



Community involvement in the planning application process

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January 2006



Wigan
Council

Building the future together

Community involvement in the planning application process

A step by step guide for developers and agents

We are committed to involving the community in the determination of planning applications. This leaflet explains how applicants and their agents can play their part in fulfilling this commitment during the preparation of their proposals.

Carrying out a community involvement exercise is not a mandatory requirement when submitting a planning application but the council sincerely believes that genuine engagement with the surrounding community before the submission of a formal application can be beneficial for all those involved.

What is community involvement?

This is the term we use to describe the process of:

- explaining proposals to residents, workers and users of the area around the site of the proposed development;
- requesting the views of people in the community;
- considering those views;
- where appropriate, amending the proposals to take the views of the community into account.

We encourage applicants and agents to follow this process and this leaflet provides a step by step guide to help you. **The leaflet should be completed and submitted with your planning application.**

Involvement of Ward Councillors

It is important that elected Members of Wigan Council who represent the ward or wards where the development is proposed are kept fully informed of the community involvement exercise. This guide explains how you can do this.

When should a developer start to consider community involvement?

As early as possible in the design of your scheme. This will enable you to include adequate time in your programme for community involvement.

What are the benefits to the developer of a community involvement exercise?

A genuine exercise can:

- provide an ideal opportunity for you to explain your proposals before decisions are made on the basis of possibly inaccurate information;
- save you time in obtaining a decision on a planning application;
- produce more certainty about the outcome;
- create a more sustainable and acceptable development;
- avoid appeals and call-in procedures.

What type of development would benefit from a community involvement exercise?

You, as an enlightened developer, should regard community involvement as an opportunity to explain and refine your proposals rather than a constraint on your intentions. Local people are generally very interested to learn about proposals which they feel may affect them. People also realise that there can be advantages to new development as well as disadvantages. For example, more jobs or more local facilities for them and their families to use and enjoy. So, a large range of proposals could benefit from community involvement, including:

- medium and large scale industrial and commercial development;
- medium and large scale residential development;
- new educational or institutional buildings;
- major infrastructure projects such as roads, pipelines or overhead power lines;
- smaller developments on sensitive sites;
- changes of use of buildings or land for purposes which are likely to be controversial;
- developments where opportunities for community benefits may be available, for example the upgrading of a facility used by the community;
- mineral extraction proposals;
- waste processing schemes;

Small scale proposals such as house extensions or advertisements will not normally require a community involvement exercise.

Advice

Our officers will advise you on:

- whether your proposals would benefit from a community involvement exercise; and
- if so, how it might be carried out.

How should a community involvement exercise be planned and carried out?

This leaflet contains a step by step guide to help you.

There are three stages in the process:

Stage 1 Carry out a community involvement appraisal to determine the nature and extent of the exercise.



Stage 2 Carry out the community involvement exercise you have decided on.



Stage 3 Complete a community involvement submission to record what you did and what the outcome was.

The remainder of this leaflet has been designed for you to fill-in and return with your planning application.

Stage 1 Carry out a community involvement appraisal to find the best way to involve the community

Description of proposed development:

Location:

Name of person completing this form:

Address:

Telephone number:

Step 1 What effects do you think the proposals have on the surrounding area?

Tick appropriate boxes:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> access arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/> effect on trees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> car parking | <input type="checkbox"/> nature conservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> traffic generation | <input type="checkbox"/> protected species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public right of way affected | <input type="checkbox"/> Listed buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> noise and disturbance | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> use in unsocial hours | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> odours | <input type="checkbox"/> scale of development |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> height or mass of development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> disruption during construction | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> attraction of crowds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> drainage problems | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ground conditions | <input type="checkbox"/> pollution potential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> effect on watercourse | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> employment potential | |

Other significant effects:

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Step 2 What is the extent of the Community which may be affected?

Tick appropriate boxes:

- 1 The immediate area

List of streets or roads:

- 2 The wider area

List neighbourhoods or districts:

- 3 Particular community interest
For example, important views, public transport, school places, employment and so on.

Please list:

Step 3 What will be the best ways of informing the community about the proposals?

Tick appropriate boxes from these options:

- Circulate letter and statement in the area explaining proposals with plans or diagrams
- Circulate specially prepared leaflet
- Arrange exhibition and invite local people
- Arrange press release or advertisement in local newspapers
- Arrange public meetings
- Arrange meetings with particular groups in community
- Arrange a citizens jury
- Additional measures (please specify)

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Step 4 You should inform the Council Members for the relevant ward

It is important that Council Members are made aware of development proposals in their ward.

There are three elected Councillors for each ward in the borough.

