

Statement of Community Involvement

July 2026

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Contact the Policy and Delivery team: Email: psp@solihull.gov.uk or phone 0121 704 8008.

Executive Summary

1. Planning shapes how places in the Borough are developed, and how they change over time. Through the planning system, the Council makes decisions on where homes, businesses, shops are built and where new open spaces are created. It is important that local people, stakeholders and agencies can get involved in the process, and the Council takes their views into account.
2. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Solihull Council will consult with local communities, stakeholders and developers on planning matters. This includes the preparation of its planning policy documents that set out the long-term vision and development strategy for the Borough, as well as the determination of planning applications submitted to the Council.
3. Planning affects everyone. The SCI helps make sure that planning decisions are shaped by the people who live, work and are invested in Solihull.
4. The Council will contact a wide range of people and organisations including local residents, businesses, statutory bodies (such as the Environment Agency), parish and town councils and neighbourhood forums.
5. The Council will use public notices, leaflets, social media, press releases and its website to share information about planning. The Council's "Stay Connected" email alert service will be used, which allows residents to sign up for updates on planning and other Council services. The Council also maintains a consultation database of individuals and groups who have asked to be kept informed, and they will be contacted directly. For major consultations, documents will be available online and in local libraries or Solihull Connect centres.
6. The Council aims to make any consultation clear and accessible to help ensure that everyone has a fair chance to get involved in planning matters and decisions in the borough.

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1. Introduction

What is a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?

7. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) explains how we will involve communities and stakeholders in all planning matters, including planning policy and proposal documents, and planning applications. It also sets out how we will give advice and assistance to those undertaking neighbourhood planning.
8. The term 'planning' in this document is about decision making about the way land is used and developed to balance the different needs and interests of Solihull's diverse communities and businesses, such as housing, highways and other infrastructure and commercial development.
9. The focus of the SCI is to explain how and when communities will be engaged in the planning process rather than provide detail on how planning applications are determined (please see [Applying for planning permission](#)) or how the Planning Committee works (please see [Planning Committee Handbook July 2023](#)).
10. Planning for development and land use in Solihull is a key responsibility of the Council (as the local planning authority) that affects us all. The Council is committed to ensuring that all of those with an interest in the development of the area and those affected by development are encouraged to be engaged in the planning process.
11. The SCI is a Local Development Document (LDD) and forms part of Council's statutory local planning framework. As a Council we are committed to engagement with our communities and will continue to update the SCI regularly.

How often is the SCI updated?

12. A review of the SCI should be undertaken every five years¹. The review ensures that all policies are kept up to date and ensures effective community involvement at all stages of the planning process.
13. This SCI is an update of the version that was adopted by the Council in January 2020. A draft updated SCI was published for a six-week consultation period in July and August 2025. The Council then considered all responses, and further improvements were made to the SCI before being approved in October 2025.
14. The Council is developing a new Local Plan, following the withdrawal of the 2020 Local Plan, and the review of the SCI will help to ensure the most effective community consultation throughout the process.

Purpose of the SCI

15. National legislation² requires the Council to prepare a SCI stating the authority's policy of engagement in the planning process with all those with an interest in development in the area.
16. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)³ supported by a suite of National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It states in Chapter 3 that 'the planning system should be genuinely plan-led' and that 'Plans should be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-

¹ Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

² The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 18) (as amended)

³ 12 December 2024 (as amended 7 February 2025)

makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees’

17. The Council places great importance on community involvement. The Solihull Council Plan (2024-25 Update) highlights ‘engaging our citizens’ as one of the ‘key enablers’ of good quality services and positive outcomes for our residents.
18. The overall aim of the SCI is to set out the Council’s procedures for community and stakeholder involvement in planning. It is hoped that this will encourage effective engagement in planning matters by making the process more transparent. The process seeks to ensure that all groups are treated fairly, and all those involved understand the planning decisions taken.
19. This SCI covers the consultation and engagement process for the following planning documents and applications:
 - Development plan documents (DPDs) e.g. the Local Plan;
 - Supplementary planning documents (SPDs);
 - Neighbourhood plans;
 - Community infrastructure levy (CIL) (Charging Schedule);
 - Planning applications.
20. This statement provides guidance on:
 - How and when opportunities to become involved in planning matters will be advertised;
 - How and when communities and stakeholders can be involved in planning matters;
 - How community and stakeholder involvement will be taken into account;
 - How community and stakeholder views will be used in decision making;
 - How we will feedback on how involvement has influenced decisions.

Preparing the SCI

21. **Stage 1 Pre-production (Spring 2025):**

- Building upon the previous SCI (2020), gathered information, used experience and good practice, to identify range, scope and potential content of the amended SCI to seek out how to best achieve our aims for community involvement.

22. **Stage 2 Production and consultation (Summer 2025):**

- Draft SCI prepared using the information gathered at stage 1;
- Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA) carried out on draft SCI;
- Comments received on the updated draft SCI (over a six-week period July & August 2025);
- An amended version of the SCI prepared, taking the consultation results into account;
- Report on the consultation undertaken summarised in a consultation statement.

23. **Stage 3 Adoption (October 2025):**

- Amended SCI and consultation statement presented to the Cabinet for adoption;
- Six-week period for legal challenge to the High Court.

24. **Stage 4 (on-going):**

- We will continuously evaluate our consultation methods and report on the implementation of the SCI as and when required;
- The SCI will be reviewed at least once every 5 years from the date of adoption to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.

About Solihull

25. To understand how best to involve the community and stakeholders in planning it is important to understand the borough, its residents, its geography and political make-up.
26. Solihull is home to around 217,000 people. The borough covers approximately 17,820 hectares, with around 66% being designated as Green Belt. There are two main areas of urban development located in the north and west of the borough where approximately 80% of the population live. Solihull has many strengths including being located at the heart of the nation's road and rail network and being home to key economic assets such as the National Exhibition Centre and Birmingham International Airport. The borough has excellent schools and educational opportunities and aspirational housing with values consistently above the national average.
27. The borough has above average wages and relatively low numbers of residents claiming an out of work benefit. However, whilst much of the borough is relatively affluent, 16 out of 134 neighbourhoods are in the most deprived 10% in the country, of which 6 are in the bottom 5%. All of these are in North Solihull (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019⁴).
28. 51% of the local population are female. The borough has a relatively high proportion (21%) of older people aged 65+ compared to England (18%) including 3.1% aged 85+ (compared to England (2.4%). The median age of Solihull's residents is 43 compared with 40 years for the West Midlands and England.
29. 7% of the Borough's residents identified as being disabled or having their day-to-day activities limited by long term physical or mental health condition. The 2021 Census indicates that around 10% of Solihull's residents provide care to family members or friends.
30. The percentage of the population from an ethnic minority background is increasing (18% in 2021 compared to 5% in 2001). This is similar to the national average (19% in 2021) but lower than the West Midlands average of 23%). Since the 2021 census, several national policy initiatives have impacted on UK immigration. Since 2021 Solihull has welcomed over 4,000 adults and children to the borough through the Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) Welcome Programme.
31. Around 52% of Solihull's residents identify as Christian and nearly 30% have no religion. Just under 9% are Muslim, 5% are Hindu, 4% are Sikh and smaller numbers are Jewish, Buddhist and belong to other religions.
32. A key current opportunity and challenge for Solihull is the planned High Speed 2 (HS2) railway that will run through the borough, linking Birmingham to London. The new interchange station and related development plans for UK Central provide an unprecedented prospect for accelerated economic growth.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

33. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is an important part of the Council's core business of improving the quality of life and life chances for everyone. Our working definition of EDI is:

Equality is not about treating everyone the same but about making sure that people have equal access to opportunities and there is demonstrable advancement of fairness. The Equality Act covers person(s), and groups listed as 'protected characteristics' that covers age, disability (including neurodiversity, mental health, etc), ethnicity / race, gender / sex, marital status / civil partnership, religion / faith / no faith, sexual orientation, transgender status and pregnancy.

