

Draft Exeter Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - Summary of consultation comments received and Council's response

Respondent	Summary of comment	Council Response	Change to SCI
<p>1 Julia Neville</p>	<p>I believe that the title of the statement is rather misleading. The focus of the document is strongly on questions about how applications for planning permission are handled. I would understand a 'Statement of community involvement' to be a document taking a broader approach and considering how the council can engage citizens across the city in contributing with ideas and comments on the broader aspects of planning as outlined in the concurrent consultation on issues. Neighbourhood plans (which I support) are a good idea, but they confine involvement to very specific areas, and can't deal with city-wide issues.</p>	<p>The title of the document is set by the legislation (under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and by government guidance. The draft SCI complies with this legislation and guidance. The document takes a flexible approach in recognition of the Council's limited resources and the need to make progress with a new Local Plan; nevertheless, the draft SCI allows for a range of approaches to consultation and engagement and, in relation to the new Exeter Local Plan, these will be explored further as we move forward.</p>	<p>No change required.</p>
<p>2 National Highways</p>	<p>Highways England was renamed National Highways in August 2021 so we request that the document is updated to reflect this. National Highways has no specific comments to make on the draft consultation document but we look forward to engaging with the Council regarding the development of the transport evidence base necessary to support the emerging Local Plan.</p>	<p>Noted; Appendix D will be updated to reflect the renaming of this consultation body.</p>	<p>Appendix E will be amended to remove reference to 'Highways England' and replace with reference to '<i>National Highways</i>'</p>

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3 Natural England	<p>We are supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general community, community organisations and statutory bodies in local planning matters, both in terms of shaping policy and participating in the process of determining planning applications.</p> <p>We regret we are unable to comment, in detail, on individual Statements of Community Involvement but information on the planning service we offer, including advice on how to consult us, can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals.</p> <p>The only specific comment we do have to make on the draft Statement of Community Involvement is to note that the list in Appendix D doesn't appear to be formatted correctly as Natural England and Local Planning Authorities are listed alongside Lead Local Flood Authority rather than as separate consultation bodies.</p>	<p>Noted; the format of Appendix D has been checked and is correct (showing Natural England, and all other consultation bodies, listed on separate lines). Follow up communication with Natural England has established that the issue probably arose from an IT glitch and they are happy with the presentation and formatting of the document.</p>	<p>No change required.</p>
4 DCC	<p>In terms of the Historic Environment there are a number of potential non-statutory consultees who could add value to the Development Plan, SPDs, Neighbourhood Plans and also the Planning Application process. These include the Exeter Historic Buildings Trust, The Devon Archaeological Society and the Devonshire Association. In addition, enhancing public access to the Exeter Urban Archaeological Database (Exeter's Historic Environment Record for the city's central area) would improve the community's opportunities to engage with heritage, including in the planning and development management process.</p>	<p>Noted; the SCI does not attempt to list non-statutory consultees. However, in regards to planning policy, any non-statutory organisation can request to be added to the 'Consultation Database' to ensure they are consulted at every stage of the new Local Plan preparation process (this is already stated in the draft SCI). In addition to this we will insert text into the final SCI to ensure it is clear that, in</p>	<p>Page 5 – Insert and amend text to read: <i>'There are certain bodies or organisations that we must consult², but we will also consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees as appropriate on a case-by case basis'</i></p>

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		<p>addition to consulting statutory consultees, we will consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees.</p> <p>In regard to planning applications, any organisation can comment on a planning application and these comments will be taken into account in determining the planning application (this is already stated in the draft SCI). In addition to this we will insert text into the final SCI to ensure it is clear that in addition to consulting statutory consultees, we will consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees.</p>	<p>Page 9 – Insert and amend text to read: <i>'In addition to the statutory consultees set out in Appendix E, we will consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees as appropriate on a case-by case basis'</i></p>
5 Exeter Hindu Community Centre	<p>The Hindu community in Exeter is growing very significantly. The cultural and spiritual needs of this community are restricted by lack of an appropriate place for worship in Exeter. Having a temple will not only plug this gap, but also support future growth in talent from Hindu community who occupy an important space in education (e.g. University of Exeter) and Health sectors (including various NHS organisations in Exeter)</p>	<p>The consultation response does not suggest any specific change to the draft SCI. Whilst the desire for a Hindu place for worship in Exeter is noted, this cannot be addressed through the SCI. This point relates more closely with the potential content of the new Local Plan. The Exeter Hindu</p>	<p>No change required.</p>

