

# Planning for Solihull's Future

## Local Plan Review 2026 – 43

### Issues and Options

### Consultation

### Summary - January 2026



Solihull Council is preparing a **new Local Plan** that will guide where new homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure should be located across the Borough up to **2043**. This consultation is your opportunity to comment at an early stage, before any final decisions are made.

This document summarises **why a new plan is needed**, **what the main issues are**, and **the options being explored**.

Whilst this document does not include any new site allocations it sets out why new ones will be required and how we should go about identifying them.

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#### 1. Why a New Local Plan Is Needed

Every council must have an up-to-date Local Plan to manage development in a planned and coordinated way. Solihull's current Local Plan was adopted in **2013** and no longer reflects national planning policy or local circumstances.

A draft replacement plan was submitted in 2020 but was withdrawn in 2024 following **major changes to national planning policy**, particularly around housing numbers and the Green Belt.

The Council is now preparing a new Local Plan so that:

- Growth can be planned rather than happening through unplanned, speculative development;
- Infrastructure such as schools, roads, health facilities and green spaces can be delivered alongside new development; and
- The Borough's character, countryside and Green Belt can be properly considered and protected.

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#### 2. What Has Changed Nationally?



##### **Higher Housing Numbers**

Government changes to the way councils must calculate housing need means that Solihull is now required to plan for **around 63% more homes** than before.

- Previous requirement: **around 816 homes per year**
- New requirement: **around 1,331 homes per year**

##### **Changes to Green Belt Policy**

National policy has also changed how Green Belt land is considered. A new concept called "**Grey Belt**" has been introduced. This refers to some Green Belt land that performs less well against certain Green Belt purposes.



Importantly:

- Green Belt land is still protected;
  - Development is **not automatic** on Grey Belt land; and
  - Any proposal must still be in a **sustainable location** with appropriate infrastructure.
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### 3. Strategic Planning Across the West Midlands

The Government is reintroducing strategic planning across the West Midlands through a **Spatial Development Strategy (SDS)**, which will be prepared by the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The SDS will look at where homes, jobs, transport and green spaces should be located across the wider region. Solihull's Local Plan will need to align with this strategy once it is adopted.

At this stage, the Council's **preferred approach** is to plan to meet **Solihull's own housing needs**, with any wider redistribution of housing across the region being addressed through the SDS so that this is undertaken in a consistent, comprehensive and more robust manner.

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### 4. Vision for Solihull

The Council's vision is that by **2043**, Solihull will **have built on its distinct reputation as an attractive and aspirational place to live, learn, invest, work and play**. Achieving this vision will contribute towards the ability for everyone to have an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous, through growth that creates opportunities for all.

This means:



- Supporting economic growth linked to UK Central, Arden Cross, HS2 and the town centre;
  - Providing homes that meet local needs;
  - Protecting the Green Belt, countryside and the Meriden Gap;
  - Tackling climate change and improving sustainability; and
  - Ensuring development is supported by the right infrastructure.
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### 5. How Many New Homes Are Needed?

The new Local Plan will need to plan for **around 24,000 new homes** between **2025 and 2043**.

Some housing sites already have planning permission or are under construction, including many sites that were proposed in the now withdrawn 2020 Plan.

Even after taking these and other land supply assumptions into account, the Council estimates that **around 9,300 additional homes** will still need to be identified through the new Local Plan.

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### 6. Where Could New Homes Go?

Before considering any further Green Belt land, national policy requires councils to look first at **other options**.



## **Non-Green Belt Opportunities**

The Council is exploring whether more homes could be provided through:

- **Redevelopment and windfall sites** (land that becomes unexpectedly available) within existing built-up areas;
- **Higher-density development** in accessible locations, such as:
  - Solihull town centre ; and
  - The NEC / Arden Cross area.

These options could potentially provide **around 3,600 homes**. This would still leave some **5,700 dwellings** to be identified from **new allocations** on land that is currently located **in the Green Belt**.

## **Green Belt Considerations**

When considering where new allocations in the Green Belt should go, national policy requires the Council to prioritise:

1. Previously developed land;
2. Grey Belt land; and
3. Other Green Belt land in sustainable locations.

This consultation is seeking views on **how this should be approached**, not on specific sites.

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## **7. Spatial Strategy and Development Principles**

The Council is reviewing its overall **spatial strategy** – in simple terms, how growth should be distributed across the Borough.

Key questions include:

- How and where should new allocations be identified?
- Should development continue to focus on the most **sustainable and accessible locations**?
- How should rural towns and villages be treated?
- How can the identity of individual settlements be protected?
- How should development near rail stations be considered?

The Council is also seeking views on the **principles** that should guide future development, including:

- Sustainable transport and accessibility – what makes a sustainable location?;
- Protecting the Green Belt and important gaps between settlements; and
- Infrastructure-led development.

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## **8. Infrastructure and Quality of Development**

New development must be supported by the right infrastructure, including:

- **Transport** (roads, public transport, walking and cycling);
- **Flood** related
- **Schools and health** facilities;
- **Green spaces** and **recreation facilities**; and



- **Biodiversity.**

The Local Plan will also shape the **quality** of new development, including:

- Housing mix and affordable housing;
- Design quality and place-making;
- Biodiversity Net Gain; and
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## 9. How to Respond to This Consultation

The Council welcomes comments from residents, businesses, landowners, community groups and other stakeholders. Please refer to the main consultation document for specific questions.

### **What You Can Comment On**

You can comment on:

- The overall vision for Solihull;
- The scale of growth proposed;
- Where development should and should not be focused;
- The approach to Green Belt and Grey Belt land;
- The spatial strategy and development principles; and
- Infrastructure and sustainability priorities.

You do **not** need to respond to every question. You can comment on the issues that matter most to you.

### **How to Submit Your Comments**

Comments can be submitted via our dedicated on-line portal which can be accessed from this web page: <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/emerging-local-plan>.

Please include your name and address (or organisation name) with your response. Anonymous comments cannot be considered.

Please respond by **16<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

### **What Happens Next?**

All comments will be reviewed and will help shape the next version of the Local Plan. A further, more detailed consultation will take place at the next stage, where the Council will set out its **preferred approach**.

If you have any questions, please contact us at [psp@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:psp@solihull.gov.uk) or call 0121 704 8001.

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