



BLACKBURN
with
DARWEN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

July 2020

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the consultation that will take place with the community on planning policy documents and planning applications.
- 1.2 Effective community involvement is likely to have a number of benefits including:
 - It will provide a greater sense of public ownership of local services;
 - It will improve community cohesion and the sense of inclusion;
 - It will enable attention to be given to public priorities and aspirations, strengthening the evidence base by drawing on local knowledge;
 - It provides an opportunity to promote regeneration and a commitment to change by facilitating joint working; and
 - It creates certainty about what will be happening and the timescales involved.
- 1.3 A SCI is required under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Planning Act 2008, Localism Act 2011, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and is informed by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019.
- 1.4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 introduced the requirement to review a statement of community involvement every five years, starting from the date of adoption. This came into effect from 6 April 2018. The Council adopted a new SCI in May 2018.
- 1.5 The impacts of COVID-19 and guidance on helping to combat the spread of the virus may now include changes to the way that the Council is able to consult on planning applications and policy. As a result the Council has reviewed its commitments to consultation in light of new guidance¹ and prepared this revised SCI to highlight any temporary arrangements that may need to be put into place during periods of restriction.
- 1.6 Any temporary amendments relating to COVID-19 are highlighted in this document in [] and in *italic* text. Details are set out in the monitoring and review section as to how the Council will decide whether or not the trigger point for COVID-19 restrictions, and therefore the temporary amendments set out in this SCI, are in force.
- 1.7 The Council will ensure that, at a minimum, it consults on both plan making and planning applications in line with the latest regulations, including any temporary regulations that may be enacted². For plan making, where all of the usual deposit points for hard copy documents are closed then the Council will seek to implement alternative systems to ensure adequate and fair access to viewing documents for all sections of the community. E.g. providing paper copies where practical, feasible and no other alternative is available and/or implementing an appointment

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making>

² E.g. The [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure, Listed Buildings and Environmental Impact Assessment\) \(England\) \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#)

based system for the viewing of documents at the Council's Principal Office. Relevant details will be provided at the commencement of any statutory public consultation period.

2. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's consultation approach

- 2.1 People can participate in all aspects of the planning process, including the preparation and examination of planning policy documents, and in the consideration of planning applications.

Planning policy

- 2.2 As part of involving the community in the preparation of planning policy documents, the Council will maintain an up to date consultation database so that anyone or any organisation who wishes to be informed of the progress of planning policy documents is directly consulted when a document is published for consultation.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 lists the key stakeholders to whom draft planning policy documents may be sent for comments. This includes representatives of service and infrastructure providers, regeneration, environmental and health interests. The regulations require the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to decide which of these might be the appropriate bodies to consult during the consultation period and for their views to be taken into account.
- 2.4 Further information on how the Council will work with the community on planning policy documents is set out in Parts 3 - 5 of this SCI.

Planning applications

- 2.5 As part of notifying the community when planning applications are received, the Council will ensure there is appropriate publicity to enable members of the public to comment on proposals. Further information on how the Council will consult on planning applications is set out in Part 6 of this SCI.

Duty to Cooperate

- 2.6 As part of the statutory Duty to Cooperate, neighbouring authorities and other relevant organisations must work together across boundaries on strategic planning issues that affect them all. Blackburn with Darwen Council will ensure it fulfils its legal requirements and actively engage with the required organisations³.
- 2.7 In accordance with requirements set out in planning regulations⁴ the Council provides details to their communities in its Authority Monitoring Reports of the actions undertaken under the duty to cooperate. This includes details of the actions taken to respond constructively to requests for cooperation from neighbouring planning authorities and other bodies covered by the duty.

