

# Statement of Community Involvement

Autumn 2023

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## 1. Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the local planning authority will consult and notify the community, businesses and other organisations or 'stakeholders' about the development of their area. It also explains how people can get involved with the planning system.

### 1.1. What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

It demonstrates, to interested parties, the opportunities for engagement and involvement in plan making and decision taking within the planning process.

This document explains the purpose, aims and processes of this involvement and the expectations of South Ribble Borough Council as the local planning authority (LPA).

### 1.2. What are the aims of the Statement of Community Involvement?

South Ribble Borough Council recognises that it is important to provide the necessary resources and opportunities for communities and organisations (etc) to comment and engage throughout the planning process. Community involvement facilitates discussions and feedback that can influence decision making.

The SCI ensures that the Council will:

- Provide access to up-to-date planning information and resources including updates on progression.
- Consult on plan making progression and planning applications (where applicable) in accordance with the latest regulations.

### 1.3. What is the purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement?

South Ribble Borough Council will comply with the standards and methods of consultation as set out in this SCI when preparing and reviewing Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Development Plans, and when determining planning applications.

The SCI provides certainty to all of those who wish to participate in the planning process.

The SCI will set out:

- what will be consulted upon
- who could be consulted
- how we might carry out consultation, and

- when we will consult.

The Council recognises that meaningful engagement with local communities and other 'stakeholders' benefits the planning process and can help increase public acceptance of developments. In more general terms, local authorities have a legal duty to act fairly in the exercise of their functions. One aspect of fairness is to consult stakeholders on matters that may affect them. The government has placed an emphasis on localism – to empower local communities to get involved in decision making.

It is important, however, that people understand that whilst all points of view made to the Council are considered, it is not always appropriate and / or possible for the Council to accommodate every request for change, especially where two parties have opposite views. Part of the Council's role is to balance competing interests and whilst it is accepted that the Council's decisions on planning matters will directly affect people's lives, it should also be remembered that feedback from public consultation is one of several factors that the Council considers when making its decisions.

Sometimes decisions may be made contrary to the views of people who have responded to consultations because other factors weigh more heavily in the overall planning balance. It is the purpose of officers' reports on planning applications, and the 'evidence base' that backs up planning policy documents, to set out how planning decisions (or recommendations) have been arrived at, considering relevant planning-related points made, including those received during consultation.

When consulting on planning matters, it is not the number of comments registered, but the relevance of the planning-related arguments contained within them that is most important. As an LPA, the Council needs to balance the views of all sides, as well as relevant law and policy, in forming its decisions.

#### **1.4. Why does South Ribble Borough Council produce a Statement of Community Involvement?**

A SCI is required under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

This document also reflects the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the Localism Act 2011, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The National Planning Policy Framework (more commonly referred to as the NPPF) sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The latest version of the NPPF was published in September 2023. It is a framework that guides local plan preparation and is a material consideration when determining applications.

Paragraph 16c of the NPPF states “[Plans are to] be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees”.

The NPPF also identifies advantages to community engagement and involvement. As paragraph 132 states “applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective

engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot”.

The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which breaks down the policy and guidance of the NPPF into specific topics. PPG provides further guidance for the interpretation of the NPPF. It is intended to be a more accessible resource to enhance understanding and empower community involvement in the planning process.

The NPPF and PPG can be found via the following link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

### **1.5. Why is South Ribble Borough Council producing a new Statement of Community Involvement?**

South Ribble Borough Council published its latest SCI in 2013. Since then, there have been significant changes made to planning legislation, regulation, and guidance.

This document reflects on the suitability and effectiveness of approaches to community engagement described in previous versions of the SCI. Therefore, it includes methods of consultation that make effective use of modern technologies, existing resources and changing circumstances.

It is a requirement to review a SCI every five years, starting from the date of adoption.

The authority will review its SCI as and when required within the recommended timeframe to ensure it remains up to date.

### **1.6. How to use a Statement of Community Involvement**

The minimum requirements for consultation on planning policy documents and planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and for planning applications in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

The remainder of this document is split into these two sections, relating to community involvement opportunities in planning policy and development management. Even though the Council’s planning policy and development Management teams work hand in hand, it is useful to explore the different opportunities for community involvement in each area of planning practice.

### **1.7. Role of Planning Officers**

Planning Officers are generally available by prior appointment to discuss the production of planning documents, pre-application enquiries and planning applications. Further details of these services are available throughout the document.

