

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Shaping the Future of North Dorset

Report on Community Consultation and
Development of the Statement of
Community Involvement

(January 2005 – October 2005)

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out a new framework for the development of planning policy to replace the Local Plan. The format is explained further in Planning Policy Statement 12 (Creating Local Development Frameworks)¹ and accompanying documents.

1.2. At the forefront of the new approach is the aim to involve local communities in the development of policy in a much more open and constructive manner than in the past by “front loading” consultation. By involving as many sectors of the community as possible from the outset of the development of policy it is hoped to produce a plan that is based on better understanding of the many different influences, (local issues, government guidelines and development economics for instance) that help to shape the way in which an area develops.

1.3. North Dorset District Council has sought to adopt an open and consultative approach from the outset of the work on the new Local Development Framework (LDF).

1.4. It was recognised early on that the public would need to be informed of the changes to the methods of plan making and public involvement if they were to be able to participate meaningfully. To this end a variety of different methods have been used to raise awareness of the new system and begin to get community involvement in the process.

1.5. This report describes the ways in which the public have been informed about and involved in the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Section 2 summarises the consultation process to date. Section 3 describes the Regulation 25 participation including the initial Raising Awareness meetings as well as more specific methods of involving local communities in thinking about the best means of communication and involvement. It also documents the responses of “specific” consultees who were approached for comments before the pre submission document was approved for publication. Section 4 describes the Regulation 26 participation and the way in which representations were addressed. Full detail of representations and Council responses are contained in the Appendices.

¹ PPS 12 Local Development Frameworks and Companion Guide to PPS12 ODPM

2. Summary of Consultation to Date

Regulation 25

2.1. Before preparing the Statement of Community Involvement we distributed a “Raising Awareness” leaflet and consulted with the bodies listed in Appendix A to gather their views on consultation in our area. These included the statutory consultees for SCIs.

2.2. To this end we invited all 74 Town and Parish Councils and 4 Community Partnerships to a **series of five workshops** held in each of the five towns in the District. The outcomes of these meetings are described in Section 3 of this report.

2.3. Following these meetings a **first draft SCI** was prepared, taking into account the advice received and this was then sent to the other statutory consultees who were invited to comment on it. The comments received and the actions taken are shown in Appendix B

2.4 The main issues raised in this round of consultation were concern that “community” consultation detracted from the role of elected parish and town councils, the need to include a wide range of consultation methods and explain how and when they will be used, the need to elaborate on the roles of both community partnerships and regional planning and the management of resources.

2.5 We addressed these issues in the pre submission SCI by explaining the link between the democratic process and the requirements of the new legislation, including all the consultation methods suggested by participants but tailoring them to the most appropriate stages of the planning process and subject to availability of resources, and including a substantial section on the role of community partnerships and how resources will be managed.

Regulation 26

2.6. We then prepared a pre submission draft SCI and carried out consultation on this draft for a six week period from 21st July to 31st August 2005.

- The document including a statement of proposals matters was available in the District Council Office in Blandford Forum, the town council offices in Gillingham, Shaftesbury, Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton and the respective libraries of these five towns.
- The document and proposals matters were available on our website with a statement explaining where and when paper copies of the document were available for inspection.

- We placed an advertisement in the Blackmore Vale Magazine on 15th July 2005.
- We sent copies of the document along with the Proposals matters and details of where the documents were available for inspection to the bodies listed in Appendix C(i). In addition we sent letters to bodies and individuals listed in AppendixC(ii) informing them of when and where the documents were available.
- We further advertised the availability of the draft by having a stall at the Gillingham and Shaftesbury Agricultural Show and by issuing a Newsletter in August that explained more about the new planning process and invited comments on the SCI.

2.7 We enclose a copy of the Proposals Matters in Appendix D.

2.8 We received 80 representations on our draft SCI. We provide a summary of the main issues raised and the way they have been addressed in the SCI in Section 4. Appendix E summarises every representation together with suggested officer responses and the recommendations of Council members at Planning Policy Panel and Cabinet. The recommendations were endorsed by full Council on 25th November 2005 and it was resolved that the SCI be submitted to the Secretary of State and published for a six week public consultation period starting in the first week of January 2006.

2.9 Additional names have been added to the database when requested. This now stands at 623 Organisations and 114 individual members of the public.

3. Raising Awareness and early Public Involvement (Regulation 25 Consultation)

3.1 In October 2004 the Council undertook two, one-day **special training events** to raise awareness of local town and parish councils of three issues:

- The new licensing laws
- The new planning framework and
- Best means of commenting on planning applications.

3.2 The events were held at Shaftesbury and Blandford and all Town and Parish Councils were invited to send representatives. There were 120 attendees representing 40 Councils at the two events. Feedback on the event showed that 73% found it very useful and the same proportion would be prepared to attend similar events in the future.

3.3 Information on the new planning framework was given by means of a power point presentation which covered the changes both at regional and local levels. An explanation was given of the different documents being prepared by the District Council and how Community and Parish Plans prepared at the town and parish level could feed into the new planning system. Questions were taken and handouts were made available.

3.4 In January 2005 the Draft Local Development Scheme was submitted to the Government Office for the South West for approval. This identified that the two documents on which work was commencing were the SCI and the Core Strategy. At this time a campaign was begun using **local media** (Vale FM radio station) and the publication of a leaflet to raise awareness of the wider public about both the SCI and topics that may be covered in the Core Strategy. The response to this campaign is described in the next section of this report.

3.5 Early in the new year the **Citizens Panel** was used to ascertain the general level of interest in the development of planning policy and a specific response on means of involvement of the public. The North Dorset Citizens Panel is a sample of 700 adult residents recruited in late 2003 using a random sampling technique from the Postal Address File. There was an 80% response rate to the survey, meaning the results are a true reflection of residents' views.

3.6 When asked whether they would like to be consulted before the preparation of updated planning policies for their local area, the vast majority (88%) said that they would. Of those interested in taking part, **a clear majority (72%) prefer consultation involving a postal questionnaire**, however significant minorities would also be willing to attend **a meeting regarding "specific issues or areas" (40%)**, a "general public meeting" (33%) or complete an "on line questionnaire" (27%).

3.7 Following up the response to the leaflets a series of **exhibitions / workshops** were held in each of the four community partnership areas and additionally in Stalbridge during April 2005.

The purpose behind these events was to enable any member of the public who had asked (via the leaflet) to be involved as well as representatives of local communities, other social and economic partner organisations and land owners and their agents, in thinking about means of consultation and the issues that may need to be tackled in the Core Strategy. A summary of the results of this exercise is included below. The full report “Shaping the Future of North Dorset – Results of Raising Awareness meetings, April 2005” can be seen on the web site at www.north-dorset.gov.uk.

Response to the “Shaping the Future of North Dorset Leaflet and Questionnaire.”

3.8 A first step in the process of raising peoples’ awareness of the new Planning system and to get people’s comments on the way in which they would like to be involved in the future was to distribute a leaflet and questionnaire throughout the district. The leaflet was also placed on the council’s website.

3.9 The questionnaire asked people if they would like to be involved or informed about the planning process in North Dorset. What areas they were particularly interested in, how they would like to be involved in the process and how they would like to be kept up date with changes in the future.

3.10 10,000 copies of the leaflet were produced. During January 2005 they were distributed widely around the district as follows:-

- Libraries 200 each, by 5 total 1000
- Sports Centres 200 each, by 6 total 1200
- Parishes 60 each, by 70 total 4200
- Towns 200 each, by 5 total 1000
- Secondary Schools 200 each, by 4 total 800
- Remainder in NDDC, main reception and DC reception

3.11 In addition to this the availability of the leaflet was also advertised through a jingle on a local radio station (Vale FM). The jingle was played five times a day throughout February and March.

3.12 There were 150 respondents to the questionnaire. Of these 78% wanted to be involved in the planning process, 20% wanted to be kept informed of progress made on planning policy and 2% wanted no further contact.

3.13 Of the 117 people who wanted to be involved the main area they were interested in were Natural Environment and Housing, which both achieved

over 70% in number of responses. The attached graph 1 gives a more detailed picture of the areas where people showed an interest. Responses to the questionnaire showed that nearly 60% of those people would like to be involved through a workshop or discussion group. This was followed by a town, parish or community partnership meeting with 53%. Graph 2 gives a more detailed picture of these responses. When asked how they would like to be informed of future changes and major planning applications, parish magazines and NDDC Website came out top with 46% of responses. Lowest in this group was using business networks or forums which only achieved a 10% response. This is shown in more detail in graph 3.

