

# Statement of Community Involvement

Adopted March 2014



[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy)



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# 1 . Introduction

## 1 Introduction

**1.1** The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Milton Keynes Council will engage with local communities and stakeholders in the development of planning policy documents and in the determination of planning applications within the Borough.

**1.2** The requirement to prepare a SCI was introduced in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and Milton Keynes Council adopted its first SCI in December 2006. Following changes to the planning process and new ways of engaging with the public and other stakeholders, including the growth of social media, it was decided that the SCI should be reviewed and updated to reflect the most up-to-date processes and procedures that will be used by the Council as part of its planning consultations.

**1.3** The draft SCI was made available for consultation for a twelve-week period between 23 October 2013 and 15 January 2014. Comments were received from 20 individuals and organisations and the final document has been updated to take account of those representations.

**1.4** This document was subsequently adopted by the Cabinet of Milton Keynes Council at its meeting on 12 March 2014.

### Importance of engagement and consultation

**1.5** The Council takes public and stakeholder engagement seriously and does not simply see it as a box-ticking exercise. In the spirit of Localism and at a time when Neighbourhood Planning in Milton Keynes is becoming increasingly widespread, the Council wants to improve the way the community gets involved in plan-making and its impact on the planning decisions that result from it.

**1.6** Planning is fundamental to shaping the neighbourhoods in which we all live and work, and it is important that everyone has the opportunity to be involved in and influence decisions that are made through the planning process. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms this. It says (in relation to plan-making, paragraph 155) that:

*“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in neighbourhood plans that have been made.”*

**1.7** Ensuring we engage effectively with stakeholders throughout the planning process also reflects the Council's commitment to equality and its three core values:

- *We are responsive*
- *We are collaborative*
- *We put our customers first.*

### The purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement

**1.8** The SCI sets out the consultation and engagement processes that will be used in preparing planning policy and supplementary/supporting documents and in determining planning applications. It explains the statutory requirements that the Council must meet at each stage and what other consultation or

engagement processes can be undertaken in addition to these minimum requirements. This gives the public and stakeholders certainty over what sort of engagement they can expect within the planning process and the ways they can get involved. Through the preparation of this document, we also gained support from partners and other local organisations about the assistance they can give to us in sharing information and facilitating discussions with their groups, members or contacts. The SCI therefore sets the framework for planning-related consultations which will enable the Council to demonstrate how it has met the requirements of the planning regulations.

**1.9** The SCI sets out the techniques available and likely to be used as it is important to retain a degree of flexibility so that methods can be appropriately tailored to the planning document in question, to allow for changes in the regulations or best practice guidance, and to reflect that new methods of communication and engagement may become available over the life of the document.

### **Principles of community involvement in planning**

**1.10** As part of consultation and engagement through the planning process, the Council will work to the following principles:

- We will meet and where practicably possible exceed the minimum standards for community involvement as set out in legislation.
- Consultation should be accessible to all regardless of age, gender, faith, race, disability as well as knowledge and experience, making it easy for groups and individuals with little or no knowledge of the planning process to get involved.
- Consultation materials will be clear and concise, and avoid jargon wherever possible. The scope of the consultation will be clear from the start, so respondents know what they can comment on and how their comments will be taken into account.
- Whenever possible, feedback will be given to reflect how comments received have been incorporated into the planning process.
- Consultation methods will be used that are appropriate to the stage of the planning process concerned in order to maximise the opportunity for community involvement, while making sure the resources they require are proportionate, and time- and cost-effective.
- Consultation methods will make widespread use of electronic and modern media techniques wherever possible to make consultations easier, quicker and more cost-effective, used alongside traditional methods, including printed media, exhibitions and meetings.
- Written information will be made available in alternative, accessible formats if requested, such as large print, Braille, audio or translated into another language.
- Engagement in the planning process will be encouraged from the earliest stage possible ('front-loaded'), when there is greater opportunity for the views of interested and affected parties to be reflected in decisions made.

