

FEEDBACK REPORT ON

THE EAST DEVON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1 Context

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will inform how the Council will undertake consultation on:
- a) documents making up the East Devon Local Development Framework and
 - b) how future consultation is undertaken when planning applications are submitted and also in respect to pre-application consultation.
- 1.2 Paper copies of an initial pre-consultation draft of the SCI were forwarded to a number of Government Agencies in July 2007 and made available on the East Devon District Council website. Comments were invited on this pre-consultation draft but it was stressed that the consultation did not form a part of the formal SCI production process (the consultation undertaken was neither in respect to the **Draft Statement** or the **Submission to Secretary of State** – these formal stages are to follow). There were a limited number of responses received.
- 1.3 In July 2007 the Council also issued an **Initial Consultation Questionnaire** the conclusions of which are to be used to help inform refinement of the SCI.

2 SCI Initial Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.1 A copy of the consultation questionnaire is attached as Appendix 1. The questionnaire was designed to be attractive to respondents and easy to fill in. The printed versions were on green A3 paper; printed double sided and folded to A4. Electronic versions were available and the questionnaire was also placed on the Council website and emailed out.
- 2.2 The questionnaire was circulated to a wide range of users of the planning system. This included emailed electronic copies or posted paper copies to:
- Every agent recorded on the Council CAPS Development Control and Building Control database.
 - Every agent, organisation, business and other body (but not private individuals) recorded on the East Devon Local Plan database.
 - Every individual or organisation on the East Devon Local Plan database with a recorded email address.
 - Every Town and Parish Council in East Devon.
 - 100 representatives with email addresses recorded on the East Devon Voluntary Services database as regular consultation respondents.
- 2.3 In all cases where our records showed that the recipients had an email address the document was emailed. The exception was with respect to Parish Council's, all Parish Councils in East Devon received a paper copy. Approximately 460 paper copies of the questionnaire were circulated (plus 65 Paper copies to Parish Councils). In addition around 520 electronic copies were circulated directly by Council officers, plus around

100 copies were sent out by the East Devon Voluntary Services Agency. In total, therefore, there were around 1,145 questionnaires circulated. It is not known how many copies were downloaded from the website and returned to the Council.

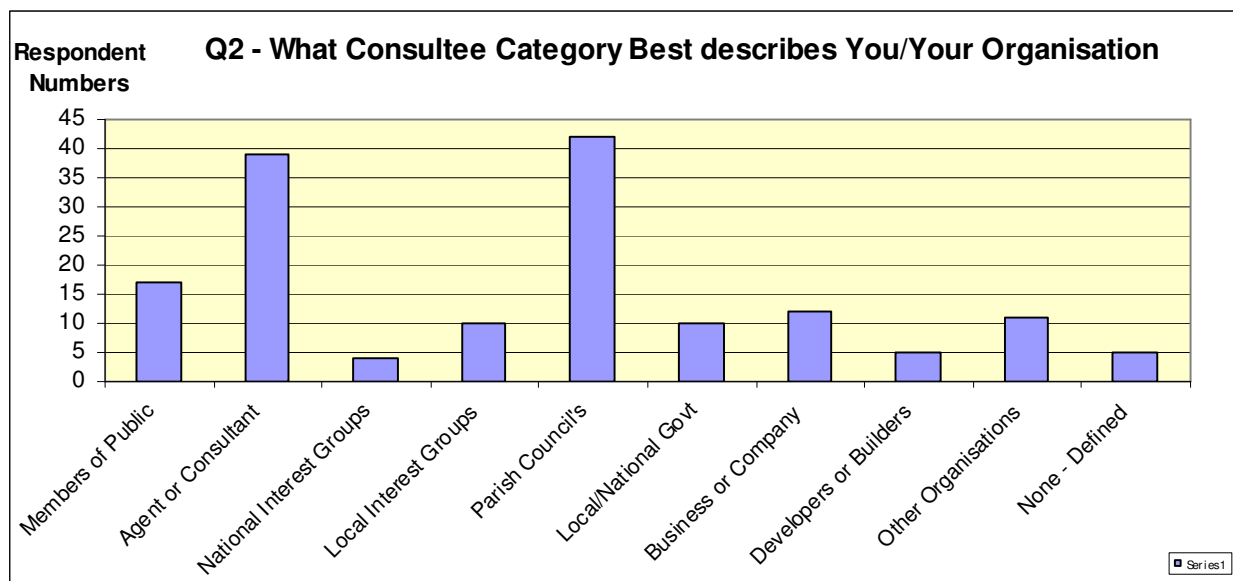
- 2.4 In total there were 155 responses to the questionnaire. Of these 112 arrived as paper copies and 23 as emailed electronic copies. 155 responses (out of a circulation of 1,145) amounts to a response rate of just under 14%. However it is significant to note that 42 Town/Parish Councils responded, 65% of the total Parish/Town Councils. Appendix 2 sums up the responses/numbers of ticks recorded for each question/answer by all respondents. Other appendices record specific comments received. This report, by design, does not advise on or list the individuals or organisations that submitted responses or what comments any specific respondent made. This information is treated as being confidential.

3 Questionnaire Design and Chosen Circulation Methods

- 3.1 The questionnaire was designed to be of most relevance to regular (or past) users of the planning system. It was intended to gauge the views of these groups on the effectiveness of existing approaches to consultation and how we might or should undertake future consultation. **It is stressed that no attempt was made to send the questionnaire to what could be deemed to be a representative group of the population as a whole. Furthermore no attempt has been made to validate whether the respondents are representative (or how representative they may be) of the population as a whole or any particular sector or group of the population.**
- 3.2 Most recipients of the questionnaire and most respondents are employed in one aspect or another by the planning or development industry or are Town/Parish Councils (clerks). The expectation is, therefore, that results received will be weighted to reflect the concerns of such groups. Notwithstanding these observations it is considered that the responses received are of worth and relevance in respect to informing refinement of the SCI and also related work areas.
- 3.3 Not all respondents answered all questions in the questionnaire and for some questions the respondents were invited to offer more than one choice or preference, therefore in some cases the sum of percentages of responses add up to more than 100%.

4 Survey Findings and Observations on Responses Received

- 4.1 There were 120 respondents that specifically wished to have their details added to the LDF database (**Question 1**). Where requested details have been added to the database.
- 4.2 Respondents were specifically asked (**Question 2**) about the category that best described them/their organisation. There were a diverse range of respondent groups as illustrated in the Graph Below.
- 4.3 The largest responding groups were Agents/Consultants and Parish Councils. The questionnaires were specifically sent to agents (as recorded on the Council's Development Control/Building control database) so it is of no real surprise that they generated significant response levels. It is considered very encouraging that a large numbers of Town/Parish Councils responded. Parish Councils take a keen interest in planning matters and they are statutory representative bodies of local communities. On the whole Town/Parish Council responses did not vary significantly from the overall general responses received to the questionnaire.