3.14 There were 30 people who wanted to be kept informed about the new planning process, but did not wish to be actively involved. As with the other group of people the natural environment came out on top with 70%, followed by green issues at 66%. The rest of the results to this question are in graph 4. With 40% of responses visiting a display or public event was the most popular way to be informed. Using the internet and town, parish or community partnership meeting were second with 33%. See graph 5 for full results. When asked how they would like to be kept up to date on future planning policy changes and major planning applications 53% chose NDDC Website. This was followed by parish magazines and local press with an equal 47% of responses. Graph 6 shows these results fully.

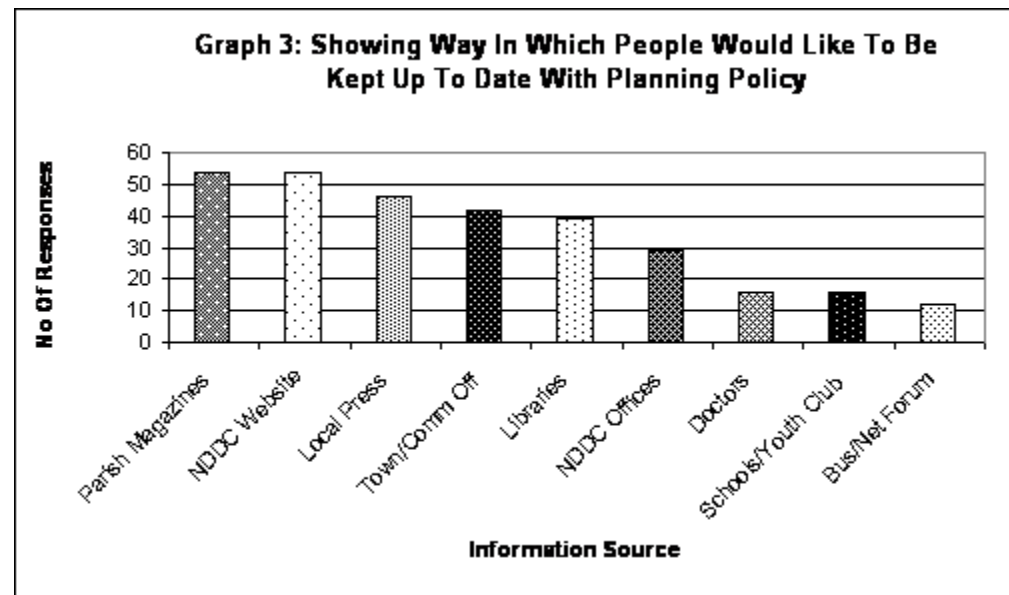
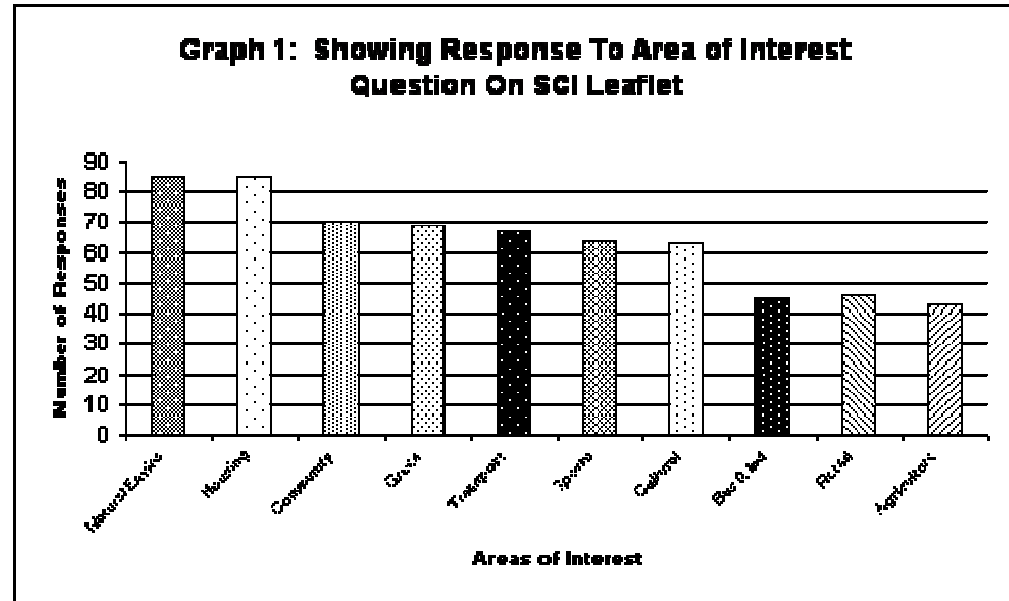
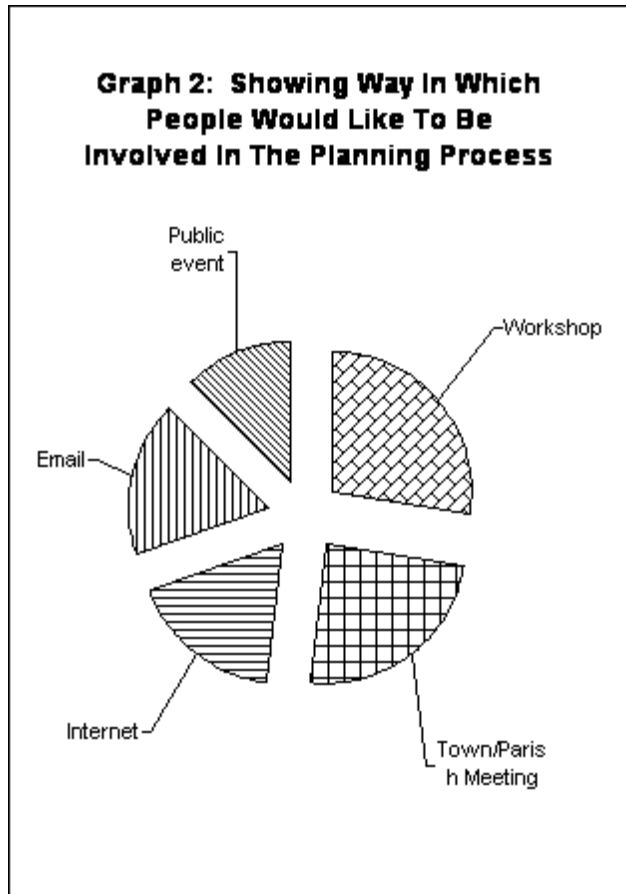
Conclusions

3.15 Results from the questionnaire clearly show that the **area most people are interested in is the Natural Environment**. Housing and “green” issues are the next most important areas for people. It will be important when the LDF process is taken forward to the special interest group stage, that these topics are given the appropriate significance, to reflect their importance to the public.