³ As set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

⁴ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, [regulation 34 part 6](#)

3. Local Plans

- 3.1 The Local Plan sets out the policies and proposals for development and use of land and buildings in an authority’s area. It is the main planning policy document and is subject to mandatory public consultation as well as independent examination.
- 3.2 The Local Plan forms part of the Development Plan and planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.3 The minimum legal requirements for consultation and public participation in Local Plan preparation are set down in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Specified bodies must be consulted if the Council considers that the body may be affected by what is proposed.
- 3.4 In addition to the formal bodies, it is the intention of the Council to involve the community at an early stage in the preparation of its Local Plan. This is essential to work towards the key objectives of openness and consensus, and resolving conflicts.
- 3.5 Community involvement is intended to be continuous throughout the Local Plan preparation process. However, distinct stages of consultation can be recognised within the Plan process, as shown below:

Figure 1: Stages of Community Involvement in Local Plan preparation⁵

Stage	
1	Preparation of a Local Plan (Reg 18) – at least one statutory 6 week public consultation on the scope and proposed content of any new Local Plan
2	Publication of a Local Plan and representations relating to a Local Plan (Regs 19 & 20) – statutory 6 week public consultation
3	Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State (Reg 22)
4	Independent examination (Reg 24) – may include a further period of consultation where ‘main modifications’ to the plan submitted under Reg 22 are proposed
5	Inspector’s Report (Reg 25)
6	Adoption of a Local Plan (Reg 26)

- 3.6 The following information sets out how the Council will consult with the community and stakeholders at each consultation stage of Local Plan preparation to ensure they have the opportunity for involvement from the outset and throughout the process.

Stage 1: preparation of a Local Plan (Reg 18)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

⁵ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders that scoping/issues and options documents are to be published for consultation and are available for inspection. Communication will include details of where documents are available to view (see below), start/finish of consultation and how anyone wishing to make representation is able to do so.
- Send a press release to local newspaper outlining details of the consultation.
- Make copies of any scoping/issues and options documents available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate (Reg 35). [*Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations*].
- Publish a notification on Council website and social media, along with links to any scoping/issues and options documents.
- Carry out a range of other community involvement methods, appropriate to the scope and potential impact of the Local Plan [*and in line with any Covid-19 guidance or restrictions in place at that time*]. The programme of such exercises will be set out and publicised prior to the commencement of this consultation stage.

Stage 2: Publication of a Local Plan and representations relating to a Local Plan (Regs 19 & 20)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders, that the draft plan and accompanying evidence base will shortly be published for consultation and be available for inspection. At this stage, the emphasis is on exploring the legality and ‘soundness’ of the document, rather than content.
- Send a press release to local newspaper, outlining details of the consultation.
- Make copies of draft plan available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate (Reg 35). [*Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations*].
- Publish the draft plan and supporting documents on the Council website. Include information on how to make a representation and what will happen when a representation has been received.
- Publish consultation details, dates and links on social media.
- Issue press release with details of consultation dates, where and when documents will be available for inspection (see above), as well as how representation can be made.
- Use additional, more targeted community involvement methods if deemed appropriate to do so by the Council [*and in line with any Covid-19 guidance or restrictions in place at that time*].
- Consider all representations received within the specified 6 week period (Reg 20).

- Publish a summary of the representations received indicating how they have been considered and whether any changes are proposed as a result.

Stage 3: Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State (Reg 22)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Submit a statement of compliance demonstrating how the Council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement along with accompanying documents. This will set out whom and how the Council consulted at pre-submission stage, the representations received and the main issues raised and how these have been addressed in the Local Plan.
- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders, that the submission Local Plan and accompanying evidence base is published and submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Include information advising where hard copies of all documents submitted can be viewed (see below).
- Make copies of the Local Plan and supporting documentation available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were displayed (Reg 35). [*Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations*].
- Publicise the submission on Council website and social media.

Stage 4: Independent examination (Reg 24)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Send email/letter to any person who made a representation on the submission document. Notification should be at least 6 weeks before and information on the time and place at which the independent examination will take place and the name of the person appointed to carry out the examination will be included.
- Publish information on the Council website and on social media.
- [*Any examination will be held in accordance with the latest Planning Inspectorate guidance⁶. The Planning Inspectorate will publish relevant updates on the impacts of Covid-19 on Local Plan examinations on the Government website⁷*].

Stage 5: Inspector's Report (Reg 25)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Send email/send letter notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders, that the Inspector's report has been received and when it will be published.
- As soon as is reasonably practical, publish the Inspector's report and make it available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-plans>

⁷ Latest update published 1 April 2020 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-planning-inspectorate-guidance>

displayed (Reg 35). *[Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations].*

- Publish the Inspector's report on the Council website.
- Publish a notification on social media.

