



Reviewing the Plan for Solihull's Future

Solihull Local Plan Review

Statement of Community Involvement - Draft

July 2019

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1. Introduction

What is a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?

1. 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.
2. 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 actively engaged in the planning process.
3. The SCI is a Local Development Document (LDD) and once adopted will form part of Council's statutory local planning framework.

Why is the SCI being updated?

4. The first SCI was adopted by the Council in February 2007 (following public consultation and review by an independent Planning Inspector). The SCI now needs to be updated due to changes in the planning system, (Localism Act 2011, an updated National Planning Policy Framework, Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017) as well as changes in communication methods.
5. This SCI revises and updates the 2007 document. The Council will consult on this revised SCI and all comments will be considered before the final SCI is adopted.

Purpose of the SCI

6. National legislation¹ 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.
7. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It states that early, meaningful engagement and collaboration with residents, organisations and businesses is essential.
8. The Council places great importance on effective community involvement. The Solihull Council Plan 2018-2020 highlights communication and engagement as one of the 'key enablers' in achieving the Council's purpose, vision and values.
9. The overall aim of the SCI is to improve community and stakeholder involvement in planning by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to, and is encouraged to, become fully involved in planning matters. It seeks to ensure that all groups are treated fairly, and all those involved understand the planning decisions taken
10. This SCI covers the consultation and engagement process for the following planning documents and applications:
 - Development Plan Documents – ie. the Local Plan
 - Supplementary Planning Documents
 - Neighbourhood Plans
 - Community Infrastructure Levy (Charging Schedule)

¹ The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 18) (as amended)

- Planning Applications

11. 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.

12. This document seeks to use plain language wherever possible. However, in some instances planning jargon cannot be avoided. To assist the reader a glossary is included at the back of this document.

Preparing the SCI

13. **Stage 1 Pre-Production (spring 2019):**

- Gather information, use past experience and good practice, to identify range, scope and potential content of the SCI to seek out how we can best achieve our aims for community involvement.

14. **Stage 2 Production and Consultation (spring/summer 2019):**

- Draft SCI prepared using the information gathered at stage 1.
- Seek comments on the draft SCI (to be invited over an eight² week period starting in late July 2019).
- An amended version of the SCI prepared, taking the consultation results into account.
- Report on the consultation undertaken is summarised in a consultation statement.

15. **Stage 3 Adoption (autumn 2019):**

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

16. **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.

A Profile of the Borough

17. To understand how best to involve the community and stakeholders in planning it is important to have an understanding of the Borough, its residents, its geography and political make-up.

18. Solihull is home to around 214,000 people in around 87,000 households. The Borough covers 17,828 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

² The legislation requires a minimum of six weeks to be provided.

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. 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.

19. The Borough has a relatively high proportion (21%) of older people aged 65+ compared to both England and the West Midlands. The percentage of the population from an ethnic minority background is increasing (14% in 2011 compared to 5% in 2001).
20. 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.
21. Further information, intelligence, statistics and data regarding Solihull can be found on the Council's website; <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/solihulldata>

Equality and Diversity

22. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement sets out the Council's commitment to equality and our legal responsibility, how we will make services more accessible to all, the actions we will take to ensure that we are effectively managing equality and diversity and how this is monitored and reviewed. This is incorporated into this SCI and how the Council address community involvement in planning matters.
23. 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.
24. FTAs help the Council decide whether an existing or proposed key function (policy, strategy or procedure) will affect people with particular protected characteristics unfairly (often referred to as a 'negative or adverse impact'). If a negative impact is identified, the manager must take steps to address this.
25. The Council's policies and information regarding equality and diversity can be accessed on the web page at: <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/equalitydiversity>.

2. Community and Stakeholder Involvement in Planning Document Production

Background

26. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Paragraph 15 states 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'.
27. The planning system seeks 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 have to be made and all communities and stakeholders may not be satisfied by planning decisions all of the time.
28. We will develop an overall strategy or principles for each document we produce through evaluating the realistic options that have emerged, taking into account 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.
29. 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.
30. The minimum legal requirements for consultation and public participation in DPDs and 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.
31. The 2012 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 such contacts which is used to notify of consultations. Individuals can be asked to be included on the database at any time. If you wish to be included please contact the Policy and Delivery team via psp@solihull.gov.uk.
32. 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

33. There are two main types of document that we will produce as part of the development plan for Solihull. These are Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Plan Documents (SPDs)
34. Development Plan Documents (DPD) include the strategic policies for the Borough and none-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 also make use of Action Area Plans. All of which would fall under the DPD category.
35. 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.
36. 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: <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/Local-Development-Scheme-October-2018.pdf>

The Production Process

37. 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**³ – 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 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 - Submission**⁴ – 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 tests⁵ 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 we produce are not formally examined, although the Secretary of State can direct us 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

³ This is known as the informal Regulation 18 consultation.

