

# **Draft Statement of Community Involvement**

## Consultation Statement

October 2019

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## Introduction

1. Councils are required to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out how and when people can influence new planning documents.
2. The Council's first Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in 2006. Following changes to relevant legislation and regulations this was revised and a new SCI adopted in 2015. Councils are now required by Government to review their SCI every five years.
3. The Council has reviewed the current SCI and adopted a revised version. This consultation statement sets out who was consulted on the draft SCI, the main issues raised in response to the consultation, and how those issues were addressed in finalising the SCI.

## Consultation

4. The Council's Cabinet approved public consultation on the draft SCI at its meeting on 20 May 2019.
5. The table below sets out more detail regarding the consultation exercise.

*Table 1: Consultation Plan*

<b>When was the consultation undertaken?</b>	Consultation took place over a four week period, from 10 June to 8 July 2019.	
<b>What documents were published?</b>	The following documents were made available as part of the consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft SCI 2019</li><li>• A representation form</li></ul>	
<b>Where were documents published?</b>	Website	The draft SCI was available to view on the Council's consultation website: <a href="https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/">https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/</a> (see appendix 2).  Links were also provided from the main Planning Policy webpage and the Council's corporate consultation webpage: <a href="https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan">https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan</a> <a href="https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/consultations">https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/consultations</a>
	Printed copies	A printed copy of the draft SCI was available to view at the Council's main offices at Riverside House.

<p><b>How was the consultation publicised?</b></p>	<p>Notifications</p>	<p>Notification of the consultation was targeted to individuals and organisations who have previously expressed an interest in being involved with the preparation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The Council's Planning Policy team maintain a database of those interested in preparation of the Local Plan and other planning documents including statutory consultees, all town and parish Councils, consultants, developers, bodies and organisations, and the general public. Utilising this database notification was sent to 1,304 general and specific consultees.</p> <p>The Council also notified 12 agents identified as regularly involved in submitting planning applications.</p> <p>Consultees were notified of the consultation by email (see appendix 4).</p>
	<p>Press notice</p>	<p>Notices publicising the consultation were placed in local newspapers in the week beginning 3 June 2019 (see appendix 3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotherham Advertiser</li> <li>• Dinnington Guardian</li> </ul>
	<p>Press release</p>	<p>The Council issued a press release to support the consultation exercise (see appendix 5).</p>
<p><b>How could people comment?</b></p>	<p>Website, email and post</p>	<p>Consultees were encouraged to view and respond to the document online. The Council provides internet access at all libraries (free for members or with a nominal charge for non-members). The Council provided a brief guide to registering with and using the Council's consultation website to submit comments.</p> <p>Where consultees did not wish to respond through the consultation website a response form was made available which could be completed and returned via email or post.</p>

### Consultation responses

6. In response to the consultation the Council received representations from nine individuals or organisations. Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the representations, the Council's response, and any subsequent changes to the SCI.
7. The main issues raised in the representations were:
  - Seeking further detail on consultation activities and methods, contact details, guidelines for community consultation and petitions.

- Appendix A should include reference to geodiversity interest, and loss of property value and loss of a view should be identified as “Material Considerations”.
- The Joint Radio Company Limited should be consulted on any planning application involving wind turbines.
- For planning applications it does not identify who and when the Council will consult and involve.
- Concerns about the SCI consultation process.
- Concerns about the Council decision making process and other consultations.
- The ‘Digital First’ approach excludes those without access to those services.
- Consultations should be advertised in local newspapers and libraries with a paper copy of the document.
- Consultation forms should include more open ended free text options.
- Concern regarding health and safety issues in relation to wireless telecommunications technology.

8. In summary, changes made to the SCI following consultation are:

- Amend paragraph 38 to provide further detail regarding pre-application community consultation.
- Amend bullet point 2 of paragraph 39 to refer to providing consultation methodologies.
- After paragraph 43 insert further detail regarding consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees.
- Amend bullet point 17 on page 12 to include reference to geodiversity.

