



SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL Statement of Community Involvement

Consultation Summary Report

August 2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This report provides a summary of the comments received in relation to South Kesteven's Statement of Community Involvement update for 2026.
- 1.2** The Statement of Community involvement (SCI) has been updated to ensure the Council's approach to consultation is robust. This Review also incorporates updates required following the withdrawal of the Coronavirus Act 2020 guidance on 20th October 2023 and the amendments required to reflect the new plan-making system.
- 1.3** A 6-week public consultation on the draft revised SCI was undertaken between the 13th of March 2026 and the 24th April 2026.
- 1.4** The SCI document was available for comment, and this presented an opportunity for respondents to comment on any areas of the SCI that required review above and beyond the proposed changes.
- 1.5** The draft SCI was available to view on the Council's website. Paper copies of the consultation document and response form were also available upon request.
- 1.6** A notification email and subsequent letters were sent to individuals, organisations, and statutory consultees on the Planning Policy consultation database to publicise the consultation. The Council also published news and information on the consultation on their website and on social media.
- 1.7** Representations were encouraged to be submitted electronically or posted using the provided response form available on the Council's website. However, representations by email and letter were also accepted.

2. SCI Comments Summary

- 2.1** The council received 13 comments from various parties, including both statutory and non-statutory consultees.
- 2.2** The draft SCI has been refined, taking into account the comments made during the consultation and through the relevant statutory and legal changes. The key findings from the consultation comments have been presented in Table 1 which presents a summary of comments received and if any action was required in response to the consultation. The consultation statement also outlines the key headline changes made to the document as part of the update process which can be found in Table 2.

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Table 1 – Summary of Comments Received

Consultee	Summary	Response / Action
Statutory Consultees		
Natural England	Supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general community, community organisations and statutory bodies in local planning matters	Comments noted - No action required
Historic England	Support the general aims and approach to the draft Statement of Community Involvement.	Comments noted - No action required
Canal and River Trust	As a statutory consultee, we note that Appendix 1: Consultation Bodies includes Specific Consultation bodies, and the Trust would be an 'other relevant statutory body defined in the regulations.' We have defined areas next to our network in which we should be notified of any planning applications likely to affect our waterways, and our Planning Buffer can be found on our open data page - https://data-canalrivertrust.opendata.arcgis.com/ (updated 29/9/2025). We also have a responsibility to assist when asked in the preparation of planning policy documents under The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026. Please ensure your teams are using the most up to date version of our open data to assist in identifying us as a relevant statutory consultee. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries you may have.	Comments noted - No action required

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National Highways	Are content that National Highways will continue to be consulted as a statutory body as National Highways has been appointed as the highway authority for the SRN, by the Secretary of State	Comments noted - No action required
Lincolnshire County Council	Lincolnshire County Council have no specific comments to make in respect of the SCI	Comments noted - No action required
Anglian Water	Section 11.5 and Appendix 1 - Anglian Water welcomes the inclusion of utility providers identified as being specific consultation bodies in the preparation of DPDs and SPDs. In addition, Anglian Water is committed to working with South Kesteven District Council to deliver the Lincolnshire reservoir project and requests continuing engagement in developing plans and policies for the district	Comments noted - No action required
Environment Agency	The Environment Agency acknowledges being correctly identified as a statutory consultee. Environment Agency now advise that parts of the SCI are now out of date due to the new 2026 Local Planning Regulations which came into force on the 25 th March 2026 including with regards to Supplementary Planning Documents. Through the new regulations it is made clear that SPDs are to be replaced with Supplementary Plans.	We acknowledge the comments made by Environment Agency however this SCI has been updated to reflect the new plan-making system, which came into force on 25 th March 2026 during the consultation period. References to Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) have been amended to reflect the introduction of Supplementary Plans (SPs) under the new planning framework.
Parish Councils		
Harlaxton Parish Council	Harlaxton Parish Council objects to the draft SCI because it does not require direct email notification to Parish and Town Councils when planning applications are amended with later changes to planning applications within their parish.	SKDC would like to advice that the draft SCI reflects the legal duty set out within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended).

