

Engaging the community in Ebbsfleet

Guidance for planning applicants to get more from engaging the community on your planning application



Contents

How to use this guidance note	3
EDC's vision for engaging in Ebbsfleet	4
Introduction to the process	6
Stage 1: Prepare a community engagement brief	7
Stage 2: Promoting your engagement opportunities	10
Stage 3: Delivering engagement events	12
Stage 4: Keeping the conversation going	16
Stage 5: Statement of Community Involvement	18
Appendices	20

01

How to use this guidance note

EDCs requirements for community engagement in Ebbsfleet.

Local authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as part of their Local Development Framework. The SCI should set out how a local authority will consult people and organisations through community engagement when preparing development plan documents, non-statutory guidance documents, or when applications for planning permission are received, and when applicants in the planning process undertake community engagement themselves.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) want communities across Ebbsfleet and neighbouring areas, to be actively involved in the planning decisions that shape their future. However, plan-making powers have not been transferred to EDC and so we refer to the Local Development Frameworks for the local authorities of Dartford and Gravesham when determining applications for planning permission.

In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 137 which states that: 'Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot' and

with reference to the standards required by the Statement of Community Involvement for Dartford Borough Council (adopted December 2017), Gravesham Borough Council (adopted October 2019), and Kent County Council (adopted 2021).

EDC have produced this guidance to define our expectations for community engagement within planning applications determined by EDC. If you are unsure whether this guidance applies to your proposals due to their nature or scale then please contact the planning team at EDC.

Details of the community engagement requirements for Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Kent County Council are set out in **Appendix 1**.



02

Our vision for engaging in Ebbsfleet

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) has embraced co-design to engage the community in the planning and design of projects in Ebbsfleet, and this document sets out a best practice approach for applicants to apply this in the planning process.

EDC is seeking to use co-design to actively involve all relevant stakeholders (e.g. local communities and businesses) in the design process from the beginning. Co-design provides a collaborative approach where stakeholders have a significant role in shaping the outcome of a proposal. This method promotes shared decision-making and aims to create solutions that align with the needs of the community.

Traditional 'consultation' tends to seek feedback from the community and stakeholders at the end of the design process when most key decisions have already been made. The decision-making power typically remains with the organisers, and engagement is often one-way. These events can be poorly attended, with seldom heard groups particularly under-represented, and some people finding it difficult to express themselves in formal environments, all of which leads to limited opportunities for people to participate in meaningful engagement.

Community engagement should use co-design to create a culture of collaboration and trust, where everyone involved understands what they are able to influence and achieve from the outset, so that they can contribute according to their capacities and build relationships between local communities, stakeholders, applicants and the planning authority.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation aims to promote a continuous dialogue, involving a range of groups and networks in more comfortable and approachable environments to deliver better places and a more democratic engagement process.

The role of the design team is to facilitate this process, by planning activities that enable the local community to better understand the opportunities and constraints of the proposed project and it's site, and contribute their ideas, experiences, and opinions.

'Major applications' should follow the five steps set out below to embed co-design within a best-practice community engagement process. Applicants for other types of application should liaise with the planning team to agree on the preferred approach for their project type.

Stage 1 Prepare a Community Engagement Brief

Stage 2 Promoting your engagement

Stage 3 Deliver an engagement event

Stage 4 Keep the conversation going

Stage 5 Submit a Statement of Community Involvement



STAGE 1: PREPARE A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BRIEF

A Community Engagement Brief should be presented at the first pre-application meeting with the EDC planning team. EDC has created a checklist to help guide what a Community Engagement Brief should include to maximise the effectiveness of engagement activities within planning applications in Ebbsfleet.

The Community Engagement Brief should address each stage of the design process with a level of detail and scope of engagement aligned with the scale of the proposal. The Brief will act as an informal guide to document the extent and nature of engagement that the applicant will carry out in the process of preparing their planning application. It is likely to be a 'working draft' that can easily be updated, and will need to be flexible to adapt to changes in the project and community responses. It should consider the following engagement practices.

