



Statement of Community Involvement 2010

Forward Planning Team

Rossendalealive
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward
Consultation November-December 2009**



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this document

This document is the second Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) prepared by Rossendale Borough Council replacing that produced in 2007. It sets out the Council's commitment to involving local communities in the preparation of planning documents and in the process of considering planning applications.

Planning shapes the places that people live, work and visit and therefore it is right that people have the opportunity to get involved.

When the Council prepares planning documents, it will have to follow the consultation processes set out in this document. This document also sets out how communities will be consulted on and made aware of planning applications.

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will:

- Clearly explain the process and methods for community involvement in different types of planning documents and at the different stages of preparation.
- Identify which organisations and community/local groups will be involved in the planning process.
- Explain the process and appropriate methods for effective community involvement in deciding planning applications.
- Rossendale Borough Council's approach to pre-application discussions.
- Rossendale Borough Council's approach to community involvement in planning obligations (Section 106 agreements) or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- Set out how this SCI will be monitored, evaluated and scrutinised at the local level.
- Set out details of where community groups can get more information on the planning process.
- Identify how landowner and developer interests will be engaged.

The SCI and other relevant documents can be viewed at the council's One Stop Shop (opening hours 8:45am – 5:15pm (Tuesdays 9:15 am – 5.15pm)) and by visiting the Council's website: www.rossendale.gov.uk/forwardplanning

1.2. What is the Local Development Framework?

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a folder of documents that will replace the Rossendale District Local Plan that was adopted in April 1995 and covered the period 1990 to 2001. The Local Plan is now time expired and therefore requires the development of the LDF to provide up-to-date planning policy. LDF preparation is on-going.

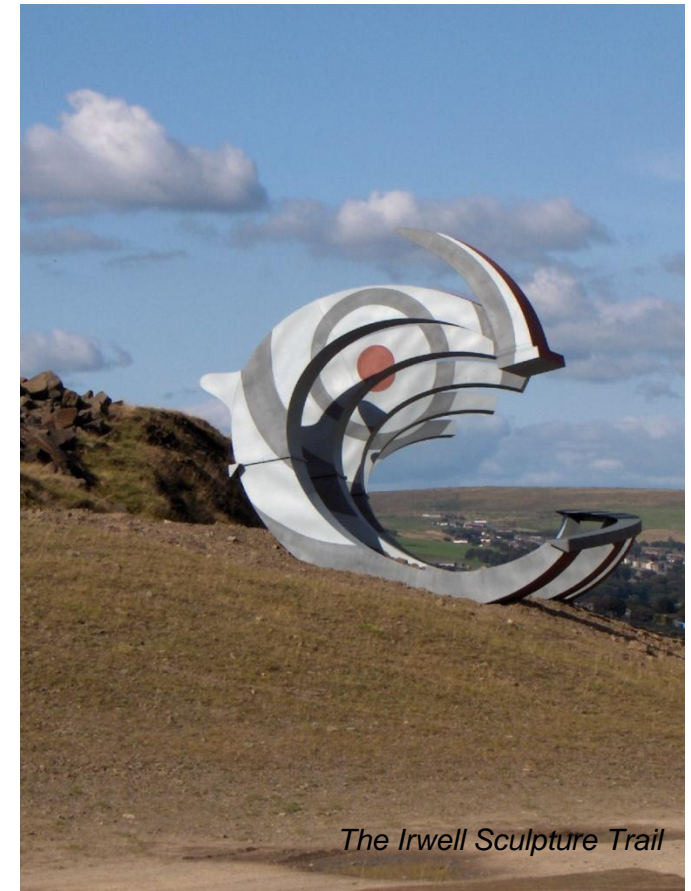
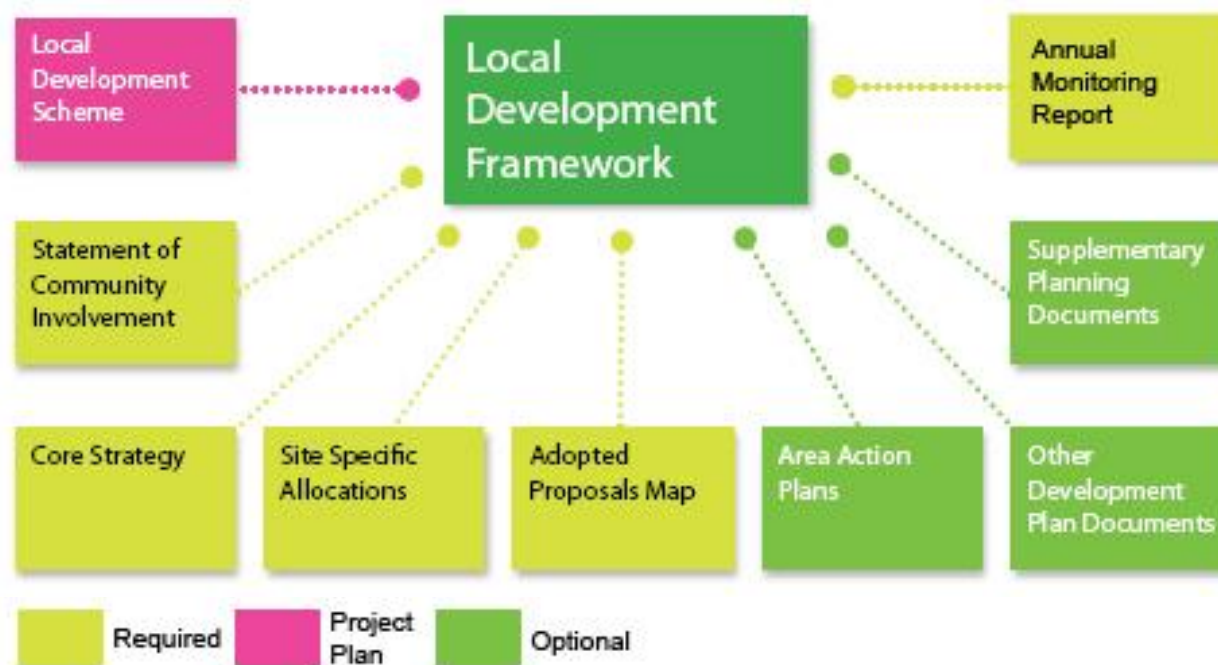
The LDF will replace the Rossendale District Local Plan. Together with the Regional Spatial Strategy the LDF will identify how the planning system will help to shape Rossendale's communities and will become the new development plan for Rossendale.

