

# **South Holland District Council**

## **Adopted Statement of Community Involvement**

December 2006

This document can be made available in large copy prints, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English. If you require the document in one of these formats, please contact: The Planning Policy team on 01775 761161 or email [localplan@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@sholland.gov.uk).

## **PREFACE**

The Council formally adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2006. The document sets out how the Council will involve you and/or your organisation in the production of its planning documents and on planning applications.

The comments received during the previous consultation stages have been considered and taken into account in producing this document.

You can obtain additional copies of the document from Customer Services at SHDC, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, or by telephoning 01775 761161.

If you require any further information about the SCI please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01775 761161 or email [localplan@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@sholland.gov.uk).

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## **Glossary of Terms**

**Annual Monitoring Report (AMR):** Local Planning Authorities are required to produce an AMR to assess how the policies are performing against their relevant targets and what action is required if targets are not being met. Any changes will be brought forward through a revised Local Development Scheme.

**Area Action Plan (AAP):** Development Plan Documents providing information and greater detail on the future development of certain parts/areas of the District.

**Development Plan Document (DPD):** These documents are statutory Local Development Documents that the Local Planning Authority must prepare. These will include the core strategy, generic development control policies, site specific allocations and policies, area action plans (where needed) and proposals map.

**Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM):** Includes the regional representation of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)

**Local Development Framework (LDF):** The LDF will contain a portfolio of Local Development Documents which will provide the Local Planning Authority's policies for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social aims for the future of their area where this affects the development and use of land. Close linkages will be made between the LDF and the Council's Community Plan.

**Local Development Document (LDD):** Documents that together make up the Local Development Framework and comprise Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS):** Project plan setting out how the Local Planning Authority will develop their Local Development Framework over a 3 year period.

**Local Plan:** The Local Plan sets out detailed planning policies and land-use proposals to guide development in the district. It will be replaced by the LDF.

**Planning Act:** Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Planning Inspectorate (PINS):** Provides the services of an Inspector to carry out independent examination of Local Plans and DPDs.

**Planning Policy Statement (PPS):** Government Statements of national planning policy which are replacing the existing system of Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs).

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS):** The RSS, prepared by the Regional Planning Board, (in our case, East Midlands Regional Assembly – EMRA) provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of LDDs and takes account of guidance from Planning Policy Statements. The RSS has become a statutory document which is a change to the previous system of Regional Planning Guidance. RSS 8 is therefore replacing RPG8 for the East Midlands. RPG8 is now RSS8 but is not fully compliant with the Act. A new RSS8 is in preparation.

**Secretary of State (SoS):** *This is the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.*

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):** *Document setting out how the community and stakeholders will be involved in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. It will not be a Development Plan Document but will be subject to independent examination.*

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):** *Assessment of the environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within each LDD.*

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):** *Documents which supplement and provide further information on the policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.*

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA):** *Tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (social, environmental and economic factors) and is required to be undertaken for all LDDs.*

## **CHAPTER 1 – AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND LINKAGES WITH OTHER STRATEGIES.**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) outlines how the Council intends to ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to participate in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents (LDDs) and to be consulted on planning applications. It sets out how and when the community will be consulted and how you can get involved in the planning process.

We aim to ensure that we genuinely listen to all comments made and pay them due regard in the decision making process. However there is no guarantee we can deliver everything requested or agree with all comments. A fair and balanced approach will be undertaken and reasoning provided to all who comment and participate. We will make every effort not to raise expectation levels unduly.

The SCI identifies the methods that will be used to encourage and facilitate participation at the different stages of LDD preparation and encourages community involvement at the early stages when ideas are being developed. LDDs can then take account of the range of community views and reflect, as far as possible, the concerns and aspirations of the people affected by them. The methods of community involvement used will depend on the specific document being prepared.

The SCI will be reviewed on a regular basis to see if there are any ways in which the Councils consultation and community involvement processes and techniques can be improved.

### **1.2 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PLANNING?**

The following quote is taken from the Planning Portal website and gives a brief overview of what is meant by planning.

*“Planning is about how we plan for, and make decisions about, the future of our cities, towns and countryside. Over the centuries, a formal way of making these decisions was set up. Your local planning authority is responsible for deciding whether a development - anything from an extension on a house to a new shopping centre - should go ahead. Local planning authority usually means the district or borough council - not the parish or town council. The planning system is needed to control development in your area.”*  
(Planning Portal)

### **1.3 AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Council is placing greater emphasis on community involvement in plan preparation. Communities are to be engaged at an early stage in the preparation of LDDs, when ideas or proposals are being developed, and will continue to be involved throughout the various stages of the process. This early involvement, or ‘front loading’, is a key feature of the new planning system. Front loading ensures active participation in developing

ideas, sharing knowledge and resolving concerns, which is essential in achieving local ownership of the policies that will shape the future development strategy for South Holland. It is hoped that this SCI will ensure that the local community's involvement in the future planning for South Holland will be a positive and worthwhile experience and will encourage active participation.

The Council will also aim to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act, Sex Discrimination Act and Race Relations Act in the production of its documents and future consultation exercises.

The District's population is made up of a range of people and organisations. Due to this mix and variety of people not all consultation methods are suitable for everyone. Some topics will be of limited interest to some groups/individuals, and some issues will affect only certain places, so consultation will need to reflect this. It is therefore important that people are consulted in a way that is suitable and convenient for them. In preparing Local Development Documents we will aim to tailor consultation to the right people and at the right time. To avoid over-consulting the community we will only involve those groups with an interest in the subject matter or those we are required to consult under current legislation. However, it is important to note that where a document is tailored to a particular group or geographical area we would still welcome contributions from other interested groups and individuals.

The planning system can be a complex and confusing mechanism for many people. For this reason we aim to make documents clear, concise and jargon free, with summary documents produced.

To be effective community participation needs to involve the following main principles:

- **Be visionary yet realistic;**
- **Be transparent** – setting clear targets of what we expect to see achieved;
- **Keep process simple** – we will make it easy for you to get involved, avoid jargon and keep documents brief;
- **Participation** – enable communities to put forward their ideas and participate in developing options and proposals;
- **Involve all sections of the community** – ensure a full spectrum of the community is involved to gather different views and perspectives on issues. We will aim to ensure meetings are held in locations accessible to all;
- **Communication** – Using various types of methods and techniques to let people know what we are doing and how they can get involved;
- **Feeding back** – letting people know their comments have been considered and the outcomes;
- **Consider ideas and comments fairly** – ensure there is an open transparent process for considering and responding to comments. Ensure disability, religion, age, race is not a barrier to involvement;
- **Local ownership** – local people should feel they own and have made major input into the production of policies and plans;
- **Keep it local** – where appropriate hold any particular events as close as possible to the community the document or decision will affect;
- **Learn from our mistakes** – reviewing the effectiveness of our engagement methods and amending where necessary; and
- **Have fun!!** – getting involved should not be a chore. Better plans and strategies will be created when people have enjoyed creating them.

#### **1.4 LINKS WITH OTHER PLANS AND STRATEGIES**

The content of this SCI also aims to complement other plans and strategies produced by the Council. This allows the Council to have a consistent approach to service delivery. The most relevant plans and strategies are set out below.

The first Local Development Framework (LDF) for the District will be prepared to ensure consistency and close integration with the South Holland Community Plan (2003-2011), the Council's Corporate Plan (2005-2008), the Consultation Strategy and Guidelines (2004) the Communications and Marketing Strategy (2004-2007) the Housing Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy. All these documents will share a common vision and the LDF will reflect the key issues and priorities identified where appropriate and deliverable. We will also have regard to the Local Transport Plan, Structure Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy and Community Safety Plan. The production of this first SCI will eventually feed into the production of a corporate SCI for the Council. This will replace the existing Consultation Strategy and Guidelines and cover all functions of the Council, not simply planning related matters.

### **Corporate Plan**

The vision of the Corporate Plan is “to develop and promote South Holland as a thriving, living and working rural community”. To help with the development and promotion of this vision we have the four themes of our mission statement. These are:

- Listening – to listen, involve the community, and work with partners.
- Providing – to provide a safe, secure and healthy place to live.
- Developing – to develop a thriving rural community.
- Leading – to be a leading edge authority providing value for money and quality services.

### **Community Plan**

The Community Plan presents a vision of how the quality of life for all the people of South Holland can be improved over the next 10 years. The actions and targets within the plan have been put together by the Local Strategic Partnership or Rural Action Zone (RAZ), a strategic alliance of major organisations within the District, following extensive consultation with local people. The Community Plan is currently under review.

Both of these documents can be viewed on the Council's website:

<http://www.sholland.gov.uk>

### **Consultation Strategy and Guidelines October 2004**

The Council recognises the need to be outward looking and responsive and that consultation and participation are important to achieving best value. The main objectives of the strategy are to:

- Promote a consistent approach to consultation;
- Promote effective listening and learning from the community;
- Promote equality;
- Define roles and responsibilities; and
- Set the standard for community engagement through consultation.

The Consultation Strategy is an important part of the Council's broader approach to customer care and community engagement. This document is to be replaced by a corporate SCI, which will be informed by this document.

### **Communications and Marketing Strategy July 2004**

The Communications and Marketing Strategy provides a framework for the development of community engagement in the Council. The Strategy sets out the Council's communications and marketing objectives and targets, identifies good communications, and will:

- Improve stakeholders perceptions;
- Increase awareness of the Council and its services;
- Effectively and efficiently communicate the Councils goals;
- Improve the service to stakeholders; and
- Motivate Staff.

The Strategy outlines that “Good communications will help us to improve performance, deliver excellence in services and demonstrate to staff, customers and the Government the Councils place at the heart of the South Holland Community”.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

The Council has published a revised Economic Development Strategy 2006-2009. This document will help to shape the economic development and sustainability of the District including the role tourism will play. It will also establish the priorities for inward investment and funding.

### **Housing Strategy**

This document aims to address the national and regional priorities for social housing and reconcile these with our own local objectives. The document sets out housing priorities for the district.

The Council will have regard to these documents in the production of its SCI and future LDDs.

## **1.5 COMMUNITY AND DISTRICT PROFILE**

Drawing up a community and district profile is a useful first step towards identifying and understanding the make up of the population and its various characteristics. This is important to ensure the SCI tailors and incorporates consultation techniques suitable to all sections of the District’s community.

