



# **Involving People in Planning**

**The Authority's Statement of Community Involvement**

**August 2014**

## 1. Introduction

As a National Park Authority we are strongly committed to public involvement in all of our work. We believe that involving residents, businesses and communities is not only right in itself but also leads to a better planning process and better informed decisions. We therefore welcome the legal requirement to produce this Statement of Community Involvement which describes how we will involve others in our planning work.

The Statement is not intended to set out rigid procedures or fixed processes but rather to describe our approach and suggest appropriate ways in which people and communities may be involved at different stages. We will use it at all times as a guide in preparing planning policy and considering planning applications.

The document is split into three parts:

- General Principles – which sets out the general principles of consultation and involvement and provides a summary of the different methods of consultation;
- Planning Policy – which sets out how communities can comment on and influence planning policy;
- Development Management – which sets out how communities can comment on and influence planning applications.



## 2. General Principles

The following principles of consultation will be followed in relation to any planning related consultation exercise we will:

- Meet minimum legal requirements for consultation, exceeding these where practical and reasonable to do so and resources allow;
- Ensure that consultations are open to everyone, although more specialist or technical consultations may be targeted at specific groups;
- Ensure that consultations are clear and in plain English where possible, whilst recognising that technical content may be needed in some cases;
- Allow sufficient time for people to respond to / be involved in consultations;
- We will be clear about what is open for consultation;
- Make efficient use of the Authority's and consultees' time and resources;
- Use electronic forms of communication wherever possible provided this is appropriate for the consultee and the nature of the consultation;
- Keep those who get involved informed of progress.

There are a number of ways in which consultation can be carried out and publicised, a brief account of some of these is given below:

- Letters and emails to consultees – these will directly alert likely interested parties to the consultation being carried out. Whilst contact is currently still made via letter to some consultees, we are aiming to become more reliant on electronic forms of communication.
- The Authority's website ([www.northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk)) – can provide full details of a consultation including electronic versions of the consultation documents and online response forms. The website contains space for direct links to consultations from the planning home page to ensure that a wide audience is aware of the consultation.
- Press releases – if an article appears in the press, on the radio or on a news or interest website this is likely to reach a relatively large audience, but the content of the article or broadcast is at the discretion of the media organisation.
- Moors Messenger – this is the Authority's own publication which is sent to all households and businesses in and around the National Park in November and May each year and enables us to communicate with every resident.
- Drop-in sessions – these provide an opportunity for interested parties to discuss the consultation with officers from the Authority and/or others such as applicants. These may be linked to existing groups / meetings which take place across the Park.
- Press adverts – these provide limited but specific details of consultations and potentially reach a wide audience in and around the National Park.
- Social media (for example Twitter or Facebook) – These can alert a potentially wide audience (in interest and location) to a consultation, although can usually only contain a limited level of detail and will often feature a link to our website where more information will be held.

### 3. Planning Policy

The Authority produces a collection of documents which are used as the basis for taking decisions on planning applications. These include Local Plans<sup>1</sup> and Supplementary Planning Documents. Any Local Plans produced by us form the Development Plan and planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Local Plans can contain strategic policy, detailed criteria covering specific issues and site allocations. Local Plans should be accompanied by a Policies Map. Supplementary Planning Documents add further detail to policies contained within Local Plans and are a material consideration which can be taken into account in determining planning applications. We also produce Planning Advice Notes which provide technical advice to accompany Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents and are also a material consideration.

Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents must be prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations in force<sup>2</sup>. These regulations will set out the required procedures for consultation, but these are often viewed as minimum requirements.

The table below summarises the possible stages in Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Document preparation, depending upon the nature of the plan being produced and the regulations in force at the time. This table provides an idea of how we may engage with communities and interested parties throughout plan production. Whilst the Authority sees involvement of others as an ongoing and integral part of the process of plan preparation, there are specific stages when we will actively seek to engage and consult with interested parties.