## **1.8. Role of Councillors**

Councillors have an important role within the planning system, as both decision makers and as community representatives. The general public can make their views known to their local ward or Parish Councillor, who can make representations on their behalf. Councillors are a vital link between the local community and the LPA. Councillors also make decisions on planning issues, such as adopting Planning Policy documents and determining some planning applications.

## 2. Planning Policy

The Council is responsible for producing local planning policy which, along with national policy, is used to inform decisions as it carries out its development management functions. There are different types of policy documents, each carrying different weight, and each requiring a different level and / or nature of engagement with the local community and other stakeholders. The most common policy documents which involve public consultation are development plan documents (DPDs), (including the Local Plan), and supplementary planning documents (SPDs). The processes for producing DPDs and SPDs vary, and, consequently, so do consultation arrangements / procedures.

When DPDs are examined by independent Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State, the documents will be tested for “soundness” and for “legal compliance”, i.e., to ensure that legal requirements have been met. One of the legal requirements is to verify that the consultation on the DPD at its various stages of preparation has been carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

### 2.1. Consultation Database

The LPA 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 can be contacted. E-mails will be sent to notify recipients of consultation events, publication, and main modifications to local plan documents. Details will include the length of consultation periods, links to relevant documents and means of responding to any consultations.

Anyone wishing to be added to the database can do so by using the contact details below in table 1. Where possible, the Council’s preferred method of communication will be via e-mail. There will also be opportunities to add contact details to the database at consultation events.

### 2.2. Contacts and Resources

There are more ways to keep up to date with the planning policy developments in the borough.

Our Technical Support Team can assist you via [planning@southribble.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southribble.gov.uk) or 01772 625586. The team can assist in accessing planning policy documentation, where possible.

The Council offices (Civic Centre, West Paddock) provide access to computers, where residents are welcome to use the facilities to view planning documentation.

Current adopted planning policy for South Ribble Borough Council is available at <https://www.southribble.gov.uk/article/1133/Planning-Policy>. Here there is also an interactive map available that is useful for a quick search of local plan designations along with a local plan policies map in PDF format.

The review of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy began in 2018 with a view to delivering a single Central Lancashire Local Plan between the authorities of Preston City Council, Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council. Background papers and

proposals can be found via <https://centrallocalplan.lancashire.gov.uk/> , including the existing Core Strategy and the emerging evidence base, as well as key issues and assessments.

*Table 1: Contact details for the South Ribble Local Plan and Central Lancashire Local Plan*

Current South Ribble Local Plan	<a href="mailto:planningpolicy@southribble.gov.uk">planningpolicy@southribble.gov.uk</a>	Planning Policy Civic Centre West Paddock Leyland Lancashire PR25 1DH Tel: 01772 625625
Emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan	<a href="mailto:centrallancashireplan@chorley.gov.uk">centrallancashireplan@chorley.gov.uk</a>	Central Lancashire Local Plan Team Civic Offices Union Street Chorley PR7 1AL Tel: 01257 515151

### 2.3. Duty to Cooperate

The duty to cooperate was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and is set out in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The authority’s monitoring report documents the actions taken under the Duty to Cooperate.

Specifically, the Duty requires local planning authorities to:

- Engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with any local planning authority, or other prescribed body, potentially affected by a strategic matter; and
- To develop strategic planning policies to address such issues and consider joint approaches to plan making.

Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 lists the prescribed bodies for our duty to co-operate.

Table 2: Duty to Cooperate Bodies

<b>Statutory Consultees</b>	<b>Duty to Co-operate Organisations</b>
Environment Agency	Environment Agency
Historic England	Historic England
Natural England	Natural England
Network Rail	Civil Aviation Authority
Highways Agency	Homes and Communities Agency
Telecommunications Operators	NHS England (Central Lancashire)
Integrated Care Board	Chorley and South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Group
Electricity and Gas Companies	Lancashire County Council (Highways Authority)
Sewerage and Water Companies	*Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Homes England	Office of Rail Regulation
Adjoining Neighbouring Local Authorities	Adjoining Neighbouring Local Authorities inclusive of Chorley Council, Preston City Council, West Lancashire Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Ribble Valley Council, Fylde Council
Parish and Town Councils within the Borough	*Wildlife Trust
Adjoining Neighbouring Parish Councils	
Lancashire County Council	
Lancashire Constabulary	
The Coal Authority	
The Canal and River Trust	
The Theatres Trust	
Sport England	

\* These bodies are not subject to the requirements of the duty. But local planning authorities and the public bodies that are subject to the duty must cooperate with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships and have regard to their activities when they are preparing their Local Plans, so long as those activities are relevant to local plan making.

