

CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE STATEMENT OF

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MAY 2014

(Adopted by JPC on 12 May 2014, brought into effect 20 May 2014)



CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) outlines how the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee expects to involve and consult the public and stakeholders when preparing planning policy documents, namely local plans (page 2) and supplementary planning documents (page 4). It also outlines how and when the public can have their say on planning applications (page 5) and provides brief commentary on neighbourhood planning (page 8).

The commitments made in this SCI are legally binding on CLJPC and its constituent district authorities. The County Council also has a duty to prepare and maintain its own separate SCI, which will mostly cover planning consultations related to Minerals and Waste proposals and policies.

The three district constituent authorities of the CLJSPC may, in addition to this SCI, adopt their own non-legally binding guidance on community involvement in planning matters specific to their individual area. However, any such guidance can only add to, rather than take away from, the commitments set out in this SCI.

What is the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee? The Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (CLJSPC) is responsible for the strategic planning policy functions of the four constituent authorities of the Central Lincolnshire area, namely the City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council, West Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council. Each of these four authorities remain individually responsible for other planning policy functions, such as neighbourhood planning, as well as development management operations (e.g. determining planning applications).

Our Commitment to Meaningful Consultation

The CLJSPC is committed to meaningful community involvement in planning: this includes taking all input from the community into account. There are various stages in the process of preparing planning policy documents and determining planning applications where community involvement can take place. Government legislation puts in place minimum requirements, but local authorities can go further if they wish. This document will help you to make sense of the process, and learn how consultation will take place in Central Lincolnshire. The benefits of good community engagement include:

Enhanced democracy: planning shapes the places where we live and work, so community involvement is vital to getting planning right.

Transparency: consultation gives us the opportunity to inform the public about the boundaries and limitations incurred in policy making, particularly the challenges faced in balancing the interests of all groups.

Encourages ownership: we hope that the public will better understand, respect and promote outcomes if they have been involved in the identification of issues and the generation of options and ideas to address such issues.

The Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Committee's Vision for Community Involvement

To comprehensively engage with users of the City and Districts, including residents, service users, stakeholders and partners, in a meaningful, appropriate and cost effective way.

Local Plans

What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan, in simple terms, sets out the policies a council will use to determine planning applications. It also sets out clearly what land is proposed for new development and what land a council thinks should be protected. A more legal definition is set out in the glossary.

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan: when will it be prepared?

A Council can produce more than one Local Plan, but it has been agreed that a single Local Plan will be produced for the Central Lincolnshire area, replacing the existing Local Plans for the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven District and West Lindsey District Councils.

To help you find out when the Local Plan will reach a consultation stage, the CLJSPC has prepared a project plan called the Local Development Schemes (LDS). The latest Central Lincolnshire LDS can be viewed on our website (www.central-lincs.org.uk/lds). The CLJSPC commits to keeping the LDS up to date and highlighting on our website the latest stages we have reached with preparing our Local Plan.

Who we will consult on the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan

When preparing our Local Plan, we will invite the following to be involved in the various stages:

- ‘Specific’ and ‘General’ consultation bodies who are considered to have an interest in the proposed Local Plan. By law, we must consult these bodies¹.
- Residents, especially those that have expressed their interest in the Local Plan and have asked for their details to be kept on our consultation database.
- Businesses in the area who we consider appropriate or who have expressed an interest.

Although those outlined above will be specifically targeted during the preparation of our Local Plan (emails, newsletters etc), any individual, business, organisation or group is welcome to partake in any or all of the various consultation stages.

When we will consult

The public, businesses and consultation bodies will have opportunities to be involved in the preparation of the Local Plan at various stages. The CLJSPC commits to there being at least the following opportunities for involvement, though please note that we can only take comments relating to planning considerations into account.

