

Statement of Community Involvement **2013:** Planning in Bury and how you can have your say **ADOPTED – AUGUST 2013**

Our approach

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) leaflet sets out how we will involve the community in preparing and revising all local planning documents and in making decisions on planning applications. It highlights the importance of becoming involved in the planning process at an early stage. We will follow the guidelines and requirements set out in these pages and will monitor and update it as necessary.

General principles of planning consultations

We will apply some general principles to our planning consultations:

- We will seek views of interested and affected parties as early as possible;
- We will consult as widely as possible within the confines of staffing and financial resources;
- We will be inclusive wherever possible by providing information in an accessible format, giving advice where requested and encourage involvement from groups that have traditionally not been involved in the planning process;
- We will inform people who respond to consultations of later stages;
- We will share information with you via the Council's website, social media and at dedicated deposit points where this is appropriate and effective.

Who will we involve?

We want everyone to have the chance to have their say on the Council's emerging Local Plan and on planning applications, wherever it is relevant. We have developed a database of individuals, groups and stakeholders who we regularly contact on planning matters **where it is of interest to them**, and we will continue to involve individuals, groups and organisations in the preparation of our planning documents so that everyone has the opportunity to influence policies and proposals.

Department of Communities and Neighbourhoods

This database is reviewed and updated on a continuous basis. You can find out how to contact us if you would like us to add your details to this database in the 'Local Plans' section of this leaflet.

How will we involve you?

We will keep you informed through a variety of methods including letters and emails, our website at www.bury.gov.uk/planning, our social media pages on Twitter and Facebook, our 'Planzine' newsletter and through notices in the local newspapers.



The ways in which you can have your say on the planning process will vary depending on the issue, and different techniques will be used at different stages in the production of a planning document or assessment of a planning application.

For example, you may be invited to submit comments or written representations by letter or e-mail or online, or provide them via feedback forms or questionnaire returns.

Please see our 'Local Plan' and 'Planning Applications' pages later in this leaflet for more details on how we can inform and involve you as part of the planning process.

Letters and e-mails

For environmental reasons, where you have provided us with an e-mail address we will generally use that means of communication rather than sending a letter in the post.

Social media

We are now on Facebook and Twitter where you will find the latest news from the department and information of local and national interest on planning issues. 'Like' us on Facebook and 'follow' us on Twitter to keep up-to-date!



www.facebook.com/buryplanning



www.twitter.com/BuryPlanning

Planzine

The individuals on our database with e-mail addresses receive our 'Planzine' e-newsletter. This contains updates on major news stories and public consultations affecting planning in Bury, shows you how you can become more involved in the planning process and offers tips on how you can find out more information to help with your proposals.

Planzine is also available online – see the 'useful web links' on the next page.

The role of Planning Officers

The Council's Planning Officers are in two teams within the Department of Communities and Neighbourhoods and are based at Knowsley Place in Bury opposite the Town Hall:

- The **Planning Policy and Projects Team** produces the planning documents that will make up the new Local Plan and can be contacted for advice on planning policy. They organise and lead the consultations on draft planning documents and consider relevant consultation responses when making any amendments to the Council's final adopted documents, where appropriate (see 'Local Plan').

Phone: 0161 253 5550

Email: planning.policy@bury.gov.uk

- The **Development Management Team** can be contacted for advice on pre-application enquiries and planning applications. Some pre-application advice carries a charge (see 'Planning Applications'). The team process planning applications in accordance with the adopted development plan (currently the Unitary Development Plan, or UDP for short), the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and any other material considerations including consultation responses and other representations.

Phone: 0161 253 5432

Email: development.control@bury.gov.uk

The role of Councillors

Locally-elected Councillors have a key role in the planning process in the following ways:

- The Council's Cabinet is made up of senior councillors whilst the Full Council is responsible for approving and adopting all statutory planning policy;
- The Council's Planning Control Committee is made up of a number of Councillors who make decisions on individual planning applications;
- Councillors represent their respective wards and listen to residents' concerns on planning issues (at Township Forums or public meetings);
- Councillors can voice their support or make objections to planning applications in writing and speak at Committee on behalf of their constituents.

Publications and fees

Fees are applicable for some services and for the processing of documents which are set nationally. Please see our web page at www.bury.gov.uk/7110 for more information.