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	Parish and Town Councils must be specifically notified by email of all amendments such as revised drawings, additional technical information, Section 73 applications and non-material amendment applications and any other changes affecting planning applications within their parish. The draft SCI states that Parish and Town Councils are notified of relevant applications within their area by email, but it does not provide an equivalent firm commitment in relation to later amendments or related changes. Where an application is amended after first submission, the Parish Council should receive a direct email notification in the same manner as for the original application, identifying the nature of the amendment and providing a fresh consultation period where the change is material. Including revised plans, additional reports, section 73 applications, non-material amendment applications, amended access arrangements, drainage changes, and any other alteration capable of affecting planning judgment, local amenity, or the concerns previously raised by the Parish Council. Parish Councils are statutory consultees for planning applications affecting their area and perform an important democratic role in representing their communities. Effective consultation requires direct, reliable, and timely notification. The burden must not be shifted onto Parish Councils to identify amendments indirectly through weekly lists or by repeatedly checking the Council's website in case a	Any further consultation beyond the requirements of the DMPO is at the Local Planning Authority's discretion. The amendment requested by the Parish Council is not sufficiently precise. The Local Planning Authority are not required to accept amendments during the course of a live planning application. However, where additional/amended details are invited, Officer's exercise reasonable professional judgement in deciding whether to undertake further consultation, and the length of time for such consultation, dependent on the nature of amendments or additional information received, which will vary on a case-by-case basis. Where further consultation is required, Parish Councils are notified directly, and the notification does include details of the amendments made or additional information received.
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	significant change has been introduced. The SCI should therefore be amended to include an express requirement that Parish and Town Councils receive direct notification of all amendments and related applications within their parish, together with a clear and proportionate re consultation period where those changes are material. Leaving specific notification of amendments to officer discretion is procedurally weak, unfair, and inconsistent with meaningful community engagement. Direct notice of amendments should be required as a matter of rule, not left to discretion. Accordingly, the procedure should be amended in the following terms: "All Parish and Town Councils shall be notified electronically by email of relevant planning applications within their area, and shall also be specifically notified electronically by email of any amendments, revised plans, additional information, section 73 applications, non-material amendment applications, or other alterations relating to those applications. Where such changes are material, a further consultation period shall be provided	
Other Comments (General public)		
Cllr Paul Martin	Parish/Town councils and ward members should be given a pre-app notice of the basic principles of the enquiry. This allows a fair amount of time to discuss the application and prepare for the main application. Three weeks is not enough and creates an unfair advantage, especially to speculative applications, for developers to exploit the communities rushed and potentially lacking response given this short time frames.	SKDC would like to advice that there is no legal duty to undertake a pre-application enquiry in advance of the formal submission of a planning application. Similarly, there is no guarantee that a formal planning application will be submitted following a pre-application enquiry. Furthermore, there is no obligation for an application to reflect a scheme submitted for pre-application advice, or for an Applicant to follow any advice provided at pre-application stage. Therefore,

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		notification of a pre-application enquiry may not assist interested parties in preparing comments for a future application. Customers who engage with the Council's Pre-Application service do so on the basis that the information is confidential. Therefore, publication of this information would undermine this expectation and the engagement with the pre-application service. Please note that the 21-day consultation period reflects the legal requirements for planning applications.
Cllr Kyle Abel	I think members of SK would appreciate the council reaching out to them on planning applications directly affecting the area they live. Rather than wait for someone to find out for themselves as often this info is not easily known or found. All residents who pay council tax have at least one email address tied to their accounts, just uses these. Under GDPR it wouldn't be seen as marketing, it would be classed as public information.	SKDC would like to advise that Ward Members are notified directly via email of applications within their Ward.
Lucie Dawson	In general, the draft statements seems comprehensive and logical in the management of such a diverse and complicated system. Our points are as below... 11.1 DPD's and SPDs the council will seek to engage and consult, where appropriate, with the general public and the wider community. We feel it would it be useful to give more detail here as to the parameters of what/who 'where appropriate' means.	25.9 - SKDC would like to advice that planning decisions are required to be made based on material considerations. The volume of public representation is not a material consideration, however, the matters raised within a representation may constitute a material consideration. 29.1 - The Council are legally required to maintain a planning register. The Council's Planning Register is published online. However, formal notification/consultation on planning applications is undertaken in accordance with the Council's SCI and the requirements set out in legislation.