⁴ Next update due in late 2025.

Diversity is what makes us different. It is about recognising and valuing differences between people to create cultures and practices that lead to inclusion and belonging.

Inclusion and belonging: Recognising equality and diversity is a process that leads to everyone feeling included and where people are proud to be part of a bigger group. People feel they belong when they are seen and valued for who they are, and this helps them and people around them to thrive.

34. The [EDI strategy for 2024-2027](#) sits alongside other statutory equality information published each year and is underpinned by our [EDI roadmap](#). The roadmap is an overview of the equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes we want to achieve for the borough and the goals involved. The [Equal Opportunities Policy Statement](#) explains our commitment to equality and our legal responsibilities, how we will make our services more accessible to all, the actions we will take and how we will monitor and review the statement to ensure we do what we say.
35. EDI strategies and statements are incorporated into this SCI to ensure this is fully addressed in all planning matters.
36. Fair Treatment Assessments (FTAs) are the Council's localised form of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). FTAs provide a comprehensive way of ensuring that services are inclusive and can be accessed and used by all sections of the community and reflect the wider perspective of the Equality Act 2010. An FTA has been carried out to assess the SCI and ensure that it meets the Equality Duty under the 2010 Act.
37. Council policies and information regarding equality, diversity and inclusion can be accessed on the Council's website: [Equality, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#)

Commitment to clear language

38. Unfortunately, the planning system can be highly technical and founded in legal judgement and commentary. The Council seeks to use plain language and avoid jargon wherever possible to improve understanding for everyone. However, in instances where this cannot be avoided further explanation will be provided. For example, a glossary is included at the back of this document.

Council Democracy Strategies

39. There are several strategies that set out how the Council operates, makes decisions and the procedures which are followed to ensure these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. These include:
 - The Constitution of the Council;
 - Code of Conduct;
 - Council Meetings – Rules of Procedure;
 - Members Code of Conduct and
 - Petitions Scheme.
40. All these strategies are designed to support good partnership working and provide better services to all residents of Solihull. They can be accessed on the Council's website: [Democracy Strategies](#)

Monitoring

41. The Council will continue to monitor the feedback received from consultations using a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators. This also includes the capture of equality, diversity and inclusion data, where possible to allow the Council to monitor who is engaging and how we can improve our out-reach on planning matters.
42. The methods outlined in this SCI will be continually monitored prior to the next likely update in five years' time.

2. Community and stakeholder involvement in planning document production

Background

43. The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. [Planning Practice Guidance](#) then provides more detailed advice on how to apply the NPPF and other planning policies. Paragraph 15 and 16 of the NPPF state that the 'planning system should be genuinely plan-led' and that plans should 'be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers, operators and statutory consultees.'
44. The planning system encourages early community and stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process. Starting with the objective(s) of the document being produced, local people and stakeholders will be asked for their views on the main decisions which need to be made. This will involve advising on the realistic options available, within known constraints, with the aim of reaching consensus. However, difficult decisions must be made, and all communities and stakeholders may not be satisfied by planning decisions all the time.
45. We will develop an overall strategy or principles for each document we produce through evaluating the realistic options that have emerged, considering the environmental, social and economic effects of each option and its likely impact on other strategies. We will consult communities and stakeholders on detailed policies and proposals to achieve the overall strategy or principles.
46. In applying this process, we will ensure all:
 - Processes are transparent and accessible, so that everyone knows when they can get involved and to what extent;
 - The community and stakeholder involvement sought is appropriate to the policies or proposals being produced and everyone with an interest is given the opportunity to be involved;
 - Consultation undertaken is based on an understanding of community and stakeholder needs;
 - Involvement is continuous, not a one-off event and those involved are provided with feedback to enable them to understand the process and how decisions have been reached.
47. The minimum legal requirements for consultation and public participation in development plan documents (DPDs) and supplementary planning documents (SPDs) are set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended). Specific bodies must be consulted where the Council considers that the body may be affected by what is proposed.
48. The Regulations also require consultation with other interest groups, which cover a whole range of voluntary, community, special interest, amenity and business interests referred to as 'general consultation bodies'. The Council maintains an up-to-date database of organisations and individuals who have expressed an interest in being kept informed at key stages of the production of planning documents – such as the Solihull Local Plan, neighbourhood plans and supplementary planning documents and this is used to notify of consultations. Requests can be made to be included on the database at any time.

49. If you wish to be included on the consultation database your details can be added via [Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council - Login](#) or please contact the Policy and Delivery team via psp@solihull.gov.uk.
50. The Council also has a legal 'duty to cooperate' with other local planning authorities, county councils and other 'prescribed public bodies' in relation to strategic cross boundary issues. For Solihull this is largely (but not exclusively) done within the Housing Market Area (HMA). Solihull is one of 14 local planning authorities that is within (wholly or part) the HMA that includes Birmingham and surrounding authorities. The Council will continue to positively address cross boundary issues in its plan making and communicate and consult appropriately.

Local development plan documents

51. There are two main types of documents that we will produce as part of the development plan for Solihull. These are development plan documents (DPDs) and supplementary plan documents (SPDs)
52. Development plan documents (DPD) include both the strategic policies for the borough and non-strategic policies. These policies are currently principally contained in one document – the Solihull Local Plan. There is also a Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Plan. The current Local Plan review is seeking to review principal policies and allocations in one plan, although in future it is open to the Council to split this production and make use of action area plans. All of which would fall under the DPD category.
53. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are used to add more detail and assist in the application of the policies set out in DPDs; this can include design guidance, or the preparation of master plans for an area.
54. Further details of the current documents and documents we will be producing over the coming years can be found in our Local Development Scheme (LDS). This can be found on the Council website: [Additional Planning Policy Documents](#).

The production process

55. In producing most of our documents we will have to follow the six main stages set out below. The exception to this is supplementary planning documents which are not subject to stages 3 and 4.
- **Stage 1 - Pre-production** – The policies we prepare will be based on an understanding of the needs of the borough and the opportunities and constraints that exist within it. Evidence will be gathered to define the main issues and options in relation to each document produced. We will involve communities and stakeholders in the development of this evidence base where this will help in identifying issues to be dealt with and options to deal with them.
 - **Stage 2 - Production**⁵ – The evidence gathered during stage 1 will be used to prepare a draft document. This will usually be preceded by informal consultation, on the main issues and options that should inform the content of the plan. The issues and options stage will

⁵ In Local Plan production this is known as the informal Regulation 18 consultation. July 2026 update: Following the Minister of Housing and Planning's intervention in Solihull's plan making arrangements in December 2025, the Council has been following plan making arrangements under the legacy system for bringing forward plans. Due to the restricted timescale to have a plan submitted by 31st December 2026, the Council has had to streamline the R18 stage and will only be undertaking one round of consultation under this regulation. It is **not** intended to publish a preferred option draft plan.

then be followed by a draft plan or preferred option consultation. The comments received at this stage help shape the content of the final plan.

- **Stage 3 - Submission⁶** – The document published at this stage is the version the Council intends to submit for examination. Prior to submission the plan will be consulted upon with a focus on seeking views on whether the plan passes the soundness tests⁷ in the NPPF.
- **Stage 4 - Examination** – Only the main Development Plan Documents are formally examined by an Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State. Any SPDs produced are not formally examined, although the Secretary of State can direct the Council to make changes to these documents. The examination can be dealt with by way of written representations or through formal public examination. The main Local Plan is normally subject to an ‘Examination in Public’ (EiP). Following the examination, the Inspector issues their report which will usually indicate whether the plan is sound (either in its submitted state or with modifications that the Inspector can invite the Council to make) or unsound.
- **Stage 5 - Adoption** – If the plan is found sound or the Council makes the modifications to make the plan sound, then it can proceed to adoption by resolution from the Full Council. As SPDs are not subject to formal examination this stage does not apply to their production, and they can be adopted once the views received at stage 2 have been considered.
- **Stage 6 – Monitoring and Review** – All documents are kept under review, and their relevance and performance will be assessed.