The Regulations require LPAs to consult ‘general consultation bodies’ as they consider appropriate, in the preparation of Development Plan Documents. General consultation bodies include:

- a) Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the authority’s area
- b) Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the authority’s area.
- c) Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the authority’s area.
- d) Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the authority’s area.
- e) Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the authority’s area.

### 3. South Ribble Development Plan

#### 3.1. Development Plan Documents (DPD)

Development Plan Documents set out strategic policies, site allocations, and policies on a range of subjects which are used when determining planning applications. The production of DPD's is set out in the Regulations and is made up of several statutory stages.

There are various types of development plan document, each with a different preparation process:

- Local Plans – plan for future growth and development through strategic policies, and a proposals map showing allocated sites to meet predicted needs and requirements.
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) – support the policies in the local plan through more detailed guidance.
- Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP)- plan for development in a specific neighbourhood area.

Below is the current structure of South Ribble's Development Plan. Please note that South Ribble is committed to preparing a new Central Lancashire Local Plan that will replace the South Ribble Local Plan and Central Lancashire Core Strategy. All documents relating to the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan can be found via <https://centrallocalplan.lancashire.gov.uk/>.

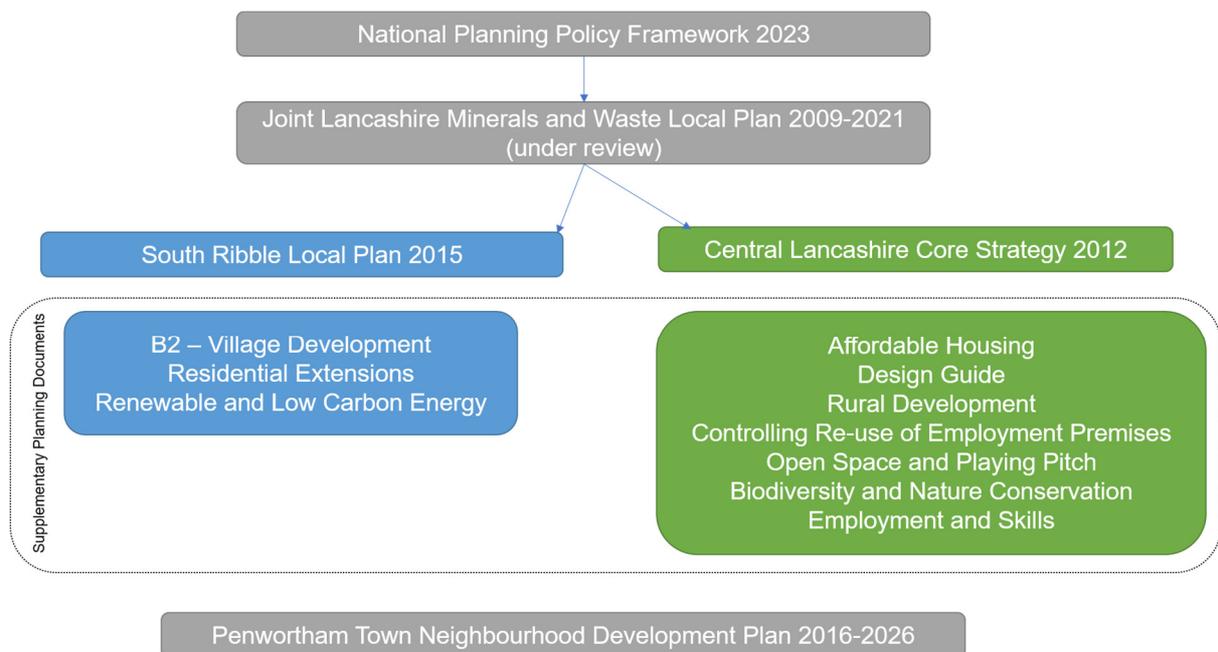


Figure 1: South Ribble's development plan structure

### 3.2. Local Plan

It is the duty of the Local Planning Authority to prepare an up-to-date Local Plan for its area. The Local Plan, and its component parts, must be supported by evidence, be consistent with the NPPF and demonstrate community involvement.

A large portion of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area. The below table indicates each stage of engagement, and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations, and businesses.