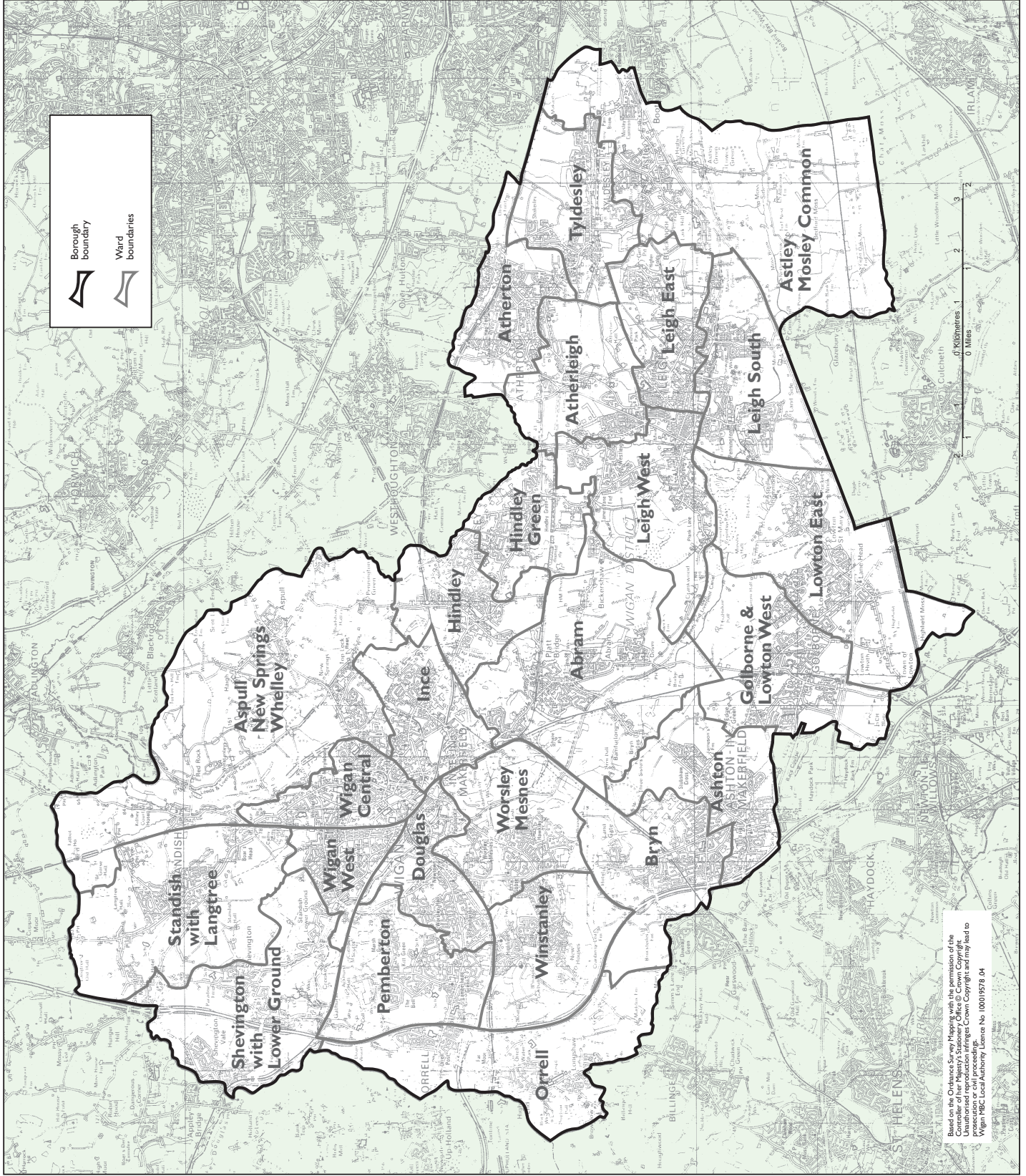
Members of the Planning Committee should be informed of development proposals in the same way as their ward colleagues. But they should not be requested to discuss or give their views on proposals because this would prevent them taking part in determining the subsequent planning application.

Note that development proposals may affect more than one ward. For example a site may cross or adjoin ward boundaries, or the site may be in one ward but the community likely to be affected is in the adjoining ward.

Timing is critical – you should inform Ward Members of your proposals no later than you inform the local community and preferably in advance.



Ward boundaries



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How do you identify which ward or wards are likely to be affected by the development?

A ward map is attached to this leaflet to help you. If you need further guidance, please contact the Planning Officers.

Please complete the details of the Council Members you have informed:

Ward:

1 Councillor Date informed:

2 Councillor Date informed:

3 Councillor Date informed:

Ward:

1 Councillor Date informed:

2 Councillor Date informed:

3 Councillor Date informed:

Based on the above appraisal, you will now have decided on the nature and extent of the community involvement exercise.

If you need any advice please contact us.

Stage 2 Carry out the exercise you have decided on

Remember to:

- give adequate advance publicity to exhibitions, meetings or events.
- keep a record of the addresses you write to and the information you send.
- keep a copy of all press advertisements, press releases and notices.
- keep a record of those attending exhibitions and, if possible, meetings.
- keep all comments slips filled in by people attending exhibitions or meetings.

Stage 3 Complete a community involvement submission

The purpose of this submission is to record what you did and what the outcome was.

Please complete:

1 How was the community informed about the proposals?

2 Summary of responses received from community:

Number of responses

Number generally in favour

Number of objections

Main reasons for objection:

Other matters raised:

Your comments on the responses received:

Amendments made as a result of community response

1

2

3

What to do next

Send in a completed copy of this leaflet with your planning application. This will enable those deciding your application to understand the steps you have taken to involve the local community.

Thank you for taking part in this community involvement exercise.

Contact details

There are Development Control Teams covering the following areas:

West

Wigan North, Wigan South

Telephone: 01942 488045

Orrell, Billinge, Winstanley, Ashton in Makerfield
and Bryn

Telephone: 01942 404275

Shevington, Standish and Aspull

Telephone: 01942 404274

East

Hindley, Abram, Platt Bridge, Bickershaw.
Atherton, Tyldesley and Astley

Telephone: 01942 404260

Leigh, Golborne and Lowton

Telephone: 01942 404263