Communicating opportunities for involvement in the production of planning documents

56. Effective publicising and promotion are crucial to encouraging effective community and stakeholder involvement.

57. For every document we produce we will seek to:

- Individually notify every specific consultation body and community/stakeholder group/individual from our consultation database who has stated an interest in being kept informed about policy development; and any additional groups who we consider has an interest in the document being produced;
- Publicise every document being produced so that everyone not specifically consulted can be aware of what is happening and to become involved;
- Provide details of how to respond.

58. The Council will use the most appropriate channels to deliver messages as directly as possible. Whilst traditional methods will still be used, the Council will increasingly use digital channels and social media to enable clearer conversations and engagement.

59. The following schedule provides a summary of the methods for publicising and promoting opportunities for involvement. We will select the most appropriate method(s) from this table each time we advertise opportunities to become involved in the production of planning documents.

- **Letters** - Appropriate for communicating on all formal consultation stages and the informal stages when new consultation documents are published. This will require the consultee database to be kept up to date. Letters will only be sent to those on the consultee database who have not provided an email address.

⁶ In Local Plan production this is known as the formal Regulation 19 consultation.

⁷ Positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

- **Email** – This will increasingly be the Council’s preferred method of communication. Appropriate for communication on all formal consultation stages, the informal stages when new consultation documents are published, and interim (non-statutory) updates as may be issued from time to time. This will require the consultee database to be kept up to date. (Please contact the Policy and Engagement team via psp@solihull.gov.uk or via other contact details set out at the end of the document).
- **E- Bulletins via ‘Stay Connected’ service** – This is a free service the Council provides that enables users to register and receive email alerts regarding the service preferences they wish to make. This will be appropriate for communicating on all formal consultation stages, the informal stages when new consultation documents are published, and interim (non-statutory) updates as may be issued from time to time. Please see the [Solihull Council](#) web page regarding this service.
- **Leaflets** - Can be appropriate for communicating all consultation stages. Can be used as part of consultation events if people require further information.
- **Notices displayed in public places** - Appropriate for communicating all consultation stages and particularly useful for site/area specific documents to notify those who use the area.
- **Website** - Appropriate for communicating all consultation and attracting the attention of those not generally involved in planning matters. Depending on other news announcements the Council may be making at the time, all new major consultations will feature on the Council’s main home page. In any event, with regards to the Local Plan, all announcements will be made on the Council’s dedicated Local Plan Review home page: [Solihull Local Plan Review](#)
- **Your Voice Solihull** – An online platform designed for residents to engage with Solihull Council. Once registered, users can take part in consultations and surveys, share ideas, and join in with discussions. It will also provide feedback about resulting action from the Council.
- **Social media** - (via the Council’s social media accounts) - Appropriate for communicating all consultation stages and for notifying those most likely to have an interest.
- **Solihull Local Development Scheme** - Appropriate for notifying of the likely timing of consultations etc.
- **Press releases** - Appropriate for advertising all consultation and attracting the attention of those not generally involved in planning matters and advertising formal adoption of plans.

Who we will specifically consult on planning document production

60. We aim to advertise the production of each document widely so that everyone can be involved in planning for the borough.
61. There are a wide range of community and stakeholder groups and individuals who we will specifically invite to become involved. Our dedicated planning consultation database ensures they are included, and anyone can be added or update their details via [Solihull Council - Login](#) or by contacting the Planning and Delivery team (all details at the end of this document).
62. The Stay Connected email alert service can be accessed here: [Solihull Council](#). Once registered users can define the Council services that they wish to receive updates on.

How we will involve communities and stakeholders in document production

63. The Council considers wide engagement to be important and therefore different methods to engage need to be considered to meet and build on the statutory regulations. Different methods will be used according to the consultation, scope of consultation, the target audience and resources available. Consultations will also be carried out avoiding main holiday periods where

possible and if unavoidable by ensuring the period of consultation allows for as much engagement as possible.

64. The different methods of communicating opportunities for involvement (as set out above) will be used and these can encourage further involvement of the community as appropriate. The following outlines some of the different methods:

- Online engagement – This has become the primary method of engagement for the Council and includes use of the website, on-line questionnaires, e-mail and social media;
- Written engagement – Easy-to-use response forms can be prepared to assist people with their response;
- Verbal engagement – Consultation material will include telephone contacts appropriate to the consultation;
- Face to face engagement – sometimes speaking directly to someone is the best way to understand a person's point of view. Depending on the issues involved this can include drop-in events and/or exhibitions. Meetings with relevant groups or organisations and presentations at public meetings such as ward committees. Meetings and exhibitions will be held at accessible and appropriate locations at times to encourage different members of the community to get involved.

65. Making consultation material available – Documents and consultation material are published on the Council's website which has an 'Accessibility and language tools' function to allow material to be accessed in different formats and languages. If documents are needed in additional different formats, we will consider requests to provide these. Hard copies may be made available for inspection at Solihull Connect centres and libraries.

66. Solihull connect centres offer free access to computers to connect with Solihull Council online services and if more help is needed a free telephone service enables residents to speak to directly to a customer service advisor. Solihull libraries also offer free access to computers for library members.

67. There is no single type of consultation that works best. A key point confirmed through the first SCI and by experience is that different people are best contacted in different ways and want to be involved in different planning issues to different extents.

68. It is recommended that the following methods are used by the community to ensure they are being consulted and engaged with effectively:

- **High** (For those who wish to be notified about all aspects of policy production and updates) - Register on the consultee database and the Stay Connected alert service. Check if there is a Parish or Town Council covering the area and how to get involved.
- **Medium** (For those who wish to be notified about significant stages (e.g. new consultation documents or notice of examination) – Register on the consultee database.
- **Low** (For those with a casual interest in planning policy development) – Rely on any press articles and/or social media interactions.

How communities and stakeholders' views will be used

69. We will aim to keep those who have registered a representation up to date with how representations will be considered.

70. The relevant Cabinet Member will receive a report that includes a summary of all the comments received during the consultation period. Normally a summary document will be published and access made available to both summaries and full copies of all the representations.
71. Prior to the submission or adoption of the relevant plan/document an opportunity will be taken to explain how the consultations have been used to shape the content of the final plan/document.
72. For consultation responses made at the formal stage of Local Plan making⁸, these will be considered by the Council prior to the submission of the plan and will then form the focus of the examination. This is when the independent Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate will test to see if the Plan is sound. Representatives need to make it clear in time for the examination if they wish to be heard in person.

Keeping our records up to date

73. Anyone can ask to be added to or removed from our Local Plan consultation database at any time through self-registration on our website: [Local plan consultation database](#)

Access to information

74. All consultation documents will be made available on our website. Where possible, for all new major consultations, printed versions will be made available as reference copies in Solihull connect centres and main libraries.
75. We will also provide telephone and e-mail contact details for informal discussions each time we advertise consultation events and publish documents. We will endeavour any reasonable requests to provide documents in different formats.
76. Recite Me is the Council's accessibility tool and translation software that is available on our website in the top right-hand corner of every page. Further information can be found on the Council's website: [Interpretation and translation](#) and [Accessibility statement](#)

⁸ Known as regulation 19 when the Draft Submission version of a Local Plan is published.