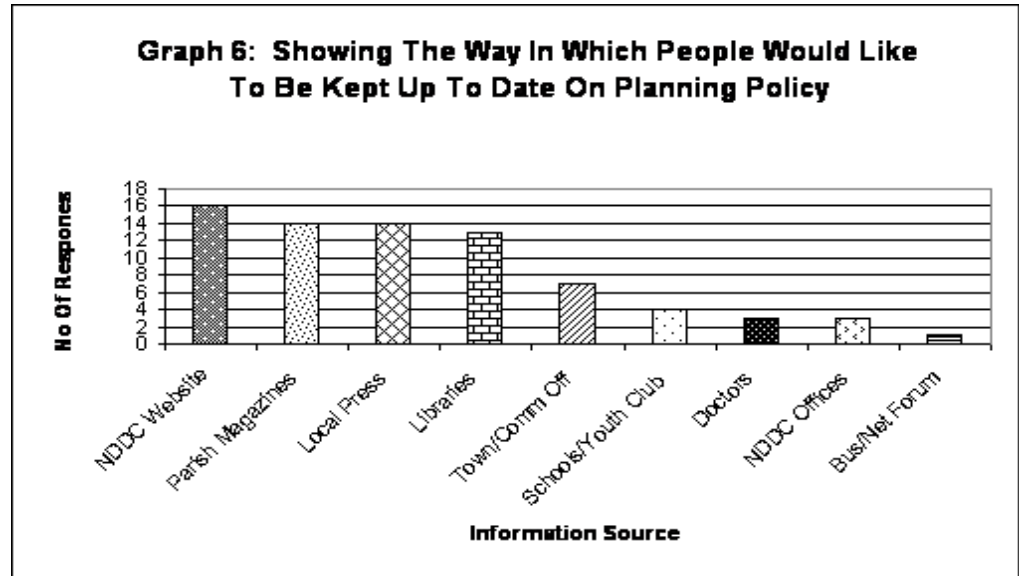
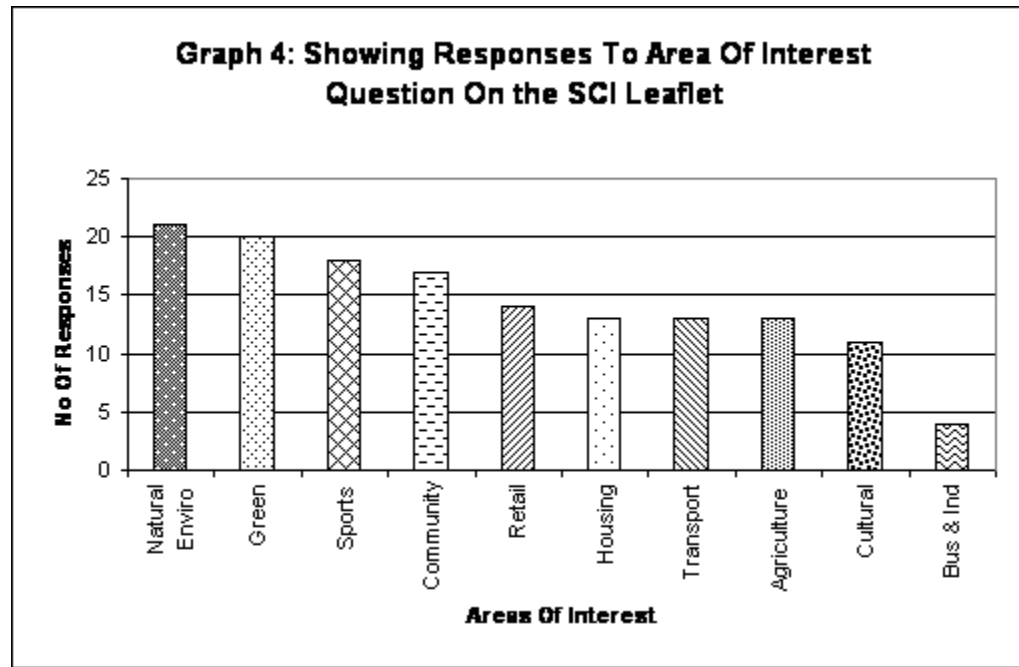
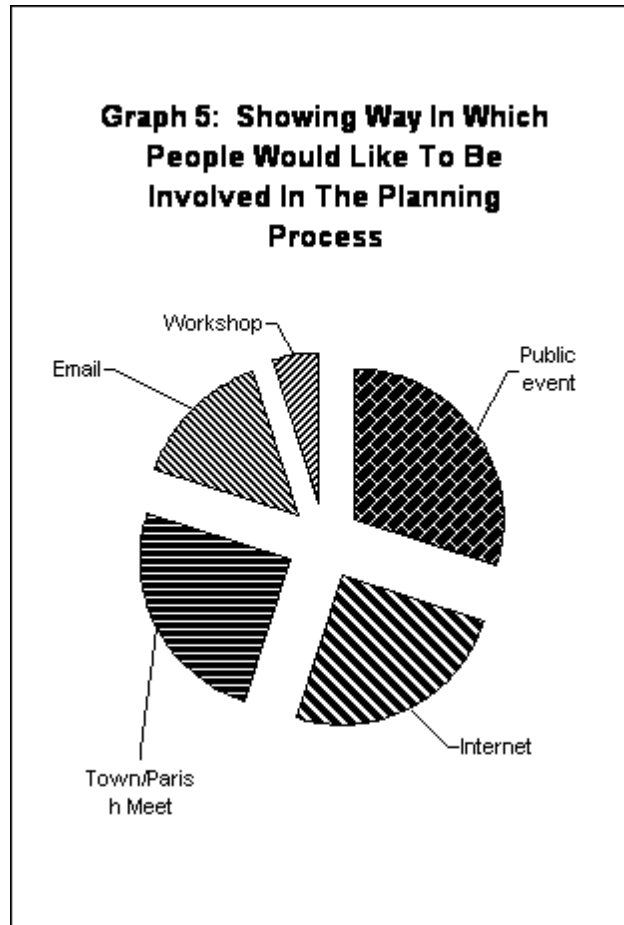
3.16 The questionnaire also reveals that the **NDDC Website will become increasingly important in the future**, as a tool for passing on information to the public. In the coming months the planning policy section on the website will have to be updated to ensure it is easy to use and understand. A news page will also need to be included, which will provide regular updates on the current progress with the planning policy process. Results also show that **information should be made available via parish magazines**. Most people will read their parish magazine, so it will provide an excellent medium for keeping people up to date on planning policy developments.

3.17 As a means of consultation in itself the leaflet was not as successful as might have been hoped. 150 responses out of about 8,000 leaflets distributed is only a 2% response rate. However it is not known how many people may have picked up the leaflet and read it as a means of information in itself.

CHARTS 1, 2 & 3 – Showing Responses of Those People Who Want To Be Involved



CHARTS 4, 5 & 6 – SHOWING RESPONSES OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO ONLY WANT TO BE INFORMED



Summary of the Results of the Raising Awareness Meetings, April 2005

3.18 A series of **five exhibition/workshops** were held in each of the towns in the District during April 2005, with the intention of raising people's awareness of the new planning process and inviting discussion on both means of consultation and on the important planning issues facing North Dorset.

3.19 Altogether over 100 people attended. They represented a broad range of interest groups from Town and Parish Councils, Community Partnerships, local agents and house builder representatives, CPRE, local businesses and representatives of educational and health interests².

3.20 At each meeting, a presentation on the new planning system was given, with an opportunity for general questions. Visitors had a chance to examine some exhibition material and were then divided into two work groups based on 1) Ideas for the Core Strategy and 2) How to get involved with the Planning Process. The latter group also considered the draft Development Control Charter which had recently been published for consultation purposes by the Council.

The Main Issues Raised

3.21 The following is a summary of the issues raised that relate to the Statement of Community Involvement and Development Control Charter. A full account of the comments is contained in the report – *Shaping the Future of North Dorset – Results of Raising Awareness Meetings, April 2005*.³

3.22 Comments were either written onto “post it” notes and stuck on exhibition boards or were recorded during the discussion sessions.

Statement of Community Involvement

3.23 Quotes from post it notes:

“People do care – need to tap into the way they care”.

“Not everyone can think on their feet”.

² For full list of attendees see full report: Shaping the Future of North Dorset – Results of Raising Awareness meetings , April 2005

³ Full Report is available to view on NDDC website.

3.24 Main issues raised:

- Is more consultation actually required? Is whole Planning process too complicated? Spend more time on the solutions rather than devising more complex consultation processes.
- Government policy too often fails to recognise different needs of rural areas.
- Consultation can raise hopes unrealistically. Need to ensure realistic options are spelled out.
- What about the democratic process? Parish and Town Councils still need to have a say, Community Partnerships are not representative of the majority.
- Variety of consultation methods preferred, no one type suits all.
- Times of meetings crucial – evenings preferred by many. Improve advertising of meetings. Consider business needs.
- Questionnaires by post or face to face if resources available.
- Use Parish / Community newsletters – free source of publicity.
- Blackmore Vale Magazine is widely read throughout the District, use it regularly to keep people informed. Start a North Dorset DC news page??
- Community partnerships already doing a good job - use them, but acknowledge they may need more resources.
- Use existing news networks eg. Gillingham's "Info Exchange" or "Homewatch" Schemes.
- E-mail / Website cheap and easy for NDDC to use, but costly for locals to download information. Keep up to date, ensure user friendly.
- NDDC logo can be a turn off (too official.)
- Involve young people in specific projects, use incentive schemes and rewards.

The Development Control Charter

- Pre application advice is necessary, especially since so little opportunity to negotiate now. A checklist would be useful (eg relevant policies, past history, necessary consultations etc.) No agreement on whether charges should be levied.
- Developers accept that pre application consultation with local community is beneficial. They are also prepared to enter "open book" discussions (where costs of developing a site are set out.) Experience is showing that early consultation is effective.
- There was no agreement on whether local community consultation should be a requirement above a particular threshold of development. Some sites are so sensitive that even a single new dwelling could be controversial.
- LPAs need to draw attention to Parish Plans where they have policies that are relevant to particular applications.

- Parishes suggested that they need more training on how to make effective comments on applications, but also need to know that their comments are received and considered.
- Parishes are aware of time constraints on applications and try to make comments within time limits. They would appreciate more pre-application involvement.
- Some thought that comments relating to broader issues than purely land use should be considered in deciding applications.
- All planning applications should be available on the website.
- Parishes are keen to be able to use developer contributions to help provide necessary infrastructure. Developers are prepared to pay contributions providing they are fair and set out clearly in advance.
- Concern with the need for effective enforcement and better use of local people as “eyes and ears” of Council. Need for more join up with Building Control in enforcement.

