

Schedule of Responses to Consultation on a Revised Statement of Community Involvement for Wirral (July 2013)

ID	Respondent	Respondent's Comments	Council's Response
SCI001/01	Network Rail	<p>It is noted in the 2006 SCI that Network Rail are listed as a Statutory Consultee. Network Rail should remain as a statutory consultee for any and all proposals adjacent to, adjoining, on, under or over the operational railway (including stations, depots, car parks etc).</p>	<p>No change is proposed, as Network Rail is already identified as a Specific Consultation Body in section 5 of the revised SCI.</p>
SCI001/02	Network Rail	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to consult Network Rail under Schedule 5 (f)(ii) of the Town & Country Planning Development Management Procedure Order 2010, where the Council must consult the statutory rail undertaker where a proposal for development is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway. Councils (and now increasingly neighbourhood areas) are urged to take the view that level crossings can be impacted in a variety of ways by planning proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By a proposal being directly next to a level crossing • By the cumulative effect of developments added over time in the vicinity of a level crossing • By the type of level crossing involved e.g. where pedestrians only are allowed to use the level crossing but a proposal involves allowing cyclists to use the route • By the construction of large developments (commercial and residential) where road access to and from the site includes a level crossing or the level/type of use of a level crossing increases as a result of diverted traffic or of a new highway, but where the level crossing is not adjacent to the railway • By developments that might impede the ability of pedestrians to hear approaching trains at a level crossing, e.g. new airports or new runways/highways/ roads • By proposals that may interfere with the ability of pedestrians and vehicle users to see level crossing warning signs • By any developments for schools, colleges or nurseries where minors in numbers may be using the level crossing • By any proposal that may cause blocking back across the level crossing • By any proposal which may see a level crossing impacted by the 	<p>The Council's responsibility for statutory notifications under the Development Management Procedure Order is noted.</p> <p>Network Rail is already routinely notified of relevant development proposals under the Order.</p> <p>No amendment to the revised SCI is required.</p>

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		<p>introduction of cycling or walking routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a level crossing will be impacted by an increase in usage as a result of a development that includes a right of way or bridgeway within its scope that crosses over the railway. 	
SCI002	Heswall Society	"The Heswall Society" should be added to the list of contacts for local plans and supplementary planning documents under the "Local Civic Societies" heading.	The Heswall Society has been added to the list of Local Civic Societies in section 5 of the final revised SCI.
SCI003	Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	It may be helpful to include reference to the UK Marine Policy Statement within the Statement of Community Involvement alongside the current reference to the National Planning Policy Framework, to ensure that both terrestrial and marine aspects of planning are covered.	A reference to the UK Marine Policy Statement has been added as a footnote to paragraph 2.3 of the final revised SCI.
SCI004	English Heritage	English Heritage has no comment to make on the content of the Statement of Community Involvement.	No response is required.
SCI005	Natural England	Natural England supports meaningful and early engagement with the community but is unable to comment in detail on individual Statements of Community Involvement. Information on how to consult Natural England and on the planning service that they offer can be found at: http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/default.aspx .	No response is required.
SCI006	Natural Resources Wales	Natural Resources Wales have no comments to offer.	No response is required.
SCI007	Environment Agency	The Environment Agency has no comment to make on the revised Statement of Community Involvement.	No response is required.
SCI008/01	Bromborough Society	It is essential that local societies, such as the Bromborough Society, are always included in the land use planning system as such bodies have, usually, a wealth of local knowledge.	The Bromborough Society has been added to the list of Local Civic Societies in section 5 of the final revised SCI.
SCI008/02	Bromborough Society	The Bromborough Society would welcome clarification that Supplementary Planning Documents, when adopted, would be a material consideration.	No change is proposed, as paragraph 3.30 of the revised SCI already states that, once adopted, a relevant SPD can be a material consideration.