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		Community Centre are invited to respond to future consultations on the new local plan.	
6 Exeter Civic Society	<p>The document does not focus on government recommendations for early and meaningful consultation with communities and interested organisations. More detail about the council's process of consultation and a greater commitment is needed.</p> <p>The final printed document should provide clear type faces and good contrast - avoid text on coloured backgrounds or across illustrations, and in colour other than black.</p>	<p>The draft SCI complies with the legislation (section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance. It is considered that the SCI will allow the Local Plan to be shaped by 'early, proportionate and effective engagement' as required by the NPPF.</p> <p>The document takes a flexible approach and allows for a range of approaches to consultation and engagement and in relation to the new Exeter Local Plan these will be explored further as we move forward.</p> <p>We will ensure a fully 'accessible' version of the final document is available.</p>	<p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p>

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	<p>Express support for positive statements relating to community involvement but important that new Local Plan reflects this.</p> <p>Useful to include information relating to possible changes to planning legislation currently being considered by government relating to zonal planning areas.</p> <p>The SCI suggests that the level of consultation will be restricted 'within available resources'. The council must set aside funds to enable extensive consultation at all stages.</p> <p>More details should be added concerning the forms of consultation listed. We ask for a commitment to use clear language which is jargon free.</p> <p>In regard to the list of planning issues, if this just relates to planning applications make this clear. Add 'ECC planning polices' to the list and amend 'economic benefits' to 'Economic benefits/ disadvantages / risks of the proposal'.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>There is great uncertainty regarding the contents of any Planning Bill and therefore such a reference would not add any further clarity.</p> <p>The documents takes a flexible approach and allows for a range of approaches to consultation and engagement. The SCI states that methods used need to be proportionate and within available resources; this is factual and transparent.</p> <p>The list of methods on page 3 presents an overview of the consultation approaches that can be utilised; more detail is provided on pages 6 and 9. Additional text regarding the use of plain English will be inserted.</p> <p>The list relates to both planning applications and planning policy documents. The introductory wording</p>	<p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p> <p>Page 3 – Insert text to state 'We will always try to communicate in plain English and fully explain any necessary technical language or acronyms.'</p> <p>Page 4 - Amend and insert text to read 'We can only take account of comments made about</p>

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	<p>It would be useful in the opening sentence if the council added 'and we will engage with community'.</p> <p>Can 'Masterplans' be added to the list of planning policy documents</p> <p>We would like to see a clear statement in the final SCI about how under-represented groups will be consulted. The council should commit to using all media options (Facebook, twitter etc). Should visually and hearing impaired, and those with physical disabilities be added to the list?</p>	<p>will be changed to provide further explanation and the bullet point list amended to include 'economic disbenefits'. ECC planning policies are already covered by the 'local planning policies' bullet point.</p> <p>This first sentence will be amended to ensure it is clear that we will engage with the community.</p> <p>Masterplans are one form of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that can provide additional guidance for development. Additional text will be inserted to reference this.</p> <p>The draft SCI allows for a range of approaches to consultation and engagement and already puts more emphasis on the use of electronic, online</p>	<p>relevant planning matters. Some examples of relevant planning matters include:'</p> <p>And insert text to bullet list to read: Economic benefits/disbenefits of the proposal</p> <p>Page 5 – Insert and amend text to read: 'This section focuses on planning policy; it explains how we will engage with the community and how you can get involved in the plan-making process.'</p> <p>Page 5 – Insert text to read 'Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites (in the form of Masterplans or other site specific plans), or on...'</p> <p>No change required.</p>