1.1 Who will you engage with ?

- Describe who you have identified as the key audiences that you need to engage with. This should consider the demographics of the local community, any local community groups, key businesses or organisations in the area. EDC can provide further information on the key demographics within the local community from our resident satisfaction surveys.
- Consider the geographic area that your project is likely to impact. This may include both new communities within Ebbsfleet, and existing neighbouring communities that may be outside the immediate community of the site itself.
- You should undertake stakeholder mapping to identify any existing community groups / interest groups in the area. Again EDC officers can help to advise on current groups and contact details.

1.2 What will the community find most useful and/or interesting to engage on?

- Identify the aspects of the project that you believe it would be most useful to engage with the community about. This may include communal facilities, public realm, parks and play spaces, but may also extend to internal aspects of your scheme as well, particularly if the project includes internal facilities that the community may want to use.
- You should ensure that this is an agenda item for your first pre-app meetings with EDC, and use the meeting to reach a shared understanding with EDC's planning team about which specific aspects of the project you should undertake engagement activities upon.

1.3 How will you promote the engagement opportunity?

- Provide a programme that illustrates the sequencing of the various engagement tools, methods and events you intend to use. This should cover the entire design process from concept design through to determination of the planning application (and beyond to completion if relevant).
- Describe how your engagement programme will be promoted to your identified audiences, with the aim of raising awareness of the engagement opportunities, ensuring they are adequately informed and given appropriate, tailored means to participate.
- Promotion should consider both digital

channels such as websites and social media, and other approaches that are capable of reaching all of your identified audiences, with a particular focus on aiming to engage with seldom heard voices within the community.

1.4 How will you engage with the community - tools & techniques

- Describe the digital tools, and in-person activities and events that you plan to use to engage with the community, and why these are appropriate for the project and the audience you are aiming to engage with.
- Explain how meaningful engagement with community groups and stakeholders will be facilitated during the events (e.g. accessibility of the event or content, interpretation, audio equipment, women & girls etc.)

1.5 How will you capture the feedback, analyse the community contributions, and report back on the outcomes of your engagement ?

- Detail how many people are anticipated to participate in each event, survey or questionnaire.
- Explain how feedback will be recorded and analysed (e.g. survey software, cloud word analysis, etc.)
- Set out when and how you will report back to the public on changes made in response to their participation.



STAGE 2: PROMOTING YOUR ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Raising awareness of your project, and the opportunities to engage with it is critical to achieving meaningful community engagement. You should carefully choose your communication channels to ensure the widest audience is reached, including local residents, businesses, elected councillors, as well as seldom heard voices.

2.1 Providing information online

- A project website can provide a virtual home for your project for the duration of the planning and construction process, allowing those interested in your project to understand how the project is progressing, and to contribute to the planning and design at the appropriate points in the design process.
- Websites should be accessible to WCAG 2.1 standards to ensure they can be accessed by as many people as possible.
- You could either develop your own site for the duration of the project (that could then evolve in the longer term to become the marketing, sales or organisation's website for the final project) or use an existing service such as Commonplace to host your project's engagement information during the planning process.
- As a minimum your website should;
 1. Provide the key information about the design of your project, and the programme for delivery
 2. Provide an opportunity for those that are unable / don't want to attend an event in person, to provide feedback on the proposals as they develop during the planning process.
 3. Provide information about the planned engagement events that they can attend either virtually (such as an online webinar and Q+A) or in person.
- You should consider how your website displays on mobile devices as well as computer screens, to ensure it is accessible to as many people as possible.

Note: These methods of engagement should be used to compliment face to face engagement and should not be used as an exclusive engagement method.