⁴ This is known as the formal Regulation 19 consultation.

⁵ Positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

normally subject to an 'Examination in Public' (EiP). Following the examination, the Inspector issues his 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

38. Effective publicising and promotion is crucial to ensuring effective community and stakeholder involvement.
39. For every document we produce we will seek to:
 - Individually notify every specific consultation bodies 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 has the opportunity to be aware of what is happening and to become involved.
40. 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.
41. 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.
 - **Email** - 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. This will require the consultee database to be kept up-to-date.
 - **E- Bulletins via 'Stay Connected' service** – This is a free service the Council provides that enables users to register and receive alerts regarding the service preferences they wish to make. A subject area covering planning policy preparation is available for this purpose. 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
 - **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 all announcements will be made on the Council's dedicated Local Plan Review home page which has a simplified URL address: www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr.
- **Social Media** - (via the Council's Twitter and Facebook 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.
- **Press Notices** - Appropriate for advertising formal adoption of plans.

Who we will Specifically Consult on Planning Document Production

42. We aim to advertise the production of each document widely so that everyone has the opportunity to be involved in planning for the Borough. However, there is a wide range of community and stakeholder groups who we will specifically invite to become involved.
43. Anyone can be added to, or update their details, on our dedicated Local Plan Consultation database (our consultee database) by completing the self registration link at: <https://solihull.jdi-consult.net/localplan/> or by contacting the Planning and Engagement team (details at the end of this document).
44. The Stay Connected email alert service can be accessed here: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSOLIHULL/subscriber/new>. Once registered users can define the Council services they wish to receive updates on.
45. Online submissions will receive an automated acknowledgement and those received via the post will receive an acknowledgement as submissions are worked through.

How we will Involve Communities and Stakeholders in Document Production

46. 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. It is recommended that the following broad levels of engagement are used:
 - **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.
 - **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

47. We will aim to keep all interested parties informed of receipt of representations and when and how representations will be taken into account.
48. 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.
49. 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.
50. For consultation responses made at the formal stage of plan making⁶, 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. He or she will usually use the representation made at this stage to identify where they should concentrate on in the examination.

Keeping our Records up to Date

51. Anyone can ask to be added to our Local Plan Consultation database at any time through self registration on our website (see links above)

Access to Information

52. Documents will be made available as follows:
 - On our website (all documents)
 - A printed version in all Solihull Connect Centres (all new consultations)
 - A printed version in libraries (all new major consultations)
 - A printed version to any Individual requesting a hard copy (subject to availability and/or charges to cover printing and administrative costs).
53. We will also provide telephone and e-mail contact details for informal discussions each time we advertise consultation events and publish documents and endeavour any reasonable requests to provide documents in different formats. Most documents can be made available in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English if required.

⁶ ie that known as regulation 19 when the Draft Submission version of a plan is published.

3. Neighbourhood Planning

Background

54. 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.
55. 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.
56. 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.
57. A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a development plan which can only be prepared by a Parish or Town Council where one exists or otherwise by a Neighbourhood Forum, to guide the use and development of land within a particular Neighbourhood Area.
58. 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.
59. 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.
60. Like Local Plans, regulations⁷ cover neighbourhood planning, including draft and submission consultation requirements and the referendum stages.

Neighbourhood Planning Process

61. Because neighbourhood planning is led by parish councils/Neighbourhood Forums, 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.
62. However, in the first instance the Council is responsible for publicising a Neighbourhood Area application, 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.
63. Once the Neighbourhood Area is designated, up to the submission of the final draft (the Submission Draft) plan, it is the town or parish council/neighbourhood forum that is responsible for public consultation and engagement in its preparation. It is only at submission stage that Solihull Council takes a lead in publicising the plan proposal. This

⁷ Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

includes consultation, submitting the plan for independent examination and organising the referendum, details of which will be publicised on the website.

- 64. 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. Parish Councils can assist by making documents available locally and providing local publicity.
- 65. 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 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

- 66. 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>2 - Preparing the Draft Neighbourhood Plan/ Order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop vision, aims and objectives. - Gathering baseline information and evidence. - Identify and assess options. - Determine need for SEA. 	<p>Undertake on-going consultation and engagement with people who live, work and carry out business in the area</p> <p>Consult specific consultation bodies</p> <p>Keep records of community engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>3: Pre-submission publicity and consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the draft neighbourhood plan or order and invite representations (minimum of six weeks consultation). • Consider the comments and amends plan/order if appropriate. • Prepare Consultation Statement. • Consult the consultation bodies as appropriate. 	<p>The Council will continue to provide informal advice and support and a formal response to consultation.</p>
<p>4: Submission of Neighbourhood Plan/ Order to the Local Planning Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit plan or order and supporting documents to the Council including basic conditions statement, SEA if required and Consultation Statement. 	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 examiner.

