

**Review of Oxfordshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
Summary of comments received on Consultation Draft SCI September 2014 and County Council responses**

Respondent	Comment	County Council Response
Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)	Confirms details of when it is necessary and when it is not necessary to consult the CAA	These comments are noted. There is no need to alter the SCI as it does not detail the circumstances when individual consultation bodies will be consulted.
Cllr Lynda Atkins	Reference should be made consistently to Town Councils as well as Parish Councils	The SCI is has been amended throughout to reflect this.
	Primary Care Trusts have been abolished and the references in Appendix 2 should be updated accordingly.	The reference in Appendix 2 has been updated as suggested.
	The document should state that AONB Boards 'will be' consulted, rather than 'should be'.	Appendix 2 sets out those consultation bodies that are specified in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and then lists other organisations and bodies which may also be consulted. AONB Boards are not listed in the 2012 Regulations and Appendix 2 reflects this. The County Council will always consult the relevant AONB Board on any plan document or planning application which could affect or has relevance to an AONB. They are therefore listed as an organisation that may be consulted and this will avoid unnecessary consultation on plan documents and planning applications which have no impact on or relevance to an AONB. No amendment to the SCI is required.
City of London Corporation	Believe that a more strategic approach to co-operation with London authorities would be beneficial. Suggests insertion in	Additional text has been inserted at the end of paragraph 3.10 to reflect this comment.

	paragraph 3.10 to reflect the fact that the duty to co-operate will not only strengthen existing relationships, but also build new ones.	
Mr and Mrs Buch	The suggested approach to using various media to make people aware of proposals is commendable. However there are two media which have not been mentioned – radio and television. Advertising would be costly, but the Council could seek interviews on local stations.	Additional wording has been inserted in paragraph 4.14 to clarify that media releases could include local radio and television as well as the press.
Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council	150 metre consultation zone should be increased to 500 metres for major planning applications and 250 metres for listed buildings and conservation areas.	Residents living near areas proposed for minerals or waste developments are able to find out about proposals in their area in a variety of methods including through site notices, press notices and consultation with the Parish or Town Council. Neighbour notification is only considered to be necessary for those properties which may be directly affected by a development due to close proximity, hence a 150 metre consultation zone was proposed. Paragraph 5.6 of the SCI provides flexibility to increase the neighbour notification zone if appropriate, depending on the specific circumstances of each application. However, the concern expressed about the proposed 150m notification zone is acknowledged and after further consideration the neighbour notification zone for minerals and waste planning applications has been amended to 350 metres, as has operated in the past. Table 1 and paragraph 5.6 have been amended accordingly.
Mr Eric Jackson	150 metre consultation zone is inadequate for minerals and waste applications and should be	See above

	much wider	
Ms Woolley and Mr Lehmann	150 metre consultation zone is inadequate for minerals and waste applications, which could affect whole communities	See above
Mr Bicknell	Comments relate to a specific site nomination for the Minerals & Waste Local Plan and not to the SCI.	No amendment to the SCI is required.
Gosford and Water Eaton Parish Council	A notification by letter should be sent on any Local Plan document or amendment, with details of where the information can be found on the internet. The Parish Council would prefer to respond by post.	This is consistent with the SCI as worded, which does not specify communication by any one particular means. The Council's default consultation method is email, but where the email address is not known or where a consultee has expressed a preference for postal communication, and in the case of neighbour notifications for planning applications, consultation will be by post. Consultation responses can be sent either by post or email. No amendment to the SCI is required.
	The Parish Council would wish to know how various decisions were arrived at by the County Council, before the policies are firmed up.	Paragraphs 4.24 – 4.27 set out how the Council will provide and publish feedback on consultations. This will enable local communities to understand how the eventual decision is arrived at. But it is not usually possible to provide feedback on how decisions are reached and how consultation responses are taken into account prior to decisions being made on local plan policies. No amendment to the SCI is required.
	It is appreciated that documents from the County Council will be written in clear English in a manner which can be understood.	This is as set out in paragraph 4.17. No amendment to the SCI is required.
Bachport (Burcot and Clifton)	The SCI should include a vision statement, as was included in the 2006 version.	The Council has sought to revise the SCI in a more streamlined manner, focusing on the important aspects of community involvement, in line with recent changes to the planning system nationally. The revised SCI retains the

