

# Statement of Community Involvement

The planning process in Bury and how you can have your say

**ADOPTION (FOR CABINET) - OCTOBER 2015**



**Resources and Regulation**

**Bury**  
COUNCIL

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# 1 Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 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.

1.2 The Council's Planning Division sits within the Department of Resources and Regulation and comprises two teams:

- The **Strategic Planning and Economic Development Team** produces the planning documents that will make up the new Development 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 'Planning Policies' section of this document). The team also input to the development of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, although consultations will be led by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) (see page 7 8).

**Phone:** 0161 253 5550

**Email:** [planning.policy@bury.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@bury.gov.uk)

- The **Development Management Team** can be contacted for advice on pre-application enquiries and planning applications. Fees are payable for planning applications and pre-application advice. 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](mailto:development.control@bury.gov.uk)

1.3 For general planning enquiries, you can call at the reception desk in Bury Town Hall on Knowsley Street. However, should you have a pre-arranged meeting with an officer in the Planning Division, you can go directly to the reception on the ground floor of 3 Knowsley Place on Duke Street in Bury (opposite the main entrance to the Town Hall).



## 2 General Principles of Planning Consultations

- 2.1 This opening section of Bury's SCI sets out the general principles and practices used by the Council in involving Bury's communities in the preparation of the various planning policy documents that the Council produces and in determining planning applications. The approach taken by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) in preparing the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework is set out separately in this report.
- 2.2 We want everyone to have the chance to have their say on the Council's emerging planning policies and on planning applications, wherever it is relevant.
- 2.3 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, when requested;
We will share information with you via the Council's website, social media and at dedicated Council buildings where this is appropriate and effective.

- 2.4 In general we will keep you informed through a variety of methods including:
- **Letters and emails** - 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.
  - **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. You will be able to access a wide range of planning-related information at [www.bury.gov.uk/planning](http://www.bury.gov.uk/planning).
  - **Media** - We will use the more traditional media to issue press notices and releases, where appropriate. We will also make use of social media by using Facebook and Twitter as a means of keeping people informed of the latest planning news from the Council 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](http://www.facebook.com/buryplanning)



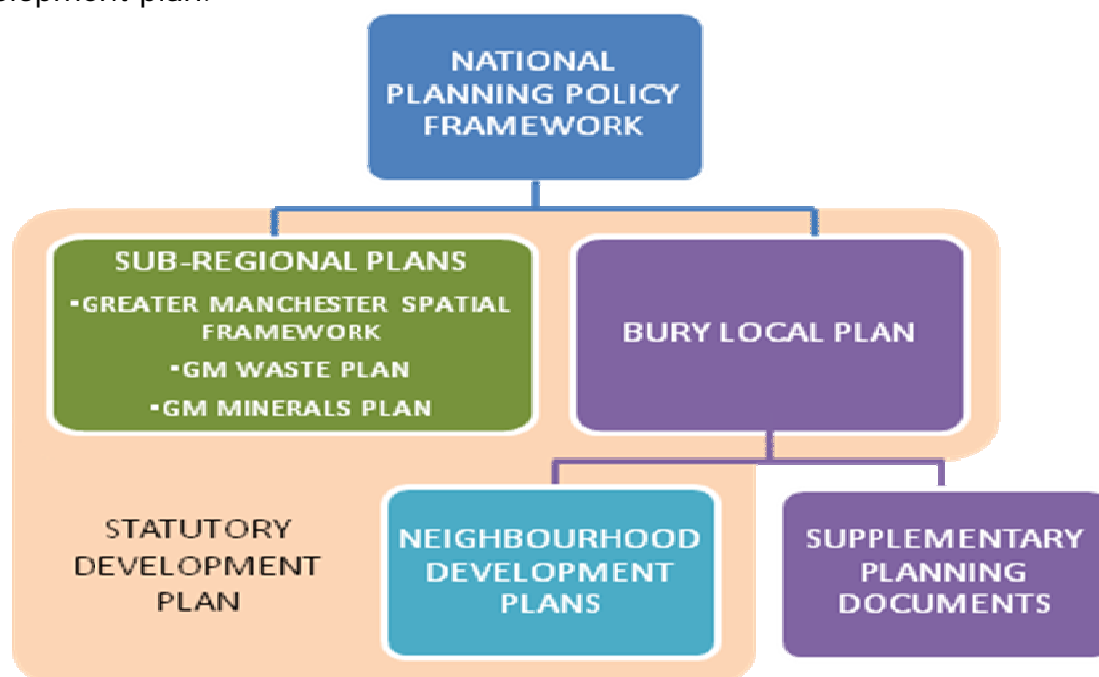
[www.twitter.com/BuryPlanning](http://www.twitter.com/BuryPlanning)

- **'Planzine' newsletter** - The individuals on our database with e-mail addresses receive our 'Planzine' e-newsletter. This contains updates on major news stories and public consultations on planning matters in Bury, shows you how you can become more involved in the planning process and offers tips on obtaining advice should you have a development proposal of your own. Planzine is also available on our website.



