



# **Statement of Community Involvement**

2026

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# 1 Introduction

## What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how a Local Planning Authority (LPA) will engage and consult with the local community and other stakeholders on planning matters. Its purpose is to bring transparency to the planning process and to set out how stakeholders can be involved in the making of planning policy documents as well as planning application decisions. It also sets out advice in relation to neighbourhood planning. Planning legislation requires the Council to produce a new SCI every 5 years.

## Bromley's Statement of Community Involvement

- 1.2 This SCI has been prepared in line with Bromley's Corporate Strategy 'Making Bromley Even Better 2021 – 2031' and will support the following ambitions in particular:
- Ambition 3: For people to make their homes in Bromley and for business, enterprise and the third sector to prosper.
  - Ambition 4: For residents to live responsibly and prosper in a safe, clean and green environment great for today and a sustainable future.
  - Ambition 5: To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley residents.
- 1.3 This SCI sets out how stakeholders can be involved in different stages of the planning process:
- Chapter 2 – provides the legislative and policy framework for the SCI and consultation and engagement.
  - Chapter 3 - sets out how the Council will engage with the local community and other stakeholders during the preparation of its planning policy documents.
  - Chapter 4 – sets out the Council's policy for providing advice and assistance to those looking to produce a neighbourhood plan.
  - Chapter 5 – sets out how the Council will engage with the local community and other stakeholders when dealing with planning applications.
- 1.4 Consultation on the draft SCI took place between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025. It replaces the SCI adopted in 2016.

# 2 Legislative and policy framework

## Legislative framework

- 2.1 The requirements for an SCI are set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It includes requirements to set out policies for community involvement in plan-making, decision-making on planning applications and neighbourhood planning.
- 2.2 When preparing a development plan document such as a new Local Plan, the Council must comply with their Statement of Community Involvement. This will be tested by a Planning Inspector during any public examination. The requirements for consulting on planning policy documents are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 2.3 The requirements for consulting on planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This includes the requirements for public consultation with neighbouring residents and community groups, consultation with non-statutory consultees and consultation with specific bodies known as statutory consultees. The requirements of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Regulations 1990 (as amended) apply to listed building applications and the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) apply to prior approval applications.

## National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 requires plans to be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, business, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees (paragraph 16).
- 2.5 In terms of decision-making, the NPPF states that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties and encourages early engagement with the local community, statutory and non-statutory consultees before submitting their applications (paragraph 40). The NPPF also states that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community (paragraph 137). Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels (paragraph 138). The Bromley Design Review Panel has been set up to provide independent, objective, expert advice at pre-application stage to support the delivery of high-quality development across the borough<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/planning/bromley-design-review-panel](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/planning/bromley-design-review-panel)

## Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.6 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) reiterates that LPAs should update their SCIs every 5 years so that they are kept up-to-date to ensure effective community involvement at all of stages of the planning process<sup>2</sup>. It states that LPAs must set out in their SCIs how they will engage communities on the preliminary stages of plan-making, specifically the survey stage and Local Development Scheme<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.7 The PPG includes guidance on how LPAs should update their SCIs to comply with Covid-19 guidance<sup>4</sup>. This guidance is no longer applicable and is not reflected in this SCI.

## Data Protection

- 2.8 Personal information collected from stakeholders during the planning process is handled and used in accordance with the data protection principles outline in the London Borough of Bromley Data Protection Policy<sup>5</sup>.

## Planning Reform

- 2.9 A wide range of planning reforms were introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. This includes changes to how planning policy documents are prepared and the scale of consultation required. It is anticipated that further reforms will be set out to implement the new plan-making system in 2026. The approach to consultation in Bromley may be reviewed in future to take account of changes to the planning system and requirements for consultation and engagement.
- 2.10 Further information and advice on the planning system for individuals and community groups is available from Planning Aid England<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 071 Reference ID: 61-071-20190315

<sup>3</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 61-035-20190723

<sup>4</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 61-078-201200513

<sup>5</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/subject-access-requests-privacy-cookies-statement](https://www.bromley.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/subject-access-requests-privacy-cookies-statement)

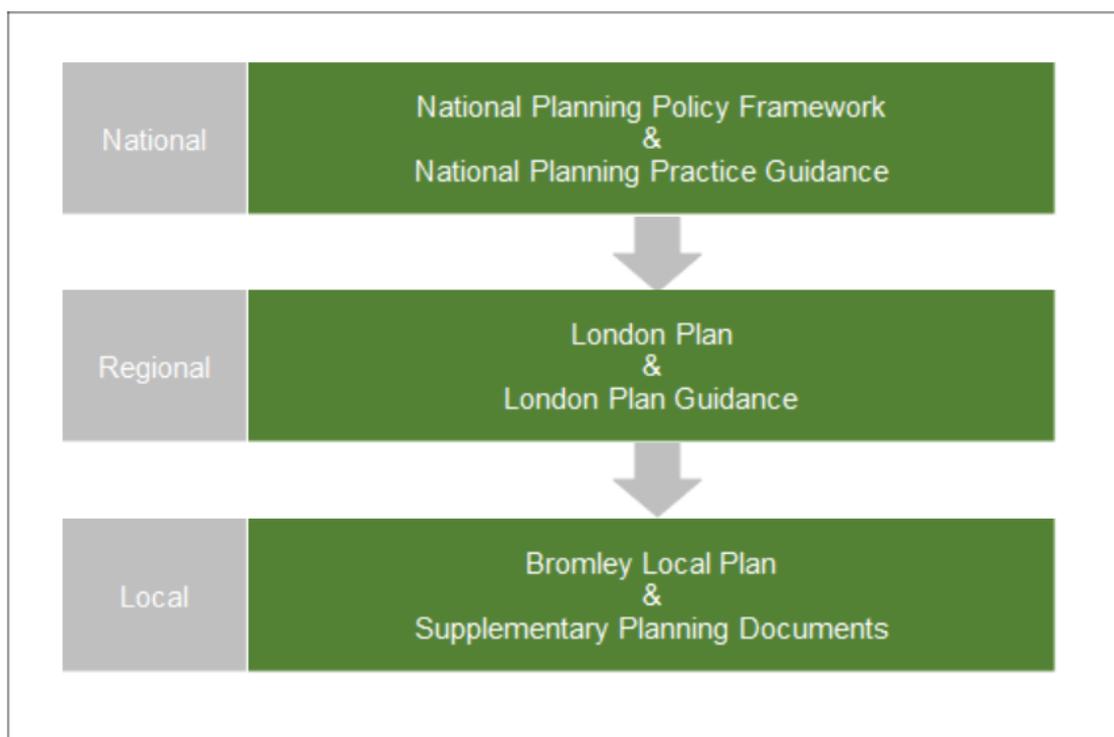
<sup>6</sup> [www.rtpi.org.uk/need-planning-advice/planning-aid-england](https://www.rtpi.org.uk/need-planning-advice/planning-aid-england)

# 3 Consultation on planning policy and guidance

## Planning policy in Bromley

- 3.1 This chapter sets out how the Council will engage with the local community and other stakeholders during the preparation of its specified planning policy documents, including when making changes to existing documents.
- 3.2 Planning policies are used to make decisions on planning applications received by the Council. Planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Bromley's Development Plan comprises the Local Plan (produced by Bromley Council) and the London Plan (produced by the Mayor of London). The Council can also produce local guidance, such as Supplementary Planning Documents which add further detail to planning policies. The National Planning Policy Framework (produced by the Government) is not part of the Development Plan but it can be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Figure 1: Planning policy framework in Bromley



- 3.3 Bromley's Local Plan was adopted in January 2019. Local Plans should be reviewed every 5 years to ensure they remain up to date. The Council has commenced a review of its Local

Plan. The timetable for preparing a new Local Plan and other planning policy documents is set out in the Local Development Scheme<sup>7</sup>.

## Who we engage with

- 3.4 The Council is committed to involving as many local people and organisations as possible in preparing planning policy documents. The plan making regulations require the Council to engage with 'general consultation bodies' and 'specific consultation bodies'. During the preparation of the Local Plan and SPDs the Council will engage with:
- Residents
  - Businesses and bodies who represent the interests of those doing business in the borough
  - Local interest groups, Residents' Associations, Civic Societies and Friends Of groups
  - Landowners, developers and their representatives
  - Voluntary groups
  - Bodies that represent the interest of different racial, ethnic, national or religious groups in the borough
  - Bodies that represent the interest of those with disabilities in the borough
  - Specific consultation bodies:
    - the Coal Authority
    - the Environment Agency
    - Historic England
    - the Marine Management Organisation
    - Natural England
    - Network Rail
    - Highways England
    - Utilities operators – electronic communications, electricity, gas, sewerage and water.
    - NHS
    - Homes England
    - The Mayor of London
    - Adjoining local authorities and county councils
    - The Metropolitan Police as the local policing body
- 3.5 The Council is required to continuously engage with prescribed bodies on strategic matters. This is known as the Duty to Cooperate. These bodies are:
- the Environment Agency
  - Historic England
  - Natural England
  - The Mayor of London
  - Civil Aviation Authority
  - Homes England
  - NHS
  - the Office of Rail Regulation
  - Transport for London
  - Highways England
  - the Marine Management Organisation
  - Local Enterprise Partnership
  - Local Nature Partnership

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<sup>7</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-development-scheme](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-development-scheme)

- Adjoining local authorities and county councils
- 3.6 These groups will be important stakeholders in the preparation of Bromley planning policy and guidance. The list is not considered exhaustive and there may be additional consultation bodies/stakeholders who will be consulted as part of future consultation exercises.

## Consultation and engagement methods

- 3.7 The methods used for each consultation will be appropriate and proportionate, as determined by the Council in line with relevant statutory requirements. The potential methods that could be used for consultation and engagement are set out in Table 1; not all methods will be used for every consultation, the methods used will depend on consideration of factors such as:
- the statutory requirements for the type of document being consulted on.
  - the nature, scope and geography covered by the document and its status.
  - best practice for engaging with particular groups, such as those not usually reached during planning consultations and those who are digitally excluded.
  - resource implications of particular methods.
- 3.8 The Council will publish documents for consultation in accordance with the timescales set out in the relevant regulations. However, this may sometimes be extended to take account of factors such as public holidays.
- 3.9 Stakeholders can join the planning policy database to be notified about future planning policy consultations<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.10 The details of how stakeholders can submit responses will be provided for each consultation. This will usually be by email or in writing. The Council may also make use of surveys and online consultation platforms depending on the nature of the consultation.
- 3.11 All relevant comments will be collated and analysed. A consultation report will be produced, setting out the relevant comments received and how these comments have influenced the drafting of the planning policy document.

**Table 1: Potential consultation and engagement methods**

Method	Detail
Online	Planning policy documents and details on how to take part in the consultation will be made available on the Council's website. Digital consultation platforms may be used depending on the nature of the consultation.
Hard copies	Hard copies of the planning policy documents and any supported documents required by the plan making regulations will be available to view at the Civic Centre during normal opening hours. Hard copies may be available in the Council's libraries depending on the nature and scope of the document, such as area specific documents available in the relevant local library.

<sup>8</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/PlanningPolicyDatabaseForm](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/PlanningPolicyDatabaseForm)

Method	Detail
Planning policy database	The Council will notify those registered on the planning policy database by email with the details of the consultation and how they can take part.
Council communication channels	Stakeholders may be notified through council communication channels such as social media, Council-wide mailing lists and networks and the Bromley magazine. The Council will also encourage local groups and networks to promote consultations to their members.
In-person and online events	Where appropriate, the Council may hold workshops or drop-in events where stakeholders can view material or discuss issues with council officers. These could be in-person and online. The scope of these events will depend on the nature and stage of the document being consulted on.

## Development Plan Documents

- 3.12 The requirements for consultation when preparing development plan documents such as a Local Plan are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Table 2 provides an overview of the process for preparing a Local Plan and the opportunities for consultation and engagement.

**Table 2: Opportunities for consultation and engagement during development plan preparation**

Stage	Opportunity for consultation and engagement
Early stages of plan preparation	<p>The Council will scope the content of the new Local Plan. This will include producing evidence base documents and will take account of monitoring of adopted policies, changes to national and regional policy and legislation and any relevant feedback on local issues.</p> <p>The Council will consult with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency on any scoping for the Sustainability Appraisal, in line with the statutory requirements.</p>
Regulation 18	The 'Regulation 18' consultation is a formal round of consultation and there is flexibility in the format of the document consulted on so long as the Council notifies stakeholders of the subject of the Local Plan and gives them the opportunity to comment on what the Local Plan should contain. Regulations do not specify a minimum consultation

Stage	Opportunity for consultation and engagement
	<p>period, but the Council will ensure a minimum of 6 weeks consultation for any 'Regulation 18' draft plan.</p> <p>Regulations require a single 'Regulation 18' consultation, although the Council can undertake multiple 'Regulation 18' consultations if this is considered necessary.</p> <p>This could include an early round of consultation (often referred to as 'Issues and Options') to give stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the key issues at an early stage and the potential ways planning policy could address these issues.</p> <p>The Council may then also undertake consultation on a more detailed 'Regulation 18' Draft Local Plan, with stakeholders given the opportunity to comment on more detailed (but not final) draft policies, rather than broad issues.</p>
Regulation 19	<p>The Council will publish a full 'Regulation 19' draft Local Plan that it considers meets the statutory requirements. Stakeholders are given the opportunity to make comments on whether the 'Regulation 19' draft Local Plan meets the legal and policy tests known as legal compliance and tests of soundness. Regulations require a minimum of 6 weeks consultation for any 'Regulation 19' draft plan.</p> <p>Stakeholders can make suggested changes if they do not think the draft Local Plan meets these tests. Any representations submitted on the 'Regulation 19' draft Local Plan will be submitted to the planning inspector who will consider these as part of the Local Plan examination (see below).</p>
Examination and Adoption	<p>Following the Regulation 19 stage, the draft Local Plan is submitted to central government. The Council will notify those stakeholders who have requested to be notified that the draft Local Plan has been submitted.</p> <p>An independent inspector is appointed and an 'examination in public' is held. This provides an opportunity for stakeholders</p>

Stage	Opportunity for consultation and engagement
	<p>who have previously commented on the Local Plan to raise concerns to the inspector via written submissions or attending public hearings.</p> <p>The inspector may suggest 'modifications' to the Local Plan in order for it to meet the legal and policy tests. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on these modifications and the responses will be considered by the inspector before they make their final recommendations on whether the Local Plan can be adopted by the Council (with any relevant modifications). The Council will notify those stakeholders who have requested to be notified that the inspector's report is available.</p> <p>Adoption of the Local Plan is a matter for Full Council. The Council will give the relevant notices that the Local Plan has been adopted.</p>

## Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.13 The Council can choose to produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These documents provide further guidance on policies in the Development Plan. The Council's adopted SPDs can be found on its website<sup>9</sup>.
- 3.14 The requirements for consultation when preparing SPDs are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Table 3 provides an overview of the process for preparing an SPD and the opportunities for consultation and engagement.

**Table 3: Opportunities for consultation and engagement during SPD preparation**

Stage	Opportunity for consultation and engagement
SPD preparation	The Council will establish where additional guidance is required and collate any necessary evidence, including any relevant feedback on local issues. This may include engagement with relevant stakeholders where necessary.
Consultation	The Council will consult on the draft SPD and stakeholders will be given the

<sup>9</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-guidance](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-guidance)

Stage	Opportunity for consultation and engagement
	opportunity to comment on the guidance. Regulations require a minimum 4 week consultation period.
Adoption	<p>Prior to adoption, the Council will produce a consultation statement that sets out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised and how those issues have been addressed in the draft SPD. This consultation statement and the draft SPD will be available for comment in line with the statutory requirements.</p> <p>The Council will then consider these comments before adopting the SPD.</p>

## Conservation Area designations, appraisals and management plans

- 3.15 Conservation Areas are areas designated because of their special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The process for identifying and designating Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended). There is no statutory requirement to consult on proposed Conservation Areas; however, the Council considers that it is appropriate to undertake public consultation where new areas are proposed, to gather the views of local communities.
- 3.16 The Council will adopt a Conservation Area appraisal and management plan for each area, to identify what features make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area; and identify guidance to assist with preserving and enhancing the Conservation Area. This will be relevant for assessing planning applications in the area, as well as for plan-making.
- 3.17 As with the Local Plan preparation process discussed above, the potential methods that could be used for consultation and engagement on proposed new Conservation Areas, and for draft Conservation Area appraisals and management plans, are set out in Table 1; not all methods will be used for every consultation, the methods used will depend on consideration of factors, as described in paragraph 3.7. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) includes specific requirements for the preparation of management plans.

## Community Infrastructure Levy

- 3.18 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area. The Bromley CIL was adopted in 2021.

- 3.19 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) (as amended) set out the process for preparing a draft CIL charging schedule, including requirements relating to consultation. The Council is expected to invite representations from local residents, businesses, voluntary bodies and bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the area, as they consider appropriate.
- 3.20 As with the Local Plan preparation process discussed above, the potential methods that could be used for consultation and engagement on the draft CIL charging schedule are set out in Table 1; not all methods will be used for every consultation, the methods used will depend on consideration of factors, as described in paragraph 3.7.

# 4 Neighbourhood planning

## Introduction to neighbourhood planning

- 4.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced in 2011. Its purpose is to allow local communities to shape development in their local areas, either through planning policies in a neighbourhood plan or granting planning permission through a Neighbourhood Development Order.
- 4.2 There is currently no neighbourhood planning activity in Bromley, with no designated neighbourhood areas or forums. However, the SCI must set out the LPA's policy for providing 'advice or assistance to qualifying bodies to facilitate proposals for neighbourhood development plans or neighbourhood development orders'.

## Advice and assistance

- 4.3 Table 4 sets out the advice and assistance the Council can provide to those wishing to engage in neighbourhood planning for each stage of the neighbourhood planning process.
- 4.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides extensive guidance on neighbourhood planning. Advice and information for groups is also available at [www.neighbourhoodplanning.org](http://www.neighbourhoodplanning.org).

**Table 4: Advice and assistance the Council can provide for each stage of the neighbourhood planning process**

Stage	Advice and assistance
Designating a neighbourhood plan area or neighbourhood forum	<p>Those looking to start preparing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order should contact the planning policy team as soon as possible for an initial discussion.</p> <p>The Council will follow the statutory timescales for publicising any application for a neighbourhood forum and/or neighbourhood area and will aim to determine them within the prescribed timescales.</p>
Plan preparation	<p>With regard to preparing a neighbourhood plan, the Council cannot write policies, ensure compliance with statutory requirements, commission evidence, undertake any administrative tasks and does not provide financial support.</p> <p>Any timetable for preparing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order should be discussed with the Council as</p>

Stage	Advice and assistance
	<p>soon as possible. Resources permitting, the Council can review a draft of the neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order prior to the Regulation 14/21 pre-submission consultation and publicity stage; this may assist with identifying key issues at an early stage.</p>
Pre-submission consultation	<p>It is the responsibility of the neighbourhood forum to meet the statutory requirements for their pre-submission consultation and to prepare all the required documents. Groups are encouraged to discuss the requirements of the SEA Regulations (Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, 2004) and the Habitats Regulations (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2017 with the Council as early in the process as possible.</p> <p>The Council can assist with contacting the statutory consultees on behalf of the neighbourhood forum.</p> <p>The Council may submit a response to the pre-submission consultation.</p>
Submission	<p>Once submitted, the Council will make a decision on whether submitted documents meet the statutory requirements.</p> <p>If the documents meet the statutory requirements, the Council will make the necessary arrangements to publicise the draft documents in line with the statutory requirements.</p> <p>The Council will submit a formal consultation response to the neighbourhood forum at this stage.</p>
Examination	<p>The Council will appoint an independent examiner and make the necessary arrangements for the examination.</p> <p>Where necessary, the Council will participate in the examination, including at any hearing sessions that are deemed necessary by the examiner.</p>

