



Guidelines for

Developers and Individuals on Engagement



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What is the Value of Consultation/Early Engagement?

Why it is Beneficial

The planning system can be viewed as a very complex and highly technical process; it can be confusing and people may feel that their views are not considered sufficiently, leading to a breakdown in trust between all parties. Effective well thought out engagement can reduce conflict which results in better development and allows communities to have their say. Also it helps communities understand the Developers' perspective; communities may not agree with the final proposal or the outcome but still accept the reasoning.

Why does community engagement matter?



Developers

- *Promote the project by producing plans/models of the proposal and demonstrate how it will fit into the local area.*
- *Local community can provide vital local knowledge.*
- *Help to identify issues and allow issues to be raised early in the process. This allows issues to be addressed or explanations given.*
- *Identify how a scheme can bring value to the area and enhance the reputation of all involved.*



Communities

- *Effective engagement means a chance to understand what is being proposed.*
- *To explore how a development can bring value to an area.*
- *Identify which options would work best within a local context.*
- *Help shape solutions and comment on the scheme at the earliest stage and offer a local perspective.*



Decision Makers

- *Good pre-application engagement will identified issues that are critical to the decision-making process.*
- *Highlight issues that are important to the local community.*
- *The decision maker will balance up these issues along with planning policy and other considerations to help make an informed decision.*

Effective engagement with the public can lead to better plans, better decisions and more satisfactory outcomes and can help to avoid delays in the planning process. It also improves confidence in the fairness of the planning system. The Scottish Government expects engagement with the public to be meaningful and to occur from the earliest stages in the planning process to enable community views to be reflected in development plans and development proposals.

Minimum requirements for consultation and engagement in the planning system are established through legislation. However it is recommended that developers exceed the minimum legislative requirements and fully engage with local communities who now expect more than the minimum.

www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf shows the requirements. Although an application cannot be refused if only the minimum requirements are met, an application is more likely to be successful if the community have been fully engaged, raising aspirations and delivering better results.

By listening to the experiences and ideas of the people who live in communities we can find solutions which will make a lasting difference.

There are different degrees of engagement ranging from information sharing and feedback to consultation and active involvement.

This can take many forms including exhibitions, forums, mail shots, using public noticeboards, community events, meetings, workshops, visits to groups, mobile unit, street stalls, Charrette plus™ (www.pas.org.uk/charretteplus/), focus groups, media, site visits, tours and Planning for Real™.

It is important to engage with as many of the community affected by proposals as possible using methods at an appropriate level to the scale of the proposals. All forms of community engagement need to be a positive, inclusive and effective experience for all those involved. Community Councils are the only community group with a statutory role in planning but it is also important to involve other key community groups with non-statutory roles such as amenity associations, residents' associations, community development trusts, civic trusts etc. A key stage to the engagement is to ensure communities receive feedback on the process and how the engagement has influenced decisions made.



Types of Developments

Depending on the type of development planned, different levels of engagement will be necessary.

Early and open negotiations over prospective planning applications is strongly recommended and legislation requires a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) with communities for national and major developments. There is no statutory guidance for public engagement on small scale developments. However it is strongly recommended that public engagement takes place.

The type of public engagement when proposing a small scale minor development can range from a friendly neighbourly chat verbally outlining the proposed development to a more formal discussion with plans detailing the development. It is important to consider how you would want to be treated if a development was happening near you.

Once an application has been received and validated by the Planning Authority, the Planning Authority will notify the neighbours within 20 metres of the proposal and it will also be advertised on the weekly list. It should also be noted that proposed developments will be advertised in the press and online - see also www.tellmesotland.gov.uk/notices/perth-kinross/planning/

This document outlines three different categories of developments - Householder Applications/Minor Developments; Local Developments; and Major/National Developments - and the type of public consultation that should take place.



Householder Applications/
Minor Developments

Local Developments

Major/National
Developments

SP=EED™ - Successful Planning Equals Effective Engagement and Delivery



PAS (formally known as Planning Aid Scotland) has developed SP=EED™ (Successful Planning Equals Effective Engagement and Delivery) to deal with the specific challenges of engagement in planning (<http://pas.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/SPEED.pdf>). Perth & Kinross Council advocates the use of this guidance when formulating proposals for community engagement. SP=EED™ sets out 3 levels of engagement (Informing, Consulting and Partnership) and 8 criteria for effective engagement within each level. Each level can be suitable in the appropriate scenario.