South Holland is an almost exclusively rural part of Lincolnshire, famous historically as a flower producing area. The largest settlement and focus of administration is Spalding. Spalding is supported by three market towns, Holbeach, Long Sutton and Crowland, and Sutton Bridge which developed as a port and the large village of Donington. The spatial pattern of growth varies from settlement to settlement. Some rural villages are growing rapidly, whereas others are stable with very low expansion rates. Extensive land reclamation over many centuries has created a flat landscape intersected by raised banks and corridors of watercourses, sea defences and roads. South Holland is 74,238 hectares, consisting almost entirely of fenlands. The area is of national agricultural significance, with 80% of the land being of Grade 1 quality.

This area has a low population density with 1 person per hectare compared to an average for England and Wales of 3.4 people. The latest population estimate for South Holland is 79,425 (2003) people and since the 1991 Census the population has increased by 13.4%, a greater rise than Lincolnshire (9.9%) or England and Wales (2.5%). South Holland's population is predicted to increase by 9.1% between now and 2010.

The population profile of the District shows that 49% of the population are male and 51% are female. The average age of someone living in South Holland is 42.8 years, compared to an average 38.7 years in England and Wales. 17.9% of the population are under 16 years of age, this is less than the average across Lincolnshire (20%). The area is characterised by out-migration of the young, and in-migration by older people. Information from Lincolnshire County Council demonstrates that, over the ten year

period to 1998, there was a significant out-migration amongst the 15-24 year age group but that all other age groups showed in-migration, resulting in net population growth. The proportion of pensioners in the population is considerably greater than the national average, 25% compared to 18.5% for England and Wales.

The South Holland economy is largely based upon agriculture, horticulture and food processing as well as services connected to these industries such as distribution. 65.4% of the population are economically active; this is less than the average in England and Wales (66.5%). In April 2005 unemployment in South Holland was 1.5% compared to 1.1% in July 2004. This is below the East Midlands unemployment rate of 2.1% (April 2005). The districts workforce is relatively low skilled, as only 10.2% of the population are qualified to degree level or higher; this is lower than the average in England and Wales (19.8%).

Indicators of cost of living show marked differences from the national averages. According to HM Land Registry the average house price in Spalding for the period April-June 2005 was £148,231 compared with an East Midlands average of £149,683 and an England and Wales average of £184,924. However, wages are currently low at 18% below the national average.

The 2001 Census also gives some indication of the ethnic and religious breakdown of groups within the District. 97.22% of the population are classified as White British; the remaining 2.78% are from other ethnic groups including Asian, African, Caribbean and Chinese. This is low compared to the England and Wales average, where 13.01% of the population are from ethnic groups other than White British. The largest religious group within the District are Christian, 83%, with other named religions, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs accounting for only 1%. 10% of the population indicated no religion with a further 7% not disclosing such information.

The District has seen an increase in the numbers of migrant workers over recent years, which these figures do not take account of, since migrant workers are generally missed by the census. There has also been an increase in the number of Gypsies and Travellers moving to the area. The Council's Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment will quantify the numbers currently here and any potential future trends. Even though the overall numbers of minority groups are small the SCI aims to make sure all religious and ethnic groups are given the opportunity to be included within certain future consultations as there may be specific needs within these communities which we are currently not addressing.

South Holland is an area of significant importance in terms of its natural and built environment. The Wash supports large and diverse populations of wetland bird species. It is recognised at both national and international levels, being designated as a site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Ramsar site, a Special Protection Area and has recently been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The rivers of South Holland are essential not only in terms of drainage, but also as havens for wildlife. Many of the settlements have a unique character, which warrants special protection. There are over 500 listed buildings in the District and a total of 13 Conservation Areas. Crowland Abbey and Ayscoughfee Hall are examples of some of the historic attractions. We will engage with various conservation bodies, such as local civic societies, wildlife trusts etc as part of the production of the LDF.



## **CHAPTER 2 - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)**

### **2.1 PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

The new Planning Act identifies a number of revisions to the planning process and in particular a new approach to the preparation of development plans. The system of Structure and Local Plans has been replaced. Each Local Planning Authority is now required to produce an LDF which will eventually replace the Local Plan, whilst a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is to be prepared by the Regional Planning Board, which will replace Regional Planning Guidance (RPG). The new system is intended to make the process of plan making a more streamlined and efficient one.

The LDF will be presented as a loose leaf folder containing all planning policy documents. This will enable the LDDs to be amended and updated easily without the necessity of having to reprint the whole LDF each time. It also means that all of the District Council's planning policies can be contained within one document at all times.

### **2.2 STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)**

The LDF will be made up of a number of important documents, including:

- Local Development Scheme (LDS) – project plan setting out what new documents will be produced and when;
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Documents that set out the planning policies to guide and control development in the District; and
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – Documents that provide further and additional information on a policy or policies held within a DPD.

#### **Local Development Scheme**

The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) (2006) has set out what LDDs the Council intends to produce and the timetable for each. When undertaking consultation on LDDs we will aim to link with other consultations being undertaken by other Council departments and have joint corporate consultations, where appropriate. The LDS has programmed a number of documents to be produced during the same period and again we will aim to undertake joint consultation on these documents to prevent overloading the community. The LDS is available to view at the Council Offices and on the website.

### Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

- **Core Strategy**

The core strategy is the principle document in the LDF and will contain the Council's vision and spatial strategy for the future development of the District. This document will deal with such matters as the principles to be employed in the distribution of development in the District, and the resolution of potential conflict between development needs and environmental concerns. It will not contain development site allocations.

- **Generic Development Control Policies**

DPD which will set out the criteria against which planning applications can be considered. This document will contain a comprehensive set of development control policies on a range of themes, from housing to recreation and conservation.

- **Proposals Map**

Map illustrating site allocations and other area-based and site based proposals shown on an Ordnance Survey Base.

- **Site Specific Allocations**

Document identifying the sites proposed for development to meet the vision identified in the Core Strategy. It will also set out the policies which refer to the development of the allocated sites. This document will include site allocations for the full range of the District's development needs, including housing, employment, retailing and recreation.

- **Area Action Plans (AAP)**

Area Action Plans are intended for areas where there is concentration of proposals for change or for key areas of conservation. At present, the Council proposes to produce only one AAP (for Spalding).

### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- SPDs will form part of the planning framework for the area but will not form part of the Development Plan. They will contain policies which expand on or supplement the policies in DPDs. We aim to produce a number of these documents, on topics such as Open Space and Crime and Disorder. SPDs will be material considerations in development control decisions.

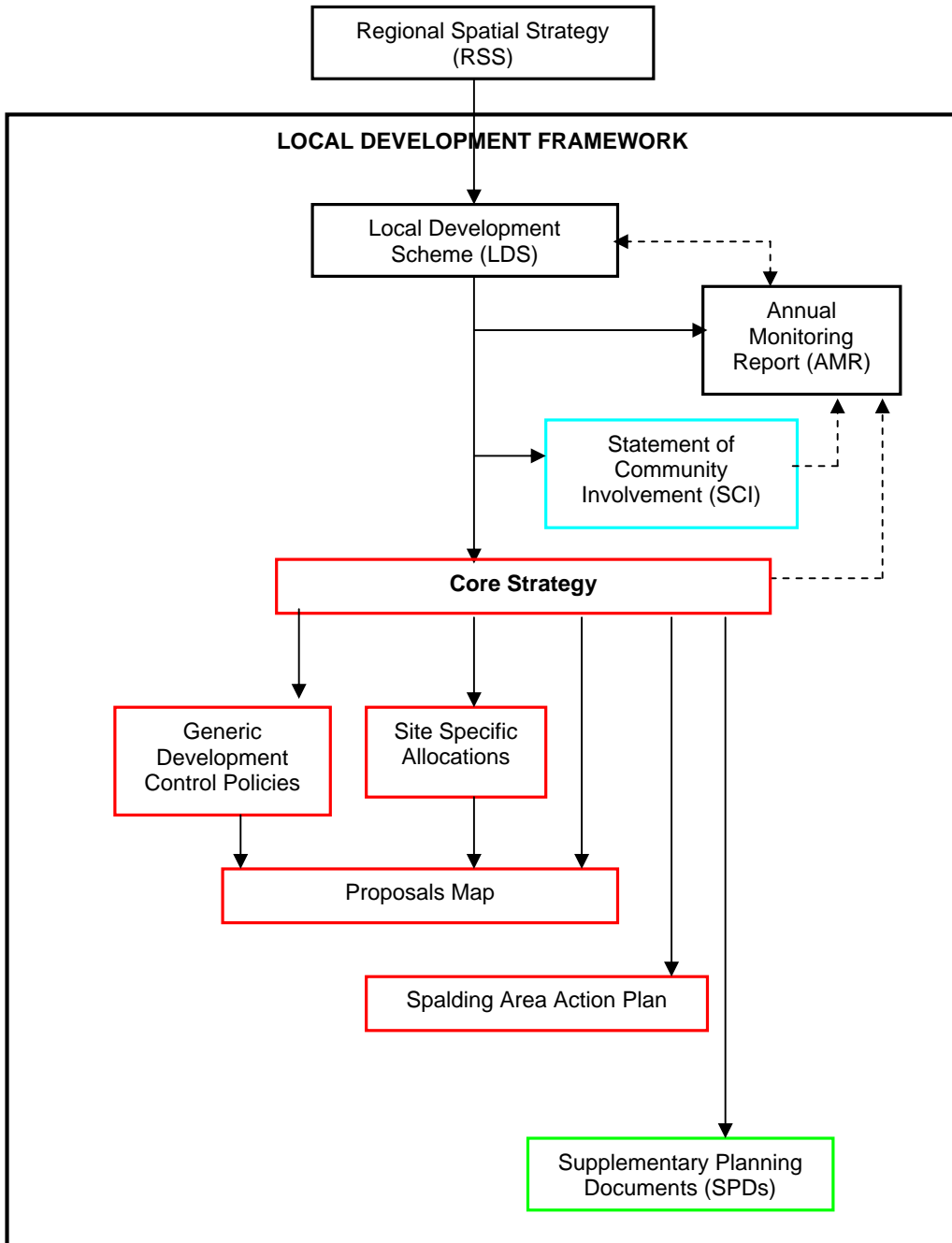
Figure 2 sets out the relationship between the various documents the Council intends to produce. The main advantage of the new system is that each of these documents can be prepared separately. This will allow the LDF to be far more responsive to local priorities than the previous Local Plan system.