Stage 6: Adoption of a Local Plan (Reg 26)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders, that the Local Plan has been adopted and include a copy of the adoption statement.
- As soon as is reasonably practical, publish the adopted Local Plan, the adoption statement and accompanying sustainability appraisal report and make these documents available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue where pre-submission documents were displayed (Reg 35). *[Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations].*
- Publish notification and documents on the Council website.
- Publish a notification on social media.
- Send out a press release to local newspaper stating that the adopted Local Plan and the adoption statement are available for inspection, indicating where and when they can be inspected.

4. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 4.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are produced to expand on policy and provide additional information and guidance in support of policies and proposals in the Local Plan. They can be site specific or topic based.
- 4.2 As with Local Plan preparation, SPD preparation is informed by community involvement – requirements of which are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Regulations set out a minimum of four weeks for formal consultation on an SPD. The Council will consider the need for a longer period of consultation where appropriate.
- 4.3 The following information sets out how the Council will involve the community and stakeholders in the various stages of SPD preparation.

SPD Stage: Preparation of draft plan (Regs 12 & 13)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders, of issues to be addressed in the Supplementary Planning Document. Information sent should include details of consultation period, where any background information can be viewed and how representation can be made.
- Where a site specific Supplementary Planning Document is being prepared, undertake more targeted consultation with the local community in the vicinity of the site if the Council deems it to be a necessary part of the process in order to gather sufficient feedback from interested parties.
- Make copies of the SPD document available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate (Reg 35). [*Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations*].
- Publish a notification on Council website.

SPD Stage: Adoption and publication (Reg 14)

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Prepare a statement setting out the main issues raised by representations received and how they have been addressed in the SPD the Council intends to adopt.
- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders, that the SPD has been adopted and send them a link to the document and adoption statement on the Council's website.
- Make copies of the adopted SPD and adoption statement available for inspection at the Council offices and any other venue the Council considers appropriate. [*Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations*].
- Publish a notification and make the SPD available on the Council's website.

5. Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs)

- 5.1 Neighbourhood planning is a key part of the Localism Act 2011. It gives local communities greater power to shape development by having a direct role in the development of planning policies at a local level.
- 5.2 A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) allows the local community to create a vision and planning policies for the use and development of land in a neighbourhood. For example, where new homes and businesses can be built and what they should look like. They can be general or more detailed, depending on what is important to local people. They must however, conform with the policies within the Local Plan and should not be used to promote a lower level of development.
- 5.3 Consultation on the early stages of the NDP preparation is carried out by the Neighbourhood Forum, Town or Parish Council preparing the Plan. A Statement has to be submitted along with the draft Plan indicating what consultation has been carried out and how it has informed its preparation.
- 5.4 Once the NDP is submitted, the Council is required to consult on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan as set out in the section below before it is sent to an independent examiner for examination.
- 5.5 Following receipt of the Examiner's report and before the NDP can be 'made' by the Council, a referendum must then also be held for the community to approve the Plan in its final form. A simple majority of the votes is required before the Council can formally 'make' the Plan so that it becomes part of the Development Plan. Regulations on Neighbourhood Development Plans are set out in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 5.6 *[Various stages of the Neighbourhood Planning process have the potential to be impacted upon by Covid-19 restrictions. E.g. public consultation, the referendum and/or the examination. The Council will support the Neighbourhood forum appropriately to ensure that procedures are in line with the latest guidance set out in Planning Practice Guidance⁸].*

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

- 5.7 Section 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires a local planning authority to prepare a statement of community involvement. An authority is now also required to set out their policy for discharging the duty to give advice or assistance to qualifying bodies in developing neighbourhood plans and modifying existing neighbourhood plans.

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

5.8 Blackburn with Darwen Council will offer the following advice and assistance in such circumstances:

- Providing qualifying bodies with any required evidence base information where available;
- Carrying out a screening exercise of the draft Plan to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required to be undertaken;
- Offer advice or assistance where appropriate in any other aspect of preparation of the draft Plan.