Planning Your Level of Engagement

Using the SP=EED™ approach, it is important to decide on what 'level' of engagement you should aim for - you need to ask yourself "what am I trying to achieve through engagement?" Movement from levels 1-3 (Informing, Consulting and Partnership) allows for an increased level of public involvement/impact in the engagement process with resulting time commitments and 'partnership' building. The level adopted therefore needs to be appropriate to the needs of the engagement catchment/local community and the unique aspects of a development. We are looking for developers to consult with communities at least at Level 2 on how they intend to develop the site.

Step 1 in your engagement planning should be gaining internal commitment on engagement expectations. Step 2 should be learning from the public in terms of what would make the engagement process credible. These steps will also include an awareness of timescales, resources and budgets available. These internal and external expectations will allow you to select the most appropriate engagement level.

SP=EED™ Levels of Engagement

Level	Engagement Goal/Promise
Level 1 - Informing <i>(very rarely appropriate to use on its own)</i>	Keeping the public informed. Involves providing balanced information to the public to assist understanding.
Level 2 - Consulting	To obtain feedback/listen and acknowledge how community feedback has influenced the decision-making process. A two-way process.
Level 3 - Partnership	To actively work with a community in formulating joint solutions. Involves in-depth collaboration and demands time and commitment from all sides.

SP=EED™ Criteria for Effective Engagement

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
1 Transparency	The purpose of the engagement is clear and people can find out about it easily.	Rights to participate are clearly explained and opportunities to express opinions are publicised.	Dialogue will take place with engagement partners about how they will be involved in the engagement process and how their input will be used.

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
2 Co-ordination	The timetable for the engagement process will be published and relevant relationships explained.	The timetable for the engagement process will include adequate periods for meetings, public events and discussions with stakeholders.	The timetable for the engagement process will include opportunities for engagement partners to develop their own ideas; partners will be involved in discussion on how to co-ordinate actions.
3 Information	Information will be relevant, accurate and comprehensible to the target audience.	Information will be communicated and shared, aiming to invite feedback.	Identification, collection and dissemination of relevant new information by partners is encouraged.
4 Appropriateness	Information will be presented to suit its intended audience and can be accessed by all stakeholders at each stage of the process	Engagement processes to fit the situation to be used, with opportunities for discussion and for questions to be raised and answered.	A collaborative approach to working with partners on proposals, and regular reviewing of the engagement process.
5 Responsiveness	Relevant information will be provided at every stage of the process.	Findings from the engagement process will be analysed, disseminated and potentially incorporated.	Partners will be offered the opportunity to present and discuss their own ideas and receive feedback.
6 Inclusiveness	Relevant representative groups/organisations will be identified and information will be designed and disseminated to reach them.	An emphasis will be placed on allowing the voices of seldom heard groups and those most likely to be affected to be heard.	Assistance and advice will be made available to seldom heard groups to enable them to become partners in the process; overall, a representative range of stakeholders will be involved.
7 Monitoring and Evaluating	Distribution of information and feedback received on the engagement process will be analysed after the process is completed.	Monitoring and evaluation of the engagement process will take place on an ongoing basis.	Monitoring and evaluation processes will be devised in collaboration with partners.
8 Learning and Sharing	Lessons from the engagement process will be identified and lead to ongoing improvements in quality.	Lessons from the engagement process will be reviewed and shared with a focus on learning and training.	The creation of a creative, problem-solving culture where skills and experience are shared and enhanced.

Engagement Techniques

Possible engagement techniques at each SP=EED™ engagement level is listed in the table below:

1 Informing	Leaflets and Traditional Media Social Media & Online Communication Public Exhibitions
2 Consulting	Stakeholder Workshops Focus Groups World Café (www.theworldcafe.com/method.html)
3 Partnership	Community Visioning Exercises/Charrettes (an intense series of design and planning workshops involving designing, drawing and testing possible solutions through a series of feedback loops and includes all affected stakeholders at critical decision-making points.)

Help and Resources Available

- SP=EED™ Verification: PAS SP=EED™ Verification is a two part programme which certifies an individual's competence in using the SP=EED™ approach to delivering engagement in planning.
<http://pas.org.uk/speed/>
- Planning Advice Note 3/20 10 Community Engagement
www.gov.scot/Publications/2010/08/30094454/0
- Make contact with Community Planning Partnerships (www.pkc.gov.uk/communityplanning), the Access Forum (www.pkc.gov.uk/article/2142/Access-Forum) and advisory organisations such as the Minority Communities Hub (<https://www.pkavs.org.uk/en/our-services/minority-communities-hub>) for guidance.