3. Neighbourhood Planning

Background

77. The Localism Act 2011 set out a series of proposals which aimed to shift power away from central government to local councils and neighbourhoods and introduced the concept of neighbourhood planning.
78. The Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) introduced a new requirement for SCIs to set out the local planning authority's policies for giving advice or assistance to groups undertaking neighbourhood planning.
79. Whilst neighbourhood planning is optional, the Localism Act enables communities to use different neighbourhood planning tools to influence the development of their area. These tools include neighbourhood development plans and neighbourhood development orders.
80. A neighbourhood development plan (NDP) is a development plan which can only be prepared by a parish or town Council, neighbourhood forum or community organisation (known as qualifying bodies), to guide the use and development of land within a particular neighbourhood area.
81. Neighbourhood development plans must conform to the 'strategic policies' of the local plan for the area (i.e. the Solihull Local Plan) and have regard to national planning policy. Once 'made', neighbourhood plans become part of the development plan for Solihull. This means that planning applications will be assessed against the policies and proposals included in the adopted neighbourhood development plan, as well as the local plan and other development plan documents.
82. Neighbourhood development orders (including community right to build orders) grant planning permission for a specific type of development in a particular area. This could be either a particular development or a particular class of development such as housing or retail.
83. Like local plans, regulations⁹ cover neighbourhood planning, including draft and submission consultation requirements and the referendum stages.

Neighbourhood planning process

84. Because neighbourhood planning is led by parish councils/town councils/neighbourhood forums (qualifying bodies) Solihull Council's role is different compared to DPDs and SPDs and the Council's role is largely to provide advice, technical input and support to groups developing a plan. (Please see list of parish/town councils on the councils' website: [Parish councils contact details | Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council](#))
85. However, in the first instance, the Council is responsible for publicising a neighbourhood area application and this includes inviting representations. (Although there is no need to publicise if the application is made by a parish council and the area covers the whole of the parish council's area - in these instances, the local planning authority must designate the area as a neighbourhood area). Similarly, where there is an application for the designation of a neighbourhood forum, we must also publicise this application and invite representations.
86. Once the neighbourhood area is designated, the local planning authority will provide advice and assistance to a qualifying body that is producing a neighbourhood plan. However, up to the submission of the final draft (the submission draft) plan, it is the qualifying body that is responsible for public consultation and engagement in its preparation. It is only at submission

⁹ Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

stage that Solihull Council takes a lead in publicising the plan proposal. This includes consultation, submitting the plan for independent examination and organising the referendum, details of which will be publicised on the website.

87. The Council will update details of the progress of each neighbourhood plan on its website. It will also publish examiners reports and any associated decision notices. Qualifying bodies can assist by making documents available locally and providing local publicity.
88. Prior to referendum an NDP that has been through a successful examination is a 'material consideration' in the planning application decision making process. NDPs waiting to be 'made' (adopted) by the Council following a majority 'yes' vote at referendum are deemed to form part of the development plan for the area concerned. This means that the council and planning inspectors will need to take the plan into consideration when making planning decisions in the NDP area.

Summary of the Council's policy for supporting groups undertaking neighbourhood planning

89. The council's policy for supporting parish/town councils or neighbourhood forums and facilitating the process is through the provisions in the table below.

Key Stages	Community Engagement: Parish/Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum	SMBC Support and advice
1 - Designation of neighbourhood area and if appropriate neighbourhood forum	Relevant body (parish/town council/neighbourhood forum) may decide to consult with the local community about preparing a neighbourhood plan/order before submitting an application to the local planning authority.	With the exception of applications which are for an entire parish area, the Council will formally publicise and consult on applications to designate a neighbourhood area (minimum consultation period is 6 weeks) and publish details in relation to the designation or refusal of a neighbourhood area. • Where appropriate, consultations on the designation of a neighbourhood area and a neighbourhood forum will be combined. • Write to specific, general and all other consultees who the Council considers may have an interest. • Make documents available on the Council's website, planning offices and other locations as considered appropriate. • Use social media and local media/press to raise awareness

Key Stages	Community Engagement: Parish/Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum	SMBC Support and advice
2 - Preparing the draft neighbourhood plan/ order: - Develop vision, aims and objectives. - Gathering baseline information and evidence. - Identify and assess options. - Determine need for SEA.	Undertake on-going consultation and engagement with people who live, work and carry out business in the area Consult specific consultation bodies Keep records of community engagement	• Provide advice on relevant national and local planning policies and guidance. • Share evidence and information on planning issues and on funding and skills for neighbourhood planning. • Provide relevant contact information to assist consultation, publicity and engagement. • Determine whether the plan or order is likely to have significant environmental effects and if an SEA is required. Ensure HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment) is completed correctly.
3: Pre-submission publicity and consultation	• Publicise the draft neighbourhood plan or order and invite representations (minimum of six weeks consultation). In the case of a modified plan, state whether the modifications are so significant as to change the nature of the plan and give reasons. • Consider the comments and amend plan/order if appropriate. • Prepare consultation statement. • Consult the consultation bodies as appropriate.	The Council will continue to provide informal advice and support and a formal response to consultation.

Key Stages	Community Engagement: Parish/Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum	SMBC Support and advice
4: Submission of neighbourhood plan/ order to the local planning authority.	• Submit plan or order and supporting documents to the Council including basic conditions statement, SEA if required and Consultation Statement. In the case of a modified plan, state whether the modifications are so significant as to change the nature of the plan and give reasons.	If the Council finds that the plan or order meets the legal requirements it will formally publicise and consult (for a minimum of 6 weeks) as follows: • Write to specific, general and all other consultees referred to in the consultation statement; • Make documents available on the Council's website, planning offices and other locations as considered appropriate; • Use social media and/ or local media to raise awareness; • Collate the representations made to send to the independent examiner; In the case of a modified plan, state whether the modifications are so significant as to change the nature of the plan and give reasons, and submit a copy of the original plan to the independent examiner.
5: Independent examination.	The independent examiner issues a report to the local planning authority and qualifying body.	• Make arrangements for the independent examination of the neighbourhood plan in consultation with the qualifying body. • Submit the plan or order, relevant documentation and representations to the examiner. • Publish the examiner's report on the website. • If the Council is satisfied that the plan/ order meets the basic conditions the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum, working with the qualifying body in light of any changes. • If the Council does not think the basic conditions have been met, they will work with the qualifying body to determine the way forward. • If a decision is taken to differ from any recommendation then arrange for a further six-week consultation as required.

Key Stages	Community Engagement: Parish/Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum	SMBC Support and advice
6: Community referendum	Raise awareness of referendum through publication of neutral promotional material.	Make arrangements and publish information statement and notice of the referendum. • Publish referendum results on the website and issue news release.
7: Bringing the neighbourhood plan/ order into force		• If more than half of those voting vote in favour, the Council 'makes' the plan via Council resolution. • Publish the neighbourhood plan, adoption statement and SEA adoption statement (where relevant) on the Council's website, at the council offices and other locations considered appropriate.
8: Monitoring and review.		Advise on the options, process and timing for reviewing neighbourhood plans.

Further information

91. Solihull Council has a webpage dedicated to neighbourhood planning. It gives details of all neighbourhood planning activities in Solihull and gives links to further help and advice. This includes a guidance and FAQs leaflet produced by Solihull Council to help explain the process. The web page can be found at: Neighbourhood Planning solihull.gov.uk
92. Government guidance on the neighbourhood planning system can be found at: Neighbourhood planning - GOV.UK

4. Community Infrastructure Levy

Background

93. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of the area. A portion of CIL is allocated to the local Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) and is distributed to local communities for small scale projects. The funds are raised through a charge that is payable on certain kinds of new development.
94. Local authorities who introduce a CIL are known as charging authorities and must produce a charging schedule which sets out the levy rate(s) that the authority will charge. The Council's charging schedule is available on the Council's website. (See links below). The charging schedule is reviewed in line with the development plan review to ensure the levy's charges and the infrastructure they fund remain appropriate.
95. CIL Regulations¹⁰ set out the procedure that charging authorities must follow prior to adopting or changing a charging schedule. These are summarised in the following table along with the key opportunities for engagement.

Summary of the process of producing the CIL charging schedule and opportunities for engagement

96. The table below sets out a summary of the process for producing the CIL charging schedule and opportunities for community and stakeholder engagement.