2.2 Promoting your engagement on social media

- Social media can be an effective method to raise awareness of the opportunities for the community to engage with you on your project.
- Have you thought about using local social media groups? EDC can help you to promote your engagement event/ activities on our social media and quarterly newsletter if you provide draft social media posts and images/graphics

2.2 Promoting your engagement through letters, newsletters and noticeboards

- More traditional means of communication can be helpful to compliment your website and social media channels to engage with certain audiences within the community.
- Leaflet drops remain an effective way of reaching the community. You could also attend a local community coffee shops and cafes.
- EDC manage a network of noticeboards across the Ebbsfleet area. You could contact EDC to find out if it is possible to post information on our noticeboards, or to share content in the 'Ebbsfleet Living' community magazine (written & delivered by EDC).
- How could you make your engagement material interesting to your target audience? Could you have a design competition for a park or open space, with a prize for a winning entry to encourage participation?
- Have you made it clear how often you plan to engage with people and what you will keep them updated on?
- Apart from updates on development progress, are you covering any other content in your communications linked

to the proposed development, such as heritage, employment, events or activities that you're going to hold?

- Are your materials free from technical jargon?

Note: These methods of engagement should be used to compliment face to face engagement and should not be used as an exclusive engagement method.

2.3 What is your approach to seldom heard groups?

- How do you plan to reach out to 'time poor' residents such as parents, commuters, and shift workers? Consider scheduling your event after working/ schooling hours, using local schools/ services/business space as an event venue.
- Consider digital inequalities when deciding on your format of communication. Have you considered how the event will cater to women and girls, to ensure they feel safe to attend and share their opinions?
- Have you considered the facilities at the venue? E.g. baby changing rooms, ramped access, space to allow for prams, to ensure parents and carers can attend.
- Have you considered hosting a women and girls only hour, to allow those who are traditionally under-represented an alternative option?
- Have you ensured the venue is in a central part of the community where women, girls and those more vulnerable feel safe to travel to and from?

Note: Ensure a meaningful target group for consultation, to avoid consultation fatigue among certain groups/stakeholders.



STAGE 3: DELIVERING ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

When planning any type of engagement event, you should have a clear idea of who is attending, what they need to know, which aspects of the scheme they are most likely to be interested in, and which aspects they could help to co-design.

Choosing a date and time...

- The first point to consider is whether you actually need to organise your own independent engagement event, or whether you could capitalise on a local community event that is already in the calendar. Local school fairs, farmers markets or gatherings at local community buildings could all provide a great opportunity to host your engagement activities. You could ask EDC in pre-app meetings about planned future events in the local community.
- Is your engagement happening at a suitable time for participants? For example, outside of school holidays and working hours is preferable.
- Are you replicating your engagement activity across multiple locations / settings? Multiple events may be required to capture those who work full time or have a younger family.
- Have you co-ordinated timings with the EDC Team and other developers in Ebbsfleet, who are also running consultations and events throughout the year?

Choosing a venue

- You should choose a venue that is local to the site and easily accessible to everybody in the local community. Appendix 2 provides a list of venues within the Ebbsfleet area that could be used for your engagement event.

Community Liaison Groups

- Have you considered engaging with an existing Community Liaison Group (CLG), or setting one up?
- Have you also considered engaging with EDC's Community Board? This is an established group within Ebbsfleet that is formed from residents across the Ebbsfleet area and meets regularly.
- Have you considered which specialist groups may need to be involved in your project? There are a number of groups in Ebbsfleet which can advise on specialist design areas, including local accessibility groups, cycling groups, and younger person design groups. EDC can provide contact details of relevant groups in pre-app meetings.

Note: You should enquire in the pre-app meeting, or contact EDC's Planning and Placemaking Team, who will be able to put you in touch with the relevant CLG or interest group.

If setting up a new group you should consider the following points:

- CLG should be made up of local residents. Is it clear how attendees will be approached and engaged?
- Are you inviting local elected representatives to sit on the group?
- Have you shared the Terms of Reference for the group with EDC officers? Consider alternating meeting times to allow more people the opportunity to engage in the sessions.
- Have you decided the format of the CLG? (Online, in person or both?)
- Consider alternating meeting times to allow more people the opportunity to engage in the sessions.
- Have you decided the format of the CLG? (online, in person or both?)