Householder Applications/ Minor Developments

Types of Developments

- *Smaller developments, household applications, minor industrial (commercial shop fronts, alterations to an industrial unit) or agricultural buildings, advertisement applications.*

Public Engagement

- *Although not statutory, to minimise objections to the proposed development applicants should keep the public informed. This involves providing balanced information to the public to assist understanding.*
- *General consultation with the neighbours outlining the proposal: where the development will take place and the detail around the development these should be in the form of plans, elevations, cross sections and materials used. This will give a good insight into the proposed development and how it will affect the surrounding environments.*
- *It is recommended that applicants should speak directly to any parties that will be affected by the proposal (neighbours, businesses, walkers etc). This should be done at the earliest opportunity to give them an idea of the proposal. It is also recommended that discussion should take place prior to submitting an application so they can visually see the proposal.*
- *Continue relationships with the effected parties and individuals keeping them informed of what is happening and any changes made as a result of the engagement.*
- *Respond to comments and ensure the community know who/where to contact if they have any enquires regarding the proposal.*
- *Liaison with community organisations and immediate neighbours ensuring plans are available on village noticeboards, Community Council, local websites or social media sites.*
- *Seek permission to display colourful notices in obvious places informing the wider community (bus stop, shops, community centres, village noticeboard) make sure the key information is highlighted such as timescale, closures, achievements and changes to schedules.*

Criteria of Engagement

- *SP=EED™ Level 2*

Local Developments

Types of Developments

- *Medium-scale developments that require planning permission but which are not considered to be national or major developments and some householder developments.*
- *Modifications of planning permission (if you have obtained consent subject to a legal agreement Section 75 but now wish to amend the terms of discharge it altogether), erection of dwellinghouse(s), Hydroelectric schemes, wind turbine(s), a material change in use of land or buildings, solar panel farm, developments which are presently residential but could be converted into business developments, contentious developments with a lot of public interest and opposition.*

Public Engagement

- *Depending on the type of development the approaches used, the time taken and the resources invested in consultation will be different, and should be in proportion to the size of the potential development. No matter how large or small, effective engagement will be beneficial.*
- *Although not statutory, to minimise opposition to the proposed development, applicants should keep the public informed. This involves providing balanced information to the public to assist understanding.*
- *Listen to any views expressed and respond to comments, giving feedback on the engagement and any changes made to plans.*
- *Good engagement allows key issues to be identified, reduce risk and potential delays post submission for the developers whilst enabling the community to help shape a scheme at the point when changes are more easily made.*
- *Communicate widely and explain why you are consulting, listen to concerns about the development and make sure everyone has the chance to engage in the consultation process.*
- *Notify local residents and groups of when the project will begin and of any proposals what would affect their surroundings (close access/roads/pathways or restricted access).*
- *Include hours of construction and the expected timescale the works will take.*
- *Continue relationships with the effected parties and individuals keeping them informed of what is happening and any changes made as a result of the engagement.*

Criteria of Engagement

- *SP=EED™ Level 2*

More detailed information to determine if an application is Householder applications or Local development can be found on the Perth & Kinross Council website: www.pkc.gov.uk/article/2630/What-needs-planning-permission. Further information is provided to ensure that the relevant information is submitted and to give more information on what is classed as Permitted Development and where Permitted Development is restricted.

Major/National Developments

Types of Developments

- *Schedule 1 Development (under Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) regulations 2011), Housing (development comprises 50 or more dwellings or site area is, or exceeds 2 hectares), Business and General Industry, Storage and Distribution (floor space of any building is, or exceeds 1,000m² or site area is or exceeds, 2 hectares).*
- *Electricity generation (if the capacity exceeds 20 Megawatts a PAN), waste management facilities, Transport and Infrastructure projects, fish farming, minerals (site area is, or exceeds, 2 hectares), other developments (floor space of any building is, or exceeds, 5,000m² or site area is, or exceeds, 2 hectares).*
- *National developments which are identified in the National Planning Framework.*

Public Engagement

- *Major developments require Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) to be carried out between the developer and the community. This will ensure that communities are made aware of and have an opportunity to comment on certain types of proposals before a planning application is submitted. A PAC is to help improve the quality of planning applications, mitigate negative impacts, where possible, and address misunderstandings.*
- *Minimum statutory pre-application consultation with the community includes sending details of the proposal to the Council and to local Community Councils and consulting the wider community using at least one locally advertised public event; events where members of the public may make comments to the prospective applicant. Doing more than the minimum is recommended to ensure good quality engagement.*
- *Certain applications for planning permission must be accompanied by a statement explaining the design principles and concepts that have been applied. A Design and Access Statement must accompany all 'national and major' category applications unless the proposed development is of a type listed within the prescribed exceptions (see Scottish Planning Series Circular 3: Development Management Procedures www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/12/9882/downloads for more information).*
- *Continue relationships with the effected parties and individuals keeping them informed of what is happening and any changes made as a result of the engagement.*