There are a number of important differences between the old planning system and the LDF system. These include:

- The LDF is made up of a number of individual documents which will be easier to understand and to update.
- The Council can focus more on the big issues and priorities for the Borough.
- The plan will be better linked to other strategies.
- The public will continuously be involved in the development of the LDF

- Shorter and more focused examination of new Plans at an Inquiry.
- The LDF system is in accordance with the new 'spatial' approach to planning

Figure 1: The Local Development Framework



1.3. The Local Development Scheme

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) outlines the programme for preparing and reviewing statutory planning documents and the Annual Monitoring Reports documents for Rossendale. The LDS is required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Real time information of the progress of the LDF is available is updated regularly on the Councils website at www.rossendale.gov.uk/forwardplanning

The LDS focuses on setting out a 'rolling' three year programme of work and gives an indication of work that is proposed beyond each 3 year period. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will provide a review of the implementation of the LDS in order to inform necessary changes to the LDS.

2. Developing a Council Strategy for Community Involvement

2.1. Principles of Consultation

The planning system already provides a range of opportunities for people to participate in key decisions that affect where they live. However the new system provides the basis for this to be built on. A transparent and accessible system is central to delivering the government's objectives of creating inclusive, accessible, safe and sustainable communities.

The preparation of this SCI has followed the regulatory requirements and advice from the Government. There is a substantial amount of information within government publications and guidance on the SCI and engaging the local community. Please see the following publications:

- Town and Country Planning Regulations (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Creating Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities through Local Spatial Planning
- At local level this documents reflects the approach and priorities of Rossendale Borough Councils' Community Involvement and Engagement Strategy

The advice contained in these documents is clear that there should be a fundamental move towards a more transparent and accountable planning system, involving local communities at the outset in plan and decision making. The approach to the Council's strategy for communication and consultation will be guided by 12 principles for consultation. These are:

- **Tailored** to the specific local needs and experiences of Rossendale – for example, if people's sense of community is very localised, then where appropriate we need to recognise and build on that as well as encouraging people to engage at the Borough level and beyond;
- **Multi-layered**, covering all levels of engagement from information-giving to community empowerment – engagement is not just about consultation;
- **Purposeful**, ensuring that engagement takes place for a clear purpose – we need to be aware not just of what has prompted the exercise but also of what we are trying to achieve;
- **Selective**, ensuring that engagement methods are selected which are fit for purpose, and that people are not consulted excessively or unnecessarily;
- **Proactive** – seeking to engage with people where we find them as well as engaging with people who come to the Council.
- **Reciprocal**, with feedback to the community receiving as much attention as the gathering of information from the community;
- **Open and transparent**, with accurate and timely provision of information, and attention paid to the use of clear language.
- **Fair, inclusive and accessible**, with attention paid to the specific barriers faced by different groups within the community;
- **Based on**, and giving encouragement to, learning from experience and shared knowledge;
- **Co-ordinated** across departments and partner agencies, ensuring that knowledge and learning are pooled, that the maximum use is made of information gathered, and that duplication is avoided;
- **Monitored** for quality to ensure minimum standards are maintained.
- **Front Loading** there should be opportunity for community participation from the earliest stages of Plan preparation

2.2. Community Involvement in Planning

The Council is committed to developing a pro-active and co-ordinated approach for effective consultation and community involvement in the planning system, and will achieve this within the capacity of its resources. The Council will also seek to work with its partners, such as the Rossendale Partnership, Community Network and Planning Aid where possible to improve community engagement.

The Council will seek to link community involvement on the preparation of an LDD with consultation on related strategies and programmes being undertaken by the Council or its partners. In addition, we will seek group consultations on separate DPDs. This should help gain understanding of how each document

links together to form the LDF and help the Council make effective use of its resources and reduce the instances of ‘consultation fatigue’ that has been evident in the Borough.

2.3. Rossendale Sustainable Community Strategy

The new planning system requires that documents that will form a Local Development Framework will have to accord to, and help provide “spatial expression” to the vision and objectives set out in the [Community Strategy](#). By encouraging involvement in plan making, the LDF will start to deliver the spatial and land use elements of the Community Strategy.

3. Who will be Involved in Local Development Framework?

Because planning affects so many different people, there are a range of organisations and individuals who may have a role or interest in the shaping and planning of Rossendale. Government guidance and regulations provide the minimum standards for consultation that the Council must meet. They also provide a comprehensive list of all the bodies and organisations that must be consulted. The Council has already exceeded these standards and is constantly contacting additional organisations and individuals as part of its consultations.

The Council recognises the different groups and organisations that make up Rossendale’s community and the different values and needs they represent. This will influence how the Council will seek to involve the different groups and individuals in the documents we prepare.

In order to ensure the Council keeps its records up to date it has developed a consultation database. The database ensures that records can be revised and that consultees can be added. There are a number of statutory and general groups of bodies and individuals we must involve (see Appendix 2 for further detail. These include:

3.1. Specific Consultees

Organisations that the Council must consult with are identified in the government guidance and regulations and are called statutory consultees. These consultees will be contacted when preparing documents when the subject matters is considered to affect them.

3.2. Elected Members

Members of Parliament and local councillors are consulted at all stages of a documents preparation. Elected representatives all have an interest in the development of the Borough and the views of the communities they represent.

We also consult with Whitworth Town Council and Parish Councils that are within and/or adjoining the Borough to ensure they are aware of all DPD and SPDs that may affect their area.

3.3. Businesses, Landowners and Developers

The Borough has businesses, landowners and developers of local, regional and national significance situated in the Borough. The Council will ensure that they are contacted on the documents that are deemed to affect them.

3.4. General Public

The general public can include people living, working and visiting the area. The Council will seek to engage as large a cross section of the general public as possible through a variety of methods.

3.5. Rossendale Partnership

The Rossendale Partnership is the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The partnership is responsible for producing the Community Strategy which sets out a vision for Rossendale based on deliverable objectives. The vision for Rossendale is “

“By 2018 Rossendale will have strong communities with an enhanced environment and heritage. It will be an attractive place to live where tourists visit and employers invest”

The Rossendale Partnership comprises of representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. There a number of elements that make up the partnership, including:

- The Executive Board of Rossendale Partnership.
- 8 theme groups.

3.6. Rossendale Community Network

Rossendale Community Network (RCN) is the arm of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) that works towards full community involvement and acts as a conduit between the key theme groups and the people as the voice of the community. It is a communication system to ensure the voice of the community is heard and provides the chance to influence issues across the Borough.

By working in partnership the Council can ensure that a full cross section of the community is involved. We will ensure that wherever possible existing consultation mechanisms are used to engage all the sectors of the community including ‘hard to reach groups.

3.7. Neighbourhood Forums

The Council has set up Area Forums to provide a vehicle for regular consultation with communities on Council related business. There are Area Forums for Haslingden, Bacup, Rawtenstall and Whitworth, to which the Council will seek to present relevant information on the Local Development Framework.