Consultation on Neighbourhood Planning preparation

5.9 The following sets out how the Council will help publicise each stage of Neighbourhood Plan preparation.

Defining the Neighbourhood Area (Reg 7) *(statutory 6 week consultation period)*

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will:

- Publicise the application on its website, along with displaying site notices across the Neighbourhood area, informing interested parties how a representation can be made (Reg 6).
- Following the decision, the Council will inform the parish council/s and publicise the Neighbourhood Area on the Council website and within the Neighbourhood Area. This will form the 'decision document' (Reg 7).

Write and publicise the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (Reg 14) *(Statutory 6 week consultation period)*

Blackburn with Darwen Council will:

- Send email/written notification to statutory consultees, general consultees on the planning database and other relevant stakeholders informing them of the draft Plan and how they can submit any comments on the document.
- Publish the consultation document on the Council's website and make hard copies available at the Council offices and any other venue deemed appropriate. [*Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations*].

Submission of the final Plan (Reg 16) *(Statutory 6 week consultation period)*

- The final plan should be submitted to the Council and should, amongst other requirements, include a consultation statement detailing how the opinions of interested parties have been sought.

- The Council will publish the Plan for a minimum 6 week period by sending email/written notification to statutory consultees, consultees on the Planning consultation database and any other relevant stakeholders, individuals and organisations who have expressed a wish to be consulted or have previously made comments.
- The Council will publish the final Plan on the Council's website and make hard copies available at the Council offices and any other venue deemed appropriate. *[Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations].*

Adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan (Regs 19 & 20)

Blackburn with Darwen Council will:

- Publish adopted Plans on the Council's website and make available for viewing at the Council office, local venues and libraries. *[Where Covid-19 restrictions prevent access in this way then the Council will ensure any consultation is in line with the latest relevant Regulations].*
- Send copies of the decision to adopt to parish/es and any person asking to be notified.
- Where known, the Council will update details of the progress of each Neighbourhood Development Plan (including details of examination or referendum arrangements) on its website www.blackburn.gov.uk. However, the main point of contact should be via the relevant Neighbourhood Forum, Town Council or Parish Council.

6. Development Management

- 6.1 The Development Management (DM) team is responsible for making decisions and recommendations on planning applications. These take into account the policies in the development plan and any other planning considerations which apply.
- 6.2 The Council is committed to both informing and engaging with the wider community and individuals in relation to planning proposals. An important part of the process is to provide information and advice to applicants and to seek and take into account the views of the general public and statutory consultees on all planning applications.
- 6.3 However, there needs to be a balance between making decisions in a timely and cost-effective way and providing the community with a reasonable opportunity to comment. The breadth of consultees will vary with the nature of the proposal and location so not all bodies are consulted on every application.
- 6.4 This section of the SCI describes how the Council will involve individuals, the wider community, stakeholders and interested groups/organisations in the DM process. *[Any specific implications of COVID-19 that may place restrictions on consultation arrangements relevant to DM will be set out on the Council's Planning webpages⁹].*

Pre-application advice and consultation

- 6.5 Pre-application discussions can confirm whether the principle of development would be acceptable and allows clear advice to be given on what information is required in order for a planning decision to be made. This allows applications to progress with more certainty through the formal process. Such approaches are treated as confidential.
- 6.6 Developers are encouraged to consult with neighbours and statutory bodies before submitting an application whether pre application advice is sought or not. Engagement with the community can help an applicant gauge the community response to the proposal and address any issues of concern which become evident.

Significant/Major pre-application advice proposals

- 6.7 Pre application advice will include advice about how to undertake the consultation process in the local context of the proposal. Consultation arrangements should be set out in a site specific statement of community involvement which is required to be submitted as part of the planning application for some major development proposals.
- 6.8 Applicants/developers will be expected to involve the local community in a way tailored to reflect the nature, scale and potential impact of the proposed development. This could include:

⁹ <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/planning>

- Consultation events with the local community
- Consultation with elected members, town and parish councillors
- Making detailed plans available for public view
- Press notices/leaflets or letters to nearby residents

6.9 The consultation arrangements should be organised, managed and funded by the applicant/developer to allow the input of the community at the outset.