Further information on LDF procedures is contained in the following publications and which are available from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Development Frameworks (2004)
- Creating Local Development Frameworks – A companion guide to PPS12 (2004)

[www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)

**Figure 2: LDF Structure and relationship between LDDs**



Key:

- Local Development Documents (LDDs)
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs)
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
- Monitoring and Review
- Chain of Conformity

### **2.3 WHAT THE PLANNING REGULATIONS REQUIRE US TO DO**

Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) sets out the minimum requirements for community involvement in plan preparation. These are set out below:

1) Consultation - An advert will be placed in the local press and on the Council's website at each consultation stage and will:

- Give details of where and when documents can be viewed;
- Say how copies can be obtained;
- Say what is the closing date for comments; and
- Say to whom comments should be addressed.

(2) Documents including Sustainability Appraisal and response forms will be made available at the following locations:

- At Council Offices including Market House Long Sutton;
- On the Council's website in both word and PDF formats; and
- In local libraries.

(3) Copies of Documents, Sustainability Appraisal and response forms will be sent to all Statutory Consultation Bodies and other General Consultation bodies deemed appropriate, by post or email where requested.

(4) Following each consultation stage we will:

- Provide a full paper copy of all comments at the Council Offices; and
- Publicise a summary of comments plus actions taken at the Council Offices including Market House Long Sutton, on the Council's website and in local libraries.

(5) Following adoption of the document we will advertise in the local press and on the Council's website. This will:

- Give details of where and when the document can be viewed; and
- Say how copies can be obtained.

(6) The Adopted Document, Sustainability Appraisal and Inspector's Report will be made available at the following locations:

- At Council Offices including Long Sutton Market House;
- On the Council's website in both Word and PDF format; and
- In local libraries.

(7) Copies of the Adopted Document, Sustainability Appraisal and Inspector's Report will be sent to all Statutory Consultation Bodies and other general Consultation Bodies deemed appropriate. (Some of these may be on CD)

*NB We will aim to prepare documents in both word and PDF formats, however large documents may only be available in PDF. Local Press refers to the Lincolnshire Free Press, Spalding Guardian, and Spalding Target. We may use other papers if appropriate. An advert will be placed on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the consultation period.*

#### **2.4 STAGES IN THE PREPARATION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS (LDDs)**

The process for producing LDDs presents a number of different opportunities for community involvement. It is important involvement begins at an early stage so views and ideas can help to shape the policies and proposals of each LDD. How you will be involved will depend on what document is being produced and what stage preparation has reached. A 'statement of compliance' with the SCI will be produced alongside each document. This will state how the community has been involved with the production of the document, in line with the SCI.

The following sections identify:

- The process of preparing each type of document –
  - Statement of Community Involvement,
  - Development Plan Document,
  - Area Action Plan and
  - Supplementary Planning Document;
- When you get involved in the process; and
- Who will be consulted.

## Statement of Community Involvement

### Stages in the preparation of the SCI

PPS12 identifies the 5 main stages involved in the preparation of an SCI, namely:

#### **(1) Pre-production**

The first stage in the process is the evidence gathering on key aspects to be included within the SCI, such as who is to be involved and how they would like to be involved in the planning process.

#### **(2) Production**

- Preparation of draft SCI – the results of the pre-production stage will feed into the production of the draft document. There will be formal 6 week consultation on the draft document.
- Assessment of representations received.
- Preparation of revised SCI.

#### **(3) Submission**

Submission of SCI to Secretary of State for independent examination. There will be a second formal 6 week consultation process.

#### **(4) Examination**

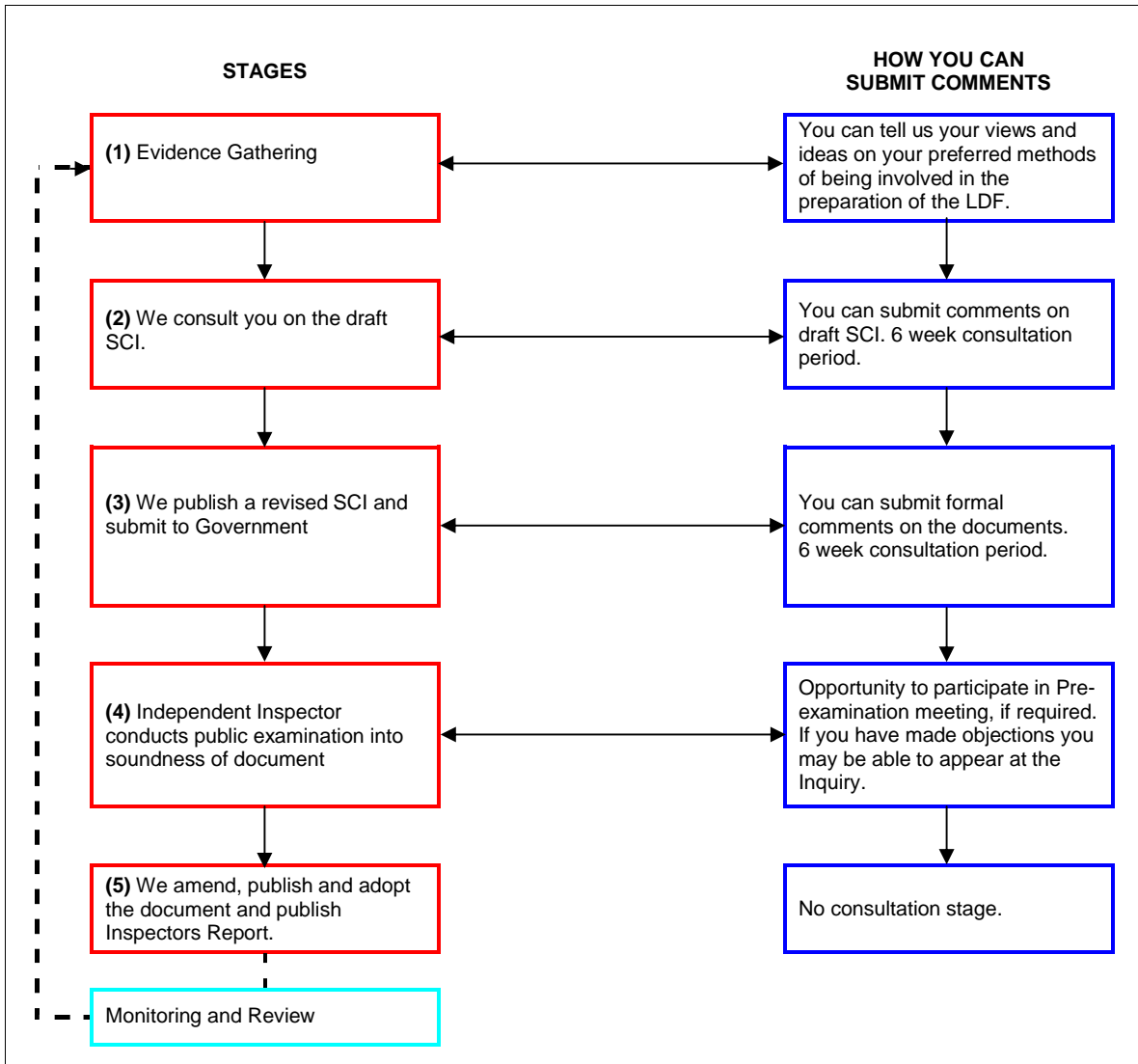
Pre-examination meeting and public examination into the contents of the SCI, if required.

#### **(5) Adoption**

Following the examination and receipt of binding Inspector's report the Council will make any necessary changes and adopt the SCI.

The following figure identifies the main stages in the production of the SCI and when you can get involved.

**Figure 3: Stages in the Preparation of the SCI**



**Who will be consulted?**

The Council will aim to consult the following groups and individuals in the production of the SCI. More information on these groups is shown in section 2.7 and Appendices 1 and 2.

- Statutory Consultees
- Any body or individual on the Council’s General Consultation database
- Other members of the general public

### **Stages in the Preparation of DPDs**

PPS12 identifies the 5 main stages involved in the preparation of a DPD, namely:

#### **(1) Pre-production**

The first stage in the process is the survey and evidence gathering on key aspects to be included within the DPD. This stage also involves the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the document. A wide range of consultation methods will be used during this stage, as indicated by tables 2 and 3.

#### **(2) Production**

- (a) Preparation of issues and alternative options – the results of the pre-production stage will be used to prepare a range of issues and options and an initial SA report. There will be informal consultation on these options.
- (b) Preparation of preferred options document and formal SA report.
- (c) Public participation on preferred options document and formal SA report – formal 6 week consultation period.
- (d) Assessment of representations to preferred options document and formal SA report.
- (e) Preparation of submission DPD and amendments to SA report.

#### **(3) Submission**

Submission of DPD and SA report to the Secretary of State for independent examination. There will be a second formal 6 week consultation process.

(3b: If a DPD is concerned with allocations of land, any alternative sites put forward during the submission consultation will be advertised and consulted upon for a period of six weeks).

#### **(4) Examination**

Independent Inspector considers objections made. This will involve a pre-examination meeting and public examination into the contents of the DPD, if required.