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SCI008/03	Bromborough Society	Why is there no reference to the Party Wall Act? It may not be a planning matter but it is essential that reference be made to it, as it is a statutory obligation upon a successful applicant and a safeguard for neighbours.	No change is proposed, as the Party Wall Act is not a relevant planning consideration or relevant requirement for inclusion in an SCI which only sets out the Council's standards for public involvement in planning decisions.
SCI008/04	Bromborough Society	Local community groups must be notified of individual applications, in our case, where any kind of heritage asset is involved.	No change is proposed, as the final paragraph of section 5 of the revised SCI already indicates how contacts can be added to the notification database for planning applications and development management decisions on request.
SCI009/01	National Trust	Generally the Trust's experience over the period since the original Statement of Community Involvement was adopted has been a positive one. The key things that have needed to work for us have done so, i.e. we have been appropriately notified of DPD consultations, given adequate time to respond and our comments have been assessed (even if we have not always agreed with the outcome of that assessment). So whilst it is agreed that it is time to up-date the SCI given the various legislative and policy guidance changes since that time, in practice the key mechanisms around consultation have, in our experience, worked satisfactorily.	The positive comments are noted but no amendment to the revised SCI is required.
SCI009/02	National Trust	The use of Contacts Lists has worked particularly well and, in our view correctly, puts the onus on consultees to determine which documents they wish to assess and whether or not to respond to them. Sometimes the wider implications of a particular Policy or of a Site Allocation may not be immediately appreciated by those undertaking a consultation or notification exercise and it is appropriate for interested parties to review documents from their own perspective and respond as necessary. We recommend that the existing practice as set out in paragraphs 3.47 to 3.52 is confirmed.	The positive comments are noted but no amendment to the revised SCI is required.

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SCI009/03	National Trust	<p>Generally the approach set out in paragraphs 3.53 to 3.55 is agreed to be satisfactory. For many organisations such as National Trust the ready availability of documents, in an appropriate format, on the Council's website is essential. In practice this works satisfactorily, but could be more user-friendly, e.g. giving greater prominence to current consultations, in particular by having a direct link from the Council's home page, and putting the latest information in a prominent location on the relevant individual web-page. To give an example, the current consultation on the proposed modifications to the Draft Submission Core Strategy would more usefully be located at the top of the page rather than having to scroll some way through to the bottom of the page. It would also have been much more convenient if there had been two composite documents available [Council responses to all issues raised and a full set of proposed modifications] as opposed to needing to open and review some 86 separate documents.</p>	<p>The positive comments are noted. The comments related to potential further improvements will be passed to the website manager but no amendment to the revised SCI is required.</p>
SCI009/04	National Trust	<p>The National Trust is a land owner within the Council's area, looking after some buildings but in the main caring for important countryside/ coast land at Thurston, Caldy Hill, Heswall Cliffs and Harrock Wood. Picking up relevant proposals that may impact upon the Trust's responsibilities can be a bit hit and miss given that we are usually a neighbour without a site address as our interest relates to 'open land'. Elsewhere the Trust has provided, under licence, GIS information about the extent of its ownerships and the wider area within which it would potentially be interested in development proposals, with the result that a Council's computer system automatically generates planning application notification e-mails to agreed e-mail accounts. The Trust would be willing to explore this further if it would be of interest and assistance to the Council.</p>	<p>The comments offering assistance to formal notification processes will be passed to the Development Management Technical Support Unit, in line with the final paragraph of section 5 of the revised SCI which indicates how contacts can be added to the notification database for development management applications on request, but no amendment to the revised SCI is required.</p>

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SCI009/05	National Trust	The information about pre-application charges is not something that National Trust was previously aware of. We are a little surprised that, unlike elsewhere, we do not appear to have been consulted upon the intention to introduce such charges, and also that no exemptions from the charging regime are provided for charities.	Pre-application charges were introduced following the Council's 'What Really Matters' budget consultation for 2012/13. Exemptions for charities were considered but discounted to ensure a universal service was provided. Exemptions would be too complex to administer and in the longer term could make it difficult for the Council to resource an appropriate service to these organisations. No amendment to the revised SCI is required.
SCI009/06	National Trust	Notwithstanding the fact that the bodies listed in section 5 are referred to as being 'examples' rather than an attempt to be a comprehensive list, it is nonetheless something of a surprise that National Trust does not appear. Apart from our land ownerships in the Council's area we also fall within several of the categories in the list of 'general consultation bodies' as a result of our coast, countryside and heritage interests and expertise at both a national and local level. It would appear appropriate to add National Trust into the bodies listed in Section 5.	The National Trust has been added to the list of National Bodies and Agencies in section 5 of the final revised SCI
SCI010	United Utilities	Table 2 – Statutory Publicity for Planning Applications To protect our assets and the service they provide to the community, notification should be provided to Specific Consultation Bodies such as United Utilities Water PLC for permitted development requiring prior notification to the planning authority (e.g. telecommunications; demolition works etc.). This is to ensure that any works including demolitions works adequately safeguards our assets and the service they provide to our customers, the community and the environment.	No amendment to the revised SCI is required. National regulations only permit immediate neighbours with a common boundary to be notified and the Council can only consider representations from immediate neighbours with a common boundary on the grounds of amenity alone.
SCI011	Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	As sewerage undertakers for the Heswall area of Wirral, DCWW welcome sewerage undertakers being included in the list of Specific Consultation Bodies and DCWW being included on the list of General Consultation Bodies.	The positive comments are noted but no amendment to the revised SCI is required.