Stage of Plan production	Possible groups involved	Possible method of involvement / consultation
<b>Local Plans</b>		
Evidence gathering	Bodies with technical knowledge Adjoining planning authorities <sup>3</sup>	Discussions Email / letter
Identifying issues	Residents / businesses Interest groups Statutory bodies Parish Councils / Meetings Adjoining planning authorities	Email / letter Press release Website Social media Moors Messenger Drop-in sessions
Options	Residents / businesses Interest groups Statutory bodies Parish Councils / Meetings Adjoining planning authorities	Email / letter Press release Website Social media Moors Messenger Drop-in sessions
Draft Plan	Residents / businesses Interest groups	Email / letter Press release

<sup>1</sup> At the time of producing the Statement of Community Involvement the Authority's Local Plan is the Core Strategy and Development Policies 2008 which was produced as part of a Local Development Framework under former legislation and guidance.

<sup>2</sup> The regulations in force at the time of producing the Statement of Community Involvement are the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

<sup>3</sup> This includes the adjoining District and Borough Councils and North Yorkshire County Council

	Statutory bodies Parish Councils / Meetings Adjoining planning authorities	Website Social media Moors Messenger Drop-in sessions
Publication <sup>4</sup>	Residents / businesses Interest groups Statutory bodies Parish Councils / Meetings Adjoining planning authorities	Email / letter Press release Website Social media Moors Messenger
<b>Supplementary Planning Documents</b>		
Evidence gathering	Bodies with technical knowledge	Discussions Email / letter
Identifying issues	Residents / businesses Interest groups Statutory bodies Parish Councils / Meetings Adjoining planning authorities	Email / letter Press release Website Social media Moors Messenger Drop-in sessions
Draft Supplementary Planning Document	Residents / businesses Interest groups Statutory bodies Parish Councils / Meetings Adjoining planning authorities	Email / letter Press release Website Social media Moors Messenger Drop-in sessions

The 2011 Localism Act introduced requirements for planning authorities relating to the Duty to Co-operate and the Authority will therefore engage with the relevant bodies<sup>5</sup> constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic planning matters.

Planning policy consultations will normally be held for a minimum period of six weeks. Opportunities to submit comments online or electronically will be made available wherever possible.



The Authority does not currently consult on the content of its Planning Advice Notes which cover topics of a technical and factual nature.

Planning policy documents can be lengthy and technical (particularly the required supporting documents such as Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment) and the Authority may produce a summary where this does not detract from the messages in the full document.

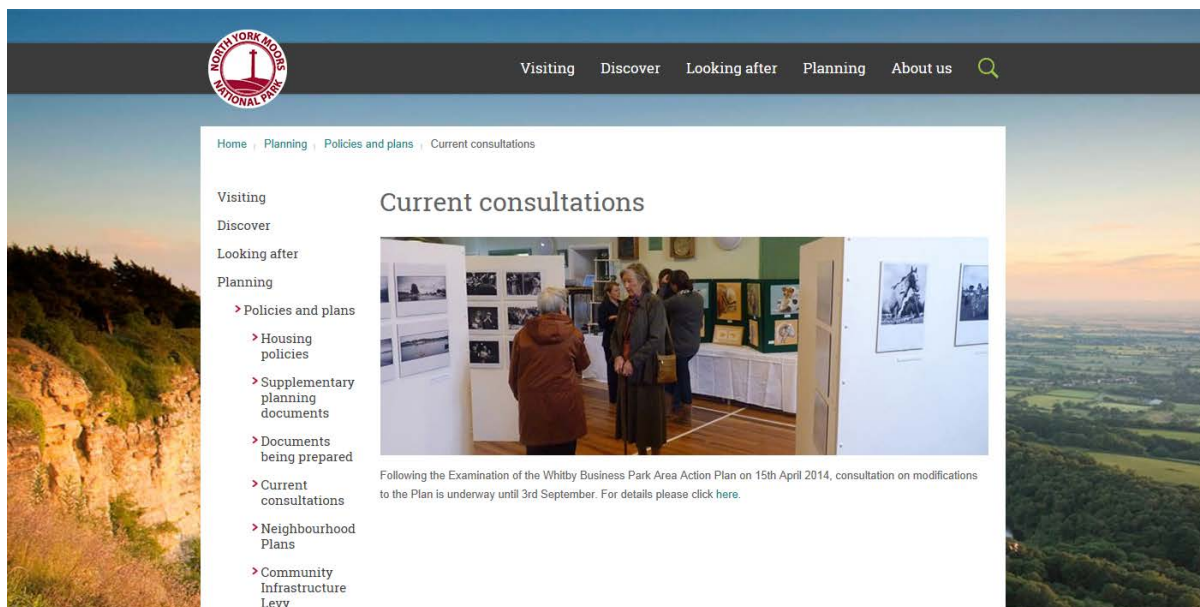
<sup>4</sup> This stage is required under the current regulations and requires the Authority to consult on whether the Plan is 'sound'