*Table 3: Stages of the Local Plan*

Stage	Description
Evidence Gathering, Issues and Options (Reg 18)	Notifying relevant bodies and the community of the intention to produce a new DPD and invite comments. The Issues and Option stage prepares several evidence base documents, that will also be subject to consultation.
Plan Preparation (Reg 18)	Preferred Options will be the first draft version of the plan and will be drawn up using evidence and information from the first stage consultation, and guidance within the NPPF. It will explore alternatives to guide the plan towards an agreed position. Comments received will be taken into account in preparing the DPD.
Publication (Reg 19 and 20)	Following on from the consultations and evidence gathering, the proposed plan will be published. There will be a consultation period of a minimum of 6 weeks to allow stakeholders and the community to make formal representations on its soundness. All the responses received at the previous stage will be published as part of the consultation, along with the Council's response to them.

Plan Submission and Examination (Reg 22 and 24)	The plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. Accompanying the DPD will be a Sustainability Appraisal report, policies map, consultation statement, representation details and any other appropriate documentation. The Inspector will consider all representations and there will be an opportunity for interested parties to speak at the hearing. The Inspector may suggest modifications to the plan which will be consulted on after the examination.
Inspector's Report (Reg 25)	The Inspector will then issue a report declaring whether the plan is sound. If the plan cannot be found sound, the LPA would have to go back to the plan preparation stage. If the plan is found sound, subject to any further changes suggested by the Inspector, the Council will move to adoption.
Adoption (Reg 26)	
Monitoring & Review	The LPA will monitor and review evidence-based reports and DPD through the adoption period.

### 3.3. Consultation Methods on emerging DPDs

When undertaking any formal consultation or formal adoption of a document, the LPA will ensure that the most up to date Planning Regulations are complied with. The minimum consultation period at preparation and publication stages is 6 weeks, although the LPA may decide to undertake additional consultations at other stages.

As well as contacting interested parties through our consultation database, consultations will be advertised on the main page of the council website, via social media posts and press releases where appropriate.

The table below outlines the other methods that will be used to engage communities and interested parties.

Table 4: Consultation methods used at each stage of local plan preparation.

		<b>Stage of preparation of DPD</b>			
		<i>Evidence Gathering &amp; Options</i>	<i>Plan Preparation &amp; Preferred Options</i>	<i>Publication &amp; Submission</i>	<i>Inspector's Report &amp; Adoption</i>
<b>Method</b>	<i>Website</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<i>Email (database)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<i>Letter (database)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<i>Deposit Points</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
	<i>Press release</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
	<i>Press notice</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
	<i>Press advertisement</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	N/A
	<i>Leaflets</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	N/A
	<i>Exhibitions</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	N/A
	<i>Drop-in sessions</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	N/A
	<i>Social Media</i>	Optional	Optional	Optional	N/A
	<i>Groups consulted /notified</i>	Statutory and general consultees	Statutory and general consultees.  Any representors from previous stage	Statutory and general consultees.  Any representors from Reg 18. stage	Statutory and general consultees  Anyone who has asked to be notified
	<i>Duration</i>	Minimum 6 weeks	Minimum 6 weeks	Minimum 6 weeks	-
	<i>Consultation Statement produced?</i>	Yes	Optional	Yes	No

### **3.4. Consultation on supporting Documents for the Local Plan**

#### *Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*

Before a mandatory Sustainability Appraisal is conducted, a Scoping Report must be completed which begins the consultation process with the three statutory bodies for an SA. These are Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency.

Where scoping determines that a full sustainability appraisal is required, the process must take full account of the EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

#### *Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)*

An HRA Scoping Report consults Natural England to explore if an assessment is required. If European nature conservation sites are likely to have a significant impact from such proposals and policies, then an assessment is required as part of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

#### *Statement of Common Ground*

This statement is prepared and updated through the plan making process, documenting local authorities' discussion on cross-boundary matters.

#### *Other Documents*

Additional documents may be submitted to demonstrate legal compliances and completion of other assessments. These are not statutory documents but could include a Health Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment.

All evidence-based documents will be subject to consultation through the relevant stages of the DPD.

An Authority Monitoring Report or Local Development Scheme are not subject to consultation but are also subject to the LPAs committee process.

### **3.5. Consultation Events and Platforms**

Consultation events are held both in the day and evening, to allow interested parties to attend at their convenience. These are usually held across the five neighbourhood areas in the borough, although these may be subject to change depending on availability and suitability.