3.8. Involving ‘hard to reach’ groups

One of the key principles of community involvement is to establish the views of as many sectors of a community as possible. Contacting some groups can be more difficult than others; however the Council will look to involve all groups to ensure that they have the opportunity to put forward their views. The groups that are not easily involved in the planning process include:

- People from black and ethnic minority groups such as Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Caribbean.
- People with disability
- Young people
- Homeless people
- Elderly people
- People with low literacy levels

In order to increase the opportunity to get hard to reach groups involved the Council will use the following methods.

- Advertise in the relevant publications such as the Rossendale Free Press, Rossendale Alive Newsletter, “Know your Councillor” leaflet.

- Place information boards in public buildings.
- Contact with identified hard to reach community groups and ensure other groups and organisations are identified.
- Provide information a range of summary and leaflet formats.
- Ensure that the Local Development Framework is on the agendas of Community Rossendale Partnership, Community Network and the Area Forums where appropriate.
- All LDF documents will be available in alternative formats such as other community languages, Braille large print or audio tape, on request.

3.9. Targeting Audiences

As well as the general categories for consultees the Council has split these into further groups to reflect the different levels of understanding of planning issues. This will help target each audience and ensure different methods of consultation are used to get information across effectively (see Section 6). These groups include:

Group A Groups and individuals with little or no planning background, such as local residents and community groups.

Group B Groups and individuals with some planning background and knowledge such as councillors, Parish Councils, Rossendale Partnership and Community Network.

Group C Groups and individuals with a planning background and knowledge such as planning consultants, developers, national organisations such as English Heritage and Environment Agency, adjoining local authorities and the Government Office for the North West.

All consultees who are on the Councils list of contacts will receive notifications of the commencement of the new consultations in accordance with the table in section 6.

4. Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2008

On the 27th June 2008, the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 came into force. These regulations set out the stages a Local Development Document need to follow and supplement and in parts replace, the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004 . The key elements are summarised below and are reflected in the diagram within Section 5.

4.1. Regulation 25 – Public Participation

This is the main stage where the public can influence preparation of a document. The purpose of this stage is for the council to complete a ‘sound’ document with which to progress to the next stage. The Council must first notify a set list of bodies that they intend to produce an LDD. They can also inform other bodies and any businesses/residents if they deem it useful to do so. Responses are invited from these groups as to what they feel should be included in the LDD and any options that are put forward. Further stages of consultation may take place during this stage including on a “preferred approach” and changes made to the document as a result of consultation.

When a final document is produced which the Council considers to be sound, it then progresses to the stage set out below.

4.2. Regulation 27 & 28 – Publication and Period for Publication

At this stage the Council must publish and make available the documents it proposes to submit. The DPD is published in order for representations on matters of soundness to be made. Examples would include a lack of consultation, lack of appropriate and robust evidence, non-compliance with legal requirements and not including significant important/ mandatory policies.

Regulation 27 is a procedural stage in the process of submitting and adopting a DPD. It is not a further opportunity to make representations on the content of the plan, but solely for matters of soundness, i.e. that the Plan prepared reflects the available evidence. All public participation and representations on the overall approach should have been made earlier in the process.

Regulation 28 requires the Council to allow a minimum of six weeks in which to receive representations on the DPD and to give notification of where to send representations on the soundness of a DPD as well the specified deadline for them to be received.

4.3. Regulation 29 – Conformity with RSS

On the same day the Council publishes all documents under Regulation 27, it must make a request to the regional planning body for an opinion on the general conformity of the DPD with the Regional Spatial Strategy.

4.4. Regulation 30 – Submission

When the period allowed for Regulation 28 has elapsed, the Council must submit a set list of documents to the Secretary of State, including the DPD, the Sustainability Appraisal, and a summary of the representations received.

Regulation also requires the Local Planning Authority to state where and when the DPD and accompanying documents are available for inspection and to advertise this information locally.

4.5. Regulations 31 to 36

During Regulations 31 to 36, the DPD is examined by an independent inspector. The Council is required to publish the time and place of the examination hearing. At the end of the examination, the inspector will deem the DPD either sound, sound but with recommended changes or unsound. If the inspector recommends changes, these are binding and must be carried out before the Council adopts the document. Once the document is sound it can then be adopted by the Council. If the document or parts of the document are found unsound, it or the relevant part(s) must return to the Regulation 25 stage.

The rules governing the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) was also changed by the 2008 Regulations. Public consultation is still required but can be undertaken in a manner that the Local Authority considers most appropriate. SPD's do not have to undergo an Independent Public Examination by a government appointed inspector.

5. When Can I Get Involved in the Preparation of Planning Documents?

5.1. Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

A Local Development Framework can include a number of DPDs. These should include a Core Strategy, an Allocations DPD, a Proposals Map and may also contain optional development documents such as Area Action Plans. These are classed as DPDs and outline the key development goals of the Local Development Framework. DPDs must be submitted for examination by a Planning Inspector.

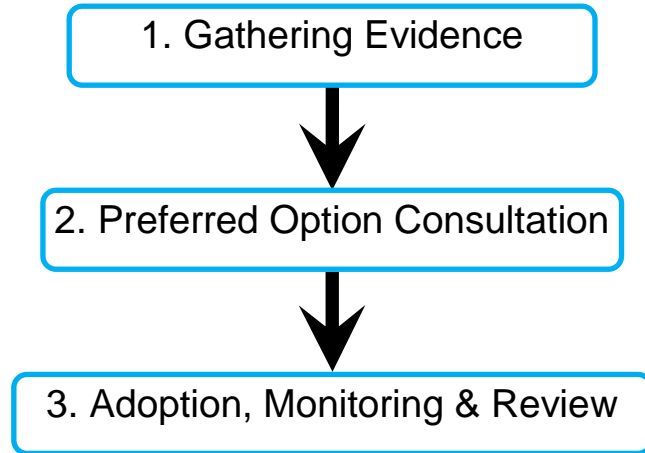
Any changes recommended in the inspectors report are binding and must be incorporated into the DPD before its adoption (Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 section 23(4)). Upon adoption, planning application decisions must be made in accordance with the DPDs unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

There five stages in preparing a Development Plan Document are set by the Government and are necessary in order to create a plan which is capable of being delivered.