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	<p data-bbox="427 357 1249 453">It would be more positive if the council committed to consult for more than the minimum legal requirement, and make a commitment to local engagement and workshops.</p> <p data-bbox="427 762 1249 858">The council must commit to consult with interested groups and organisations in the preparation of SPDs, so the word 'may' in the second paragraph should be changed to will.</p> <p data-bbox="427 1072 1249 1264">LPAs should be proactive in supporting communities in developing their own Neighbourhood Plans but there is no evidence on the council's website that this has been done, and the webpages appear to be out of date, with the protocol not being updated since 2012. There is no link to the government's new Neighbourhood Planning webpages</p>	<p data-bbox="1288 188 1650 319">and social media platforms. The list already includes 'Those with disabilities (both physical and mental)'</p> <p data-bbox="1288 357 1650 724">The SCI already states that we may go beyond the legal requirements and already references workshops, exhibitions and online events. It should be noted that there is no statutory requirement to consult on the SCI and yet we consulted for a period of eight weeks.</p> <p data-bbox="1288 762 1650 995">The council is committed to consultation on SPDs as stated in the preceding paragraph of the SCI. The sentence referred to could be misleading and therefore will be deleted.</p> <p data-bbox="1288 1066 1650 1364">The draft SCI already refers to the potential for communities to bring forward a Neighbourhood Plan (see page 8). There is also reference to the duty to support and the Protocol that has been adopted by the council. The council's</p>	<p data-bbox="1682 357 1944 389">No change required.</p> <p data-bbox="1682 762 2033 995">Page 8 – Delete text 'Engagement and consultation may be targeted to relevant groups and organisations depending on the SPD subject matter and impact.'</p> <p data-bbox="1682 1066 1944 1098">No change required.</p>

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	<p>Developers should undertake public consultation before submitting planning applications.</p> <p>How will the council ensure the SCI is reviewed?</p> <p>How will SPDs be adopted by ECC?</p> <p>Avoid use of acronyms.</p> <p>List non-statutory organisations that are hoped to be consulted.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Planning webpage has now been updated to include a link to the Government's new 'Neighbourhood Planning' webpages.</p> <p>The draft SCI already encourages developers and applicants to engage with the community prior to submitting a planning application (see page 10)</p> <p>The draft SCI commits to a review every 5 years in accordance with the statutory requirement (see Chapter 5 – page 11)</p> <p>The draft SCI already explains how SPDs will be produced and adopted (see page 8 and Appendix 6).</p> <p>Unfortunately it is challenging to avoid the use of acronyms in all cases but where we have used them they are explained in the glossary.</p> <p>All organisations that aren't statutory are non-statutory, and it would not be</p>	<p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p>

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	<p data-bbox="427 963 1223 1027">Council should ask communities if they wish to establish their own community plan.</p> <p data-bbox="427 1169 1249 1233">Display a site notice for all types of applications listed or send a letter of notification to neighbours.</p>	<p data-bbox="1285 188 1648 927">appropriate to try to list them all here. However, in regards to planning policy, any non-statutory organisation can request to be added to the 'Consultation Database' to ensure they are consulted at every stage of the new Local Plan preparation process (this is already stated in the draft SCI). In regard to planning applications, any organisation (or individual) can comment on a planning application and these comments will be taken into account in determining the planning application (this is already stated in the draft SCI).</p> <p data-bbox="1285 963 1648 1129">The draft SCI already refers to the potential for community's to bring forward a Neighbourhood Plan (see page 8)</p> <p data-bbox="1285 1169 1621 1366">The SCI already explains that 'In most cases, we send letters to immediate neighbours that share a common boundary with a planning application site,</p>	<p data-bbox="1680 963 1944 995">No change required.</p> <p data-bbox="1680 1169 2036 1366">Page 9 – Insert text to read: 'The case officer may use a site notice when it is difficult to identify the neighbours or if the land ownership is unknown.'</p>