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	25.9 Planning decisions are made on the basis of material planning considerations NOT the number of objections received Is there a specific reason why the number of objections are not also taken into consideration. Where there is a particularly contentious application, surely the number of objections (assuming those objections are still of Material Consideration) should provide an additional indication as to the feelings of any interested parties/the general public? 29.1 Planning practice guidance and planning legislation requires specific parties to be notified of planning decisions. The council approaches this by providing all of its decisions on the website. Is there a reason why this specific phase of an application would only be announced online, where at all other stages all interested parties are notified? In section 30.5 it states that the 'planning inspector will consider the evidence (of an appeal) and decide whether to allow or dismiss the appeal. They will inform the council and interested parties...' It seems odd that just this element would not be communicated directly? We are assuming here that 'interested parties' includes any individual who has been a part of the overall consultation	30.5 – SKDC would like to advise that interested parties refers to statutory consultees, as well as any individual who submitted representations during the course of the initial planning application, or the appeal.
Peter Jackson	Statement of Community Involvement The SCI should require, rather than encourage, meaningful pre-application engagement with local communities for major developments. Early and transparent consultation is essential to ensure proposals properly reflect local constraints and community needs	SKDC would like to advise that Paragraph 41 of the National Planning Policy Framework recognises that the Local Planning Authority cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. This includes encouraging applications who are not required to do so by law, to engage with the local

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		community and statutory and non-statutory consultees in advance of submitting planning applications.
Andrew Shelton	Page No 15, Section 15, Paragraph 15.1: Digital Exclusion - There is a strong emphasis on digital-first public engagement which I support, however the only non-digital option now seems to be viewing hard copies by appointment at Council offices. Excuse the generalization, but those who may lack digital access/ digital confidence may also be the same group who lack the ability to travel. Question: What measures would be put in place to mitigate digital exclusion and ensure equitable participation for digitally isolated or disadvantaged groups? Mitigate digital exclusion and ensure equitable participation for digitally isolated or disadvantaged groups. Page No 44, Section Appendix: Implications for Town and Parish Councils - There seems to be expanded, more structured consultation stages, which again I fully support. Question: Will there be an increase in the volume of administration at the town and parish level - and if so, what support, capacity considerations or process adjustments will be offered to help mitigate? Put in place support and capacity, or process adjustments to mitigate	SKDC would like to advise that publication of the planning register online is considered to be the most efficient use of public resources. However, hard copies of documents can be made available or posted to customers, on request, subject to a charge. The revised SCI is not expected to result in an increase in administration for Town and Parish Councils in supporting the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans. No changes have been made to this part of the SCI. The obligations stated within the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol reflect existing good practice and activities already required to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan such as engaging with the Council.

Table 2 – Key Headline changes to the SCI Document

<u>Key change 1 -</u>	The general information (page 2) has been updated, removing the consultation information.
<u>Key change 2 -</u>	Following the below changes to the document the contents page has been updated to reflect the new page numbering.
<u>Key change 3 -</u>	The new plan-making system (2026) has been introduced to the SCI since this came into force on 25 th March 2026.
<u>Key change 4 -</u>	Section 4 containing ‘why a review is needed’ had been updated to reflect the new legislative and regulation changes.
<u>Key change 5 -</u>	Changed in consultation section updated to ensure the SCI remains robust and future proof given any changes required by legislation, government guidance or exceptional circumstances that affect the Council’s ability to carry out consultation.
<u>Key change 6 -</u>	The new plan-making system (2026) introduced new arrangements for Supplementary Plans which replace Supplementary Planning Documents under the legacy plan-making system.
<u>Key change 7 -</u>	Removed references to the Covid19 pandemic as this advice has been revoked. In addition, the SCI has been future proofed to include any similar exceptional circumstances.
<u>Key change 8 -</u>	Stages involved for the new plan-making (2026) process which has been added to reflect the changes in legislation which came into force on 25 th March 2026. Reference to the legacy system has been removed.
<u>Key change 9-</u>	Stages involved for Supplementary Plans (2026) process has been added to reflect the changes in legislation which came into force on 25 th March 2026. References to SPDs have been removed.
<u>Key change 10-</u>	Update to the statutory Duty to Co-Operate section as this has been abolished.
<u>Key change 11-</u>	Contact details for the Planning Policy Team have been included for information on how the team can be contacted to be added to the database.
<u>Key change 12 -</u>	Table 1 has been introduced to reflect the changes in new consultation methods due to the new plan-making stages (2026).

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<u>Key change 13 -</u>	Consultation on the Local Plan and plan-making stages for the new system (2026) added as Appendix 2.
<u>Key change 14 -</u>	Consultation on Supplementary plan-making stages for the new system (2026) added as Appendix 3.
<u>Key change 15 -</u>	Glossary updated to explain the terminology 'Legacy local plan system'.
<u>Key change 16 -</u>	List of abbreviations updated to explain the abbreviation SP (Supplementary Plans).
<u>Key change 17-</u>	Links & footnotes have been reviewed and updated to ensure users can be easily directed to the pages referred to within the text. Links have been provided to the new plan-making system.