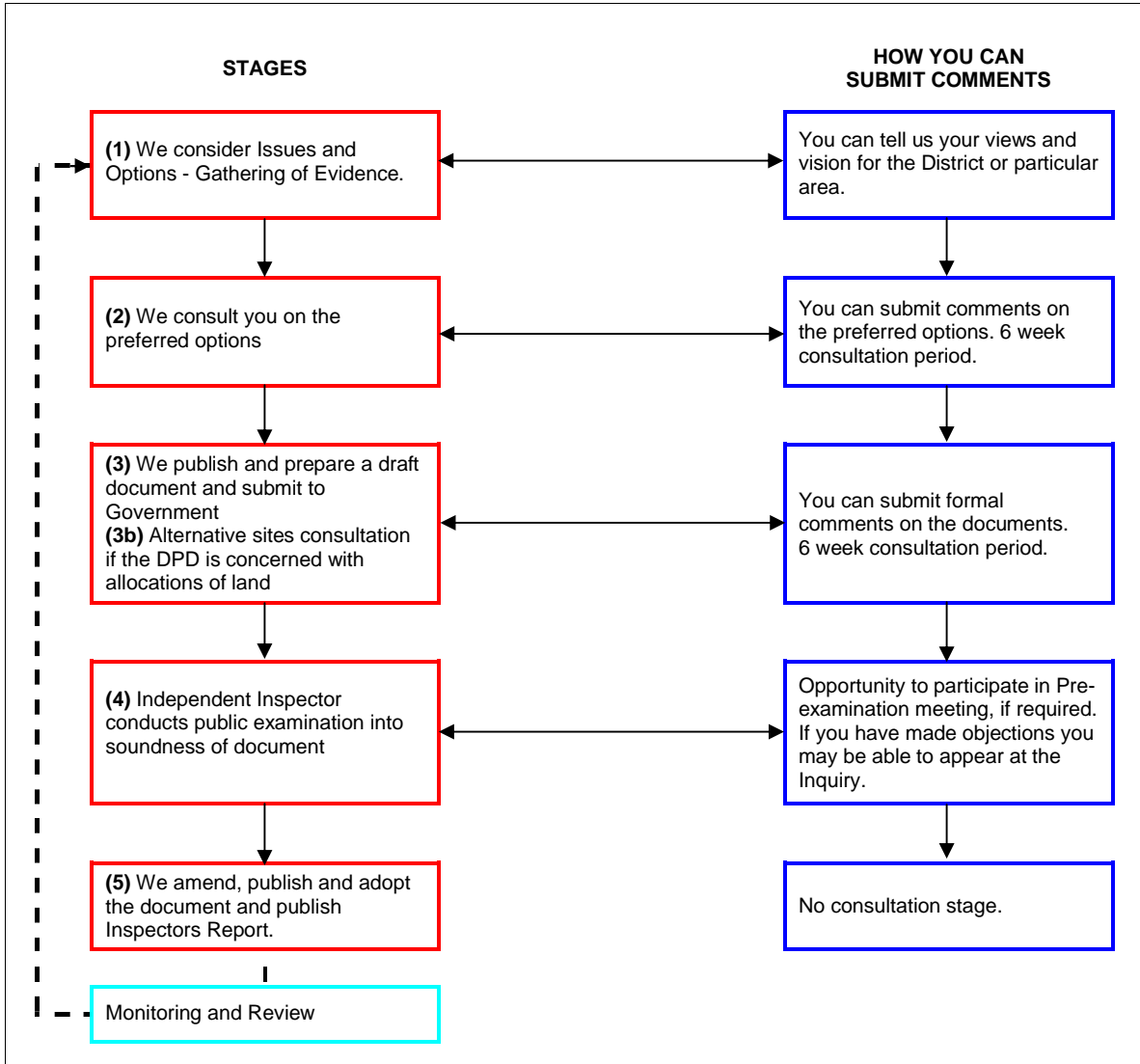
#### **(5) Adoption**

Following the examination and receipt of binding Inspector's report the Council will make any necessary changes and adopt the DPD. A statement of how the SA process has been taken into account will be made available.

The Planning Act 2004 includes a requirement for the Council to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for each LDD to assess its impacts on the environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability and also meet the requirements of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The SA/SEA will be undertaken as an integral part of the preparation of each LDD. The findings of the appraisal will be detailed in a report and will be subject to public consultation before being submitted to the Secretary of State, alongside the relevant LDD.

Figure 4 identifies the 5 main stages in the preparation of a DPD and when you can get involved in the process.

**Figure 4: Stages in the Preparation of a DPD**



**Who will be consulted?**

The Council will aim to consult the following groups and individuals in the production of each DPD. More information on these groups is shown in section 2.7 and Appendices 1 and 2.

- Statutory Consultees
- Any body or individual on the Council's General Consultation database
- Other members of the general public

### **Stages in the Preparation of Area Action Plans (AAPs)**

The process for preparing an AAP is the same as that set out for the other DPDs shown above.

#### **Who will be consulted?**

The Council will aim to consult the following groups and individuals in the production of each AAP. More information on these groups is shown in section 5 and Appendix 1 and 2.

- Statutory Consultees
- Parish Council of the particular area and adjacent Parish Councils only
- Any body or individual on the Council's General Consultation database with a particular interest in the area concerned
- Other members of the general public

### **Stages in the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

The process of preparing an SPD differs from that of a DPD as these documents are not subject to independent examination. PPS12 identifies the 3 main stages involved in the preparation of an SPD, namely:

#### **(1) Pre-production**

- Evidence Gathering – a wide range of consultation methods will be used.

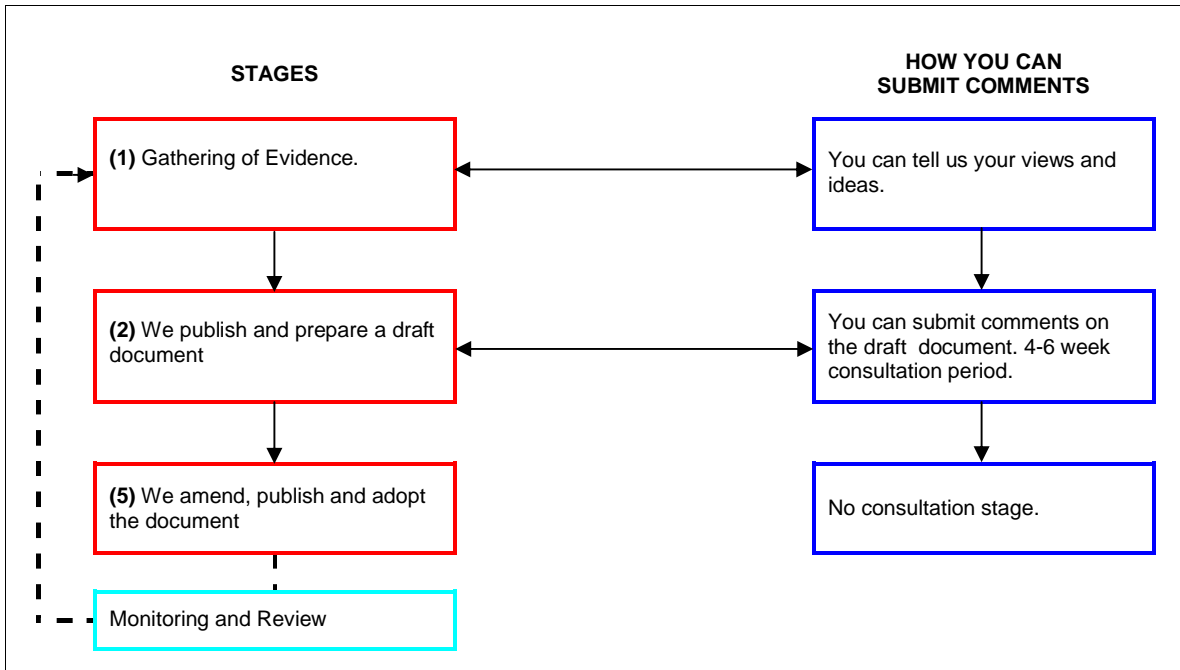
#### **(2) Production**

- Preparation of Draft document and SA.
- Public consultation on draft SPD – this will be for a minimum of 4 weeks but may be set at 6 weeks if appropriate.
- Assessment of representations.
- Preparation of revised SPD.

#### **(3) Adoption**

- Following consideration of responses the SPD will be adopted and published.

**Figure 5: Stages in the Preparation of an SPD**



**Who will be consulted?**

The Council will aim to consult the following groups and individuals in the production of each SPD. More information on these groups is shown in section 2.7 and Appendices 1 and 2.

- Statutory Consultees
- Any body or individual on the Council's General Consultation database who has expressed an interest in the topic being considered
- Other groups or individuals with a particular interest in the topic
- Other members of the general public

**2.5 HOW TO MAKE COMMENTS ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS (LDDs)**

Figures 3, 4 and 5 have identified the stages when you can get involved in the preparation of documents and when you can submit comments.

We are aiming to make the system of responding on planning documents open and transparent so that it is as easy as possible for you to comment upon LDDs. We will ensure that a standard response form is made available both in paper and online for every document we produce. The form will make it clear the dates when you can submit comments and to whom they should be submitted. The standard form will be used during the formal consultation stages only. Other ways of gathering information, such as workshops, exhibitions and questionnaires will be used at earlier stages. All comments

will be publicly available so other people and groups can see the full range of views expressed.

We appreciate that it may be time consuming completing a number of forms and we will aim to ensure the process is streamlined so some details do not have to be completed each time. However, if you do wish to comment on more than 1 aspect of a document you will need to use a separate form for each comment. Through front-loading of community engagement, negotiating and resolving concerns, the number of objections should be minimised by the time the later formal consultation stages are reached.

You can respond on any LDD by using one of the following methods:

- Using paper forms to be returned in the post;
- Downloading forms from the website and submitting them by post;
- Completing online forms electronically;
- Email comments;
- Fax comments;
- Submit paper letter by post containing comments; or
- By audio or visual media such as Video/DVD/CD/Tape.

However we would prefer that any comments submitted are on the standard response form. If you have difficulties submitting written comments please contact the Council and we will aim to find alternative ways to record your comments.

During formal consultation stages we will only accept comments during the specified period. Late comments will not be accepted to ensure we stick to the timetable and meet the milestones in progressing our documents as set out in the LDS.

## **2.6 FEEDBACK**

Following the completion of a consultation period we will analyse all comments received. Paper copies of all comments received will be available to view at the Council Offices. However we will also publish a report which will summarise all comments received and how they have been taken into account. The report will be made available in the Council Offices, on the website and in local libraries. A letter or email will be sent to all respondees informing them of the availability of the report. The written report will be the main method of reporting back, however we may also look to use other mechanisms such as informal meetings, coffee mornings etc where appropriate.

The summary report will set out:

- Any groups or individuals whom the Council consulted;
- How these groups or individuals were consulted;
- A summary of the main issues raised; and
- How these main issues have been dealt with.

