

Statement of Community Involvement

November 2018

Community languages

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Bengali

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Chinese

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Gujarati

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Hindi

यदि आपको अंग्रेजी के अलावा किसी और भाषा में आसानी से बात कर सकते हैं तो कृपया अवश्य करें। दोभाषिया और अनुवादक का प्रबन्ध किया जा सकता है। टेलिफोन : **020 8726 6000**.

Punjabi

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Somali

Haddii ay kula tahay in si fudud laguugu fahmi karo luqo aan ahayn Ingiriisi, Fadlan samee sidaa. Afceliyeyaal iyo tarjubaano ayaa lagu qaban. Telifoonku waa 020 8726 6000.

Tamil

உங்களுக்கு ஆங்கிலம் தனியே வேறு மொழியில் பேசுவதற்கு எளிதாக இருந்தால், தயவு செய்து பேசவும். மொழி பெயர்ப்பாளர்கள் வழங்கப்படுவார்கள். தொ. **020 8726 6000**.

Turkish

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Urdu

اگر آپ انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی اور زبان میں بات کرنے میں آسانی محسوس کرتے ہیں تو ازراہ کرم ایسا ہی کیجئے۔ آپ کیلئے ترجمان اور تحریری ترجمہ کرنے والے فراہم کیے جاسکتے ہیں۔ ٹیلی فون نمبر: **020 8726 6000**.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for the London Borough of Croydon. An SCI is a document that explains the process by which a local authority involves the community and other stakeholders in two key processes that affect the spatial development of an area: the formulation of the Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications.
- 1.2 The document is divided into three key parts. There is a brief introduction to the Local Plan which aims to describe the processes by which the Council makes spatial plans for the local area. The next section focuses on planning applications and the possibilities for community involvement in considering these. The final part includes important details about the Council's system for monitoring and reviewing its community involvement practices.
- 1.3 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was first adopted in August 2007 and was based on a series of community involvement commitments made by the Council including:
 - **Involving Croydon people**
 - **Being clear and reasonable**
 - **Working together**
 - **Supporting people to be involved**
 - **Taking positive action to involve people (as per the Equality Act 2010)**
 - **Providing Feedback**
- 1.4 This document is a revision of the previous SCI published October 2012, and has been updated to comply with new legislation.
- 1.5 This SCI was revised by the Council in November 2018 and adopted by the Council on 21st January 2019.

2 The Local Plan

- 2.1 The Local Plan is the council's Development Plan Document that outlines the spatial strategy for the local area¹. Croydon's Local Plan was adopted on 27 February 2018. The Local Plan spatially expresses the vision and priorities of the 'We are Croydon' vision and Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) into a spatial vision, strategic objectives and planning policies for the borough. The vision and SCS set out the scale and nature of change that is expected over the coming years in Croydon and are the touchstone for all other strategies and plans in the borough, ensuring that the same vision and priorities are met and that we are consistent and act together to create a better place in which to live and work. The overarching vision and strategy within these two documents do not only take account of Council services but of programmes operated by all agencies operating within the borough. The vision and key themes are set out in Figure 1 below.
- 2.2 The Local Plan has an important role to play as it determines how land will be used and developed. In doing so, the Local Plan will often address issues that go beyond the physical use of land, but this should ultimately result in a more sustainable form of development.