Key Stages	Community Engagement: Parish/Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum	SMBC Support and advice
5: Independent examination.	The Examiner issues a report to the local planning authority and qualifying body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make arrangements for the independent examination of the neighbourhood plan. • Submit the plan or order, relevant documentation and representations to independent 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 doesn't 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
6: Community Referendum	Raise awareness of referendum through publication of neutral promotional material.	<p>Make arrangements and publish information statement and notice of the referendum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish referendum results on the website and issue news release.
7: Bringing the neighbourhood plan/ order into force		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 as considered appropriate.
8: Monitoring and review.		Advise on the options, process and timing for reviewing neighbourhood plans.

Further Information

68. 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 Council's web page can be found at: <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Planning/appealsenforcement/planmaking/neighbourhoodplanning>.

69. Government guidance on the neighbourhood planning system can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>.

4. Community Infrastructure Levy

Background

- 70. 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. The funds are raised through a charge that is payable on certain kinds of new development.
- 71. 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).
- 72. CIL Regulations⁸ 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

- 73. The table below sets out a summary of the process for producing the CIL Charging Schedule and opportunities for community and stakeholder engagement.

Stage	Process and Requirements	Opportunities for Community Engagement
1: Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule. (Regulation 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.

⁸ The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)

Stage	Process and Requirements	Opportunities for Community Engagement
<p>2: Draft Charging Schedule. (Regulation 16)</p>	<p>Publication of Draft Charging Schedule (DCS) and a statement of representations procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory consultation for a minimum of six weeks on the DCS and supporting evidence. • Prepare Consultation Statement. • An Examiner is appointed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents made available for inspection. This will include on the Council’s website, planning offices 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.
<p>3: Examination. (Regulations 19 - 24)</p>	<p>Council submit to the Examiner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Charging Schedule, - Summary of main issues raised by the consultation - Copies of the representations - Relevant evidence. <p>Examiner conducts the hearing Examiner submits recommendations and the reasons to Council (If the Council do not agree with the Examiner’s recommendations the whole process will need to be repeated unless it is a correctable error)</p>	<p>Documents made available and persons notified as above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>4: Adoption, Monitoring and Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 the CIL Annual Monitoring Report or an Infrastructure Funding Statement and will be published on the Council’s website by 31st December of each year. • Charging Schedule will be reviewed in line with Local Plan progress and changes in costs and values of development. 	<p>Adoption Statement, Charging Schedule and associated maps published on website and made available for inspection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

75. Solihull Council webpage to explain CIL, with a link to the current Charging Schedule, can be found here: <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/cil>
76. Government guidance on CIL can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy>

5. Community and Stakeholder Involvement in Planning Applications

Background

77. This section of the document sets out how we will consult the community and stakeholders on applications for different types of development.
78. 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
79. The nature of involvement at any stage varies depending on the type and size of development proposed.
80. 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 councils
 - statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency or Sport England
 - other community groups and societies.
81. Any representations made on applications are considered when we decide whether to approve an application. This ensures local people and stakeholders help to influence development in their area.

Pre-application Advice

82. 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) (February 2019):
- “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”*
83. For these reasons the Development Management Service encourages applicants to take maximum advantage of the pre-application services offered.
84. There is a charge associated with pre-application submissions. To find out more please see the website links below:
- Advice for home owners:
<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Planning/planninghomeowners/planningpermission>
 - Advice for other developments:
<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Planning/planningbusiness/planningpermission>
85. 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.

Pre-application Consultation

- 86. There is no statutory requirement for community and stakeholder involvement at the pre-application stage of the process. However, 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.
- 87. 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 Development Management officers at an early stage. Suggested minimum levels of involvement are set out in the table below.

Development	Examples of Community Involvement
Major Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Councils and Neighbourhood Forums 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 Agency and other consultees described at section 2.3 to ascertain any specific requirements.
Larger scale housing development (In excess of 20 dwellings)	As above Contact Ward Councillors, Parish/Town Council 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

- 88. 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.
- 89. 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.
- 90. 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.

91. In addition to encouraging developers to consult with the wider community, our Development Management 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.
92. 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.

Advertising Planning Applications

93. 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 laminated 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 (www.solihull.gov.uk).

Access to Information

94. Information regarding planning applications can be accessed in the following ways:
- **Web site (www.solihull.gov.uk)** - 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. NB. Tracking a specific application reference number only, will not trigger notification for any subsequent application at that address.
 - **Solihull Connect (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 website (www.solihull.gov.uk).
 - **Development Management** - The Development Management Team who deal with all planning applications can be contacted by phone, e-mail or via our website (www.solihull.gov.uk).
 - **Case Officer** - The officer dealing with the planning application, whose direct dial number is provided with all consultation letters.