Stage	Advice and assistance
	<p>Following receipt of the examiner's report, the Council will make it available in accordance with the statutory requirements.</p> <p>The Council will consider the examiner's report and make a decision in response to the recommendations, including whether to send the plan to referendum. If the Council makes a decision which differs from the recommendations it will follow the statutory requirements in terms of notification and inviting representations.</p>
Referendum and Adoption	<p>The Council will make the necessary arrangements for the referendum to take place.</p> <p>If successful at referendum, the Council will 'make' (adopt) the neighbourhood plan or development order in accordance with the statutory timescales.</p>

# 5 Consultation on planning applications

- 5.1 It is also important that the community has an opportunity to be involved in planning applications, being applications for householder development, full planning permission, outline planning permission and retrospective planning permission. This section explains how the Council intends to involve you in dealing with planning applications, including the role of developers in that process. In relation to the Council's remaining functions under part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, it will involve the public as required by legislation.

## Introduction

- 5.2 This Statement of Community Involvement provides a framework to involve the wider community at an early stage on planning applications. The Council has a duty to consider all valid planning applications it receives, regardless of whether or not they reflect adopted policies. Most people become involved in planning as a result of commenting on or submitting a planning application. In this respect, it is important to recognise that “significant” (major) applications are subject to wider consultation than those of a minor nature.

## What are Major applications?

- 5.3 The Government has a definition of “major” applications which includes:
- a residential development for 10 or more dwellings;
  - residential development on a site of 0.5 hectares or more;
  - development involving a building(s) with a floor space of 1000 square metres or more; and
  - any other development on a site of 1 hectare or more.
- 5.4 The Assistant Director (Planning and Building Control) will decide whether an application is significant or not.

## Pre-application discussions and early community consultation

- 5.5 The Council and government advice encourages developers to enter into early discussions before submitting an application, although there is no statutory requirement for an applicant to do so. It is important that this should include appropriate key consultees such as the Environment Agency or the Highways Authority. At this stage, planning officers can advise developers, in their opinion, whether an application is likely to be “sensitive” and therefore if there is any need for the applicant to undertake additional community consultation.
- 5.6 Before a major application is submitted to the Council, applicants will be encouraged to:
- contact local residents and interest groups informing them of the development proposed; and

- for larger schemes, setting up a public meeting or an online session gives the local community an opportunity to fully understand the proposal and provide feedback before submission.
- attend meetings with local groups that are likely to have an interest in the application proposal.
- submit a brief statement as part of the planning application submission outlining what consultation has taken place, who with, the comments received and how these have been taken into account within the application.

5.7 The Council's aim is to encourage discussions between the developer and the community **before** any major application is submitted, in order to try and achieve a degree of consensus and/or at least a clear understanding of what the proposal is trying to achieve. It is, however, important that the impartiality of the Council is maintained in the pre-application process. As far as possible, the Council's role will be to maintain a watching brief during the pre-application process. Council officers will, therefore, not normally be involved in pre-application public consultation documents or meetings.

## What we do when a planning application is received

5.8 The Council has a range of methods to ensure that submitted applications are brought to the attention of its residents, statutory consultees and other stakeholders. The details of each application, after validation, are published on Planning Public Access on the Council's website<sup>10</sup>. The application form, location plan and full plans are available to view on Planning Public Access, and each application is updated with the decision notice.

5.9 A weekly list of all valid planning applications received is circulated to councillors and published on the Council's website via Planning Public Access. The website provides the opportunity to search for an application via the planning application number (supplied in all correspondence) or via the property address.

### Advertisements

5.10 Legislation requires statutory publicity for different types of applications. The Council produces at least one site notice and an advertisement in a local newspaper for the following types of application:

- development subject to an Environmental Assessment;
- development affecting a public right of way;
- development affecting a statutorily listed building or conservation area; or
- development which is a departure from the Development Plan.

### Site notices

5.11 Site notices are only used in the case of significant applications to provide information for people in the vicinity of a site. It includes information on:

- the nature of the application;
- how to contact the Council;
- how to view plans; and
- the deadline for making comments (usually 21 days from the date of the notice).

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<sup>10</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/planningaccess](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/planningaccess)

### Neighbour notification

5.12 In accordance with legislation, the occupiers of properties immediately adjoining an application site are notified individually by letter that an application for planning permission has been received. They are invited to inspect the application and make any written observation. 21 days are given for comments to be submitted.