PAC Summary of key issues:

- *The willingness of members to 'allow' individuals and communities to contribute.*
- *The timing of public involvement and the recognition that early involvement is likely to be more productive.*
- *Ensure the community know who/where to contact if they have any questions regarding the proposal.*



Criteria of Engagement

- *Provide details of any aspects of the development that could change or what is fixed and what is up for debate. Giving the community a chance to contribute to details such as landscaping and materials.*
- *Include as much information about the consultations that have taken place in the form of a report detailing the consultation process along with the feedback from the event, what changes have been made to the proposals and how concerns were acted on. This should be shared with the community and the Council.*
- *SP=EED™ Level 2/3*

Section 46 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (c 8) (the 1997 Act) allows Scottish Ministers to direct that a particular planning application, or particular class of planning application, be referred to them for their decision. Ministers can direct that applications for outline planning permission, applications for detailed permission following the grant of outline planning permission and applications for full permission be referred to them. Scottish Ministers have a general power under Section 26A(3) of the Act to direct that a particular local development should be dealt with as if it were major development.

Consultation Checklist

This checklist is to help plan and record engagement on Planning Applications. It can be used for any scale of development and can be used as supporting evidence with your Planning Application.

Consultation/Project Name: _____

Lead Officer: _____

Target Start Date: _____

Background				
Background of the project				
Objectives				
	Yes	No	Information	Comments
Have project objectives been defined and are they clear?				

Scope				
	Yes	No	Information	Comments
Research the area and community and build up relationships with existing community groups			<p>Research who will be affected by your plans both positively and negatively including residents, organisations and businesses. Includes consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>who is affected;</i> • <i>who is interested;</i> • <i>who is important;</i> • <i>how representation across all target groups will be ensured;</i> • <i>Are there any other stakeholder groups that are difficult to access? (and, if so, how will the consultation process allow for their input/ feedback?).</i> <p>Identify which representative group/s the consultation is most relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Perth and Kinross Residents</i> • <i>Black and Minority Ethnic Communities</i> • <i>Selected Localities</i> • <i>Young People</i> • <i>Other group/s (please specify):</i> 	
Have possible barriers to participation been identified and mitigating action planned?			Inclusive engagement ensures that the decision taken reflect the wider community view, rather than the vociferous minority. Monitor the comments received from the consultation process, this will ensure you have a true representation of all different society.	

(continued)

(continued)

Method				
	Yes	No	Information	Comments
Have you identified the methods and tools you will be using?			<p>What approach will be easiest for the people you are consulting?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter to key organisations• Face-to-face meetings• Mail-out• Questionnaires• Public Meetings• Focus Groups• Online Survey• Expert Panel• Exhibitions• Charrettes <p>Will the engagement technique suit the capacity of the stakeholders involved? The information is accessible clear, understandable and relevant.</p>	
Have you chosen venues that are known and accessible to all members of the community?			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure venue is clearly signposted on the day.• Decide if catering is required.• Ensure that materials are appropriate and accessible	

Method (continued)

	Yes	No	Information	Comments
How will you encourage participation?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise your event well, ensuring the whole community know about it, including informing key groups and organisations in the community. Methods of publicity may include posters in key places in the community, letters to residents, flyers, letters to key community groups, email, text and website publicity. Take into account that not all residents may be English speakers. Plan events various different times and days to ensure maximum attendance, ie after school, evenings, weekends. Plan how you will record who was involved in your event and what their opinions were of the plans. 	
Consultation activity taken place?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the information articulate clearly the purposes, objectives and methods of the consultation process? Is the information written/published in a way that is easily understood? (Plain English) Have you considered providing the information in an alternative format? Video clip, sound bites, info-graphics, other languages etc. 	
Consultation activity taken place? (continued)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will you ensure the stakeholders have enough time to absorb the information and understand it before providing comment/input/feedback? Present information clearly to describe your proposals, highlighting areas of uncertainty Update information to take into account comments received by the community to date. 	

(continued)

Method (continued)				
	Yes	No	Information	Comments
Are there any practicalities which may impact on the consultation? eg weather, holidays, religious festivals, clashes with major community events in the area or major sporting events on TV etc.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You could consider asking to incorporate your consultation into an existing community event. 	
Results and Outcomes				
	Yes	No	Information	Comments
Have you identified how will you inform the participants and wider community of the results and subsequent outcomes?			<p><i>National Standard 9: Feedback - We will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.</i></p> <p>If you have taken contact details from attendees ensure you keep them and all other relevant local organisations informed throughout the process, telling them what changes have been made as a result of the engagement and letting them know the final decision on your plans.</p>	
Have you identified how you will use the results?				

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Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

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