Charges may apply for printing off copies of Planning Policy and Projects documents. Please contact the Planning Policy and Projects team (details on previous page) for more details.



Useful web links

Pages on the Planning section of our website that may be of interest are shown below:

Latest Planning News

www.bury.gov.uk/3826

Includes copies of the Planzine e-newsletter.

e-Planning - General Public

www.bury.gov.uk/3723

Home page with many useful links to pages which may interest those looking to submit or comment on an application:

- The planning applications quick search facility which also allows comments to be made;
- Information on Planning Committee;
- Advice on planning permission and link to Planning Portal;
- Interactive map for viewing the policies and proposals applicable to your area;
- Planning policy;
- Enforcement notices.

Planning Committee and Delegated Decisions

www.bury.gov.uk/4809

View the latest results from Planning Committee and learn more about more about how it works.

This page also provides a link to the list of Meeting Dates, Agendas and Minutes of the

Council which include the forthcoming scheduled dates for Planning Committee and Township Forums.

Planning Consultations

www.bury.gov.uk/2139

Any public consultations on the Local Plan or other relevant documents will appear here with information on how you can get involved.

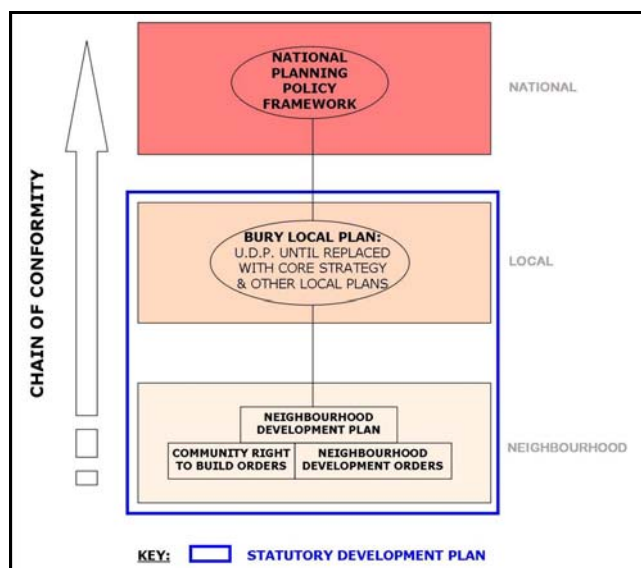
Local Plan

A new planning system

The Government wants to give local people a greater role in shaping their neighbourhoods, and the changes to the planning system set out in the 2011 Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) give communities the opportunity to get more involved in the preparation of planning documents for their areas.

Together with the new national planning policies in the NPPF, the other changes made to the planning system include the removal of the regional tier of planning (previously known as the North West Regional Spatial Strategy) and the introduction of new powers for communities as part of neighbourhood planning.

The diagram below and the following sections illustrate how this all fits together in the context of Bury.



National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF was introduced in March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Framework acts as guidance for local planning authorities in preparing plans and making decisions on planning applications. Policies in Local Plans

and Neighbourhood Plans must be consistent with the Framework.

Bury's Local Plan

The Local Plan will be the new development plan for the Borough, replacing the 'Unitary Development Plan'. It will set out the policies, proposals, guidance, land use designations and site allocations against which all planning applications will be assessed.

Bury's Local Plan will consist of the following documents (referred to as '*Local Plan documents*' from now onwards):

- *Core Strategy* – This document sets out the Council's planning framework and will shape how the Borough will develop in the future, including policies on how much development the Borough will need to accommodate e.g. for housing, areas where development will not be encouraged, and detailed policies for other areas such as protecting recreation.
- *Site Allocations* – This will include detailed policies for site-specific areas of land.
- *Site Allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople* – To set out detailed proposals to deliver sites allocated for gypsies and travellers.
- *Greater Manchester Minerals Plan and Greater Manchester Waste Plan* – already adopted, these documents contain the policies, broad framework and site proposals to meet the needs for minerals and waste across the GM area.
- *Adopted Policies Map* – Illustrating how the policy designations and site-specific proposals will look on a plan.

In addition, the Council will produce and update a range of supporting guidance notes, referred to as *Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)*.

Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Planning is the third and final tier in the new planning system and is an **optional process** led by the community.