Stage	97. Process and Requirements	Opportunities for Community Engagement
1: Preliminary draft charging schedule. (Regulation 15)	• Prepare evidence base to inform the preliminary draft charging schedule (PDCS). • Publish the PDCS • Consult on the PDCS with consultees. Consider representations when preparing the draft charging schedule.	• Informal consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and interested parties. • Make consultation documents available for inspection including on the Council's website, planning offices and other locations as considered appropriate. • Use social media and/ or local media to raise awareness.

¹⁰ The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)

Stage	97. Process and Requirements	Opportunities for Community Engagement
2: Draft charging schedule. (Regulation 16)	Publication of draft charging schedule (DCS) and a statement of representations procedure. Also publish the appropriate available evidence on infrastructure costs, other funding sources and viability. • Statutory consultation for a minimum of four weeks on the DCS and supporting evidence– in accordance with relevant legislation. (However, if only minor changes are proposed a shorter consultation period may be considered appropriate). • Prepare consultation statement. • An examiner is appointed.	• Documents made available for inspection. This will include on the Council’s website and other locations as considered appropriate. • Use social media and local media to raise awareness. - Notifications will be sent to relevant groups and organisations and all those who have requested to be notified. • Consultation may also be supported by workshops/meetings. • Consultees can request to be heard by the examiner and notified of further stages.
3: Examination. (Regulations 19 - 24)	Council submit to the examiner: - Draft charging schedule; - Summary of main issues raised by the consultation; - Copies of the representations; - Relevant evidence. Examiner conducts the hearing. Examiner submits recommendations with reasons to the Council (If the Council does not agree with the examiner’s recommendations, the whole process will need to be repeated unless it is a correctable error).	Documents made available and persons notified as above. • If the DCS had been modified following Regulation 16 then all consulted under Regulation 15 must receive a copy of the statement of modifications. • Notice of examination given four weeks in advance to people who have requested the right to be heard. • Local publicity for the examination. • Publish examiner’s recommendations and inform all who requested notification.
4: Adoption, monitoring and review	• Council approves charging schedule and date of effect. • Six-week period for legal challenge to the High Court. • Details of CIL income received and spent will be published either in a CIL annual monitoring report or an infrastructure funding statement. • Charging schedule will be reviewed in line with local plan progress and changes in costs and values of development.	Adoption statement, charging schedule and associated maps published on website and made available for inspection. • Use social media and/or local media to advertise adoption. - Web pages and social media to be used to highlight projects that have been funded by CIL

Further information

98. Solihull Council webpage to explain CIL, with a link to the current charging schedule, can be found here: [Charging schedule and rates | solihull.gov.uk](https://www.solihull.gov.uk/charging-schedule)
99. Government guidance on CIL can be found here: [Community Infrastructure Levy - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy)

5. Community and stakeholder involvement in planning applications

Background

100. This section sets out how we will consult the community and stakeholders on applications for different types of development.
101. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 sets out a minimum standard of publicity and notification of applications to the local community, depending on the nature of the application.
102. There are two main stages of the planning application process where the community and stakeholders may become involved:
 - Pre-application;
 - During the determination of the application
103. The nature of involvement at any stage varies depending on the type and size of development proposed.
104. Anyone can access information regarding planning applications and involve themselves in the decision-making process by making their views known. Groups typically involved in the planning application process include:
 - local people, especially those living close to application sites;
 - residents' associations, parish/town councils & neighbourhood forums;
 - statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency or Sport England;
 - other community groups and societies.
105. Any representations made on applications are considered when the Council decide whether to approve an application. This ensures local people and stakeholders help to influence development in their area.

Pre-application advice

106. Pre-application discussions are a useful way of applicants finding out at an early stage if the type of development they are proposing is acceptable in principle. It can highlight any conflict with adopted policies or guidance at an early stage and can also identify the level and type of detail needed as part of a formal planning application. As stated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024):

“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”

107. For these reasons the Council's development management service encourages applicants to take advantage of the pre-application services offered wherever possible and appropriate. It is important to note though that pre-application advice is generally treated in a confidential manner due to it being commercially sensitive. As a result, pre-application inquiries will not be subject to wider public consultation in the same way as standard planning applications.
108. There is a charge associated with pre-application submissions. Further information can be found on the planning and building control pages of the Council's website: [Pre-application discussions](#)

109. Whilst this advice is offered without prejudice and in confidence there may be some occasions when we feel that, due to the scale or location of a proposed development, a developer should consider wider public involvement before a planning application is submitted.
110. The Council is no longer able to offer pre-application advice for household extensions or similar household projects. Instead, the Council directs homeowners to review the planning portal web pages. The planning portal is a government partnered web service and provides easy to follow guidelines as well as examples of interactive homes that demonstrate what sort of works can and cannot be undertaken without the need for planning permission. Where planning permission is needed for household extensions, the Council's supplementary planning document 'House Extension Guidelines', provides comprehensive advice that should be followed.

Advice for homeowners:

[Interactive House – Planning Portal](#)

[Applying for planning permission - solihull.gov.uk](#)

[Solihull House Extension Guidelines SPD](#)

111. For anyone without digital access, Solihull connect centres and libraries offer free access to computers.

Pre-application consultation

112. The [Localism Act 2011](#) brought in a requirement for developers to consult before they submit certain planning applications. The Government encourages applicants to involve the wider community at an early stage in the development of their proposals and this is an approach we support.
113. We would therefore expect developers of applications for major development to involve the wider community in the development of their proposals at a pre-application stage. It would also be good practice for developers of smaller schemes to involve the community and stakeholders in their plans. The type of consultation to be undertaken in each instance will depend on the nature of the application and should be discussed with the Council's development management officers at an early stage. Suggested minimum levels of involvement are set out in the table below.

Examples of Community Involvement	
Major development • Housing development (10 or more dwellings/0.5 hectare or more site area) • New building/ development (more than 1000m² floor area/1 hectare or more site area)	Contact the owners/occupiers of neighbouring sites in writing with copies of the plans and allow a period for them to comment. Contact key stakeholders such as ward councillors, parish/town Councils, neighbourhood forums and local amenity societies in writing or by organising meetings to discuss proposals. Copies of plans are a useful tool to aid meaningful dialogue. Contact bodies such as the Environment Agency, Highways England and other consultees to ascertain any specific requirements.

Examples of Community Involvement	
Larger scale housing development (In excess of 20 dwellings)	As above Contact ward councillors, parish/town councils, neighbourhood forums and local amenity societies in writing, or by attending meetings, with copies of the plans and allow a period for them to comment.
Large scale housing (50+ dwellings), new town centre schemes, leisure and office development	As above Consider holding public exhibitions/drop-in sessions, public meetings and providing a newsletter to keep people up to date with the progress of the scheme. Bespoke websites or social media pages can also be a positive way of engaging the community but not necessarily in isolation.

114. Innovative consultation methods to engage communities in more interactive and engaging ways will also be explored including using digital tools, online surveys and interactive maps. Any consultation should also encourage as much of the community to be involved by arranging accessible events at different times of the day/week and avoiding school and public holidays where possible.
115. To ensure the process remains impartial we will not be directly involved at this stage, although developers will be expected to agree appropriate community involvement methods, such as exhibitions and public meetings with us. As part of the planning application, developers will be expected to submit a report detailing how the community has been involved, what representations were received and how the proposals have changed as a result of consultation.
116. Applicants should fund community involvement at the pre-application stage. Enabling communities to actively influence schemes as well as improving the quality of application and minimising the time taken in determination is likely to compensate for any initial outlay.
117. We cannot invalidate an application or refuse planning permission due to a lack of public participation or because we disagree with the methods of consultation undertaken by the developer. However, failure by the applicant to consult could lead to objections being made which could influence or delay the determination of the application.
118. In addition to encouraging developers to consult with the wider community, our development management service through its pre-application service, offers prospective applicants of major schemes the chance to present details of their proposals to a 'development team' meeting. This involves representatives from a wide range of Council services, including highways, housing and landscape architects.
119. These meetings are used to highlight any issues raised by the proposals and offer feedback to the developer at an early stage. They are also useful for identifying the need for pre-application consultation with stakeholders and the local community.
120. To note, the information that should be submitted as part of a planning application is set out within the Council's Local Validation Criteria - [Local Validation Criteria January 2020](#).