- **Planning Portal** - The Planning Portal is the Government's 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 also 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. (www.planningportal.gov.uk)

How to Comment on a Planning Application

95. When an application is submitted we have 8, 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.
96. Applications are available to view at the locations set out in the 'Access to Information' section above. Further information on the details of an application can be found by contacting the case officer, whose direct dial telephone number is provided with all consultation letters.
97. 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.
98. The simplest way to make comments is online, via the website (www.solihull.gov.uk). 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.
99. 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.

Determining Planning Applications

100. 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. The decision on simple, straight forward and uncontroversial applications can be delegated to officers. This allows the Planning Committee to focus on the major, significant and potentially controversial proposals. The Planning Committee will also determine any application submitted by the Council if there has been at least one objection to the proposals. A Planning Committee Agenda Setting meeting is held with the Chairman of Planning Committee where proposals which may meet thresholds for determination at Planning Committee are considered. Within the terms of the delegation agreement, it is for the Chairman of Planning Committee to decide which proposals are taken to Planning Committee for determination.
101. 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).

102. Planning Committee takes place roughly every four weeks. Agendas are available via the website (www.solihull.gov.uk) and at Solihull Connect. Anyone who has made representations on an application will be notified of the time and date of the relevant meeting and given the opportunity to register an interest in speaking.
103. It is not necessary that those who have made representations on an application will need to attend and address the meeting. 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 letters. Members will therefore be aware of the issues raised in representations.
104. These speaking arrangements shall only apply to those applications being reported to the Committee and not those to be determined under delegated powers even if an objection is lodged.
105. Further information regarding Planning Committee, the determination of planning applications and the principles of speaking at Planning Committee can be found in the Council's '[Planning Committee Handbook](#)'.
106. 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.
107. 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.

Feedback

108. 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.
109. Anyone can also register an interest in a particular planning application or area via our website (www.solihull.gov.uk) and will be informed of the decision once the application has been determined.

Following the Decision

110. 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.
111. 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 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.
112. 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. 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.

- 113. The law currently provides no third party right of appeal for people aggrieved by the Council's decision to grant or refuse planning permission.
- 114. 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.

Summary of Types of Planning Applications and Methods of Involving Stakeholders and the Community

- 115. The following tables set out the different types of planning applications and methods of involving stakeholders and the community.

116. 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjoining neighbours (owners or occupiers) must be informed; or • A site notice may also be displayed if appropriate <p>Note: Anybody interested has at least 21 days to view the details of the application and make comments to the Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For some applications we are also required to consult statutory consultees, such as the Highways Agency, for a period of 21 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Details of applications are made available as part of the list of planning applications we receive, 'the Weekly List', available on our website (www.solihull.gov.uk) • Applications can be viewed electronically via our website (www.solihull.gov.uk). Free internet access is available at all libraries across the Borough.

117. 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>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development materially affecting a conservation area (can be development outside a conservation area that, in our opinion, affects its setting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for works to listed buildings 	<p>Note: Some applications for works to listed building also need to be referred onto amenity societies, such as the Victorian Society, for comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For some applications we are also required to consult statutory undertakers, such as Historic England for a period of 21 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will also inform neighbours adjoining the site and anybody interested has at least 21 days to view the details of the application and make their comments to the Council.

118. 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>Applications for the treating, storing, processing or disposing of waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>For some applications we are also required to consult statutory undertakers, such as the Highways Agency, for a period of 21 days</p>	<p>As for general planning applications; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will encourage developers of major schemes to undertake pre-application consultation with stakeholders and local residents. <p>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.</p>

119. 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning applications not in accordance with the policies and proposals of the Development Plan. Development which would affect a public right of way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 For some applications we are also required to consult statutory undertakers, such as the Highways Agency, 	<p>As general and major planning applications</p>

	for a period of 21 days	
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120. **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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certain applications that are likely to have a significant effect on the environment. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new motorways or new roads with four or more lanes quarries/opencast mines waste disposal installations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 undertakers, such as the Highways Agency, for a period of 21 days 	<p>As general and major planning applications.</p>

121. **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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works to trees covered by a tree preservation order Works to trees in a Conservation Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbour letters are sent to adjoining properties and a site notice is posted if the proposal includes felling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjoining neighbours (owners or occupiers) informed; or A site notice placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days <p>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</p>

		permitted. These applications cannot be refused. We can only reach a decision as to whether to serve a TPO or not.
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122. **Advertisements**

<i>Type of Development Proposed</i>	<i>Methods of Community Involvement (Minimum Statutory Requirements)</i>	<i>Additional Methods that may be used</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for the display of adverts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbour notification for adjoining properties or site notice. For some applications we are also required to consult statutory undertakers, such as the Highways Agency, for a period of 21 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjoining neighbours (owners or occupiers) informed; or A site notice placed on, or near to the site, for at least 21 days