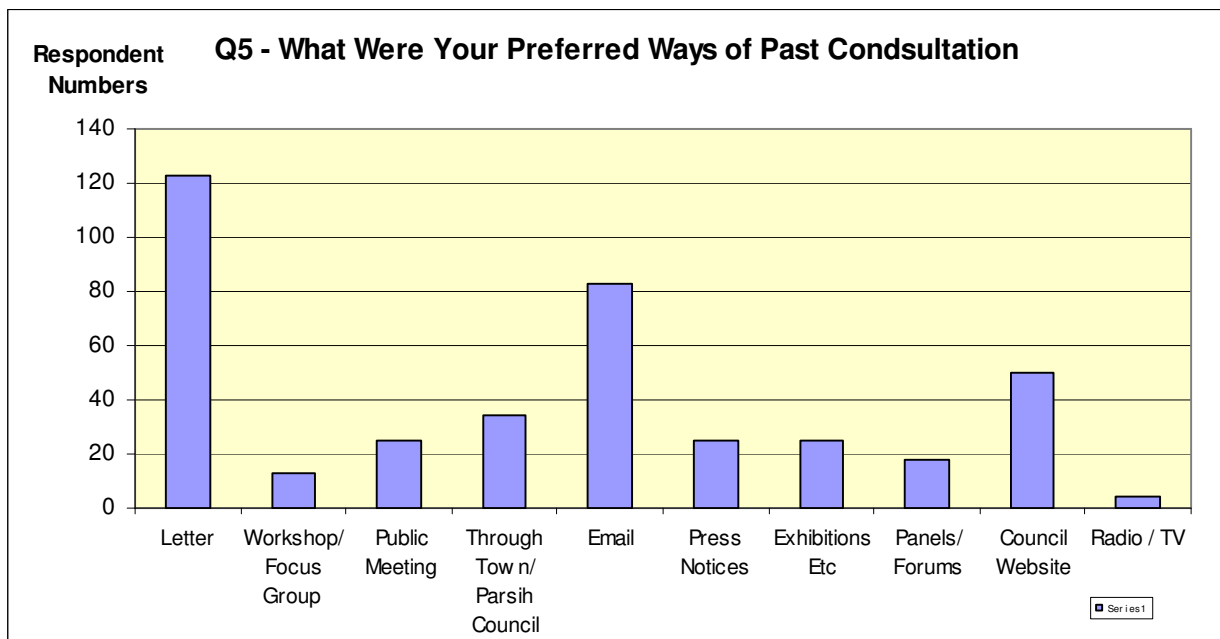


- 4.4 There were 17 members of the public that responded to the questionnaire and 16 provided details of their sex and age (**Question 3**). Of the 16 there were 14 male respondents and 2 female respondents and of the 16 respondents there were 12 (75%) who were over 60 years of age. Although the absolute numbers are small the percentage figure does indicate (as is often widely assumed to be the case) that elderly people (especially males) are the most active sector of the public in East Devon in respect to responding to and commenting on planning issues.
- 4.5 It is often assumed that it is easy to get the views of articulate older males in East Devon; the questionnaire does nothing to dispel this perception. The questionnaire evidence suggests that younger people (under 60s!) and females are not so active in the planning process and as such are groups that may warrant particular attention in respect to future consultation and may perhaps warrant different/specialised consultation techniques.
- 4.6 There were 100 respondents that answered **Question 4** and of these, 91 advised of past involvement in the Local Plan, 40 in Development Briefs or SPGs and 2 indicated no past involvement in the plan making process. 55 respondents provided no response. There were 93 respondents who responded to **Question 4a** about the appropriateness of past consultation and the clear majority, 83%, felt past consultation was appropriate. Of those offering a response the clear majority, 77%, felt that they were kept informed during the consultation process (**Question 4b**). Also a majority of those offering a response, 68%, felt that that sufficient feedback was provided (**Question 4c**).
- 4.7 The response rates suggest, despite the drawn-out nature of Local Plan production, that respondents were generally happy with the way consultation was undertaken in the past. This response was received even though many respondents would have been disappointed with the Local Plan conclusions/the Inspector's findings and adopted Council policy.
- 4.8 If there was previously an area of slighter weakness the questionnaire responses would suggest that it is with respect to providing feedback. Comments received on past consultation (**Question 4d**) are recorded in Appendix 3.
- 4.9 Some of the key issues raised in response to **Question 4d** included:

- More feedback and updates on consultation exercises is favoured, especially in non-technical language/terms.
- More justification is sought for why changes are made to documents (or not made) in response to consultation exercises and feedback should be provided.
- More time for making consultation responses was seen as desirable.
- It was considered that documents are sometime too complex to understand and summary versions should be made available.
- It was felt that it would useful to provide training for people on how to make better quality consultation responses and it was seen that effective engagement and awareness can be limited to a limited number of informed people.
- More on-site meetings with relevant people/organisations were considered appropriate.
- More engagement with Parish Councils was seen as desirable.
- It was suggested that re-consultation may be appropriate where significant changes occur to documents.

4.10 It is considered that it would be desirable to provide more feedback in response top comments and observations received and that this should seek to set out reasons for either supporting or opposing respondents comments.

4.11 There were 150 respondents who responded to the question about what, from past experience, were preferred ways of being informed about what is going on at different stages of the planning process (**Question 5**). 123 respondents (82% of the 150) indicating that receipt of letters was a preferred past way of being informed. This method of communication was far more popular to other means identified; emails with 55% of respondents was the second highest ranking option. The Council website was endorsed by 33% of respondents. The responses suggest that despite the fact that electronic communication may be cheaper and easier to use, from the Council perspective, most people would appear to like to have or receive documents in paper format. Full responses are set out in the table below.