Choosing a format for the event

- You should carefully select a format for your engagement event based on the design stage, the types of audience and the venue.
- For example, you might choose to host a Q&A session with the community and developer team/design team/ architect team or host an interactive play/ design session.
- In addition to visual plans of the scheme, have other communications tools been used? For example, use of imagery displaying other places to set a precedent and inspire the imagination, mood boards, interactive maps, postcards, drawings, props.
- Have you involved local groups and

businesses in your event? (e.g. to provide refreshments and/or deliver activity-based workshops, leaflet distribution etc). Engaging local businesses will encourage word of mouth within the local community.

- How will you collect feedback from the local community?

Recording the outputs

It is important to document the engagement process because this data should be incorporated into your Statement of Community Involvement and Design and Access Statement to be submitted as part of your planning application.

The data should also be reported back to participants who dedicated time and effort during the engagement process. The population has the right to understand how they have had an input in shaping their area.

A quick guide to organising co-design events

EDC is keen to use co-design events to allow our local community to become more involved in the design and decision making in their local community.

Co-design is best enabled through facilitated workshops between the community, stakeholders and design team. It provides an opportunity for the design team to bring the community into the design process, providing them with the skills and understanding of the project and the design process that enables the community to share their experiences and knowledge to design aspects of a scheme together.

Key principles for organising a co-design event:

Inclusive and accessible

- Just like any engagement event, you should ensure participants are representative of the communities affected by the project and consideration should be given to how seldom heard groups are encouraged to participate.
- Begin the session by clearly introducing the context of the project. The design team should provide sufficient information and technical detail to allow participants to feel confident from the outset, but without overloading them with information.
- Set a clear understanding of the aims of the workshop, and any limitations around what can be influenced by contributors. Transparency will ensure stakeholder aspirations are managed from the beginning and provide an understanding of how their voices can genuinely influence the project. It is critical that design teams take time to explain legal, contractual or other constraints that they are operating within through their brief, so that the co-design activity can be helpful in delivering a feasible and viable outcome at the end.
- Ensure everybody is clear at the start of the session about how they can contribute, and facilitate the sessions to ensure all voices are given time to contribute.
- Providing break out groups and multiple feedback streams throughout the session can allow everyone to be heard.
- Avoid lengthy presentations and encourage open dialogue and two-way activities that allow all participants to explore ideas.
- Interactive activities should be embedded into the workshop to keep the momentum of engagement during the session. Encourage generating ideas through hands-on activities, including modelling, building, sketching, Lego-making etc.
- Avoid leading questions or trying to influence participants towards choosing / pursuing specific outcomes or design solution, this should develop naturally through the process.
- Include a feedback process to check that everyone taking part feels that they are being treated as an equal and are being listened to.

Empowering participants

- Agree and make clear to everyone from the outset, when and how power will be shared between all involved in the process.
- All stakeholders should have the power to jointly shape not only the co-design process but also the outcome and the criteria for defining the success of the project.
- Allocate time and resource to ensure everyone feels confident in the decision-making process.

Sharing knowledge

- Allow all stakeholders to share their knowledge and experiences to influence decisions. Knowledge sharing should be both bottom-up as well top-down.
- All stakeholders should have access to the information they need to make decisions and feel like an equal part of the group. Information should be easy to access and understand, jargon free and include limited technical details to avoid overwhelm.
- Establish the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved, along with the parameters of the project (e.g. the budget, timeframe) to ensure a transparent process from the start.

Consider if co-design can be extended into co-production

Co-production (like co-design) aims to ensure everyone involved can contribute their ideas and experiences, however co-production elevates this by encouraging stakeholders and designers to then deliver these services and plans in partnership. Co-production is underpinned by three key principles; sharing power, sharing knowledge and ensuring inclusivity, which all contribute to building trust.