123. **Prior Notification Applications**

<i>Type of Development Proposed</i>	<i>Methods of Community Involvement (Minimum Statutory Requirements)</i>	<i>Additional Methods that may be used</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are numerous types of prior notification applications as set out in the General Permitted Development Order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory publicity is carried out in accordance with the General Permitted Development Order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are numerous types of prior notification applications as set out in the General Permitted Development Order

124. **Appeals**

<i>Type of Development Proposed</i>	<i>Methods of Community Involvement (Minimum Statutory Requirements)</i>	<i>Additional Methods that may be used</i>
<p>Appeals made against: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Shirley Library (walk in centre)

22 Parkgate
Stratford Road
Shirley
Solihull
B91 3GG

Solihull Connect at The Bluebell Centre (walk in centre)

Ground Floor West Mall
Chelmsley Wood
Solihull B37 5TN

Solihull Connect Local at Kingshurst (self service hub)

Marston Drive
Kingshurst
Solihull B37 6BD

Solihull Connect Local at Smiths Wood Village Centre (self service hub)

Elmwood Place
37 Burtons Way
Solihull
B36 0UG

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

283 Kenilworth Road
Balsall Common
CV7 7EL

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

Homer Road
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 3RG

Shirley Library

22 Parkgate
Stratford Road
Shirley
Solihull
B90 3GG

C. Further Information

Useful Websites

125. Solihull Council website: www.solihull.gov.uk/planningservices
126. The Planning Portal: www.planningportal.gov.uk

Solihull Council

127. **Policy and Engagement**
(Responsible for the production of the planning policy documents)

Policy & Engagement
Managed Growth and Communities 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
Managed Growth and Communities Directorate
Solihull MBC
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB
Email: planning@solihull.gov.uk
Tel: (0121) 704 8008

Planning Aid England

128. 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
<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>

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, Planning and Housing - An elected Member appointed by the Leader of the Council to make day-to-day decisions on services. Primarily responsible for regeneration land use policy, North Solihull regeneration, housing functions, economic development, town centre management, the development plan, transport, all town and country planning executive functions and building control.

Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing Decision Sessions - Forum in which the Cabinet Member makes decisions. Sessions are held approximately monthly and are usually open to the public and attended by opposition Members.

Community - Any person or groups of people with shared needs or interests living within the Borough.

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 Management - Our team primarily responsible for processing planning applications.

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 & Engagement
Managed Growth & Communities 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



Reviewing the Plan for Solihull's Future

Solihull Local Plan Review

Fair Treatment Assessment – Draft

July 2019

Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA) Form

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION



Part A: Overview			
1 Name of service, policy, strategy, procedure, or function etc Note: to save space services, policies, strategies, procedures and functions will be referred to as “functions” for the rest of this form.			
Solihull Statement of Community Involvement			
2 Directorate	Managed Growth & Communities	3 Division/Service	Managed Growth – Growth and Development
4 Is this a new, existing or revised function?		Revised Statement of Community Involvement	
Part B: Background and Context			
5 Why are you completing this FTA?			
<p>National legislation (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) 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.</p> <p>The 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.</p> <p>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 actively engaged in the planning process.</p> <p>The SCI is a Local Development Document (LDD) and once adopted will form part of Council’s statutory local planning framework.</p> <p>The first SCI was adopted by the Council in February 2007 (following public consultation and review by an independent Planning Inspector). The SCI now needs to be updated due to changes in the planning system, (Localism Act 2011, an updated National Planning Policy Framework, Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017) as well as changes in communication methods.</p> <p>The SCI also needs to comply with Equality Act 2010. The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Solihull Council to have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Assessing impact on equality and recording this is one of the key ways in which we can show due regard.</p>			
6 In terms of equality, what do you already know about this function?			

There is potential for both direct and indirect positive and negative impacts for all of the protected groups. The SCI aims to improve involvement of the communities in the planning process through a variety of means. The SCI ensures that a clear process to community involvement and consultation is enabled within the planning process and will undertake many different methodologies/approaches to engagement that are tailored to individual and group needs. The aim is to have an inclusive approach and therefore have a positive impact for all.

The aim of the planning process is to improve communities, the economy and the environment for the benefit of all. The SCI aims for equality of opportunity for involvement across all the protected characteristics. The Local Plan and the planning process aim to address other equality issues relating to 'spatial planning' (planning spaces and places) which can be linked to protected characteristics such as public transport, quality of place, and issues that are specific to rural communities.

In relation to the planning process and specific planning applications, the process to consult is different. Engagement equality impact is very much locality specific depending on the scale of a planned development. For instance, statutory procedures dictate the remit of consultation, key consultees and those close to development, however, for larger developments there is greater need to ensure engagement is appropriate and takes consideration of all equality and diversity issues.