The Localism Act introduced Neighbourhood Planning as a new way for communities to get involved in guiding the future development of the places where they live and work, with new rights for communities to:

- Prepare a Neighbourhood Plan;
- Instigate Neighbourhood Development Orders;
- Exercise a Community Right to Build-;
- **Make a Community Right to Bid by listing an 'Asset of Community Value' (more information at www.bury.gov.uk/8262).**

Neighbourhood Plans in particular will set out a vision for an area or site and will establish planning policies for the use and development of land in a defined neighbourhood area. Should a community wish to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan it will become part of the planning framework for their area once adopted.

The Plan must be in conformity with the Bury Local Plan and will be prepared using a formal process including a local referendum and an examination by an independent inspector.

More advice on this including a step-by-step guide is available at www.bury.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning.

Preparing the documents

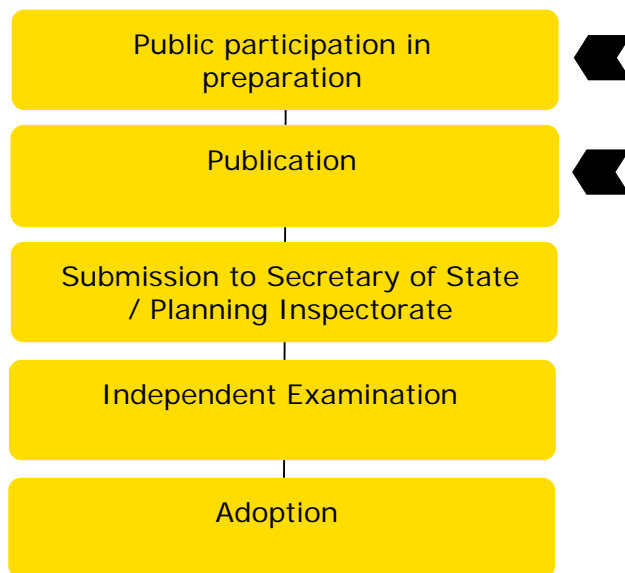
There are a number of key stages involved in the preparation of the documents for the Bury Local Plan. These stages are required by Government planning legislation and regulations and are designed to ensure that the process is as open and transparent as possible.

The diagrams opposite illustrate the key stages in the production of Local Plan Documents and SPDs (see previous page for descriptions). **The arrows show when you can get involved in the process.**

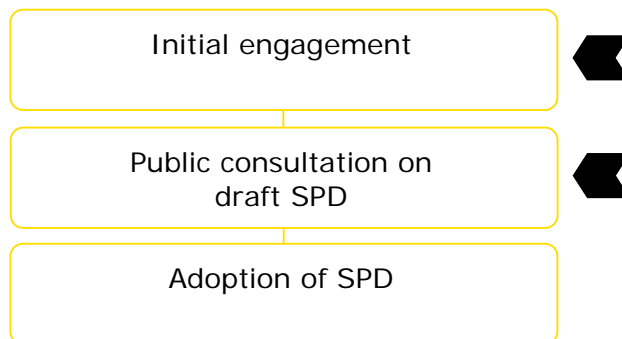
The documents we prepare must be supported by evidence and generally accord with national policies in the NPPF.

Following submission, Local Plan documents will be examined by an

independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared
Local Plan Documents:



Supplementary Planning Documents:



Key stages at which stakeholders can influence emerging planning policies.

in accordance with legal and procedural requirements and whether it meets specified 'soundness' tests. More information on the examination process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate website.

SPDs have a similar process, except that the documents are much quicker to produce as there is no submission to the Government or Planning Inspector involvement.

The Statement of Community Involvement does not require public consultation, submission to Government or an Examination.



Sustainability Appraisal

As part of the plan preparation process, we will assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies in each Local Plan Document, and our SPDs as appropriate. The key purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to identify and enhance the positive effects whilst minimising any potentially adverse impacts of our planning policies. This process will also involve the assessment of any equality impacts.

Where necessary, we will also carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment of our emerging planning documents.

We will continue to consult the public at the above key stages on the formation of the appraisal and also Government agencies on the SA and how we can improve our planning documents in the light of their results and recommendations.

The following applies to both Local Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.

When we will consult

- First, we will ask for ideas, views and information from appropriate organisations, individuals and communities.