A co-design case study // Alkerden Major Urban Park

The applicant and design team for Alkerden Major Urban Park demonstrated a best practice approach to community engagement that included co-design activities, all of which were comprehensively explained and detailed in their Statement of Community Involvement and Design and Access Statement.

The team appointed an art consultant to work with the community to develop a comprehensive approach to their public art strategy, in addition to promoting engagement through a project website, leaflet drop, advertising, liaising with the local press and directly engaging with EDC and key stakeholders and community groups in the area, including the Community Liaison Group and Ebbsfleet's Design Group.

The applicant also delivered a successful in-person workshop at Castle Hill Community Centre. The event included a number of interactive co-design activities for people to get involved in, including providing the opportunity to design elements of the park through drawing on scaled postcards that could be slotted into the master-plan, and a large chalk drawing board that encouraged people to participate in drawing or writing their ideas onto. From this the team got a clear direction of what the community wanted to see included in the park, including yoga space, splash park and a climbing wall.





Students from Ebbsfleet Academy visiting the Alkerden Major Urban Park South Site





STAGE 4: KEEPING THE CONVERSATION GOING

Throughout the engagement process it is important that any decisions or revisions to the scheme are communicated back to the community, ensuring they reach both participants and those who could not attend.

Communication with the community must be sustained beyond the engagement process, so that people can access data and information representing the results of the engagement process and understand how these informed the scheme. Continued communication helps local stakeholders feel informed and understand how their input has shaped the scheme.

Community liaison groups provide a forum where applicants can feed back to the community and use it as an opportunity to regularly communicate updates to stakeholders during the decision making and construction process. On-going communication ensures stakeholders feel valued and that their voices are being heard.

Below are some examples of things to regularly communicate with residents:

- The progress of the project.
- Budget constraints
- Timeline of expected delivery and/or updates on changes to the expected time frame.
- How consultation / co-design has informed the final design.

Following an engagement event, applicants should detail how many people participated, explain how the data was recorded and analysed, list the key findings based on quantitative and qualitative analysis and explain how the results of the engagement have informed proposals or changes made during the design process.

Community engagement can also be used after a project has been complete to provide valuable feedback about how engagement events and building sites were managed, how the scheme performs and how it fits in in its context.

Students getting creative as part of the 'This Must be the Place' Community Group.





STAGE 5: STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As set out in EDC's Validation Requirements for Planning Applications document, EDC requires applicants to submit a 'Statement of Community Involvement' (SCI) for all major planning applications. The SCI should explain how the applicant has undertaken pre-application consultation in accordance with the NPPF and should demonstrate how the views of the local community / stakeholders have been sought and taken into account in the formulation of development proposals. The Community Engagement Brief is expected to inform the content of this formal application document.

Note : EDC's Validation Requirements checklist sets out all the documents that are required to be submitted for a valid planning application.

The Statement of Community Involvement should clearly set out;

1. How the applicant has used community engagement in their design process
2. how they have kept their audience engaged throughout the lifetime

of the project, including how any changes to the scheme following the engagement activity/ co-design process have or will be communicated to the local community and planning committee.

3. how feedback from the community has been integrated into the scheme, and how any changes to the scheme following the engagement activity/ co-design process will be communicated to the local community and planning committee.
4. Include a completed engagement ladder checklist (see page 19) to indicate the types of engagement that have been used. A template can be downloaded directly from the website.

The engagement ladder

The ladder below describes a series of steps towards reaching an optimal level of engagement.

CO-PRODUCTION

Co-production is an equal relationship between the local community and the people responsible for designing it. They work together, from design to delivery, sharing strategic decisions about the best way to deliver services. Whether this level of engagement is achievable is dependant on the project type.

CO-DESIGN

The local community are involved in designing services based on their experiences and ideas. They have genuine influence but have not been involved in 'seeing it through'.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

The local community are given opportunities to express their views and to influence some decisions, but only as framed by the designers/applicants.

CONSULTATION

The community may be asked to fill in surveys or attend meetings; however this step may be considered tokenistic if they do not have the power to influence or affect change.