Decision making on the comments received to various LDDs will be undertaken by Cabinet (10 Councillors) and by Full Council (All Councillors) where necessary. We have operated an internal member-officer Local Plan Working Party which has assisted

in evolving planning policy for consideration by Cabinet. We will use similar arrangements to assist with work on the LDF in the preparation of policies and proposals and discussing comments and how to deal with them. Councillors will consider and make recommendations on the summary report before it is publicly available in its final form.

We aim to ensure feedback takes place as soon as possible after the consultation period finishes to ensure momentum is kept going in the preparation of the document and so the community feels progress is being made. An acknowledgement will be sent by the Council within 10 days from the receipt of any representation. Any group or individual who submits comments at any stage during the preparation of a LDD, and who is not already on our database, will be added to it and informed of progress on the document and future consultation stages. We will also undertake further discussions with groups or individuals to resolve issues and discuss comment in more detail where appropriate.

## **2.7 WHO WILL BE INVOLVED?**

During July/August 2005 a questionnaire was distributed to a wide range of groups, organisations and individuals asking how they would like to be involved in the planning process. The responses to these questionnaires have helped determine who will be involved in developing future plans and strategies including the production of DPDs and SPDs. This list will be regularly reviewed and updated. This questionnaire was stage 1, pre-production, of the preparation of the SCI. The Council understands that it is often difficult for many groups to always respond to documents within the set 6 week period. Where possible we will aim to notify well in advance of forthcoming consultations and keep to the timetables set out in the LDS. However, comments still must only be made during the 6 week period and not before.

### **Specific Consultation Bodies**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) sets out the legal requirements for consultation and public participation on the LDF. The guidance sets out a list of statutory consultees that the Council must consult with, as set out in Appendix 1. They include neighbouring authorities, Government Office etc. These bodies will automatically be sent copies of documents and be consulted at all stages in the preparation of an LDD.

### **General Consultation Bodies**

The Council is committed to engaging a wide range of groups and organisations in the planning process. In order to achieve this aim the Council intends to work with and involve other groups not normally involved in the planning process and develop new contacts wherever possible. We want to make the LDF process open to any individual or organisation interested in the future development of the District. These other general consultation bodies, as set out in PPS12 fall into a number of categories:

- Voluntary Groups;
- Racial/Ethnic Groups;
- Religious Groups;
- Disability Groups; and
- Business Groups.

A comprehensive list of these groups and organisations is set out in Appendix 2.

This list contains details of people who have responded to previous Local Plan consultation exercises, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) who were involved in the production of the Community Plan, other community and voluntary groups and groups who responded to the questionnaire where we asked how they would like to be involved in the planning process.

The Council recognises that the views of Parish Councils and local community groups are crucial in reaching out to a wider spectrum of the community and helping to identify priorities at the local level. These groups can provide specialised local knowledge and enable the Council to seek the views and aspirations of large sections of the community. The Council considers that meetings and exchanging information with the Parish Councils are an effective use of resources and we intend to make greater use of such resources in future planning exercises. Some parishes have already begun preparing parish plans and village appraisals. These documents will also have a vital role to play in future LDF documents and help to increase knowledge and understanding for all groups. However, we do recognise that there is not a Parish Council for Spalding. In the absence of a Parish Council views on planning matters at a local level are often expressed by other organisations including Spalding Civic Society and Spalding Town Forum. We will aim to engage closely with such groups but recognise that they are not representing the electorate at large.

There are also particular sections of the community that the Council wishes to contact due to their specific needs or because previously they have been under-represented in the planning process. These 'hard-to-reach' groups, whose involvement in the planning process is desirable, include racial/ethnic groups, religious groups, the young, the elderly, those who live in remote locations, those on low incomes and disabled groups. We will make every effort to ensure their future involvement and will aim to develop relationships to capture the views of this target group. LDF documents and any related literature can be made available in a variety of formats e.g. Braille, large print, audio cassette, languages other than English. If you require documents in another format please contact: The Planning Policy team, on 01775 761161 or e-mail [localplan@sholland.co.uk](mailto:localplan@sholland.co.uk).

The Council also values the views of young people and will endeavour to engage with schools, youth clubs and youth organisations on relevant issues. The use of email and the website will be a useful way in reaching and engaging with such groups.

We recognise that all Council members have an important liaison role to play in encouraging involvement, generating interest and raising awareness at the local level. Members will be kept informed of progress on the LDF through the Members Newsletter and will be made aware of comments received during the various consultation stages.

An amalgamated list of both statutory and general consultation bodies will be available on the Council's website. This list will be updated as appropriate. Any group not already on this list is encouraged to contact the Council to be added and therefore involved in future consultations.

## **2.8 METHODS/TYPES OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The responses received to the questionnaire referred to in Section 2.7 have also helped determine the engagement techniques that the Council will use to gather views and ideas in developing its future plans and strategies. As previously stated we will tailor consultation methods to suit the document being prepared and the identified target group. Details of the methods to be used will be published before each stage of the process and all interested groups and individuals informed well in advance. The minimum requirements set out in PPS12 will be met in each case and other methods used as appropriate. An attendee list will be made available at each event to gather information on who has attended. We may also use posters to advertise documents being produced and raise awareness.

The following table outlines the various types of engagement methods, their various strengths/weaknesses and resource implications. The methods identified here are not intended to be exclusive and we are open to undertaking new and innovative approaches to engagement, if practical, such as the use of text messaging. Due to the rural nature of the District we will undertake displays/exhibitions in the main urban areas as a minimum for DPDs that have District wide implications. If time and resources permit we will extend this to provide a greater geographical spread across the District. We do recognise, though, the importance of being realistic about the extent of consultation we can undertake and this will be dependent on staff and financial resources.

**Table 1: Methods of Community Involvement**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
Documents available at Council Office, Spalding (plus Market House, Long Sutton).	Documents will be placed at Council Offices for inspection during normal office hours. There will be clear instructions as to how, where and when people can respond. Response forms will be made available. Copies of documents will be available at each stage of preparation.	Cheap and easy way of displaying documents and informing local community. Offices allow access for all sections of community, such as the disabled, elderly and documents can more easily be provided in other languages or formats. Allows community to also speak directly to officers and talk through issues.	Not everyone has access to transport to visit offices. However Market House in Long Sutton provides facilities for people in eastern side of District.	Low Relatively Inexpensive
Documents available at Libraries (Details shown in Appendix 3)	Documents will be placed at all the libraries in the District. There will be clear instructions as to how, where and when people can respond. Response forms will be made available. Copies of documents will be sent at each stage of preparation.	Libraries located in each of the 6 urban areas providing facilities for large section of the community. Potential use of mobile library.	Not everyone will use/visit libraries. Documents will need to be appropriately displayed if people are to see and therefore comment upon them.	Low
Letter to statutory bodies	Statutory bodies will be consulted and invited to respond in writing with clear instructions on how to view the relevant documents and how and when to respond to consultation.	Good method for obtaining specific feedback on particular issues or national perspective.	Consultees may not have enough time to answer specific points.	Low
Parish Council Offices	Parish Councils will be consulted and invited to respond with clear instructions on how and when to respond. Copies of documents will be sent at each stage of preparation. Response forms will be provided.	Good method of contacting and informing the community in a particular area or District wide.	Not everyone uses their Parish Council Offices and not all Parish Councils have dedicated offices.	Low
Via Council's website	Copies of documents and reports will be available to view on the website, along with details of where, how and when to respond. Documents will be available in Word and PDF formats. We will monitor and record the number of hits on the website.	Good way of advertising and promoting documents and consultations to local community and wider audience. Quick and easy way to respond to documents and provide feedback. Appeals to young people. Access to information 24 hours a day.	Not everyone has access to website facilities. Previous exercises have indicated low response rate.	Low (DPDs containing many maps will be expensive)

Email	Consultees will be informed of future consultations, be able to email comments and will be provided with feedback wherever possible and where requested. Documents will be emailed in both Word and PDF format.	Cheap and quick method. Has particular appeal to young people and businesses. Most consultees will have email access.	Limited access.	Low
Letter	Consultees will be informed of future consultations, be able to email comments and will be provided with feedback wherever possible and where requested.	Easy way of contacting community and wider audience. Suitable for everyone.	Not quickest method of informing people or receiving comments back.	Cost effective way of providing information to large number of people. Staff time in producing a vast number of letters.
Articles in Local Newspaper (Press Releases)	Newspaper articles will raise awareness of the stages of plan preparation and how communities can get involved in commenting on planning documents.	Can provide wide publicity of proposals.	No guarantee press will report.	Low
Radio	Advertisements and interview slots will raise awareness of the stages of plan preparation and how communities can get involved in commenting on planning documents.	Can provide wide publicity of proposals.	Dependent on people listening to local radio stations.	Medium.
Public Notices	Statutory requirement giving details of progress of the planning documents and where, how and when to respond to documents and how they can be viewed.	Good way of advertising consultations to wide spectrum of local community.	Dependent on people buying local papers. Often small adverts in centre pages.	Low Fairly expensive if do more than the minimum statutory requirements
South Holland Now (Council's newsletter)	Articles in Council's newsletter will raise awareness of the stages of plan preparation and how communities can get involved in commenting on planning documents.	Free newsletter available to every household. Cheap and easy way of promoting LDF and informing of progress with documents and consultations.	No guarantee people will read newsletter. Could be treated as junk mail. May not coincide with LDF consultations. No guarantee there will be space to publish planning progress in each issue.	Low
Displays/ Exhibitions	Staffed exhibitions at an accessible location will allow members of the community to meet with the planning officers and to ask questions and share views. Useful	Allows people to comment on proposals in non formal relaxed environment. All day exhibitions can get good representation from public. Having exhibitions on a number of days gives	Need to be well publicised to ensure good representation from public and community groups. Exhibitions will not cover all areas.	Staff time and printing costs for displays could be high. Cost of hiring venue.

	method for showing proposals visually. Useful where area specific proposals are made, such as for AAPs or SPDs.	people flexibility in deciding when to visit.	People attending may not be representative of wider community. Responses hard to record unless people fill in forms available.	
Workshops	Means of engaging local people and developing ownership of proposals. Useful where area specific proposals are made. A range of methods may be used such as Displays, Planning for Real exercises, video.	Allows people to comment on proposals in non formal relaxed environment. It is a more informal approach than public meetings and encourages people to contribute who otherwise would not.	Need to be well publicised to ensure good representation from public and community groups. Meetings could be hijacked by most vocal attendees. May need facilitator.	High staff time. Cost of hiring venue. Cost of facilitator and/or video production. Cost of hospitality.
Public Meetings	Open way for people to engage in robust debate on planning issues. Useful where area specific proposals are made.	Can be used to cover wide range of topics or tailored to specific purpose. Useful way of creating interest in local issues.	Difficult to get representative sample of views and ideas as formal environment may discourage people from expressing views in front other attendees. Meetings could be hijacked by most vocal attendees. May need facilitator.	High staff time. Cost of hiring venue. Cost of facilitator. Cost of hospitality.
One-to-one meetings	Useful means of identifying key issues, getting key people involved and achieving alignment with other strategies and initiatives.	Good way of understanding and gathering views especially relating to complex issues. Easy to organise. Useful method of getting a targeted response.	Small sample of views so not necessarily representative of all communities' views. Time consuming.	Medium staff time.
Questionnaires	Will be used to ask individuals and groups about specific topics or district wide issues.	Can gain representative sample of community. Cost effective method of providing information to large number of people.	Not always effective if people think they have no interest in planning they won't fill it in. Postal response may be low.	Cost of producing document. High staff time in analysing responses.
Presentations	Means of presenting information to local people. Can use a variety of visual methods to display information such as slideshows. Good means of displaying visually proposals for an area.	Can be used to cover wide range of topics or tailored to specific purpose. Useful way of creating interest in local issues.	Difficult to get representative sample of views and ideas as formal environment may discourage people from expressing views in front of other attendees. Q and A session could be hijacked by most vocal attendees.	High staff time. Cost of hiring venue. Cost of display material. Cost of hospitality.
Developers Forum	Meeting with all local developers, agents, architects to discuss current issues and set out progress on planning documents held about once a year.	Useful means of discussing a number of issues through presentations and discussions.	No guarantee all groups will attend.	Cost of hiring venue. Cost of display material. Cost of hospitality.

The following table identifies what methods of consultation we propose to use for each LDD and at what stage. These are minimum targets only and may change or be added to depending on the document being prepared.

**Table 2: Consultation methods for each stage of production of LDDs**

Consultation Methods	Local Development Documents		
	DPD	AAP	SPD
<b>At Council Offices</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>Libraries</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>Letter to Statutory Bodies</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>Parish Council Offices</b>	every stage	every stage Tailored to specific Parish Council and adjacent Parish Councils only.	every stage Tailored to specific Parish Council and adjacent Parish Councils if area specific, if District-wide each Parish Council will be consulted.
<b>Website</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>Email</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>Letter</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>Response Form</b>	Stages 2, 3 and 3b.	Stages 2 and 3.	Stage 2.
<b>Articles in local newspapers</b>	Stages 1 and 5	Stages 1 and 5	Stages 1 and 3
<b>Press Releases</b>	every stage	every stage	every stage
<b>South Holland Now</b>	Every stage if coincides with LDF consultations.	Every stage if coincides with LDF consultations.	Every stage if coincides with LDF consultations.
<b>Displays/ Exhibitions</b>	Stages 1 and 2. Displays will remain throughout preparation at Council Offices, Parish Council Offices and Libraries. Will be dependent on space and if libraries and parishes agree.	Stages 1 and 2. Displays will remain throughout preparation at Council Offices, Parish Council Offices, appropriate local Library and prominent community building if practical. Will be dependent on space and if libraries and parishes agree.	Stages 1 and 2. Displays will remain throughout preparation at Council Offices, Parish Council Offices and Libraries. If area specific at Council Offices, Parish Council Offices local library and prominent community building if practical. Will be dependent on space and if libraries and parishes agree.
<b>Workshops</b>	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.
<b>Public Meetings</b>	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.
<b>One-to-one meetings</b>	Will be used at various stages if needed.	Will be used at various stages if needed.	Will be used at various stages if needed.
<b>Questionnaires</b>	Stages 1 and 2.	Stages 1 and 2.	Stages 1 and 2.
<b>Presentations</b>	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.	Stages 1 and 2 and other stages if appropriate.

**Stages for DPDs and AAPs – refer to Figure 4.  
Stages for SPDs – refer to Figure 5**

## **CHAPTER 3 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **3.1 CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

New development or changes of use of land and buildings have the potential to impact on people and the environment in which they live. We therefore consider it extremely important that those people who may be affected by new development have the opportunity to view and understand submitted planning applications and to make comment/representations if they wish to do so.

Consultation on planning applications is therefore an important part of the overall process when we are faced with deciding whether or not to support new development. There is often a wide range of individuals, local groups, Parish and Town Councils and other organisations that may need to be consulted on a particular planning application. We are in the process of preparing a detailed Consultation Protocol (which will be available as a background document) to set out clearly how particular types of planning application will be publicised and who will be consulted.

In addition to Town and Parish Councils, District Council Ward Members and the general public, we have some discretion over who we consult on planning applications and these are known as non-statutory consultees. These will be those organisations/groups who we decide should be consulted on certain planning applications, for example, neighbouring authorities and the internal drainage boards. However, there are organisations that we are required to consult on certain types of planning applications and these are called statutory consultees. This includes organisations such as English Heritage, the Environment Agency and The Health and Safety Executive.

### **3.2 HOW WILL PLANNING APPLICATIONS BE PUBLICISED?**

#### **Large scale development**

Planning applications which involve major development such as large housing estates (10 dwellings or more), and large retail or commercial development will be publicised in the following manner:

- A Notice will be placed in the press giving details of the planning application, how the plans can be inspected and how representations can be made. A period of 21 days, from the date the notice appears, will be available to make representations.
- A Site Notice (or several Site Notices if the site is large) will be displayed near the site giving details of the proposal, how plans can be inspected and how representations can be made. A period of 21 days from the date the notice is erected will be available to make representations.
- The relevant Town or Parish Council will receive a notification letter of the planning application together with relevant plans. They will have 21 days in which to respond.

- The District Council Ward Member(s) will be sent a notification letter of the planning application together with a site location plan. They will have 21 days in which to respond.
- Those properties which directly adjoin the site will receive a letter notifying them that a planning application has been received and how they can view the plans. A period of 21 days, from the date of the letter, is available for them to make representations to us.
- Statutory and non-statutory consultees will also be notified where necessary. They will have 21 days in which to respond. Bodies such as Natural England will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation.
- All comments and representations must be made in writing.

### **Small scale development**

For smaller scale developments such as single dwellings, extensions and small scale retail and commercial developments planning applications will be publicised in the following manner:

- A Notice will be placed in the press only if the proposal meets certain criteria, for example, it is within a Conservation Area, it is close to a Listed Building or affects a Public Right of Way.
- A Site Notice may also be erected for the above reasons or if we consider that there may be a wider interest in the proposal or if the application site is bounded by open or agricultural land.
- Those properties which directly adjoin the site will receive a letter notifying them that a planning application has been received and how they can view the plans. A period of 21 days, from the date of the letter, is available to them to make representations to us.
- The relevant Town or Parish Council will receive a notification letter of the planning application together with relevant plans. They will have 21 days in which to respond.
- The District Council Ward Member(s) will be sent a notification letter of the planning application together with a site location plan. They will have 21 days in which to respond.
- Statutory and other consultees will also be notified where necessary. They will have 21 days in which to respond.
- All comments and representations must be made in writing.

### **Site Notices**

Site Notices are laminated A4 sheets of paper displayed as near to the site as possible, often attached to a lamppost. The Notice shows the planning application reference number, name of the applicant, the location of the site and a description of the proposal together with a small location plan. The Notice gives details of where the application and plans can be viewed and how comments can be made.

## Weekly List

The Council produces a list of planning applications that have been registered in the previous week. This is known as the 'Weekly List'. The List can be viewed on the Council's website and copies are also available for inspection at the Council Offices, Priors Road, Spalding. Annual subscriptions can also be made to receive copies of the Weekly List.

## Confidential Information

Some planning applications may include information that relates to the financial details of the proposal, such as income/outgoings or profit and loss of a business which is personal to the applicant. This information should be marked clearly as 'confidential' and will be kept out of the public domain.

Any other information, as far as planning law is concerned, is available for the public to view. The Freedom of Information Act does allow an applicant to keep supporting information (other than financial details) confidential as long as they write to us and clearly explain what the information consists of and why it must be kept in confidence. This information is then exempt from Freedom of Information. However, the planning officer does have some discretion in relation to this type of non-financial supporting information and whether or not it should remain confidential. If, for example, the applicant had requested some details to remain confidential but the case officer considers it essential for the public to see the information in order to understand the application, then the case officer can decline to keep the information in confidence.

## 3.3 CHANGES (AMENDMENTS) TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Sometimes it is necessary for an applicant to amend the proposal which is the subject of a planning application. This may be as a result of discussion with the planning officer who considers that certain changes will improve the proposal, as a result of consultation responses already received or at the request of the Council's Development Control Committee. In these cases the planning application remains live and those neighbours, groups etc previously consulted may be re-consulted on the changes. The decision whether or not to re-consult is made by the planning officer. In the case of minor changes such as those to improve the design of a proposed building or repositioning a proposed building away from a shared boundary to overcome neighbour concerns, it will not be necessary to formally re-consult. More significant changes will always be subject to re-consultation, particularly where neighbours could be materially affected. This will be done in the following way:

- A notification letter will be sent to those properties consulted previously advising them that an amendment has been received. **They will have 10 days in which to respond.**
- The relevant Town or Parish Council will be sent a notification letter together with copies of the amended plans. **They will have 10 days in which to respond.**
- The District Council Ward Member will be sent a notification letter advising that an amendment has been received. **They will have 10 days in which to respond.**
- All comments and representations must be made in writing.

We have recently prepared a draft 'Code of Practice and Guide for Parish Councils' to assist parish councils and local interest groups in understanding and making representations upon planning proposals. This will help these organisations make structured responses when consulted on planning applications and to concentrate on the material planning considerations.