Conclusions from Early Consultation

3.25 The early consultation undertaken highlighted some important issues to be considered in the SCI.

3.26 Some local Councils consider their role is being threatened by unelected community partnerships and care must be taken to ensure **consultation is inclusive of all and respects the democratic process**. This means ensuring that adequate time is allowed to give local councils the best opportunity to consider any documents produced.

3.27 There was also **concern that consultation may raise unrealistic hopes** of what can be achieved. There is a need to ensure that constraints are identified as well as opportunities.

3.28 The Citizens Panel showed that consultation via **postal questionnaire** would be acceptable to many residents, but **meetings relating to particular issues** or areas would also be popular. Holding focus groups to discuss particular issues would help meet this need. **Timing of meetings/events** is crucial to ensure maximum participation, evening meetings being preferred.

3.29 Both the response to the leaflet and the follow up meetings showed that use of existing media such as **free local newsletters/ parish magazines** and the widely read **Blackmore Vale Magazine** will be useful ways of getting information out. More use should also be made of the **NDDC website**. A regular Newsletter would help keep people up to date.

3.30 On the Development Control side, there is **widespread acceptance that pre application consultation with local communities is beneficial**, particularly on larger or controversial applications.

3.31 A **checklist of relevant pre-application information** that can be made available for applicants would be useful. Applicants should be made

aware of **relevant issues in Community or Parish Plans** when seeking pre application advice.

3.32 **On going training** is required to ensure Parish and Town Councils are kept up to date with relevant policy advice.

Consultation with “Specific” Consultees Under Regulation 25

3.33 Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 requires the Local Authority to consult certain specific bodies before preparing the pre submission draft SCI.

3.34 To comply with this regulation an early draft of the document was sent out to the Government Office for the South West, the South West Regional Assembly, the Highways Agency and each authority whose area adjoins the District Council. All Town and Parish Councils had been invited to the earlier workshops sessions to have their input in this way.

3.35 Several bodies made comments at this stage, the results of which are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.36 The comments made were considered by North Dorset’s Cabinet on 23rd June 2005 and the “Actions Proposed” were endorsed by the Cabinet.

4. Consultation on the Pre-submission Draft SCI (Regulation 26 Consultation)

4.1 The pre submission draft SCI was subject to a six week consultation period in accordance with the requirements of the new planning legislation. The list of consultees is summarised in Appendix C

4.2 It is noted that at this stage the authority was made aware that it had omitted to consult with all the parish councils adjoining the District boundary. This was rectified by sending letters to the Clerks asking if they wished to make comment on the SCI and requesting contact details for future consultation purposes. A full six week period was given for their responses.

4.3 At the end of the period the representations made were recorded. A few representations were in the form of questions. These were accepted as being valid but further correspondence was required to establish whether the representation constituted an objection.

4.4 The representations ranged from general objections to the new requirements, through to lack of clarity on the consultation process and omission of individual organisations from the data base.

4.5 Clearly no changes could be made in response to those objections based on dislike of the new requirements. However, wherever possible, explanatory paragraphs were inserted to explain the reason behind new methods. In response to criticism that the consultation process was not clear, Section 4 was completely reviewed with some new text and some text re-arranged into table format.

4.6 A summary of representations is shown below and a detailed schedule of all representations and Council responses is set out in Appendix E.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS UNDER REGULATION 26

Summary of the main issues raised

Overall objections to new process

Objection examples 'Timetable of consultation will be more problematic and less democratic than current system', 'Concern over the costs of the process', 'A better balance between democratic consultation and getting on with the job is needed' 'SCI process is unrealistic and a wasteful use of resources'.

Inaccessibility of document Objection examples 'Reduce jargon and use plain English', 'Glossary of terms is too limited' 'Document is too long', 'Reliance on website is not acceptable'

Objection to paragraphs 4.17 to 4.19 concerning the clarity of consultation

Objection examples 'There needs to be clearer explanation of how the Council will carry out consultation at each stage of the process', 'Diagrams should be clear and large enough to read easily'.

Weight and input of community involvement in the planning process.

Objection examples 'What happens if the community's wishes are not concurrent with the RSS's?', 'Too much weight is given to community responses', 'Written representation may not be given the same weight as participation at a focus group' 'The document underplays the benefits of consultation'.

Objections concerning aspects of pre-application negotiations

Objection examples 'Questions whether 'encouraging' prospective applicants to involve the local community will have any effect', 'North Dorset Design Panel should not be limited, but should include other members of the public', 'The community rather than planners should decide how much involvement they should have in pre-application negotiations'.

How those main issues have been addressed in the DPD

The new planning legislation requires the local authority to conform to a set of Regulations. Therefore no substantial changes have been made, but extra explanations have been included, where appropriate.

Parts of the document have been re-written to make it more user-friendly.

The whole of section 4 has been re-written and tables used to make the process more easily understandable.

The document has been amended to explain the relationship between the LDF, Regional Planning, Community Planning and the democratic process. "Focus Groups "will be renamed "special interest groups" to better reflect their function.

The document has been amended to widen membership of the Design Panel and make it clear that community involvement will not be restricted.

Issues surrounding adherence of the 6-week consultation period Objection examples 'NDDC should take a proactive role in ensuring that local residents and community organisations actively participate', 'Note that 6 week consultation period goes against Dorset Compact on consultation procedure'.

No changes can be made to the statutory 6 week consultation period, but the Council will be proactive in raising awareness of the ongoing nature of public participation.

Accessibility issues concerning people with disabilities Objection examples 'All venues for public consultation should have full disabled access', 'Representatives of disabled community should be consulted on final plans'.

The Council will ensure that special access needs are met.

Poor response to the Raising Awareness Campaign Objection examples 'Low response raises concerns over the legitimacy of the process', 'Response rate is indicative of public's disillusionment with politics'.

These objections were 'statements of fact' and therefore no changes have been made. The campaign did result in over 100 new contacts being added to the consultee database.

Objection to paragraph 4.12 concerning 'General' consultation bodies and Appendix D Objection examples 'It is not clear whether 'hard to reach' groups have been identified', 'Does not identify the National Trust as a consultee', 'TESCO be added to the Council's database'.

Contacts have been added to the database as requested.

Regulation 25 Consultees

i) Invited to Raising Awareness Workshops

All 74 Town and Parish Councils

The Community Partnerships:

- Three Rivers
- DT11
- Shaftesbury Task Force
- SturQuest

Those who had responded to Raising Awareness leaflets

ii) Asked to comment on initial draft SCI

Government Office for the South West

South West Regional Assembly

Highways Authority

Dorset and adjoining County Authorities

Adjoining Authorities (Nb Adjoining parish councils consulted retrospectively at regulation 26 stage)

Community Partnerships as listed above.

Response to Regulation 25 Consultation on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement

Ref	Respondee	Summary of Comments	Action Proposed
1	Government Office for the South West		
1.1		Need to make reference to the Sustainability Appraisal process in the section on the Documents that are being prepared.	Paras 3.3 and 3.4 to be expanded to cover this point
1.2		Needs to elaborate on how the Community planning and LDF exercises are to be integrated.	To be covered in expanded para 4.15
1.3		Needs to be more precise about how and when the community will be involved.	Para 4.18 to be reworded more positively and identify stages of involvement.
1.4		Appendices C and D need to be personalised to include details of local bodies that will be consulted rather than just those identified in the guidance.	This has been done.
1.5		Need to identify how you will keep consultation groups up to date and how consultation methods will be reviewed.	Will include reference to use of Best Value questionnaire or Citizens' Panel
1.6		Need to set out how the results of community consultation will be fed into the process and how it will be reported on what changes have been effected as a result.	New para 4.21 will explain how comments will be reported and any actions implemented.
1.7		On consultation on planning applications, applications should be broken down into different categories and the different methods applicable to each set down. The document needs to be more precise.	Development Control input now covers these points. (It was not included in original consultation.)
1.8		Needs to set out the resources available to manage community involvement effectively.	Section 6 to be expanded to include reference to Community Partnership funding.

Ref	Respondee	Summary of Comments	Action Proposed
2	South West Regional Assembly		
2.1		Welcome paragraphs on "front loading". Need to refer to Regional Spatial Strategy after "higher level policies."	Agree to proposed change
2.2		First sentence of para 4.1 , LDDS should be in "general conformity" with the RSS.	Agree to proposed change
2.3		Appendices A and C should explain that the Assembly is the Regional Planning Body.	Agreed
3	Highways Agency		
3.1		Pleased to note inclusion as statutory consultee. No comments at this stage.	No action needed
4	Somerset County Council		
4.1		Needs to be clearer on how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of documents.	New para 4.21 will explain how comments will be reported and any actions implemented.
4.2		Hopes cross border consultation will also take place with South Somerset District Council.	South Somerset DC are a statutory consultee.