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| Draft plan consultation (min 6 weeks) | <p>At this stage, we legally as a minimum must notify appropriate bodies of our intention to prepare a Local Plan and what the subject of this plan will be. However, the CLJSPC commits to going further than this legal minimum, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will invite comments from everyone, not just the appropriate bodies required by law• We will set out in the draft plan greater detail than is legally required as to what the emerging plan will look like, and seek comments on it. This gives everyone a better opportunity to make informed comments before the plan reaches its final stages.• If appropriate, we may consult on a second draft plan, especially if the first draft plan had some elements of uncertainty or we specifically asked open questions seeking the views of the public. <p>Following the consultation(s) on the draft plan we will use all feedback to consider how best to revise the plan before reaching the next stage.</p> |
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¹ specified in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

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| | <p>We will summarise and publish a report of all the key issues raised at this stage. Whilst we will not reply to each individual person or respond to every comment raised, we can assure you that all comments received will be carefully considered.</p> <p>Any comments received outside the advertised consultation period are unlikely to be considered.</p> |
| <p>Consultation on the proposed submission ('final') version of the plan (min 6 weeks)</p> | <p>Once we have finalised the plan in light of the earlier round(s) of consultation we will consult on what is known as a proposed submission version of the plan. This is the final version of the plan before it is submitted to government for examination.</p> <p>All comments received during this consultation will be considered by the independent inspector who is appointed to examine the plan: he or she will consider if any changes are needed in light of the comments received (not the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit). Further details on this stage will be published nearer the time.</p> |

How we will consult

We will use a range of methods to engage with the community when we prepare a Local Plan. Some things we are required to do, but the CLJSPC commits to undertaking as a minimum the following:

- Notify certain bodies which we have to in order to bring the consultation to their attention and inform them of how and when they can make comments.
- Notify anybody else who has asked to be notified or who we think would be interested in the emerging plan.
- Issue a press release to bring the consultation to the attention of the wider public and inform them of how and when they can make comments.
- Make hard copies of the plan and other essential material available to view at various suitable locations, such as Council offices and libraries.
- Publicising full details of the consultation on Council websites, including making an electronic version of the Plan available for people to view and download.

In addition to this, we may, if appropriate and cost effective, also:

- Undertake a 'launch' event at the very start of the plan making process, to highlight to everyone that we have commenced preparation of a new local plan. However, this will not be a formal consultation event.
- Use questionnaires (electronic and/or hard copies) to gather feedback during a formal consultation period.
- Hold focus groups or workshops to gather feedback.
- Have exhibitions / displays in appropriate places.

During all consultations, individuals and organisations will be able to submit comments either:

- In writing: via post, or at a focus group, workshop or exhibition (if held); or
- Electronically: via email, electronic questionnaire (if available), or via an online consultation portal (if available).

Supplementary Planning Documents

What is a Supplementary Planning Document?

A supplementary planning document (SPD) is a document which can be prepared to expand on a particular policy or policies contained within the Local Plan. The CLJSPC may prepare SPDs at any time, but is not obliged to do so. Also, the individual constituent authorities may prepare SPDs which are specific to their locality only. Whether the CLJSPC or one of the constituent authorities prepares an SPD, the following commitments will apply.

Who will be consulted on Supplementary Planning Documents?

When preparing an SPD, any individual, business, organisation or group is welcome to partake in the public consultation stage/s. However, the CLJSPC/the local planning authority may choose to notify those individuals, businesses, organisations and groups which it thinks will have particular interest in the SPD and invite them to comment.

When we will consult

We will invite comments on the draft version of a SPD during a consultation period of at least 4 weeks: we will review all comments received during the consultation period and amend the SPD as necessary and appropriate. As with Local Plans, only comments relating to planning considerations can be taken into account.

Depending on the nature and extent of changes made to the SPD, we may decide that it is necessary to re-consult on the revised draft, again for at least 4 weeks. If so, we will notify all those who submitted comments during the initial consultation of this second consultation. However, as before, anyone will be able to submit comments during the second consultation stage, if one takes place.

How we will consult

As with Local Plans, when we consult on a SPD we will:

- Make hard copies of the SPD available to view at various suitable locations, such as Council offices and libraries during the consultation period.
- Publicise full details of the consultation on the relevant CLJSPC or Council websites, including making an electronic version of the SPD available for people to view / download.