9. In addition to changes as a result of representations received, the Council also considers it appropriate to include reference existing and proposed arrangements with parish and town Councils. As such the following changes have been made:

- Insert after paragraph 20:  
“A Joint Working Agreement between the Council and Rotherham’s parish and town councils sets out best practice and how they aim to work together to benefit local people, and provides further information regarding Neighbourhood Planning.”
- Insert after paragraph 45:  
“The Council has a protocol which provides further guidance on how parish and town councils are involved in consultation on planning applications. This is maintained as a separate working document to allow more frequent amendment as necessary in the light of operational experience and any changes to the planning regulations.”

## **Adoption**

10. Following the consultation process a final version of the SCI has been prepared incorporating the changes set out at appendix 1 and paragraph 11 above.
11. The SCI was adopted by the Council at its meeting of xxx, and is available on the Council’s website: [www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan).

## Appendix 1: Summary of representations received and the Council's response

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
<b>Historic England</b>		
No comments	Noted	None
<b>Natural England</b>		
Unable to comment of individual SCIs but are supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general community, community organisations and statutory bodies in local planning matters, both in terms of shaping policy and participating in the process of determining planning applications.	Noted.	None
<b>Highways England</b>		
<p>In relation to Local Plans it is identified who and when the Council will consult and involve, however it is not identified for planning applications. Could you please provide clarification on this.</p> <p>We would point out 'A guide to working with Highways England on planning matters' is of relevance for the need to consult and work with us on planning applications, with specific reference to paragraph 93 relating to pre-application stage.</p>	<p>Planning practice guidance helpfully identifies when statutory consultees will be consulted on proposals. It also provides guidance regarding consultation with non-statutory consultees. An amendment to clarify the process is considered appropriate.</p>	<p>After paragraph 43 insert:</p> <p>Planning law identifies when certain statutory consultees must be consulted on particular types of development proposals. Where this is the case these organisations are under a duty to respond to the local planning authority within a set deadline and must provide a substantive response to the application in question.</p> <p>Depending upon the nature of the proposal the local planning</p>

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
		authority may also consult non-statutory consultees likely to have an interest in a proposed development and identified in national planning policy and guidance.
<b>Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust</b>		
Request more detail on how sections 5,6 and 7 works in practice; i.e. use of social media, use of existing community infrastructure and groups.	The Council may utilise social media or existing community infrastructure or groups where it is considered appropriate and where privacy and data protection requirements are adhered to. However the means of engagement will vary depending upon the particular circumstances of each case. As such the SCI is a high-level document which is not intended to be overly prescriptive, but which establishes the principles which will be adhered to rather than providing specific detail of individual means of engagement. Flexibility must be allowed to deliver what is appropriate on a case by case basis.	None
Do you have one person in the planning department who is trained/experienced in inclusive community engagement who can be the initial point of contact for people?	Whilst the SCI provides general contact details it is inappropriate to identify individual officers as these details may change over time.	None
How have you ensured this consultation has been wide-reaching?	The Council has undertaken consultation in line with the statutory requirements set out in relevant planning legislation and regulations. Refer to the consultation plan at table 1 above.	None
Concerned that residents close to allocated sites knew nothing about the allocations until planning applications submitted.	The Local Plan Sites and Policies document was subject to a number of public consultations including a variety of means of	None

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
	engagement. The Inspector examining the Plan did not identify any concerns regarding the consultation undertaken.	
It is unclear exactly what consultation/engagement techniques are carried out for housing allocations that will ultimately affect people's lives. How will people be engaged for substantial allocations of land for development? What are the triggers for neighbour notifications and drop in events?	<p>The SCI is a high-level document which is not intended to be overly prescriptive, but which establishes the principles which will be adhered to rather than providing specific detail of individual means of engagement.</p> <p>It is inappropriate to identify specific actions or triggers in relation to consultation methods as these will vary depending upon the circumstances of individual cases and flexibility must be allowed to deliver what is appropriate on a case by case basis.</p>	None
Section 25: People can register for updates on the Local Plan which is helpful but it does not say how you have publicised this 'service'.	<p>The SCI sets out how people may register on the Council's Local Plan database; however it is not considered appropriate for the SCI to set out how this service will be publicised.</p> <p>The Council will give further consideration to how the service may be publicised, for example through the website, inclusion within correspondence and / or via social media.</p>	None
<p>Concerns identified regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reference number for sites changing between plan consultations</li> <li>• The content and purpose of consultation workshops / meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan Sites and Policies document was subject to a number of public consultations including a variety of means of engagement. The Council has also provided comprehensive consultation feedback through its consultation website and through consultation statements. The Inspector examining the Plan did not identify any concerns regarding the consultation undertaken.</p> <p>The Council retained consistent site</p>	None