Hampden Protection of River Thames)		Council's key principles of consultation but a vision statement would add little to this and is therefore not considered necessary. No amendment to the SCI is required.
	Section 2.2 sets out the principles of community involvement. Would like greater clarity on what, how and when consultations will be fed back to the public.	Paragraphs 4.24 - 4.27 set out how the Council will provide feedback on consultations on plan documents and paragraph 5.26 provides this information in relation to planning applications. No amendment to the SCI is required.
	The Council should adopt a policy of communicating with consultees by both email and letter	Email communication has the advantages of being fast, cost efficient and easy for consultees to forward to others. Many consultees prefer this method of communication so it is not considered necessary to duplicate emails with letters as a matter of course. However, where the email address is not known or where a consultee has expressed a preference for postal communication, and in the case of neighbour notifications for planning applications, consultation will be by post. Consultation responses can be sent either by post or email. No amendment to the SCI is required.
	Consultations should run for a minimum of 8 weeks to allow Parish Councils to meet twice before responding.	Paragraph 4.13 of the SCI states that local plan consultations will be for a minimum of 6 weeks. This is in line with the statutory period specified in the Local Planning Regulations. The SCI provides for a period longer than 6 weeks where this is appropriate and it is not necessary for a longer period to be specified as a rule. No amendment to the SCI is required.
	The Council should not levy a charge to Parish Councils who request a paper copy of a document which will have a material impact on the parish	Where there is a need for organisations or individuals to be provided with a paper copy of a consultation document the Council will usually do this without making a charge. But the Council needs to retain the right to make a reasonable charge for copying and providing paper documents where this is appropriate and this is reflected in paragraph 4.16 of the SCI.

	<p>The SCI refers to making SPDs available for inspection for a four week consultation period, but does not detail how the consultation would be held, who would be consulted and how.</p>	<p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p> <p>A minimum consultation period of 4 weeks for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) is in line with the statutory period specified in the Local Planning Regulations. Paragraph 4.22 of the SCI states that consultation on SPDs would be undertaken using appropriate methods drawn from those set out in the section of the SCI covering consultation on plan documents generally, including how consultation would be undertaken, who would be consulted and how. It is not necessary to repeat that section specifically for SPDs.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>Would like to see a breakdown and the method and level of community involvement for each stage of document preparation, similar to that contained in the 2006 SCI</p>	<p>The Council has sought to revise the SCI in a more streamlined manner, focusing on the important aspects of community involvement, in line with recent changes to the planning system nationally. In doing this, the way that community involvement in plan preparation will be undertaken has been set out more generally. This provides flexibility to respond both to the needs of particular situations and to changing circumstances. It is not considered appropriate to go back to the more detailed and prescriptive format of the 2006 SCI.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>Neighbouring Parish Councils should be notified of minerals and waste applications.</p>	<p>For large scale minerals and waste applications, such as new quarries or large scale waste management facilities, the development does have the potential to affect neighbouring Parishes. Development might also impact neighbouring Parishes if it was located close to the boundary. In these cases neighbouring Parishes would be consulted.</p> <p>However, it is not considered necessary or appropriate to notify all neighbouring Parish Councils of all minerals and waste applications as most applications are relatively minor and not likely to cause any impact in other parishes.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>

	<p>Would like to see greater clarity on the process for notifying the community of planning applications. The 2006 SCI contained more detail. In particular it contained the protocol for speaking at Planning and Regulation Committee and the criteria by which a members' site visit would be made. These are notably absent from the new draft.</p>	<p>One of the intentions of the revised SCI was to set out how community involvement will be undertaken in a more concise, flexible and simple manner. The SCI sets out the statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications and indicates what else the Council will do to ensure that the level of community consultation is appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposals. It is considered that a flexible approach which allows consultation methods to be selected and built on depending on the specifics of the application is the most appropriate approach. This means it is not possible to be prescriptive in the SCI because the nature and level of community involvement that is appropriate will vary depending on the application. Paragraph 5.26 of the SCI states that objectors are able to address the committee meeting at which a decision is to be made on an application. Member site visits take place as considered appropriate at the request of a Councillor or suggestion of the case officer. These are not public meetings and it is not considered necessary to refer to the arrangements for them in the SCI.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>Would like to see the neighbour notification extended beyond 150 metres.</p>	<p>See response to previous similar comment.</p> <p>Table 1 and paragraph 5.6 have been amended.</p>
	<p>There should be greater clarity regarding the number and location of site notices.</p>	<p>In many cases one site notice is sufficient and this is all that is statutorily required, but the SCI provides flexibility for this to be increased to as many necessary for especially large sites or developments with greater impacts. Although the location will always be near the application site, the exact locations of notices will depend on the site, where people are most likely to see them and the availability of suitable places to affix a notice. It is not necessary or desirable for the SCI to be prescriptive about the number or locations of site notices.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>The Parish and District Council</p>	<p>Although the views of the public are very important in considering planning</p>