Advertising planning applications

121. We advertise the fact that a planning application has been submitted in a variety of ways:

- **Site notice** - Site notices are posted for major applications, applications affecting a conservation area or listed building or those sites with no direct neighbours. They are notices which are usually fixed to lamp posts as close as possible to the site. The applications that need to have site notices are detailed in the tables at the end of this chapter;
- **Neighbour notification letter** - Neighbours informed of an application are those directly adjoining the boundary of the site. This can include properties opposite or to the rear of the site if they are directly affected by the proposal;
- **Press notices** - Certain types of application, such as those affecting a listed building or the setting of a conservation area or major development must be advertised in a local newspaper. The applications that need to have press notices are detailed in the tables at the end of this chapter;
- **Weekly list** - List of valid planning applications received by the Council, produced on a weekly basis, is available on our website: [Search for planning and Building Control applications](#).

Access to information

122. Information regarding planning applications can be accessed in the following ways:

- [Solihull Council website](#) - Provides a range of information about planning services including the weekly list, planning applications forms, plans and supporting documents, planning decisions, planning histories and committee dates, agendas and minutes. You can also comment on a planning application using the website or request to be notified when a decision is made.
- Through registering with the public access database, an individual may track a specific application or seek notifications of all applications received within an area as defined by the individual. (However, please note that tracking a specific application reference number only, will not trigger notification for any subsequent application at that address).
- **Solihull connect and libraries (appendices)** - Current planning applications can be viewed online, along with planning policy documents material to the determination of planning applications.
- **Weekly list** - List of valid planning applications received by the Council, produced on a weekly basis, available via the Council's web site: [Search for planning and Building Control applications](#).
- [Planning Portal](#) - The Planning Portal is a government partnered planning resource. The site can be used to learn about the planning system and provides a useful interactive tool to understand what household development may be built without the need for planning permission. The Planning Portal can also be used to apply for planning permission on-line, for general advice, e.g. planning application fees, appeal against a planning decision and research the latest government policy. The site also offers a link to the planning pages of our website.

How to comment on a planning application

123. When an application is submitted, the Council has 8, 10, 13 or 16 weeks to determine the application, depending on its scale and nature. Part of determining planning applications is consultation with a wide range of people. The types of consultation each sort of application will be subject to are set out below. These include site notices and neighbour notification.

124. Applications are available to view at the locations set out in the 'Access to information' section above.

125. People are given 21 days to offer their comments on the proposals. The 21-day period runs from the date of the notification letter or the date of the site notice or press notice, whichever is the latest. However, the Council will endeavour to take account of any representation received after this time up until the decision is made.
126. The simplest way to make comments is online, via the [Council's website](#) . See '[How can I comment on a proposed development?](#)'. However, comments can be made in writing, by email or post. We also offer the opportunity to request e-mail notification when a decision is made on a particular application.
127. Comments should relate to planning issues relevant to the proposal (known as material planning considerations). Issues that can be taken into account and will be assessed by the Council, could relate to highway issues, loss of privacy, loss of light, noise and disturbance for example. Please see further guidance on material planning considerations on the Planning Portal: [What are material considerations? - Planning Portal](#).
128. Proposals can often be amended during the processing of the application to make a scheme acceptable in planning terms. Significant amendments that alter the character of a proposed development will require a new planning application to be submitted. However, amendments of a minor nature, made to overcome issues raised may be accepted. In these instances, any re-consultation we undertake is discretionary and only directed to people who are affected by the amendment made. For small developments, such as household extensions the Council will only accept one set of amendments ahead of issuing the planning decision notice except in exceptional circumstances. This reflects the aims of national guidance to support timely decision making and encourage good quality submissions and decisions.

Determining planning applications

129. Matters related to the determination of planning applications (and some other regulatory functions) are for the Planning Committee to undertake on behalf of the Council.
130. Information regarding Planning Committee, the procedure for the determination of planning applications and the principles of speaking at Planning Committee can be found in the Council's [Planning Committee Handbook](#).
131. The decision on simple, straight forward and uncontroversial applications can be delegated to officers. Most planning applications are decided under 'delegated powers'. This allows the Planning Committee to focus on the major, significant and potentially controversial proposals.
132. In some instances, determined by law planning applications will be referred to the Secretary of State for decision or will be decided by the Planning Inspectorate where a decision has not been reached within the statutory period and the applicants have lodged an appeal. (Please also see 'Following the decision' below).
133. The legal framework set out in *article 40(3) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015* (DMPO 2015) requires that local planning authorities (LPAs) maintain a register containing key documents related to planning applications, including:
 - copies of the application and accompanying plans
 - draft and final s106 agreements
 - any other relevant planning obligations
 - details of modifications to such agreements.

134. At Solihull Council, such information is held on the planning file, which can be viewed on the planning pages of the website using Public Access. A planning application reference number or site address will allow the planning file to be located, viewed and tracked on request
135. A section 106 (S106) agreement is a legally binding agreement or “planning obligation” between a local planning authority and a property owner. The purpose of a S106 agreement is to mitigate the impact of the development on the local community and infrastructure. The agreement will set out the terms binding on the owners or developer to provide, facilitate or fund the provision of infrastructure, services or other measures that may be needed for the development to be acceptable in planning terms. The agreement may relate to measures on or off site and may restrict development for example pending the satisfactory performance of measures or development coordination.
136. Prior to determination of the planning application, the officer report will set out the Heads of Terms agreed with the applicant which provides a summary of what the S106 seeks to achieve to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms; if a monetary sum is required to be paid by the applicant, the amount required will be specified. A final draft S106 agreement will be published on the planning file after engrossment but before completion, which normally will mean the final draft version will be publicly accessible for around five days ahead of the S106 Legal Agreement being sealed. On sealing of the S106 agreement, the planning decision notice is issued and the completed S106 and planning decision notice is posted on the planning file.
137. Planning Committee takes place roughly every four weeks. Agendas are available via the website under ‘Decision making’ and [Planning Committee](#) and also at Solihull Connect.
138. We write to anyone who has made a formal comment on an application which is to be heard at the committee. Further guidance on how to speak at committee will be contained within the notification letter.
139. It is not necessary for those who have made representations on an application to attend and address the meeting, other than a ward councillor who has called the application to committee. All objections or comments in support of a proposal are included in a summary of representations within the planning officer’s report and members have access to individual representations in full. Members will therefore be aware of the issues raised in representations.
140. These speaking arrangements shall only apply to those applications being reported to the Committee and not those to be determined under delegated powers.
141. A planning update note is also produced on the day of the meeting, which reports any changes that have occurred since the publication of the Officer report.
142. Council meetings can be watched live using the Council’s webcast service. Full Council, Cabinet and Planning Committee meetings as well as the Climate Change and Planning, Transport and Highways Cabinet decision sessions and other meetings of wide public interest are included. Webcasts are also available on demand in the webcast library. The committee meetings are minuted and published online.
143. Further information about how to watch Council webcasts is available on the website: [Solihull Council webcast overview](#).

Feedback

144. Once a decision has been made on an application, we send a notice of the decision to the applicant setting out whether planning permission has been approved or refused and the

conditions of any approval or the reasons for refusal. The decision notice also informs them of their rights if they are unhappy with our decision. Planning decisions are also available to view on the planning file by using the public access function on the Planning pages of the Council's website: [Search for Planning and Building Control applications](#).

145. Anyone can also register an interest in a particular planning application or area via our [website](#) and will be notified by email of the decision once the application has been determined.