4.12 The other options (including, Workshop/ Focus Group, Public Meetings, through Town/ Parish Council, Press Notices, Exhibitions, Panels/ Forums and Radio / TV) all receiving around or less than 20% endorsement. Whilst some respondents favour such means of consultation it appears that as consultation techniques they do not necessarily get

widespread or universal popular support. It can reasonably be inferred, from the responses received, that care needs to be taken over how these types of consultation techniques are used and how and who they are 'targeted' at. These types of approaches to undertaking consultation (especially exhibitions) are widely used but there is little evidence to suggest how successful or popular they are. It might be appropriate to monitor this issue in the future. Other choices and comments on consultation are identified in Appendix 4. In summary they included:

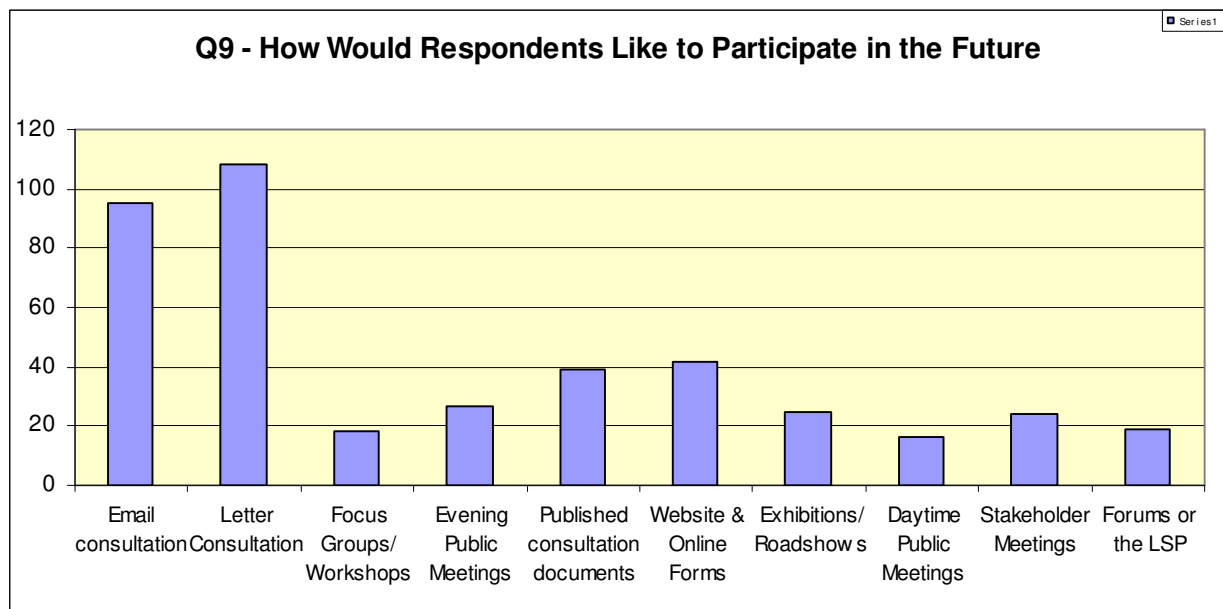
- Specific meetings with Parish Councils.
- Telephone.
- Personal contact.

4.13 Most respondents, 133 out of 148 (90%), responded that they have access to the internet (**Question 6**). This fact is of interest when cross-referenced back to the above, question 5 and also below Question 9, which indicates that despite having access to the internet people still like to receive/handle paper copies of documents.

4.14 In **Question 7** respondents were asked what future LDF documents they want to be consulted on. Responses received will be recorded on the LDF database. Not surprisingly most respondents (81%) want to be consulted on the Core Strategy. Many respondents also indicated that they wished to comment on other documents that will make up the LDF.

4.15 In **Question 8** respondents were asked about additional organisations that they would wish to see added to the LDF database. A number of organisations were identified and these will be added to the database.

4.16 **Question 9** of the questionnaire asked how people would like to participate in production of, and be consulted on, future LDF documents. In total 150 people offered responses with consultation on documents by email (63% of respondents) and letter (72% of respondents) being the most popular choices. Other means of consultation and/or participation were less popular. These Question 9 responses mirror the observations and findings in Question 5 responses.



4.17 In **Question 10** respondents were asked if there were other means for encouraging or undertaking consultation that could be of use or appropriate. A range of responses were

received that are detailed in full in Appendix 5. However, in summary the suggestions included:

- Notification newsletters and inserts in other Council correspondence.
- More neighbourhood consultation.
- Inserts in Parish magazines.
- On-line consultations.
- Contacting landowners affected.
- LDF/Planning newsletter.
- Specific Parish Council consultation.
- Faxing information out.
- Making more staff available.
- Making better use of the existing media and use more attractive documents/posters.
- Improve website – especially in respect to planning applications.

4.18 A number of the above suggestions could be viably followed up and used to help with future consultation. With respect to future LDF documents the Council has purchased an on-line consultation system to improve web based information provision and feedback, and allow for on-line comment submission. There could be an option to produce a LDF newsletter; however this could prove time consuming. An alternative which could achieve similar ends, and is already planned, is to produce a regular 'audit trail' report of work undertaken. The intention is that this will be a regularly updated report setting out the LDF work we are doing, reports we are producing and future actions proposed. This will cross-reference/link to the LDF Local Development Scheme and the LDF Annual Monitoring Report. It is recognised that throughout LDF production we will need to undertake more Town/Parish Council consultation (though through Parish Plans and Village Design Statement work and other initiatives there is already active consultation and liaison work). Also contacts with landowners will need to improve in the future, for example through work on production of the LDF Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

4.19 In **Question 11** respondents were asked about the preferred format for future document consultation. There were 150 respondents who indicated preferred choices. Of this total there were 106 respondents (71%) that wished to receive paper copies with far less favouring electronic copies, 30% via the web, 47% as email attachments and 12% on CD Roms. Presumably because of advances in computing technology it seems to be that CD Roms are not very important for document circulation (perhaps they are more important for very large or interactive documents). Furthermore whilst the vast majority of respondents have internet access most chose to respond on paper forms and like to receive/handle paper documentation.

4.20 In Question 11 respondents were also asked if there were other means by which documents could be circulated. Three responses were received, these were:

- Summary by post with option to view whole documents.
- CD Rom (only if compatible with MAC OS10.4.6).
- Fax.

4.21 In order to inform the planning application processes and coverage of this side of planning matters in the SCI there were also two questions that were specially about planning applications. In **Question 12a** we sought views on whether means used to inform the public of planning applications were appropriate. We received 133 responses with 89% of respondents indicating satisfaction with the way consultation is undertaken.

4.22 As a follow-on (**Question 12b**) we asked about what else could we do to keep the public better informed and consult the public about planning applications. Full responses received are included in Appendix 6.

- 4.23 Communication, in general, and the effectiveness of current approaches to consultation were key matters expressed in responses and specific points raised included:
- Letters/telephone calls should be answered/responded to.
 - Notification is sought on when appeals are lodged.
 - Comments made on applications by other bodies/parties should be made widely available.
 - On-line systems does not always work and use could be made of Google earth for site locating.
 - More time should made available for comments and people/neighbours informed more promptly of applications.
 - People should be notified when applications are to be considered and better neighbourhood consultation should be undertaken and there should be wider press coverage.
 - Neighbouring parishes (not just the Parish a proposal falls in) should be notified of applications.
 - Pre-application meetings should be undertaken and also progress meetings held with applicants.
 - It should be made explicitly clear that consultation on listed building consents/conservation area consents/advertisement applications/reserved matters applications are carried out (these are technically not planning applications).