EDUCATING

Designers/applicants inform the local community about the services and explain how they work. This may include telling people what decisions have been made and why.

INFORMING

Stakeholders are helped to understand the design of the services and delivery so that they gain relevant knowledge about it, but their views are not taken into account leaving no real decision making opportunity.

CHECKLIST

- Have you enabled the community to be actively engaged throughout the process in making strategic decisions about the best way to deliver a project?
- Have you facilitated co-design events with the community, providing them with the knowledge to work with the design team to embed their solutions into the project?
- Have you provided updates through the engagement process of how you have responded to the communities feedback?
- Have you updated your scheme to reflect the communities feedback in relation to the areas that they were able to influence?
- Have you consulted the community using a variety of appropriate methods, and explained where they have the opportunity to influence?
- Have you informed the community about your project, e.g. through a newsletter, social media or a web-page?
- Have you presented evidence of community engagement in the Statement of Community Involvement?
- Have you presented a community engagement brief at your first pre-app?

Appendix 1

Dartford Borough Council's community engagement requirements

Dartford's Core Principles of Public Involvement in Planning

A : Public involvement will be at a timely stage before final decisions are made by the Council.

B : Explanatory information supporting proposals, or further contact details, will be provided to inform people responding to proposals.

C : Clear deadlines will be provided for public consultations. The time period should be reasonable, but will recognise if there is a fixed timescale in which decisions need to be taken.

D : Public comments will be acknowledged, and taken into account, with applicable planning issues appropriately weighed up.

E : Notification and publicity will occur as soon as possible; with electronic communication primarily used, and webpages regularly updated.

F : Local Plan communication and activities will fit the purpose of the proposed document and the stage of its preparation.

Pre-application consultation by developers

5.7 Developers have clear responsibilities to the public from the outset of considering submitting planning application, through to constructing and maintaining their premises.

5.8 The Council encourages developers (for major applications) to talk to people early on in the development process. A set of well targeted and responsive consultation events can help produce developments with community support. DBC provides a pre-application service to developers, and will use this to check developers' community consultation arrangements for appropriate schemes. DBC expect developers to base their consultation on the best practice principles outlined in the RTPI's 'Good Practice Guide to Public Engagement in Development Schemes'.

5.9 Developers that do not conduct community consultation are risking additional issues arising in their scheme that may have adverse impacts on the determination of their application, with delay likely. Advice from the Council should be followed as to when and what kind of engagement should take place, and with whom in local communities. However, the Council cannot force developers to undertake pre-application activities, with responsibility for this resting with the developer.

5.10 The government expects key schemes to undertake community consultation as part of their pre-application preparation and discussions. They confirm in national guidance: "The approach to pre-application engagement needs to be tailored to the nature of the proposed development and the issues to be addressed".

5.11 Developers in Kent have signed up to this approach through the Kent Developers Group. They have helped produce a

protocol with Local Planning Authorities that seeks to ensure early engagement with relevant communities

5.12 The Council will expect consultation to take place as early as possible with local people and Town/ Parish Councils. Ordinarily this should take the form of electronic information/ events and publicity/ activities within the relevant communities.'

5.13 Meaningful local publicity and activities should typically entail a round of publicity (e.g. letters or leaflets delivered to residents and wider publicity) followed by an opportunity to give feedback in person.'

Exhibitions can prove very positive, and these should occur with input from the Council in relation to where to hold events e.g. appropriate venues, and on the duration and days of the exhibition – it will need to be open on different days/ times of the week/ day.'

5.14 Participants must be able to easily express their views to the developer, and the ability to input should be in easily accessible written form, e.g. feedback forms or questionnaire including open questions.

5.15 Producing and publicising effective online information will be invaluable in ensuring engagement efforts can be managed and the public can be kept informed of the latest news. Developers should provide contact details, and are expected to be contactable by email and to provide responses within a reasonable time-scale.

