

VILLAGE / NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN STATEMENTS

- THEIR PURPOSE AND A CONTENT CHECKLIST -

Village Design Statements (VDS) are promoted by the government's Countryside Agency and supported by Leeds City Council, as a means of promoting good design, appropriate to its local context. They may also be applied to Parish Plans and in neighbourhoods within the city's urban boundary. Developed by local communities in conjunction with the City Council, a range of skills are needed in their preparation, including leadership, public consultation, report writing, visual analysis, photography, plan drawing / sketching, editing and desk top publishing. The process leading to their adoption is illustrated overleaf.

The six key aims of a Village or Neighbourhood Design Statement are:

- To enable communities to analyse and define the value of their local environment
- To act as a tool for assessing the local character of an area
- To assist the City Council in steering future development to respond to and respect that character
- To guide smaller changes ("permitted development")
- To prompt the scope for local environmental improvements and support community initiatives
- To become adopted and used by the Council as a material consideration in planning matters

A comprehensive VDS will have something to say about each of the following elements. The figures in brackets give the recommended relative weighting to be given to each topic; these may vary according to the local context.

SETTLEMENT (5%)

- Settlement evolution and historic maps
- Location and boundary definition plans
- Political and administrative boundaries
- Land and building uses
- Population and its age distribution

CHARACTER (20%)

- Open Spaces - significant public / private paved / grass areas; mapped
- Topography
- Mapping of character areas

BUILT FORM (20%)

- Age, type, scale
- Wall materials + features – stone, brick, render
- Windows – type, materials, colour
- Front doors and porches
- Roofs types, materials, chimneys
- Relationship to the street
- Front gardens, open / enclosed
- Garden sizes and character
- Boundaries – walls (brick / stone), fences, railings, gates, piers, posts
- Key recommendations

HIGHWAY (5%)

- Visual character of local roads
- Footway type, kerb and surfacing materials, grass verges, hedgerows, walls etc
- Street furniture - post boxes, lamp columns, seats, litter bins, bus shelters, railings, signs

VIEWS & MOVEMENT (20%)

- Landmarks and important views -church spires, bridges, viaducts, hill tops, landmark trees, important buildings or street scenes
- Poor views and eyesores
- Links – footpaths, ginnels, bridleways, roads
- Public transport links
- Social places - shops schools places of worship café / restaurant pubs village hall
- Safe routes to school

HABITATS (10%)

- Public greenspace, common land
- Gardens types
- Meadows
- Watercourses and ponds
- Woodland
- Scrub / disused land
- Field hedges & walls

COUNTRYSIDE (20%)

- Farm type & general character
- Field sizes and crop
- Woodlands - type age species use
- Farm gates and stiles - particular types
- Footpaths bridleways - formal public rights of way and "use by custom," desirable improvements

Where a VDS becomes adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, it should focus on matters which are within the proper scope of planning considerations. It should be supplementary to and consistent with adopted UDP policies and the emerging Local Development Framework, and assist in their local interpretation. See the Countryside Agency's guidance and the City Council's planning webpages, www.countryside.gov.uk

www.leeds.gov.uk/planning

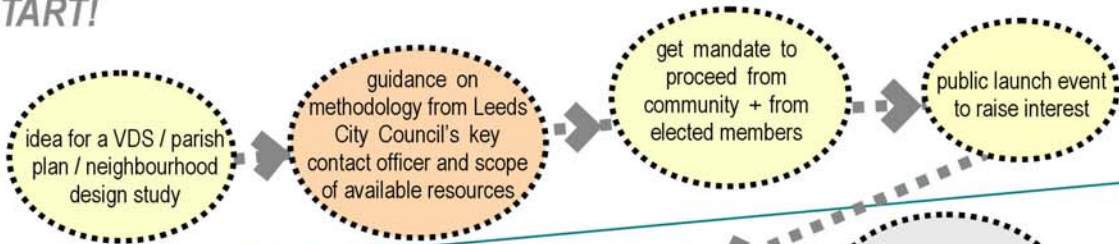
stages in the preparation of a village/neighbourhood design statement

idea - mandate - survey / analysis - consult community - formulate - consult LCC - external consult¹⁾ - review - adopt

allow 24-36 months

START!

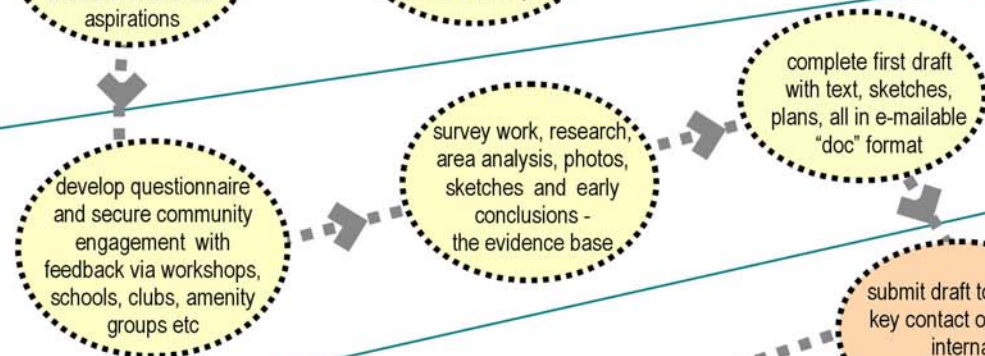
initiate



build team



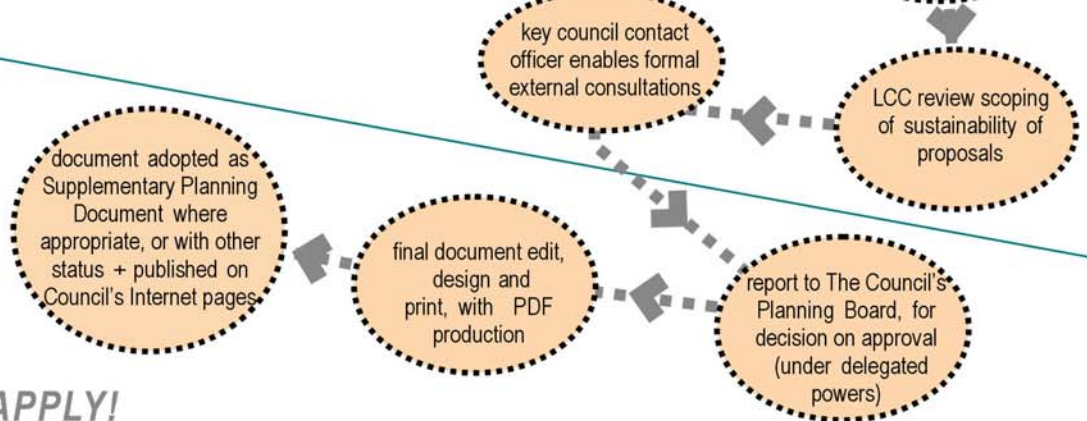
survey + draft



consult + agree



complete + endorse



APPLY!