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
	references throughout consultation and these have been included where appropriate in the adopted document to aid cross reference to previous consultations.	
Can you include the email address of the Case Officers associated with individual planning applications on your planning portal?	This comment is beyond the scope of the SCI consultation; however the issue will be raised with the relevant department for consideration.	None
We encourage RMBC to provide guidelines on how to conduct fair, inclusive consultation exercises to avoid unbiased results (e.g. from leading questions). Whoever is undertaking the consultation exercise needs to include their detailed methodologies as well as the results in their report.	Paragraphs 37 to 39 set out the Council's expectations regarding pre application consultation. It is agreed that some additional guidance would be helpful.	<p>Insert within paragraph 38:  "Consultation methods should provide reasonable opportunity for a wide cross section of the community to provide comments. Any publicity, presentation material and questionnaires should concentrate on facts about the proposed scheme and avoid any bias or leading questions."</p> <p>Amend bullet point 2 of paragraph 39 to read:  "• The methods and timing of consultation (including methodologies adopted)."</p>
Appendix A: The Trust thinks this is a useful list, although most members of the public who do submit comments do not refer to policies as it is our experience that many people do not know how to without support. It is also worth including here what weight you give to petitions, especially	Petitions are treated the same as any other representation submitted on a proposal. The weight to give to representations, including petitions, is a matter for the decision maker. The Council has no further specific guidance	None

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
if it is none, so the public know best how to submit their opinions.	regarding petitions and as such it is not considered necessary to refer specifically to petitions in the SCI.	
<b>Mr &amp; Mrs Stamp</b>		
Appendix A - Loss of Property Value and Loss of a View should be identified as "Material Considerations" as they cannot be separated from "Loss of sunlight" and "Loss of Privacy".	National Planning Practice Guidance notes that: "The scope of what can constitute a material consideration is very wide and so the courts often do not indicate what cannot be a material consideration. However, in general they have taken the view that planning is concerned with land use in the public interest, so that the protection of purely private interests such as the impact of a development on the value of a neighbouring property or loss of private rights to light could not be material considerations." (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 21b-008-20140306. Revision date: 06 03 2014)  As such it is not accepted that loss of property value and loss of view are material planning considerations.	None
<b>Joint Radio Company Ltd</b>		
The Joint Radio Company Limited should be consulted on any planning application involving wind turbines as it represents the UK Gas & Electricity supply organisations and manages many of their radio communication links.	The Joint Radio Company are already identified by the Council as a consultee in relation to wind turbine planning applications.	None
<b>Name withheld at the request of the consultee</b>		
The process for consultation on this document was difficult as it would only let you comment if you registered with the website. This is not a way that will encourage participation.	Providing comments via the consultation website requires that respondents are registered. However a copy of the consultation representation form was also provided on the consultation website which enabled comments to be provided by email, or by post without registering. The	None

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
	consultation website (appendix 2) made clear reference to the availability of the response form.	
Comments provided on the Council decision making process including that the Transportation Group meeting is not webcast.	The comments are not relevant to the Statement of Community Involvement. The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates and how decisions are made in a way that is efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.	None
<p>The 'Digital First' approach excludes those without access to those services.</p> <p>Consultations should be advertised in local newspapers (including contact details), and advertised in libraries with a paper copy of the document.</p>	<p>Online consultation is encouraged in line with Council policy (set out at paragraph 7 of the SCI) and recognising that the Council provides access to the internet free in all libraries for members, or at a nominal charge for non-members. This provides opportunities for those without, or with limited access to the internet elsewhere to view planning information online.</p> <p>The SCI sets out the approach to newspaper notices at paragraphs 31 and 43.</p> <p>The use of libraries to assist in planning consultations (including provision of hard copies of documents or other information) may be appropriate depending upon specific circumstances; however the use of this approach for all consultations would not be feasible given the resource implications. We ensure that libraries and other locations where information is available are briefed regarding the consultation material</p>	None
Reference is made to other Council consultations and the need to check facts carefully.	The consultation referred to is not related to the planning service or relevant to the SCI. The Council endeavours to ensure that consultation material is accurate.	None