No review of the Statement of Community Involvement has taken place since 2007. No monitoring is carried out with regards to protected characteristics and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications.

7 What outcomes are wanted from this function?

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – sets out the Council's strategy for enabling effective community involvement and consultation for the development of the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and for planning applications and Permission in Principle. It also sets out how neighbourhood planning groups can meet their community engagement obligations, including front loading and targeting specific groups.

The aim of the statement is to provide clear guidance of how the community, key stakeholders and developers can be involved within planning processes and planning applications within Solihull. It aims to ensure that as wide an audience as possible is consulted and within good time. It sets out key groups we will engage with, including 'hard to reach' or 'easy to overlook' groups. It also sets out how feedback will be provided. We will continue to review our consultation techniques to ensure the most effective means are used to seek views to help access these groups in particular.

8 Are any other departments or partners involved in the delivery of the function? How are they being involved in this assessment?

Policy and Engagement (Responsible for the production of the planning policy documents)
Development Management (Responsible for dealing with planning applications)

There are a range of existing meetings and forums, which can be tapped into, including applicants, objectors, developers, builders and the voluntary sector. There are a number of networks covering particular sections of the community which can be used to engage those groups with protected characteristics.

Part C: Assessment

9 What key information, results of consultation or data have you collected and used to inform this assessment?

There is national, regional and local evidence available which shows that people with certain protected characteristics can face barriers in employment, access to services and information, participation in decision making and in consultation. Census 2011 data and equality related evidence has been used in section two of this assessment.

10 What does your information tell you about the impact of your function on different groups of people? Are there any specific differences (positive or negative) between their experiences of interacting with this function?

The council has a duty to eliminate discrimination/harassment and victimisation, as well as duties to promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between groups of people. In assessing the effects of your function on different groups of people, you should think about how your function achieves these three aims.

Note: You should consider barriers to equal access, equality of outcomes, human rights and the ten dimensions of equality for the different groups of people listed

	Are any of these positive impacts? How could you better promote equality? How could you improve relations between groups of people? Note: If any actions are identified insert these into Part D	Are any of these negative impacts? How can you reduce/eliminate these? Note: If any negative impacts are identified put actions to address these in Part D	What evidence has informed this assessment?
*Age	<p>Solihull is home to around 214,000 people in around 87,000 households. The Borough has a relatively high proportion (21%) of older people aged 65+ compared to both England and the West Midlands.</p> <p>The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all.</p> <p>The SCI aims to address the needs of young people, whether the very young or the student population. This links to SCS theme of Altogether Better for Children and Young People and the Government's Every Child Matters.</p> <p>The SCI also aims to address the needs</p>	<p>No monitoring is carried out with regards to age and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications. Monitoring of impact will be introduced as part of Development Management and Local Plan Planning process.</p> <p>Older people may have difficulties accessing the online portal. The Development Management Team who deal with all planning applications can be contacted by phone, e-mail or via our website (www.solihull.gov.uk). The case officer dealing with the planning application, provides a direct dial number with all consultation letters.</p> <p>The Local Plan Twitter and Facebook will be used to engage with younger people</p>	<p>Researching approaches by other local authorities.</p>

	<p>of the working population and older people.</p> <p>For the Local Plan Review different methodologies will be used to effectively engage with a variety of user groups/consultees, including: Letters; Leaflets; Email; E- Bulletins via 'Stay Connected' service; Notices Displayed in Public Places; Website; Social Media; Press Releases and press notices</p> <p>Anyone can be added to, or update their details, on our dedicated Local Plan Consultation database (our consultee database) by completing the self registration link at: https://solihull.jdi-consult.net/localplan/ or by contacting the Planning and Engagement team (details at the end of this document). Online submissions will receive an automated acknowledgement and those received via the post will receive an acknowledgement as submissions are worked through.</p> <p>Documents will be made available as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On our website (all documents) • A printed version in all Solihull Connect Centres (all new consultations) • A printed version in libraries (all new major consultations) • A printed version to any Individual requesting a hard copy (subject to availability and/or charges to cover printing and administrative costs). 	<p>who can be hard to reach.</p>	
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	<p>We will also provide telephone and e-mail contact details for informal discussions each time we advertise consultation events and publish documents and endeavour any reasonable requests to provide documents in different formats. Most documents can be made available in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English if required.</p> <p>For planning applications. We advertise the fact that a planning application has been submitted in a variety of ways; Site Notices are posted for major applications; Neighbours informed of an application are those directly adjoining the boundary of the site; Press notices.</p> <p>The simplest way to make comments is online, via the website (www.solihull.gov.uk). 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.</p>		
Carers	No impacts identified.	No specific issues identified.	Researching approaches by other local authorities.
*Disability	<p>In Solihull 81.7% who responded to the question said they in good health in the Census 2011. However 17.9% identified their general health was not good and their day to day activities where limited because of it.</p> <p>The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all. This aims to eliminate disadvantage for</p>	<p>No monitoring is carried out with regards to disability and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications. Monitoring of impact will be introduced as part of Development Management and Local Plan Planning process.</p> <p>Nationally it has been identified that "Personal safety" is the highest critical need identified for people with learning difficulties.</p>	Researching approaches by other local authorities.