Ref	Respondee	Summary of Comments	Action Proposed
5	Dorset Community Action	Considers consultation period of 6 weeks (for the SCI) is too short, wishes to see 8 weeks as a minimum.	The statutory requirement for consultation on the draft and final submission stages of SCI and any other Development Plan Document is 6 weeks maximum. This gives rise to conflict with the Dorset Compact signed by this Council in 2003 in which we agreed to undertake a minimum of 8 weeks consultation. To go beyond the requirements of the Regulations could leave us open to challenges. GOSW advice is that in view of the ongoing nature of consultation stakeholders should have ample opportunity to engage up to and during the formal stages and that these should act as a final "catch all" to conclude a particular round of consultation. It is not therefore proposed to change the SCI in this respect.
6	Sturquest	Paras 2.3 and 4.13 need to reflect fact that Stalbridge may form a Partnership of its own.	Agree to proposed change
6.1		Para 4.14 should mention the "Community Planning in North Dorset March 2005" when discussing emerging cross cutting themes.	Agree to proposed change
6.2		Need to compare timescales for consultation with those in the Dorset Compact. Timescales are often quite long with voluntary groups who have to consult members.	See response to 5.1 above.
6.3			

Regulation 26 Consultees

i) Sent copy of pre submission document.

- Adjacent authorities including County and District authorities and Parish Councils
- All Parish Councils in the District
- The 4 Community Partnerships
- Government Office for the South West
- Rest of “specific” consultees for SCIs

ii) Sent letter to inform them of when and where the pre submission draft was available both in hard copy and on the web site.

- 53 local agents/landowners
- 35 economic groups
- 2 tourism groups
- 4 disability groups
- 1 ethnic group
- 12 youth groups
- 2 older person groups
- 28 environmental groups
- 8 health groups
- 3 sports groups
- 7 schools
- 4 transport groups
- 19 housing associations/house builders
- 5 other local authorities in Dorset
- 89 members of the general public

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Notice of Proposals Matters

Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement Pre-submission Draft

North Dorset District Council give notice of the publication of the pre-submission draft of the Statement of Community Involvement.

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the Council's agreement with the local community and other stakeholders covering their ongoing involvement in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and planning applications. The subject matter covers the whole of North Dorset.

Representations on this statement can be made during the period 21st July to 31st August 2005 inclusive. Representations received after 31st August will not be considered.

Representations can be made:

By e-mail: plancons@north-dorset.gov.uk
Or by post: Policy Manager (Planning)
North Dorset District Council, Nordon,
Salisbury Road, Blandford, Dorset, DT11 7LL

Representations can be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specified address, that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and of the adoption of the SCI.

The following documents are available for inspection:

- **The pre-submission draft of the Statement of Community Involvement**
- **The report of consultation undertaken to date.**

They can be viewed on the Council's web site: www.north-dorset.gov.uk and inspected at:

Blandford Forum - District Council Office – Nordon, Salisbury Road, Blandford, Dorset on Mon, Tues and Thurs 9.00 – 17.00, Wed 9.30 -17.00 and Fri 9.00 -16.00.

Library - Mon 10.00 - 18.00, Tues 9.30 - 17.00, Thurs 9.00 - 19.00, Fri 9.30 - 18.00, Sat 9.00 - 16.00

Gillingham - Town Council Office, Town Hall, Gillingham, Dorset on Monday to Thursday 9.30 - 13.00. Friday by appointment only

Library - Mon, Tues 9.30 - 17.00, Thurs, Fri 9.30 - 19.00, Sat 9.30 - 16.00

Shaftesbury - Town Council Office, Town Hall, Shaftesbury, Dorset on Monday to Friday 9.00am – 13.00

Library - Mon, Tues, Fri 9.30 - 17.00, Thurs 9.30 - 19.00, Sat 9.30 - 13.00

Stalbridge - Community Office, 8 Ring Street, Stalbridge, Dorset on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9.30 - 12.00

Library - Mon 14.00 - 17.30, Tues 10.00 - 12.30 & 14.00 - 17.30, Wed 10.00 - 12.30, Fri 14.00 - 17.30, Sat 9.30 - 12.30

Sturminster Newton - Town Council Office, 1 Old Market Cross House, Market Cross, Sturminster Newton, Dorset on Monday to Thursday 9.00 - 14.00 , Friday 9.00 - 13.00

Library - Mon 9.30 - 17.00, Tues 13.30 - 17.00, Thurs 9.30 - 12.30 & 13.30 - 19.00, Fri 9.30 - 12.30 & 13.30 - 17.00, Sat 9.00 - 12.30

Regulation 26 Schedule of Responses

Respondents are listed at the end of Appendix E. ID numbers on schedule identify respondents in list.

Recorded Paragraph	Representation Number	ID Number	Paragraph	Summary	Officer's Comment	Officer's Recommendation	PPP Comment	Cabinet Recommendation/ Council Resolution
7	1	808	2.3	The document underplays the benefits of consultation	Para 2.3 summarises the benefits of consultation as listed by government advice. Essentially the points suggested have been covered but could be strengthened as proposed by the objector.	Strengthen text on the benefits of consultation as proposed.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

10	2	543	3.1	<p>SCI process is unrealistic and a wasteful use of resources given that a plan already exists and that key issues are already well known at parish through to county level. Community interest is not stimulated by woolly and jargonistic documents especially in the light of national and regional policy constraints. Too much input from policy unit. District Councillors should be pivotal. Suggests alternative process to focus more on "doing" stage. No specific "jargon" is highlighted as needing to be changed.</p>	<p>The SCI sets out how the Council will act in partnership with democratically elected town and parish council members and local community groups to agree a mutually acceptable plan. It is accepted that some issues have already been raised through parish, community and county plans. However, the council is obliged to follow a given process which will ensure that the new plan is based on up to date and robust evidence.</p>	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
10	3	543	3.1	<p>Suggests alternative process to review plan. Each councillor to agree their agenda with Policy, publicise and arrange meeting with interested people, present results to cabinet for approval and action. Reviewed through periodic updates or satisfaction surveys.</p>	<p>The process suggested could be equally as cumbersome with 33 councillors arranging meetings with agendas which could conflict with each other. More importantly, the process would not be in accordance with the process set out by statute.</p>	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

13	4	598	3.4	<p>Raises questions over who determines the social, economic and environmental criteria against which proposed options are judged. Suggests re-wording to clarify: "measured against a set of social...criteria as agreed by the council and stakeholders within the requirements of the European and National legislation and as guided by existing good practice."</p>	<p>The suggested wording would clarify this point</p>	<p>Change para 3.4 as suggested.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>	<p>Members suggested rewording to "measured against a set of social,,,criteria as agreed by the Council in consultation with stakeholders, within the requirements of legislation and as guided by good practice."</p>
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22	5	598	3.13, 4.2	<p>Raises the question over what happens if the local community wishes are in conflict with the Regional Spatial Strategy. Following email discussion with the objector, he suggests that a further bullet point reading "adhere to the RSS" be added to para 3.13</p>	<p>This is a question which is often raised during consultation with the community. Government Guidance is clear that the Core Strategy must be in 'general conformity' with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and other Local Development Documents must be in conformity with the Core Strategy. This need to 'conform' is the major cause of cynicism and reluctance to get involved. Paragraph 4.2 mentions conformity but there is not much detail. Paragraph 3.13 relates to the Authority's general rather than planning priorities. It is therefore considered that adherence to the RSS would be better explained under a new heading between paras 3.3 and 3.4 where the national context is discussed.</p>	<p>Insert paragraph on relationship between LDF and Regional Spatial Strategy between paras 3.3 and 3.4</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
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24	6	422	4.1 4.9 4.13-4.16	Too much weight is given to community responses. Need to redress the balance by highlighting the role of town and parish councils	PPS 12 (paras 3.1-3.7) set out the importance of involving community organisations and partnerships in accordance with lengthy guidance from the ODPM on linkage between LDF and community plans. Parish and town councils are listed as "general consultation bodies" in Appendix D. The importance of their contribution could be highlighted in the text but detail on community consultation should not be reduced in response to this objection.	That para 4.9 be strengthened to reflect importance of town and parish council contributions.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
25	7	78	4.2	Questions community input to RSS	Para 4.2 states that the LDF will have to be in conformity with the RSS. A new paragraph on RSS is proposed in the section on national context between para 3.3 and 3.4 (See Representation 20).	Explain RSS process in a new paragraph between 3.3 and 3.4	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
26	8	430	4.3	Comment on poor response to Raising Awareness Campaign	This is factual information and should stand. Any justification would add to a document which is already criticised by some as being too long. See next rep.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