The table below shows the neighbourhood areas for the purposes of consultation and the settlements they include. There will be a maximum of one event in each neighbourhood area, locations will vary based on availability although a community facility is normally selected.

*Table 5: Neighbourhood areas used for drop-in events with the corresponding wards.*

Neighbourhood Area	Wards
<b>Leyland</b>	Broadfield Buckshaw & Worden Earnshaw Bridge Leyland Central Moss Side St Ambrose Seven Stars
<b>Central</b>	Farington East Farington West Lostock Hall
<b>Western</b>	Hoole Longton & Hutton West New Longton & Hutton East
<b>Eastern</b>	Coupe Green & Gregson Lane Samlesbury & Walton Bamber Bridge East Bamber Bridge West Walton-le-Dale East Walton-le-Dale West
<b>Penwortham</b>	Broad Oak Charnock Horwick & Priory Middleforth

During formal consultation periods of the development plan, hard copies of documents will be available at local libraries and the Civic Centre to view during opening times (Reg.35). The Civic Centre and libraries also have access to computers where documents can be viewed online or be used to submit any feedback via the relevant platform. These documents will also be taken to consultation events where the team will be on hand to answer any queries. These consultation packs would include proposal maps, evidence-based assessments, and spatial proposals. Again, all documents will be provided online, via the Central Lancashire Local Plan website.

Table 6: Libraries used across South Ribble for deposit points.

Leyland Library	Lancastergate, Leyland, Preston, Lancashire, PR25 2EX Tel: 0300 123 6703 <a href="https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/leyland-library/">https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/leyland-library/</a>
Longton Library	Liverpool Old Road, Longton, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 5HA Tel: 0300 123 6703 <a href="https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/longton-library/">https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/longton-library/</a>
Kingsfold Library	Hawksbury Drive, Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 9EJ Tel: 0300 123 6703 <a href="https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/kingsfold-library/">https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/kingsfold-library/</a>
Lostock Hall Library	Watkin Lane, Lostock Hall, PR5 5TU Tel: 0300 123 6703 <a href="https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/lostock-hall-library/">https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/lostock-hall-library/</a>
Bamber Bridge Library	Station Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5 6LA Tel: 0300 123 6703 <a href="https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/bamber-bridge-library/">https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/bamber-bridge-library/</a>

### 3.6. What will happen to your representation?

Any representations made in response to a consultation on a draft DPD or SPD are published on the Council's website. The requirement to publish a Consultation Statement reflects the Government's desire to strengthen both stakeholder and community involvement in the planning process.

A Consultation Statement demonstrates:

- Which bodies and persons were invited to make comments

- How those bodies and persons were invited to make comment
- The material that was subject to consultation
- A summary of the issues raised
- How the comments received will shape the next version of the plan

On occasion we are unable to publicise a representation (e.g., if it contains personal information, allegation, abusive content) and on these occasions the sender will be notified, where possible. We will not consider anonymous submissions.

The Consultation Statement will inform the preparation of policies and allocations which have helped to shape successive versions of the plan through the Local Development Scheme.

## 4. Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) may be produced to provide further guidance and more detailed advice relating to specific topic areas. These have a more limited role, for instance, they cannot introduce new policy or change land allocations.

Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the requirements for producing Supplementary Planning Documents.

SPDs offer local planning authorities the opportunity to add guidance on specific policy areas. They are quicker and simpler to prepare than a local plan.

The purpose of SPDs is to provide guidance on the interpretation and implementation of relevant planning policies, particularly those in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and South Ribble Local Plan.

South Ribble's current adopted SPDs are listed in figure 1 and can be found via <https://www.southribble.gov.uk/article/1134/Current-policies-and-guidance>

SPDs must be supported by appropriate evidence and accord with national policies. Whilst they are not examined by an Inspector, an SPD is still subject to a process of consultation and engagement with relevant parties. The Council will carry out at least one stage of consultation on an SPD before it is adopted, for a minimum of four weeks.

Members of the public, local businesses, organisations, and interested parties from the consultation database will be consulted, as well as statutory consultees.

Following changes to the revised SPD, a consultation statement will be published at least 4 weeks before the document is formally adopted by the Council. The consultation statement will list all the responses received, with the Council's response, and any changes that have been made.

## 5. Neighbourhood Development Plans

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) were introduced into the planning system through the Localism Act 2011. They are an opportunity to allow communities to set planning policies to guide development in their areas (alongside the Development Plan).

Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (England) 2012 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, enable local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans (also known as Neighbourhood Plans) and to create Neighbourhood Development Orders.

Neighbourhood Plans once adopted form part of the development plan, therefore decisions on planning applications must take account of them. As of Autumn 2023, there is only one neighbourhood plan in place in South Ribble.

Penwortham Town Councils' Neighbourhood Development Plan can be viewed via [https://www.southribble.gov.uk/media/131/Penwortham-Town-neighbourhood-development-plan/pdf/Penwortham\\_Town\\_NDP\\_-\\_Final\\_0.pdf?m=63736981936197000](https://www.southribble.gov.uk/media/131/Penwortham-Town-neighbourhood-development-plan/pdf/Penwortham_Town_NDP_-_Final_0.pdf?m=63736981936197000)

Neighbourhood Planning is a way for communities to have a say in the future of places where they live and work. It gives neighbourhoods the power to produce a plan that directs development in their local area. A Neighbourhood Plan can add detail and locally set objectives to support and complement the Local Plan. It must be in conformity with national planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework) and cannot be used to prevent development.

The Council has a statutory duty to support local groups in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. However, the responsibility to produce a Neighbourhood Plan lies with the qualifying body:

- a Parish/Town Council
- a Neighbourhood Forum (in a non parished area)
- a community organisation

While a Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared, consultation on it will be the responsibility of the individual Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum and is therefore outside the scope of this SCI.

However, once a Neighbourhood Plan has been drawn up and submitted to the local planning authority, the local planning authority must carry out a statutory consultation on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan before it is examined by an independent and suitably qualified person. This stage will be subject to a six-week consultation.

A Neighbourhood Plan is subject to an examination by an Independent Planning Inspector, full details of the Inspector and examination process will be made publicly available.

A Neighbourhood Plan will also require a referendum, details of which all will be made publicly available.

There is a requirement to consult those who live, work and carry out business in the neighbourhood area. All those on the Neighbourhood Plan database who have previously responded and requested to be kept informed of the process will also be contacted.

### **5.1. What resources does the planning policy team provide for Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

The planning policy team are on hand to support with neighbourhood planning through GIS support, advice and guidance as required and will assist with examination.

In addition, resources are available on the Planning Portal and Planning Aid websites to support the formulation of an NDP through the whole process.

## 6. Community Involvement in Development Management

This section explains how planning and related applications are dealt with and outlines the Council's consultation arrangements. The primary role of the Development Management team is to assess, make recommendations and determine planning applications taking into account the adopted Local Plan and supplementary documents. The development management team also offer a pre-planning application advice service, present the Council's case in planning appeals, and investigate breaches of planning control.

### 6.1. Types of Applications

The development management team deal with a range of application types, including major, minor and other applications.

Major applications are defined in the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and include the following types of development:

- Residential development for more than 10 units or on a site greater than 0.5 hectares if the number of units proposed is not known.
- Provision of building(s) with floorspace greater than 1,000 sq m
- Development which has a site area greater than 1 hectare

Minor applications include those under the thresholds above. Other applications could include householder, listed building consent, changes of use or prior approval.

The requirements for consultation in respect of different application types varies.

### 6.2. Development Management Consultations

The requirements for consultation on planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

However, the consultation carried out will depend on the application type.

### 6.3. Permitted Development

It should be noted that not all development requires an application for planning permission for some works, planning permission is automatically granted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 so these works can be carried out as 'Permitted Development'. For example, householders can make certain changes to their house without needing to apply for planning permission. These are called "permitted

development rights”. Other examples of permitted development include certain changes of use, for example from a shop to an office.

To assist in determining whether a proposed householder development is likely to be permitted development, self-assessment sheets are available on the Council website. These provide advice in relation to various types of domestic extension and alterations. (<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/article/1128/Householder-self-assessment>)

The Planning Portal also provides a number of resources to support planning applications, including the ‘Interactive House’. (<https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission>)

Planning Aid England is another platform that offers an online advice service, support services and consultant directory (<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice/>).

The planning team are available to provide basic advice to members of the public without charge. This advice could include questions on submitting an application, processing an application, relevant planning policies or planning application fees.

