



CIL Consultation  
Policy and Spatial Planning  
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Your ref:  
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Date: 28/03/2012

Dear Sirs

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule**

I am writing in response to your consultation on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule. The National Farmers' Union represents farming businesses, many of which are located within the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council area. These businesses have an essential role in producing local food and maintaining the green belt and urban fringe landscape by grazing livestock, maintaining hedgerows and participating in agri-environment schemes. We feel that it is important to recognise the needs of these businesses within the CIL document.

Planning policy must allow agricultural and rural businesses to develop and evolve in order to ensure their long term viability. Farms may need to invest in large new buildings or other infrastructure as animal welfare and environmental requirements change. They may also need to diversify their businesses, perhaps by supplying local produce through farm shops.

We welcome the decision to introduce a 'nil' levy rate for "all other uses" as this would include agriculture. In response to Q.7, it is vitally important that all agricultural development has a zero rate under the Community Infrastructure Levy (or any future replacement of the CIL). The primary reason for this is that CIL is based on the uplift in land value that occurs when planning permission is granted. However when permission is granted for a new agricultural building there is no uplift in land value, therefore any levy would have to be paid out of revenue which would effectively be a tax on food and potentially affect the economic viability of the farming enterprise. It should also be noted that unlike housing development, agricultural development makes no or at worst a minimal impact on infrastructure.

In accordance with Article 21 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, I may wish to be heard by the examiner if an inquiry into the draft charging schedule is held. Please notify me of any such Inquiry.

I hope that you find our contribution to the CIL consultation useful. If you require further information or clarification of any of the points raised in the response please do not hesitate to contact me at the West Midlands Regional Office.

Yours sincerely

  
Sarah Faulkner  
Environment and Rural Affairs Adviser