



# **SOLIHULL MBC**

## **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL):**

### **EXAMINATION**

## **COUNCIL'S OPENING STATEMENT**

June 2015

The Council wishes to welcome the Examiner, and other hearing participants to Solihull, and it is grateful to the Examiner for the opportunity to make this short opening statement to introduce its Community Infrastructure Levy at this critical stage in its progress towards adoption.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough is located on the southern edge of the West Midlands conurbation between Birmingham and the Black Country in the West and Coventry to the east. It is bound to the north by the rural area of North Warwickshire and the south by rural Bromsgrove, Stratford and Warwick. Two thirds of the Borough is located within the Green Belt – including the strategically important Meriden Gap which separates the conurbation from Coventry.

The Borough is home to several major economic assets of regional and international importance, including Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre, Jaguar Land Rover to name a few. It is also at the heart of the national rail and motorway network.

Solihull is renowned for its key economic assets, strategic transport infrastructure, high quality environment, aspirational housing and excellent schools; which are integral to its success and have ensured that Solihull is a desirable place in which to live, work and invest.

Given the Borough's reputation as an aspirational place to live, house prices in the popular residential areas of the mature suburbs and rural area are significantly higher than both the West Midlands and national averages. However the Borough is not without its problems and North Solihull is the subject of one of the largest regeneration programmes in England.

The Council's adopted Local Plan sets out a vision that by 2028 Solihull will have built on its distinct reputation as an attractive and aspirational place to live, learn, work and play; with strong links to Birmingham and the wider Local Enterprise Partnership area, to the major urban area of Coventry and rural Warwickshire.

The spatial strategy for the Borough maintains the approach of promoting and delivering growth in a way which enhances the Borough, whilst at the same time not undermining the characteristics that make it special. This is at the heart of 'Managed Growth'.

An important part of the managed growth agenda is the ability to support the Borough's growth aspirations through the Community Infrastructure Levy and the Council welcomes the opportunity to introduce the levy to ensure that all appropriate developments make a contribution towards the Borough's infrastructure needs.