

Borough of Redditch Statement of Community Involvement

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL



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ADOPTED

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1 Introduction

What is planning?

1.1 Planning is the process that aims to protect, enhance and develop where we live. This is done through the creation of Local Plans which set out a long-term vision for an area. The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 was adopted in January 2017. Planning officers in Development Management then use these plans to inform decision making on local planning applications. Community engagement has come to be accepted as a necessary component of the planning processes, as communities' involvement brings local knowledge to the table and helps to produce better quality development.

What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

1.2 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the opportunities residents and other local stakeholders have to become involved in the planning process within the Borough of Redditch. Since the adoption of the last SCI (2006) there have been considerable changes to the planning system including the introduction of 'Local Plans', replacing 'Local Development Frameworks', as well as a selection of new community planning tools.

1.3 These changes mean that the 2006 SCI no longer covers all of the opportunities for communities to become involved in the planning process or sets out the current legal requirements for consultation. This new SCI allows for these changes to be incorporated. Please note that the SCI identifies the minimum requirements for consultation, however, Redditch Borough Council may hold further consultation at its discretion.

Why is the SCI important?

1.4 It is recognised that including communities in the planning process can help to achieve outcomes that are favourable for all. The challenge for the Council is to create an environment where communities actively and willingly engage. This SCI sets out the Council's proposals for community involvement in the various stages of planning, whether it is the preparation of planning policy or the deliberation of a planning application.

1.5 The Council will benefit from effective community involvement because:

- We can gain important local knowledge from the community;
- We can get community support for the plans we create; and
- We can reduce the levels of conflict in the system.

1.6 The benefits for the community include:

- A better understanding of the planning process;
- Having a say in the development of their area; and
- Helping to shape the future of their area.

2 The Aims of the SCI

2.1 The Council is committed to enabling any interested person, group or organisation to become involved in planning with regard to both development management and policy making. The purpose of this document is to demonstrate how, when and where Redditch Borough Council will consult with local and statutory stakeholders. All aspects of local planning are included within the SCI from the development of Local Plans to Development Management.

2.2 The SCI will:

- Explain why involving the community is important;
- Describe what we intend to do to inform you;
- Let you know how and when you can be involved;
- Outline the various methods for involving people; and
- Explain how you will be informed of the outcome of the consultation exercise.

“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that have been made.”

National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (Para. 155)

3 Consultation - Planning Policy

3.1 There are two principle types of planning policy documents, each with different statutory arrangements dictating how they are consulted on and adopted.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Are planning policy documents which make up the Local Plan. They help to guide development within the Borough by setting out the planning policies, which planning officers use to make their decisions on planning applications. These documents are subject to consultation and independent examination.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

The Council can produce Supplementary Planning Documents which provide additional guidance on detailed issues. SPDs will be used to cover a range of issues on which the Council wishes to provide additional information to elaborate upon policies in the Local Plan, for example, a site specific housing site. These documents are also subject to public consultation; however, they are not independently examined.

3.2 The Council may also produce other documents that the public are invited to comment on, but this is not a mandatory requirement.

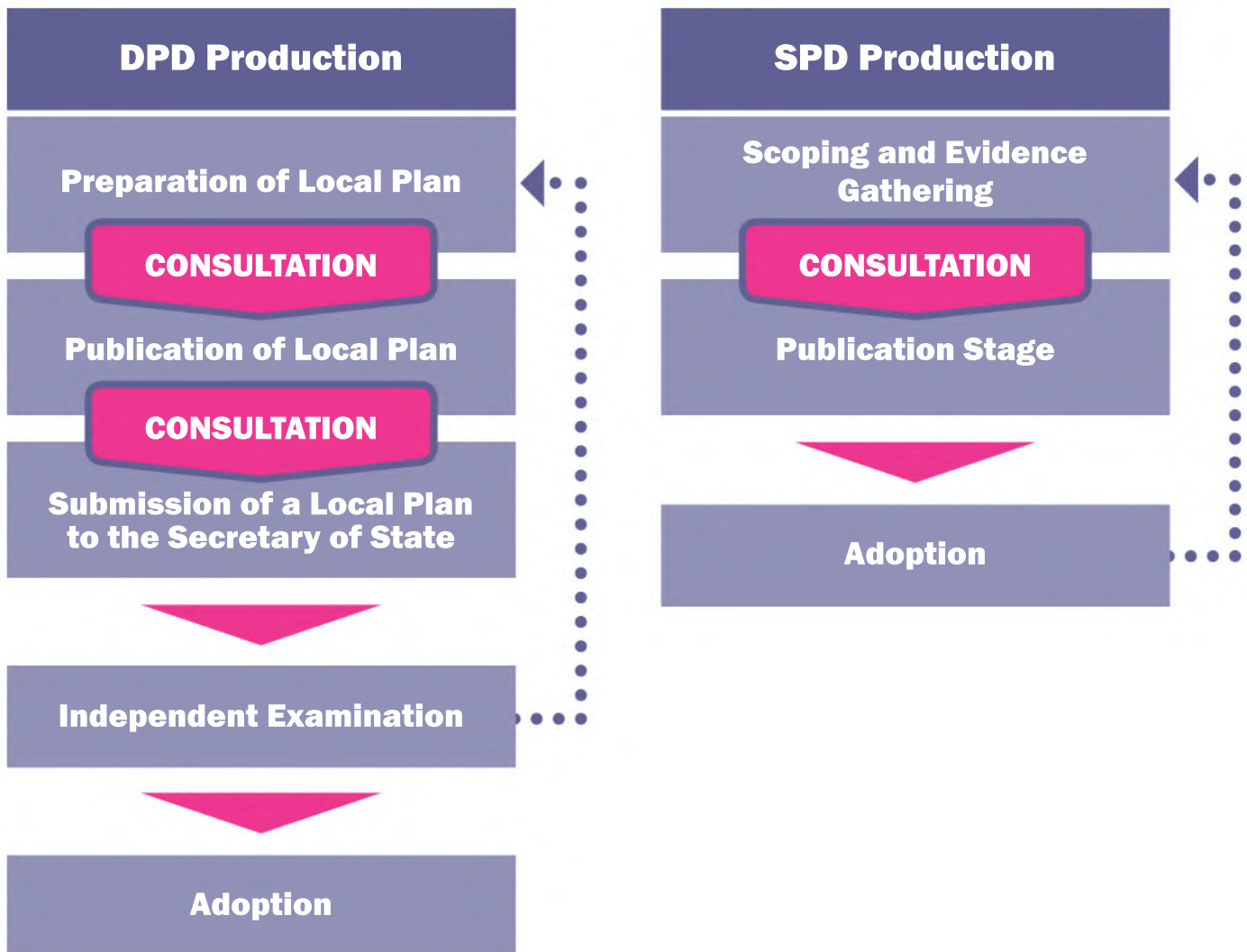
Stages of Plan Making

3.3 All planning policy documents are required to be based on evidence. Evidence used in preparing planning policy documents includes statistical evidence, technical assessments and information gathered through public consultation.

3.4 Planning policy documents must also be in conformity with national policy, such as the National Planning Policy Framework and the online National Planning Practice Guidance. The Council must therefore balance the need to ensure its policies are justified by the available economic, social and environmental evidence whilst supporting the broad national aims of the Government and reflecting, as far as possible, local opinion.

3.5 The process of producing Development Plan Documents like the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents is detailed in Figure 1 on page 5.

Figure 1: Production stages for DPDs and SPD's



Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

3.6 The main stages of DPD production are detailed above in Figure 1. Within these 5 stages, consultation or engagement is required during the Preparation and Publication stages.

Preparation of Local Plan

3.7 At the preparation stage of the plan making process, we must consult and invite representations from:

- Duty to Cooperate bodies (See Appendix A);
- Specific Consultation Bodies (See Appendix B);
- General Consultation Bodies; and
- Residents or businesses within the area who we consider appropriate.

3.8 Representations will be sought on what the Local Plan ought to contain. Representations may alter the content of the Plan. There may also be more than one consultation period on a draft plan. The Council has flexibility as to how the initial stages of plan production are conducted.

Publication of Local Plan

3.9 The Publication Stage plan is the plan which the Council considers is ready for Examination. Before the plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination, the Local Plan, along with all the supporting documents will be published for consultation. The consultation will last a minimum of 6 weeks and documents will be made available online and in all the locations detailed in the 'Access to information' section of this document. Using the Consultation database, the Council will invite people living in, working in or with an interest in the Borough to comment. This is the last opportunity in the process when formal representations on the Local Plan can be made to the Council.

Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State

3.10 The Local Plan and associated documents are submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination and an Independent Inspector is appointed. The Inspector will examine the soundness of the Local Plan and will be provided with the formal representations made at the Publication Stage.

3.11 A Programme Officer will also be appointed. This is not an Officer of the Council, but works under the direction of the Inspector. The Programme Officer will assist the Inspector with the procedural and administrative matters and be the point of contact between the Council, Inspector and participants in the Examination. They will notify the general and specific consultation bodies when and where the documents are available for inspection as well as give notice of Submission to those who requested to be notified at the Publication Stage.

3.12 No formal consultation is carried out at this stage.

Independent Examination

3.13 The Planning Inspectorate will inform the Council of the date for the Examination in Public (EIP). The EIP will be a public hearing to examine the soundness of the Plan and ensure that the appropriate legal and procedural requirements have been met. The Programme Officer will notify any person who made a representation at the Publication Stage of the date, time, place and name of the Inspector at least 6 weeks before the opening of the hearing.

3.14 No formal consultation is carried out at this stage.

Adoption

3.15 As soon as reasonably practicable after the Council adopts a Local Plan the plan and associated documents will be available for inspection at Redditch Town Hall, Customer Service Centres, any key locations and on the Council's website. An adoption statement will be sent to any person who has asked to be notified about the adoption of the Local Plan as well as to the specific and general consultation bodies.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

3.16 The Council will occasionally produce SPDs to add further detail and guidance to the policies in the Local Plan as well as other DPDs.

Scoping and Evidence

3.17 This stage is the beginning of document preparation with evidence gathered from a variety of different sources and the identification of possible issues and options. No formal consultation is required at this stage; however, the Council may hold informal consultation with stakeholders and interested parties where appropriate to the subject matter of the SPD.

Publication Stage

3.18 The draft SPD document will be available for consultation for a minimum of 4 weeks. Representations will be invited from individuals and bodies considered appropriate having regard to the lists of specific and general consultation bodies. Unlike with DPDs, there is not a requirement to consult certain Specific Consultation Bodies or General Consultation Bodies. Any person can make comments on an SPD.

Adoption

3.19 Representations received will be considered and the Council is required to draft a statement setting out how issues have been addressed. When the SPD document has been re-drafted to incorporate comments and finalised it will be presented to Councillors for adoption. Once adopted, a SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Neighbourhood Planning

3.20 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the ability for community groups to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans, which are more commonly referred to as Neighbourhood Plans. These can add detail beyond the strategic elements of the Council's Local Plan. The Qualifying Body (typically the community group) can allocate land for development and include policies to control development. They can also prepare Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) and Community Right to Build Orders. As local communities are responsible for the development of these plans, and apart from a statutory pre-submission consultation for a set period, it is the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Planning group to decide how they involve people in the process and undertake early consultations. The Council does, however, have some statutory functions regarding the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, which are set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

3.21 Table 1 (below) identifies the different stages of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and at which stage the Qualifying Body or Local Planning Authority have a statutory duty to consult the public or hold a referendum.

Table 1: Summary of the key stages in neighbourhood planning

Step 1	Designating neighbourhood area and if appropriate neighbourhood forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant body (parish / town council, prospective neighbourhood forum or community organisation) submits an application to the local planning authority (LPA) to designate a neighbourhood area ■ local planning authority publicises and consults on the area application for minimum 6 weeks (or minimum of 4 weeks where the area to which the application relates is the whole of the area of a parish council and is wholly within the area of one local planning authority) ■ local planning authority designates a neighbourhood area within the statutory timescales ■ In an area without a town or parish council a prospective neighbourhood forum submits an application to be the designated neighbourhood forum for a neighbourhood area ■ local planning authority publicises and consults on the forum application for minimum 6 weeks ■ local planning authority takes decision on whether to designate the neighbourhood forum
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Table 1: Summary of the key stages in neighbourhood planning *continued*

Step 2	<p>Preparing a draft neighbourhood plan or Order</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Qualifying body develops proposals (advised or assisted by the local planning authority) ■ gather baseline information and evidence
	<p>Qualifying body will consult with the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ engage and consult those living and working in the neighbourhood area and those with an interest in or affected by the proposals (e.g. service providers) ■ talk to land owners and the development industry identify and assess options ■ determine whether a plan or an Order is likely to have significant environmental effect ■ start to prepare proposals documents e.g. basic conditions statement
Step 3	<p>Pre-submission publicity & consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The qualifying body: ■ publicises the draft plan or Order and invites representations ■ consults the consultation bodies as appropriate ■ sends a copy of the draft plan or Order to the local planning authority ■ where European Obligations apply, complies with relevant publicity and consultation requirements ■ considers consultation responses and amends plan / Order if appropriate ■ prepares consultation statement and other proposal documents
	<p>Qualifying body will consult with the community</p>	
Step 4	<p>Submission of a neighbourhood plan or Order proposal to the local planning authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Qualifying body submits the plan or Order proposal to the local planning authority ■ Local planning authority checks that submitted proposal complies with all relevant legislation ■ If the local planning authority finds that the plan or order meets the legal requirements it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ publicises the proposal for minimum 6 weeks and invites representations ■ notifies consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement ■ appoints an independent examiner (with the agreement of the qualifying body)
	<p>Qualifying body will consult with the community</p>	

Table 1: Summary of the key stages in neighbourhood planning *continued*

Step 5	Independent Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ local planning authority sends plan / Order proposal and representation to the independent examiner ■ independent examiner undertakes examination ■ independent examiner issues a report to the local planning authority and qualifying body ■ local planning authority publishes report ■ local planning authority considers report and reaches own view (save in respect of community right to build orders where the report is binding) ■ local planning authority takes the decision on whether to send the plan / Order to referendum
Step 6	Community Referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ relevant council publishes information statement ■ relevant council publishes notice of referendum/s <p data-bbox="268 1039 501 1140">Local Planning Authority will hold the referendum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ polling takes place (in a business area an additional referendum is held). This is a Yes or No vote. ■ results declared. A Yes vote needs to be over 50%
Step 7	Making the neighbourhood plan or Order (bringing it into force)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ subject to results local planning authority considers plan / order in relation to EU obligations and Convention rights ■ If the plan / Order is compatible with EU obligations and does not breach Convention rights – local planning authority makes the plan or Order. ■ Once the legal challenge period is over, the Council can adopt the Neighbourhood Development Plan which will then be a material planning consideration

Source: Adapted from NPPG Paragraph: 080 Reference ID: 41-080-20150209

Other Planning Policy documents

Sustainability Appraisal

3.22 The undertaking of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is vital to the integration of sustainability and environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. The SA is not a separate activity, but an integral part of the plan making process in Redditch. As such, Council reports documenting the SA process will be published alongside the Local Plan document production for consultation at the Publication and Submission stages.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule

3.23 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a standardised non-negotiable, local levy. This is placed on new development for the purpose of raising funds to support the delivery of infrastructure, such as schools and highways that are required due to new development. The CIL Charging Schedule is the key document which a Local Authority must produce and have examined if it wants to introduce this type of standard charge on development.

3.24 Redditch Borough Council does not currently have a CIL Charging Schedule and seeks contributions towards infrastructure costs from developers through Section 106 agreements. Should the Council wish to implement a CIL, it will produce a document which sets out the level of charge required for every additional square metre of new development. This new document will be produced through the same stages as a Local Plan, as outlined in Figure 1. The Council would therefore:

- Widely publicise and consult a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule setting out the Council's initial consideration of appropriate charge;
- Widely publicise and consult a Draft Charging Schedule prior to submission for independent examination; and
- Submit the Draft Charging Schedule and all representations to an examination in public. All those who made a representation on the Draft Charging Schedule will be able to speak at the examination, should they wish.

Statement of Community Involvement

3.25 The SCI (this document) was consulted on with the public and statutory consultees at the draft stage. Although there is no legal requirement for consultation, it is important to the Council that the ways in which we will be consulting and advertising on Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and planning applications is clearly explained and the public are able to make comments and suggestions on the ways we consult.

Who do we consult?

3.26 The nature of community involvement will vary depending on the type of planning policy document being produced. Redditch Borough Council intends to do more than the required minimum for consultation and plans to involve as many parties, groups, bodies and individuals as possible.

3.27 Redditch Borough Council has a consultation database, all of whom are notified of a public consultation on a planning document when one occurs. Organisations, groups and individuals that wish to be added or deleted from the database can do so at any time by contacting the Development Plans team (See 'Access to information' section for details).

How will we involve people?

3.28 A basic minimum for involvement would be informing the required (statutory) consultees about documents being produced and how and when they can be consulted on.

3.29 The principles for involvement are ensuring our approach is:

- **Accessible:** Have documents and hold events in the most suitable places for people to make use of;
- **Genuine:** to only involve people when they can have a real influence on the outcome of a plan;
- **Transparent:** to keep the lines of communication open; and
- **Appropriate:** to use the best method possible for involving people.

Methods of involvement

3.30 The table below shows the variety of methods available to the Council when consulting on planning documents. Not all of these methods will be used. The most appropriate method(s) will be used when consulting on specific documents.

Table 2: Methods of involvement	
Method	Approach
Letter	Letters will be sent out to consultees, all those who have expressed a specific interest and local bodies who may have valuable input, to inform them of any consultation they may want to take part in or about a document that has been released for consultation in accordance with legal requirements.
E-mail	E-mails will be used when appropriate. All documents will be available in an electronic format via email as this is an important way of saving paper.
Exhibitions	Exhibitions (including explanatory posters and leaflets) can be held to inform people about documents that have been produced. These exhibitions may be held in Redditch Town Hall and other locations as appropriate.
Workshops	Workshop events will consist of a presentation followed by group work in order to discuss the issue at hand. These organised discussion group events can be very worthwhile but can be very resource intensive.
Website	The Council's website has proven to be a very useful tool when engaging the public. All consultation documents will be available online free of charge.
Focus Groups	Focus groups bring together a small number of stakeholders to discuss a specific issue in depth. They are used to explore specific subjects in detail.
Leaflets	From time to time the Council may produce leaflets either summarising key pieces of work or advertising wider proposals for the public to be involved in.
Posters	The Council has a network of public venues where publicity material can be displayed in order to reach a wider audience.
Public Meetings	When Planning Officers are invited to attend public meetings, such as Parish Council meetings to discuss documents, every effort will be made to attend.

Table 2: Methods of involvement *continued*

Method	Approach
Publicly available documents	A hard copy of the consultation document will always be made available at Redditch Town Hall, Redditch Library, Worcestershire Mobile library and the Customer Service Centres.
Questionnaires	Where appropriate, questionnaires will be used at an early stage when preparing a Local Plan or SPD to gauge public opinion on a specific topic. This technique is useful when quantitative data is needed.
Interviews	It may be useful to do one to one interviews with specific individuals who have links to a specific subject to get their in-depth knowledge of the subject. This technique will be employed when appropriate.
Planning for Real®	Planning for Real® refers to using interactive displays and 3D plans to illustrate the issue being dealt with. These techniques tend to be very popular with the public and tend to help those who have not taken part in the planning process before to have their say. Planning for Real can be used in conjunction with other methods to help maximise involvement.
Media	There are statutory requirements for the Council to publish details of consultation periods in a newspaper which covers the whole of the Borough. The Council will attempt to get extra media coverage of any events to improve publicity. The Council will utilise free newspapers to increase coverage opportunities.
Social Media	When appropriate, the Council may use forms of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to advertise consultation events and opportunities.

3.31 A wide variety of methods have been identified which can be utilised to involve as many people as possible in the most suitable way for them. Different people will want to be involved in the process to different degrees. The Council is also aware of the suitability of different methods at different stages of document production. At early stages the Council may seek to gather qualitative data (views, reasoning and suggestions) and this may involve a workshop or focus groups; latter stages will necessitate as much publicity of proposals as possible to ensure people are aware of the proposals.

3.32 In many cases, it may be necessary to consult on more than one document at the same time or for the Council’s Planning Department to get involved in and attend meetings of other groups. By joining up with other organisations’ events and community activities the Council will be able to reach a broader and, potentially, a greater number of people than would otherwise be the case. Joining up with other organisations events and community activities helps avoid consultation fatigue with the public. The Council will make every attempt to attend meetings of other organisations, such as Feckenham Parish Council, on request.

3.33 Choosing the appropriate approach during consultation can influence the number of people informed, consulted and involved in the different stages. Appropriate approaches to each stage will result in the optimum consultation with the community.

Access to information

3.34 The Council recognises the importance of effective communication. All DPDs and SPDs will be available for review during normal opening times at Redditch Town Hall with key local documents made available at local Customer Service Centres.

- ➔ **Redditch Borough Council**, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch Town Centre, B98 8AH
- ➔ **Batchley Customer Service Centre**, Batchley Shopping Centre, 183 Batchley Rd, Batchley, Redditch, B97 6JB
- ➔ **Woodrow Customer Service Centre**, Woodrow Shopping Centre, Studley Road, Redditch B98 7RY
- ➔ **Winyates Customer Service Centre**, Winyates Centre, Redditch B98 0NR

3.35 The documents the Council produces will be available in a variety of different formats including:

- **Hard copies** - leaflets, posters and paper copies of documents, which will be placed in key community locations;
- **Electronic versions** - that can be e-mailed to interested individuals/organisations;
- **Website** - proposals documents, proposals matters, availability of proposals documents for inspection (with times, locations, places) will be published on the Council's website – www.redditchbc.gov.uk

3.36 The Council can also make documents available in other languages and formats (large print, Braille) if needs are identified. Any comments that people wish to make on any of the documents out for consultation can be sent to the Council by post or by emailing to the following address:

- **Development Plans**
Redditch Borough Council,
Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square,
B98 8AH Tel: (01527) 64252
Email: devplans@redditchbc.gov.uk

Feedback and taking views into account

3.37 The views that are expressed by the community during any involvement activity will be fed into the process of document production and revision. Feedback from consultations will be made available in summary form and will be used to influence the drafting of documents. Ensuring people are kept informed of the outcome of events is seen as a vital part of the planning system to reinforce the message that public involvement is helpful and worthwhile.

3.38 After both the Publication and Submission consultation stages of DPDs where possible the Council will;

- Record comments from public meetings and forums and feed these into the process;
- Produce a summary of written comments received during consultation periods and make these publicly available on the Council's Website; and
- Produce a report to Councillors listing all written comments received, our responses and recommendations as to what changes, if any, should be made. This report will also be available on the Council's website.

3.39 The Council will keep contributors informed, where possible, through using;

- The Local Media, e.g. Press Releases;
- Newsletters; and
- Officer presentations to stakeholder groups who have been involved in participation events and those who contact us to request a presentation.

4 Consultation - Development Management

4.1 Many people first become involved in planning through consultation related to a Planning Application for nearby development, whether it is a small householder development, such as an extension, or a larger application for a number of dwellings.

4.2 The Council's Development Management team is responsible for the processing of most planning applications within the Borough (apart from applications which are dealt with by Worcestershire County Council such as those for minerals, waste, schools, railway stations and large infrastructure projects, among others).