We may also identify other methods to engage the public, taking into account the subject and content of the SPD, the individuals and organisations that we want to target, as well as accessibility and cost. These may include:

- Issuing consultation letters / emails to parties who we consider will have a particular interest in the SPD to bring the consultation to their attention and inform them of how and when they can make comments.
- Issuing a press release to bring the consultation to the attention of the wider public and inform them of how and when they can make comments.
- Using questionnaires (electronic and hard copies) to gather feedback.
- Holding focus groups or workshops to gather feedback.
- Having exhibitions/ displays in appropriate places.

During all SPD consultations, individuals and organisations will be able to submit comments either:

- In writing: via post, or at a focus group, workshop or exhibition (if held); or
- Electronically: via email, electronic questionnaire (if available), or via an online consultation portal (if available).

Planning Applications

Applicant consultation obligations before a planning application is submitted

Those applying for planning permission for certain developments must consult on the proposal prior to formally applying for planning permission. The applicant must have due regard to all comments received during this consultation when deciding whether to make changes to their proposal before submitting an application. When submitting their application, applicants must provide details of the consultation undertaken in order for their application to be valid.

Please contact the applicable Local Planning Authority for full details of what proposals will require applicants to undertake pre-application consultation.

Although only certain proposals will require this formal pre-application consultation, applicants are encouraged to involve the local community when preparing their proposal, even if legally they don't have to. Such engagement can be beneficial to both the applicant and the community, as it can foster transparency, and enable proposals to respond to local needs and desires.

Who will be consulted on planning applications?

Planning applications should be submitted to the relevant local planning authority - Lincoln City Council, North Kesteven District Council or West Lindsey District Council (or, for certain matters such as minerals and waste proposals, to Lincolnshire County Council). Full details of how to submit a planning application, including details of all the information and documents that must be submitted alongside an application, are available from each individual authority.

Any individual, business, organisation or group is able to submit comments on any planning application.

When a local planning authority receives a planning application, it will publish details of the application on its website. Specifically, it will publish details of the location of the proposed development; a description of the proposed development; details of how people can submit comments on the application and the deadline for people to do this. In addition to this, the application will be publicised as outlined below:

| TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT | MINIMUM PUBLICITY THAT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN |
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| Development where the application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is accompanied by an Environmental Statement; or - is a departure from the Local Plan; or - affects a public right of way | Site notice: on display on or near the site for a minimum of 21 days. Will contain details of the application and how to submit comments. Local newspaper: notice of the application featured in a newspaper which circulates within the locality of the applicant site. Neighbour notification: the owners/ occupiers of properties adjoining the site notified. |
| Major development (likely to have a significant impact on the local area or create significant public interest or controversy) | Site notice: on display on or near the site for a minimum of 21 days. Will contain details of the application and how to submit comments. Local newspaper: notice of the application featured in a newspaper which circulates within the locality of the applicant site. Neighbour notification (where appropriate): the owners/ occupiers of properties adjoining the site notified. |

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| Minor development | <p>Site notice: on display on or near the site for a minimum of 21 days. Will contain details of the application and how to submit comments.</p> <p>Neighbour notification: the owners/ occupiers of properties adjoining the site notified.</p> |
| Development affecting the setting of a listed building or the character and appearance of a conservation area. | <p>Site notice: on display on or near the site for a minimum of 21 days. Will contain details of the application and how to submit comments.</p> <p>Local newspaper: notice of the application featured in a newspaper which circulates within the locality of the applicant site.</p> |
| Permitted development requiring prior approval of the local planning authority | <p>Site notice: on display on or near the site for a minimum of 21 days. Will contain details of the application and how to submit comments.</p> |

How and when consultation will take place

Once a planning application has been validated, the local planning authority should determine the application within 8 weeks in the case of minor applications, or 13 weeks in the case of major applications.