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		and in some cases we place a site notice in the local area.' (See page 9). However, we will insert additional text to explain further.	Additionally, a site notice may be used where the case officer judges that the case is of interest to an audience not limited to the immediate neighbours.'
7 Devon CCG and RD&E NHS Trust	The plan needs to take in the population growth and the effects it has on health services – developers should be expected to provide s106 contributions to mitigate the impacts generated from new developments.	The consultation response does not suggest any specific change to the draft SCI. The comments will be considered in relation to the New Local Plan.	No change required.
8 Devon Archaeological Society	<p>Inclusion of the Devon Archaeological Society as non-statutory consultee for planning policy and the planning application process.</p> <p>Enhancing public access to ECC's Historic Environment Record would improve the community's opportunity to engage with heritage.</p>	The SCI does not list non-statutory consultees. However, in regards to planning policy, any non-statutory organisation can request to be added to the 'Consultation Database' to ensure they are consulted at every stage of the new Local Plan preparation process (this is already stated in the draft SCI). In addition to this we will insert text into the final SCI to ensure it is clear that, in addition to consulting statutory consultees, we will consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees.	Page 5 – Insert and amend text to read: <i>'There are certain bodies or organisations that we must consult², but we will also consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees as appropriate on a case-by case basis'</i>

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		<p>In regard to planning applications, any organisation can comment on a planning application and these comments will be taken into account in determining the planning application (this is already stated in the draft SCI). In addition to this we will insert text into the final SCI to ensure it is clear that in addition to consulting statutory consultees, we will consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees.</p>	<p>Page 9 – Insert and amend text to read: <i>'In addition to the statutory consultees set out in Appendix E, we will consider whether to consult more widely with non statutory consultees as appropriate on a case-by case basis'</i></p>
<p>9 Exeter Green Party</p>	<p>Comment and consultation alone do not constitute community involvement and therefore this is a wholly inadequate offering.</p> <p>The draft SCI does not meet the requirements of the NPPF as it does not enable Plans to be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement.</p> <p>The draft SCI does not 'contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous' as required by the NPPF</p>	<p>The draft SCI complies with the legislation (section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance.</p> <p>It is considered that the SCI will allow the Local Plan to be shaped by 'early, proportionate and effective engagement' as required by the NPPF.</p> <p>The SCI is not a 'Plan' and does not include policies as such, but does try to</p>	<p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p>

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	<p>The Consultation Charter applies to planning</p>	<p>explain how the public can get involved in planning; it is considered that the document does this in a clear and concise fashion.</p> <p>The preparation and consultation on the new SCI have complied with the Consultation Charter and this is referenced in the accompanying reports to committee (indeed the consultation on the draft SCI was held for longer than required by the Consultation Charter). However, a reference to the Consultation Charter will also be added to the final SCI to ensure it is clear that all future consultations, in relation to Planning Policy, will also adhere to the Consultation Charter (it should be noted that the Consultation Charter is not intended to apply to planning applications which are governed by their own specific statutory consultation arrangements; this is specifically stated in the Charter).</p>	<p>Text to be inserted (page 6) to state: <i>'All consultations relating to planning policy documents will adhere to the Consultation Charter'.</i></p>

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	<p>Comment in not community involvement; the principles and approaches to community involvement should be set out in full.</p> <p>There should be continued engagement on developing the local plan between the formal statutory consultation stages.</p> <p>The draft SCI appears to have been prepared without reference to the Exeter Community Strategy</p> <p>There is no evidence in the SCI that the Council is being proactive in informing communities of neighbourhood planning</p>	<p>The document takes a flexible approach and allows for a range of approaches to consultation and engagement and in relation to the new Exeter Local Plan these will be explored further as we move forward.</p> <p>There is no reason for the SCI to refer to this strategy as it has no bearing on the LPA's approach to consultation. In any case the Exeter Community Strategy is no longer current, as it was not updated after 3 years and has been superseded by the Grants policy for ECC.</p> <p>The draft SCI already refers to the potential for communities to bring forward a Neighbourhood Plan (see page 8). There is also reference to the duty to support and the Protocol that has been adopted by the Council. The 'community builders' already take an active role in promoting Neighbourhood Planning; it</p>	<p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p>