26	9	397	4.3	The low response to the Raising Awareness campaign raises concerns over the legitimacy of the whole process. The consultation process should be urgently reviewed.	The Raising Awareness campaign was undertaken to explain the new planning process to members of the public and was just the first stage in an ongoing programme of community involvement. Whilst the response was limited, it should be noted that the exercise added over 100 new names to the Planning Policy database, in addition to all the democratically elected bodies and other organisations which have traditionally been involved in the planning process. Consultation is not limited to those who responded to the Raising Awareness campaign.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
26	10	532	4.3	Para 4.3 sets out the first stage of the Raising Awareness campaign. The objector suggests that the response rate is indicative of the public's disillusionment with politics, and recommends that NDDC "break the mold" and avoid the waste of resources used in this process.	NDDC does not have the option to opt out of the new process. However, the Council should be mindful of the resources required and work efficiently within the requirements of the new process.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

28	11	430	4.5	Do not overburden volunteers or partnerships - there must be value in their time.	This paragraph is intended to address the public criticism that the community have already been consulted through the community planning process. It is not intended that joint working should overburden anyone. Joint working is seen as the best solution to "consultation fatigue". Clarity is being sought from the four community partnerships.	No change unless requested by Community Partnerships.	Noted officer comment	Members agreed that using joint working would prevent further burdening community partnerships. Agreed no change required.
30	12	56	4.7, 4.9	All three tiers of elected members have a community leadership role. Therefore, the SCI should include County Councillors in discussions concerning policy and specific planning applications, as part of the consultation process.	County Councillors have not specifically been consulted although a number of District Councillors also sit on the County Council. In addition, all relevant County Council departments are being consulted. However, County Council members representing North Dorset residents could be added to the consultation database.	County Council members representing North Dorset be added to the database for consultation on Development Plan Documents	Agreed Officer recommendation but noted that it will not be necessary to include CC members on major planning application consultations	Agreed Officer recommendation

42	13	770	4.19	All venues for public consultation should have full disabled access and offer should be made to provide individuals with information in alternative formats	NDDC only uses venues with full disabled access. This can be stated in the document. All documents are offered in alternative format. It is acknowledged that this offer should be extended to other information sent out as part of the consultation process.	Para 4.19 add comment on access for people with disabilities and availability of all information in alternative formats.	Agreed Officer recommendation. NB SINCE PPP IT HAS BEEN NOTED THAT THE COUNCIL MAY BE UNABLE TO HONOUR THIS STATEMENT WHILE HAVING TO RELY ON VENUES OUTSIDE OF ITS CONTROL. THE RECOMMENDATION HAS THEREFORE BEEN CHANGED TO READ THAT THE COUNCIL "WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT"	Suggested "The Council will meet all special needs for access".
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35	14	700	4.12	It is not clear whether "hard to reach" groups have been identified or what particular methods will be employed to engage such groups.	"Hard to reach" groups have not been specifically mentioned in the text except in the last two bullet points of para 4.19 where it is stated that the council will work with other organisations to reach groups which are traditionally hard to reach and will make special arrangements to meet with individuals where appropriate. Representative bodies for "Hard to Reach" groups are included on the database and are referred to in Appendix D.	Specify how "Hard to Reach" groups will be engaged in more detail in revised section 4.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
35	15	430	4.12	Need to ensure cross border consultation with South Somerset District Council and Wiltshire County Council	"Adjoining local authorities" are specifically mentioned in this paragraph and are mentioned by name in Appendix C. Adjoining parishes should be added to the list of specific consultation bodies.	No change to para 4.12. Add "adjoining parishes" to Appendix C.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
35	16	135	4.12	Does not identify The National Trust as a consultee.	The National Trust is on the Planning Policy database but is not specifically mentioned in the SCI.As a major landowner the NT should be added to Appendix D	Add NT to Appendix D under Agents/Landowners.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

35	17	807	4.12	Requests that TESCO be added to the Councils database to ensure appropriate consultation occurs at the key stages of the Plan making process.	Details of TESCO contact should be added to the database for ongoing participation in the planning process.	No change to document. Add TESCO details to database.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation. Noted that other major retailers in North Dorset should also be added to the data base.
37	18	73	4.14	Statement regarding status of Three Rivers Partnership Action Plan is inaccurate	This paragraph as written will need updating at every stage of the process. It has therefore been suggested to the respondent that the paragraph be rewritten to be less time based	Rewrite paragraphs 4.13-4.14 so that they do not need to be constantly updated.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

38	19	430	4.15	Comments that protocol between NDDC and Community Partnerships should now be in place.	Protocol is agreed.	Update para 4.15 to reflect that Protocol is ratified.	Officer advised that Protocol is being revised. Members agreed that position be checked and reflected in text. Further amendments now proposed for paras 4.15 and 4.11. They will be updated again if the position changes before submission to the Secretary of State	Agreed Officer recommendation
30	20	700	4.7-4.19	There is no clear expression within the document of how and when the community will be consulted	Section 4 of the document is intended to explain this process. Providing more precise detail at this stage is difficult. However, it is acknowledged that the document should be clear and concise and the information will be provided in table format as recommended by GOSW.	Information in Section 4 will be partially rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

40	21	168	4.17	Suggests that the way in which bodies will be consulted could be shown more clearly in table form.	This has been suggested by other respondents and would be more consistent with the way in which the section on planning applications is presented.	Information in Section 4 will be partially rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
40	22	808	4.17-4.19	There needs to be a clearer explanation of how the Council will carry out consultation at each stage of the process.	This is an objection raised by others and needs to be addressed.	Information in Section 4 will be partially rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
40	23	71	4.17	Diagrams should be clear and large enough to be read easily.	Summarising information in table format typically necessitates a smaller font size. The diagram referred to is difficult to read and should be reproduced in a more accessible format.	Information in Section 4 will be partially rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
41	24	430	4.18	Asks how community will be involved in the production of Development Plan Documents.	The whole of section 4 seeks to explain how the community will be involved. It has been suggested by other respondents that the information could be shown more clearly.	Information in Section 4 will be partially rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

42	25	810	4.19	Concern that written representations may not be given the same weight as participation at a focus group, for example. This would disadvantage organisations which are involved in a number of plans and can not attend meetings.	The SCI process is not intended to discriminate against organisations or individuals who can't attend meetings. This should be made clear.	Para 4.19. Add bullet point relating to consultation by letter/written representation.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Members were advised by the Chief Executive that the term "Focus Group" was defined as statistically representative. As the groups have not been set up in this way the groups would be better described as "Special Interest Groups. Therefore here and throughout all documents "Focus Group" should be replaced with "Special Interest Group"
42	26	430	4.19	Comment that Community Partnership newsletters and Gillingham Town Council Information Exchange are appropriate means of communication.	Acknowledge incorrect use of "if appropriate".	Delete "if appropriate" at end of fifth bullet point in para 4.19.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

42	27	813	4.19	Focus groups are undemocratic. Members who are known to agree with proposed policies get invited.	Focus groups consist of members of the public who have expressed an interest in the specific topic under discussion together with invited "experts" who cover a wide spectrum of views on different aspects of any subject. The SCI explains that policies need to take on board existing strategies. It is therefore sensible to get community and experts together to engender understanding. At the end of the process a number of options will be put forward for wider ongoing consultation and assessment against social, economic and environmental criteria agreed by stakeholders.	No change.	Members considered that the concerns of the respondent should be addressed in the text. Changes to para 4.19 have subsequently been agreed with the portfolio holder	Members agreed that the description of these groups should be given further thought. The following has now been agreed with the General Manager (Policy)
42	28	71	4.19	Font should be of a consistent size.	Font size on page 16 of the SCI is varied. This should be edited to be consistent with the rest of the document.	Edit font size on page 16.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

43	29	71	4.20	This objection relates to the response from the GOSW concerning the six week period for consultation. NDDC should take a proactive role in ensuring that local residents and community organisations actively participate. This objection relates primarily to the response from GOSW concerning the 6 week period for consultation.	Community organisations are aware that NDDC is obliged to work to a very tight schedule. The SCI sets out in detail how the authority will work with community partnerships to ensure meaningful participation. Unfortunately, communications sometimes fall down, but the SCI should set out clearly when and how organisations will be consulted.	No change to 4.20. Other changes in response to GOSW are designed to add clarity to the process.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation. Noted that officers will investigate using a "lead in period" to the formal consultation exercise.
43	30	78	4.20/4.21	Notes that GOSW refused to extend consultation period beyond six weeks despite commitment in Dorset Compact and despite all the emphasis on community consultation.	The reason for adhering to the six week period is given in these paragraphs. NDDC are constrained by the approved LDS timetable and by government policy on this issue.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation. Noted that officers will investigate using a "lead in period" to the formal consultation exercise.