5.16 A report on community consultation and engagement will need to be prepared and submitted with the planning application. This will summarise the process, outcomes, and demonstrate how a representative range of relevant views have been sought. Views on the proposals should be clearly evidenced and how the proposal has been finalised using this input.

5.17 Developers should continue public engagement once an application is submitted, and after the proposal is decided. This includes open communication approaching and during the construction stage. Although not conducted by the Council, we will seek to promote the adoption of a positive approach as set out in Principles A-F.

Gravesham Borough Council's community engagement requirements

The Council believes that everyone who wishes to be involved in the proper planning of the borough should have the opportunity to do so. It believes that effective community involvement and engagement can help to:

- Ensure that the diverse values of the Gravesham community are reflected in planning decisions and that people are genuinely involved in decisions that affect their lives or interests.
- Bring together different people with different perspectives to increase shared understanding across community divides.
- Allow the Council to identify options and solutions to planning issues at an early stage and increase public involvement in the decision-making process.

However, it should be noted that views gathered from the community as a result of engagement are only part of the evidence upon which planning decisions (whether in relation to policy or decisions on individual applications) are made.

In addition, when deciding on a planning application, the Council can only take into account 'material considerations'. Whilst what is or is not a material consideration is capable of being established through case law, the weight attached to a material consideration is a matter of judgement for the decision-maker. The decision maker must show that they have considered all relevant matters when reaching a decision.

The Council will seek to offer a range of opportunities to get the community involved in the production of new planning policy documents and will set out clear standards in respect of consultation on planning applications. In so doing, the Council will seek to:

- Be clear about what decision is being made and the process and opportunities for involvement and engagement
- Engage with the community at the most appropriate time whilst supporting effective interaction between the interested parties
- Encourage involvement from different groups within the community, especially those with a specific interest or who are often under-represented
- Utilise communication methods that are relevant and effective in engaging local stakeholders, supporting greater use of electronic/online methods of consultation where appropriate
- As a minimum, carry out proportionate consultation based on the arrangements and activities set out in this SCI.

Within the NPPF Paragraph 25, under the heading 'Maintaining Effective Cooperation':

"Strategic policy-making authorities should collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans. They should also engage with their local communities and relevant bodies including Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships, the Marine Management Organisation, county councils, infrastructure providers, elected Mayors and combined authorities (in cases where Mayors or combined authorities do not have plan-making powers".

For the Pre – Application Phase – the NPPF suggests engaging with external parties and the local community before an application is submitted. Under the heading ‘Pre Application Engagement and Front-Loading’ paragraph 40 states ‘Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take up of any pre-application services they offer’. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.”

As outlined in the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with plan-making positively seeking opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. Plans should provide certainty and a mechanism for efficient, timely decision-taking and for approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan.

Gravesham Policy

Paragraph 5.15.11: 5.15.11 A proportionate amount of stakeholder and community engagement should also be undertaken to ensure that the design approach responds to expert advice and the needs and wishes of those who will use the places or buildings created or be impacted by them. Where

proposals are likely to have a significant impact on the appearance and functioning of an area, developers will be encouraged to seek independent advice from the South East Design Review Panel (currently delivered through Design South East), to inform their design approach.

KCC (Minerals and Waste) Statement of Community Involvement

Engagement Principles:

By presenting all of the relevant information and options at all stages of plan making and planning application determination, the County Council recognises the importance of: - timely and early engagement; - clear and informative communication; and, - the need to maintain transparency.

Whilst proposals may not always please everyone, engagement will be inclusive, easily accessible, transparent and meaningful, addressing tensions in good faith and finding the right balance. In considering representations, it is of note that planning matters are determined against material planning considerations that are relevant to a particular application or policy. Decisions are not determined on the basis of sheer numbers objecting to or supporting a proposal, rather they are based upon the content and merit of the response.

We are required to consult a range of consultation bodies where relevant to specific planning activities. These organizations may represent the interests of different groups in the authority's area.