Consultee & summary of representation	Council response	Changes to SCI
<p>Consultation forms should include more open ended free text options so that residents' answers are not influenced by what the Council actually wants.</p>	<p>The Council has no template or format in which comments on planning applications must be provided. In relation to Local Plan consultations, response forms &amp; questions allow free text entry wherever appropriate.</p>	<p>None</p>
<b>Mr J Harwood</b>		
<p>Expresses concern regarding health and safety issues in relation to wireless telecommunications technology</p>	<p>The issue raised is beyond the remit of the SCI, which sets out how people can be involved in preparing Local Plan documents and decision making in respect of planning applications. It is not the role of the document to address the detail of specific uses or proposals. Relevant planning considerations will be taken into account in preparing planning documents or determining planning applications.</p> <p>Paragraph 183 of National Planning Policy Framework clarifies that "The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively."</p>	<p>None</p>
<b>Sheffield Area Geology Trust</b>		
<p>Does SAGT fall within the scope of paragraph 25?</p> <p>In Appendix A, 5th bullet from bottom, biodiversity is mentioned without including geodiversity.</p>	<p>SAGT are included in the Local Plan consultation database.</p> <p>It is considered reasonable to amend the wording of the bullet point to include reference to geodiversity.</p>	<p>Amend bullet point 17 on page 12 to read: "Adverse impact on nature conservation interests and biodiversity / geodiversity opportunities."</p>

## Appendix 2: Consultation website and webpages

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Where Everyone Matters

Local Plan - Consultation Portal

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[Consultation Home](#) > [Planning](#) > [Statement of Community Involvement](#) > [Draft SCI 2019](#) > **Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2019**

### Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2019

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how and when you can influence new planning documents covering Rotherham and the ways in which you can comment on planning applications, as well as other forms of consent such as listed building consent or telecommunications applications.

The current SCI, adopted in 2015, has been reviewed and refreshed. The draft revised document is presented in three sections which explore the:

- Approach to community involvement.
- Influencing the Local Plan.
- Getting involved in planning applications.

The Council is now seeking your views on the draft SCI for 4 weeks. You can view and comment on this document by using the links below and filling in the response form. **Comments must be received by 5pm on Monday 8 July 2019.** Please note that comments may be rejected where they are defamatory, obscene or racist or otherwise likely to cause offence.

The 'supporting documents' tab below contains a guide to using the consultation website and a copy of the response form.

 View and Comment

[Event Information](#) | [Supporting Documents](#) | [All Comments](#)

**Access:**  Login required

**Status:**  open (From 10/06/19 07:55 to 08/07/19 17:00)

**Privacy:** If you take part: your name may be displayed, your answers may be displayed, your town/city will not be shown

**Description:** Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2019

**Organisation:** Rotherham MBC

**Contact Name:** Planning Policy

**Contact Email:** [planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Contact Telephone:** 01709 823869

**Other Contact Information:** Planning Policy, Environment & Development Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE.

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# Planning policy



## The Local Plan

The Council's local plan provides a long-term development strategy for the Rotherham area.



## Current Consultation

Have your say on the draft Statement of Community Involvement



## Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a new way of securing contributions from developers towards infrastructure.

Home ▶ Closed consultations

# Closed consultations

## Closed consultations

After a consultation finishes, the responses will be considered by Council leaders before a final decision is made.

### 2019 Consultations

Proposed Public Spaces Protection  
Order for Fitzwilliam Road

Proposals to relocate the town  
centre library

Review of polling districts and  
places - 2019

Regulation and licensing of sex  
establishments

Revised Statement of Community  
Involvement

## Appendix 3: Press notice

### PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

### DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Notice is hereby given that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has published a draft Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation in line with Regulation 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).