<sup>5</sup> The Duty to Co-operate bodies are currently set out in Section 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012



Whilst we aim to carry out planning policy consultations electronically through making documents available on the website and communicating via email, paper copies or copies in other formats, such as large print or Braille, can be made available on request.

Following consultation, once we have had an opportunity to consider all of the responses received, a summary of the responses and an indication of how they have been addressed will normally be made available (except where the volume of responses received renders this task unfeasible in which case a summary of the types of comments made will be produced). This may be published alongside subsequent stages of consultation<sup>6</sup>. Comments made verbally at drop-in sessions will be summarised and reported to the Authority but participants will be encouraged to submit a written response to ensure that we are able to accurately record all comments. Whilst all comments received will be taken into account, it should be noted that we cannot always act favourably upon each one as, in addition to varying views often being put forward, wider considerations must also be taken into account such as national policy and legislation. Those who responded to a consultation and Parish Councils / Parish Meetings will be notified of the adoption of new planning policy documents. There may be a small charge for receiving paper copies of documents.



To be contacted by letter or email your details will need to be held on the Policy Team's consultation database. These details are not used for any purposes other than planning policy consultations<sup>7</sup> and are not shared either within or beyond the National Park Authority without your prior agreement. If you would like to be kept informed of planning policy consultations and would like your details to be stored on our database please email [policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk) or telephone 01439 772700.

If you would like to find out about documents that are currently being produced and any current consultations please see the planning policy pages on the Authority's website at [www.northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk).

Should any Neighbourhood Plans be prepared within the National Park, appropriate consultation methods would need to be determined by the bodies responsible for their production (in the National Park this would be the Town or Parish Council or Parish

<sup>6</sup> This is with the exception of any comments made at Publication stage which will be considered through the process of Examination by a Planning Inspector

<sup>7</sup> Including consultations on the National Park Management Plan

Meeting). Nevertheless, we would expect such groups to use this Statement of Community Involvement as a starting point and may be able to advise on or assist with consultations.

In instances where the Authority is working jointly with other planning authorities the approaches to consultation may need to be varied to take into account the requirements of other Statements of Community Involvement and other authorities' established consultation methods.

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## Business park soon set to enter '21st Century'

**Planners are consulting on proposals to turn Whitby Business Park into a modern business park for the "21st Century", but say they want to hear from residents and businesses first.**

Published on the 19 May 2013 11:16

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The North York Moors National Park Authority, along with the borough council, want to know what type of businesses and other uses people want to see there.

They also want the public's views on what a contemporary business park should look like.

An Area Action Plan for the business park has been drawn up showing highways, environmental improvements and further development of the site. The draft plan shows where the park could be extended to accommodate more businesses, a hotel and pub, improved paths and landscaping and a better road layout.

Residents and businesses can look at the document online and download it from <http://scarborough.objective.co.uk/portal>

It is also available for inspection at the National Park authority's offices, the Moors National Park Centre in Danby, Scarborough Town Hall, Whitby Town Council office, the library and the tourist information centre.

The consultation period is six weeks and the final date for comments on the Area Action Plan is 5pm on June 14.

**North York Moors National Park** shared a link. about an hour ago

The Authority is consulting on a draft design guide for new agricultural buildings. Comments are invited by 14 December.