## 2. Community involvement in Planning Policy

### 2 Community involvement in Planning Policy

**2.1** As a local planning authority, Milton Keynes Council has a duty to put in place a framework of planning policies (known as the Development Plan) which can be used to guide development proposals and determine planning applications. As part of the preparation of these planning policies and supporting documents, there are statutory stages of consultation that must be undertaken to allow the public and stakeholders to have their say on what is being proposed.

**2.2** This section considers the sorts of documents that Milton Keynes Council prepares and the regulations that guide the preparation process for those documents. Within those regulations are statutory requirements for consultation and this section sets out how they will be met in Milton Keynes, and indicates the methods of consultation and engagement that may be used in addition to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be fully engaged in the process.

#### Planning documents subject to consultation

**2.3 Local Plans or Development Plan Documents (DPDs)** – these documents contain the key policies that guide the future development of the Borough and are used in the determination of planning applications. In Milton Keynes, we will be preparing documents including the Site Allocations Plan, Plan:MK (a review/replacement for the existing Milton Keynes Local Plan and the Core Strategy) and a Minerals Plan (to replace the existing Milton Keynes Minerals Local Plan). The statutory stages in the preparation process for these documents is laid out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012<sup>(1)</sup>.

**2.4 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** – these provide additional guidance and interpretation to support policies in the Local Plan/DPDs, or relate to specific sites. As with Local Plans/DPDs, the statutory requirements for preparing SPDs are laid out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

**2.5 Development Frameworks or Briefs** – these documents are prepared to set the parameters that development proposals for a specific site should meet, providing certainty to developers about what is expected in a planning application. There is no statutory process for preparing these documents, but the principles of consultation and engagement will be integral to the process we follow.

**2.6 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule** – CIL is a charge that is levied on new development floorspace which is intended to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure to support growth. The statutory process for preparing a CIL Charging Schedule is set out in the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended)<sup>(2)</sup>.

**2.7 Neighbourhood Plans or Development Orders** – these are community-led documents, prepared by a Town or Parish Council. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012<sup>(3)</sup> set out the statutory requirements for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders. Consultation during the preparation stage of these plans is undertaken by the Town or Parish Council and does not therefore need to meet the requirements of this SCI. However, it may provide useful guidance for Town and Parish Councils undertaking consultation and engagement on their draft plans.

1 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/made>

2 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/948/contents/made>

3 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>

## 2 . Community involvement in Planning Policy

Once submitted to Milton Keynes Council, we have a responsibility to publish the draft plan for comments before examination and referendum. Comments received will be sent to an independent examiner to consider as part of the examination process.

**2.8 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA and SEA)** – these document the appraisal process undertaken alongside our Local Plan/DPD preparation (and SPD in some cases). The process is laid out in Government guidance<sup>(4)</sup>. Consultation is undertaken alongside the related plan, with the exception of the Scoping Report stage, which is particularly focussed on three ‘consultation bodies’ (Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage) and is carried out ahead of the preparation of the Local Plan/DPD.

**2.9 Local Investment Plan (LIP)** - the LIP is the infrastructure delivery schedule that is prepared by MKC and updated regularly to guide investment in key infrastructure and projects across the Borough, helping to ensure development is supported by the facilities needed to make it sustainable. The preparation of the LIP is not governed by statutory regulations, but the process undertaken by MKC will incorporate regular periods of public and stakeholder engagement.

### Who will we consult?

**2.10** The Regulations listed above for each type of document provide information on the bodies and organisations that must be directly notified as part of the preparation process. Table 2.1 'Who we will directly notify as part of the consultation on a planning document' summarises our interpretation of these requirements in terms of the different sorts of documents we will consult on.

**2.11** In some cases, we have a degree of discretion over whether to notify certain bodies if the topic of the document in question is not likely to be of interest or relevance to that body. Normally, we would consult wider than might be necessary to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved. Further, this list only reflects the bodies that we will contact directly regarding a consultation by email or post. As all consultation material will be more widely available, any interested parties will be able to respond if they wish.

**2.12** Our consultation database contains the contact details of around 4,000 organisations, individuals or agents who have responded to a planning policy consultation in the past, or have asked to be kept informed of the preparation of our planning documents.