6.10 The applicant/developer is urged to discuss with the Council proposed measures to effectively involve the community at an early stage as part of pre-application discussions.

Planning applications

6.11 There are a variety of ways in which planning applications are publicised and information relating to applications is made available to view and comment upon. General advice about the planning process including consultation and how to make comments on planning applications is provided on the Council's Planning web pages:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/planning/planning-permission-applications/comment-a-planning-application>

Publicity

6.12 The Council is required to undertake a formal period of public consultation before determining a planning application. These requirements are set out in Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. There are separate arrangements for listed buildings which are set out in Regulation 5 and 5a of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Regulations 1990 (as amended).

6.13 These requirements are, however, regarded by the Council as the minimum, and in most cases established practice is to go beyond the basic steps specified.

6.14 For all planning applications, details of the application will be published on the Council's website and further to this each week a weekly list of all received, decided and appealed applications is published online.

6.15 Applications are publicised by either a site notice in at least one place on or near the land to which the application relates, a press notice or via the neighbour notification process. Occupiers of premises adjoining the application site/proposal are notified in writing that an application has been received and highlights it can be viewed on the Council's website.

6.16 Site notices will be used where wider consultation is considered to be necessary due to the scale of the proposal or where neighbouring properties are not known.

Consultation

6.17 The Council will seek to engage a wide range of stakeholders in the planning application process. These include Government departments and agencies, Council departments, adjoining local

authorities and interest bodies (see Appendix 2). Not all bodies are consulted on each application; consultations vary according to the nature of the proposal and location.

6.18 Experience suggests that neighbouring occupiers prefer to be notified by letter, and although regulations state that notification be made to adjoining owners and occupiers, in practice the Council will notify all those who could potentially be affected by the proposed development, according to the circumstances and the case officer's judgement.

6.19 Representations should be received by the Council within the 21 day consultation period from the last notice given. However, comments received after the 21 day period will also be taken into consideration wherever possible, until the application is determined. This consultation period is extended to 24 days where Bank Holidays are within the statutory consultation period. Details on what the Council can and cannot consider as part of the assessment of the planning application can be found here:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/planning/planning-permission-applications/comment-a-planning-application/planning-permission>

6.20 Parish Councils are consulted on current applications within their respective areas, and are informed that all documents relating to the application are available on the Council's website. The 21 days consultation period still applies. The role of the Parish Councils in the planning process can be found here:

<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/planning/planning-permission-applications/comment-a-planning-application/planning-role-parish>

Weekly List

6.21 The Planning Service has recently undergone a 'Digitisation' Project which involved transferring planning records into digital format and updating computer systems.

6.22 As part of this project, the weekly lists of applications received are now available to view through the online explorer. This will allow members of the public, Council Members and stakeholders to monitor applications received and determined, not just on a borough wide basis, but also on a ward by ward basis.

Representations

6.23 Once all consultation has concluded, the Council will consider the representations made by consultees and the public and proceed to determine the application.

Re-consultation

6.24 The Council will work proactively with applicants to secure appropriate developments with the applicant as required by paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework. As such applications may be amended during a planning application to overcome an issue identified.

- 6.25 Where an application has been amended the Local Planning Authority will decide whether further publicity and consultation is necessary. An additional 10-14 days will be provided for comments.

How an application is considered

- 6.26 The majority of applications are determined by Officers under the Authority's Scheme of Delegated powers. All other decisions are taken by the Planning and Highways Committee. Further details on this can be found here:
<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/planning/planning-and-highways-committee>

Notification of Decision

- 6.27 Once a decision has been reached, the decision notice is sent to the applicant or agent via email advising of the outcome. A copy is also published on the Council's website and can be viewed with all the other relevant application documents. In its initial consultation letter the Council will also advise how information on the outcome will be available.
- 6.28 If the decision was made by the Planning and Highways Committee, minutes will be available on the Council's website and can be viewed at the Town Hall on request.