### **3.4 HOW TO RESPOND TO A CONSULTATION ON A PLANNING APPLICATION**

If you receive a letter notifying you that a planning application has been received or if you see a site notice or press notice then you have an opportunity to make your views known to the planning authority. These views will be taken into account when the application is determined.

#### **Supporting**

If you do not have any concerns about the proposal then you need do no more. You do not need to write to us to say you have no objections.

#### **Objecting**

If you wish to object to a planning application then this must be done **in writing** to the planning department either by letter or e-mail. Your letter should make it clear

- which planning application you are referring to (there will be a reference number on the letter/notice which will be similar to H02/1498/05)
- that you are objecting (rather than just commenting) and
- should set out clearly the reasons why you are objecting. Objections to a planning application can only be taken into account if they relate to 'material planning considerations'.

Relevant planning considerations include the following:

- The Development Plan: The East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8), the Lincolnshire County Structure Plan and South Holland District Local Plan and other statutory Plans, e.g. County Minerals Plan.
- Draft Plans: i.e. the South Holland Re-Deposit Local Plan 2005. The weight to be attached to Draft Plans depends on how far they have progressed through the statutory stages. The Re-Deposit Local Plan is now at an advanced stage and should be adopted by July 2006.
- Government Planning Policy Guidance Notes/Planning Policy Statements and Circulars.
- The Council's supplementary planning guidance, policies or planning briefs.
- The environmental qualities of the surrounding area, the visual character of a street and the amenity or privacy of dwellings.
- Road safety, access, car parking and traffic generation together with other public services such as drainage.

- The size, layout, siting and design of the development.
- Public or other proposals for using the same land.
- Previous planning decisions and consideration of what could be undertaken as permitted development.

Planning considerations do NOT include the following:

- Retrospective Applications: development carried out without the necessary planning permission is generally not an offence and planning legislation makes provision for planning applications to be made retrospectively. If the development is acceptable on its merits, the Council cannot withhold permission simply to punish a pre-emptive development. However, if the development is unacceptable, the Council will commence enforcement proceedings against the developer.
- Trade Objections: it is not the role of planning to interfere in matters of competition between businesses other than at strategic level, e.g. when the vitality of a town as a whole is threatened by an out of town retail park. An example of a 'trade objection' might be "We don't need another electrical shop as there's been one in this street for years".
- Moral Objections: for instance against betting shops, adult entertainment shops, lottery kiosks or amusement arcades, although there may be genuine planning reasons for refusal such as noise and disturbance to adjoining residents.
- Views: the loss of an attractive private view, e.g. when development is proposed on the opposite side of a road or to the rear of an objector's house. There is no right to a private view, but the loss of residential amenity generally and matters such as overlooking, privacy or public views, are important planning considerations.
- Property values: fear that an objector's house or property might be devalued.
- Ownership: the fact that the applicant does not own the land to which the application relates, (because this can be overcome by agreement) or that an objector is a tenant of land where development is proposed.
- Covenants: allegations that a proposal might affect private rights, e.g. restrictive covenants, property maintenance, private rights of way or boundary disputes. An example might be when an extension on a boundary is acceptable in planning terms but might be difficult to maintain. Such considerations are legal or contractual matters on which objectors, neighbours or applicants should consult their own solicitor or adviser.
- Personal: arguments of a personal kind such as relating to the associations, financial circumstances or ethnic origin of the applicant. The personal circumstances of applicants can only be taken into account in exceptional circumstances, for example where the applicant's proposed use of a building would be acceptable but the planning permission, if not made personal, would unacceptably allow more intensive

uses in the same Use Class. The planning system does not exist to protect the private interest of one person against the activities of another. The material question is not whether owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties would experience financial or other loss from a particular development, but whether the proposal would unacceptably affect the amenities and the existing use of land and buildings which ought to be protected in the public interest.

- Other legislation: where there is specific legislation imposing controls e.g. Building or Fire Regulations, or Health and Safety, etc, then these should not be duplicated by the Local Planning Authority.

(The above list is not comprehensive.)

### **3.5 THE OUTCOME OF A PLANNING APPLICATION**

Once the necessary notification of a planning application has been made, a decision will not be reached until after the 21 day consultation period has elapsed. If further consultation is necessary due to receipt of revised plans then no decision will be made until 10 days after this notification date in accordance with Government targets. We aim to make a decision on a planning application within 8 weeks of its validation date for small scale or minor development or within 13 weeks for major planning applications. Further details regarding the decision making process can be found in the Council's advice note 'Planning Information' which can either be viewed on the Council's website [www.sholland.gov.uk](http://www.sholland.gov.uk) click on Planning or obtained in person at the Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding or by ringing our Customer Services team on 01775 761161. The results of any such consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, and on behalf of, the Council.

Once a decision has been made the Town/Parish Councils and consultees will receive a letter giving the Council's decision and including either reasons for refusal of the application or a list of conditions if permission has been granted. This information should be received within 7 working days of the decision being made.

### **3.6 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE**

We encourage the use of pre-application discussion with the public, agents and developers. The aim of pre-application discussion is to try and achieve an acceptable development and establish if a proposal can be changed or improved in order to obtain planning permission. This approach can help:

- Establish whether planning permission is actually required
- Avoid unnecessary time and expense at a later date
- Clarify the prospects of a permission being granted
- Identify those proposals with no prospect of permission
- Clarify the proposal in relation to local and national planning policy
- Identify any changes that may need to be made to secure a permission
- Identify information that will be required to support the application e.g. a Flood Risk Assessment.
- Provide guidance on how long the process will take

- Provide advice relating to design

Pre-application discussions may cover proposals which involve land not in the ownership of the applicant, may seek advice on finding sites or involve commercially sensitive information. Therefore, these discussions will be confidential and planning officers will not discuss the matters raised with others outside the planning department.

Pre-application advice does not bind us to make a particular decision. It is purely advice, but will be based on sound knowledge of planning policy and the likely material planning issues. It is given without prejudice to the formal consideration of the application and any subsequent decision and will be based on the accuracy and level of information provided at the time.

Those seeking to carry out works or to change the use of land or buildings are strongly advised to contact the Planning Service to check whether or not what they wish to do requires planning permission. This should always be done, or confirmed, in writing to avoid misunderstandings that can occur with purely verbal advice. In addition, solicitors will require written evidence of advice received in relation to enquiries about the need for planning permission, should a property be sold in future. We will normally respond in writing within 20 working days of the enquiry.

A 'Householder's Development Form' is available for those who may be considering an extension or similar small scale development such as a garage. This form requires certain relevant information to be submitted which will enable a planning officer to reach a decision as to whether the proposed development requires planning permission. We will normally respond in writing within 15 working days of the form being received. Copies of the form can be downloaded from the Council's website [www.sholland.gov.uk](http://www.sholland.gov.uk) click on Planning, or obtained in person at the Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding or by ringing our Customer Services Team on 01775 761161.

### **Applicant's pre-application consultation**

Developers and agents involved in major or potentially contentious schemes are encouraged to consult with Parish Councils, local interest groups and neighbours during the pre-application stage. This enables local views to be taken into account prior to submission of an application which can overcome delays once an application has been submitted.

As part of improvements to consultation and customer service the Council is moving towards e-access to current planning applications and associated plans, consultation responses and supporting documentation, and the improved submission of representations electronically. The Service also proposes to introduce a Development Control Charter which sets out how planning and related applications and the associated views of third parties will be considered by the Council, as well as what customers of the Service can expect.

### **Development Team Approach**

Sometimes it is useful for prospective applicants to meet with or seek advice from a range of Council officers and outside agencies, for example the County Highway

Authority, in order to obtain a comprehensive reply to their enquiries. This can save time and ensures that all parties are aware of a particular proposal and the advice given at that time.

For large scale or major proposals that will proceed to a formal planning application a 'development team' can be assembled comprising the relevant internal and external parties who will then be involved in the consideration of the planning application.

The Council will make every endeavour to meet the requirements of the Race Relations Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

## **CHAPTER 4 - RESOURCES**

The Planning Policy Team will lead consultation exercises on the LDF and comprises 6 full time members of staff, although 2 of these are shared with other teams. The Planning Policy Team also works closely with officers from other Council departments, such as the Improvement and Development Team and Communications and Marketing Team in the preparation of documents. Where necessary external consultants will be used to supplement internal resources and to provide certain expertise in the production of some technical documents. The Council has identified resources for completing the Local Plan and commencing work on the LDDs as set out in the LDS. Project management will be undertaken by the Planning Policy Team Leader as supervised by the Planning Manager and the Head of Planning and Development. Due to the front loading of consultation promoted by the new Planning Act it means greater resource intensity at the beginning of the process and less at the end. We will allocate appropriate resources accordingly to deal with these processes. Funding from the Planning Delivery Grant may also be used to fund community engagements, which represent an improvement in service performance.

## **CHAPTER 5 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The SCI will be monitored on an annual basis. Monitoring will help to identify how effective we have been in engaging with the community and if the consultation methods included in the SCI are appropriate. As the range of consultation methods are based upon the pre-production questionnaire until we actually begin using these methods we cannot be certain they will deliver the best and most accurate results.

We will also ensure that all contacts are kept up-to-date and amended if details change. A reminder for all groups will be included on all documents and on the website. In order to ensure we are gathering views from all sections of the community we will monitor attendance at meetings, exhibitions etc. This will allow us to see the types of groups and individuals attending and those who are not. If a particular group is missing we will endeavour to contact key representatives to gather views and encourage future attendance. The success and effectiveness of the SCI will be reviewed through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

As a result of monitoring the Council will consider what changes need to be made and will bring forward such changes through the review of the SCI.

## **CHAPTER 6 - PLANNING AID**

The Council will make every effort to ensure people are aware of where else they may seek independent advice on planning matters. East Midlands Planning Aid provides free, independent and professional advice and support on planning issues to people and communities who cannot afford to hire a planning consultant. It complements the work of Local Authorities but is wholly independent of them.

Planning Aid can provide advice on how to comment on planning applications, how to participate in the preparation of plans and how to understand and use the planning system. We will make members of the public aware of the advice and support Planning Aid offers.

Further information can be obtained by contacting East Midlands Planning Aid:

15 Wheeler Gate,  
Nottingham,  
NG1 2NA

Tel: 0115 852 4266  
Mobile: 07977 544550

Email: [emco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:emco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)

## **APPENDIX 1: SPECIFIC CONSULTATION BODIES**

Please note, the lists in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 are not exhaustive, and also relate to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.

The following bodies are specific consultation bodies and must be consulted if the Council considers that body will be affected by what is proposed to be covered in a LDD:

- (A) Government Office East Midlands (GOEM)
- (B) East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA)
- (C) Lincolnshire County Council
- (D) Adjoining Local Authorities:
  - North Kesteven District Council
  - South Kesteven District Council
  - Boston Borough Council
  - Peterborough City Council
  - Kings Lynn and West Norfolk District Council
  - Fenland District Council
  - Norfolk County Council
  - Cambridgeshire County Council
- (E) The Environment Agency;
- (F) Highways Agency;
- (G) The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage);
- (H) Natural England;
- (I) The Strategic Rail Authority;
- (J) East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA);
- (K) Relevant Telecommunications Companies;
- (L) Mobile Operators' Association;
- (M) Any of the bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of the local planning authority:
  - Strategic Health Authority
  - East Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust;
  - Relevant Electricity and Gas Companies;
  - Sewerage undertaker; and
  - Anglian Water.

- (N) Any Government Departments or agencies who have large land holdings in the area covered by a local development document.
- (O) District Councillors
- (P) Parish Councils
- (Q) Adjacent Parish Councils
- (R) Planning Inspectorate

## APPENDIX 2: GENERAL CONSULTATION BODIES

In addition to the specific consultation bodies listed in Appendix 1 the Council will consult the following groups where they are likely to be affected by the proposals in a LDD. This will be based upon information gathered through the Pre-Production Stage of the preparation of the SCI.

If you would like to be added onto this list, or you know of any group who would, please contact the Council at the address shown or email [localplan@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@sholland.gov.uk) and we will add these details onto the database. Please provide a contact name, address and brief details of the group, if applicable.

If you would like to be removed from this list please contact us and identify clearly the group to be removed and if possible the reasons why. Please use either of the methods stated above.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Spalding Guides
- Age Concern – Holbeach
- Age Concern Boston and South Holland
- Age Concern Spalding District
- Agricultural Society
- Allison Homes
- Ancients Monuments Society
- Anglo-Polish Society
- Anglo-Portuguese Society
- Any individual who made representations to Re-Deposit Local Plan
- Ashley King
- Ashwood Homes
- Ayscoughfee Hall School
- Barker, Storey, Matthews
- Black Sluice IDB
- Boston, Spalding and District TUC
- Brian Barber Associates
- Broadgate Homes
- Brown and Co
- Burmor Developments
- Business Link –Lincolnshire and Rutland
- CABE
- Calthrops
- Campaign for Real Ale
- Captains Beck Residents
- Carter Jonas
- Childrens Links
- Churches Together Spalding & District
- Citizen Advice Bureau
- Community Council of Lincolnshire
- Community Law Partnership
- Connexions
- Council for British Archaeology
- Country Land and Business Association
- Arts Council East Midlands
- Cowbit St Mary's (Endowed) C of E Primary School
- CPRE
- Crowland Chamber of Trade
- Crowland Scouts and Guides
- Crowland The St Guthlac School
- Crowland Town Society
- Dalton, Warner, Davis
- David Lock Associates
- Development Land and Planning
- Development Planning Partnership
- Development Planning UK
- DGM
- Donington and Quadring Royal British Legion
- Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School
- Donington PTA
- Donington The Thomas Cowley High School
- Drivers Jonas
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award – South Holland Committee
- East Elloe Dial A Ride
- East Elloe Lions Club
- East Midlands Planning Aid
- Education Liaison Officer, St Thomas's C of E Primary School
- Emery Planning

- Fenbank Builders
- Fieldview Homes
- Fleet Lynx Neighbourhood Watch
- Fleet Wood Lane School
- Fleet Youth Association
- Foy Planning Consultancy
- Friends of Spalding Parish Church
- Gedney Church End Primary School
- Gedney Drove End School
- Gedney Hill C of E (Controlled) Primary School
- Geest
- Geoffrey Collings
- Gosberton Clough and Risegate C P School
- Gosberton Clough and Risegate Residents Association
- Gosberton Community Primary School
- Gosberton Social Club
- GR Merchant
- Gypsy and Travellers Law Reform Coalition
- Gypsy Council
- Gypsy Council for Education, Culture, Welfare & Civil Rights
- Hayes Affordable Housing
- HBF
- Heine Planning
- Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire
- Hix and Son
- Holbeach and District Community Association
- Holbeach Bank Primary School
- Holbeach Civic Society
- Holbeach Primary School
- Holbeach Rotary Club
- Holbeach Seniors Link
- Holbeach St Mark's C of E Primary School
- Holbeach St Marks Social Club
- Holbeach The George Farmer Technology College
- Holbeach William Stukeley C of E Primary School
- IDEA
- I D Planning
- Inland Waterways
- Job Centre Plus
- John Hayes MP
- John Martin & Associates
- Langwith Builders
- Larkfleet Ltd
- Libraries in South Holland
- Lincolnshire and Rutland Education Business Partnership
- Lincolnshire Association of People with Disabilities
- Lincolnshire Bat Group
- Lincolnshire CC Education
- Lincolnshire Heritage
- Lincolnshire Racial Equality Council
- Lincolnshire Rural Housing Association
- Lincolnshire Sports Partnership
- Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership
- Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
- Long Sutton and District Civic Society
- Long Sutton Athletic Football Club
- Long Sutton Conservative Club
- Long Sutton Cricket and Hockey Club
- Long Sutton Market House
- Long Sutton Royal British Legion
- Long Sutton Scouts/Guides
- Long Sutton The Peele School
- Long Sutton Town Centre Partnership
- Longhurst Housing Association
- Longstaff
- Lutton Sports and Social Club
- Mark Dennis Architects
- Marsh Child Care Centre
- Matrix Planning
- Morgan Cole
- Muir Group
- National Farmers Union
- National Talking Express
- Nene Housing
- Nene Valley Harriers
- Nepalese Local Community Group
- Network Rail
- Network Strategy East Midlands
- North Level IDB
- Npower Renewables
- Parker and Sons
- Patterson Homes
- Paul&Company
- Peacock and Smith
- Pedals
- Persimmon Homes

- Pinchbeck East C of E Primary School
- Pinchbeck West C of E Primary School
- Planning Law Practice
- Princes Trust in Lincolnshire
- Quadring Cowley and Brown's Primary School
- Rail Passengers Committee (now Rail Passengers Council)
- Richard Diggle
- Robert Doughty Consultancy
- Rotary Club – East Elloe
- Rotary Club – Spalding
- Rotary Club of South Holland
- Roythornes Solicitors
- RPS Construction
- RSPB (South Lincs Members Group)
- RSPB Eastern England Office
- Shaw TRUST
- Shepeau Stow Primary School
- Smith Stuart Reynolds
- South Holland Adult Education, Sir John Glead Technology School
- South Holland Community Education, Pinchbeck Study Centre
- South Holland IDB
- South Holland Primary Care Group
- South Holland Tenants Group
- South Lincs. Blind Society
- Spalding and District Access Group
- Spalding and District Civic Society
- Spalding Disabled Swimming Club
- Spalding Gentlemen's Society
- Spalding Glead Boys School
- Spalding High School
- Spalding Lions Club
- Spalding Monkshouse Primary School
- Spalding Parish C of E Day School
- Spalding Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied Social Club
- Spalding Police
- Spalding Primary School
- Spalding Saint Norbert's Catholic Primary School
- Spalding St John The Baptist C of E Primary School
- Spalding St Paul's Community Primary & Nursery School
- Spalding The Glead Girls' Technology College
- Spalding The Queen Elizabeth Royal Free Grammar School
- Spalding Town Centre Partnership
- Spalding Town Centre Forum
- Spalding Transport Group
- SPARC
- Sport England
- St Matthews Housing Association
- Stamford Homes
- Stansgate Planning
- Surfleet Seas End Primary School
- Sutton Bridge Westmere Community Primary School
- Sutton St James Community Primary School
- The Garden History Society
- The Georgian Group
- The Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings
- The Theatres Trust
- The Twentieth Century Society
- The Victorian Society
- Townswomens Guild
- Trade Union Council
- Travellers Liaison Officer
- Tudor Homes
- Tweedale Planning
- Tydd St Mary C of E Primary School
- Voice East Midlands
- Ward Members
- Wash and North Norfolk Coast EMS Management Group
- Wash Estuary Strategy Group
- Watch
- Welland and Deepings IDB
- Welland Seniors Forum
- West Elloe Dial A Ride
- Weston Hills C of E Primary School
- Weston St Mary C of E Primary School
- Whaplode C of E Primary School
- Womens Institute South Lincolnshire
- Workers Education Association (Spalding and District)

- Young Farmers Club
- Youth Clubs – Spalding, Holbeach, Gosberton, Sutton Bridge, Moulton Chapel and Donington

### APPENDIX 3: LIST OF LIBRARIES

#### **Crowland Library**

Hall Street  
Crowland  
Peterborough  
PE6 0EW

PHONE: 01733 210658

FAX: 01733 211846

e-mail:

[crowland.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:crowland.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

#### **Holbeach Library**

Church Street  
Holbeach  
Spalding  
Lincs  
PE12 7LL

PHONE: 01406 422782

FAX: 01406 425082

e-mail:

[holbeach.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:holbeach.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

#### **Spalding Library**

Victoria Street  
Spalding  
Lincs  
PE11 1EA

PHONE: 01775 769916

FAX: 01775 768931

e-mail:

[spalding.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:spalding.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

#### **Mobile Library**

#### **Donington Library**

25 High Street  
Donington  
Spalding  
Lincs  
PE11 4TA

PHONE: 01775 820320

FAX: 01775 820203

e-mail:

[donington.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:donington.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

#### **Long Sutton Library**

Trafalgar Square  
Long Sutton  
Spalding  
Lincs  
PE12 9HB

PHONE:

FAX:

e-mail:

[longsutton.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:longsutton.library@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

#### **Sutton Bridge Library**

Mobile library only