- 4.24 The planning process increasingly seeks to encourage greater public involvement in consideration of planning applications. To inform our thinking about how the public may wish to be involved we asked respondents to tick, in a matrix, those approaches to consultation that they felt were appropriate for different application types (Question 13). This question identified various approaches and sought responses in respect to both major development types and minor development types, as detailed below:

Major Developments:

- Major/large scale development, eg for 10 plus dwellings or for retail/commercial use over 1,000 square metres or sites over 0.5 hectares.
- Application accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Applications that are a departure from the Development Plan.
- Extraction or working of minerals or waste management, handling or disposal.
- Development affecting the setting of a Listed Building.
- Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Minor Developments

- Minor Development, e.g. for 1 to 10 dwellings or retail/commercial uses up to 1,000 square metres or sites up to 0.5 hectares.
- For or relating to a Tree Preservation Order.
- Where a Lawful Development Certificate is sought.

- 4.25 The general pattern for both Major Developments and Minor Developments was one of respondents endorsing consultation through Meetings with Town or Parish Councils and through Notices in the Press and on websites. With respect to minor developments there was only limited endorsement for; Public Meetings; Discussion groups or workshops and for Local Exhibitions. There were, however, comments made in respect to how Major Developments are distinguished from Minor Developments. Amongst the comments made there were observations that what might be perceived as minor application in one location may be perceived as major in another, for example a small number of houses, a minor scheme in an urban area, may be perceived as major in a rural context.

- 4.26 For Major Developments respondents were keen to see use made of Public Meetings though discussion groups or workshops were less widely endorsed. Local exhibitions were only widely endorsed for schemes *“for 10 plus dwellings or for retail/commercial use over 1,000 square metres or sites over 0.5 hectares”*. Whilst minor developments in respect to Tree Preservation Orders and issues where a Lawful Development Certificate is sought generated little interest in respect to Public Meetings; Discussion groups or workshops; and for Local Exhibitions.
- 4.27 As a **final question** we asked for any further comments about consultation on development proposals. This open ended question generated a series of responses as summarised in Appendix 7. A number of comments received to the last question were specifically relevant to individual locations, however some of the key themes emerging in response to Question 7 included;
- Existing forums (including the Local Strategic Partnership) were favoured for consultation.
 - Better access to case officers is sought.
 - Needs to be recognised that not everyone has access to Broadband.
 - Consultation exercises should cover larger areas/broader range of interest groups.
 - The SCI should be seen as a material consideration and failure of developers to engage in consultation should be cited as a reason to refuse planning permission.
 - Press releases and press articles should be issued when consultation is undertaken.
 - Consultee views should be considered seriously rather than being seen as a nuisance.
 - It needs to be recognised that pre-application discussions involves significant costs and it is not appropriate to be overly prescriptive what form consultation should necessarily take. Consultations approaches should reflect relevant and specific local circumstances.

Appendix 1 – Copy of the SCI Questionnaire

East Devon Local Development Framework

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Initial Consultation Questionnaire



This questionnaire has been designed to assist the Policy and Conservation section at East Devon District Council to produce a Statement of Community Involvement. The statement will form part of our Local Development Framework (LDF). We would welcome your responses and any additional comments you wish to make which will need to arrive at the Council Offices at or before **5.00 pm on Friday 3 August 2007**. This questionnaire is being made freely available for businesses, organisations and individuals to complete. Please feel free to make further copies of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is also available on the Council website at www.eastdevon.gov.uk. Thank you, in advance, for completing the questionnaire.

If you require any further information or wish to discuss the contents of this questionnaire or require information in large print, audio format or another language, please contact the Planning Policy Team via the means detailed below or by telephoning 01395 – 571533.

Your Name	<input type="text"/>
Organisation (If appropriate)	<input type="text"/>
Contact address	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Telephone number	<input type="text"/>
E-mail address	<input type="text"/>

Q1: Would you like us to register your details on our LDF Database and keep you informed of progress on LDF work and this consultation? Yes No

Privacy Policy:

Please note that if you tick **Yes** to the above your name, organisation (if appropriate) and address details will be electronically recorded on our Local Development Framework database. The database contents are not confidential and will be available for public scrutiny. The database will be used to generate emails and letters.

If you tick **No** we will not include your details on the database and therefore not contact you again.

Responses to this survey (from question 2 onward) will be treated as confidential and will be used to help us more fully understand how people and organisations use the planning service and how they wish to be consulted in the future. In any analysis of the information supplied we will maintain the anonymity of individual respondents. The information you supply will not be used for any other purpose and will be kept secure in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Please **post** this form to us at: **Statement of Community Involvement Questionnaire,
Policy and Conservation Section,
East Devon District Council,
Council Offices,
Knowle, Sidmouth,
Devon EX10 8HL**

or **email** the form to us at: **ldf@eastdevon.gov.uk**

or **Fax** it to us on: **01395 – 517532** Please respond by: **5.00 pm on Friday 3 August 2007**

Q2: Which consultee category best describes you or the organisation you are responding on behalf of? (Please tick the single most appropriate box)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual member of the public | <input type="checkbox"/> Agent or consultant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National interest group | <input type="checkbox"/> Local interest group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Local or National Government department or agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business or company | <input type="checkbox"/> Developer or builder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these |

Q3: Please answer the following questions if you are responding as an individual member of the public (Please tick relevant boxes)

Are you? Male Female

What age are you? under 16 16-19 20-29 30-39 40-59 60 or Over

Q4: Have you been involved in the plan making process in East Devon before, either through consultation on the Local Plan or commenting on other planning policy documents such as development briefs or supplementary planning guidance? (Please tick relevant boxes)

- Yes – The Local Plan
- Yes – Development Briefs/Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs)
- No (Please go to Q5)

- a) Did you consider that the level and type of consultation was appropriate? Yes No Don't Know
- b) Did you consider that we kept you or your organisation well informed during the consultation process? Yes No Don't Know
- c) From your experience do we provide sufficient feedback on the outcomes of our consultation? Yes No Don't Know
- d) Based on your past experience are there any ways that we could have improved consultation undertaken in the past?

Q5: From past experience what have been you or your organisation's preferred ways of being informed about the different stages of the planning process? (Please tick all relevant options).

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops/focus groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Through Town/Parish Councils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Press Notices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibitions/displays/road shows | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting with existing panels/forums etc |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council website | <input type="checkbox"/> Local radio/television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other – Please Specify | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 500px; height: 20px;"></div> |

Q6: Do you have access to the Internet? Yes No

Q7: Which of the following documents would you like to be consulted on in the future? (Please tick any boxes that are relevant).