The County Council aims to encourage and facilitate broadly based participation and the way in which views are sought will vary depending upon the information which is being consulted upon. A variety of engagement tools will be used including, but not limited to, the following:

- County Council website
- Site notices
- Press notices
- Posters (E.g. Libraries / Gateways / Parish notice boards)
- Public meetings
- Stakeholder/representative group workshops/drop-ins
- Meetings with key stakeholders
- Virtual/physical exhibitions (manned/unmanned)
- Letters/emails to interested parties
- Responding to queries via email and/or telephone
- Social media
- Hard copy documentation available for inspection at Council Offices

Appendix 2

Venue Hire

The following venues in the Garden City and neighbouring areas are available for hire:

1. Castle Hill Community Centre
Cherry Orchard Road,
Ebbsfleet Valley, Swanscombe, DA10 1B
enquiries@castlehillcommunitycentre.com
2. Cherry Orchard Primary Academy,
Cherry Orchard Road,
Ebbsfleet Valley, Swanscombe, DA10 1BR,
office@cherryorchardprimary.org.uk
3. Eastgate Community Centre,
141 Springhead Parkway,
Northfleet, Gravesend DA11 8AD,
office@eastgate.org.uk
4. Springhead Park Primary School,
Springhead Park Way,
Northfleet, Gravesend, DA11 8BY
office@springhead.kent.sch.uk
5. Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council Offices,
Community Hall,
The Grove, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0GA
01322 385513
6. Church Road Hall,
Church Road,
Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0HF
01322 3855133
7. Ebbsfleet Academy,
Southfleet Road,
Swanscombe, DA10 0BZ,
admin@theebbsfleetacademy.kent.sch.uk
8. Ebbsfleet Green Primary School,
Ackers Drive Weldon,
Ebbsfleet Valley, Kent, DA10 1AL
info@ebbsfleetgreenprimary.org.uk
9. Ebbsfleet United F.C.
Kuflink Stadium. Stonebridge Road,
Northfleet, Kent, DA11 9GN
info@eufc.co.uk

Appendix 3

Lessons Learned Feedback Form

SCHEME NAME

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY DATE & TIME

--	--

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

--

QUESTIONS

1. What element(s) of your community engagement worked well?	
2. Which aspect(s) of your community engagement was most challenging?	
3. In future, what community engagement support would you like from EDC?	

Appendix 4

Community Liaison Group (CLG) Terms of Reference

<INSERT NAME> Community Liaison Group Terms of Reference

<p>Purpose</p>	<p>The overarching aim of the <insert name> Community Liaison Group is to provide an information exchange between <insert site/neighbourhood/developer>, its key stakeholders and local communities. It will facilitate balanced discussions and help to ensure that <insert developer/neighbourhood> interactions with the local Ebbsfleet communities and stakeholders are conducted in a constructive and transparent manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <insert organiser> will act as a conduit between <insert developer> and the local community to discuss areas of interest and concern and for <insert developer> to inform representatives about current and future operational issues that may impact on the community and other stakeholders. • The <insert CLG> shall have no executive powers but will be a forum for the discussion of matters pertaining to the operation of <insert site/neighbourhood>. • The objectives above do not interfere with the accountability of relevant decision-making bodies on the sites or of statutory organisations such as the regulators, planning authorities and relevant governmental authorities.
<p>Meetings and their frequency</p>	<p>The <insert CLG name> will initially meet <quarterly>, with the frequency of meetings being reviewed and agreed annually. <insert organiser> will provide the meeting venue and secretariat services.</p> <p>The meetings will <not> be open to the public or members of the press, although the minutes will be available for distribution by representatives and will be posted online on <insert location>, which can be found at:</p> <p>.....</p>
<p>Membership</p>	<p>Membership of the <insert CLG> could be made up of representatives from: (delete / add as appropriate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) • Parish Council members • Residents Association members • Local residents • Elected council members • Ward Councillors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer representative • DBC/GBC Lead Councillor