**2.13** The Council also prepares other planning-related documents which will be subject to public consultation and engagement, although we have some discretion over the arrangements for those consultations as they would not be governed by regulations in the same way as those in the table above. These documents could include Conservation Area Reviews or the Local List (which identifies significant local heritage assets).

4 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf)

Table 2.1 Who we will directly notify as part of the consultation on a planning document

	Local Plans/DPDs	SPDs	Dev't F'works	CIL Charging Schedule	N'hood Plans	Sustainability Appraisal (5)	Local Investment Plan
<b>Specific Consultation Bodies (6)</b>							
Town and Parish Councils within MK	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Town and Parish Councils adjacent to MK	A	A	B	A	A	A	A
Adjacent Local Planning Authorities, and other LPAs within the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership	A	A	B	A	A	A	A
Buckinghamshire and MK Local Nature Partnership (7)	A	B	B	B	B	A	A
Homes and Communities Agency	A	B	B	A	A	A	A
Natural England	A	B	B	B	A	D	A
Environment Agency	A	B	B	B	A	D	A
English Heritage	A	B	B	B	A	D	A
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	A	C	C	B	B	A	A
Highways Agency	A	C	C	B	B	A	A
Electronic Communications providers	A	C	B	B	B	A	A
Utility providers	A	C	B	B	B	A	A
NHS Area Team/MK Clinical Commissioning Group	A	C	B	B	B	A	A

- 5 As stated above, with the exception of the Scoping Report stage, consultation on Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) is undertaken alongside the Local Plan or DPD that it relates to.
- 6 The regulations also include reference to the Coal Authority and the Marine Management Organisation, however consultation with these bodies is not considered necessary
- 7 The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 180) requires that we work collaboratively on strategic planning priorities in consultation with Local Nature Partnerships.

## 2. Community involvement in Planning Policy



## 2. Community involvement in Planning Policy

	Local Plans/DPDs	SPDs	Dev't F'works	CIL Charging Schedule	N'hood Plans	Sustainability Appraisal <sup>(5)</sup>	Local Investment Plan
<b>General Consultation Bodies<sup>(8)</sup></b>							
Voluntary bodies whose activities benefit the area	A	B	C	C	B	A	A
Bodies representing interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the area <sup>(9)</sup>	A	B	C	C	B	A	A
Bodies representing the interests of different religious groups in the area <sup>(10)</sup>	A	B	C	C	B	A	A
Bodies representing the interests of disabled persons in the area <sup>(11)</sup>	A	B	C	C	B	A	A
Bodies representing the interests of businesses in the area	A	B	C	B	B	A	A
<b>Other consultees</b>							
Ward Members	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Developers, housebuilders, landowners and their agents	A	B	A	A	B	A	A
Other organisations or individuals who are on our consultation database	A	B	C	B	B	A	A

- 5 As stated above, with the exception of the Scoping Report stage, consultation on Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) is undertaken alongside the Local Plan or DPD that it relates to.
- 8 General consultation bodies would be notified when the content of the document MAY be relevant to that body or the group(s) it represents.
- 9 In Milton Keynes, the Racial Equality Partnership serves as an umbrella group representing these bodies
- 10 In Milton Keynes, the Council of Faiths serves as an umbrella group representing these bodies
- 11 In Milton Keynes, the Disability Action Group serves as an umbrella group representing these bodies

## 2. Community involvement in Planning Policy

### Key

A	Body will normally be notified.
B	Body will be notified if it is considered the document will be relevant to them or the group they represent, or if the document relates to an area near to them.
C	Less likely that the body in question will be notified, but each document will be considered separately, and consultees chosen accordingly.
D	'Consultation bodies' that must be consulted at the Scoping Stage. We would normally also consult wider, and notify other bodies in this list where appropriate.

### How will we consult?

**2.14** As a minimum, we will directly notify the bodies and individuals identified in Table 2.1 'Who we will directly notify as part of the consultation on a planning document', at the relevant statutory consultation stages for each type of document. Where we have an email address for a consultee we will send the relevant information electronically, to make efficient use of time and resources. When this is not possible, we will send a letter by post.