- East Devon Core Strategy** – this will set out the overall vision and key strategic principles that will guide development in East Devon in the future.
- East of Exeter Principal Urban Area Joint Action Plan** – this plan will set out policy for the major proposals to the east of Exeter including Cranbrook, the inter-modal, Skypark and Exeter Airport.
- Axminster Area Action Plan** - this plan will set out development proposals for Axminster.
- Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document** – this plan will set out policy and identify sites for gypsies and travellers.
- Site Specific Allocations & Policies** – this plan will allocate specific sites and land areas for development.
- Supplementary Planning Documents** – these will guide how planning policies will be put into effect (guidance is proposed for a Science Park, planning agreements and biodiversity)
- Any Future Area Based Plans or Documents** – at present we do not have proposals to produce any additional documents but we may define specific documents to be produced in the future.
- None of the above.**

Q8: We already consult a wide range of agencies and organisations on planning matters. However are there any specific individuals or organisation that you feel we might not currently consult but which should be added to our database?

Please provide contact name, organisation and address:

Q9: When we undertake participation and consultation on future LDF documents which of the following would be most useful to you and/or your organisation? (Please tick all of your preferred methods)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct email consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> Council website using online forms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct consultation by letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibitions/roadshows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus or discussion groups or workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> Daytime public meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evening public meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings with selected stakeholders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Published consultation documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Through existing forums or partnerships or the LSP |

(The LSP – the Local Strategic Partnership - is a partnership of local agencies and bodies which works towards the aims and objectives set out in the East Devon Sustainable Community Plan)

Q10: Are there other ways of undertaking consultation or participation that you think we could use that would make it easier for people to get involved in the planning process?

Please advise:

Q11: When we prepare consultation documents what are your preferred means of receiving them? (Please tick all of your preferred methods)

A paper copy of the documents

Electronic copy that can be downloaded from our web site

Electronic copy via emails

CD Rom

Other – if so please specify

Q12: We currently inform the public of planning applications by a variety of means which include issuing press notices, via our website, putting up site notices and sending out neighbourhood notification letters:

a) From your experience are these measures appropriate? Yes No Don't Know

b) What else could we do to keep you better informed and consult you about planning applications?

Please provide details:

Q13: How do you feel applicants or developers should be encouraged to involve the community when they propose a development in the future? (Please tick the relevant boxes in the table).

	Public Meeting	Discussion groups or workshops	Local Exhibitions	Meetings with Town or Parish Council	Notices in the Press and on websites
Major developments:					
Major/large scale development, eg for 10 plus dwellings or for retail/commercial use over 1,000 square metres or sites over 0.5 hectares					
Application accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment					
Applications that are a departure from the Development Plan					
Extraction or working of minerals or waste management, handling or disposal					
Development affecting the setting of a Listed Building					
Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area					
Minor developments:					
Minor Development, e.g. for 1 to 10 dwellings or retail/commercial uses up to 1,000 square metres or sites up to 0.5 hectares					
For or relating to a Tree Preservation Order					
Where a Lawful Development Certificate is sought					

Developers are not legally obliged to undertake these methods of consultation. However, with respect to larger schemes, we will use responses received to produce best practice guidance to inform prospective developers of how people feel they should be involved in the planning process when developments are proposed/planning applications are submitted.

Please add any further comments you would like to make about consultation on development proposals:

Appendix 2 – Survey Findings/Questionnaire Responses

The questionnaire was analysed on an Excel spreadsheet and the total ticks recorded for each question were added-up. Detailed below, using the question format set out in the questionnaire, are the sum of the questionnaire total ticks recorded for each question for all respondents.

Q1: Would you like us to register your details on our LDF Database and keep you informed of progress on LDF work and this consultation? 121 Yes 28 No

One respondent advised - No (Hopefully result will be in press locally).

Q2: Which consultee category best describes you or the organisation you are responding on behalf of? (Please tick the single most appropriate box)

<input type="checkbox"/> 17 Individual member of the public	<input type="checkbox"/> 39 Agent or consultant
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 National interest group	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Local interest group
<input type="checkbox"/> 42 Parish Council	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Local or National Government department or agency
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Business or company	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Developer or builder
<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Other organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 None of these

Q3: Please answer the following questions if you are responding as an individual member of the public (Please tick relevant boxes)

Are you? 14 Male 2 Female

What age are you? 0 under 16 0 16-19 0 20-29 2 30-39 2 40-59 12 60 or Over

Q4: Have you been involved in the plan making process in East Devon before, either through consultation on the Local Plan or commenting on other planning policy documents such as development briefs or supplementary planning guidance? (Please tick relevant boxes)

91 Yes – The Local Plan

40 Yes – Development Briefs/Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs)

2 No (Please go to Q5)

a) Did you consider that the level and type of consultation was appropriate? 77 Yes 9 No 6 Don't Know

b) Did you consider that we kept you or your organisation well informed during the consultation process? 72 Yes 12 No 10 Don't Know

c) From your experience do we provide sufficient feedback on the outcomes of our consultation? 61 Yes 20 No 9 Don't Know

d) Based on your past experience are there any ways that we could have improved consultation undertaken in the past?

[See Appendix 3](#)

Q5: From past experience what have been you or your organisation's preferred ways of being informed about the different stages of the planning process? (Please tick all relevant options).

<input type="checkbox"/> 123 Letter	<input type="checkbox"/> 13 Workshops/focus groups
<input type="checkbox"/> 25 Public meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> 34 Through Town/Parish Councils
<input type="checkbox"/> 83 Email	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 Press Notices
<input type="checkbox"/> 25 Exhibitions/displays/road shows	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 Meeting with existing panels/forums etc

50 Council website 4 Local radio/television

9 Other – Please Specify See Appendix 4

Q6: Do you have access to the Internet? 148 Yes 14 No

Q7: Which of the following documents would you like to be consulted on in the future? (Please tick any boxes that are relevant).

121 **East Devon Core Strategy** – this will set out the overall vision and key strategic principles that will guide development in East Devon in the future.

73 **East of Exeter Principal Urban Area Joint Action Plan** – this plan will set out policy for the major proposals to the east of Exeter including Cranbrook, the inter-modal, Skypark and Exeter Airport.

47 **Axminster Area Action Plan** - this plan will set out development proposals for Axminster.

52 **Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document** – this plan will set out policy and identify sites for gypsies and travellers.

115 **Site Specific Allocations & Policies** – this plan will allocate specific sites and land areas for development.

95 **Supplementary Planning Documents** – these will guide how planning policies will be put into effect (guidance is proposed for a Science Park, planning agreements and biodiversity)

95 **Any Future Area Based Plans or Documents** – at present we do not have proposals to produce any additional documents but we may define specific documents to be produced in the future.

13 **None of the above.**

Q8: We already consult a wide range of agencies and organisations on planning matters. However are there any specific individuals or organisation that you feel we might not currently consult but which should be added to our database?

Please provide contact name, organisation and address:

Suggestions are not listed but will be added to the LDF database.