	<p>should always be consulted on CLOPUD applications.</p>	<p>applications, CLOPUD applications are different and must be determined entirely on the basis of the legal situation, in conjunction with the Council's Legal Services Team if necessary.</p> <p>CLOPUD applications are used as a means of finding out whether planning permission is required for a development. If permission is not required then the development is outside the scope of the planning system. If permission is required then local communities will be consulted in the usual way when the application is submitted.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>The Parish and District Council should always be consulted on CLEUD applications.</p>	<p>CLEUD applications must be determined on the basis of evidence regarding past use.</p> <p>Whether or not the proposals comply with planning policy, and impacts on factors such as local amenity, landscape or biodiversity cannot be taken into account. It is considered that routinely consulting on this type of application could create confusion and give the impression that local views can be taken into account in the decision when legally they cannot. Instead the Council will endeavour to ensure that potentially harmful developments do not bypass the planning system in this way through rigorous monitoring and enforcement.</p> <p>However, Parish, Town and District Councils may be a source of additional evidence which could help in deciding a CLEUD application. Therefore, there are circumstances where it would be appropriate for them to be consulted.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>Would like to see greater clarity on when it would be appropriate to consult non-statutory consultees on an EIA Scoping Opinion.</p>	<p>The non-statutory consultees which it would be appropriate to consult on a Scoping Opinion would depend on the location of the site and the nature of the development. Without the context of a specific application, it is not possible to be prescriptive about this. The SCI is clear that Parish and Town Councils will be consulted on EIA Scoping requests.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>
	<p>Paragraph 5.26 on letting people</p>	<p>An amendment has been made to paragraph 5.26 of the SCI to confirm when</p>

	know how their views have been taken into account in planning decisions – this should go further and indicate when and how the report will be circulated and whether further consultation will take place.	and how committee reports will be made available to the public and when further consultation may take place on a planning application.
Appleford Parish Council	Fully endorse the comments made by Bachport.	This is noted. The comments made by Bachport are addressed above.
Mr Bamford	It seems to me that OCC/SODC misses the opportunity to draw on available expertise ("peer review"), rather than simply giving us the chance to object or support. For example, I have spent a lot of my career looking at the output of long term forecasts from modelling. This seems to me relevant to flood modelling for example.	When the Council consults on plan documents and planning applications, consultees and the public are invited to make any comments they consider to be relevant; comments do not have to be limited to simply an expression of objection or support. No amendment to the SCI is required.
English Heritage	Pleased to note its identification as a Specific Consultation Body	Noted. No amendment to the SCI is required.
Environment Agency	Pleased to note its identification as a Specific Consultation Body and a Statutory Consultee. Happy to continue to meet with planning officers to discuss both policy and planning.	Noted. No amendment to the SCI is required.
East Hendred Parish Council	East Hendred Parish Council fully supports all the statements made in this document and hereby indicates its desire to be fully	Noted. No amendment to the SCI is required.

	involved as specified.	
Mr Stern	<p>Believe that local residents and the community should be at the heart of any consultation on either policy or applications. SODC should proactively engage with residents and community organisations via email using council tax contact details.</p>	<p>The Council's policy and practice is to involve local communities in consultations on both plan preparation and planning applications, as set out in the SCI.</p> <p>It would not be appropriate for the Council to use personal data held by the district councils in connection with council tax collection for planning consultation purposes.</p> <p>For the Minerals & Waste Local Plan, a database of names of interested and potentially affected persons with either email or postal addresses has been built up for consultation purposes and is continually added to.</p> <p>For planning applications, given that not everyone has an email address which they check regularly and email addresses can change over time, and as consultations are for 21 days, it is considered preferable to notify residents of neighbouring properties by post. This gives more certainty that the notification has reached the relevant property at the start of the consultation. Email notification is used where possible and appropriate, for example in consulting Parish and Town Councils which have provided email addresses.</p> <p>No amendment to the SCI is required.</p>

Consultees who responded with no comments:

Natural England
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Swindon Borough Council
South Northamptonshire District Council
Cumbria County Council
Marine Management Organisation
Highways Agency
Chilterns Conservation Board