Planning Appeals

- 6.29 Applicants or their agents on their behalf have the right to appeal against the decision made whether a refusal or against any conditions imposed. There are no provisions for a third party including objectors to appeal.
- 6.30 The appeal process is administrated by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on behalf of the Secretary of State. The applicant should contact PINS if they wish to appeal.
- 6.31 If an appeal is made against the Council's decision, the Council will notify in writing all those advised of the original application and will outline the process to be followed. All comments made on the application are copied to the Planning Inspectorate, and all those involved in the original decision are given a further opportunity to comment in writing or make representations at a hearing or inquiry into the appeal.

7. Monitoring and review

- 7.1 Impacts of COVID-19 and potential temporary arrangements on consultation and community involvement are set out in this SCI highlighted in [*italic text in square brackets*]. These temporary arrangements will only be enacted when restrictions in place as a result of a Government imposed lockdown (full or partial) and/or social distancing measures or guidance prevent normal consultation methods set out in this SCI from taking place.
- 7.2 In the event of further COVID-19 outbreaks it is possible that complex and varying restrictions may be imposed in the coming months and years ahead. It may therefore be a matter of degree rather than hard fact as to whether temporary COVID-19 amendments should be in place for the purposes of public consultation. For the avoidance of doubt, decisions will be made by the relevant Council Officer and Portfolio Holder. This will be communicated as follows:
- Planning applications (DM): the Council will publicise any further changes/impacts to DM-related consultations and operations on its website¹⁰.
 - Planning policy: the Council will confirm in its publication material whether temporary amendments set out in this SCI are enacted for statutory public consultation periods.
- 7.3 Monitoring of the procedures outlined in this SCI will be continual, so that evaluation can take place as part of the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The effectiveness of the SCI will be reported in the monitoring report. Changes in practices may result from this review, to reflect best practice in community/stakeholder involvement, managing stakeholder expectations more effectively and addressing specific concerns in relation to joint working with stakeholders.
- 7.4 For further information or clarification on any aspect of this SCI, please contact the Council's Growth Team on 01254 273915 or email forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk

¹⁰ <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/planning>

APPENDIX 1: Consultation bodies - Planning Policy

The Council ensures that the requirements for notifying specific and general consultation bodies at various stages in the preparation of the Local Plan are achieved in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Specific and general consultation bodies are those listed under Regulation 2 of the 2012 Regulations, and summarised below.

General consultation bodies mean the following:

- Voluntary bodies in the area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the area;
- Bodies which represent the interests of local business.

Specific consultation bodies mean the following:

- The Coal Authority
- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- The Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Highways England
- Adjoining local authorities
- Relevant telecommunications companies
- Relevant health providers
- Relevant gas and electricity companies
- Relevant water and sewerage undertakers
- Homes England (formerly Homes and Communities Agency)

APPENDIX 2: Consultation bodies - Planning Applications

Statutory Consultees

Depending upon the scale, type and location of the planning application or the constraints of the site, there may be a statutory requirement to consult with certain official groups, bodies or people. These are known as statutory consultees and could comprise one, some or all of the following:

Statutory consultee
Adjoining landowners
Canal and River Trust
Coal Authority
Control of major-accident hazards competent authority (COMAH)
County Planning Authorities
Crown Estates Commissioners
Department of Energy and Climate Change
Designated Neighbourhood Forum
Environment Agency
Forestry Commission
Garden History Society
Health and Safety Executive
Highways Authority
Highways England
Historic England
Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Local Highway Authority
Local Planning Authorities
National Parks Authorities
Natural England
Parish Councils
Rail Infrastructure Managers
Rail Network Operators
Sport England
Theatres Trust
Toll Road Concessionaries
Water and sewerage undertakers

Non-Statutory consultees

In addition to the statutory consultees set above, local planning authorities should also consider whether there are planning policy reasons to engage other consultees who, whilst not designated in law, are likely to have an interest in a proposed development (non-statutory consultees):

e.g. Non-statutory consultees
CPRE
Electricity North West
Cadent Gas
Lancashire Wildlife Trust
Emergency Services and Multi-Agency Emergency Planning
RSPB
Forestry Commission
Health and Safety Executive
Ministry of Defence
Office of Nuclear Regulation
Police and Crime Commissioners
Business Improvement Districts