The following provides information about the consultation process.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):** The draft revised SCI sets out the Council's policy for involving the community in the preparation of Local Plan Documents and in the consideration of planning applications. The SCI is effective for the whole of the Borough of Rotherham.

**Consultation period:** The Council is seeking your comments from **Monday 10 June until 5pm on Monday 8 July 2019**. Representations received after this deadline will not be taken into consideration.

Representations should be made using the Council's consultation website at <https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk>

This is the council's preferred method for receiving representations, as it helps to speed up the management of the process. Alternatively comments clearly marked 'SCI Consultation' can be submitted by email to [planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk)

or in writing to: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Planning Policy, Regeneration and Cultural Services, Riverside House, Main Street, ROTHERHAM, S60 1AE

A consultation response form is available upon request from Planning Policy.

**Representations must be received by 5pm on Monday 8 July 2019.**

Representations cannot be treated as confidential.

#### INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

The consultation document can be viewed at the following locations:

- On the Council's consultation website at <https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk>
- At the Council's offices at Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE during normal working hours.

The Council will consider all representations received during the consultation period. The Council will publish a statement which summarises the main issues raised during the consultation period, the Council's response to these issues, and details of the changes to the SCI as a result of comments made.

Further information is available on the Council's website at [ww.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan](http://ww.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan)

#### **Bronwen Knight**

Acting Assistant Director, Planning, Regeneration and Transport,  
Regeneration and Environment, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham S60 1AE

## Appendix 4: Consultation notification email

Dear Sir/Madam

A revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been produced which sets out how and when you can influence new planning documents covering Rotherham and the ways in which you can comment on planning applications, as well as other forms of consent such as listed building consent or telecommunications applications.

### How can I comment on this document?

The Council is now seeking your views on this document during the consultation period which runs from **10 June 2019 to 8 July 2019**.

You can view and comment on the draft document using our online consultation website at <https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk> Paper copies are also available during normal opening hours at the Council's principal offices at Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham S60 1AE.

Comments should be made via our consultation website. Alternatively you can submit your comments by email to [planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk) using the representation form (available from the consultation website or on request from Planning Policy). Please clearly mark your email as "SCI consultation".

Following this consultation, a statement will be prepared setting out how comments received have been taken into account in preparing the final SCI.

Comments should be received by **5pm on 8 July 2019**.

For any further information please contact the Council using the details below:

Phone:	01709 823869	Post: Rotherham MBC Planning Policy Planning, Regeneration & Cultural Services Riverside House Main Street ROTHERHAM S60 1AE
Email:	<a href="mailto:planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk">planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	
Web:	<a href="http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planningpolicy">www.rotherham.gov.uk/planningpolicy</a> <a href="https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk">https://rotherham-consult.objective.co.uk</a>	

Yours faithfully

**Andy Duncan**  
**Acting Head of Service**  
**Planning and Building Control**  
Planning, Regeneration and Transport  
Regeneration & Environment Services  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Riverside House, Main Street  
Rotherham, S60 1AE



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## **Appendix 5: Press release**

### **TELL US HOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOUR VIEWS**

Rotherham people have an opportunity to have their say on how they can be involved in shaping the future development of the borough.

Whenever Rotherham Council is considering a planning application, or producing policies for the borough area, it is required to consult and engage with people and organisations to gain their views.

How the Council does this is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement. The Statement helps ensure that there is active, meaningful and continued involvement of local communities and stakeholders throughout the process.

The Statement of Community Involvement needs to be updated every five years, and it is now time to review the Statement. The Council is therefore seeking people's views on how it should continue to engage with people and organisations.

Councillor Denise Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy said: "Since the last time we reviewed how we consult with people and organisations, we have found better ways to communicate and seek feedback, and there have been advances in technology which have changed the way people want to interact with us.

"We therefore need to continually review how we engage to ensure that anyone who wants to have their say can be involved – getting people's preferences on how they would like to do that is key."

The consultation runs until 5pm on 8 July. You can take part in the consultation at [www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan). The public consultation closes at 5pm on 8 July 2019.