Stage	What is it?	Do I get to have any input?
1. Evidence Gathering	This is where we get all the facts, figures and statistics to help us make achievable and deliverable decisions and plans.	Not normally. This stage is to get factual and/or scientific data about certain topics and/or issues.
2. Public Participation	Using the evidence above a variety of 'Options' are developed to address an issue or deal with a particular topic. Once responses have been received on the 'Options', work begins on developing a 'Preferred approach' which should address the comments made earlier and may be subject to further consultation.	Yes! We want your comments on the 'Options' put forward to help us get it right. Your comments will help us to come up with a 'Preferred Option' which you will hopefully you'll like. You will also be able to comment on the 'Preferred approach' during the consultation period. This is the best stage to give us your comments, as it will be more difficult to address them later on in the process.
3. Publication	This is a formal stage of the process. We will publish the final version of the document for a consultation period of 6 weeks. However, unlike the previous stage, it is not a further opportunity to make representations on the content of the plan, but solely for matters of soundness (i.e. that all key facts have been considered).	Yes, but this stage is more concerned with how we have used the evidence, to inform the options and conclusions made Ideally, general comments and representations should have been made during the public participation stage.
4. Submission & Independent Examination	When we are satisfied that the best and most appropriate plan has been prepared, we will submit the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State (the Government) to be independently assessed and examined by an appointed Planning Inspector.	Yes. The document will be "examined in public" and you can watch the proceedings and might be contacted by the Inspector to speak and give evidence. However no new/further representations on the Core Strategy can be made and the decision to discuss particular topics and call certain people to speak is up to the Inspector.
5. Adoption, Monitoring & Review	Following Stage 4 above, the Inspector will issue their decision with regard to quality and soundness of the document which can only be adopted when they have determined that is fit for purpose. After this, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policies and whether there is any need to review any part of the Core Strategy.	No. At this stage all comments and representations will have been received, taken into consideration and if necessary, people and organisations will have given evidence at the examination. This is the final stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy, and once adopted, it will replace the current Local Plan in its entirety, as set out in the document.

5.2. Supplementary Planning Documents (Optional documents)

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) expand or add more detail to the policies set out in the development plan documents. These may take the form of design guides, development briefs for specific sites or buildings, a master plan or can also be issue-based documents (e.g. on affordable housing, energy efficiency etc).



These documents can use illustrations, text and practical examples to expand on how the authority's policies can be taken forward. Local Authorities must involve the community in the preparation of SPDs.

There have been some changes to way in which SPDs are produced. The 2008 Regulations supplement S108 of the 2008 Planning Act, removing the requirement for SPDs to be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (although it will still be necessary to screen them).

There are three stages in preparing a Supplementary Planning Document (left). These stages are set by the Government and are necessary, in order to create a plan which is capable of being delivered.

They must follow the order set out and abide to a strict set of regulations which govern the way that planning policy documents are created and developed. An explanation of the stages and how and when you can get involved is included over the page.

Stage	What is it?	Do I get to have any input?
1. Evidence Gathering	This is where we get all the facts, figures and statistics to help us make achievable and deliverable decisions and plans.	Not normally. This stage is to get factual and/or scientific data about certain topics and/or issues.
2. Consultation	Using the evidence above a variety of 'Options' are developed to address an issue or deal with a particular topic.	Yes! We want your comments on the Options put forward to help us get it right. Your comments will help us to develop the final document which you will hopefully you'll like. This is the best stage to give us your comments, as they cannot be addressed later on in the process.
3. Adoption, Monitoring & Review	Once responses have been received on the Preferred Option, work begins on developing the final document which should address the comments made in the stage above. The SPD is then taken to a Full Council meeting of Elected Members for adoption. After this, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policies and whether there is any need to review any part of the document.	No. At this stage all comments and representations will have been received, taken into consideration and if necessary.

6. Proposed Methods for Community Involvement in the LDF

In order to widen the involvement of the Community, and especially in consulting with hard to reach groups, a range of consultation methods will be used. In spring 2004 the Council undertook a series of road show events to provide communities with the opportunity to state what they felt were the issues facing Rossendale. The information from these events has provided the foundation for the preparation of the LDDs which the Council has subsequently added to and enhanced to reflect recent “good practice”.

Method	Why Use it?	Benefits	Weaknesses	Resource Implications
Newspaper advertisement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory requirement To publicise by formal notice that documents are available for inspection. 	To provide the public with formal notice of commencement of public participation.	May not be the most inclusive method for some hard to reach groups e.g. ethnic minorities.	Staff time and cost of placing the notices.
Letters to statutory bodies and other national consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory requirement. Notify all relevant bodies on the consultation database 	Good for targeting specific groups directly.	Implications on staff time.	Staff time and cost of postage.
Consultation Documents available for inspection at LPA offices and other public buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory requirement. Making documents available for inspection at the Councils One Stop Shop and other public buildings viewed as appropriate. 	To meet the minimum requirements by ensuring that documents are available for inspection.	This method does not actively reach out to certain sections of the community i.e. the housebound, or elderly people.	Cost of printing documents for inspection.
Web Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory requirement. The webpage will be used to advertise the consultation on the LDF, opportunity to comment online and download all documents relevant to the specific consultation and LDF in general. 	Meets regulatory requirements. An excellent source of information for access at home and other locations. It is the preferred media of younger people. Frees up staff time.	Not all stakeholders will have access to the internet.	Staff time in training and then uploading documents.
Emails	Provides opportunity for people to be informed and signposted to further information.	Quick way of keeping people up to date. Reduces on the cost of postage.	Not all stakeholders have access to email.	Staff time.

Local Media (i.e. newspaper and radio)	Effective method of reaching a wider community audience.	Could help to raise awareness of local events and opportunities to become involved.	Again, local newspapers may not be accessed by hard to reach groups.	Staff time and cost of advertisement.
Leaflets/Brochures	Useful for targeting specific areas and groups with summarised information and signposting.	Effective way of summarising information in a concise 'reader friendly' manner.	Can only provide a limited amount of information.	Staff time and printing costs.
Public Exhibitions	Provides further opportunity for targeting audiences with summarised information and signposting people to further information.	Provides a method of effectively out reaching to stakeholders.	Displays must be kept up to date in order to provide correct information. May be difficult to engage hard to reach groups. Staff time in preparing and presenting display.	Staff time and cost of exhibition material.
Formal written consultation/ community surveys	Responses can help identify key interests and groups with consultation structured around key issues.	A good way to introduce the main issues. Surveys can be measured on a statistical basis to provide a more accurate summary of comments and feedback.	Surveys can be time consuming and require proper planning and analysis in order to be effective. Some stakeholders can be 'put off' by these more formal processes.	Staff time and cost of materials; computer resources
One-to-One meetings with selected stakeholders	Provides opportunity for detailed discussions to be undertaken on general or specific issues.	Can help to clarify matters of concern or uncertainty in a direct way. More information can exchange between the Council and selected stakeholders and support obtained for delivery of key elements of the Plan	Could be resource intensive in terms of staff time.	Staff time.
Public meetings	Provides further opportunity for people to comment on issues that affect them.	Can help to clarify matters of concern or uncertainty in a direct way. More information can exchange between the Council and selected stakeholders	Not all stakeholders will raise issues in a public forum. Vocal individuals can adversely dominate meetings.	Staff time and cost of venue hire.