For those who would like to request support (including requesting alternative formats), an appointment can be made by using one of the contact details below:

Planning Service

Development Management Team

Civic Centre

West Paddock

Leyland

PR25 1DH

Telephone: 01772 625586 Email: [planning@southribble.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southribble.gov.uk)

#### **6.4. Pre-Application Advice**

South Ribble Borough Council welcomes and encourages applicants and developers to seek pre- application advice from the Council prior to the submission of a formal planning application. Discussions can help to achieve a better standard of application, which has a greater chance of a successful outcome.

There are a number of benefits in seeking pre-application advice before making an application:

- It provides early guidance on the planning policies relevant to your development and helps you to understand how these policies apply to your proposal.
- It can identify at an early stage if there is a need for specialist information such as a tree survey, flood risk assessment, ecological assessment.
- It enables proposals to be changed and potential problems overcome before an application is submitted, saving time during the application process.
- It will ensure you know what information you need to submit with the application, thereby making sure it can be registered and validated.
- It can give a greater degree of certainty of whether your application is likely to be successful.
- By identifying and addressing issues at pre-application stage, this can save time when an application is submitted and may result in a quicker decision.

The pre-application advice form is available on the Council's website, along with a list of information and plans that should be submitted with the form.

<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/article/1315/Pre-application-Advice-Service>

Pre-application advice will normally be provided within 21 working days and incurs a fee which is indicated on the council's charging structure. Details of this can be found via

<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/article/1127/Pre-application-advice>.

All pre-application enquiries are treated in confidence and are not available on the planning register. Although, we may be required to release details of pre-application enquires under Freedom of Information requests.

## **6.5. How we will consult on pre-application enquiries**

For major pre-application enquiries the Council may seek advice from internal and external consultees. However, many of these external agencies offer their own direct pre-application advice service e.g., Lancashire County Council as highway authority, Highways England, the Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency.

During the pre-application discussions officers will also advise developers on whether the proposals would benefit from a process of community involvement before the application is submitted. National Planning Practice Guidance advises that 'pre application engagement with the community is encouraged where it will add value to the process and the outcome.' The Council understands that different developments will require public consultation to be tailored to suit the individual circumstances but on significant schemes a public meeting, exhibition and / or leaflet drop in the local area may be required. At pre-application stage, the development management team will be able to advise on an appropriate consultation plan for major development proposals.

The community consultation measures outlined above are not necessary for small scale applications e.g., house extensions or single dwellings. However, we emphasise to

applicants / developers the benefits to be gained by discussing proposals with neighbours who may be affected by the development and taking account of their comments when drawing up the formal planning application.

## **6.6. Planning Applications**

The level of consultation carried out for planning applications will be proportionate to the type and scale of planning application being determined. In all cases, publicity will meet legal requirements.

The regulations set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations and The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, state how planning applications need to be publicised, either by site notice or individual neighbour notification.

Neighbour notification by letter is the principal method of consultation on most planning applications – in such cases, letters are sent to all owners / occupiers of properties that immediately adjoin the boundary of the application site. Where the Council is unsure of the owner of an adjoining site, for example where the application site adjoins open land, a site notice will be displayed.

In addition, a press notice and site notice are also required for the following types of applications:

- Major developments
- An application accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement
- A departure from the Local Plan
- A development that would affect a public right of way,
- Development affecting the character or appearance of a Conservation Area
- Development affecting a Listed Building or its setting.

Neighbours / interested parties are given 21 days to respond in writing to the consultation.

All planning applications (with associated documents) received by the Council can be viewed via the public access portal. (<https://publicaccess.southribble.gov.uk/online-applications/> )

Weekly lists are published online for the public to view and issued each week to councillors, consultees and others who have requested a weekly update. This includes applications received and determined and appeal information.

Following submission of a planning application, negotiations between Planning Officers and developers / their agents may result in a revision to the proposed development necessitating the submission of amended plans. If the amendments are significant, the Council will, upon receipt of amended plans, carry out a further consultation on these amendments. In view of the tight timescales to determine planning applications, the re-notification time may be reduced to 14 days.

Comments may be made on any planning application, by anyone, regardless of whether or not they were consulted individually. All comments must be made in writing and must contain the name and address of the author. The Council will not take into consideration any anonymous comments received.

All comments received are public information and cannot legally be kept confidential. All written representations received on planning applications are published on the Council's website. Therefore, comments should not include any personal information, for example phone numbers or signatures. When submitting comments by email it is recommended that they be sent as an attachment in order to avoid publication of personal email addresses.

Please note that comments should be submitted within the identified consultation period as the Council may be in a position to determine the application as soon as the neighbour consultation period expires. If this date cannot be met, consultees should contact the case officer well in advance of the consultation period ending to see whether it is possible for an extension of time to be granted for comments to be submitted.