**2.15** In all cases, we encourage consultees to make comments electronically whenever they are able to. Our preference is for consultees to respond online through our Objective consultation portal<sup>(12)</sup>, which is usually used to host our document consultations. Responses sent by email are also encouraged, and we ask respondents to send them in a MS Word format rather than PDF, to enable us to process comments more efficiently. Responses sent by post or fax are also acceptable.

**2.16** We will always make consultation documents available online through our website<sup>(13)</sup> and include them on the Council's list of current consultations<sup>(14)</sup>. Documents are also made available to view in the Council's Civic Offices in Central Milton Keynes and in libraries across the Borough, so people without internet access can still access our consultation documents.

### Additional consultation and engagement methods

**2.17** In addition to meeting the standard requirements set out above, the Council will where appropriate do additional consultation and engagement at various stages of the document preparation process. Not all methods will be used; they will be tailored to the specific stage and be proportionate to the importance of the document in question.

- Using the **local media**, preparing **press releases** to circulate to the local newspapers and radio stations, or working with the newspapers to prepare **articles** or advertisements to provide detail and raise awareness and interest. Rarely, it will be appropriate to use **statutory notices** in the local press (MK News and The Citizen) which set out the consultation matters (name and subject of the document, dates of the consultation period, where the documentation can be viewed and how to make comments). This is, however, an expensive method as the cost of statutory newspaper notices is high and may not be considered to provide value for money.
- In addition to directly notifying teams that have an interest in the consultation in question, we will also share information across **internal departments** through the weekly bulletin email distributed across the Council, to ensure other teams know about current consultations. Information is also included in the Members' Weekly News email circulated to all Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils.
- Include articles in the Council's LiveMK **newsletter** circulated to properties across the Borough. We may also provide information to be included in our partners' newsletters, for example those circulated by Town and Parish Councils and Community Action:MK.
- Use of **social networking** sites and media techniques (for example Facebook or Twitter) to raise awareness of consultations. This method could be particularly useful in targeting younger stakeholders in the process.

12 <http://miltonkeynes-consult.objective.co.uk>

13 <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy>

14 <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/consultations>

## 2. Community involvement in Planning Policy

- Display **site notices** where a planning policy document might have consequences for a specific site or area (for example, allocation of an area for future development or the preparation of a development framework), so that local residents can be made aware of proposals that could affect their area.
- Deliver **presentations** or hold Q&A sessions at meetings of existing groups, including those that are managed or convened by partners in the voluntary or community sectors, for example. This could include Town and Parish Councils, Residents' Associations and Business Associations, a Developers Forum, local interest groups or community groups.
- Prepare and make available **leaflets** which summarise the key issues being addressed by the document, or to stimulate debate. This would signpost to the main document where people who are interested in the subject can find more information. A **questionnaire** or survey could also form a part of such a leaflet. Leaflets should be made available to anyone visiting the MKC offices, places in local libraries and other locations with a high turnover of visitors.
- Raising awareness of consultation periods, including advertising consultation events or meetings, or providing information on issues through **posters** and **flyers**. These could be displayed in public places, including the libraries, Council offices, supermarkets or local shops, on Town and Parish Council information boards or bus/railway stations.
- Hold **exhibitions** or roadshows, with unmanned displays or staffed drop-in sessions.
- Ensuring we engage with groups that may be harder to reach through traditional methods. This could include attending meetings of the **Youth Cabinet** or working with local schools on specific issues that may of interest to the younger generation. Similarly, working with leaders from **faith communities** and groups that represent older people, for example, will enable us to gather views from the stakeholders that might otherwise not get involved in the planning process.
- Where a consultation relates to a document being prepared for a specific site (for example a development brief), we may undertake **door-to-door leaflet drops** in the local area to ensure that nearby residents and businesses are aware of the proposals and any specific events being held about it.
- Hold interactive **workshops** or discussion groups with key stakeholders, with the opportunity to explore and debate issues in some depth. This could include events with schools, the use of methods such as Planning for Real® or design workshops (sometimes referred to as a Charette), where residents take a hands on role in registering their views and identifying priorities for development in their area using 3D modelling, plans and maps. Such events may often be led by external facilitators, and could use techniques such as 'World Cafe' or 'Open Space' formats<sup>(15)</sup>.