Working groups/ Focus groups and seminars	Effective way to involve community groups such as Rossendale Partnership, Community Network, and other sectors such as elected members, County Council officers etc to become involved in the preparation of the LDF.	Can help to clarify matters of concern or uncertainty in a direct way. More information can exchange between the Council and selected stakeholders	May need expert facilitation in order to obtain the best results. Can be difficult to recruit members as it requires time commitment.	Staff time and cost of venue hire.
Area forums	Specific groups for presenting and receiving feedback on local issues.	Allows more detailed discussion to take place with regard to individual local areas.	Potential to address importance of strategic themes that affect local areas as well as local issues.	Staff time and cost of venue hire.
Local Strategic Partnership	Source of local knowledge and structured by theme groups that can reflect topics arising as part of preparing and LDF.	A good way to tap into local and organisational knowledge and experience by accessing the relevant 'theme groups' and other agencies.	Resource intensive - officer attendance at each of the partnership groups.	Staff time.
Planning Aid	Planning Aid provides free, independent and professional help, advice and support on planning issues to people and communities who cannot afford to hire a planning consultant. Planning Aid complements the work of local authorities but is wholly independent of them.	Will help provide access to planning advice which will assist vulnerable/ hard to reach groups.	Could be resource-intensive for Planning Aid	None

7. Which Methods will be used for the Different Types of Document?

Which Document?		Development Plan Documents (DPDs)					Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)		
What Method?	To Which Group?	Stage of Preparation					1	2	3
		1	2	3	4	5			
Newspaper advertisement	A, B, C		■	■	■	■		■	■
Letters	A, B, C		■	■	■	■		■	■
Consultation Documents	A, B, C		■	■	■			■	
Web site	A, B, C		■	■	■	■		■	■
Emails	A, B, C		■	■	■	■		■	■
Local Media	A, B, C		■	■	■	■			
Leaflets/Brochures	A		■	■	■	■		■	■
Public Exhibitions	A, B		■					■	
Formal written consultation/ community surveys	A, B, C	■	■	■			■	■	
One-to-One meetings	A, B, C		■	■				■	
Public meetings	A, B, C		■	■				■	
Working groups/ Focus groups and seminars	B		■	■				■	
Area forums	A		■	■				■	
Local Strategic Partnership	A		■	■	■	■		■	
Planning Aid	A		■	■	■	■			

Key	
Development Plan Documents (DPDs) - Stage	
1:	Evidence Gathering
2:	Public Participation
3:	Publication
4:	Submission and Independent Examination
5:	Adoption, Monitoring and Review
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - Stage	
1:	Evidence Gathering
2:	Preferred Option Consultation
3:	Adoption, Monitoring and Review
Symbols	
■	Statutory Requirement
■	Proposed Method
■	Subject to available resources
Group	
A	People with little/no planning knowledge or background
B	People with some planning knowledge or background
C	People with a planning background and knowledge

8. Dealing with Your Comments

All members of the community (residents, businesses, community groups and other members of the public) can contribute to the process of preparing development plans. Planning's purpose has always been to try and make where we live as pleasant a place as possible. The best way of making this happen is to involve you in deciding how your local community is planned. Obviously, other people in the community or stakeholders may have different views that must be taken into account and it is unrealistic to expect that everyone can decide and agree on the detail of everything that goes on in your area.

When a document has reached the required stage for consultation the Council will provide a standard feedback form to help make commenting on each document easier. The form will be available in paper form at our One Stop Shop and other public buildings and available to download on the internet. You can also register and provide comments on the LDF online.

The Council will fully consider comments made at the both the Public Participation and Publication stages. A summary of the comments made will be produced highlighting the main issues and demonstrating where a comment has led to changes in the document. These reports will be made available on the Councils website www.rossendalebc.gov.uk , at the Councils One Stop Shop in Rawtenstall, and at the public libraries in Rawtenstall, Bacup, Haslingden and Whitworth.

All comments received will be acknowledged at the end of the consultation period and will be made public alongside future versions of the relevant document(s). Therefore all comments received on the LDF become public documents and cannot be kept confidential.

All information collected will be used only to inform decisions in planning policy documents. A statement will be prepared outlining the main issues raised, which will be available for public viewing in the future.

9. Community Involvement and Consultation on Planning Applications

The Development Control service receives approximately 800 planning applications each year. These include applications for Planning Permission and those for Listed Building Consent, Conservation Area Consent and Advertisement Consent.

It does not deal with applications for County Matters, e.g. for mineral extraction or waste disposal, as these are the responsibility of Lancashire County Council.

Both large and small scale planning applications can be contentious and can attract intense interest from the various stakeholders in the planning process. The purpose of this section is to outline what the Council already does in ensuring that all stakeholders can participate in the planning application process once an application has been received and also to set out what it expects prospective applicants to do to ensure early consultation on their schemes prior to a formal submission.

9.1. The Councils Practice for Publicising Planning Applications

The Development Control Customer Charter sets out the Councils current practice on dealing with planning applications. There are statutory requirements for publicity on planning applications. The Council recognises the value of public involvement in decisions about new development in Rossendale, therefore, its arrangements for publicity and consultation meet the minimum legal requirements and often exceed them.

Its publicity and consultation practices include:

- Online register of new applications and decisions taken: the Development Control website hosts a list of all current planning applications together with a facility to comment on an application on-line.
- Copies of current applications are available for inspection during working hours: A planning officer is available at the Council's One Stop Shop in Rawtenstall to discuss the proposals.
- Neighbour notification by letter: all owners and occupiers adjacent to a proposal site, or who may be materially affected by a development, are notified by letter and given 21 days to comment on a planning application. However, bodies such as Natural England will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation. Where material amendments are made to a planning application, neighbours will be re-notified and usually give 7 days to comment further.
- Display of notices at the proposed site and in the local press: major applications, applications which do not accord with the development plan, applications in Conservation Areas and for Listed Buildings will be publicised by a site and press notice.
- Consultation with other groups: various statutory bodies and non-statutory bodies and interest groups are consulted for specialist advice.
- Weekly List: a list of applications received each week is displayed on the Councils website and distributed to Elected Members, local interest groups and to local newspapers for publication.
- Commenting on applications: anyone can comment on the planning merits of a planning application whether they have been notified directly or not. Representations (in support or not) can be made by letter, fax or e-mail. Alternatively, they may be sent electronically through the on-line comments form. All representations are acknowledged and their contents are summarised in the planning officer's report to the Development Control Committee. Both the applicant and the public have rights to speak before the Committee.

