

# local development frameworks

Every local authority is required to prepare and maintain a Local Development Framework (LDF) to guide development in their area. The LDF comprises a series of local development documents comprising Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which together set out how development is to be managed and delivered.

Typically, a local authority will produce some or all of the following documents:

- **Local Development Scheme** setting out a timetable for the production of documents.
- **Statement of Community Involvement** setting out how the community will be involved in decision making.
- **Core Strategy** - regarded as the key documents as it establishes a vision for the area and sets out the broad pattern for new development.
- **Development Control Policies** which provide the broad guidelines for determining planning applications.
- **Site Specific Allocations** that identify the sites that needed for development.
- **Area Action Plans** that provide guidance for particular locations, such as a town centre or new urban extension.
- **Proposals Map** that illustrates land uses development sites and areas to be protected.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents** providing detail about particular policies, such as affordable housing or planning obligations.
- **Annual Monitoring Reports** which record whether timetables and policies are being achieved.

Each document must go through a number of consultation stages (depending on the subject matter and its complexity) and a DPD may be subject to an Examination in Public (EiP) before it is finally adopted.

## Front End Loading

The key to the development plan system is the preparation of the evidence base. It follows from this that the consultation process is therefore 'front end loaded'. In other words, local planning authorities are expected to prepare evidence - on subjects as diverse as flood risk, strategic housing land availability and

landscape characteristics - and to base their strategy, and the detailed development proposals which follow from it, upon rational evidence.

Objections to the making of a DPD, if they are warranted, must therefore be made at an early stage and must be directed towards the conclusions drawn from the evidence that has been gathered. Conversely, objections made at late stages in the preparatory process, and without evidence that they were raised at earlier stages, are unlikely to be given significant weight.

## Testing Local Development Documents

DPDs that are subject to an Examination in Public will already have been subject to extensive public consultation. As a result, the Examination is intended to review only whether a plan is considered to be 'sound'. To be "sound" a DPD should be JUSTIFIED, EFFECTIVE and consistent with NATIONAL POLICY.

- Justified means that the document must be founded on a robust and credible evidence base and it must be the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.
- Effective means that the document must be deliverable, flexible and capable of being monitored.

The concepts of justification and effectiveness are set out in national planning guidance

## Navigating the System

DLP Planning can help you navigate the complexities of the plan making system by:

- Monitoring the status and timetables for the preparation or review of DPDs.
- Reviewing existing and emerging DPDs to help justify your proposed development or to substantiate and support your opposition against the proposals of the Local Planning Authority.
- Reviewing the evidence base on which DPDs will be based.
- Preparing the evidence base needed to support the promotion of your development.
- Preparing and submitting representations at formal stages of public consultation.
- Preparing for and attending any Examination in Public.