4.3 Planning applications can be split into two types, major and minor. When a planning application has been validated, for both major and minor applications, it is included on the weekly list which is published on the Council's website.

4.4 Depending on the type of planning application being considered, there are a number of consultation bodies that the Council must consult and invite to make comments. In addition, those who the Council decides to consult with can depend on factors such as how many people would be affected by the proposal and the type of impact it is likely to have.

The main type of consultation groups include:

- **Public** – Including consultation with neighbouring residents and community groups through site notices or letters or other means, depending on the type of planning application;
- **Statutory Consultees (see Appendix C)** – Where there is a requirement by law to consult a specific body they are expected to respond, for example, Environment Agency;
- **Consultation required by a direction** – Where the local planning authority is directed to undertake additional consultation due to specific local circumstances; and
- **Non Statutory Consultees (see Appendix D)** – These consultees are not required to be consulted by law but there is a planning reason to engage with these consultees and who are likely to have an interest in the proposed development, for example, Health and Safety Executive.

4.5 Some applications which come into the Council do not require consultation, for example some forms of permitted development. These are detailed in Table 3.

4.6 All applications are available to view on the Council's website and are available in hard copy on request at the Town Hall in Redditch. All responses received within the consultation period for applications are uploaded on the Council's website. Full consideration is given to representations received, and due weight attached to the views of the community and stakeholders. Once a decision has been reached, all respondents will be informed of the outcome. Decisions can be reached in two ways, by planning officers through delegated powers, or by the Planning Committee comprised of a number of elected Councillors.

What do we consult on and how?

Pre-application stage

4.7 Before an application is submitted, pre-application advice can be sought. Depending on the type and size of proposed development, a fee and community consultation may be required. Pre-application advice can be sought from the Council to improve the quality of the scheme prior to submission. Developers are strongly advised to discuss proposed plans with likely affected parties, such as neighbours, before planning applications are submitted. Pre-application consultation enables local people to influence proposals at an early stage where suggestions are more easily incorporated.

4.8 The Localism Act 2011 requires applicants to consult with the community before submitting planning applications for certain large developments. Developments which require pre-application consultation include, for example, wind turbine development involving more than two wind turbines or where the hub height of any turbine exceeds 15 metres.

4.9 Pre-application consultation can take a number of different forms, and the onus is on the developer to organise it. Examples of pre-application consultation include fliers, public meetings, websites and questionnaires targeted at those living, working or visiting near to the proposed development site.

Minor Planning Applications

4.10 Minor planning applications can include development for:

- **Householder developments** - Developments within the curtilage of a dwelling house which requires planning permission, for example: extensions, alterations, garages, car ports, walls, fences and outbuildings. ***Please note: this is not an exhaustive list of when planning permission may be required for householder developments, please seek advice from the Planning Department if you have any queries;***
- **New Residential** - 1-9 dwellings/under half a hectare;
- **Office/light industrial** - floorspace of up to 999m²/under 1 hectare;
- **General industrial** - floorspace of up to 999m²/under 1 hectare;
- **Retail** - floorspace of up to 999m²/under 1 hectare;
- **Gypsy/traveller site** - 1-9 pitches.

4.11 Advertisement on minor applications normally involves the writing to adjoining neighbours OR advertising the application through a site notice. The application is also published on the weekly list and the plans uploaded to the Council's website. The Parish Council is also written to (where one exists). Public consultation on minor applications must last for a minimum of 21 days.

4.12 Minor applications which involve Listed Buildings, are within a Conservation Area or adjacent to a public right of way will also have to be advertised in the newspaper and a minimum 21 days given for comments to be submitted.

4.13 Minor applications are generally determined by planning officers (under delegated powers). However, an applicant or objector can ask their local Ward Councillor to call the application in to Planning Committee. Should the Ward Councillor call in the application, the Planning Committee will determine the planning application.

Major Planning Applications

4.14 Major planning applications include development for:

- **Residential** - 10 or more dwellings /over half a hectare;
- **Office/light industrial** - floorspace of 1000m² or more/over 1 hectare;
- **General industrial** - floorspace of 1000m² or more/over 1 hectare;
- **Retail** - floorspace of 1000m² or more/over 1 hectare;
- **Gypsy/traveller site** - 10 or more pitches

4.15 Site notices and/or adjacent neighbourhood notification letters are required for major planning applications, depending on the type of development. For all major applications, inclusion on the weekly list, advertising in the newspaper and uploading the application to the Council's website are required. Consultation on major schemes is required to be a minimum of 21 days but, dependent on the size and type of scheme, a longer consultation period may be given. All major applications are determined at Planning Committee and, for those who make comments on the application; there is the opportunity to speak at the committee meeting.

Change of use applications

4.16 Applications for a change of use can be either major or minor. This is dependent on the size of the site or floor space of a building as detailed above.

Other applications

4.17 In addition to minor and major planning applications, there are other types of applications which can be submitted to the Council for determination. With the update to Permitted Development Rights, through the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, a greater amount of development can be undertaken without the need for planning permission. For householder developments which fall within Permitted Development Rights, and do not need to provide a prior notification to the Council, public consultation is not required. The Council suggests that in these cases the applicants inform neighbours themselves of the intended development.

4.18 Table 3 lists the minimum requirements for consultation for types of applications not mentioned in the above sections. For the statutory publicity requirements for planning and heritage applications, please see Table 4 below.

4.19 If you are unsure whether a proposed development falls within Permitted Development Rights or, you have any other questions regarding planning applications please contact the **Planning Department, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm** on **01527 881 770** or email **newplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk**

Application Type	Consultation
Lawful Development Certificate (existing)	None required
Lawful Development Certificate (proposed)	None required
Prior Notification	As the scheme is permitted development and does not need the benefit of planning permission, generally there is no consultation. There are some types of Prior Notification where neighbours are notified. But this is not always the case and consultation will be undertaken depending on the nature of the proposal and type of prior notification application.
Advertisement Consent	Relevant Statutory consultees
Listed Building Consent	Site Notice Newspaper Advert
Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)/works to trees protected by TPOs	None required
Works to trees in Conservation Areas	None required
Discharge of conditions	Relevant Statutory consultees
Environmental Assessment 'scoping opinion'	Relevant Statutory consultees
Environmental Assessment 'screening opinion'	None required
Non-material Amendments	None required
Details pursuant of conditions	None required

Source: Please see Appendix E for the relevant legislation.