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		is not the role of the SCI to do this.	
10 The Progressive Group of Councillors	<p>Statement of Community Involvement is inadequate for both the Authority and our communities in light of the challenges that Exeter faces. Should be going beyond consultation to enable proper community engagement</p> <p>SCI should be redrafted with particular reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively supporting and promoting Neighbourhood Planning 	<p>The draft SCI complies with the legislation (section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance. The document takes a flexible approach and allows for a range of approaches to consultation and engagement and in relation to the new Exeter Local Plan these will be explored further as we move forward.</p> <p>The draft SCI already refers to the potential for community's to bring forward a Neighbourhood Plan (see page 8). There is also reference to the duty to support and the Protocol that has been adopted by the Council. The 'community builders' already take an active role in promoting</p>	<p>No change required.</p> <p>No change required.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="427 325 1218 453">• Liveable Exeter: to date there has been marketing rather than community engagement; if these new developments are to meet the 'Garden City Principles' then community involvement is of paramount importance. <li data-bbox="427 667 1070 695">• Include recently adopted Consultation Charter 	<p data-bbox="1285 188 1653 284">Neighbourhood Planning; it is not the role of the SCI to do this.</p> <p data-bbox="1285 322 1635 619">This comment does not relate directly to the SCI. However, the Liveable Exeter team have been working on community engagement plans and there will be engagement projects coming forward in 2022.</p> <p data-bbox="1285 657 1653 1364">The preparation and consultation on the new SCI have complied with the Consultation Charter and this is referenced in the accompanying reports to committee (indeed the consultation on the draft SCI was held for longer than required by the Consultation Charter). However, a reference to the Consultation Charter will also be added to the final SCI to ensure it is clear that all future consultations, in relation to Planning Policy, will also adhere to the Consultation Charter (it should be noted that the Consultation Charter is not</p>	<p data-bbox="1680 322 1944 351">No change required.</p> <p data-bbox="1680 657 2011 858">Page 6 – Insert text to read: <i>'All consultations relating to planning policy documents will adhere to the Consultation Charter'.</i></p>

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		intended to apply to planning applications which are governed by their own specific statutory consultation arrangements; this is specifically stated in the Charter).	
11 Historic England	<p>While we welcome acknowledgement of Historic England as a statutory consultee for certain types of planning application in Appendix D, we consider that the SCI should also mention our role as a statutory consultee in other areas of decision-taking, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certain listed building consent applications; and • environmental impact assessment for cultural heritage. 	Noted. Text will be inserted to ensure it is clear that we will consult with Historic England, and all other statutory consultees, for all relevant applications and assessments.	<p>Page 9 – amend and insert text to read: <i>For specific applications (including planning applications, listed building consent applications and other assessments such as Environmental Impact Assessments) we may will consult with specialist organisations all relevant statutory consultees such as Natural England, Historic England, the Environment Agency, utility providers, and Devon County Council (on education and transport and some other topics). We may also consult with other specialist organisations and other internal teams, such as Environmental Health.</i></p>

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	<p>You may also wish to encourage pre-application discussions with relevant statutory consultees such as Historic England.</p> <p>We would also like to see the SCI mention that Historic England's role as a statutory consultee in the plan-making process. We are a specific consultation body for local plans and a prescribed body under the Duty to Co-operate. We should also be consulted on draft neighbourhood plans where our interests are considered to be affected. We should also be consulted at each stage of preparing Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessments.</p>	<p>Text will be inserted to encourage developers and applicants to engage with Historic England and other statutory consultees</p> <p>A new appendix will be inserted that lists all the Specific (including Historic England) and General consultation bodies for preparation of a Local Plan and other planning policy documents.</p>	<p>Page 10 – Amend and insert text to read: <i>However, developers and applicants are encouraged to engage as appropriate with statutory consultees (such as Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) and the broader community, neighbours or Exeter St James Neighbourhood Forum, as early as possible in developing their proposals.</i></p> <p>Page 5 – Insert text to read: <i>'The specific and general statutory consultees for planning policy are set out at Appendix A'</i></p> <p>A new Appendix A to be inserted.</p>
12 Ross Bright	<p>Ensuring we have facilities in central areas in Exeter for recycling, services that are well maintained and a recycling scheme to a similar standard, if not better, than that of East Devon and the recycling bins offered to households. Ensure communities are at the heart of city development, pedestrianising central Exeter to reduce air pollution as well as people feeling more comfortable than squashed to the sides of the high streets, there is no need for buses to drive through central Exeter with the new bus station entrance on the edge,</p>	<p>The consultation response does not suggest any specific change to the draft SCI. The comments will be considered in relation to the New Local Plan</p>	<p>No change required.</p>

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	as well as better designed road infrastructure to ensure smoother transport whilst investing in cycle lanes as much as that of roads.		
13 Exeter Airport	The city of Exeter falls within the Aerodrome Safeguarded area of Exeter Airport and any future development must continue to consult with the Airport to ensure that there are no adverse impacts that could compromise aircraft safety or aerodrome operations. Exeter Airport appears to be missing from Appendix D: Statutory Consultee list.	Noted. Appendix D draws on the Planning Practice Guidance, 'Table 2 – Statutory Consultees'. However, this Government Guidance does not include the requirements of 'The town and country planning (safeguarded aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas) direction 2002'. This is an omission and the SCI will be amended to include reference to Exeter Airport as a statutory consultee.	Appendix E – Insert text to add ' <i>Exeter Airport</i> ' to the list of statutory consultees and to amend the footnote to read: <i>'List draws on the Planning Practice Guidance , 'Table 2 – Statutory Consultees on applications for planning permission', but has been revised to focus on those statutory consultees more likely to be relevant in Exeter, including Exeter Airport (where development falls under the 'The town and country planning (safeguarded aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas) direction 2002'</i>
14 Exminster Parish Council	Affected neighbouring parishes outlying Exeter City should be included as part of the Statutory Consultee List; i.e. Exminster, Ide, Shillingford Abbot and Whitestone Parish Councils.	Parish Councils are included in the list of statutory consultees in Appendix D.	No change required.
15 Yvonn Atkinson	I agree with the issues. On design it is also important to take into account women's safety issues. The design of infrastructure	The consultation response does not suggest any specific change to the draft	No change required.

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	should be such that women feel safe at all times of the day and nights on the streets of Exeter.	SCI. The comments will be considered in relation to the New Local Plan	
16 John Mooney	The best community involvement processes in the world are worthless if the planning issue at hand is not subject to Planning Approval. This is the case for Houses Of Multiple Occupancy in most of the city. The council has the tool (Article 4 orders) to change this situation and, if it really is committed to utilising "local knowledge and expertise to help shape places", then it should do make more use of that tool.	The consultation response does not suggest any specific change to the draft SCI. However, it should be noted that the Council has committed to reviewing the HMO Article 4 direction to determine if the extent needs to be revised.	No change required.
17 Julie Chapman	I would like it to say, you MUST publish applications via social media. A weekly link to all new applications please.	New applications are already advertised via social media; the final SCI will be amended to ensure this is clear.	Page 9 - Text to be amended/ inserted to read: 'Details of <i>every valid</i> each -planning application received are also displayed <i>and accessible</i> on our website. <i>We also publish a weekly newsletter that anyone can subscribe to, plus new applications out for consultation are published on the website and advertised via social media every working week.'</i>