### 3 Planning Policy

- 3.1 The Government wants to give local people a greater role in shaping their local area, and the provisions of the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) give communities the opportunity to get more involved in the preparation of planning documents together with new powers to help shape ~~their~~ **their** neighbourhoods.
- 3.2 The diagram below and the following sections sets out the emerging structure of planning policy in Bury, highlighting those documents that will make up Bury's statutory development plan.



#### National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (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.
- 3.4 Additional advice is provided in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which is available online at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk>. Policies in Development Plans must be consistent with the Framework and PPG.

#### The Development Plan

- 3.5 The current statutory development plan in Bury comprises the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals and Waste Plans. Work is currently on-going on the preparation of a new Local Plan for Bury and this will, once adopted, replace the UDP. Work is also on-going on the preparation of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework which again, once adopted, will form part of Bury's wider Development Plan. The various documents making up Bury's Development Plan will be used as the basis for determining planning applications.
- 3.6 The documents making up the Development Plan must be supported by evidence and generally accord with national policies in the NPPF.

- 3.7 Following submission, Development Plan Documents will be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared 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 at [www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate](http://www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate).
- 3.8 Ultimately, Bury's Development Plan will consist of the following:
- **Bury Local Plan** - The emerging Local Plan will set out the local planning framework for the delivery of growth and development to meet identified future needs. Local Plan policies and site allocations will establish where future development will be encouraged and areas where it will be resisted.
  - **Adopted Policies Map** – Illustrating where the policy designations and site-specific proposals are on a plan.
  - **Greater Manchester Spatial Framework** – This is being prepared by AGMA and will focus primarily on housing and employment land requirements for Greater Manchester, the infrastructure requirements to deliver this and the environmental capacity of Greater Manchester to accommodate this in the most sustainable manner.
  - **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.
- 3.9 As part of the plan preparation process, we will assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies in the Bury Local Plan at each stage, 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.
- 3.10 Where necessary, we will also carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment of our emerging planning documents.
- 3.11 In addition, the Council will produce and update a range of supporting guidance notes, referred to as *Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)*.

### Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.12 The Government's Localism Act (2011) introduced Neighbourhood Planning giving new rights and powers for neighbourhoods to produce a plan to shape how their neighbourhood area should develop and grow. They are taken forward by neighbourhoods themselves: by an existing parish council, or by the creation of a neighbourhood forum where there is no parish council.
- 3.13 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](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid).

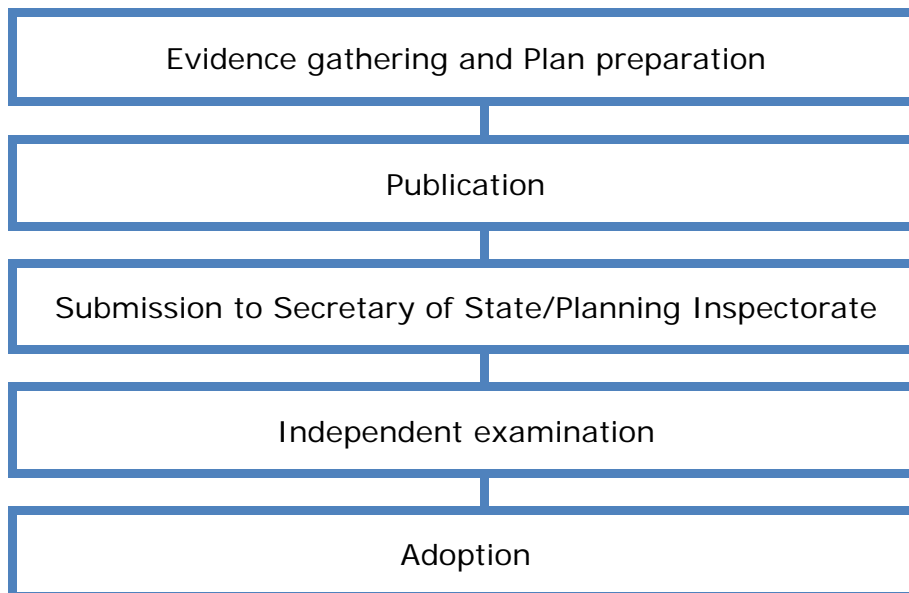
### **Consultation on Planning Policy Documents**

- 3.14 There are a number of key stages involved in the preparation of planning policy documents. 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 following highlights the key stages involved in the preparation of the Local Plan, the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and sets out who will be consulted, the stages at which consultation will take place and how consultation will be undertaken. Information on consultation involved in the

preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is also set out. Any public consultations on the emerging Bury Local Plan, the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework or other planning policy related documents will appear at [www.bury.gov.uk/planningconsultations](http://www.bury.gov.uk/planningconsultations).