For more details - [www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/consultations](http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/consultations)

**Current consultations**  
[www.northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk)

The Authority is currently consulting on draft design guidance for new agricultural buildings which will form Part 5 of the Design Guide

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## 4. Development Management

### Pre Application Discussions

We encourage pre-application discussions<sup>8</sup> with planning officers, even for minor schemes, in order to assess whether the principle of development is acceptable and to identify any potential issues that can be resolved prior to the submission of an application. Applicants are also encouraged to discuss their proposals with neighbours or others likely to be affected. For certain schemes which are likely to be contentious or have wider community impacts, the applicant will be encouraged to undertake more formal pre-application consultation with the local community and other relevant organisations. Such community consultation is expected for major development proposals (10 or more dwellings or on a site of 0.5 hectares or more, or other developments with a floor space of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or on a site of 1 hectare or more) or a significant proposal that departs from adopted policy. Under powers introduced by the 2011 Localism Act, community consultation is now a legal requirement in relation to proposals for two or more wind turbines or where the hub height exceeds 15 metres and similar requirements could be introduced for other forms of development in the future.

Where such consultation takes place it should be based on the following methods:

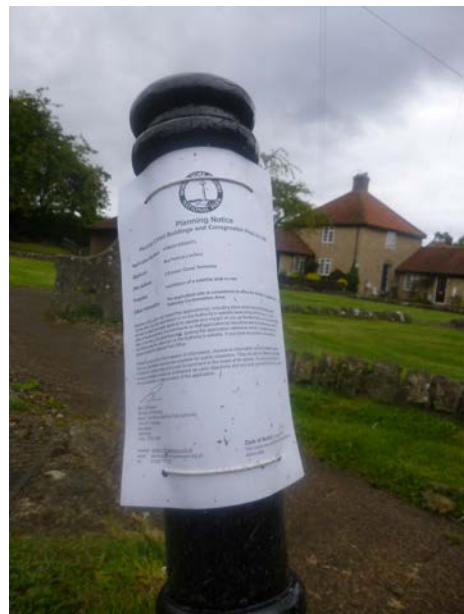
- Contact with the Parish Council(s) / Parish Meeting(s);
- Public meeting/display/exhibition;
- Distribution of leaflets to residents;
- Local press coverage;
- Use of Social Media.

However, we suggest that discussions with the Authority take place prior to carrying out any consultation in order to ensure the most appropriate methods are undertaken.

### Application Stage

If pre-application community consultations have been undertaken, details of the methods of consultation that were entered into and how the results of this have informed the proposal should be included with the planning application.

Once a planning application has been received, we will display a site notice on or near the application site and will advise immediate neighbours with a mutual boundary or those considered likely to be affected by letter. A separate consultation letter will be sent to the relevant Town or Parish Council or Parish Meeting<sup>9</sup>, statutory consultees and other organisations in the community, such as amenity bodies. In some cases, particularly major developments, or development affecting a Conservation Area, Listed Building or Public Right of Way, there are extra publicity requirements, including a requirement for the Authority to advertise the proposal in the local paper.



<sup>8</sup> Please note there is a charge for pre-application advice and the procedure and associated cost is available on the planning pages of our website.

<sup>9</sup> Communication with Parish Councils and Parish Meetings is likely to be in electronic format in the future, reflecting the level of resources the Authority has for such consultations.





The site notice and all consultations allow 21 days for comments to be made to the Authority and a longer time period will be given on request wherever possible<sup>10</sup>. Officers are available to answer queries on submitted schemes and can be contacted by phone, email, or in person (by appointment), at the Helmsley office. Officers are also available to meet members of a Town or Parish Council/Meeting to help local people formulate their comments on development proposals. In order to determine applications in an efficient and timely manner, on occasions applications are determined by Planning Committee prior to the end of the statutory consultation period. Where comments are subsequently received which raise new issues the application would be reconsidered by Planning Committee.

All planning application forms and plans can be viewed at the Authority's offices in Helmsley and on our website, using the following link:  
<http://planning.northyorkmoors.org.uk/Northgate/PlanningExplorer/ApplicationSearch.aspx>

Some Parish Councils also make plans available for inspection locally.