### When will we consult?

**2.18** The regulations relating to each type of planning document set out the points in the preparation process that we must undertake consultation, or make documents available for comment. We will always meet these requirements, but in addition we can undertake additional engagement at appropriate points through the process. In particular, there should be significant effort made at the early stages of preparing our local plan documents, at the point in the process when there is the greatest opportunity to influence the shape of our strategies and policies.

15 These methods are used to host and facilitate group discussions and can be used in meetings for large numbers of people who may have very different views.

## 2 . Community involvement in Planning Policy

**2.19** The Council's Parishes' Protocol<sup>(16)</sup> states that "*timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response.*" It suggests that this might typically vary between two and 12 weeks depending on the nature and impact of the proposal. In some cases consulting for 12 weeks will not be feasible, however we will endeavour to give advance warning to Town and Parish Councils and other stakeholders of upcoming consultations in order that they can arrange to respond within the consultation period if it is considerably shorter. The regulations that most planning documents must follow generally require a minimum of six weeks, so we will always exceed the Council's minimum standard of two weeks.

**2.20** Consultations that fall over a holiday period will normally be no less than eight weeks in duration, to reflect Town and Parish Council meeting schedules and for the convenience of members of the public who may be away at these times.

### **What happens after a consultation has closed?**

**2.21** All comments received as part of a planning policy consultation will normally be transferred to our Objective consultation portal. This makes it easier for us to publish and run reports on the comments we receive, especially when we undertake several rounds of consultation on the preparation of a single policy document.

**2.22** After a consultation period ends comments will be reviewed and considered by officers and, where appropriate, changes to the document proposed. Where possible, individual officer responses will be prepared for each comment received. However, it is common to receive a large volume of responses to some of our policy documents and it would not be possible to respond to each comment individually. In these cases, comments will be summarised and responses to the issues raised prepared.

**2.23** A Consultation Statement will usually be produced which sets out the comments received (either individually or in summarised form, dependent on the volume and complexity), the Council's response to those comments and details of how the outcome of the consultation has been reflected in the next stage of the document preparation process. In some cases, it may be appropriate to identify the specific amendments that have been made to a document in response to comments received, however this will not always be possible, particularly on complex documents or where a large volume of comments are received.

**2.24** The Council will notify anyone who has responded to a consultation when we move to the next stage of the process and when that Consultation Statement is made available, so they can see how their comments have informed the process.

## 3 . Community involvement on Planning Applications

### 3 Community involvement on Planning Applications

**3.1** Milton Keynes Council determines around 1,500 planning applications each year, ranging from householder extensions to major new residential, retail or office developments. As part of the process to determine these applications, it is important that the community and other stakeholders have the opportunity to get involved, to help shape the areas where they live, work and spend their leisure time.

**3.2** Planning legislation sets out the minimum requirements for publicising and consulting the community and stakeholders on planning applications. This section sets out our interpretation of how we will meet those requirements through the development management process, through consultation at pre-application, application and appeal stages.

#### Pre-application Stage

**3.3** The Council's Planning Enquiries team provide free advice and basic guidance on planning issues in relation, for example, to whether a proposed development may require planning permission. For more detailed guidance, the Development Management team offer pre-application advice to all applicants. The pre-application advice service provided by the Council allows a developer (from a householder wondering whether their extension is likely to get planning permission, to a major retail developer wanting to redevelop an area in one of our town centres) to explore and address the planning issues raised by their prospective development without incurring the cost of submitting a formal planning application. Information on accessing pre-application advice, the service that will be provided and the costs involved is available on the Council's website<sup>(17)</sup>.

**3.4** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights the benefits of front-loading consultation and engagement in the development management process. It says (paragraphs 188 and 190) that *"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties... The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits."*

**3.5** For small-scale development proposals, there is usually no need for an applicant to undertake pre-application public consultation beyond speaking to nearby neighbours about plans. However, for larger-scale or potentially controversial development proposals, the Council expects developers to engage with relevant stakeholders, including the local community, Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils. For very large development proposals, pre-application consultation is required by the Planning Act 2008 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).