## Bury Local Plan

3.15 Bury’s Local Plan will be the key planning policy document that we produce. The diagram below illustrates the key stages in the production of the Local Plan.



### How will the Council involve you?

3.16 The following table lists some of the activities and methods the Council will consider using when undertaking consultation exercises in connection with the Local Plan. **The methods used will be tailored to suit the scale and nature of impact of the decisions to be made and the particular needs of people being consulted:**

Material made available on the Council’s web site, in Council offices at Knowsley Place Reception, Town Hall Reception and selected local libraries (see our Statement of Community Involvement web page on <a href="http://www.bury.gov.uk/planningconsultations">www.bury.gov.uk/planningconsultations</a> <a href="http://www.bury.gov/10738">http://www.bury.gov/10738</a> for a list).
Send letters and emails to database contacts, including targeted consultation letters for key community groups. <b>The Council may consider more targeted consultation where residents may be more directly affected by proposals.</b>
Advertise via social media on Facebook & Twitter.
Where possible, place articles in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ local newspapers;</li> <li>▪ ‘Planzine’ - the department’s e-newsletter sent to a database of contacts and</li> <li>▪ Using other online news sources as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Use posters on notice boards in prominent locations including town centres, civic suites, markets, leisure centres and public open spaces.
Advertise on TV screens at Council buildings.
Advertise via Township Forums and other community group meetings as appropriate.

Hold key stakeholder discussions and forums.

Officer meetings with authorities / agencies under 'Duty to Co-operate'

## **When will the Council involve you?**

### Early Engagement

- 3.17 In developing the Local Plan, the Council will seek to engage with interested parties at an early stage. This will include a minimum 6 week period of consultation on a draft version of the Local Plan which would be likely to include the key issues within Bury and realistic options for addressing these. Consultation would also involve inviting comments on emerging evidence that will be prepared in support of the Local Plan.

### Publication Stage

- 3.18 Following consideration of all comments submitted on the draft Local Plan, the Council will prepare a Publication version of the Plan and this will effectively be what the Council considers to be its final, 'sound' plan. This version of the Local Plan will then be subject to a further period of consultation lasting at least 6 weeks.

### Submission and Examination

- 3.19 We will inform all those who request to be notified when the Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State and anyone who made representations at the Publication stage will be notified of details of the Examination.

## **Who will the Council involve?**

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

- 3.21 Specific and 'Duty to Co-operate' consultation bodies include the following (as at **August October** 2015):

- 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
- Historic England
- Environment Agency
- GM Local Enterprise Partnership
- GM Local Nature Partnership
- GM Police and Crime Commissioner
- Highways England
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner
- Natural England



- Office of Rail and Road
- 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.

3.22 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 faith groups in the Borough;
- Disabled persons in the Borough;
- Businesses in the Borough.

3.23 We have developed a consultation database which includes all of the above but also includes a wide range of other individuals, groups and stakeholders. We contact those on the database throughout the process of preparing planning policy documents so that everyone has the opportunity to influence policies and proposals as they emerge. This database is reviewed and updated on a continuous basis.

3.24 You can find out how to contact us if you would like us to add your details to this database on page ~~11~~ 12.

### **The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Joint Development Plan Document**

3.25 The ten Greater Manchester authorities have agreed to produce a joint Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Development Plan Document (GMSF). The GMSF will provide the overarching framework to strategically manage sustainable growth and development across the conurbation over the next twenty years or so. Principally, the GMSF will identify the housing numbers and employment floorspace needs and associated infrastructure requirements, as well as identifying the key broad opportunity areas where this growth should be focused.

3.26 The ten districts have each resolved to delegate the formulation of the GMSF to the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA.). AGMA act on the ten districts' behalf on the consultations on the GMSF. This section of Bury Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the community and other stakeholders will be involved in the preparation of the joint GMSF.

3.27 However, the Greater Manchester Agreement provides for a directly elected mayor with powers over strategic planning, including the power to create a statutory spatial framework for GM (with a unanimous vote of the Mayor's cabinet). Legislation is required to enable these changes and it is anticipated that the first city region Mayor elections will take place in early 2017. The governance of the document will transfer from a joint development plan document by the ten districts to the GMSF produced by GM Mayor/Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The consultation arrangements will need to be reviewed at this time.

### **Who will AGMA involve?**

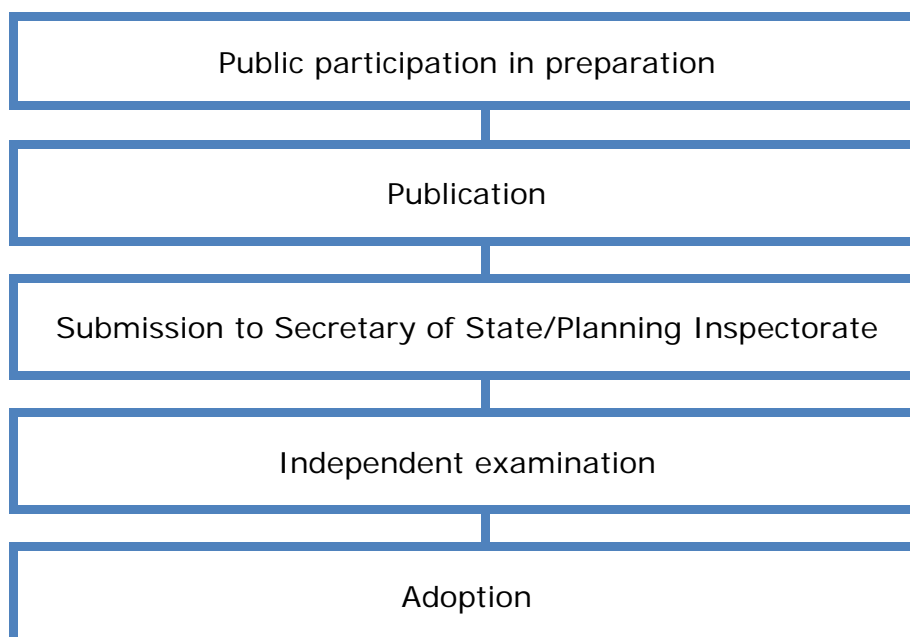
3.28 The following groups will be consulted where appropriate:

- **Specific consultation bodies** – organisations that AGMA are required to consult throughout the plan preparation process, including those responsible for services, utilities and infrastructure provision, Parish Councils in and adjacent to Greater Manchester, adjoining councils and government departments, where appropriate.
- **Local organisations** - community and voluntary bodies with an interest in Greater Manchester.
- **Businesses** – those with business interests in Greater Manchester and bodies representing the interests of businesses operating in Greater Manchester.
- **Landowners, developers and agents** – those who have a direct interest in future development and have a major role to play in providing the facilities and services the district needs.
- **The general public** - those who live in, work in or visit Greater Manchester as well as those who have expressed an interest in the subject matter.

### When will AGMA involve you?

- During **preparation**, as appropriate, inviting representations on what the GMSF should contain, when AGMA is gathering evidence, identifying the issues, and developing the options for addressing the issues. ~~and then the preferred options/approaches.~~ Representations will also be invited on a draft document during a specified time period. Comments that are submitted will be considered prior to the next stage.
- At the **publication** stage, when the proposed submission version of the GMSF (the draft GMSF we want to adopt) is published to allow formal representations to be made for a period of at least 6 weeks on the soundness of the plan and whether it complies with legal requirements. Significantly, only representations made at this stage can be considered at the public examination.
- At the **submission** stage the GMSF and associated documents, including all the representations made at the publication stage, will be submitted to the Government (this is not an opportunity to submit additional comments). Following submission an independent inspector will be appointed to undertake a **public examination**. People who made representations at the Publication stage can appear at the examination.

### GMSF Preparation



## How will AGMA involve you?

AGMA will contact appropriate organisations and individuals directly, by email or by post.
AGMA will publicise consultations by methods such as the AGMA website and each of the ten districts' web sites, press releases, social media, meetings and workshops.
AGMA will make consultation documents available on the AGMA website and each of the ten districts' websites, at the principal office of each of the ten districts and at selected public libraries.
AGMA will publish comments received, or a summary of them, as soon as possible and explain how they have been taken into account in preparing the plan. <sup>1</sup>

- 3.29 If you wish to register your interest in being informed of future GMSF consultations please contact [gmsf@agma.gov.uk](mailto:gmsf@agma.gov.uk). Further information about the GMSF is available on the AGMA website: [www.agma.gov.uk](http://www.agma.gov.uk).