	<p>those without access to a car or the internet, disabled people, older people or those with limited mobility. This includes rural areas where accessibility is more problematic for some people. It will also help in promoting inclusion and positive attitudes towards disabled people.</p> <p>As highlighted above There are a number of ways for people to get involved in the Local Plan and Planning determination process.</p> <p>Our commitment to meaningful consultation includes making documents and information available in Braille, large print, or audio version.</p>	<p>Particularly focussed consultation with both older people and disabled people will take place as part of the consultation on the Local Plan.</p> <p>We will proactively work with disability groups to ensure opinions on the Local Plan are incorporated through the consultation process and where necessary through planning applications. Statutory duties are adhered to and considered through the planning application process.</p>	
*Gender reassignment	The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all.	No specific issues identified.	Researching approaches by other local authorities.
Looked after children/care leavers	No impacts identified.	No specific issues identified.	Researching approaches by other local authorities.
*Marriage/civil partnership	No impacts identified.	No specific issues identified.	Researching approaches by other local authorities.
*Pregnancy/ maternity	<p>The SCI aims to reduce inequalities in line with the “Altogether Better for People” aim by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all.</p> <p>The Local Plan includes themes which are relevant to pregnancy and maternity such as health, accessibility and transport links.</p>	No specific issues identified.	Researching approaches by other local authorities.
*Race/ ethnicity	<p>In Solihull 10.9% who identified themselves with a BME ethnicity in the Census 2011.</p> <p>The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the</p>	No monitoring is carried out with regards to race/ethnicity and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications. Monitoring of impact will be introduced as part of Development Management and Local Plan Planning	Researching approaches by other local authorities.

	<p>planning system is accessible to all.</p> <p>Different methodologies will be used to effectively engage with a variety of user groups/consultees. Our commitment to meaningful consultation includes making documents and information available translated into another language.</p> <p>The SCI recognises target groups for consultation and these include known community organisations which could include community organisations for minority ethnic groups.</p>	<p>process.</p> <p>Specific issues for Gypsy, Roma Traveller communities in relation to housing, access to information and services.</p> <p>Different methodologies will be used to effectively engage with a variety of user groups/consultees, including:</p>	
*Religion/ belief/ faith	<p>In Solihull 65.6% of people state their religion as Christian; around 0.2% percent as Buddhist; 0.1% Hindu; 2.5% Muslim, 1.7% Sikh, 0.2% Jewish and 27% percent as having either no religion or not stating their religion (Census 2011).</p> <p>The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all.</p> <p>The SCI recognises target groups for consultation and these include known community organisations which could include faith groups.</p>	<p>No monitoring is carried out with regards to religion/belief/faith and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications. Monitoring of impact will be introduced as part of Development Management and Local Plan Planning process.</p>	<p>Researching approaches by other local authorities.</p>
*Sex/Gender	<p>No impacts identified. The balance of males and females within Solihull is fairly evenly split and there are 100,352 (48.6%) males and 106,322 (51.4%) females living in Solihull (Census 2011). Looking at older age groups (aged 70+) there is a higher proportion of women.</p> <p>Evidence from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) suggests that</p>	<p>No specific issues identified.</p> <p>No monitoring is carried out with regards to sex/gender and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications. Monitoring of impact will be introduced as part of Development Management and Local Plan Planning process.</p>	<p>Researching approaches by other local authorities.</p>

	<p>differential impact relating to gender includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational attainment • Employment – particularly work patterns, ‘traditional’ work roles • equal pay • Care responsibilities and gender – linked to access to services and employment • Health – in relation to gender prevalence of certain conditions and access to information/advice/care • Personal safety concerns – also linked to age with issues for e.g. younger men or females walking alone <p>The SCI aims to involve both men and women. Equality of opportunity for all is an overall aim.</p> <p>The Local Plan includes themes which are relevant to gender such as employment, accessibility, transport links and crime.</p> <p>The issues of personal safety, crime and fear of crime are also relevant and can be influenced through the Development Management process.</p>		
<p>*Sexual orientation</p>	<p>No accurate data is available about the number of lesbian, gay and bisexual people living in Solihull. However Government and Stonewall estimates state that between 5 percent and 7 percent of the population is lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). This would amount to between 10,700 and 14,980 people in Solihull.</p>	<p>No monitoring is carried out with regards to sexual orientation and those commenting on the Local Plan or Planning applications. Monitoring of impact will be introduced as part of Development Management and Local Plan Planning process.</p>	<p>Researching approaches by other local authorities.</p>

