



Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Report of Councillor Phil Dilks, Cabinet Member for Planning

Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Statement of Consultation

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 requires local planning authorities to take into account any representation made to them in response to consultations undertaken in accordance with Regulation 18. The Statement of Consultation documents the February - April 2024 consultation on the Draft Local Plan and reports on the comments received.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1. Note the feedback responses; and;**
- 2. Consider approving the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Statement of Consultation for publication.**

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, which is for noting.

Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance (Deputy s151)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no additional legal or governance comments that are not already reflected in the body of the report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.3 Reporting on comments received through Local Plan consultations is a regulatory requirement. The Statement of Consultation documents and considers the consultation comments received through the 2024 Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan consultation, setting out how the comments will be taken into account as the Local Plan evolves.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance and Risk Officer

Climate Change

- 1.4 The production of a Statement of Consultation has no identified impact on climate change as it is a timetable for development plan production. The Local Plan and planning system is a mechanism to support delivery on the climate change agenda and the Council's commitment to reduce the organisations' carbon footprint as well as to work towards a net zero carbon district. The emerging Local Plan will introduce new climate change policy evidenced by a Climate Change Study; and will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 South Kesteven District Council's vision, as set out in the 2024 – 2027 Corporate Plan is to be: "A thriving District to live in, work and visit". The Council is undertaking a review of its adopted Local Plan (2011-2036). The new plan, once adopted, will update and replace the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan (2011-2036).
- 2.2 The Local Plan and Planning Service have a key role to play in realising this vision by recognising that every locality has different constraints and opportunities. The Council is committed to ensuring that the planning service does everything that it can to support our communities and to sustainable growth. This will be achieved by working proactively with our communities to ensure that development meets the needs of our business and local economy as well as recognising the importance of housing and growth to meet the needs of our residents.

Statement of Consultation

- 2.3 This consultation statement sets out how the council has carried out meaningful and proactive engagement with local residents, community groups, landowners, businesses, and organisations in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the relevant statutory requirements, as part of the Local Plan review.
- 2.4 Specifically, this consultation statement outlines the consultation and engagement activities that were undertaken for a Regulation 18 Local Plan stage, which culminated in an eight-week public consultation between 29th February 2024 – 25th April 2024. This involved consultation on the following:
 - Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan
 - Interim Sustainability Appraisal
 - Habitats Regulation Assessment
 - Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Call for Sites
 - Policy Priority Survey
- 2.5 The purpose of this statement is to provide a summary of the Council's consultation process and feedback for the production of the Local Plan Review. The statement sets out the following information:
 - How we consulted
 - Who we consulted
 - A summary of the main findings
 - Conclusion and the next stages of the Local Plan Review.
- 2.6 The preparation of a new Local Plan must comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations"). Regulation 18 of the Town and Country

Planning regulations outlines the first steps that must be undertaken in preparing a Local Plan. This includes who needs to be notified, and how a local authority should consider feedback from engagement activities when preparing a draft Local Plan for submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

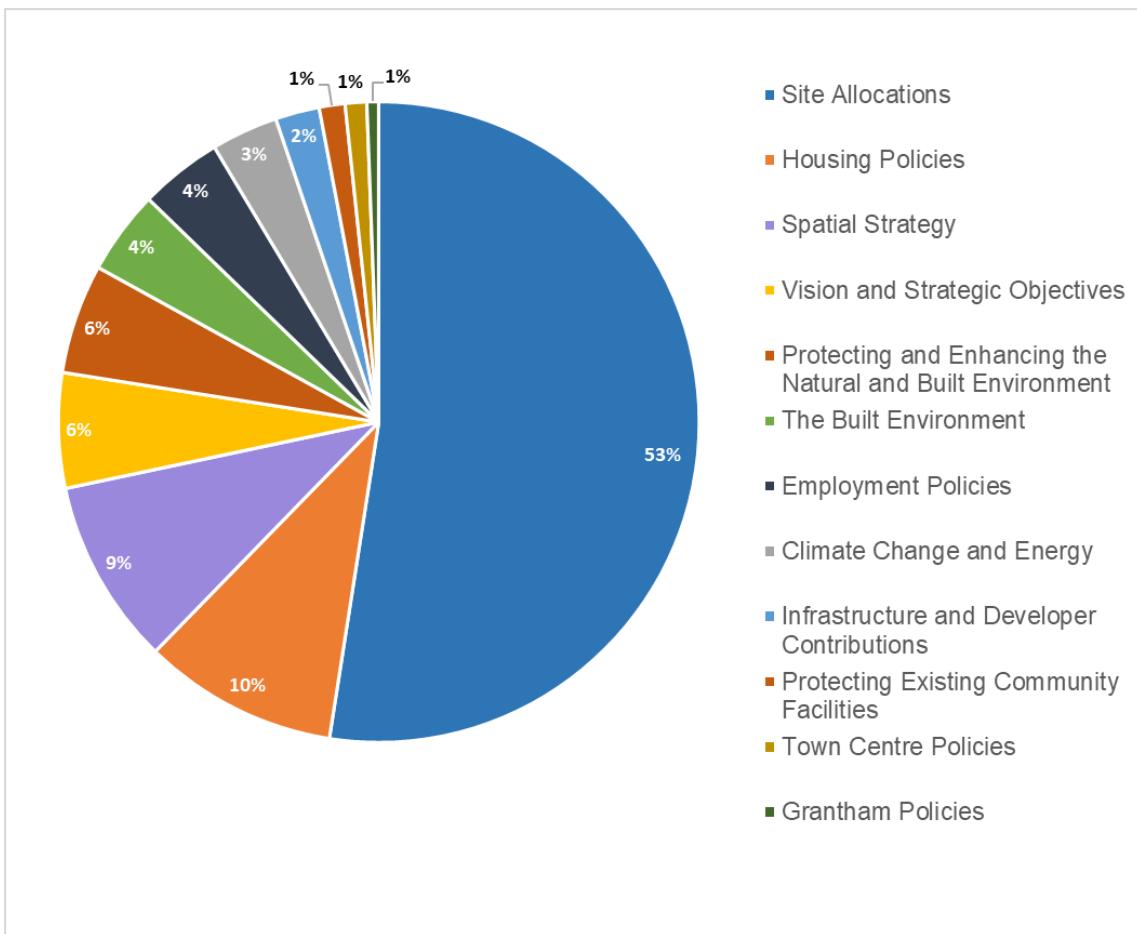
- 2.7 The consultation and engagement activities for this stage of the Local Plan review were undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Consultation (SCI) (October 2021) and Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.8 As required by the NPPF (paragraphs 15-16) this consultation statement demonstrates how the Council conducted early, proportionate and effective engagement between communities, organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators, statutory consultees when developing the new Local Plan.