The Development Control Customer Charter can be viewed on the Councils website at www.rossendale.gov.uk. The Development Control section is undertaking improvements to its website and has an on-line applications database containing details of current and historic planning applications. It is anticipated that more information will be made available on the web-site as IT improvements are taken forward.

When an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, or if the Council fails to determine a planning application within the allocated period is received the Council will notify all those who were consulted originally or who made representations to the application. The Councils website contains a list of all planning appeals received. The Planning Inspectorate determines appeals and representations are normally sent to them directly.

9.2. Pre-application Discussions

The Council encourages developers to engage in pre-application discussions with planning officers. The aim of these discussions is:

- To identify key issues and planning policies that the developer should take into account
- To identify likely problems at an early stage and to allow the developer to address them via amendments to a scheme prior to submitting a planning application
- To enable the identification of information that is required to support an application including the form of community consultation and any impact studies that may be required to support an application.

These discussions are held on a confidential basis at this stage of the process. However, a consultation statement should be agreed at the commencement of pre-application discussions if it is evident that such discussions will lead to a planning application being submitted. This may form part of a wider scoping exercise to assess the impact of development proposals. The scale of an application will determine the scope of community consultation, and as such, each proposal/application will be viewed on its own merits.

The advice given by planning officers will be as accurate and objective as possible - but in providing an informal, officer view - will be without prejudice to the final outcome of a planning application.

In addition to meeting the planning officers, developers of smaller scale applications - including house extensions - are encouraged to contact neighbouring occupiers with draft plans and invite comments within a specified time period. This is the best time for those who live nearby to consider whether they might be affected by a proposal for new development and to make their views known. Developers should also contact statutory undertakers and non-statutory bodies for technical advice.

9.3. Community Consultation for Residential and Non-Residential Development

During pre-application discussions on 'Major' applications, the consultation requirements for a planning application will be agreed with planning officers. Major applications are defined as schemes involving:

- **Residential development comprising the erection of 10 or more houses or development on a site of 0.5 hectares or more**
- **Non-residential development exceeding 1,000 square metres of floor space or on sites of 1 hectare or more**

The level of community consultation should reflect the nature and scale of the proposed development and the extent to which it accords with development plan policies. The purpose of community consultation is to:

- To allow the applicant to explain his initial ideas
- To obtain the views of the local community and stakeholders

Such an approach benefits all involved by allowing accurate information to be presented to the community thereby pre-empting rumour and misconceived objections. In addition, by making provision for amendments early in the process, the applicant may avoid the inconvenience of having to make substantial amendments to an application at an advanced stage of the process and may lead to a speedier decision. In the long run, it should reduce the time and cost in reaching a successful outcome.

Community consultation may take a number of forms depending on the scale and likely interest in the proposals:

- Circulation of leaflets with draft proposals to residents in the vicinity of the site
- On-line and/or on-site information on draft proposals
- Arranging public meetings or exhibitions with community and other local interest groups
- Use of the Planning Aid service and/or specific public engagement techniques
- Requesting feedback within a specified time-scale to allow changes to be made

9.4. Consultation Statement

Those submitting 'major' applications are expected to submit a consultation statement with their planning application, which describes the community consultation that has been undertaken, including:

- The scale of the notification, including a list of properties and businesses contacted
- A list of interest/community groups or other organisations contacted
- The location and during of any public meeting, exhibition or event held
- A summary of all the comments received and issues raised
- A clear indication of which comments have resulted in amendments to the scheme and what those changes are, and which comments have not, and why not
- Any comments by groups or individuals about the public engagement process

If an applicant fails to carry out any community engagement or provide a consultation statement or if either fail to meet the standards set out above, then members of the Committee will be made aware of this in the planning officer's report.

10. Who Can Help You with Planning Issues?

There are a range of organisations developed to provide assistance to community groups and individuals who are interested about finding out more on the planning. The need for them has been further emphasised by the introduction of the new planning system and it is important the SCI provides information on organisations that can aid the community involvement in the LDF process.

10.1. Planning Aid

Planning Aid provides free, independent and professional help, advice and support on planning issues to people and communities who cannot afford to hire a planning consultant. Planning Aid complements the work of local authorities but is wholly independent of them. In most UK regions Planning Aid is run by the Royal Town Planning Institute.

For people living in the North West Region there is North West Planning Aid. The organisation can provide guidance to help you gain an understanding of the planning process, and how best to get involved in the preparation of an LDF and commenting on planning applications.

For all initial planning enquiries visit the Planning Aid website www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk or contact Michael Mansell, the Planning Advisor for North West Planning Aid at nwcw@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

10.2. Planning Portal

The portal is for use by everyone. Planning Portal offers the chance to find out about how change in the environment of England and Wales is managed and the part we can all play in a brighter future for our countryside, villages, towns and cities.

It avoids technical language wherever possible. Major parts inform the general public and other sections will be especially useful to people with a professional interest and university students in need of detailed information.

The site was developed with the input of some 150 stakeholders from the planning process, including 40 Local Planning Authorities. For more information or to use the Planning Portal services www.planningportal.gov.uk

10.3. Elected representatives

Councillors provide another point of contact for you to express your views on planning issues. The key responsibility of councillors is to:

- Be the ultimate policy-makers, collectively in Full Council.
- Serve on the Councils Cabinet or on one or more of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees and on other Council Committees;
- Represent their communities and bring their views into the Councils decision-making process;
- Deal with local issues and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances;
- Balance different interests within their electoral division and represent the electoral division as a whole;
- Be available to represent the Council on other bodies;
- Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics in accordance with the Councils Code of Conduct for Members; and register financial and other interests.

10.4. Planning Officers

A Planning Officer from the Forward Planning Team will be available to deal with enquiries about the LDF. For information on specific planning applications officers from the Development Control Team will be available to contact by telephone or by appointment.

11. Improving Consultation: Monitoring and Reviewing the SCI

Like all the documents that will form the LDF, the SCI will have to react to changing circumstances and will be subject to periodical review.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of the SCI an evidence base will be developed that tracks the effectiveness of the consultation database, gauges opinion on the most and least successful forms of consultation and provides opportunity for analysis of this information. The Annual Monitoring Report, prepared by the Council to monitor progress in preparing the LDF, will reflect on the community involvement process.

As this process develops, results will be presented as part of revised versions of the SCI and will help identify the thresholds from which a review of the SCI will take place other than changes in the regulatory requirements or government guidance in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12.

As part of the Councils commitment to improving community involvement further work has been undertaken towards improving consultation through e-government improvements so that online consultation and graphic presentation of planning issues can be achieved.