Q9: When we undertake participation and consultation on future LDF documents which of the following would be most useful to you and/or your organisation? (Please tick all of your preferred methods)

95 Direct email consultation 108 Council website using online forms

18 Direct consultation by letter 27 Exhibitions/roadshows

39 Focus or discussion groups or workshops 42 Daytime public meetings

25 Evening public meetings 16 Meetings with selected stakeholders

24 Published consultation documents 19 Through existing forums or partnerships or the LSP

(The LSP – the Local Strategic Partnership - is a partnership of local agencies and bodies which works towards the aims and objectives set out in the East Devon Sustainable Community Plan)

Q10: Are there other ways of undertaking consultation or participation that you think we could use that would make it easier for people to get involved in the planning process?

Please advise: **See Appendix 5**

Q11: When we prepare consultation documents what are your preferred means of receiving them? (Please tick all of your preferred methods)

- 106** A paper copy of the documents **45** Electronic copy that can be downloaded from our web site
 71 Electronic copy via emails **18** CD Rom
 3 Other – if so please specify **See Bullet Points in Main Report**

Q12: We currently inform the public of planning applications by a variety of means which include issuing press notices, via our website, putting up site notices and sending out neighbourhood notification letters:

- a) From your experience are these measures appropriate? **118** Yes **9** No **9** Don't Know
 b) What else could we do to keep you better informed and consult you about planning applications?

Please provide details: **See Appendix 6**

Q13: How do you feel applicants or developers should be encouraged to involve the community when they propose a development in the future? (Please tick the relevant boxes in the table).

	Public Meeting	Discussion groups or workshops	Local Exhibitions	Meetings with Town or Parish Council	Notices in the Press and on websites
Major developments:					
Major/large scale development, eg for 10 plus dwellings or for retail/commercial use over 1,000 square metres or sites over 0.5 hectares	76	19	69	89	75
Application accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment	41	19	48	83	68
Applications that are a departure from the Development Plan	54	22	45	83	68
Extraction or working of minerals or waste management, handling or disposal	56	17	34	78	67
Development affecting the setting of a Listed Building	28	14	23	90	73
Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area	61	19	39	92	71
Minor developments:					
Minor Development, e.g. for 1 to 10 dwellings or retail/commercial uses up to 1,000 square metres or sites up to 0.5 hectares	16	10	10	92	84
For or relating to a Tree Preservation Order	4	2	2	76	77
Where a Lawful Development Certificate is sought	7	1	2	73	66

Developers are not legally obliged to undertake these methods of consultation. However, with respect to larger schemes, we will use responses received to produce best practice guidance to inform prospective developers of how people feel they should be involved in the planning process when developments are proposed/planning applications are submitted.

Please add any further comments you would like to make about consultation on development proposals:

See Appendix 7

Appendix 3 – Comments on Question 4d

Based on your past experience are there any ways that we could have improved how we undertook consultation in the past?

Ongoing updates during the consultation process to advise of what stage the process is at.
From past experience consultation process was satisfactory.
Always room for more information.
By explaining why views were not (or appeared not to be) taken into account. E.g. declassification of special interest land.
1. Take more account of our comments. 2. Approve our Parish Plan as S.P.G.
Involve local group of DAPC more to ensure Councils are better informed.
Except critique on current planning issues presented to Mark Williams - CEO
Though I have ticked the "Yes" boxes, that refers to once I became involved - but I had to involve myself.
Public meeting, with relevant organisations invited plus open invitation to public, to announce and explain the process. Further public meeting when draft Local Plan ready. Find public meeting to announce outcomes.
More direct consultation and feedback.
Supply Parish Councils with adequate training in commenting on such consultations in a constructive manner. Often PC level is an emotional response - equally maybe sometimes you should help them channel these emotional responses into more structured comments?
Consultation needs to be appropriate for each circumstance. More than one form of consultation can often be beneficial.
Have more local consultations.
Developer outside immediate L.A. Area. Unable to see/get local adverts on progress.
Poor feedback. Prompt feedback would have been appreciated.
More needs to be done to raise the level of awareness of the public in general. It only seems to be a small minority who engage with the process, leaving the majority to complain when they don't like what they failed to take an interest in months or years earlier.
Early information of planning applications especially those affecting a large proportion of the community. In some instances discussions pre-planning could result in a more satisfactory outcome.
A level platform for all extensions and alterations including negotiation on schemes prior to any refusal.
Although I have responded to the "New Settlement" A later consultation went to an "old" Chairman. Also I have responded to the redevelopment of Exmouth and didn't get any feedback. Also, I only read about Nigel M's late plan's and your approval via the press".
It would be helpful if we were consulted before a final decision was made.
Direct consultation jointly between resident, Ward Members and Policy Planning Officers on site.
On open DC/PC meetings be more willing to discuss issues from the floor.
It would be good if the response to a planning objection could be more than an acknowledgement.
No
Time availability to respond in was insufficient feedback totally lacking.
Went monotonous, if not over a year between letters. Updates would have been helpful as long timescale mean't that you could never be sure what was happening and what deadlines due were.
I found the feedback slow and not geared for a lay person.
We have experienced a significant change of personnel since being involved in the last revision of the East Devon Local Plan but would wish to be consulted in the future representing our 2000 + members in the Sid Valley.
Unlocking Exmouth' was a sudden announcement. Previous proposals and bullet points from Exmouth based Councillors seemed to have been ignored. A dialogue with Exmouth Town Council is required.
More consultation with applicants would be desirable to reduce the number of refusals that are at present given due to time scale.
Longer time for responses would be welcome.
Many customers wish to see local plans but are often put off by size and complexity of documents, key point summaries might help.
It is not always clear with SPGs and Development Briefs how, if at all, our comments are used.
Improve feedback at local level. Targeted consultation at Parish level.
Simplified communication. The planning process is subject to regulatory jargon that is often difficult for the layman to understand.
I was not informed of the outcome of my objection I made to the local plan (affordable housing) policies and these were not taken forward at the Inquiry. As a result many parts of East Devon, in particular Exmouth, are seeing an increasing number of developments for 10-14 dwellings with no affordable housing, resulting in problems of affordability and lack of choice.
I was not part of the team representing the BS Design Statement Group who talked to EDDC officers, but I gathered from colleagues that EDDC staff (Planning Policy) were consistently helpful in answering their questions and providing guidance.
Perhaps more reasoning behind the decisions made could be given.
My contribution (comments/ involvement) was relatively minor , but with the development of internet, website and email facilities you should provide as much up to date information about ongoing developments/ negotiations as possible.