Who we consulted

- 2.9 The Council has an established consultation database of individuals, landowners, developers, agents, stakeholders, and others who have indicated they wish to be notified of updates and consultations in respect of the Local Plan. Over 1,800 notification emails and letters containing information on the consultations and other informative information (see Appendix A) were distributed to all contacts on the Council's Local Plan Consultation Database. This included notification with:
 - Statutory consultees;
 - Neighbouring Local Authorities (see Appendix B);
 - Residents;
 - Landowners;
 - Developers;
 - Agents;
 - Infrastructure providers;
 - Community Groups;
 - Organisations;
 - Parish and Town Councils; and
 - District and County Councillors.

Responses Received

- 2.10 The Council received 2,439 individual comments from 794 respondents. Three petitions were also received.
- 2.11 The figure below sets out an overview of responses received in regard to each policy within the Draft Local Plan.



Main themes raised in representations

2.12 The main themes raised through the consultation were:

- Significant number of objections to proposed residential allocations. Concerns particularly regarding infrastructure capacity, lack of facilities, loss of green/open space, loss of habitats, traffic impacts and surface water/flood risks.
- Concerns that the Plan is reliant on Grantham delivering over half of the housing requirement on large strategic sites.
- Support for the overall settlement hierarchy and distribution for growth. However, comments on the settlement hierarchy also raised objection to growth being limited in smaller villages.
- Objections Identifying Claypole as a larger village and Hough on the Hill retaining its status as a smaller village.
- Support for the inclusion of a climate change chapter and the Council's ambitions to national net-zero targets.
- Concerns that the affordable housing percentage requirement is such a large range.
- General support for the new policy on Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains.

- Concerns that The Deepings will have a lack of open space.
- Concerns over the employment growth forecast scenario that has been used to determine employment need within the Plan review.
- Concerns about the lack of employment within Stamford.
- That Brownfield should be developed before greenfield.
- The Plan period is not considered to be long enough for the next stages, and it should be rolled forward to ensure that the plan period provides a minimum of 15 years at adoption.
- Objections to the requirement of community support on edge of settlement schemes, as well as ambiguity over the definition on 'edge of settlement' and 'community support'.

2.13 All comments are being considered as the Local Plan Review evolves and any changes will be reflected in the next iteration of the Local Plan.

2.14 The Council is continuing with the Local Plan Review. A new timetable is included in a revised Local Development Scheme (February 2025), which will set out the next stages of consultation.

2.15 The key areas of work which will be undertaken between now and a Pre-Submission Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation include:

- Understanding implications from the most recent revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
- Undertake an additional Regulation 18 consultation focussing on additional preferred site allocations to meet the district's increased housing need.
- Completion of outstanding evidence base work
- Understanding and completing any actions arising from the response to Regulation 18 consultation comments.
- Consider new site submissions through the Site Assessment Methodology and Sustainability Appraisal process.
- Consider any changes to the Plan through the Sustainability Appraisal and take into account the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal before determining the Local Plan publication.
- Continue working with duty to cooperate partners and where appropriate agreeing Statements of Common Ground.

2.16 The public will have further opportunities to make representations on the Local Plan as the review of the Local Plan progresses.

Next Steps

2.17 The next steps are:

- Publish the Statement of Consultation
- Understand and complete any actions arising from the response to the Regulation 18 consultation comments.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. The Council has a duty under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to take into account any comments received through the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation. The Statement of Consultation reports on the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, taking into account comments received. Publication of the Statement also ensures that the Local Plan process is transparent.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 The alternative of not publishing a Statement of Consultation has been discounted. Failing to publish a Statement of Consultation would contravene the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 The reason for the recommendation is to ensure the Council is complying with its statutory duty to consider and report on consultation comments received through the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan consultation. Publication of the Statement also ensures that the Local Plan process is transparent.

6. Consultation

6.1 The Statement of Consultation reports on the consultation undertaken on the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan which was held for six weeks in April – May 2024 in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2021).

7. Background Papers

7.1 List any background papers and where they can be accessed:

- Local Development Scheme (June 2024)
https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Local_Development_Scheme_2023-2026.pdf
- Statement of Community Involvement 2021
https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Final_SCI_2021.pdf
- National Planning Policy Framework

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A: Statement of Consultation (February 2025)
- 8.2 Appendix B: Appendix E of the Statement of Consultation: Summary of Responses and Officer Response