### Duty to Cooperate

- 3.30 In undertaking the community and stakeholder involvement outlined above AGMA will ensure that the duty to cooperate with neighbouring councils and other prescribed bodies is met, as set out in law. In doing so AGMA will engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis and have regard to their activities so far as they are relevant, in order to ensure that strategic matters are given full consideration in the preparation of the GMSF.

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<sup>1</sup> The exceptions to this general principle occur at the 'publication' stage of the plan when representations are passed to the independent inspector to consider at the public examination and following the examination when the inspector may consult on proposed modifications to the plan. At these stages we are not therefore in a position to explain how comments have been taken into account.

## Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.31 The preparation of SPDs involve a similar process to that for statutory development plans, except that the documents are much quicker to produce as there is no submission to the Government or Planning Inspector involvement.

### How will the Council involve you?

- 3.32 The following table lists some of the activities and methods the Council will consider using when undertaking consultation exercises in connection with Supplementary Planning Documents:

Material made available on the Council's web site, in Council offices at Knowsley Place Reception, Town Hall Reception and selected local libraries (see our Statement of Community Involvement webpage on <a href="http://www.bury.gov.uk/planning">www.bury.gov.uk/planning</a> <a href="http://www.bury.gov.uk/10738">www.bury.gov.uk/10738</a> for a list).
Send letters and emails to those database contacts that are considered to be affected by the SPD.
Advertise via social media on Facebook & Twitter.

### When will the Council involve you?

- 3.33 Where necessary, we will engage with relevant stakeholders in developing a draft of the SPD. However, normally, we will prepare a draft version of the SPD and make this available for comment for a minimum of 4 weeks.
- 3.34 Once adopted/approved we will make the SPD available on our website, and from our principal office. We will also notify any person or body that made a representation or who has asked to be notified of the adoption.

### Who will the Council involve?

- 3.35 By making all relevant material available on the Council's web site and by placing it in the Council's principal offices and libraries, we will be seeking to encourage involvement from a wide range of individuals, businesses, groups, organisations and other stakeholders. We will also send letters/emails to those contacts that are considered to have a specific interest in the SPD.

## Neighbourhood Plans

- 3.36 Neighbourhood Planning is an optional process led by the community. There are parts of the neighbourhood planning process that the Council have to undertake and publicise. However, it is a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum that is responsible for engaging and consulting with their neighbourhood during the development of a neighbourhood plan. There is further information about neighbourhood planning on our website, including how we will support parishes and forums producing a plan and our other responsibilities which include publicising neighbourhood area applications and holding a neighbourhood referendum towards the end of the process.

- 3.37 Neighbourhood Plans need to be consistent with other elements of the Development Plan and would be subject to a formal examination by an independent inspector.
- 3.38 More advice on neighbourhood plans can be found on the Government's Planning Practice Guidance website (see link in paragraph 3.4).

### **Wish to be kept informed?**

- 3.39 If you have an interest in ~~the~~ local planning matters and would like to add your details to our database of contacts and receive letters or emails on future consultations please contact via the following:

#### **Write to us:**

Strategic Planning and Economic Development.  
Resources and Regulation  
3 Knowsley Place  
Duke Street  
Bury  
BL9 0EJ

**Phone us:** 0161 253 5550

**Email us:** [planning.policy@bury.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@bury.gov.uk)



# 4 Planning Applications

- 4.1 The Development Management Team handle both pre-application enquiries and the processing of planning applications.

## Pre-application Advice

- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 More details of how this service is delivered including information on charges is available on our website at [www.bury.gov.uk/planning](http://www.bury.gov.uk/planning) [www.bury.gov.uk/10785](http://www.bury.gov.uk/10785).

## Getting Involved in Planning Applications

- 4.4 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.



- 4.5 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 ~~'Planning applications and appeals' page~~ [planning applications search facility](http://www.bury.gov.uk/e-planning) at [www.bury.gov.uk/e-planning](http://www.bury.gov.uk/e-planning) <https://planning.bury.gov.uk/online-applications> for more information or view the ways you can contact us in Chapter 5 1. In addition to being able to view the applications in your own home, you can also view them online at your local library.
- 4.7 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

- 4.9 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/planning](http://www.bury.gov.uk/planning). 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 on our "Planning proposals – have your say" web page at [www.bury.gov.uk/10771](http://www.bury.gov.uk/10771).

## **Planning Appeals**

- 4.12 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.
- 4.14 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 "Planning applications refusals and appeals" webpage at [www.bury.gov.uk/planning](http://www.bury.gov.uk/planning) [www.bury.gov.uk/10769](http://www.bury.gov.uk/10769).



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**(October 2015)**