Committee:	Planning	Agenda Item

Agenda Item 6

Date:	**25 July 2012**
Title:	**Development Management Local Validation Checklist**
Report Author:	**Ann Howells, Support and Advice Manager**

Summary

1. As part of the process of validating applications the Council has the ability to set local validation requirements. These are in addition to the national validation requirements which are set by government. The council needs to balance the need for information with the demands on the applicant.

Recommendations

2. That the amended Development Management Local Validation Checklists and association document be adopted for Development Management validation purposes.

Financial Implications

3. None. The documents will be electronically distributed via the website.

Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

   Validation of Planning application Checklists
   Consultation responses

Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	Six week public consultation
Community Safety	No issues
Equalities	Affects everyone the same
Health and Safety	No issues
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Affects everyone the same

Sustainability	No issues
Ward-specific impacts	All wards
Workforce/Workplace	Planning and Building Control Support Team

Situation

6. The Government changed the way in which planning applications are submitted, from 6 May 2008, the National Standard Planning Application Form became the only official method of submitting a planning application for planning consent for all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in England.

7. The standard form is intended to make the process of submitting a planning application less confusing for applicants, as it will to a great extent replace the variety of planning application forms currently produced by LPAs which differ in the questions asked, the style, the layout and the number of copies required.

8. Legislation put into place on 6 April 2008 to adopt the national forms and make it mandatory from 6 May 2008 for applications to be made only on the 1APP forms and to include all of the information and documents specified on the form (the national requirements) together with the additional information and documents specified by the Local Planning Authority to whom the application is made (the local requirements).

Local Validation Checklists

9. With internal and external consultation I have worked at producing a comprehensive set of Validation Checklists and Advice Note.

10. The Advice Note explains the procedure that the Council uses for deciding whether applications made under the Town and Country Planning Acts are valid when received. It also includes checklists designed to help applicants submit the correct information with their applications.

11. The note seeks to:

- assist applicants in ensuring that applications are valid when submitted,
- explain the various Validation Checklists that should be used when completing an application,
- ensure that all applications can be dealt with effectively and efficiently,
- respond positively to the Best Practice Advice issued by Government; and
- ensure that the Council can comply with changes in legislation.

12. This note therefore explains what information will be required for certain types of applications. For example if submitting an application for a new housing development the applicant will need to consider whether an Affordable

Housing Statement should be submitted. This advice note does not however tell you how much affordable housing the scheme should include. Advice on the amount of affordable housing can be found in the Council's policy documents and other advice notes.

13. The applicant will need to complete the relevant Validation Checklist and submit it as part of the supporting documentation. There is one checklist for each type of planning application. These correspond with the national planning application forms. If the information required by the Validation Checklist is not submitted with the application then the application will not be valid and will not be progressed to a decision.

Consultation responses

14. A total of 10 responses were received from the following organisations/people:

Great Canfield Parish
Saffron Walden Town Council
Hibbs & Walsh – Agent
Sworders - Agent
Environment Agency
Natural England
Thames Water
The Victorian Society
2 internal UDC responses

15. These raised a number of issues regarding the text of the document and the levels of information required. All were supportive of our approach and the principle of improving the quality of planning applications. The Validation Guidelines have been altered to meet some of the specific comments.

16. Letters to each responder were sent thanking them for their time and input.

Conclusion

17. The District Council has consulted on the validation checklists. Once formally adopted and published on the web site this will complement the national validation checklists and the new national application forms. The attached advice note sets out the District Council approach to this new requirement

Risk Analysis

6. Little or no risk

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the validation requirements are excessive.	1	A reduction in the number of applications submitted.	Monitor the rate of applications and regularly review the checklists.

		Appeals to the Planning Inspectorate on an invalid application.	Monitor any appeals on this ground and regularly review the checklists.

1 = Little or no risk or impact
2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.