50	31	452	50	<p>With vast majority of planning applications being dealt with under delegated powers, there is little or no opportunity for objections to be effectively voiced. There should be a right to appeal against officer decisions within a 2/3 week period following a decision.</p>	<p>This issue is periodically discussed by the planning profession and at government level, but so far the decision has been to not introduce these rights of appeal for objectors (known as third party rights). Therefore the authority is constrained by legislation). Decisions on planning applications are not arbitrary, they are taken within the context of the statutory Local Plan and all "material" objections are taken into account.</p>	<p>No change.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation but highlighted the scope for council members to request committee consideration of planning applications where issues had been raised</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
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56	32	78	5.11	<p>Questions whether "encouraging" prospective applicants to involve the local community will have any effect</p>	<p>Para 7.7 of the companion guide to PPS12 states that the SCI should "encourage" but "cannot prescribe" that developers involve the community. Similarly, at 7.7.2 "Authorities cannot refuse to accept valid applications because they disagree with the way in which an applicant has consulted the community. However, failure by the applicant to consult could lead to objections being made which could be material to the determination of the application". Because of the tight timescale after applications are submitted, prospective applicants will find it in their interest to reduce conflict before submission, in order to avoid a refusal or permission.</p>	<p>No change.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation. Members noted that minor applications can also have major local implications but that small organisations may not have the resources and experience to conduct public consultation. This is a matter for the DC Charter rather than the SCI.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
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56	33	423	5.11 - 5.13	Questions whether pre-planning consultation would have prevented White Pit situation	The application referred to was for housing, a replacement primary school and new community hall at Whitepit, Shillingstone and was a major application for the village. Although a public meeting was held in the village at an early stage in the application process, more pre application discussion would certainly have helped raise both the local community's and County Council's (as landowner) awareness of each other's concerns and might have highlighted problems that subsequently arose (eg the archeological implications) at an earlier stage.	No change	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
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58	34	595	5.13	<p>Objector raised three concerns which should be addressed through community involvement; how to obtain early knowledge of new local applications, how to use limited timescale productively and how to obtain access to informed comment on matters of concern.</p>	<p>There will be a pre-application process during which groups like SturQuest Open Spaces Group will be invited to comment. When applications are received, such groups could be included as non-statutory consultees. It is acknowledged that time is limited but, by the time that applications are received there should already be an awareness by all parties of the issues involved. Similarly, officers' time is limited, but the council is boosting the role of support and reception staff so that detailed information can be obtained more readily. Anyone can be considered for addition to the development control database. With the increased use of IT for general information, telephones should be freed up for more specific information and for those who do not have access to the internet.</p>	<p>Add specific reference to partnership and parish plan working groups to para. 5.13</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation. During discussion it was noted that all consultation responses will eventually be available in the council's web page.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
58	35	73	5.13	<p>North Dorset Design Panel should not be limited to architects, planners and councillors, but should include other members of the public.</p>	<p>Agree. It is anticipated that the Panel will also provide the opportunity for Local Community Partnership participation.</p>	<p>Change para 5.13 to include LCP participation.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>

58	36	770	5.13	Representatives of disabled community or a qualified Access Consultant should be consulted on final plans.	Disabled access is dealt with under building regulations and is not a material consideration in determining planning applications. However, the Council is anxious to address this concern. It now has the power to introduce new criteria that will have to be met if an application is to be registered as valid. It will consider whether it can make "Access Statements" a requirement in some circumstances. Your officers feel that the list provided at 5.13 is flexible enough to include representation from people with disabilities.	no change	Agreed Officer recommendation. Members discussed how NDDC could do better than the minimum requirements and noted that this could be a role for the Design Panel	Agreed Officer recommendation
58	37	807	5.13	Paragraph 5.13 states that the Council will expect at least two methods of consultation to be used on major applications. This conflicts with advice from the ODPM.	The list of possible ways of involving communities is based on suggestions in the ODPM guidance. If developers wish to use other means, the Council would not be prescriptive. Officers consider the wording to be flexible enough and would not wish to "water down" the message.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

59	38	78	5.14	The community rather than planners should decide how much involvement they should have in pre application negotiations.	Paragraph 5.14 is not intended to limit the extent of community involvement that any developer may wish to pursue. It is intended to persuade developers to at least undertake the minimum involvement.	Make changes to last sentence of para 5.14: delete "and agree", insert "minimum" before "extent".	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
59	39	807	5.14	Para 5.14 needs to clarify when project team working will be introduced for types of major applications.	Project teams are already being used for some larger applications.	Change para 5.14 by amending tense in the third sentence	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
59	40	807	5.14	ODPM good practice guide acknowledges need for confidentiality in pre-application discussion. Therefore, para 5.14 should be changed to reflect need for confidentiality.	It would be helpful to highlight the need for confidentiality in the SCI	Amend last sentence of para 5.14 to include need for confidentiality.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
60	41	700	6	Suggests that more information is provided on how the detail on consultation groups is held and updated.	Information on consultation groups is held on an Access database. It will be reviewed as the council progresses its IT upgrade and all consultees will be asked to update contact details and state a preference for electronic or traditional communication in the future. An initial review is planned in conjunction with a progress report to be mailed/emailed out in October.	Include a paragraph in Section 6 on how consultation group data is stored and updated.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

60	42	430	61	£30,000 consultancy fees to cover need for expert advice seems excessive.	To fulfill the criteria of "soundness" LDF policies must be based on clear and robust evidence. This will involve extensive research and survey work, and personnel may not always be available to cover every area of expertise. The council must ensure that a budget is set aside for such eventualities so that delivery of policies in accordance with the agreed timetable are not jeopardised. Failure to deliver on time could result in loss of "planning delivery grant" (worth £54,000 in 2004/5).	No change.	Document should explain that taxpayers money is not being wasted. New paragraph 6A suggested which incorporates officer and member comments	Agreed Officer recommendation
73	43	397	82	Concern that reference to ODPM web site excludes non computer literate residents.	The only reference to the ODPM website is on the response form to explain one of the "tests of soundness". One of the "tests" is whether the Council has met the minimum requirements as set out in the Regulations. Advice is awaited from the Planning Inspectorate on how to express this in "plain English", while still meeting legal requirements.	Defer recommendation until advice from PINS is received	Officer comments noted	Noted that document does not limit response. No change required.

73	44	532	8.2	Response form limits ability to comment	The response form is designed to focus comment on the "tests of soundness" which will be used by the Planning Inspectorate when judging the Council's planning documents. It is not intended to limit comment. The response form is designed in accordance with draft guidance from the Planning Inspectorate.	Expand para 8.2 to explain that the purpose of the form is to focus rather than limit response.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
78	45	71	Appendix B	Reduce jargon and use plain clear English	Whenever possible, jargon has been avoided but NDDC are willing to discuss further reduction, where possible.	To discuss further with objector to reduce unnecessary jargon. Glossary to be expanded and referred to in the text, as appropriate.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
80	46	686	Appendix D	Include South West RSL Planning Consortium in list of consultees in Appendix D.	It is not possible to include all 850+ names on the database in Appendix D. However, as the respondent represents an umbrella group, it would be acceptable to include the Consortium as a named consultee	Include SW RSL Planning Consortium as a named consultee	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
80	47	423	Appendix D	the DAPTC is not included in the list of consultees	The DAPTC has been involved but is not mentioned by name under community groups. However, all parish and town councils are listed. The DAPTC as an umbrella group can be added.	Add DAPTC to Appendix D under community partnerships/organisations.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

77	48	808	Appendix A	The glossary of terms is too limited. A much wider range of terms needs to be properly defined and existing definitions should be expanded.	Expansion of the Glossary would improve understanding of the process.	Expand Glossary along the lines suggested.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
1	49	469	All	Too long and sleep inducing	The document has been kept as short as possible within the statutory requirements. Other comments have been received asking for more detail.	No specific change in response to this comment. Other changes may make the document more focused and therefore easier/quicker to read.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
1	50	423	All	Timetable of consultation will be more lengthy and less democratic than current system (i.e. dependent on RSS which is remote)	NDDC is not in a position to change the requirements of the new system. The agreed LDS timetable is as short as is practicable.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
81	51	770		Highlights access problems experienced by people with disabilities	This is not specifically related to the SCI. The comments will be added to those made at the Traveling Focus Group as part of the evidence gathering for the Core Strategy.	No change	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