### Statutory consultees

5.13 There is a statutory requirement to inform certain consultees of planning applications set out in the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure) Order 2015. A list is included in Schedule 4 of the order. The organisations to be consulted will vary with the nature of the proposal and location. Consultees are notified in writing and normally have 21 days in which to respond.

5.14 The Council is committed to negotiating improvements to proposals, wherever possible, by consulting a wide range of non-statutory consultees on a range of applications.

5.15 There is no statutory requirement for the Council to publicise or notify neighbours in respect of the following application types:

- certificates of lawfulness for an existing or proposed use or development.
- applications for advertisement consent.
- non-material amendments.
- approval of details pursuant to conditions.

## **How to comment on planning applications**

5.16 Comments supporting or objecting to a proposal may be made by anyone, regardless of whether they have received a letter or have been specifically consulted. The Council, however, can only take into account material planning considerations. Comments received must relate to planning matters which include national and local planning policy and such issues as impact on lighting or highway safety. Planning decisions are not based simply on the number of representations 'for' or 'against' a proposal. The types of concerns that are not generally planning considerations, and therefore cannot be taken into account when determining planning applications, include:

- Loss of value to property.
- Commercial competition.
- Loss of a view.
- Disturbances during building work.
- Land ownership disputes.
- Private deeds or covenants.
- That planning permission is sought retrospectively.
- Matters covered by other legislation including licensing or gambling.

5.17 The Council's website<sup>11</sup> provides the opportunity (and primary way) for anyone to comment on a submitted application. For those without access to the internet, comments can be sent by post (or submitted in person) to Planning, Bromley Civic Centre, Churchill Court, 2 Westmoreland Road, Bromley, BR1 1AS, quoting the relevant planning reference number.

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<sup>11</sup> [www.bromley.gov.uk/planningaccess](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/planningaccess)

5.18 Comments should be submitted as soon as possible, although the Council aims to take into account any representations received up to the date on which the decision is made. No application will be determined within a period of 21 days from the date when the consultation letters are sent out (or 14 days for a re-consultation). It may be necessary, in exceptional circumstances, to write and publish reports for a Planning Committee before the expiration of the 21 days. For Developments accompanied by an Environmental Statement the consultation period is extended to 30 days. In such cases, comments not already noted will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting. All comments received are made available for public inspection on the Council's website and will not be treated as confidential (unless an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations applies). Names and addresses are redacted from the comments when they are displayed online, but this information is available for the decision maker to view when the application is considered.

### **When will amendments to an application be accepted?**

5.19 As we operate a chargeable pre-application advice service, to ensure that the advice service is properly administered and to be fair to those who use the service, it will not be possible to negotiate or provide advice on the merits of proposals the subject of a planning application other than via the pre-application service. The Council is not normally able to accept revised plans on current applications except by specific agreement. Although there is no legal requirement to do so, the Council endeavours to re-consult if it considers the amendments would materially affect the considered views of interested parties.

### **What involvement is there when an application is being determined?**

5.20 Over 90% of the applications submitted to the Council are dealt with through powers delegated to the Assistant Director (Planning and Building Control). This helps to ensure that the majority of applications are dealt with within the statutory period set by the Government. For delegated decisions, a summary officer report is displayed on the Planning Public Access website alongside the decision which explains why the decision was made. The Council has two plans sub-committees allowing a meeting to be held every month; and operates a system that allows public speaking at planning sub-committee meetings. This gives members of the public the opportunity to comment on applications determined by committee, either in support or as an objector. Councillors then consider these comments in determining the application. The Development Control Committee meets approximately every two months and considers the more major or contentious planning applications. As with the sub-committees, the public have an opportunity to ask to speak.

### **How else do we involve the community?**

5.21 Councillors are also involved in the consultation process and receive the weekly list of planning applications. Members can request copies of documentation or plans relating to individual applications. Residents can speak to their Ward Councillors about planning applications.

5.22 An annual Residents' Association Seminar is normally hosted by the Planning Division to provide information and updates on planning matters.