Following the Decision

146. When an application is approved for 'full' planning permission, or other types of consent such as listed building or conservation area consent, the permission or consent must be implemented within a specified period. This is usually three years from the date of the decision notice.
147. If 'outline' planning permission has been granted, work cannot begin until further details, known as 'reserved matters' have been approved. Reserved matters can include details such as access, layout, appearance, scale or landscaping and must be submitted within three years of the original 'outline' planning permission and development must be begun within five years of the outline permission or two years of approval of the final reserved matter, whichever is the later.
148. If an application is refused or the applicants are unhappy with the conditions set out in the decision notice, they can appeal against the decision. There are three types of planning appeal; written representations, public hearings and public inquiries. Appeals are dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), the agency that acts on behalf of the Secretary of State in deciding planning appeals. The Inspectorate notify us when an appeal has been lodged. We send all representations received on the application to the Inspectorate and notify all those people who made representations of the appeal, informing them how and when to get involved.
149. The law currently provides no third party right of appeal for people aggrieved by the Council's decision to grant or refuse planning permission.
150. The Planning Inspectorate's [Procedural Guide: Planning Appeals - England](#) provides guidance on information on how appeals work and opportunities to participate.
151. Occasionally, applicants will want to make changes to the proposals after a decision has been made. If these amendments are significant, e.g. making a building larger, then a new planning application will be required. However, amendments of a minor nature such as changes to materials or types of windows used will be considered with re-consultation only directed to the people we consider are affected by the amendment made. Other changes that are considered to be non-material amendments may not be subject to further consultation, although details will still be published on the Council's website. Guidance on options for amending proposals that have planning permission can be found here: [Flexible options for planning permissions](#).
152. The Council will investigate all alleged planning and building breaches in accordance with the Local Enforcement Plan. If you suspect a building has been put up without permission, or other work started where there has been a planning breach, please contact the Council at planningenforcement@solihull.gov.uk. Further details on the Council's approach to addressing planning enforcement matters can be found on the Council's website: [Planning and Building Control enforcement](#).

Summary of types of planning applications and methods of involving stakeholders and the community

153. The following tables summarise the different types of planning applications and methods of involving stakeholders and the community. (The requirements of Schedule 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, which includes the full list of statutory consultees, should be consulted as the basis of statutory consultation before the grant of planning permission).

154. General planning applications

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
- Householder Applications, e.g. house extensions, garages, garden sheds - Changes of use e.g. shop to office - Housing development (less than 10 dwellings/under 0.5 hectare site area) - New building/ development (less than 1000m² floor area/under 1 hectare site area) - Applications for telecommunications installations e.g. mobile phone masts and aerials mounted on buildings (see also prior notification)	- Adjoining neighbours (owners or occupiers) must be informed; or - A site notice may also be displayed if appropriate Note: Anybody interested has 21 days to view the details of the application and make comments to the Council - For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as Highways England for a period of 21 days	- In most instances those neighbours informed of an application are those that directly adjoin the boundary of the site and we consider are directly affected by the proposal. This can include properties opposite or to the rear of the site. - If the site falls within an area covered by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum, they will be notified and offered the opportunity to comment. - Ward councillors are consulted - Details of applications are made available as part of the list of planning applications we receive, 'the Weekly List', available on our website. - Applications can be viewed electronically via our website. Free internet access is available at libraries across the borough.

155. Applications in Conservation Areas/Affecting Listed Buildings

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
Development materially affecting a conservation area (can be development outside a conservation area that, in our opinion, affects its setting)	- A site notice must be placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days; and - The application must be advertised in a local newspaper	
Applications for works to listed buildings	Note: Some applications for works to listed building also need to be referred onto amenity societies, such as the Victorian Society, for comment For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as Historic England for a period of 21 days	We will also inform neighbours adjoining the site and anybody interested has 21 days to view the details of the application and make their comments to the Council.

156. Major Development

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
- Housing development (10 or more dwellings/ 0.5 hectare or more site area) - New building/ development (more than 1000m² floor area/ 1 hectare or more site area) - Application for the working of minerals Applications for the treating, storing, processing or disposing of waste	- A site notice must be placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days; - The application must be advertised in a local newspaper; and - Adjoining neighbours (owners or occupiers) shall be informed in writing. For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as Highways England, for a period of 21 days	As for general planning applications; and We will encourage developers of major schemes to undertake pre-application consultation with stakeholders and local residents. Developers will be encouraged to include with their application details of the public consultation undertaken and how this has influenced/resulted in changes to the proposal.

157. Departures from the Development Plan/Development affecting Public Rights of Way

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
Planning applications not in accordance with the policies and proposals of the Development Plan.	A site notice must be placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days	As general and major planning applications

Development which would affect a public right of way	- The application must be advertised in a local newspaper - For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as Highways England, for a period of 21 days	
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158. **Applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement**

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
- Certain applications that are likely to have a significant effect on the environment. For example: - New motorways or new roads with four or more lanes - Significant new airport developments - Quarries/opencast mines - Significant waste disposal installations.	- A site notice must be placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days; and - The application must be advertised in a local newspaper - Further copies can be requested of the applicant if consultation with statutory bodies is required. - If the application is not accompanied by an environmental statement but it is later found that one is required the developer must carry out the publicity described, namely the posting of a site notice and the advertisement of the application in the local newspaper. - For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as Highways England, for a period of 21 days	As general and major planning applications unless otherwise deemed appropriate under national requirements or guidance for National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (for example).

159. **Works to Protected Trees**

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
Works to trees covered by a tree preservation order (TPO)	For TPO applications displaying a site notice or notifying the	For both TPO and trees in conservation areas, ward councillors are notified and

Works to trees in a Conservation Area (TCA)	residents. In addition, where a neighbour submits an application, the authority should make sure the owner or occupier of the land on which the tree stands is informed and given a chance to comment There is no statutory requirement to advertise works to trees in Conservation Areas	where applicable Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forum Neighbour letters for all applications for work on TPO trees. Neighbour letters and a Site Notices when the proposal is to Fell a tree (for both TPO and TCA apps). Neighbour letters for TCA's when the subject tree is identified as overhanging onto neighbours' land. Neighbour letters for TCA's when the subject tree is identified as overhanging onto neighbours' land. Note: For applications to carry out works to trees in a conservation area (a section 211 notice) we have 6 weeks to determine these applications otherwise the works are permitted. These applications cannot be refused. We can only reach a decision as to whether to serve a TPO or not. Ward councillors, and where applicable parish councillors and neighbourhood forums are notified.
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160. **Advertisements**

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
Applications for the display of adverts	- Neighbour notification for adjoining properties or site notice. - For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as Highways England, for a period of 21 days	- Adjoining neighbours (owners or occupiers) informed; or - A site notice placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days

161. **Prior Notification Applications**

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
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	<i>statutory requirements)</i>	
There are numerous types of prior notification applications as set out in the General Permitted Development Order	Statutory publicity is carried out in accordance with the General Permitted Development Order	

162. **Appeals**

<i>Type of development proposed</i>	<i>Methods of community involvement (minimum statutory requirements)</i>	<i>Additional methods that may be used</i>
Appeals made against: - - the refusal of planning permission; - the imposition of a particular condition on a planning permission; - the failure of the Council to make a decision within the required period; - the serving of an enforcement notice.	- Appeals against a decision made by the Council are dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) - If an appeal is lodged we must notify all those who commented on the application and provide PINS with copies of all the representations made - Anyone wishing to make representations on an appeal must send their correspondence direct to PINS, who then send a copy on to us	

A. Solihull Connect

Solihull Connect at The Core (walk in centre)

Theatre Square

Solihull

B91 3RG

E-mail: connectcc@solihull.gov.uk

Solihull Connect at The Bluebell Centre (walk in centre)

Ground Floor West Mall

Chelmsley Wood

Solihull B37 5TN

Solihull Connect Local at Shirley Library (self-service hub)

