

My ref: LVL2015  
Your ref:  
Date: 15 April 2015  
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**Economy, Transport & Environment**  
Executive Director, Graham Hughes

To applicants, agents, consultees and other parties involved in submitting, assessing or otherwise interested in planning applications made to and determined by Cambridgeshire County Council

Box SH1315  
Shire Hall  
Castle Hill  
Cambridge  
CB3 0AP

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Proposed 3rd revision of the Local Validation List for applications for planning permission**

Local planning authorities are required to review their existing local validation lists at least every two years. Local validation lists set out what information should be submitted in support of a planning application to enable the planning authority to validate and register it and consultees and other interested parties understand and assess the proposal.

Our original 2008 local validation list was comprehensively reviewed in 2010 and subject to minor updates in April 2012 to reflect the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework. It was reviewed again in 2013. We have recently reconsidered the list and the accompanying guidance documents and are proposing limited changes to them. We would like the views of all participants in the planning process; applicants and their agents, statutory consultees, parish councils and individual members of the public. The consultation period will run for 6 weeks from 15 April until 27 May 2015.

The documents on which we are seeking views are the Local Validation List dated June 2013, the accompanying document *Guidance for applicants and their agents on the Local Validation List* (June 2013) and other supporting documents which can be accessed via the County Council's website at:

[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20099/planning\\_and\\_development/234/planning/3](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20099/planning_and_development/234/planning/3)

The short report on the following pages sets out how we propose to change the Local Validation List and the supporting guidance documents. Comments on the proposed revisions should be sent to: County Planning, Minerals and Waste, Box No SH1315, Shire Hall, Cambridge, CB3 0AP or by e-mail to [planningdc@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningdc@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) by **27 May 2015**.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Wass".

Helen Wass  
Principal Planning Officer (Development Management)



## Report to accompany consultation on 3rd review of Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Validation List

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Since 6 April 2008 the validity of planning applications received by this authority (except those for mineral development) has been informed by the County Council's Local Validation List (LVL). The LVL sets out what information, over and above the national requirements, is necessary to accompany planning applications submitted to Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 1.2 The County Council supported the Government's proposal that local planning authorities (LPAs) review their existing local lists in accordance with the policy principles set out in a consultation paper and that where revision is necessary, the revised local list be published on the LPA's website by the end of December 2010. Our revised LVL was published in December 2010 and updated in April 2012 to reflect the changes to national planning policy arising from the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In response to a consultation in 2012 the County Council supported the Government's proposal that LVLs should be reviewed at least every two years.
- 1.3 A statutory instrument came into force on 31 January 2013 the effect of which is that for a LVL to carry any weight it must have been published within 2 years before the planning application is made. This applies to applications made on or after 31 July 2013. For this reason we reviewed our LVL in 2013. The requirement to review the LVL every 2 years has been carried forward in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 so we are undertaking a 3<sup>rd</sup> review.
- 1.4 The key purpose of stipulating what a planning application must comprise is to ensure that LPAs have up front the information that is essential for a sound, timely and robust decision. It also means that statutory consultees and other third parties who look at and comment on applications can see clearly for what permission is being sought, and what the impacts (both positive and negative) are likely to be.
- 1.5 The key issue is that the right information must be available, at an appropriate time, to support good decision-making. The NPPF suggests applicants discuss information requirements with the LPA and key consultees early on. The 2013 changes supported this approach: they removed nationally-imposed requirements that are not needed for every application, allowing space for local agreement on what is needed.

### 2.0 THE 2015 REVIEW

- 2.1 Where the LPA considers that changes to its LVL are necessary the proposals should be issued to the local community, including applicants and agents, for consultation.

- 2.2 The proposed changes to the LVL have been informed by:
- changes in Government guidance and planning policy, notably the introduction of the Planning Practice Guidance Suite;
  - the current development plan; and
  - the experience of officers in its use over the past two years including anecdotal feedback from applicants, agents and consultees.

The rationale is to strike a balance between securing the information that is needed to determine the application and making the LVL as concise and non-daunting for applicants as possible. In reality, most applications only need be supported by a few of the items on the LVL and this should be agreed with the planning case officer at the pre-application stage.

- 2.3 It is proposed to add the following items to the current LVL:

Surface water drainage strategy – Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states that *“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere ...”* Surface water drainage systems on all new development need to take this into account. In a Written Ministerial Statement (18 December 2014) the Secretary of State made it known that the Government expects *“local planning policies and decisions on planning applications relating to major development ..... to ensure that sustainable drainage systems for the management of run-off are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate”* and for *“avoidance of doubt this statement should be read in conjunction with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.”*

The NPPF states that a Flood Risk Assessment (which typically includes or makes reference to a surface water drainage strategy) should be provided for development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 or where the development site is greater than 1 ha in Flood Zone 1. The Ministerial Statement means that information on surface water drainage (the level of detail being relevant to the type of development and application) will also be needed for major development on sites that are less than 1 ha in Flood Zone 1 to enable decisions to be made on the suitability of the proposed drainage systems.

We are working with colleagues in the County Council’s Flood and Water Team to provide clear advice to developers.

Construction traffic management plan - This has frequently been requested by the highway engineer when there are concerns about the impacts of construction traffic and how it will be managed. This is an aspect of development that is often of interest to local residents as well. We currently secure the information after permission has been granted by means of a “pre-commencement” condition. However, it would reduce work for developers and the planning and highway authorities if in relevant cases it is provided at the planning application stage. Furthermore, a well thought out construction traffic management plan which shows consideration to the local community may result in fewer objections and a swifter passage through the planning process.

2.4 We are considering with technical consultees changes in the following areas:

Item 12: Transport assessment or statement

Lack of relevant transport information is a common reason for delay in determining planning applications. In order to appropriately assess the acceptability or otherwise of many applications that come to the County Council the transport officers require additional information. The information that is most often lacking relates to existing levels and type of vehicles generated by a site and levels and types of vehicles that would be generated by the proposed development.

The 2013 guidance notes attempted to set thresholds above which a transport assessment or statement is needed. Some transport statements are rather formulaic and contain a lot of generic information that has little relevance to the proposal whilst at the same time omitting that which is necessary. We are working with transport and highway colleagues to improve the information in the guidance note.

2.5 Comments are invited on the proposals set out above. We also invite you to suggest any other changes to the LVL and supporting documents that you would like us to consider. Comments should be submitted by **27 May 2015** to: County Planning, Minerals & Waste, Box No SH1315, Shire Hall, Cambridge, CB3 0AP or by e-mail to [planningdc@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningdc@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

2.6 It is proposed to report the results of the consultation exercise and a revised LVL to the Planning Committee for endorsement on 18 June 2015. The revised LVL will be published on the County Council's website before 30 June 2015.

County Planning, Minerals & Waste  
Growth & Economy  
Strategy & Development  
Economy, Transport & Environment  
Cambridgeshire County Council

14 April 2015