- After considering the initial comments and the relevance of previous consultation results we will consult on document(s) which explain issues to be considered and may include potential options.
- We will consider the need to prepare documents for additional consultation stages setting out further options, information, greater detail or a preferred option.
- We will formally publish the 'Publication' document (or equivalent under any revision to the relevant regulations) for representations following receipt of comments from the above informal consultation stages.
- Public consultations will usually take place for a period between 4 and 6 weeks although this may be longer if required.

Who we will consult

- Statutory organisations including Councils, infrastructure providers and government bodies as legally required or otherwise appropriate;
- Organisations representing local geographical, economic, social and other communities or other relevant interests;
- Local businesses, voluntary and other organisations;
- **Equality groups in the Borough;**
- Others who have expressed an interest in the subject matter;
- The general public.

More information is displayed in our 'Consultees' section.

How we will consult

The table on the next page lists some of the activities and methods the Council will consider using when undertaking consultation exercises.

The methods used will be tailored to suit the scale and nature of impact of the decision to be made and the particular needs of people being consulted.

How we will consult – the methods we will use

Informing people (letting people know about it)	Consulting people (asking for views & evidence)
Update planning web pages at www.bury.gov.uk .	Key stakeholder discussions and forums.
Advertise in local newspapers and on TV screens at Council buildings.	Online consultation at www.bury.gov.uk .
Notify via social media on Facebook & Twitter.	Public meetings.
Place articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In local newspapers; ▪ On the Council home page at bury.gov.uk; ▪ In 'Planzine' - the department's e-newsletter sent to a database of contacts and ▪ Using other online news sources as appropriate. 	Material made available in Council offices at Knowsley Place Reception, Town Hall Reception and selected local libraries (see www.bury.gov.uk/5265 for a list).
Deliver letters, emails and send 'Planzine' to database of contacts, including targeted consultation letters for key community groups.	Documents/information sent to stakeholders as appropriate.
Use posters on notice boards in prominent locations including town centres, civic suites, markets, leisure centres, parks, health centres and doctors' surgeries.	Feedback forms included with documents.
Promotional material such as displays and summaries/leaflets made available at selected local libraries and events as appropriate and at www.bury.gov.uk .	Public workshops.
Internal engagement with Local Strategic Partnership and Members' Panel.	Questionnaires / surveys.
Briefings for Councillors, at Township Forums and other community group meetings as appropriate.	Exhibitions.
Involving people (discussions to develop ideas together)	
Workshops / forums / focus groups to identify issues and shape options	
Officer meetings with authorities / agencies under 'Duty to Co-operate'	

Press notices and releases

Local newspaper notices are less 'personal' but they help to ensure that we communicate as widely as possible. We are no longer required to publish press notices to meet our legal requirements and therefore notices will be used at the Council's discretion.

Our website

The Internet is a popular way of communicating planning issues and making all relevant information available to individuals and groups. A key advantage of this is that we can include far more information than we could within newspaper adverts for example.

When we hold any consultations on Local Plan documents or provide key updates, you will find details and links to the relevant documents at www.bury.gov.uk/5264. We will ensure that these pages are regularly updated with all the latest information on Local Plan progress and we will provide opportunities for online consultation through the use of feedback forms.

Discussion groups and meetings

Sometimes people like to have their say in face-to-face meetings. One-to-one meetings, public meetings and workshops can be organised with officers where appropriate. Smaller meetings will be particularly useful for getting the views of individuals or groups and they allow issues to be explored in more detail.

Officers may also be willing to use local umbrella organisations to engage with a wider range of people.

Internal consultation

As part of the consultation process for Local Plan documents, the Council will seek to engage the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) network, currently referred to as 'Team Bury'. The LSP brings together representatives from the voluntary, community, public and business sectors to

help deliver the ambitions in the Council's Community Strategy.

Meetings of the Members' Panel will be organised, as appropriate, to allow for discussion and debate on policy issues prior to formal consultation.

The six Township Forums in the Borough are held every ~~month~~ **6 weeks** and officers will attend to inform of any consultations using measures such as presentations, displays and leaflets as appropriate.

How will we respond to you?

We will maintain the following consistent approach:

- If you attend a public meeting / exhibition we will ensure that Planning Officers are available to answer your questions or let you know where further information is available;
- If you request a planning document we will let you know where it is available (such as from the Council website) and whether there is any charge for a paper copy.

Our timescales

We will make sure that our Local Plan is regularly monitored and prepared to agreed timescales. To keep our Local Plan on target we will:

- Aim to carry out all our planning consultations in line with this SCI and the latest programme timetable set out in our Local Development Scheme;
- Update our Monitoring Report, which is produced on a regular basis to chart the impact of development plan policies and targets.

Links to the above documents can be found on our Local Plan page at www.bury.gov.uk/4577.

Planning Aid England

Planning Aid is a voluntary organisation providing independent and impartial advice and support through its Chartered Town Planners, with particular responsibility now for supporting groups interested in neighbourhood planning. Find out more at www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid.

Consultees

The list below outlines the organisations and other bodies that we are legally required to consult and involve in preparing our Local Plan documents.

Specific and 'Duty to Co-operate' consultation bodies include the following (as at August 2013):

- Neighbouring local planning authorities
 - Manchester City Council
 - Salford City Council
 - Bolton Council
 - Blackburn with Darwen Council
 - Rossendale Council
 - Rochdale Council
 - Lancashire County Council
 - North Turton Parish Council
- Coal Authority
- Civil Aviation Authority
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- GM Local Enterprise Partnership
- GM Local Nature Partnership
- GM Police **Authority** and Crime Commissioner
- Highways Agency
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Lancashire Police **Authority** and Crime Commissioner
- Natural England
- Office of Rail Regulation
- South Pennines LNP
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Commissioning Board
- United Utilities, Electricity North West ...and other relevant gas, electricity and electronic communications network infrastructure providers.

We are also required to include voluntary bodies whose activities benefit any part of the Borough and other 'general consultation bodies' that represent the interests of:

- Different racial, ethnic or national groups in the Borough;
- Different **religious faith** groups in the Borough;
- Disabled persons in the Borough;
- Businesses in the Borough.

Wish to be kept informed?

If you have an interest in the Bury Local Plan and would like to add your details to our database of contacts and receive letters or emails on future consultations please see below.

Write to us:

Planning Policy and Projects
Dept. of Communities and Neighbourhoods
3 Knowsley Place
Duke Street
Bury
BL9 0EJ

Phone us: 0161 253 5550

Fax us: 0161 253 5290

Email us: planning.policy@bury.gov.uk

Planning Applications

The Development Management Team handle both pre-application enquiries (for which we may charge) and the processing of planning applications.

Pre-application advice

Pre-application enquiries help the applicant get their application 'right first time' and whilst they are not a guarantee of obtaining planning permission, the exercise ensures that all of the planning issues are identified early so as to enable the applicant to put forward the best possible application.

More details of how this service is delivered including information on charges is available at www.bury.gov.uk/4603.



Getting involved in planning applications

The publicity for planning applications is subject to legislative requirements set by Government and can be carried out using different methods including one or all of the following:

- Letters to neighbours;
- Site notices;
- Press notices.

We will publish all planning applications on our website and a minimum of 21 days will be allowed for comments to be made via our online system, by email or by post. See our 'e-Planning general public' page at www.bury.gov.uk/3723 for more information or view the ways you can contact us in the 'Our approach' section of this leaflet.

In addition to being able to view the applications in your own home, you can also view them online at your local library. All comments received by the Council before the application is determined are considered by the officer in making their recommendations on the application.

Planning is an open and public process and as such all comments made on a planning application can be viewed by both the applicant and other members of the public.

Decision Making

Most planning applications are determined by the Chief Planning Officer, but some applications are presented to the Planning Control Committee (PCC).

There is a formal 'scheme of delegation' of decisions to the Chief Planning Officer and these can be viewed on our website at www.bury.gov.uk/4809.

If an application is presented to the PCC then there is an opportunity for the public to address Members of the Committee. Our website provides more information on how to do this at www.bury.gov.uk/4637.

Planning Appeals

When an application is refused by the Council an applicant has a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

The process of who is informed of an Appeal is set down by Government and we will ensure that these requirements are complied with.

As a minimum requirement, any comments that a person makes on the original application are passed to the Planning Inspector appointed to consider the Appeal and these comments are also be supplied to the applicant. In certain Appeals you may be able to make further comments and in some cases you may also take part in a Public Inquiry, although this will be at the discretion of the Inspector.

The rules around publicity and how you can be involved in Appeals can be found on our website at www.bury.gov.uk/4692.