Comments can be made by letter, e-mail or through the web site, and any comments made which constitute a material planning consideration are taken into account.

Where significant changes are proposed to applications that have not yet been determined, those people who commented on the matter in respect of the original application will be reconsulted. Amended plans are available for inspection at the Authority's offices in Helmsley and on the Authority's website.

## **Decision making**

Where an application is to be determined by the Planning Committee, the applicant/agent, one objector, one supporter and the Town or Parish Council/Meeting, can speak at the meeting for 3 minutes in support of their views to supplement and reinforce information contained in the planning application. For major applications it may be necessary to be flexible with regards to the amount of time allowed for speaking. Anyone who has commented on an application will be informed in writing of the date and time of the meeting and an information leaflet is available explaining the public speaking procedures. Planning Committee meetings can be observed by any member of the public. The Planning Committee is guided by the policies of the adopted Local Plan<sup>11</sup> when reaching decisions on

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<sup>10</sup> The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 establishes the consultation period as 21 days. The Authority usually agrees to accept comments which would be submitted after this time.

<sup>11</sup> At the time of producing the Statement of Community Involvement the Authority's Local Plan is the Core Strategy and Development Policies 2008 which was produced as part of a Local Development Framework under former legislation and guidance.

planning applications but will also have regard to responses made in relation to the application<sup>12</sup>.

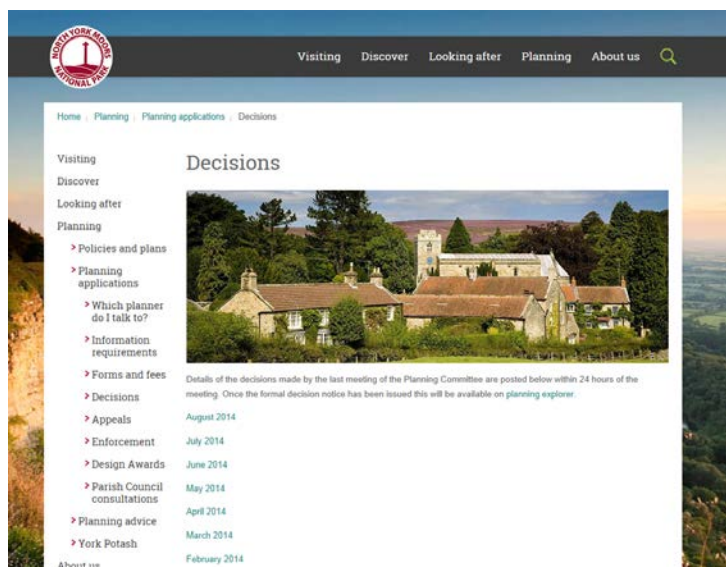
Certain applications are determined by the Director of Planning under the agreed scheme of delegation, which applies to both approvals and refusals. At the time of writing these applications are those where:

- The proposal conforms to the Authority's adopted policies and procedures;
- No comments are received from any interested party which are contrary to the recommendation made by officers, unless these can be addressed by attaching a suitable condition;
- There are no other material circumstances which would warrant decision by Committee.

## After the Decision

All decisions are posted on our website within 24 hours of the decision being made. Copies of decision notices are also available for inspection at the Authority's offices in Helmsley. In cases where the decision taken by the Authority is contrary to the views of the Parish/Town Council/Meeting a letter will be sent explaining the reasons for this and the basis of the decision.

Concerns about approved developments not being implemented in accordance with approved plans or conditions can be raised with officers in the Enforcement and Monitoring Team.



If a decision is taken to appeal anyone who commented on the original application will be notified and advised of the appeal process. With the exception of householder applications<sup>13</sup> there is an opportunity for anyone who made comments on the original application to make further comments to the Planning Inspectorate.

<sup>12</sup> Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

<sup>13</sup> A householder application relates to development which is ancillary to the dwelling and is within the curtilage of the dwelling.

## 5. Further Information

If you would like further information on how you can be involved in planning, please contact us using the details below:

Planning Policy – [policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

Development Management – [planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

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