We are a statutory consultee for planning applications affecting land on which there is a theatre. This applies to all theatre buildings, old and new, in current use, in other uses, or disused.
Consultation in respect of development plan documents has been appropriate to date, keeping participants informed with a sound presentation of responses to consultation. With regard to Supplementary Planning Guidance the obligations on the District Council have been less onerous and the provision made for consultation and responding to consultation has been less thorough. Such documents do not necessarily enjoy the profile of local development documents and hence may require more effort to ensure that all are aware of the content and the opportunities for consultation. It is suggested that there may be a need to ensure that consultation on such topics, where these are controversial or of wider ranging significance, should extend beyond a single opportunity to respond to one draft document. Re-consultation may also be necessary where significant changes are proposed or resisted following initial consultation.
Although it would occasion more work (and more expense), in the context of partnership working it would be beneficial if a reasoned written response to a representation were provided, briefly indicating whether it had been adopted and if not, why not.
It is hoped that there will be more opportunity to use email to submit views.

Appendix 4 – Comments on Question 5

From past experience what have been you or your organisations preferred ways of being informed about what is going on at different stages of the planning process?

Via meeting of Clyst Vale Parish Council Group - with invited EDDC Officer.
Telephone.
Changing as email and websites increase in popularity.
I would have emailed this form but could not place multiple ticks electronically.
Telephone or letter enquiry to relevant P.O.
Meetings with existing forums/focus groups can proceed to road show exhibition and press notice to inform the general public.
Personal contact.
You should select the medium to suit the information to be conveyed. One medium will not suit all circumstances. However, once set up, email is fast and cheap
Accept that you will not please all but in the past it has not always been easy to access information as not knowing what to look under, not clear what department has responsibility

Appendix 5 – Comments on Question 10

Are there other ways that you can identify we could use to undertake consultation and make it easier for people to get involved in the p[planning process?

We believe you've got the process about right. Matt Dickins for PM, we say
Notification with Council communications e.g. council tax.
Listen more carefully to the concerns of neighbours and local people during the planning process.
Parish magazine press releases? Web based involvement 'go online and have your say'.
Landowners are ignored in the Consultation. We should be informed at the start not when the policy has been decided.
Local radio, video clip, community web sites, local newspaper, council direct mailing newsletters, displays at Town and Village Halls.
Above should reach everyone.
The establishment of a <u>regular</u> news bulletin by post or e.mail would enable community groups to keep in contact with the planning process.
Yes - As in Q4. Also there should be more co-ordinated links between resident/councillors/planning officers plus input from MPS (e.g. government central policy related to local specifics.
Local Paper Discussion Forums - online
There is a distinct omission of consultation with Parish Councils, there are groups of Parish Councils where consultation would be valuable to gain an overall perspective of an area/Local Town under development review. These towns are vital to the many surrounding villages and hamlets. " <u>Listen to the locals</u> ".
EDDC Planning Web Site very good.
Newsletters delivered to every bodies houses/businesses.
Fax
Increased availability of staff. From experience it is particularly difficult to get hold of officers by phone. A free-post envelope with consultations!
Local issues best served by exhibitions/focus groups
Eye-catching posters and publicity through local newspapers encouraging people to take part in local affairs. Articles in local paper, written in plain English, avoiding repetition, too many subordinate clauses, jargon and "burospak".
React to and incorporate public concerns to encourage further participation.

Provide as much up to date info' as possible through your web site. Current planning info is often sparse, deficient and entered on web site after excessive delay. Set high standards for accuracy of filed plans and drawings. At present there does not appear to be sufficient opportunity on controversial applications for those directly affected to have an input and to say and be assured that any representations they may make have been carefully considered, This may be even more true of those matters that are dealt with under delegated authority by planning officers. In these latter cases the reasoned decision of the planning officer should be available through the EDDC website. It seems to me that the exercise of delegated authority requires great care by the planning officer and in all but minor applications should require a site visit. There may be instances where decisions have been made on the basis of inaccurate filed details which have not been identified in the absence of a site visit..

Information should be available and up to date on the website. Frequently planning validation numbers change in retrospect and it is not clear why this is. Also it is not clear which proposed planning applications are dealt with by delegated responsibility with no details available to the public. Also frequently information is often very sparse and not accessible through the usual channels on the website. Resulting in frequent visits to the web page or ending up going for hard copies to the Town Clerk! Re controversial applications it is not always sufficient opportunity to have input and say, due to lack of information. Retrospective planning applications – difficult to find when and how these have been dealt with. The exercise of delegated responsibility we accept requires great care however, there does not seem to be a clear opportunity for input especially when some information is incorrect in the absence of a site visit. There does not appear to be total transparency one at times really has to search around for information, then hears that something has been passed.

Appendix 6 – Comments on Question 12

We currently inform the public of planning applications by a variety of means which include issuing press notices, via our website, putting up site notices and sending out neighbourhood notification letters:

b) What else could we do to keep you better informed and consult you about planning applications?

When applications are refused, we do not always seem to know if an appeal has been lodged.
E-mail copies and letters and comments sent to EDDC should be sent to Parish Councils to assist them with their comments.
Ensure that the on-line planning system is fully functioning. Recently it has failed to list all the weekly applications, only some, and sometimes generates an error message when trying to view "associated documents".
Letter/email is most reliable method.
Invite Exmouth Community Association to join the Local Strategic Partnership.
Provide 10 days more for objections to be submitted and specify which meetings of EDDC and Exmouth Town Council will consider the applications.
Consultation on Planning Applications in neighbouring Parishes. Lots is happening (which affects us greatly along A3052 that we learn about through gossip!!
A longer load time. Too often applications are received with little time to consult.
Meetings with officers before and during planning applications.
Consult the landowners first.
The main thing is good notification of neighbours by letter or <u>several</u> site notices to cover the area (also back properties).
Develop better understanding of the impact of planning applications within a wider Economic context.
Ensure full plans are easy to download and are also available in good time at Exmouth Town Hall.
See answer to Question 10.
Consult verbally and in writing prior to making any planning decisions.
I take a "Pulman' Series" Paper and have never seen a list. Therefore, I really would like a copy I can circulate to our Officers in East Devon and if appropriate, Exeter from what I have heard, they haven't seen them either.
A google earth point and press graphic based site that brings up the application details.
But should be posted <u>at site</u> to make it clear where development is to be done. (In our case a notice was placed 100 yards from site - could be misleading).
More detail in planning applications submitted to Parish Councils.
Notification of planning proposals by email.
It would be helpful if letters were answered and telephone calls returned.
Cease publication in the midweek newspaper and concentrate on the wider read weekend edition to ensure greater exposure.
If planning affects Sheldon, a copy of the site notice to be sent to Parish Chairman.
Inform via email of any applications in the immediate vicinity. Radius of area to be decided.
The present planning process seems to be fair and gives an opportunity for interested persons to comment in writing to the planning committee before a decision is made.
As I live outside the area but am interested in planning applications which affect Public Rights of Way or where they could be improvements to add public routes e.g. large scale housing developments and retail applications, I would be grateful to be notified by letter.
However, the adoption of the scheme for your selection criteria for circulating neighbourhood notification letters needs to be amended - all of the adjoining properties need to be informed of planning applications regardless of postcode or parish boundaries.