**3.6** The Council intends to prepare guidance for applicants and developers undertaking pre-application consultation. This guidance would include reference to good practice examples, including the benefits of holding well-publicised exhibitions or public open meetings, setting up information websites, and circulating flyers or newspaper adverts setting out details of any proposals.

## 3 . Community involvement on Planning Applications

### Planning Application Stage

**3.7** Once a planning application has been received and validated by the Development Management team, there is a process of publicity and consultation that is undertaken to ensure that stakeholders and the community have the opportunity to have their say on the development proposed. The following procedures are undertaken:

- On all planning applications, **neighbour notification letters** are sent to the occupiers of the properties adjoining the site.
- When it is not possible to identify all adjoining properties, a **site notice** is displayed as close as possible to the proposed development site.
- For some types of application (including major applications; applications for works to listed buildings; applications for developments that would effect the setting of a listed building or conservation area; or applications for works to trees that are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order or are within a conservation area), a site notice will also be displayed and a **newspaper notice** placed in the local press.
- An email will be sent to the relevant **Ward Member and Town or Parish Council** clerk for the area where the development proposal is situated, making them aware of the application.
- A **weekly list** of all planning applications is published on the Council's website<sup>(18)</sup> and circulated to all Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils.
- **Internal and external statutory consultees** are also notified of relevant applications (for example Highways, Development Plans, Planning Obligations, Environmental Health or Conservation and Archaeology teams, or the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board or Natural England).
- Following these notifications, there is a period of at least **21 days** on all applications for any interested parties, including internal and external statutory consultees, to make comments. We continue to accept comments until the application is determined, so in many cases this will be longer than 21 days.
- If significant changes or significantly **amended plans** are submitted while the application is being processed, an additional 14 days will be available to make comments. The same parties will be notified of these changes, plus anyone who has already commented on the proposals.
- All planning applications can be viewed online through the Council's **Public Access** system<sup>(19)</sup>. Alternatively, interested parties can view a **hard copy** of a planning application by coming into the Council's Civic Offices.
- We encourage people to **respond online** through the Public Access system. This allows us to process comments more efficiently. Alternatively, comments can be submitted by **email or post**. All comments must be made in writing and contain the name and address of the author. We cannot consider anonymous comments.
- All comments received are **public documents** and will be made available to view online through the Public Access system. They cannot be kept confidential, although personal information (signatures, email addresses and phone numbers) is censored.
- Under the **officer scheme of delegation**, the majority of applications do not get determined at **Development Control Committee** (DCC, which is usually reserved for major applications), or at a **Panel** meeting (which is a more informal meeting, with fewer Members).

18 <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/view-or-comment-on-planning-applications>  
19 <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/view-or-comment-on-planning-applications/public-access-system>

### 3 . Community involvement on Planning Applications

- For those applications that are determined at DCC or Panel, these are public meetings and members of the public have the **right to speak** in relation to an application. All requests to speak must be registered with Democratic Services (by email to [dc-speaking-requests@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:dc-speaking-requests@milton-keynes.gov.uk)) by noon two clear working days prior to the day of the meeting. A maximum of three members of the public can speak on any application, and these spaces are allocated on a first come, first served basis. The Chair of DCC has the discretion to extend the number of speakers on the rare occasions when there is greater demand.
- Once a decision is made, either at DCC, Panel or through the officer scheme of delegation, the **decision notice** is placed on the Council's website, and we will write to or email anyone who commented on the application to confirm the decision.

#### Appeals

- 3.8** An appeal may be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by an applicant when permission has been refused, where it has been permitted with conditions which the applicant considers to be unreasonable or where the application has not been determined within the appropriate time limit.
- 3.9** If an appeal is made, the Council will notify anyone who was notified about the original application, plus anyone who commented on the application. Any further comments made at this time should be sent straight to the Planning Inspectorate (not the Council) for their consideration.
- 3.10** For appeals that are decided through an informal hearing or public inquiry, interested parties are also given the opportunity to appear before the Inspector. The Planning Inspectorate will consider the evidence and decide whether the Council's decision was correct. The Inspector's decision is binding on the Council, although it can be challenged on a point of law in the High Court.
- 3.11** When an appeal decision is received by the Council, we will publish the decision on our website.





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