

The South Wonston Village Design Statement

Community Workshop

23/03/2026



What is a village design statement and why is it important to South Wonston?

A **Village Design Statement (VDS)** is a community-led planning document that describes what makes a village special — its landscape, layout, buildings, and local character — and sets out **design principles** for how future development should happen.

It's not about stopping development but about **guiding it in the right way** — so any changes respect what local people value and protect the things that make the place unique.

Once adopted by the local council (in our case, **Winchester City Council**), the VDS becomes a **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**. That means it must be taken seriously in planning decisions — it becomes a formal part of how planning officers and developers assess proposals

What are the benefits or challenges if we don't have a VDS for South Wonston

WHY DO WE NEED ONE FOR THE VILLAGE?

- To make sure new homes, extensions, or buildings fit in with the village's character
- To protect local views, green spaces, wildlife, and history
- To help residents influence how South Wonston evolves
- To support better design, not just more development
- To help ensure that change benefits the whole community, not just developers

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T HAVE ONE?

- Developers have more freedom to propose designs that don't reflect the local area
- Planning officers have less guidance to push for good design or reject poor-quality proposals
- The village's identity is more vulnerable to change over time
- We lose a key tool for shaping the future, rather than just reacting to it

What are the benefits or challenges if we don't have a VDS for South Wonston

WHY DO WE NEED ONE FOR THE VILLAGE?

- To make sure new homes, extensions, or buildings fit in with the village's character
- To protect local views, green spaces, wildlife, and history
- To help residents influence how South Wonston evolves
- To support better design, not just more development
- To help ensure that change benefits the whole community, not just developers

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T HAVE ONE?

- Developers have more freedom to propose designs that don't reflect the local area
- Planning officers have less guidance to push for good design or reject poor-quality proposals
- The village's identity is more vulnerable to change over time
- We lose a key tool for shaping the future, rather than just reacting to it

What do we need to do today? (1)

PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST

Identify and map **key views to be protected**

Safeguard **green spaces, gaps, and rural character**

Be clear on **what must not be lost**

BUILD A STRONGER EVIDENCE BASE

Capture **resident observations of wildlife & habitats**

Develop a **proper biodiversity picture for the parish**

Use this to support **planning and protection**

What do we need to do today? (2)

STRENGTHEN BIODIVERSITY APPROACH

Strengthen Biodiversity Approach

Define **clear Biodiversity Guidelines**
(currently missing)

We could consider **external expertise** if needed

Ensure biodiversity is **embedded in decisions**, not optional

CLEAR DESIGN EXPECTATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Visualise “good” development

Be specific on:

- Building heights
- Spacing between homes
- Trees, hedgerows, and green gaps
- Accessibility and layout

Don't be vague, be explicit — aim for **practical, usable standard**

What do we need to do today? (3)

DEFINE WHAT MAKES SOUTH WONSTON, SOUTH WONSTON

What are the **non-negotiables of local character**?

What should development **respect and reinforce**?

Reflect the importance of:

- Openness and spacing
- Green infrastructure
- Rural feel and landscape setting

CLEAR DESIGN EXPECTATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

What would **make the village better**?

Where are the **points of agreement vs tension**?

What should we push for (or resist) in future development?



Wrap up and any final points

Thank you