Figure 1: We are Croydon vision themes

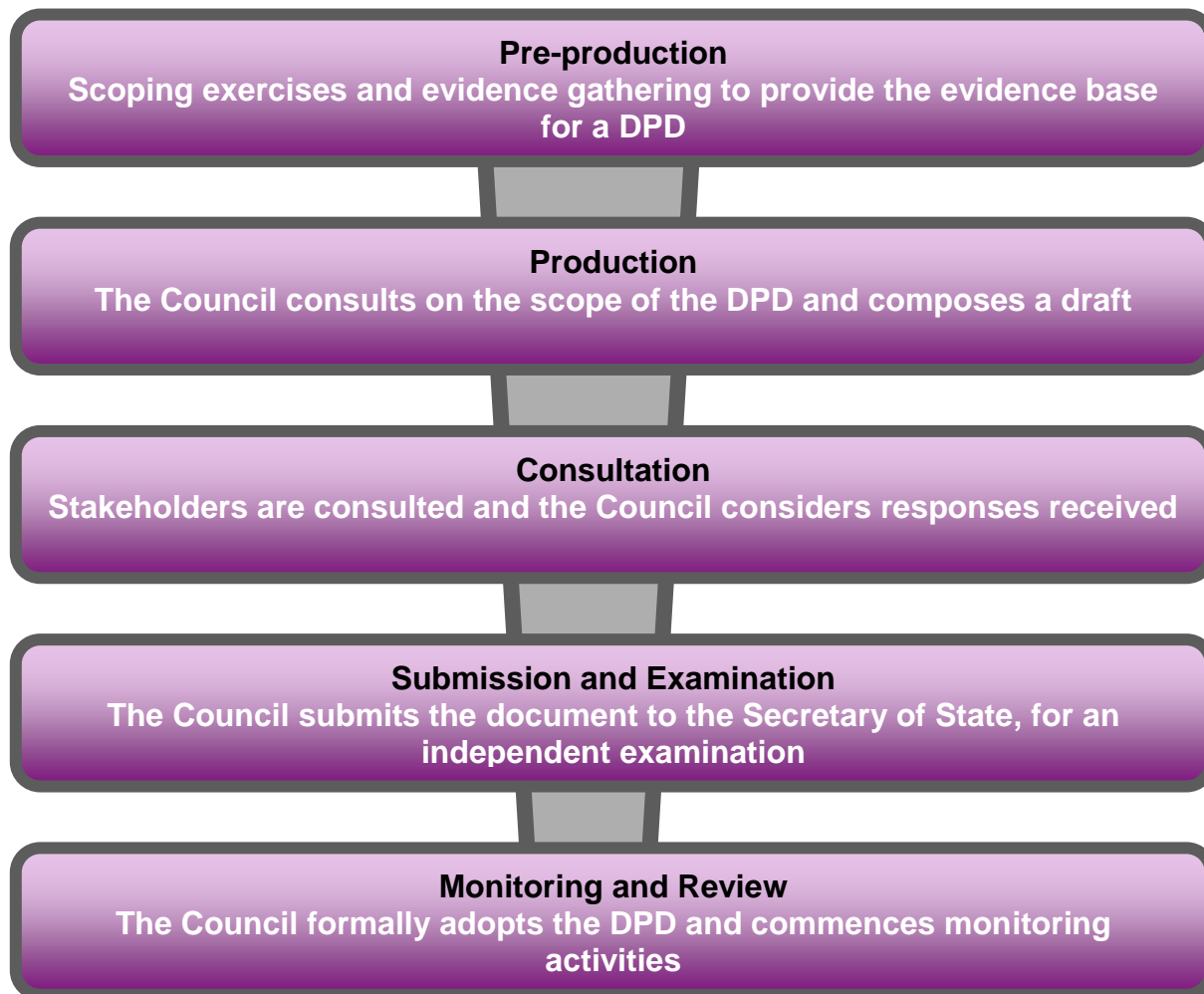
- 2.3 Within the Local Plan there are a number of statutory and non-statutory planning documents that are used by Croydon to achieve the boroughs long term vision.

¹ Central government legislation sets out the requirements for Local Development Documents in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 (as amended).

Development Plan Documents

- 2.4 Development Plan Documents (DPDs) form a major part of Croydon's planning policy framework. They include policies and proposals for specific areas of land and are subject to the regulations set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Local Authorities are required to publish details of their DPDs along with a timetable showing when they are to be prepared and revised in their Local Development Scheme, which is available to download on the website.
- 2.5 Sustainability Appraisals (SA) are an integral part of producing DPDs and are designed to promote sustainable development through improved integration of sustainability considerations in the preparation and adoption of strategic plans. The first stage of an SA is a scoping report which identifies Croydon's aims for sustainable development and this forms the basis for consultation. SAs are conducted at the same time as the first two stages illustrated in Figure 2 below. Once the DPD is adopted, its effects are monitored by further appraisal.

Figure 2: Indicative stages in the Preparation of DPD



Supplementary Planning Documents

2.6 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) make up another key part of Croydon's local planning policy framework. They contain detailed guidance on various planning matters regarding application, further explanation and amplification of the policies in DPDs. They can include design guides, area development briefs and masterplans. SPDs are drafted in a similar way to DPDs (as illustrated in Figure 2); however they are not subject to the submission and examination stage and usually do not require Sustainability Appraisals if they're related to a DPD which was subject to an SA. Stakeholder engagement and consultation informs and aids the production of an SPD. Croydon has utilised Interim Planning Guidance (IPG) documents in the past (e.g. Croydon Metropolitan Centre masterplans prior to the production of the Local Plan). IPGs are subject to exactly the same formulation processes as SPDs and while they are not technically part of the borough's Local Plan they carry weight in planning terms which means they are considered a material planning consideration when deciding planning applications.