22 Parkgate

Stratford Road

Shirley

Solihull

B91 3GG

Solihull Connect Local at Kingshurst Library (self-service hub)

Marston Drive

Kingshurst

Solihull B37 6BD

Solihull Connect Local at Balsall Common Library (self-service hub)

283 Kenilworth Road

Balsall Common

CV7 7EL

Solihull Connect Local at Dickens Heath Library (self-service hub)

Old Dickens Heath Road

Dickens Heath

Solihull

B90 1SD

B. Solihull libraries

Balsall Common Library

283 Kenilworth Road
Balsall Common
CV7 7EL

Castle Bromwich Library

Hurst Lane North
Castle Bromwich
Solihull
B36 0EY

Chelmsley Wood Library

10 West Mall
Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre
Chelmsley Wood
Birmingham

Dickens Heath Library

Old Dickens Heath Road
Dickens Heath
Solihull
B90 1SD

Hampton in Arden Library

39 Fentham Road
Hampton in Arden
B92 0AY

Hobs Moat Library

Ulleries Road
Solihull
B92 8EB

Kingshurst Library

Marston Drive
Kingshurst
Solihull
B37 6BD

Knowle Library

Chester House
1667-1669 High Street
Knowle
Solihull
B93 0LL

Marston Green Library

Land Lane
Solihull
B37 7DQ

Meriden Library

Arden Cottage
The Green
Meriden
CV7 7LN

Olton Library

169A Warwick Road
Olton
Solihull
B92 7AR

Solihull Central Library (The Core)

Homer Road
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 3RG

Shirley Library

22 Parkgate
Stratford Road
Shirley
Solihull
B90 3GG

C. Further Information

Useful Websites

163. Solihull Council website: [Homepage | solihull.gov.uk](http://solihull.gov.uk)
 Solihull Council Planning and Building Control: [Planning and building control | solihull.gov.uk](http://solihull.gov.uk)
 Solihull Council Social Media Links: [Contact us using social media](#)
 Solihull Councillors and democracy: [Councillors and democracy | Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council](#)
 The Planning Portal: [Planning Portal](#)

Solihull Council

164. **Policy and Delivery**
 (Responsible for the production of the planning policy documents)

Policy & Delivery
 Economy & Infrastructure Directorate
 Solihull MBC
 Council House
 Manor Square
 Solihull
 B91 3QB
 Email: psp@solihull.gov.uk
 Tel: (0121) 704 8008

Development Management

(Responsible for dealing with planning applications).

Development Management
 Economy & Infrastructure Directorate
 Solihull MBC
 Council House
 Manor Square
 Solihull
 B91 3QB
 Email: planning@solihull.gov.uk
 Tel: (0121) 704 8008

Planning Aid England

165. [Planning Aid England](#) provides free, independent and professional town planning advice and support to communities and individuals who cannot afford to pay planning consultant fees. It complements the work of local planning authorities but is wholly independent of them.

Planning Aid England,
 RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane,
 London
 EC3R 8DL
 Tel: 020 7929 8338

D. Glossary

Adoption - The formal approval or acceptance of development plan documents by the Council.

Area action plan (AAP) - Development plan documents for key areas of change or conservation, focussing on proposals and their implementation.

Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Planning - An elected Member appointed by the Leader of the Council to make decisions on defined responsibilities. Decision sessions are held approximately monthly and are usually open to the public and attended by opposition Members. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Planning has responsibility for the Local Development Plan, Development Management Performance, Neighbourhood Planning, all town and country planning executive functions and building control. Cabinet Member responsibilities are amended from time to time and the full list is available at: [Committee details – CPH Climate Change & Planning Decision Session.](#)

Community – For the purposes of this SCI, Community refers to ‘persons who appear to the authority to have an interest in matters relating to development in their area’. (As defined by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 20014 (Section 18) (as amended). This will therefore be different for different planning matters.

Community strategy - Our long-term vision for improving the quality of people’s lives, with the aim of improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough.

Conservation areas - Areas of special architectural or historic interest designated by the Council because their character or appearance is judged worthy of preservation or enhancement against local and regional criteria.

Development Plan - The essential documents containing the essential planning policy and proposal documents to guide planning decisions.

Development plan documents (DPDs) - Adopted documents containing the core planning policies and proposals.

Environmental statement - Identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant environmental effects of planning proposals.

Examination - Formal examination of development plan documents by an independent inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Feedback - Ensuring that any representations received are acknowledged, that communities and stakeholders are aware of the current and next stages and are informed of the decisions that have been taken.

Forward Plan - When major decisions are to be discussed, or made, these are published in the Cabinets’ Forward Plan, in so far as they can be anticipated.

Planning and Policy - Our team primarily responsible for producing planning policies and proposals for the borough.

Involvement - Involving people in planning matters, ranging from informal comments to contributing to decisions.

Listed building - A building, object or structure that has been judged by English Heritage to be of national historical or architectural interest, including houses, buildings designed by

prominent architects, churches, public as well as private buildings, cottages, and historic monuments, such as milestones and village pumps.

Local Plan Consultation Database - The list of consultees held by the Planning and Delivery Team detailing, which groups wish to be consulted on certain documents, and how they wish to be consulted.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) - Development plan process document setting the programme for the production of all other development plan documents and guidance

Local strategic partnership - A forum of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors with the key role of implementing strategies and initiatives.

Monitoring and review - Monitoring the production or implementation of development plan documents to identify any need to review.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) - The UK Government department for housing, communities and local government. Responsible for all planning matters.

Outline planning application - A planning application to determine the principle of proposed development. Outline applications do not normally include details of the proposed siting, access, design and external appearance and landscaping, although such details may be requested if required to determine the principle. Otherwise, such detail is dealt with through a “reserved matters” planning application.

Planning committee - A committee of Council Members meeting approximately every four weeks and usually in public session to exercise our planning functions

Planning application - Formal application for permission to develop land or buildings.

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) - The executive agency of the MHCLG with the responsibility of examining the soundness of planning documents and deciding planning applications and appeals.

Pre-production - Evidence gathering to define the main issues and options for development plan documents.

Prior notification - Some proposals for minor agricultural development, e.g. small agricultural buildings and some telecommunications installation development do not require the submission of a formal planning application. Instead, developers are required to give “prior notification” of the proposed development.

Process documents - Documents to guide the production of the development plan, comprising the Local Development Scheme (LDS), Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

Production - Preparing draft development plan documents.

Representations - General comments or comments of support or objection.

Reserved matters - Planning application to determine the detailed matters “reserved” by an “outline” planning permission, e.g. siting, access, design and external appearance and landscaping.

Site specific allocations development plan documents (SSAs) - Development plan documents (DPDs) allocating land for specific uses.

Stakeholder - Anyone with an interest in the borough, for example, employers and employees in the borough, residents or anyone who visits.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - Local development document process document stating how we will consult and involve communities and stakeholders in planning matters.

Statutory - A legal requirement.

Submission - Submission development plan documents, as proposed for adoption, to the Secretary of State,

Supplementary planning documents (SPD) - Detailed policy to supplement development plan document (DPD) policies and proposals. SPDs can be thematic or site specific.

Sustainability appraisal - An appraisal of the potential social, environmental and economic impacts of policies and proposals.

Third party right of appeal - Only the applicant has the right to appeal to the Secretary of State against the Council's decision to refuse a planning application or to approve it with conditions. An objector (a third party) cannot appeal to the Secretary of State against the Council's decision to approve a planning application.

Tree preservation order - Protection orders placed on trees of amenity value by the Council to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without our consent.

Without prejudice - This refers to pre-application advice which is offered without pre-judging any decision that may be taken by the Council once an application is submitted.

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**Policy & Delivery
Economy & Infrastructure Directorate
Solihull MBC
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB**

Email: psp@solihull.gov.uk

Tel: (0121) 704 8008

Web site: www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr