

Public Consultation & the Planning Framework for Communities

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Overview

- Ethical issues surrounding public consultation within the planning system. Why do we have it and what is it meant to achieve?
- What are the main opportunities for public consultation within our development plan and local area plan systems and what does our legal framework say about each
- What are the most effective formats for public consultation
- How is the public consultation for the LAP reviews being organised?
- Hints and tips for those intending to participate

Public Consultation & the Planning Framework for Communities

- Principles
- Procedures
- Public Consultation 'Toolbox'
- Manager's Reports
- The 2010/2011 Local Area Plan Reviews in Cork
- Conclusions

Principles

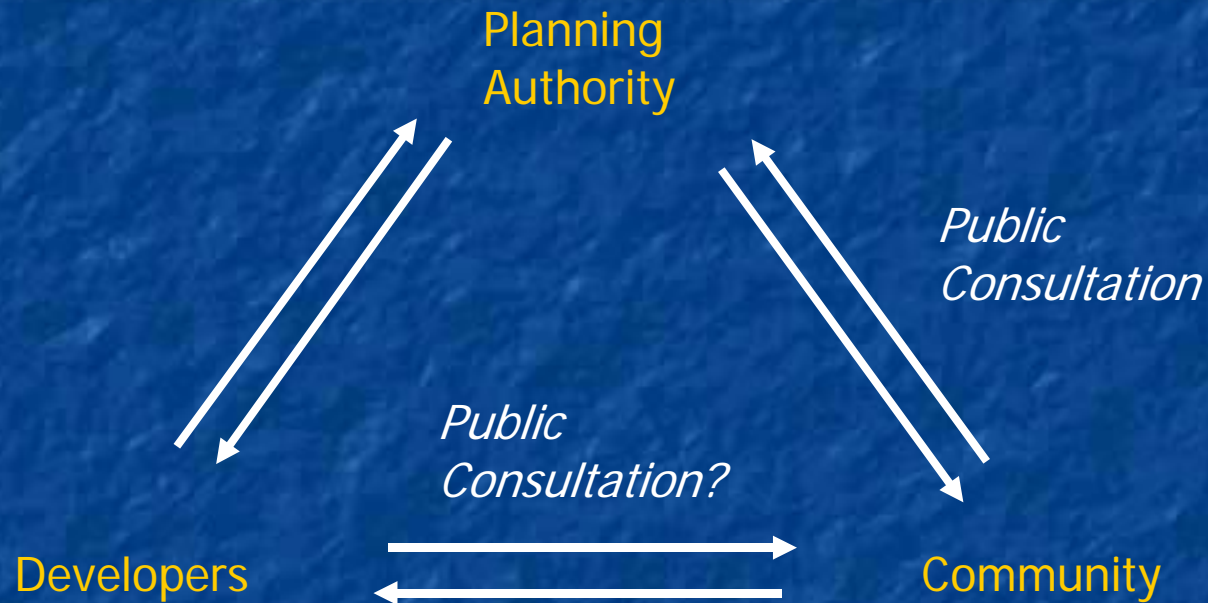
- Purpose of our planning system:

“To provide, **in the interests of the common good**, for proper planning and sustainable development including the provision of housing”

Principles

- Determining “the common good” in a democracy:
 - Expert professional and technical opinion
 - Democratically elected representatives
 - **Effective and meaningful public consultation**

Principles



Consensus & The Development Plan Process

Principles

- Planning and the 'common good'
- Building consensus
- Effective and meaningful public consultation is at the heart of the planning process in a democracy

Principles

Key benefits:

- Vehicle for new concepts and ideas
- Mitigation of adverse effects
- Greater consensus through more effective public consultation **delivers** stronger, longer-lasting and more effective plans

Development Plan Procedures

	Period for submission	Documents	Other Measures		
Preliminary Section 11	8 weeks	Background papers/draft proposals	Public Meetings (shall)	Oral submissions (may)	Other additional measures
Draft Plan Section 12 (2)	10 weeks	Draft Plan	None Specified		
Amendment Section 12 (7)	4 weeks	Amendment			

Local Area Plan Procedures

	Period for submission	Documents	Other Measures
Preliminary Section 20 (1)	None stated	None stated	"A planning authority shall take whatever steps it considers necessary to consult the public before preparing, amending or revoking a local area plan....."
Draft Plan Section 20 (3) (b) (ii)	6 weeks	Draft Plan	None specified
Amendment Section 12 (7)	4 weeks	Variation or Modification	

Procedures

- Development Plans Guidelines
 - Actively involve citizens in the whole process of making the plan
 - Especially those who may not normally engage in the process
 - Innovative methods
 - As wide a public consultation as possible
 - **Vital....**to build public and political consensus around the strategy of the new plan

Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

- Developing skills and methodologies for effective consultation at different stages in the plan process
 - Public Meetings
 - Workshops or Focus Groups
 - Role of the Internet

Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

- Public Meeting
 - Share information, exchange ideas, introduce new concepts.
 - Take-away material
 - Attendance can be open to anyone or limited to a particular community.
 - More formal format can risk confrontation and may discourage participation
 - Less formal format (can avoid confrontation and allow a more detailed exchange of views.

Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

Formal Public Meetings



Informal Public Meetings



Confrontation
Or
Consensus



Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

■ Workshops or Focus Groups

- In-depth exploration (led by a 'facilitator' with a 'recorder') of people's views, motives, desires, aspirations, ambitions, values and behavior.
- Group of 10-12 people based on each topic or theme
- Useful for acquiring large tranches of open-ended information.
- Often used to clarify and identify issues prior to implementation.
- Help to increase understanding of people's motives and behavior
- Help with prioritisation
- Limit on the number that can participate
- Specialised staff skills
- Format suits consultation with organised stakeholder groups rather than individuals
- Issues raised can be recorded and published

Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

Workshop or Focus Groups



Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

- E-Consultation
 - Main role is for the dissemination of high quality maps & documents
 - Interactive potential to achieve the same results as traditional consultation techniques
 - Less resources and time spent by both staff and the public
 - Printing costs and mail costs all reduced.
 - Some additional set costs but then, administering the consultation is cut down to a minimum
 - Software collates the results.
 - Internet based surveys bias towards middle and upper social groups
 - Mobile phone based methodology can reach younger age groups successfully
 - Disappointing results from some Development Plan internet consultations

Public Consultation 'Toolbox'

- General Points to Help Consultation
 - Use coherent, well-structured, jargon-free language
 - User friendly documents with a comprehensive index and include brief details of the topics covered in the contents section
 - Visually attractive, well illustrated, layout
 - Send a copy to stakeholder groups or individuals
 - Prepare summary and explanatory leaflets/posters at each stage for distribution at public counters, consultation events or more widely
 - Encourage intending developers to engage in their own consultation with communities

Manager's Reports

■ Principles

- The outcome of public consultation is put before the decision maker
- Everything relevant must be included
- The public expect to see what happened to the points that they raised
- Complex statutory background
- Short time-frames for preparation
- Must include clear responses or recommendations

Manager's Reports

- Statutory Obligations
 - List the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations
 - List the bodies consulted by the authority (section 11 only)
 - Summarise the issues raised in the submissions and during the consultations (section 11 only)
 - Give the opinion ('response' section 12) of the manager to the issues raised, taking account of
 - Any direction given by the members under section 11
 - The proper planning and sustainable development of the area
 - The statutory obligations of any local authority in the area
 - Any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government
 - State the manager's recommendations on the policies to be included in the draft development plan (section 11)

Manager's Reports

■ Issues for Practitioners

- Summarising the issues raised with consistency requires significant skill and effort by staff
- The administration of this part of the process can be complex and can sometimes dominate the proper assessment and consideration of the 'planning' issues
- Summarising the issues can often take so long that there is little time to properly develop the 'opinion', 'response' or recommendation of the Manager
- The report needs to be laid out so that a person who made a submission can find:
 - the issues that the authority consider that they raised
 - The managers 'opinion', 'response' and/or 'recommendation' in respect of those issues
- Best practice suggests that these reports should be in the public arena so that those who made submissions can review they way the authority has assessed and reported the issues raised by their submission.

Local Area Plans and the National Planning Policy Framework



Local Area Plan Procedures

	Period for submission	Documents	Other Measures
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LAP Reviews 2010/2011

- Outline Strategies
 - Form & Content
- Introduction to Forward Planning
 - National & Regional framework
 - Approach in Cork
 - County Development Plan 2009
- Local Area Plans
 - Process

Outline Strategies

- The basis for preliminary public consultation (prior to the preparation of the new draft local area plans)
- Position statements
 - Development needed
 - Zoned land already identified
 - Infrastructure progress
 - Environmental Issues
 - Strategic Diagrams
- Issues to be addressed in the Draft Local Area Plan

Local Area Plans Review

Key Government Planning Policies:

- National Spatial Strategy
- Regional Planning Guidelines
- Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas- Guidelines for Planning Authorities DoEHLG (May 09)
- Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines DoEHLG (2005)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Consultation Draft Guidelines DoEHLG (2008)

Local Area Plan Review

County Development Plan 2009

- Strategic Document
- Goals and Objectives for Sub-Areas
- Target Populations for Towns and EA's – based on Government targets for the Regions (2007 and 2009)
- Revised Local Need Criteria
- Scenic Route (definition and guidance)
- Part V Housing – 50/50 Social/Affordable
- Detailed planning in 10 Electoral Area based Local Area Plans

Local Area Plans Review Process

Key County Council Planning Policies:

- North and West Cork Strategic Plan (NWSP) 2002-2020. (CCC 2002)
- Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) 2001-2020
- CASP Update 2008
- Cork Joint Housing Strategy 2008
- Cork County Housing Land Availability Study 2008 (CCC)
- Cork County Business Land Availability Study 2009 (CCC)
- Cork Joint Strategic Retail Study 2008 (CCC)

Local Area Plans Review Process

Electoral Area Local Area Plans Programme for Review 2009- 2010		
	Activity	Meeting/Latest Statutory Date
April – August 2009	Survey/Data Collection Establish Divisional Steering Groups Identification of Issues/Opportunities Preparation of Draft Outline Strategy Report Liaison with Divisional Steering Groups	
September 2009	Draft Outline Strategy Reports to PPG	8/9 th , 22 nd /24 th September
October 2009	Presentation of Draft Outline Strategy Report to Special Electoral Area Committee's	Initial meeting: 29 th September & 6/7/8 th October Second meeting: 20/21/22/23 Oct.
November - December 2009	Finalisation of draft Outline Strategy Reports Preparation of Reports for Publication Preparation of material for Public Exhibitions	
January – February 2010	Launch Outline Strategy Reports and public consultation period Public Exhibitions in 29 Main Towns Complete public consultation	Press Notice: 4 th Jan 2010 First Exhibition: 12 Jan 2010 Final Exhibition: 18 th Feb 2010 Public Consultation Ends: Monday 1 st March 2010

Local Area Plans Review Process

Electoral Area Local Area Plans Programme for Review - 2010

	Activity	Meeting/Latest Statutory Date
March – April 2010	Prepare informal report on submissions received Liaison with Divisional Steering Groups	
May – July 2010	Present report on Submissions Received to Development Committee Prepare draft LAP's	21 st May 2010
August 2010	Draft LAP's to PPG	Suggested dates: 3 rd , 10 th & 12 th August 2010
September 2010	Presentation of Draft Local Area Plans to Electoral Area Committee's	Special Electoral Area Committee's: 6 th – 10 th & 20 th – 24 th September 2010
October 2010	Finalisation of draft Local Area Plans by Development Committee/Council Preparation of Public Consultation Draft Plans & exhibition material	Special Development Committee w/c 4th October 2010 Council: 11 th October 2010
November - December 2010	Commence Formal Public Consultation (in advance of formal s20 notice) Publication of s20 Notice Exhibitions in 29 main Towns	Commence public Exhibition of draft plans: Tues. 9 th November 2010 Issue formal s20 notice: 22 nd November 2010

Local Area Plans Review Process

Electoral Area Local Area Plans Programme for Review 2011		
	Activity	Meeting/Latest Statutory Date
January 2011	Completion of Formal Public Consultation (6 weeks allowed from s 20 notice)	3 January 2011
February 2011	Issue of Manager's Reports (12 weeks allowed from s 20 notice)	14 February 2011
March 2011	Decision to Amend plans/default provisions apply (6weeks allowed from Issue of Managers reports)	28 March 2011 (Scheduled Council meeting 28 th March)
April 2011	Publication of Amendments (3 weeks allowed from decision to amend) Commence Formal Public Consultation on amendments	18 th April 2011
May 2011	Completion of Formal Public Consultation on amendments (4weeks allowed from publication of amendments)	16 th May 2011
June 2011	Issue of manager's Report (8 weeks allowed from publication of amendments)	13 June 2011
July 2011	Make LAP's or default provisions apply (4 weeks allowed from issue of Manager's reports)	25 July 2011 (Scheduled Council meeting 25 th July)

Local Area Plans Review

Planning & Development Acts:

Elected Members of the Council are restricted to considering only the following matters:

- The proper planning and sustainable development of the area;
- The statutory obligations of any local authority in the area; and
- Any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government.

Public Consultation & the Planning Framework for Communities

- Conclusions
 - **Better** consultation means **better** plans
 - Don't be **afraid** of consultation
 - People only get **cross** when they feel that the communication is only one-way
 - **Engagement** between public and officials, **explain** the strategy underpinning the plan and **listen** to and **learn** from what they have to say
 - Make sure that the reports show the submissions, and the **issues** raised, were treated with **respect**
 - Be well **prepared** and give as much **information** as possible
 - Encourage staff to develop skills in
 - Speaking in public
 - Leading or facilitating group discussions

Public Consultation & Development Plans

Thank you

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