Duty to Co-operate

2.7 The Local Plan is intended to be the main delivery mechanism for all strategies and plans that affect development and the environment in an area. Therefore, the Local Plan needs to be assembled in close liaison and co-operation with all other prescribed bodies on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. Many, but not all of these strategies and plans, are subject to their own community and stakeholder involvement requirements. The government introduced a 'Duty to Co-operate' in the Localism Act 2011 which requires Croydon to work with neighbouring authorities and other public bodies involved in planning when it comes to tackling issues at a larger than local scale. Examples include cross borough infrastructure such as flood defences, transport improvements and waste management (the South London Waste Partnership has produced a Joint Waste Plan DPD for Sutton, Merton, Kingston and Croydon) which is currently being reviewed to set out what will happen with waste after 2021. This is due to be adopted in March 2021.

2.8 The 'duty to co-operate':

- relates to sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas;
- requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues;
- requires that councils and public bodies 'engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis' to develop strategic policies; and
- requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan making.

Neighbourhood Planning

2.9 As part of the government's drive to empower communities, neighbourhood forums are able to produce Neighbourhood Plans which support the delivery of strategic policies in Local Plans. The Localism Act 2011 gave power to local communities by allowing them to positively plan their own areas using Neighbourhood Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and the Community Right to Build. Neighbourhood Plans are classified as DPDs and will make up part of the Local Plan. If you would like more information about Neighbourhood Planning, please

visit the Neighbourhood Planning pages on the Council's website:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework/neighbourhood/neighbourhoodplan> and

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework/neighbourhood/devorder>

Croydon's approach to Plan Making consultations

- 2.10 The planning system is an important part of our democracy. It provides the opportunity for different views and opinions about development to be expressed by individuals, groups, stakeholders and organisations. Importantly, it allows people to have their say about the future of their neighbourhoods, communities and areas. This section identifies some of the different types of community involvement that will be used in the preparation of planning documents. One of the Council's chief aims is to offer access to those people and groups who are difficult to reach by traditional planning consultation methods. Furthermore, the Council is committed to meeting the needs of all stakeholders to encourage greater participation in the planning process. Croydon intends to achieve effective community involvement in the creation of development plans by:
- Enabling the community and stakeholders to put forward their own ideas and to participate in the development of options and proposals rather than simply commenting on Council generated ideas
 - Investigating community and stakeholders' problems, needs, and concerns at the earliest possible stage
 - Offering an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to respond to, comment upon, criticise and support policies and proposals
- 2.11 Croydon communicates by:
- Giving advance notice through the Local Development Scheme to the community and all stakeholders of the intention to prepare a new plan or planning document
 - Informing the community and stakeholders about policies and proposals early in the process
 - Providing feedback on how views and comments have affected decision making and the influence they have had on the development of a plan or document
- 2.12 Care will be taken to ensure that when workshops, conferences and events are planned for community involvement, venues are accessible and useable by all people and groups. Where possible, events will be held in buildings accessible by a choice of transport (including public transport) and have access facilities for disabled groups or those with mobility problems. Where appropriate, and when sufficient advance warning is given, translation, signing services, microphones and loop induction systems can be made available.
- 2.13 After Development Plan Document and Supplementary Planning Document consultations, comments are recorded and analysed. In the case of a DPD, a record will be made of all responses received, together with the council's response to each representation. In the case of an SPD, the statement will incorporate only a summary of the main issues raised.

Table 1 How Croydon involves stakeholders

Ways in which Croydon involves the community and stakeholders:
<p>Local Plan consultee database</p> <p>The council has a list of organisations and stakeholders for consultation and engagement purposes which is kept as up to date as is practicable. Those on this list form the consultee database and will be consulted during the preparation of planning documents. The council is also required to engage with landowners and developers as part of the planning process. Apart from the general opportunity for engagement through the statutory consultation process, the council seeks to directly engage landowners and developers through the preparation of DPDs, SPDs and Masterplans, in order to ensure that development on key sites is deliverable. All consultees on the database shall be consulted by email or letter if requested informing them of planning consultations. Any person/organisation is free to sign up to be on the consultee database.</p>
<p>Printed media and libraries</p> <p>Where required, adverts are placed in local newspapers and Council communications (e.g. magazines, e-bulletins) promoting upcoming consultation periods and events. In addition the Council aims to supply articles outlining the purpose of consultations and their associated events through press releases. Libraries are sent all consultation reports along with promotional material, such as posters, for display on public notice boards.</p>
<p>Web pages</p> <p>There is a wealth of information about the Local Plan online at https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework/localplan You will find information about the plan-making system and updates informing you of progress in the production of the Local Plan. Croydon Council advocates online consultation, please visit the Council's consultation webpage at: https://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Social media and interactive websites</p> <p>Sites such as Facebook, Twitter and the Council's Your Croydon website have been utilised to reach as many people as possible and to introduce an interactive approach to consultation. Social media changes rapidly and the Council will seek to utilise the most effective mediums when engaging with stakeholders.</p>
<p>Workshops, drop in events, information stands and joint consultations</p> <p>Workshops, information stands and bespoke engagement exercises will accompany consultation periods (where appropriate and proportionate to the consultation subject matter). In addition, the Spatial Planning Service will try and collaborate with our partners from external organisations and internal Council departments on joint consultation events in order to reduce consultation fatigue and amalgamate resources.</p>
<p>Engaging less visible members of the community</p> <p>Examples of those who commonly experience barriers to participation include: people with mental health conditions, people with learning difficulties and disabilities, Gypsies and Travellers, people undergoing/considering or who have undergone gender reassignment, older and young people, pregnant and breastfeeding women, asylum seekers, refugees, people with caring responsibilities, people on low incomes or benefits, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual and transgender (LGBT).</p> <p>Some people may not want to participate because sharing their experiences could</p>

compromise their privacy. Some people face barriers due to their location e.g. areas of high deprivation. Croydon encourages a broad range of people to participate. Representative groups are regularly engaged in order to advise the Council about how to consult certain groups. The Council will often use groups, such as Croydon Voluntary Action, to help publicise and assist public consultations. Opportunities for people to participate in supportive and safe environments, where they feel their privacy will be protected, or via technology such as the internet, also offer useful solutions. The Council will continue to engage with representative groups (such as the Community Networks and Croydon Youth Parliament) in order to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

3 Planning Applications

- 3.1 Croydon Council makes decisions on thousands of applications each year and it is vital that the community and stakeholders are involved in making decisions in this process. Applications are normally determined in accordance with the policies and proposals of the statutory development plan for the area (at present this comprises the London Plan, the Croydon Local Plan 2018 and the South London Waste Plan 2012). Whenever an application is determined contrary to the provisions of the development plan, there should be specific and justified material considerations for doing so. There is a requirement set out in planning law to consult a specific body, who are then under a duty to respond providing advice on the proposal in question. These consultees are set out in Planning Practice Guidance. Community involvement in considering planning applications can be an important means of identifying such reasons. Community involvement can also help shape proposals so that they are more acceptable and appropriate.

Table 2 Community and stakeholder involvement in planning applications

Online Planning Register

The online planning register allows you to view current and previous applications. The register includes planning appeals, planning decisions (including decision notices) and drawings. Users can now register on the system and create and save searches on properties and areas. Organisations and individuals will be able to set an alert for when a new application within their prescribed search criteria is received. Additionally they will be able to set a “tracking” feature, to automatically send an email when an application is going to committee or the decision has been issued. For more information:

<http://publicaccess2.croydon.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Local Publication

Information regarding planning proposals is published in the Croydon Guardian if they affect: conservation areas, listed buildings or public rights of way, major developments consisting of 10 or more dwellings, employment development consisting of at least 1,000m² floor space, developments on sites of 1 hectare or more, waste management development relating to mineral extraction, other developments likely to be of wider interest to the community (such as applications for telecommunications masts), and developments which are departures from the policies of the development plan.

Site notices

Site notices are now only displayed on or near a site for major developments and in the case of applications affecting the character and appearance of conservation areas and/or listed buildings and their setting. The number of site notices will depend on the circumstances of the case. Major proposals affecting a wider area will have more site notices. The notices will be fixed to lampposts and other street furniture near to applications sites. The site notices will be weather proofed through the use of laminates to ensure legibility for the life of the notice.

Neighbour notification

For all other applications, a neighbour notification letter is sent in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 which states that planning applications must be publicised by giving requisite notice by site notice in at least one place on or near the land to which the application relates for not less than 21 days or by serving the notice on any adjoining owner or occupier. Whilst the legislation states that the Council should be serving notice on any “adjoining” owner or occupier, the Council has decided that it will widen the scope of consultation as appropriate and on a case by case basis, especially where development might be of

interest to those living on the opposite side of the street. The Council also adopts a pragmatic approach and notifies residents where they are separated by a public footpath or a rear access road.

Pre-application consultation

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a duty governing consultation before applying for planning permission and The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) reflects the importance of early engagement and seeks to encourage local planning authorities to encourage prospective developers to engage with the local community and where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees (such as the highways or local flood authority), before submitting their planning application and the prospective developer must have regard to any advice that the local planning authority may have provided. The developer should have regard to any comments or responses generated by the consultation undertaken when deciding whether to make any changes to their proposals before submitting their planning applications. The outputs of such consultation (if undertaken) should be detailed as part of any subsequent planning application.

- 3.2 The Council publicise applications by neighbour notification, on site and in some circumstances in local newspapers. There is also information on the council's website. However it should be noted that it doesn't matter how stakeholders hear about a proposal, anyone can submit comments on an application. The site notice or press advertisement explains where the planning application can be viewed. The statutory register containing the application details is available by visiting Access Croydon on the ground floor of Bernard Weatherill House, 9.00am to 4.00pm on Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays) and is also viewable via our web site (<http://publicaccess2.croydon.gov.uk/online-applications/>). We strongly recommend that you look at an application before commenting on it.
- 3.3 The planning case officer assesses the planning applications taking into account the planning policies that apply to the proposal, other material considerations and their judgement of the impact it will have. This will be based upon the site visit, the responses from people and organisations consulted on the application and any views expressed by people interested in the application (such as neighbours). The publicity requirements mean that we will not receive all of the relevant views until about a month after the Council register the application and this will be longer in some cases. It is a requirement of planning law that we make all planning decisions in accordance with the provisions of the development plan. For guidance on making a planning application please visit:
<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/make-application/advice>

4 Monitoring

What happens after a public consultation?

- 4.1 After Development Plan Document and Supplementary Planning Document consultations, a Statement of Participation shall be produced and published on the Council's website. The statement shall include comments from the public and the Council's replies. In the case of a DPD, a record will be made of all responses received, together with the council's response to each representation. In the case of an SPD, the statement will incorporate only a summary of the main issues raised.

Measures of success: accessibility, satisfaction, equality

- 4.2 The success of the SCI initiatives will be measured by:
- how effectively the community and local groups have been able to access the Local Plan documents and supporting information
 - the level of involvement of equality groups
 - the level of satisfaction expressed by respondents to the publication and consultation process
- 4.3 The overall level of success will be measured in part through the responses to Local Plan consultation exercises, and through complaints received by the planning department, particularly with regard to consultations on planning applications. Where there is evidence of substantial dissatisfaction with the existing procedures for consultation on either planning policy documents or planning applications the council will consider the need for revisions to the SCI. Additionally, when a DPD or SPD has been the subject of public consultation the council will review it in the light of the comments received and may then make changes, as appropriate. Where a document has had an Examination the comments from the Inspector on matters covered by the SCI will be taken into account.
- 4.4 Monitoring reports can include information about issues such as, net additional affordable housing, Five Year Housing Supply, Vacancy rates within Local and District Centres as well as the Croydon Metropolitan Centre, Community Infrastructure Levy receipts and what projects are funded through CIL, the number of neighbourhood plans that have been adopted, and action taken under the duty to co-operate. Information is required to be published online and in council offices.

Opportunities for feedback

For queries related to the SCI please contact the Spatial Planning Service:

Spatial Planning Service
6th Floor Zone B
Croydon Council
Bernard Weatherill House
Mint Walk
Croydon
CR0 1EA

Phone: 020 8407 1385

E-mail: LDF@Croydon.gov.uk

5 Appendix

The development plan system and statutory consultees

5.1 The current planning system as it affects London consists of:

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The London Plan
- Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plans

5.2 All three levels of planning affect Croydon's development. The Local Plan must generally conform to the principles stated in the London Plan and be consistent with the national planning policy framework. The Council is legally obliged to publish a 'sound' plan for public consultation. For a plan to be 'sound' in law it is required to be **positively prepared, justified, effective** and **consistent with national policy**. In order for the plans to be considered justified and effective, they must be:

- Founded on a robust and credible evidence base
- The most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives
- Deliverable
- Flexible
- Capable of being monitored

5.3 The bodies and organisations to be consulted under the planning regulations are extensive and subject to organisational change and amendments to the regulations. All planning documents are sent to these groups for formal consultations. The specific and general consultees are defined in various pieces of legislation (see links below):

If you would like to see copies of the legislation and guidance governing the planning system please see:

National planning policy documents and guidance

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>

Planning Practice Guidance - Statutory Consultees see paragraph 3.1

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consultation-and-pre-decision-matters#Statutory-consultees-on-applications>

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>

Localism Act 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

Planning Act 2008 (Part 9)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents>

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) (as amended)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

Local Plan Checklist

<https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/pas-topics/local-plans/local-plan-checklist>

Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (as amended)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>