Table 4: Statutory publicity requirements for planning and heritage applications

Type of development	Site notice	Site notice or neighbour notification letter	Newspaper advert	Website
Applications for major development as defined in Article 2 of the Development Management Procedure Order.		X	X	X
Applications subject to Environmental Impact Assessment which are accompanied by an environmental statement.	X		X	X
Applications which do not accord with the development plan in force in the area.	X		X	X
Applications which would affect a right of way to which Part 3 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 applies.	X		X	X
Applications for planning permission not covered in the entries above e.g. non-major development.		X		X
Applications for listed building consent where works to the exterior of the building are proposed.	X		X	X
Applications to vary or discharge conditions attached to a listed building consent or conservation area consent, or involving exterior works to a listed building.	X		X	X

Source: NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 15-029-20140306

Planning Committee

4.20 Redditch Borough Council's Planning Committee is held monthly and consists of nine Ward Councillors. All major applications automatically go to Planning Committee for determination. The majority of minor planning applications will be determined by Planning Officers (through delegated powers); however, occasionally they may also be determined by Planning Committee.

4.21 Some of the reasons a minor application may be determined by Committee include:

- A Councillor makes a written request;
- A planning application receives two or more letters of objection;
- Applications that involve Council owned land, Council employees or Councillors.

4.22 There is an opportunity to speak at Planning Committee, for the applicant, any objectors, Parish Council representatives or Ward Councillor. Public speaking is also permitted at meetings of the Committee. Any member of the public who wishes to speak on a particular application is required to register their interest by no later than 12 noon on the day of the Committee meeting. There is, however, a protocol for public speaking at meetings with restrictions on the amount of time allowed to address the Committee (3 minutes per person). Details of the date, time and location of Planning Committee will be sent to all those who have made a representation on the planning application. Neighbours will not be informed unless they have submitted a representation to the planning application. The procedure for determining applications at Planning Committee is detailed below.

4.23 For further details about **Planning Committee** please visit <http://moderngovwebpublic.redditchbc.gov.uk> or email the **Committee Services Team** at democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

Planning Committee Procedure

An Officer will present the report on behalf of the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services.

Members of the public who have registered to speak may address the meeting when invited to do so by the Chairman and in accordance with the public speaking rules.

Ward members who have registered to speak may then address the meeting when invited to do so by the Chairmen and in accordance with both the Public Speaking Rules and Procedure Rules.

The Chairman will invite the members of the Committee to address the meeting. With the consent of the Chairman, the Committee Members are entitled to address the meeting more than once.

Before taking the vote the Chairman will read out the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services and ascertain if any member of the Committee wishes to put forward an alternative recommendation.

If no alternative recommendation is put forward the Chairman will proceed to vote.

If one or more alternative recommendations are put forward the Chairman will:

- a) request each member who puts forward an alternative recommendation to read out the alternative recommendation and specify the reasons for the alternative recommendation;
- b) invite the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services to advise the Committee on the extent to which the alternative recommendation and reasons for it fall within or outside planning policy;
- c) consider whether an adjournment is required to enable the member proposing the alternative recommendation to take advice from officers; and only then proceed to vote.

Each member of the Committee may vote only once in favour of either the recommendation proposed by the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services or an alternative recommendation.

Notification of planning decisions

4.24 Once a decision is reached, either by delegated powers or by Planning Committee, the Council will send a Decision Notice to the applicant. Full consideration is given to comments received, and due weight attached to the views of the community and stakeholders when reaching a decision. Decision Notices are available to view on the Council's website and letters or emails are sent out regarding the Decision to all those who made comments.

Appeals

4.25 Should planning permission not be granted, the applicant is able to appeal the decision. This means that the application is re-assessed by an independent Planning Inspector. Only the person who applied for planning permission has a legal right to appeal (known as the appellant). There is no right of appeal for interested people or organisations (known as third parties).

Appealing a planning decision can be for a number of reasons including:

- Disagreement with the decision;
- Disagreement with the imposition of a planning condition; or
- The decision wasn't made within 8 weeks for a minor planning application or within 13 weeks for a major planning application.

4.26 To appeal a planning decision, please visit the **Gov.uk website (<https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-inspectorate>)**. There are time limits for submitting an appeal which is normally six months from the date of the Council's decision.

4.27 Anyone can comment on a planning appeal. You do not need to have commented on the original planning application to comment on an appeal. However, if somebody comments on the original planning application, their original response will be passed on to the Planning Inspectorate and there is no need to resubmit any comments. Any new comments for the appeal can be made to the Planning Inspectorate and nobody will be prejudiced by the fact that they have already commented on the planning application. Redditch Borough Council will inform any respondents to the original planning application of an appeal.

4.28 Once an appeal has been validated, the Planning Inspectorate will tell the applicant what happens next and how long the appeal may take. There are three ways an appeal can be determined:

- **Written Representations** - The appellant and the Council prepare written statements for the Planning Inspector to consider. Third parties may also submit representations. The Planning Inspector may wish to visit the site and then a decision will be issued.
- **A Hearing** - Where the planning issues are not straight forward and require a discussion. This is an informal discussion of the issues between the parties which the Planning Inspector leads. Third parties are welcome to attend and speak at the discretion of the Inspector.
- **A Public Inquiry** - Where the planning issues are complex or there are legal matters to discuss. Expert witnesses present evidence and the opposing party can cross-examine them. Third parties may take part and can also be cross-examined.

4.29 The Planning Inspector will make the decision and inform the appellant and the Council. The appellant can challenge the decision in the High Court if they think the Planning Inspectorate made a legal mistake.

5 Conclusion

5.1 The purpose of the SCI is to set out how people can be involved in the planning process. It explains:

- The minimum requirements for community involvement;
- How involvement will occur in a timely and accessible way;
- That suitable methods will be employed;
- How results of involvement will be fed into document production; and
- How people can be involved in the planning process.

5.2 Redditch Borough Council is committed to providing a high level service to the community, making sure everyone has the opportunity to be involved in the planning process. The Council will look to achieve this in the most resource efficient way. Therefore any approach used when engaging with stakeholders will reflect the type of work being undertaken. Any non-statutory approaches used during engagement or consultation activities will also be reviewed to assess whether such an approach was effective.

5.3 The SCI will be reviewed periodically. This will include assessing whether the community involvement techniques indicated in this document have been effective and efficient in achieving a good level of public involvement and participation across all sections. As a result of monitoring, the Council will consider what changes, if any, need to be made to the SCI.

Appendices

Appendix A: Planning Policy: Duty to Cooperate Bodies

Other public bodies, in addition to local planning authorities, are subject to the duty to cooperate by being prescribed in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by The National Treatment Agency (Abolition) and the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (Consequential, Transitional and Saving Provisions) Order 2013. These bodies are:

- The Environment Agency;
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as Historic England);
- Natural England;
- The Mayor of London;
- The Civil Aviation Authority;
- The Homes and Communities Agency;
- Each clinical commissioning group established under section 14D of the National Health Service Act 2006;
- The National Health Service Commissioning Board;
- The Office of Rail Regulation;
- Transport for London;
- Each Integrated Transport Authority;
- Each highway authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Highways Act 1980 (including the Secretary of State, where the Secretary of State is the highways authority); and
- The Marine Management Organisation.

These organisations are required to cooperate with local planning authorities, County Councils that are not local planning authorities and the other prescribed bodies. These bodies play a key role in delivering local aspirations, and cooperation between them and local planning authorities is vital to make Local Plans as effective as possible on strategic cross boundary matters. The bodies should be proportionate in how they do this and tailor the degree of cooperation according to where they can maximise the effectiveness of plans.

The prescribed bodies are defined in Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Those relevant to Redditch Borough are:

- Environment Agency
- Historic England;
- Natural England;
- Highways Authority;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Primary Care Trust;
- Office of Rail Regulation;
- Highway Authority.

In respect of other bodies, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have been identified in the regulations as bodies that those covered by duty 'should have regard to' when preparing local plans and other related activities. A similar status is also now applied to Local Nature Partnerships and Utility Companies.

Appendix B: Planning Policy: Specific Consultation Bodies

Specific consultation bodies are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 Part 1.

For Redditch Borough this means that consultation with the following bodies will take place where these bodies still exist:

- The Coal Authority
- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Highways England
- Bromsgrove District Council
- Stratford on Avon District Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Feckenham Parish Council
- Bentley Pouncefoot Parish Council
- Tutnall and Copley Parish Council
- Alvechurch Parish Council
- Beoley Parish Council
- Mappleborough Green Parish Council
- Studley Parish Council
- Sambourne Parish Council
- Cookhill Parish Council
- Inkberrow Parish Council
- Stock and Bradley Parish Council
- Hanbury Parish Council
- Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police
- CTIL (on behalf of Vodafone and Telefónica)
- MBNL (on behalf of EE and Three)
- EE
- Three
- BT
- Virgin
- Sky
- Homes England
- Severn Trent Water
- National Grid
- Western Power Distribution
- NHS England Midlands and East
- Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group
- Homes and Communities Agency

Appendix C: Development Management: Statutory Consultees

The table below lists where there is a statutory requirement to consult particular bodies or persons, detailing when each statutory consultee is consulted and an example planning application.

Statutory consultee	When are they consulted	Example application
Adjoining landowners	When a planning application is classed as a major application.	Major application for 200 dwellings
Canal and River Trust	Where development is likely to affect any inland waterway or reservoir owned or managed by the Canal and River Trust or any canal feeder channel, watercourse, let off or culvert which is within an area which has been notified for the purposes of this provision to the local planning authority by the Canal and River Trust.	Major application adjacent a canal
Coal Authority	Where notice has been given to a mineral planning authority as respects land which is in their area and it is specified in the notice by the Coal Authority that the land contains coal or any development which involves the provision of a building or pipeline in an area of coal working notified by the Coal Authority to the local planning authority.	This is for applications to the minerals authority which is Worcestershire County Council
Control of major-accident hazards competent authority (COMAH) competent authority	Where development may become the source of or increase the risk or consequences of a major accident.	Application for a nuclear power plant
County Planning Authorities	Where development is of strategic importance or may impact on the wider county strategy.	Application for a new motorway junction
Crown Estates Commissioners	Where notice has been given to a mineral planning authority as respects land which is in their area and it is specified in the notice by the Crown Estate Commissioners that the land contains gas or oil.	This is for applications to the minerals authority which is Worcestershire County Council
Department of Energy and Climate Change	Where notice has been given to a mineral planning authority as respects land which is in their area and it is specified in the notice by the Coal Authority that the land contains coal.	This is for applications to the minerals authority which is Worcestershire County Council