12. What Organisations and Groups will be involved in the LDF?

Government guidance sets out the consultees we must contact when preparing a development plan document. A full list of the consultees is held in the Councils LDF consultation database.

Please note, this list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.

Specific Consultees

- **Government Office for the North West**
- Government Departments including the Home Office
- 4 North West (4NW)
- North West Regional Development Agency
- Adjoining Local Planning Authorities
- The Environment Agency
- The Highways Agency
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Primary Care Trusts
- **Relevant Telecommunications companies**
- **Relevant electricity and gas companies**
- **Relevant sewerage undertaker**
- **Relevant water undertaker**
- **Neighbouring Parish Councils**
- **Yorkshire Forward**
-

General Consultees

- Home Builders Federation

Elected Representatives

- Local and County Councillors
- Members of Parliament

Rossendale Borough Council and Partners

- Heads of Services
- Senior Officers
- Rossendale Partnership
- Community Network

Representatives from other key sectors and organisations

- Black and minority ethnic groups
- Community groups
- Disability groups
- Faith groups
- Over 50's groups
- Voluntary groups
- Young people

General public

- Employees
- Local residents

Landowners, developers and Agents

- Construction companies
- Developers
- House builders
- Specialist consultants

Businesses

- Local businesses
- Other businesses with an interest in or adjoining the Borough

Other interest groups and organisations

- Civic and amenity groups
- Conservation and Heritage Societies
- Community interest groups
- Rights of way groups
- Environment groups
- Government agencies
- Local Authority agencies
- Organisations representing different racial, ethnic, or national groups
- Public Service providers
- Residents Associations
- Schools and Colleges
- Sports and Recreation organisations
- Tenants Associations
- Transport operators and transport groups
- Utility companies
- Manchester Airport
- Post Office Property Holdings

13. Where to View Information and Contact the Councils Planning Department

Documents to be viewed for consultation will be made available in the Councils One Stop Shop and other public buildings in the Borough.

There will be a number of approaches used to ensure engagement is effective, some of which are subject to regulations that ensure minimum standards are achieved (see Section 6).

Documents will also be made available on Rossendale Borough Councils Website with easy access ensured through links on the homepage. Feedback forms are available on request at offices or can be downloaded from the website www.rossendale.gov.uk/forwardplanning

Consultation Documents will also be sent to consultees as appropriate in paper copy upon request.

13.1. Planning Department Contact Details

Forward Planning (Planning Policy)		Development Control (Development Management)	
Address	Forward Planning Team Rossendale Borough Council One Stop Shop Lord Street Rawtenstall BB4 7LZ	Address	Development Control Team Rossendale Borough Council One Stop Shop Lord Street Rawtenstall BB4 7LZ
Email	forwardplanning@rossendalebc.gov.uk	Email	planning@rossendalebc.gov.uk
		Duty Officer – Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm, One Stop Shop	01706 252580
Anne Storah (Principal Planner)	01706 252418	Adrian Harding (Principal Planner)	01706 238646
Adrian Smith (Principal Planner)	01706 252419	Neil Birtles (Principal Planner)	01706 238645
Caroline Ridge (Assistant Planner)	01706 238627	Richard Elliott (Planning Officer)	01706 238639
James Dalgleish (Planning Technician)	01706 252586	M Sadiq (Planning Officer)	01706 238641
Gwen Marlow (Technical Assistant)	01706 252417	Diane Dungworth (Business Manager)	01706 238638
		Paul Talbot (Planning Technician)	01706 238637
		Ikra Ashraf (Planning Technician)	01706 238640

14. Glossary of Terms

AAP: Area Action Plans - AAPs form part of the Local Development Framework system. Their purpose is to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is expected or required. AAPs are Development Plan Documents and are therefore subject to independent examination by a Planning Inspector.

AMR: Annual Monitoring Report - The purpose of the report is to monitor how effective the policies and proposals within individual Local Development Documents are in meeting the vision set out in the Core Strategy, together with monitoring the extent to which targets are being met. Until the Core Strategy is adopted, the AMR will assess the effectiveness of Local Plan Policies and relevant regional policies. It also assesses progress on the preparation of Local Development Documents which will inform revisions to the LDS.

Binding Report: A binding report is a report received from the planning inspectorate following their examination of a DPD. The local planning authority is obliged to carry forward the comments made within this report.

CLG: Communities and Local Government - Government department responsible for national policy on local government in England, formerly known as ODPM. Sometimes referred to as DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) <http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/>

DPD: Development Plan Document - An LDF should include a Core Strategy, a document dealing with Site-Specific Allocations of land, a Proposals Map and may also contain optional development documents such as Area Action Plans. These are classed as DPDs and outline the key development goals of the Local Development Framework. They are subject to an independent inspection by a Planning Inspector. Together with the RSS, they form the Development Plan and are used to determine Planning Applications.

Evidence Base: The Council is obliged to compile an evidence base of local needs, opportunities and limitations on which to base its LDDs.

GONW: Government Offices for North West - Government Office for the North West is one of nine Government Offices in England who represent and undertake work on behalf of central government departments in each of the English Regions: Cabinet Office, Department for Business, Enterprise and (update-some names have changed) Regulatory Reform, Department for Transport, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, Home Office, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for Work and Pensions, Communities and Local Government, Department of Health – co-located with GONW. They also have regular links with other government departments. <http://www.gos.gov.uk/gonw/>

HRA: Habitats Regulations Assessments – also referred to as Appropriate Assessment (AA) – this is a requirement of the Habitats Directive to assess whether the policies and proposals in a DPD or SPD will impact on the integrity of European Sites which are of exceptional importance in respect of natural habitats and species etc. HRA/AA must be carried out before a plan is adopted.

HMR: Housing Market Renewal - government pathfinder initiatives designed to regenerate housing in neighbourhoods that have spiralled into decline. Rossendale is part of the Pennine Lancashire Elevate Pathfinder, encompassing Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Pendle and Ribblesdale Valley.

Integrated Regional Strategy (RS2010) – A document prepared jointly by NWDA and 4NW that will set out the economic, environmental and planning framework for Rossendale for the next 15 years. It forms part of the Development Plan for the Borough.

LCC: Lancashire County Council - Currently the transport planning and Mineral and Waste planning authority for Rossendale. <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/>

LDD: Local Development Document - these are the collection of documents that make up the Local Development Framework. They include DPDs, SPDs, the LDS, the AMR and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

LDF: Local Development Framework, local planning framework (in preparation). The LDF is a folder of local development documents prepared by a district council, unitary authority or national park authority that outline the spatial planning strategy for the local area.

LDS: Local Development Scheme - this document outlines the timetable for preparing the documents that comprise the Local Development Framework.