	<p>The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all.</p> <p>Particularly focussed consultation with groups will take place as part of the consultation on the Local Plan if appropriate.</p>		
Socio-economic disadvantage	<p>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. 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.</p>	No specific issues identified.	Researching approaches by other local authorities.
Other – please specify Transgender	<p>We have no accurate information on transgender populations.</p> <p>The issues of personal safety, crime and fear of crime are relevant to transgender people. These can be influenced through engagement with the planning process whether through the Plan or the Development Management process.</p> <p>Particularly focussed consultation with groups will take place as part of the</p>	No specific issues identified.	

	consultation on the Local Plan if appropriate.		
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11 How does this function contribute towards people’s human rights? Note: refer to the guidance document for information on human rights. If any actions are identified insert these into Part D

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law. The general purpose of the ECHR is to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to maintain and promote the ideals and values of a democratic society. It sets out the basic rights of every person together with the limitations placed on these rights in order to protect the rights of others and of the wider community.

The specific Articles of the ECHR relevant to planning include Article 6 (Right to a fair and public trial within a reasonable time), Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence), Article 14 (Prohibition of discrimination) and Article 1 of Protocol 1 (Right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property).

The planning system by its very nature respects the rights of the individual whilst acting in the interest of the wider community. It is an inherent part of the decision-making process to assess the effects that a proposal will have on individuals and weigh these against the wider public interest in determining whether development should be allowed to proceed. The SCI aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring that consultation and the planning system is accessible to all.

12 How does this function contribute towards safeguarding children and vulnerable adults? Note: refer to the guidance document for information on safeguarding. If any actions are identified insert these into Part D

The Local Plan and Development Management have any direct contact with either vulnerable adults or children.

Part D: Actions

13 List any actions required to address negative impacts identified or to better promote equality, good relations, human rights, and safeguarding issues. Do you need to collect any additional data, conduct equality monitoring, or undertake further consultation to be able to take account of the impact on particular groups?

Action	Outcome	Lead	Timescale	How will progress be monitored?
Monitoring of impact will be carried out as part of Development Management and Local Plan.	To ensure representation from all protected characteristics	Group Manager - Development Management Group Manager - Policy & Engagement	Every 12 months	Analysis produced each year.
Reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities will be made where required. We will consider the accessibility of	To ensure there is representation from all protected characteristics	Group Manager - Development Management	Ongoing	

venues prior to consultation events.		Group Manager - Policy & Engagement		
Translation and interpretation requests will be considered in line with corporate guidance.	To ensure there is representation from all protected characteristics	All officers	On going	Number of requests will be monitored
Review leaflets and letters that succinctly outline the process to get involved with the development of the Solihull Plan with the head of equalities.	To ensure there is representation from all protected characteristics	Group Manager - Development Management Group Manager - Policy & Engagement	November 2019	Review of leaflets with Equality Team

Part E: Summary

14 a Summary for Publication Note: this should include the key findings and impacts identified in this assessment – refer to the guidance document

The SCI details how people can be involved in the Local Plan process. It details how targeting may be necessary for certain groups, both in the consultation on the Local Plan and on-going in planning application determination. The SCI is part of a statutory process which aims to involve all interested stakeholders in the spatial planning of their area for the future.

The involvement of communities in the Local Plan process gives communities the chance to influence development in their own area. This gives an opportunity for all to be involved and to influence issues which would affect protected characteristics such as accessibility and safety.

The SCI also details how people can be involved in the Development Management process. This can give people an opportunity to influence such issues as accessibility by public transport; promoting legibility, accessibility and permeability; safe and attractive places; design measures to reduce actual or perceived opportunities for crime and/or anti-social behaviour; and prioritising the needs of cyclists, public transport users, pedestrians and disabled people.

The SCI has potential to have a positive impact on all protected characteristic groups. We will ensure information is accessible to all, for example, we will produce summary leaflets that succinctly outline the process to get involved with the development of the Solihull. Reasonable adjustments will be made for people with disabilities in order to effectively participate in planning consultation, along with translation and interpretation requests.

Sustainable Communities are a key aim of the Planning process, as outlined in national policy and hence a key aim of the Local Plan, Development Management. Sustainable communities are communities in which people wish to live work and spend time. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and

offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

b Please indicate which of the following best describes the outcome of your FTA	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Only negative impacts have been identified for this function
<input type="checkbox"/>	No different impacts have been identified for this function
<input type="checkbox"/>	A mixture of positive and negative different impacts have been identified for this function
<input type="checkbox"/>	Only positive different impacts have been identified for this function
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There wasn't enough information to be able to reach a conclusion at this point in time