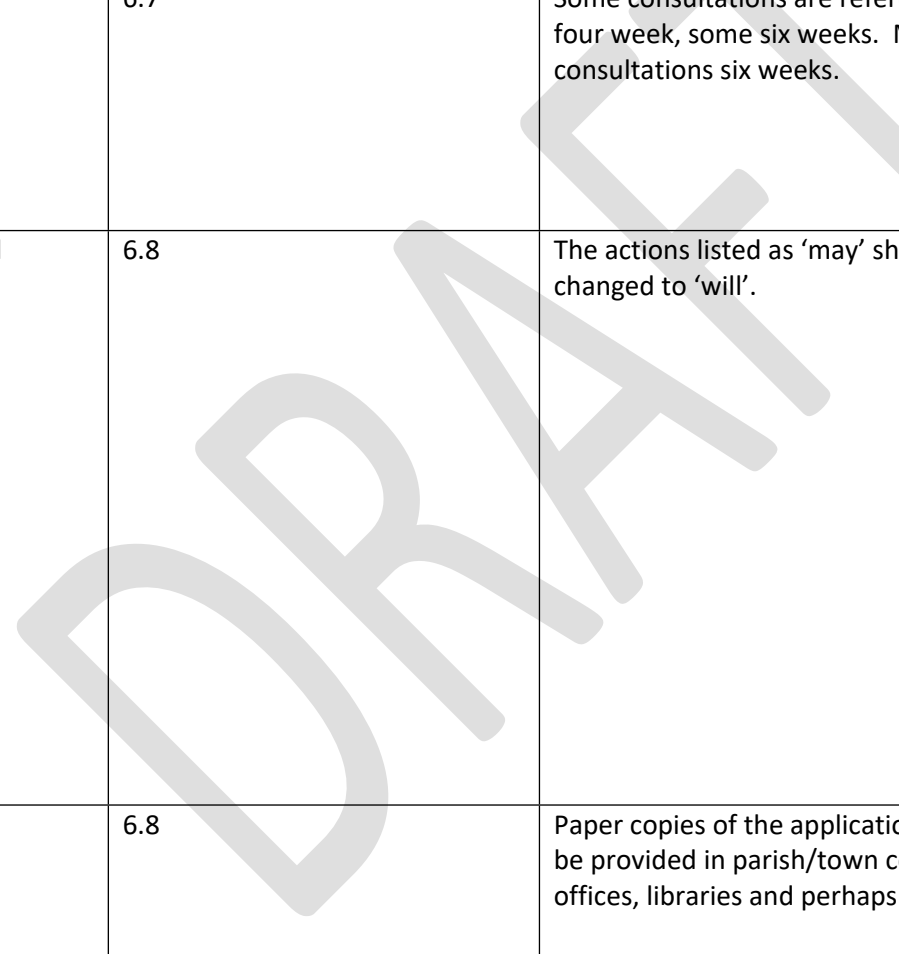
| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
| CO1        | 5.8                  | Holding exhibitions is good.   | Comment noted.  |
| CO1        | 5.9                  | Without being examined, an SPD carries less weight as it is really non-statutory guidance. It emphasises that all policies should be subject to examination.   | <p>Supplementary Planning Documents are a material consideration when determining planning applications. Such documents are used to provide more information on the application of policies set out in local plans.</p> <p>SPD are a useful tool to help manage development proposals, however policies contained within a local plan for the starting point for determining planning applications.</p> |
| CO1        | 5.11                 | <p>With regard to the adoption of a SPD and actions that may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper copies must be made available in parish/town council offices and libraries.</li> </ul> | <p>The bullet refers to considering making paper copies of an SPD available at other council offices and appropriate libraries.</p> <p>The council would support parish/town councils printing and making information available to their communities.</p>   |



Section 6: Engagement process for neighbourhood development plans

| <b>Respondent</b> | <b>Section or paragraph</b> | <b>Summary of representation</b>  | <b>Council response</b>   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Historic England  | 6                           | Welcome notification of proposed neighbourhood planning areas as well as consultation on draft plans.                           | Comment noted.  |
| Wokingham Society | 6.1                         | Correct typo in the first line from 'gives' to 'give'.  | Paragraph 6.1 amended as suggested.   |
| CO1               | 6.1                         | Neighbourhood plans carry very little weight so are virtually useless in planning terms. Policies must comply with local plans. | As set out in paragraph 6.2 once a neighbourhood development plan is 'made' (adopted), it becomes part of the development plan alongside local plans and together form the starting point for deciding planning applications. It is incorrect to state that neighbourhood plans carry very little weight. |
| Wokingham Society | 6.3                         | Insert a new sentence in the first line after 'plan', so start 'These stages are:'  | Paragraph 6.3 amended as suggested.   |
| Wokingham Society | 6.4                         | Comments that the text 'Locality neighbourhood plan toolkit and guidance' is underlined, as if intended to provide hyperlink.   | The reference to Locality neighbourhood plan toolkit and guidance is underlined due to it being a hyperlink. No changes are required.   |
| Wokingham Society | 6.5                         | Comments that it would be helpful to explain that the referenced costs of   | Amendments made to paragraph 6.5 to expressly state that printing   |

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|-------------------|----------------------|---|---|
|                   |                      | printing will need to be picked up by the neighbourhood group.  | costs will fall to the group preparing the neighbourhood development plan.  |
| Wokingham Society | 6.5                  | Amend the penultimate bullet so that it begins 'Making...'  | Paragraph 6.5 amended as suggested.   |
| CO1               | 6.5                  | Advise applicants that neighbourhood plans carry very little weight unless it is 100% compliant with local plans. | <p>As set out in paragraph 6.2 once a neighbourhood development plan is 'made' (adopted), it becomes part of the development plan alongside local plans and together form the starting point for deciding planning applications. It is incorrect to state that neighbourhood plans carry very little weight.</p> <p>Whilst planning law requires a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with strategic policies set out in local plans, it does not stop neighbourhood plan policy adding value to the planning system, reflecting local priorities and values.</p> |
| CO1               | 6.5                  | Why costs for venues being available?<br>What costs?  | The use of the council facilities is outside the scope of the SCI. Reference to potential costs for using facilities is therefore appropriate.  |

| <b>Respondent</b>            | <b>Section or paragraph</b> | <b>Summary of representation</b>   | <b>Council response</b>  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Wokingham Society            | 6.7                         | Suggests in the final line of the first bullet inserting 'and' after '(excluding bank holidays)'.<br> | Paragraph 6.7 amended as suggested.  |
| CO1                          | 6.7                         | Some consultations are referenced as four week, some six weeks. Make all consultations six weeks.  | Planning law sets out that an application to be designated as a neighbourhood area must be published for four weeks. It is appropriate for the SCI to reflect this period.   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 6.8                         | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.   | Paragraph 6.8 relates to the designation of a neighbourhood area. Planning law requires consultations for neighbourhood area designation to be available online, with a paper copy available at the council office.<br><br>Additional actions the council may choose include the issuing of a press release, the use of social media, the placing of a paper copy in libraries. These actions would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'. |
| CO1                          | 6.8                         | Paper copies of the application should be provided in parish/town council offices, libraries and perhaps schools.  | Paragraph 6.8 relates to the designation of a neighbourhood area. Planning law requires consultations for neighbourhood area designation to be available   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                      | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
|            |                      |  | <p>online, with a paper copy available at the council office.</p> <p>Additional actions the council may choose include the issuing of a press release, the use of social media, the placing of a paper copy in libraries. These actions would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p> <p>The use of schools as deposit locations is considered inappropriate with this giving rise to potential safeguarding issues when children are present and additional costs to the school in ensure buildings are open and staffed.</p> |
| CO1        | 6.8                  | Important to discuss area boundaries with new ward boundaries. | <p>The choice to prepare a neighbourhood development plan sites with the town or parish council unless the area is unparished. It is for the town or parish council to decide the neighbourhood area they wish to apply for.</p> <p>Planning law requires the council to accept applications to designate areas which are commensurate with a parish council boundary. Where</p>  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|--|--|
|            |                      |  | applications differ, other factors can be considered.  |
| CO1        | 6.8                  | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.   | <p>Paragraph 6.8 relates to the designation of a neighbourhood area. Planning law requires consultations for neighbourhood area designation to be available online, with a paper copy available at the council office.</p> <p>Additional actions the council may choose include the issuing of a press release, the use of social media, the placing of a paper copy in libraries. These actions would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p> <p>The use of schools as deposit locations is considered inappropriate with this giving rise to potential safeguarding issues when children are present and additional costs to ensure buildings are open.</p> |
| CO1        | 6.9                  | <p>With regard to the pre-submission plan stage and actions listed as 'will':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SEA should cover the impact of local plan development in the area.</li> </ul> | Strategic Environmental Assessment is a process which focuses on environmental impacts of plans, projects and programmes.  |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                              |                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good that the council will support the town/parish council with undertaking the SEA.</li> </ul> | SEA will consider the impacts of the proposals contained within the neighbourhood development plan.   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 6.10                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.   | <p>Paragraph 6.10 relates to initial draft consultations on a neighbourhood development plan. This stage of plan-making is led by the parish or town council with planning law placing no requirement on council. Notwithstanding, actions that the council 'may' choose are to publicise the plan on the council's website, issue a press release and provide a paper copy at the council office.</p> <p>These actions are considered reasonable to describe as 'may'.</p> |
| CO1                          | 6.10                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'.   | <p>Paragraph 6.10 relates to initial draft consultations on a neighbourhood development plan. This stage of plan-making is led by the parish or town council with planning law placing no requirement on council. Notwithstanding, actions that the council 'may' choose are to publicise the plan on the council's</p>   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
|            |                      |  | <p>website, issue a press release and provide a paper copy at the council office.</p> <p>These actions are considered reasonable to describe as 'may'.</p>  |
| CO1        | 6.10                 | <p>Paper copies should be provided at town/parish council offices and libraries.</p>   | <p>Paragraph 6.10 relates to initial draft consultations on a neighbourhood development plan. This stage of plan-making is led by the parish or town council with planning law placing no requirement on council. Notwithstanding, actions that the council 'may' choose are to publicise the plan on the council's website, issue a press release and provide a paper copy at the council office.</p> <p>These actions are considered reasonable to describe as 'may'.</p> |
| CO1        | 6.11                 | <p>With regard to the publication version and actions listed as 'will':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation should be for a minimum of six weeks and this should be the norm for all consultations.</li> <li>• Paper copies of the plan documents should be</li> </ul> | <p>As set out in paragraph 6.11, consultation on final draft local plan will be for a minimum period of six-weeks. This accords with planning law.</p> <p>A paper copy will be made available in the council offices in accordance with planning law.</p>   |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|                              |                      | available at town/parish councils and libraries.         | There is no requirement to make copies available in town or parish council offices, however should they choose to do so, this would be welcomed.   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 6.12                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'. | <p>Paragraph 6.12 relates to the publication of the submission neighbourhood development plan. Planning law requires the council to consult on the plan, making it available online and in the council office and to collate representations.</p> <p>Actions the council 'may' choose are listed as the issuing of a press release / e-newsletter, the use of social media and the summarising of representations.</p> <p>These actions would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p> |
| CO1                          | 6.12                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'. | Paragraph 6.12 relates to the publication of the submission neighbourhood development plan. Planning law requires the council to consult on the plan, making it available online and in the council  |



| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|                              |                      |  | <p>office and to collate representations.</p> <p>Actions the council 'may' choose are listed as the issuing of a press release / e-newsletter, the use of social media and the summarising of representations.</p> <p>These actions would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p>   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 6.14                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'. | <p>Paragraph 6.14 relates to the examination of a neighbourhood development plan. Planning law requires a number of actions including passing representations to the appointed examiner, funding the examination, answering any questions directed to the council from the examiner and making the examiners report available online.</p> <p>Actions the council 'may' choose are listed as notifying consultees and providing a summary of representations.</p> <p>These actions would be supplementary and as such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p> |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 6.18                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'. | <p>Paragraph 6.18 relates to the making (adoption) of a neighbourhood development plan. Planning law requires the council to publish the decision to make the plan on the website and notify people who asked to be notified.</p> <p>An action the council 'may' choose is listed as issuing a press release.</p> <p>This action would be supplementary and such it is reasonable to describe this as 'may'.</p> |

Section 7: Engagement process for planning applications

| Respondent           | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Woodley Town Council | 7.3                  | The document would benefit from providing links and / or directing readers to further information explaining 'Permitted Development' and 'Prior Approval'; i.e. what this cover and how it affects local processes like, for example, consultation. | New paragraph added after paragraph 7.4 providing a link to the Planning Portal website where further information can be found.  |
| Woodley Town Council | 7.4                  | The document would benefit from providing links and / or directing readers to further information explaining 'Permitted Development' and 'Prior Approval'; i.e. what this cover and how it affects local processes like, for example, consultation. | New paragraph added after paragraph 7.4 providing a link to the Planning Portal website where further information can be found.  |
| CO1                  | 7.5                  | In general, interpretation by the use of the words 'on balance' means in favour of the applicant.   | <p>Paragraph 7.5 sets out that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The structure of planning law therefore requires a decision to be made on balance. This balance may be in accordance with the development plan or towards an</p> |

| Respondent             | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|                        |                      |   | exception to aspects of the development plan where material considerations provide justification.  |
| Loddon Valley Ramblers | 7.6                  | Insert impact on rights of way and access into the list of material considerations.   | Paragraph 7.6 amended to insert reference to effect on public rights of way.   |
| CO1                    | 7.6                  | <p>With regard to material considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many considerations are simply ignored by the use of the words 'on balance'.</li> <li>• Comments 'not so' in relation to effects on listed buildings or conservation areas.</li> <li>• Comments hardly ever in relation to effects on trees and hedgerows, stating that houses come first.</li> <li>• Comments precedent in relation to previous planning decisions.</li> </ul> | <p>It is incorrect that material considerations are not taken into account.</p> <p>Relevant material considerations, including those raised in representations, are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| Wokingham Society      | 7.7                  | Amend the to add a full stop after 'consideration' and then a capital letter for 'However'.   | Paragraph 7.7 amended as suggested.  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---|--|
| CO1        | 7.7                  | Public interest generally is ignored as the development need seems to get priority. | <p>As set out in paragraph 7.5, planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>It is unclear what is meant by public interest, however, in the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| CO1        | 7.11                 | Comments needs more encouragement and incentives.                                   | <p>Paragraph 7.11 refers to the council's discretionary pre-application service which enables someone considering developing land or buildings is able to gain advice before proceeding to submit an application for planning permission.</p> <p>As stated, the council encourage the use of this service.</p>   |
| CO1        | 7.12                 | A very grey area, especially in rural areas.  | Comment noted.   |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                              |                      |  | <p>Paragraph 7.12 refers to actions someone proposing to make a planning application should take. As set out the council encourages positive engagement with local people.</p> <p>There are no mechanisms for the council to enforce actions which a person may choose to take.</p> |
| Wokingham Society            | 7.12                 | Insert hyperlink to the Localism Act.  | Paragraph 7.12 amended to make Localism Act 2011 a hyperlink.   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 7.12                 | No information is provided on how the council will discharge a person's obligation to bring a planning applications attention to those in vicinity of the site.  | <p>Paragraph 7.12 refers to actions someone proposing to make a planning application should take. As set out the council encourages positive engagement with local people.</p> <p>There are no mechanisms for the council to enforce actions which a person may choose to take.</p> |
| Wokingham Society            | 7.13                 | Comments that the text from the currently adopted SCI at para 6.7 which specifies the obligation of those promoting medium/large scale development to start community engagement at an early point and | Paragraph 7.12 amended to include text confirming that for larger proposals, engagement should start early and form an integral part of the initial design process.   |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|---|
|                     |                      | that it must form an integral part of the initial design process.   |   |
| Earley Town Council | 7.13                 | Correct typos by changing 'method' to 'methods'.  | Paragraph 7.13 amended as suggested.  |
| Earley Town Council | 7.13 / Table 1       | The adopted SCI had a column for what the developer must do. For householder applications this included displaying a site notice and said 'should', not 'shall'. The council should more strong encourage the display of site notices for all applications. | <p>Table 1 relates to actions someone proposing a planning application (e.g. a developer) should take before an application is submitted to the council.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.19 refers to actions once a planning application has been submitted. This confirms that where required by law, the council will display a planning notice on or near the application site. Where not required, the council will send a notice to the applicant and ask them to place this on display voluntarily. This is for all scales of proposed development.</p> |
| CO1                 | 7.14                 | Comments that it is very helpful to highlight that someone looking to submit a planning application should consider the comments raised through early engagement and amend the proposal if necessary.   | Comment noted.  |

| Respondent               | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| Shinfield Parish Council | 7.16                 | Paragraph 7.16 should be strengthened and incorporated with 7.15 as a “We Will Liaise with town and parish councils”. | <p>Paragraphs 7.15 and 7.16 relate to actions the council will and may take when they are aware that someone may be proposing a planning application in the future.</p> <p>The actions state we will encourage the potential applicant to consult with the community, and the council may liaise with the town or parish council.</p> <p>Within a pre-application context, the council may not be able to share information received due to confidentiality issues. It is appropriate that liaison is listed as an action that may be undertaken where relevant.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, it is accepted that the reference to encouraging consultation with the community could expressly refer to town and parish councils and has been amended accordingly.</p> |
| Earley Town Council      | 7.16                 | It should be made clear that town and parish councils are a consultee in statute.                                     | Whilst town and parish councils are a statutory consultee for planning applications, paragraph 7.16 refers to actions that may be taken before  |



| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                | Council response   |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|                              |                      |  | <p>an application is submitted to the council.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.15 states that the council will encourage applicants to consult the community. This would include the town or parish council, however the paragraph has been amended to expressly state this.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.16 states that the council may liaise with town and parish councils where relevant. Within a pre-application context, the council may not be able to share information received due to confidentiality issues. It is appropriate that liaison is listed as an action that may be undertaken and where relevant.</p> |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 7.16                 | The actions listed as 'may' should be changed to 'will'. | <p>Paragraph 7.16 relates to actions a person proposing a planning application should take before submission. The specific reference is to the council liaison with Town and Parish Councils where relevant.</p> <p>With the requirement within the section falling to the person preparing a planning application, it is not reasonable to place a</p>  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation                                | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|--|--|
|            |                      |  | <p>requirement on the council who may not be aware of the persons intention. Further, within a pre-application context, the council may not be able to share information received due to confidentiality issues. It is appropriate that liaison is lists as an action that may be undertaken and where relevant.</p>   |
| CO1        | 7.16                 | Comments that liaise with town/parish council is a must. | <p>Whilst town and parish councils are a statutory consultee for planning applications, paragraph 7.16 refers to actions that may be taken before an application is submitted to the council.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.15 states that the council will encourage applicants to consult the community. This would include the town or parish council, however the paragraph has been amended to expressly state this.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.16 states that the council may liaise with town and parish councils where relevant. Within a pre-application context, the council may not be able to share information received due to confidentiality issues. It is appropriate that liaison is lists as an</p> |

| Respondent                            | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                                       |                      |  | action that may be undertaken and where relevant.   |
| Wokingham Society                     | 7.17                 | Correct grammar by removing the redundant 'by' in front of 'via' in the second line.   | Paragraph 7.17 amended as suggested.  |
| Surrey County Council                 | 7.18                 | Public Service Infrastructure (PSI) applications are only allowed 18 day consultations.  | Paragraph 7.18 amended to refer to most types of planning application requiring 21 days consultation.   |
| Arborfield and Newland Parish Council | 7.19                 | Support the extending the consultation period for major applications from 21 to 28 days.   | Supported noted.  |
| Winnersh Parish Council               | 7.19                 | Support the extending the consultation period for major applications from 21 to 28 days.   | Support noted.  |
| Earley Town Council                   | 7.19                 | Comments that planning law has requires notification of neighbours that adjoin the site and are opposite. The adopted SCI refers to consulting properties on opposite the site where separated by road, footpath of similar feature. | <p>Paragraph 7.19 refers to posting letters to neighbours adjoining the application site.</p> <p>The SCI being quoted by the respondent is that adoption in 2014, which was superseded by a the currently adopted SCI in 2019.</p> <p>Planning law requires notification of a planning application to be sent to adjoining properties. The council's interpretation is that this excludes</p> |

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|---|
|                     |                      |   | <p>properties separated by features such as roads.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the council consults a wider number of properties beyond those adjoining the application site where it is considered reasonable based on the scale and nature of the proposal. Paragraph 7.20 has been amended to refer to this under 'may'.</p>   |
| Earley Town Council | 7.19                 | Town and parish councils should be notified of applications in adjoining areas.   | <p>Planning law requires notification of a planning application to be sent to the town or parish council in which the application is situated.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the council will consult wider town and parish councils where it is considered reasonable based on the scale and nature of the proposal. Paragraph 7.20 has been amended to refer to this under 'may'.</p> |
| ID9                 | 7.19                 | Notification of people affected by planning development should be strengthened with only those adjoining the application site notified at present. Even really minor applications have an impact beyond immediate neighbours. | <p>Paragraph 7.19 refers to posting letters to neighbours adjoining the application site.</p> <p>The SCI being quoted by the respondent is that adoption in 2014,</p>   |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------|----------------------|--|---|
|            |                      |  | <p>which was superseded by a the currently adopted SCI in 2019.</p> <p>Planning law requires notification of a planning application to be sent to adjoining properties. The council's interpretation is that this excludes properties separated by features such as roads.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the council consults a wider number of properties beyond those adjoining the application site where it is considered reasonable based on the scale and nature of the proposal. Paragraph 7.20 has been amended to refer to this under 'may'.</p> |
| ID8        | 7.19                 | <p>Comment that where development is proposed with a wider ownership, e.g. development within a wider caravan park owned by the applicant, that consultation should extend beyond that of the freehold ownership</p> | <p>Planning law requires notification of a planning application to be sent to adjoining properties. The council's interpretation is that this excludes properties separated by features such as roads.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the council consults a wider number of properties beyond those adjoining the application site where it is considered reasonable based on the scale and nature of the proposal.</p>   |

| Respondent                   | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                              |                      |  | Paragraph 7.20 has been amended to refer to this under 'may'.   |
| Historic England             | 7.20                 | Suggests either referring to statutory consultees or adding Historic England to the list of agencies mentioned.  | <p>Paragraph 7.20 provides give sthe example of the Environment Agency and Natural England when referring to other organisations that may be consulted.</p> <p>There is not necessary to provide an exhaustive list, however Historic England has been added.</p>   |
| Finchampstead Parish Council | 7.20                 | Amend listed actions from 'may' to 'will where applicable'.  | As set out in paragraph 1.7, those actions which go beyond lawful requirements are often set out as things the council 'may' do. Many of these actions are taken, however there will be occasions when it will not be practicable or appropriate to do all of them. |
| CO1                          | 7.20                 | With regard to the statement that the council may consult with other organisations, that this is not always.   | As set out in paragraph 7.20 other organisations are consulted where applicable. This will not be the case in all circumstances.  |
| Surrey County Council        | 7.21                 | Does the publication of responses take account of PAS advice that this is not a requirement and that full redaction and consideration needs to be done before publication. | As set out in paragraph 2.5, the council will protect residents by redacting sensitive information before it is made public, such as personal addresses, phone  |

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                   |                      | <p>Suggest setting expectation on retention of published comments, e.g. removal after a number of years.</p>   | <p>numbers, email addresses, and dates of birth.</p> <p>Document retention is beyond the scope of the SCI.</p>  |
| Wokingham Society | 7.21                 | <p>Comments that reference to registering to have an opportunity to speak at planning committee is misleading with registration not guaranteeing the right to speak.</p> <p>The rules for this are set out in the council's guidance on 'Who Can Speak', which specifies that "objectors or supporters ... must live within the ward(s) of the relevant application under consideration or be directly affected by the proposed development – or have been asked to speak by someone who meets either of these criteria".</p> <p>An organisation such as the Wokingham Society, with a general concern for development across the whole town of Wokingham must (by chance rather than design) either have a suitable spokesperson who lives in the relevant ward(s) or be invited to speak by a non-member who does.</p> | <p>The government requires planning applications to be determined within a timely fashion and there are usually several planning applications to be considered at the meeting. To ensure timely decision making the time available for public speaking needs to be limited.</p> <p>There is a total of 9 minutes public speaking time at a Planning Committee meeting divided between various parties.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.21 refers to providing an opportunity to speak at Planning Committee. It is accepted that whilst opportunity exists, where multiple people wish to speak, the time permitted would not allow for everyone to speak and that interested people are requested to coordinate their input through nominating a spokes person.</p> |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response   |
|------------|----------------------|---|--|
|            |                      | <p>While we would hope that the Wokingham Society might be regarded under para. 4.4 as a 'civic amenity group' if this carries entitlement to register to speak, we would at least urge that this bullet point be amended by adding after "register to speak at Planning Committee" "(but see the Council's guidance on "Who Can Speak" under the rules for a Planning Committee meeting)", and provide digital link.</p> | <p>A footnote has been added to the bullet referencing the council's website on how an interested person can find out more.</p>  |
| CO1        | 7.21                 | <p>Comments that three minutes is insufficient for someone to speak at Planning Committee.</p>  | <p>There is no limit to the volume of written representations that can be made in connection with a planning application.</p> <p>The Government requires planning applications to be determined within a timely fashion and there are usually several planning applications to be considered at the meeting. To ensure timely decision making the time available for public speaking needs to be limited.</p> <p>There is a total of 9 minutes public speaking time at a Planning Committee meeting divided between various parties.</p> |



| Respondent           | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| CO1                  | 7.23                 | Comments from local people are generally just ignored.   | <p>It is incorrect that matters raised in representations, are ignored. All representations are carefully considered alongside the views of others, technical information and planning law, policy and guidance.</p> <p>In the case of planning applications, the views of people who have made representations are summarised within the officer report, with the matters raised visibly considered and responded to.</p> |
| Earley Town Council  | 7.25                 | It should be made clear that Planning Committee must consider an Officer's recommendations and of the financial implications of an appeal arising is not a consideration the Committee must account for. | The council has limited resources. All councillors have a fiduciary duty to ensure that public resources are not wasted. Whilst the cost of an appeal is not a material planning consideration, the failure to adequately substantiate reasons for refusal would constitute unreasonable behaviour and expose the council to an award of costs against it.   |
| Woodley Town Council | 7.25                 | The document would benefit from a greater explanation of the 'listing' process; i.e. which applications are considered by Officers, and which can be listed and how.                                     | This is set out in the council's Constitution which is available on the website.   |

| Respondent        | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response   |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| CO1               | 7.26                 | Comments that three minutes is insufficient for someone to speak at Planning Committee, denying the ability to make a substantive case against the officer report. | <p>There is no limit to the volume of written representations that can be made in connection with a planning application.</p> <p>The Government requires planning applications to be determined within a timely fashion and there are usually several planning applications to be considered at the meeting. To ensure timely decision making the time available for public speaking needs to be limited.</p> <p>There is a total of 9 minutes public speaking time at a Planning Committee meeting divided between various parties.</p> |
| CO1               | 7.27                 | Notification of the decisions should be sent to all those who have commented on the planning application.  | Notification is sent to all those that commented on an application.  |
| Wokingham Society | 7.28                 | Amend the second line after "In these" to add "cases".   | Paragraph 7.28 amended as suggested.   |
| CO1               | 7.28                 | Officers in the past have based planning decisions on cost which is not a planning matter.   | Paragraph 7.28 explains that an applicant may appeal the decision  |

| Respondent | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation | Council response                              |
|------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---|
|            |                      |                           | of the council to refuse planning permission. |

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Section 8: Dealing with unauthorised development

| Respondent          | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation  | Council response  |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| Earley Town Council | 8                    | It would be useful to provide an explanation of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the process of allowing a retrospective planning application, and the process by which the expedience of enforcement is considered.  | <p>The presumption in favour of sustainable development is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>Retrospective applications are allowed by legislation. An explanation of enforcement principles and procedures is provided within Local Planning Enforcement Plan which is references and linked to from this section.</p> <p>Enforcement policy falls outside the scope of the SCI, which relates to engagement throughout the land use planning process.</p> |
| CO1                 | 8                    | The council has failed in this area. The council has excellent officers but there is a policy of how to appease the unauthorised developer by getting them to submit a planning application and recommending it is approved. Developers consider the council to be a soft touch and they can get away with whatever they want. | <p>The council operates an effective enforcement team which investigates an average of 1000 alleged breaches of planning each year and serves more enforcement notices than any of the other Berkshire Authorities.</p> <p>The council’s approach to planning enforcement is in line with the national Planning practice Guidance</p>   |

| Respondent           | Section or paragraph | Summary of representation   | Council response  |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|---|
|                      |                      |   | <p>and is set out within the Local Planning Enforcement Plan.</p> <p>Where works have been carried out without permission, a person has the right under planning law to submit a retrospective application for those works.</p> |
| Woodley Town Council | 8.2                  | Insert hyperlink to the Local Planning and Enforcement Plan.  | Paragraph 8.2 amended to make Local Planning and Enforcement Plan a hyperlink.  |
| Wokingham Society    | 8.3                  | Insert hyperlink to the GOV.UK website.   | Paragraph 8.3 amended to make National Planning Policy Framework a hyperlink.   |
| Wokingham Society    | 8.4                  | Comments that there should be a method of reporting a breach of planning by phone or in writing. Details should be added. | Paragraph 8.4 amended to reflect that the council website is the best way to report a suspected breach of planning, but someone way also write to the council or call the customer line.  |
| Wokingham Society    | 8.5                  | Insert hyperlink to the Local Planning and Enforcement Plan.  | Paragraph 8.5 amended to make Local Planning and Enforcement Plan a hyperlink.  |

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