LSP: Local Strategic Partnership – are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships which match local authority boundaries. LSPs bring together at a local level, the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively.

LTP: Local Transport Plan- prepared by Lancashire County Council it sets out the Strategic transport vision for Lancashire as well as detailed local implementation priorities <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/>

4NW: North West Regional Assembly - a partnership organisation responsible for the Regional Spatial Strategy and in association with NWDA the new Integrated Regional Strategy. It has an Executive Board whose members are elected with representation from local government, business organisations, public sector agencies, education and training bodies, trade unions and co-operatives together with the voluntary and community sector. <http://www.4nw.org.uk/>

HPDG: Housing and Planning Delivery Grant –is to incentivise local authorities to improve delivery of housing and other planning outcomes as part of their strategic, place shaping role and to provide more support to communities and local councils who are doing their bit to deliver new homes.

MWLDF: Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework. Prepared by Lancashire County Council this sets out the planning framework for Minerals and Waste development in Rossendale and the rest of Lancashire. The suite of documents in this LDF (ie, LDS, SCI, Core Strategy and Site Allocations document) parallels that prepared for Rossendale and is subject to identical consultation procedures. (insert link)

NWDA: North West Development Agency- Jointly responsible with 4NW for preparing the North West Integrated Regional Strategy (insert link)

PINS: Planning Inspectorate - carries out appeals and similar casework under planning and environmental legislation in England and Wales. PINS carry out the examination on DPDs, from which their reports are binding on the local planning authority. <http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/>

PPG: Planning Policy Guidance Notes - government planning policy documents by subject matter. PPGs are gradually being replaced by PPSs. All the PPGs can be viewed and downloaded from the CLG website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/>

PPS: Planning Policy Statements - government planning policy documents by subject matter. PPSs are replacing the earlier Planning Policy Guidance Notes. All the PPSs can be viewed and downloaded from the CLG website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/>

RDLP: Rossendale District Local Plan - Rossendale District Local Plan 1995 - 2001. This was adopted in 1995 and provided the detailed local planning policies for Rossendale. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 makes provision for local planning authorities to "save" their existing planning policies if they have not been replaced by new policies in their LDF within the prescribed periods. As such various policies within the Rossendale District Local Plan have been saved, and should be referred to as the Local Plan: Saved Policies.

Local Plan Saved Policies: Rossendale District Local Plan Saved Policies. The policies which Rossendale Borough Council wished to save and the reasons behind them (see section 4) were satisfactorily demonstrated to the Secretary of State, and as from the 27th September 2007, the Rossendale District Local Plan Saved Policies were brought forward.

RSS (North West of England Plan): Regional Spatial Strategy - prepared by the North West Regional Assembly. The current adopted RSS is the North West of England Plan. This was adopted on the 30th September 2008 and replaced Regional Planning Guidance 13 (RPG13). The development of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) links economic, housing, transport and planning goals together in a broad spatial strategy. The RSS focuses on the needs of the region as a whole but also highlights those areas that need more specific guidance or a different approach. This approach should improve the co-ordination and delivery of regional policy and sustainable development. The RSS is part of the statutory Document Plan and is used in determining planning applications.

SA: Sustainability Appraisal - A sustainability appraisal is an integral process within the LDD preparation process. An SA provides assessment that ensures that an LDD will contain policies and guidance that ensure that development will bring long term economic, social and environmental benefits. The SA also incorporates the requirements of SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment).

SCI: Statement of Community Involvement - this document sets out how the council will engage the local community, key stakeholders and representative organisations both before and during the preparation of key components of the LDF.

SCS: Sustainable Community Strategy - is prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership as a set of goals and actions which they, in representing the residential, business, statutory and voluntary interests of a local area, wish to promote. The community strategy informs the Local Development Framework and acts as an umbrella for all other strategies devised for the local area. Rossendale's SCS can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.rossendalealive.co.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=43>

SDF: Sustainable Development Framework - sets out the principles and parameters of a Sustainability Appraisal of Development Plan Documents. This is the outcome of the first SA task of setting out the scope of the SA.

SEA: Strategic Environmental Assessment - This is a European directive and its requirements have been incorporated into the SA process. The objective of the SEA Directive is "to provide for a high level of protection for the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programs with a view to promoting sustainable development".

SoS: Secretary of State - ultimately the 'national planning authority' for England and Wales. The SoS has the power to approve or refuse planning policies and applications. Planning Appeals are decided by the SoS

SPD: Supplementary Planning Documents - expand or add more detail to the policies set out in the development plan documents. These may take the form of design guides, guidance on energy efficiency or form development briefs for sites or buildings, a master plan or issue-based documents.

SPZ: Simplified Planning Zones - an area in which a local planning authority wishes to stimulate development and encourage investment. It operates by granting a specified planning permission in the zone without the need for a formal application or the payment of planning fees. Rossendale does not currently have any SPZs.

Test of Soundness: In examining a LDD, planning inspectors use test of soundness to assess how sound a document is. These often test how thoroughly a document uses the evidence base.

For further information on the Local Development Framework please visit:

www.rossendale.gov.uk/forwardplanning

Contact Details

Forward Planning
Rossendale Borough Council
One Stop Shop
Lord Street
Rawtenstall
Rossendale
BB4 7LZ

Email: forwardplanning@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Tel: 01706 252417

If you would like a summary of this leaflet in large print, on audio cassette or in a language other than English, please let us know and we will be happy to arrange it.

Please telephone 01706 217777 or Contact Communications Section, One Stop Shop, Rawtenstall, BB4 7LZ

اگر آپ کو ان معلومات کا خلاصہ بڑے حروف میں، آڈیو کیسٹ پر، یا انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہے تو برائے مہربانی ہمیں بتائیں، ہم بخوشی آپ کے لیے اس کا انتظام کریں گے۔

برائے مہربانی 01706 217777 پر ٹیلیفون کریں یا پھر کمیونٹی کیشن سیکشن سے اس پتہ پر رابطہ قائم کریں:

Communications Section, Town Centres, Rawtenstall, BB4 7LZ

আপনি যদি এসব তথ্যের সার সংক্ষেপ বড় হরফের ছাপায়, অডিও ক্যাসেটে অথবা ইংরেজী ছাড়া অন্য কোন ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদেরকে জানালে আমরা অত্যন্ত খুশী মনে তার ব্যবস্থা করব।

অনুগ্রহ করে ০১৭০৬ ২১৭৭৭৭ এই নাম্বারে অথবা কমিউনিকেশন সেকশন, টাউন সেন্টার অফিস, রটেনস্টল বি.বি.৪ ৭এল.জেড. এই ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করুন।