Statutory consultee	When are they consulted	Example application
Environment Agency	Applications including those for mining operations, refining or storing mineral oils and their derivatives, development relating to the use of land as a cemetery, development within Flood Zones 2 or 3 or Flood Zone 1 which has critical drainage problems, development which does not use the services of a sewage undertaker for the disposal of sewage, or development involving the carrying out of works or operations in the bed of, or within 20 metres of the top of a bank of a main river which has been identified by the Environment Agency. In accordance with Schedule 4 (t), (u), (v), (zc) and (zd) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.	Application for development within Flood Zone 2
Forestry Commission	Where an application proposes the use to be for forestry or an application where there is forestry. In accordance with Paragraph 4 of Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.	This is for applications to the minerals authority which is Worcestershire County Council
Garden History Society	Where development is likely to affect any battlefield, garden or park of special historic interest.	No sites have been identified within Redditch Borough at this time; however the previously considered Brockhill West site is adjacent to a Registered Park and garden in Bromsgrove.
Greater London Authority	Where development is within a London Borough. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008	This is for applications within a London Borough
Health and Safety Executive	Where development is within an area which has been notified by the Health and Safety Executive as being within the vicinity of toxic, highly reactive, explosive or inflammable substances (otherwise than on a relevant nuclear site).	No sites have been identified within Redditch Borough at this time
Highways Authority	Where development is likely to result in an adverse impact on the safety of, or queuing on a trunk road, prejudice the improvement or construction of a road or highway, includes the construction, formation or laying out access to or from a trunk road or highway, development likely to result in the material increase in the volume of a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway or the laying of a new street.	Major application including access onto a main trunk road

Statutory consultee	When are they consulted	Example application
Highways England	Where development is likely to result in an adverse impact on the safety of, or queuing on a trunk road, prejudice the improvement or construction of a road, includes the construction and the formation or laying out access to or from a trunk road.	Major application including access onto a main trunk road
Historic England	Where development is likely to affect a scheduled monument, a battlefield, garden or park of special historic interest or is for the demolition, in whole or in part, or the material alteration of a listed building which is classified as Grade I or Grade II*.	Application for an extension to a Grade II* listed building
Local Highway Authority	Where development is likely to result in a material increase in the volume of traffic or a material change in the character of traffic entering or leaving a classified road or proposed highway, likely to prejudice the improvement or construction of a classified road or proposed highway, development which involves the laying out of a new street or highway or the laying out or alteration of any means of access to a highway.	Major application including access onto a highway
Local Planning Authorities	Where development is likely to affect land in Greater London or in a metropolitan county other than land in a National Park, or is likely to affect land in a non-metropolitan county other than land in a National Park.	An application within Redditch Borough
National Parks Authorities	Where development is likely to affect land in a National Park.	There are no National Parks within the vicinity of Redditch Borough at this time
Natural England	Where development is in or likely to affect a site of special scientific interest, is not for agricultural purposes and is not in accordance with the provisions of a development plan and will involve the loss of 20 hectares or lead to the loss of 20 hectares or more of grades 1, 2 or 3a of agricultural land or where it appears to the local planning authority that an area of particular natural sensitivity or interest may be affected.	Application for development adjacent to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
Parish Councils	Where an application is made which is likely to affect land in the area of a parish council.	Application within an area which contains a Parish Council

Statutory consultee	When are they consulted	Example application
Rail Infrastructure Managers	Where development is within 10 metres of relevant railway land.	Application adjacent to relevant railway land
Rail Network Operators	Where development is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway.	Application which is close to a level crossing and would lead to a likely increase in traffic over the level crossing
Sport England	Where development is likely to prejudice the use, or lead to the loss of use of land being used as a playing field or is on land which has been used as a playing field any time in the 5 years before the making of the relevant application and which remains undeveloped.	Application for housing on a playing field
Theatres Trust	Where development involves ant land on which there is a theatre.	Application involving a theatre
Toll Road Concessionaries	Where development involves the construction of a highway or private means of access to the premises affording access to a road in relation to which a toll order is in force	Redditch Borough currently has no toll roads
Water and sewerage undertakers	Where development involves the boring for or getting of oil and natural gas from shale.	Redditch Borough currently has no identified shale oil or gas resources

Appendix D: Development Management: Non-Statutory Consultees

Non statutory consultees are optional consultees. The table below provides examples of when particular bodies or persons may be consulted and provides an example planning application.

Statutory statutory consultee	When are they consulted	Example application
Emergency Services and Multi-Agency Emergency Planning	Where issues affecting the emergency services are identified or if specific emergency planning issues related to new developments are apparent.	Application which is protected by flood defences
Forestry Commission	Where development is likely to affect Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands or Plantations on Ancient Woodlands Sites including proposals where any part of development is within 500 metres of an ancient semi-natural woodland or ancient replanted woodland.	Application within 500m of an Ancient semi-natural woodland as defined and recorded in Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory
Health and Safety Executive	Where developments are proposed around pipelines, licensed explosives sites, licensed ports and other relevant sites as well as developments for and around hazardous installations.	Application in proximity to a site which stores or uses hazardous substances
Ministry of Defence	Where developments are within 15km of Ministry of Defence aerodromes or the application is for a wind turbine of 11m to blade tip or taller and/or has a rotor diameter of 2m or more.	Application for a wind turbine over 11m high (to blade tip)
Office of Nuclear Regulation	Where developments are proposed for and around nuclear installations.	Redditch Borough currently has no nuclear installations
Police and Crime Commissioners	Where there is an identified risk and to create safer places and buildings that are less vulnerable to terrorist attack through integrating counter-terrorism protective security measures as part of building and urban design.	Application for a new shopping centre
Rail Network Operators	Where development would likely affect transport infrastructure.	Application near to a level crossing

Statutory statutory consultee	When are they consulted	Example application
Sport England	Where development might lead to loss of or loss of use for sport of any major sports facility, proposals which lead to the loss of use for sport of a major body of water, creation of a major sports facility, creation of a site for one or more playing pitches, development which created opportunities for sport, artificial lighting of a major outdoors sports facility or a residential development of 300 dwellings or more.	Application for 350 dwellings
Business Improvement Districts	Where development is within or likely to impact on a Business Improvement District.	Redditch Borough currently does not have any Business Improvement Districts
Woodland Trust	Where development might destroy, degrade or threaten the irreplaceable habitat of ancient woodland.	Application adjacent to ancient woodland.
Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment Record	Where development which may affect the historic environment.	Application near an area which may have some archaeological importance.

Appendix E: Legislation at the time of publication

Please note, any legislation referred to in the Statement of Community Involvement includes any order revoking and re-enacting that order.

Housing and Planning Act 2016

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012

Localism Act 2011

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

The Business Improvement District (England) Regulations 2004

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

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Development Plans

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