81	52	497	<p>Leaflets or letters regarding major applications should be sent to local groups in the towns/parishes which would be affected by a particular development. County HQs as listed in Appendix D do not have local knowledge. Please add Gillingham Afternoon Women's Institute to Appendix D.</p>	<p>Appendix D relates to DPD documents and not planning applications. There are 850+names on the Planning Policy database and every name can not be reproduced in the SCI. However, the general point can be made, and the specific group named can be added to the database. With regard to consultations on Planning Applications the authority will seek to increase the number of local groups that are consulted but this can only be done as the authority is made aware. Normally only 'land based' organisations would be contacted. Increasingly, 'social' groups will be able to access information from the website.</p>	<p>Note in para 4.12 that local reps will be consulted when known. Add group to database.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation. Noted that databases should be fit for purpose and updated regularly. Local contacts should be checked annually to confirm that they wish to remain on the database. Extra text has been added to para 6.2A</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
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81	53	808		<p>Fails to define "community" and makes no reference to the role of the development industry.</p>	<p>Agreed that "community" is not defined. A definition could be included at the beginning of Section 4. Housebuilders are one of our local business communities. House builders, consultants and local agents have all been invited to participate in focus groups and have been consulted on the LDF process so far. There are over 50 individual organisations on the database. The importance of getting them involved in the process is recognised, and it is agreed that the SCI should be modified to reflect this. It is appreciated that developers will experience difficulty in inputting to the process unless specifically instructed by their clients.</p>	<p>That a definition of "community" be included at para 4.1 and that the importance of getting developers involved at an early stage is recognised in the section 'who will be consulted'.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>	<p>Suggested that definition of community should be in line with government definition in "New Localism".</p>
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81	54	808	<p>SCI should provide an opportunity for developers to present their case directly to the community in the same way as they can present their planning applications. There should be greater emphasis on round table discussions and on the role for developers in assessing alternative options.</p>	<p>The SCI does not stop developers from being involved in the process Over 50 Agents/Developers were invited to a recent focus group on housing and a larger number than this have been invited to comment on the pre-submission SCI. The industry itself needs to take some responsibility for ensuring that its clients make themselves aware of the new process and the need to engage with local authorities at an early stage. They will need to provide realistic alternatives to be assessed. Developers should not wait until specific sites are being put forward but should engage in the development of strategic policy.</p>	<p>No change.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
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81	55	397	Parish Plans should be accepted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and more cognisance should be taken of parish plans in the LDF process.	Although a Parish Plan can no longer be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they do provide local evidence of issues which the LDF may be able to address. Paras 4.13-4.16 explain the role of community partnerships and parish plans in some detail. A protocol exists to ensure that communities are informed of how the District Council can help in the implementation of their Action Plans. The main reason why Parish Plans can not be adopted as SPG (or SPD under the new system), is that many of their actions are not land use based. Community planning bodies should note that issues identified in their plans were added to issues which emerged from the first round of focus groups. These will be used in formulating policy for North Dorset. Paragraphs 4.13-4.16 could make more specific reference to Parish Plans.	Strengthen paragraphs 4.13-4.16 to include reference to Parish Plans.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
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81	56	397		Raises concern over the cost and requests exact sum incurred.	The consultation process is prescribed by legislation. Failure to comply may result in financial penalties. Council will strike a balance between the need to consult in a meaningful way and the need to use resources wisely. The cost of planning policy is on the Council's website. Comparison with previous years will give some idea of whether costs are increasing as a result of the new process.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation. Noted that the LDF process is only part of the overall budget and that other departments and organisations are involved. An accurate answer can not therefore be provided	Agreed Officer recommendation
81	57	397		Concern that site visits will be stopped	There is no proposal to stop site visits. Contrary to government advice, members have agreed to continue to allow the public to attend and give their views. This is in addition to their right to speak at Development Control Committee. The protocol is set out in the Development Control Charter. It is not necessary to reiterate it in the SCI.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

81	58	71		Reduce reliance on people looking for information - stating that a document is on the website is not informing people.	Reference to documents on the website is for those who wish to use that method. The use of the website is just one method of making information available and this should be clear from the document. Section 4 is to be partially rewritten in response to other representations. This should further clarify how use of the web site dovetails with other methods of communication.	No change to references to website except where affected by partial rewrite of Section 4 in response to other representations.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
81	59	532		The paperwork is too long, repetitive and wordy	In response to similar objections, some of the information will be rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Some of the information will be rewritten in a more user friendly and concise manner.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
81	60	532		A better balance is required between democratic consultation and getting on with the job	NDDC is obliged to work within the requirements of the new planning process which places extra emphasis on the consultation process.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

30	61	22	4.7-4.12	<p>The list of bodies to be consulted in these paragraphs does not include developers, nor does Appendix D. Concern that developers are not engaging with the process</p>	<p>Agreed that developers should be specifically mentioned as consultees. However, they have not been omitted from the process. Housebuilders, consultants and local agents have all been invited to participate in focus groups and have been consulted on the LDF process so far. There are over 50 individual organisations on the data base. The importance of getting them involved is recognised, and it is agreed that the SCI should be modified to reflect this. It is appreciated that developers will experience in inputting to the process unless specifically instructed.</p>	<p>That the importance of getting developers involved at an early stage is recognised in the section "who will be consulted"</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation. In addition members noted the importance of getting developers involved at an early stage and recommended that officers ensure that major landowners are also included as consultees. They did not feel that it was necessary to make any special case for involving developers other than through the methods already being used.</p>	<p>Agreed Officer recommendation</p>
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78	62	22	Appendix B	The SCI lacks detail that the council is involving developers and their agents, Levvels attended a Focus Group meeting, but there is no mention of the outcome of such meetings in the SCI	The outcome of the Focus Groups have not been included in the SCI, as they are being used as the evidence for the Core Strategy, and therefore information concerning such meetings will be published with the Pre Submission Core Strategy, which is tabled in for publication in February 2006.	No change to SCI.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
42	63	22	4.19	Paragraph suggests that the Planning for Real exercises and workshops will not be used for the policies in the Core Strategy nor the Generic Development Control policies. Objector questions what techniques the Council proposes to use in order to assess the options for the policy on affordable housing in particular.	It is suggested that round table discussions such as Focus Groups are more suitable for strategic policies such as affordable housing.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation
81	64	22		Objector would prefer to be contacted via email, and believes this would be the best way to contact the development industry in general.	This is an option set out in the SCI. As the Council updates its IT there will increasing opportunity for online consultation and discussion.	No change.	Agreed Officer recommendation	Agreed Officer recommendation

List of Persons Supporting the SCI

ID Number	Title	Forename	Surname	Organisation Name
812		Katherine	Burt	Environment Agency
811		Alice	Ordidge	South West Regional Development Agency
809		Gaynor	Gallacher	Highways Agency
808	Mr	Paul	Davis	Persimmon Homes
724	Mr	Harry	Stevens	Strategic Land Partnerships
559	Mr	Stuart	Todd	South West Regional Assembly
549	Mr	William	Wallace	East Dorset District Council
168	Mr	Phil	Norman	Strategic Planning Service, Somerset County Council
81		Rhian	Thomas	Rapleys Commercial Property and Planning Consultants
80	Mrs	Susan	Levy	Broad Oak Residents Association
56	Mr	Steve	Place	DT11 Forum Dorset Community Action
78	Mr	D M	Adkins	Newton Resident's Association

List of Persons Raising Objections to the SCI

ID Number	Title	Forename	Surname	Organisation Name
22	Mr	George	Venning	Level Consulting Ltd
56	Mr	Steve	Place	DT11 Forum Dorset Community Action
71		Susi	Calder	Three Rivers Partnership
78	Mr	D M	Adkins	Newton Resident's Association
135	Mr	Chris	Gingell	The National Trust
168	Mr	Phil	Norman	Strategic Planning Service, Somerset County Council
397	Mr	John M	Gill	Child Okeford Parish Council
422		S	Murdock	Shaftesbury Town Council
423		Susie	Bamforth	Shillingstone Parish Council
430	Mr			Sturminster Newton Town Council
452		J D	Astin	
469	Mrs	J	Day	
497	Mrs	Vanessa	Cockarill	
532	Mr	Richard	Wood	
543	Mr	Ken	Lindon Travers	
595	Mr	James	Martin	Sturminster Newton Open Spaces (Sturquest)
598	Mr	David	Bacon	
686	Mr	Robin	Tetlow	Tetlow King Planning
700	Mr	David	Jones	GOSW
770	Ms	Sue	McKerrow	NORDDIS
807		Kiran	Garcha	DPP
808	Mr	Paul	Davis	Persimmon Homes
810		Jan M	Molyneux	National Home Builders Federation
813		Lesley	Gasson	Shillingstone Parish Council