Towards the start of this 8 or 13 week period, the local planning authority will invite comments on the application: this consultation period will be for at least 14 days, but will normally be 21 days (although the local planning authority will try to take into account any late comments received up to the date on which the decision is made). During this time, the application and details of how to submit comments will be publicised as outlined above.

People can submit comments on an application either in writing or electronically via email. A verbal comment will not be recorded.

Local planning authorities can only take comments which relate to planning considerations into account: comments on non-planning matters such as the effect of the development on property values, or loss of view for example, cannot be taken into consideration. Examples of the planning considerations that we can take into account include:

- whether or not the proposal complies with the local planning policies in the local plan;
- government planning policy;
- comments on the design and appearance of the proposed development and its potential impact on the surrounding area;
- planning law and previous decisions;
- highway safety and traffic issues;
- noise, disturbance and smells;
- conservation of historic buildings and trees.

Sometimes, especially for small applications, a decision will be reached by a planning officer (a 'delegated' decision – each council sets its own thresholds as to what types of proposals are delegated to officers). If a proposal is to be determined at planning committee, all those who made comments on the application will be advised of when the application will be presented at committee. Those who submitted comments on the application will have opportunity to speak at the committee meeting: for further information on the procedures for speaking at committee please contact the Committee Services of the relevant council.

Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning was a key outcome of the Localism Act 2011. It enables parish councils and, in areas without parish councils, neighbourhood forums, to prepare neighbourhood development plans and/or orders. The CLJSPC has no involvement in Neighbourhood Planning.

However, whilst a district council cannot prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, it has a duty to support their production at various stages. The public can get involved in neighbourhood planning in a number of ways.

For more information on neighbourhood planning, please see the following websites or contact your parish council or neighbourhood forum (if you have either) to see if they are preparing a neighbourhood plan.

City of Lincoln Council:

<http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/living-in-lincoln/neighbourhood-working/>

North Kesteven District Council:

<http://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/residents/living-in-your-area/localism/neighbourhood-plans>

West Lindsey District Council:

<http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

Glossary

Local Plan

A term used to describe a single development plan document or the combined development plan documents for the local planning authority area. It sets out the spatial planning strategy, policies, and/or allocations of land for types of development across the whole, or specific parts, of the local planning authority's area.

A local plan is any document prepared by a local planning authority (individually or in cooperation with one or more local planning authorities) which contains statements regarding: the development and use of land; the allocation of sites for a particular type of development or use; or development management and site allocation policies which are intended to guide the determination of applications for planning permission.

Neighbourhood Plan

A statutory development plan prepared by a neighbourhood forum or parish/ town council, or jointly, which sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land within the particular designated neighbourhood area to which it applies.

Neighbourhood Development Order

A statutory document prepared by a neighbourhood forum or parish/ town council which automatically grants planning permission for development or a particular class of development within the particular designated neighbourhood area to which it applies.

If you require further information on anything within this Statement of Community Involvement please contact us:

The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Team,
c/o North Kesteven District Council,
5th Floor, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln
LN1 1DF

Tel: 01529 414155 or 01522 699013 (if calling from a Lincoln number)
Email: talkplanning@central-lincs.org.uk

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| <p>Development and Environmental Services City of Lincoln Council City Hall Beaumont Fee Lincoln LN1 1DF Tel: 01522 873550 E-mail: customer.services@lincoln.gov.uk Web: www.lincoln.gov.uk</p> | <p>Planning Services North Kesteven District Council PO Box 3 District Council Offices Kesteven Street Sleaford NG34 7EF Tel: 01529 414155 E-mail: customer_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk Web: www.n-kesteven.gov.uk</p> |
| <p>Development Services West Lindsey District Council Guildhall Marshall's Yard Gainsborough DN21 2NA Tel: 01427 676676 E-mail: customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk Website: www.west-lindsey.gov.uk</p> | <p>Communities Directorate Lincolnshire County Council Witham Park House Lincoln LN5 7JN Tel: 01522 782070 E-mail: Dev_PlanningSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk Website: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk</p> |