Advise close neighbours by post.
A clear link from the Council's web page to a list of all applications that are current.
Existing methods are appropriate.
Ensure applications in adjoining Parishes or of local relevance are sent to Clyst Honiton Parish Council.
When you make a decision you could inform PC much quicker.
Consult not only on planning applications but make it explicitly clear that consultation on listed building consents/conservation area consents/advertisement applications/reserved matters applications etc etc are carried out and are specifically referred to in the SCI as all of which are technically not planning applications
Improvement in implementing existing methods - e.g. ensure that press notices appear in the appropriate local paper (several times an application for BS has appeared in the Sidmouth Herald and/or the Exmouth Herald but failed to appear in the Budleigh (Exmouth) Journal, the one paper which most residents of BS read . Site notices are sometimes late in appearing; and occasionally neighbourhood notification letters have failed to be sent to some neighbours. This last failure is probably due to using obsolete OS maps without checking them against the latest electoral register. I do not know many residents who browse through the EDDC website to see "what's on" by way of planning applications - and there are still many who do not own a computer.
On occasions the notices are posted after or extremely close to the local town council has discussing the issue. This can mean any input arrives too late to be considered at the initial planning process.
If neighbourhood notification letters are sent then in my experience in most cases these are not sufficiently widely distributed.
See notes above. You are slow to put info on website (could always preface with caveat where some aspect of processing remains to be completed) On controversial matters convene on site meetings for those affected.
CTD would particularly like to be kept informed of all planning applications for residential development in East Devon above 500 dwellings (either on a single site or on a related series of sites in a given community).
Delays accessing information from the webpage, not always clear that accessibility is due to difficulties with site or just info not available. Strange how at times for controversial applications, the site present difficulties and eventual close down, Have reported this on numerous occasions. For controversial applications perhaps some sort of site meetings available with interested parties

Appendix 7 – Comments Received on the Final Question

Please add any further comments you would like to make about consultation on development proposals:

Q9 Through existing forums or partnerships or the LSP - As long as Exmouth Community Association are involved.
Q7- Supplementary Planning Documents - (Not Cranbrook etc just other docs.
Please only send out once as I clerk for 4 Parishes!
Q7 Any future area based plans or documents only if relevant to Uplyme area.
Improve direct access to officers in charge of specific applications. Better indication of officer in charge of each and every application and specific contact in respect of major applications.
The use of email and electronic means is great if in your area you have access to Broadband. If like Talaton you live to far from the exchange and can't access it you have to rely on the old fashioned paper documents and post. Please bear this in mind in the consultation process.
The letter notification of development plans you mention earlier is not always sent to all interested parties, and you should consider widening your area of distribution.
In East Devon we have many areas which are historically or geographically sensitive. To preserve this heritage for our future generations it is essential that all possible is done to encourage developers to deal sensibly with sensitive issues.
The whole purpose of an SCI is to inform developers of the level of consultation necessary. Applications should be refused if a developer has refused to enter into a dialogue with the local community on major schemes. Therefore, an SCI is not 'best practice' but a material consideration in determining a planning application.
I would welcome more publicity through collaboration with the local press. Notifications should not be confined to box advertisements which often appear with legal advertisements (and are perused by few readers). Well-written articles on the news pages would be more effective. Some announcements by EDDC are easily missed - e.g. Mr Mark Williams' Election Roadshow in BS (one inconspicuous poster and practically no letter-press in the local paper) was attended by only eleven residents (population ca. 5,000). As and when public meetings are held, speakers should be discouraged from presenting a lecture with slides (which often repeat their prepared script). Instead, there should be plenty of time for a public forum, during which residents are actively encouraged to air their views.
A level of consultation is required that enables those directly effected to feel that they are being considered seriously rather than seen as a nuisance. There can be an understandable atmosphere of "we are the experts", unfortunately the experts are not the ones whose lives will be compromised by a particular development.
In a small village / settlement 3 dwellings could feel like a major development / change.
The separation of major and minor developments in the manner indicated is too simplistic. A development of 2 or 3 houses or a small workshop could be, in a small community, effectively, the equivalent of a major development in a large community elsewhere. It would therefore be sensible to formulate rules under which minor could be treated as major and, conversely, major as minor. I would like to be assured that laboriously created Parish Plans /Village Design Statements adopted by EDDC as supplementary planning guidance will be honoured and enshrined in the new arrangements I have read the 'East Devon Draft Statement of Community Involvement' and support, subject to the comments above, its proposals. However, I would like to be more convinced that such proposals are no more than a

palliative window dressing to cover and disguise a concerted drive to squeeze more houses into existing attractive East Devon communities.

The Pre-Formal Consultation Draft (July 2007) Statement of Public Consultation discharges the advice set out in PPG12 and the Companion Guide faithfully in relation to the obligations of developers to undertake pre-application consultation. Encouragement is given to such consultation and highlights the benefits for developers to consider. Moreover the Draft SCI indicates the range of consultation methods available in the planning arena generally. Where developers undertake consultation, it is not the responsibility of the SCI to set out the specific requirements of such consultation. Indeed the nature and timing of any consultation that might be conducted will vary substantially according to the nature of the application (whether they are in accordance with the development plan or not, whether in outline or detail); the nature of the communities affected (existing and future); the degree of consultation undertaken through the development plan process. There is a need also to be mindful of resources. Paragraph 7.7.3 of the Companion Guide to PPG12 indicates that undertaking pre-application discussions involves significant costs. It is therefore neither appropriate nor necessary to set out specific consultation techniques for developers to pursue. Any consultation proposals that are developed in respect of developments should be specific to that development in terms of the communities affected, the timing of consultation (which the SCI should recognise may also include post submission consultation by developers), and the methods of consultation. Specifically in relation to public meetings, we would submit that such methods are ineffective in terms of the objectives for consultation on major developments, relative to other forms of consultation, and should not be encouraged as a generality within the SCI.

We feel that any development of 2 or 3 houses in a small rural area could constitute to the equivalent of a major development impact on a larger community. It would therefore appear logic to formulate methods of consultation that would address the impact on a local level whereby any development no matter how large or small the effect and impact on the character of the area in question needs to take priority. As an organization that produced a Village Design Statement which has been adopted as Supplementary planning guidance by EDDC that all proposed planning applications are looked at within the context of this guidance uppermost to protect the Special Character of the area. Having read the ED draft Statement of Community Involvement we support the proposals within, bearing in mind the above comments and the assurance that without being cynical that it is not mere window dressing to cover the current drive by government to produce more houses by creating 'cluster housing' under a different guise whereby changing the existing landscape and character of our East Devon Communities, some like West Hill that have not the infrastructure to accommodate much more ad hoc development in the guise of backland development