The Council welcomes comments, whether in support of, or opposition to, an application, but the Council can only take account of material planning considerations. These include matters like the effect on traffic or parking, the appearance of the proposal, overlooking or disturbance, overshadowing, loss of privacy, and loss of ecological habitats. We cannot take into account matters such as loss of property value, private disputes between neighbours, matters covered by leases or covenants, the impact of construction work and competition between firms.

Planning Law requires that decisions be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. The development plan is currently the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the South Ribble Local Plan. The views of statutory consultees and the public are important in making decisions on planning and related applications. However, they are just one consideration amongst several in the overall decision-making process and must be weighed alongside local planning policy set out in the development plan and related guidance, national policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and other material planning considerations.

Having assessed an application, the planning officer will prepare a report summarising the comments received from consultees and other interested parties. Taking account of development plan policy and other material considerations, the report will assess the planning issues and recommend whether the application should be approved or refused. The majority of applications will then be determined under delegated powers by authorised officers of the Council.

However, most major and / or controversial applications are reported to the Planning Committee for a decision by Members of the Council. If the application is to be decided by Planning Committee, comments received from consultees, or the public will be set out in the case officer's report. Committee agendas are published 5 clear working days in advance of the meeting and are available on the Council website.

## **6.7. Planning Committee**

Planning Committee meetings are held in public. The Council allows public speaking at Planning Committee meetings, subject to a number of criteria. The procedure for debate at Planning Committee is available at <https://www.southribble.gov.uk/article/1129/Planning-Committee>

Anyone interested in speaking at Planning Committee must register their request by noon two working days prior to the Committee meeting. The following people may address the Planning Committee:

Up to five members of the public who wish to speak against an application will be allowed to do so. Each will have up to four minutes in which to state their case.

Up to five members of the public who wish to speak in favour of an application will then be allowed to speak. Again, each will have up to four minutes in which to state their case.

The applicant will then be invited to speak in support of their application.

Only ward councillors not on the Planning Committee are permitted to make representations. Neighbouring ward councillors will also be allowed to make representations where an application will have a significant demonstrable impact on their ward.

If you feel unable to address the Planning Committee, a Ward Councillor may be willing to put your view to the Committee. Details of Ward Councillors are available on the Council website at:

<https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=WARD&VW=LIST&PIC=0>

## **6.8. Planning Appeals**

If an application for planning permission is refused by the local planning authority, or if it is granted with conditions that are unacceptable to the applicant, an appeal can be made to the Secretary of State against the refusal of permission or against the conditions attached.

There is also a right of appeal if an application is not determined within a specific time, and a right of appeal against the issuing of an Enforcement Notice.

Only applicants have a right of appeal. There is currently no third party right of appeal in respect of planning decisions.

Appeals are examined by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the government. We will notify in writing all those who made written comments upon the original application.

Copies of their comments will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate and the Council will inform people how to make further representations to the Planning Inspectorate. Further advice on the appeal process is available at:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate>

## 7. Conclusion: Monitoring & Review of the Statement of Community Involvement

The SCI will be monitored and reviewed when necessary to take account of best practice in community involvement and any regulation changes.

Should situations such as the COVID pandemic arise, alternative methods of community involvement may be taken. These changes will be listed on our website in the short term until a revised statement can be issued.

For further clarification or any questions about the contents of this SCI, please contact South Ribble's Planning Policy team.

Planning Policy

Civic Centre

West Paddock

Leyland

Lancashire

PR25 1DH

Tel: 01772 625586

[planningpolicy@southribble.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@southribble.gov.uk)

## Glossary

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)	Monitoring the performance indicators of the Core Strategy.
Consultation Statement	Sets out how the Council has sought participation from communities and stakeholders during a consultation period.
Core Strategy (CS)	It is a key document with strategic policy for Central Lancashire's Local Development Framework, to help co-ordinate development in the area and contribute to boosting investment and employment.
Development Plan	Sets out strategic policies, site allocations, and policies on a range of subjects through a Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.
Duty to Co-operate	Places a legal duty on local planning authorities and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan and marine plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	Assesses the effects of the Local Plan in terms of equalities issues, with a particular focus on disadvantaged or excluded groups of people.
General Consultation Bodies	Those listed in Part 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Test if a plan or project proposal could significantly harm the designated features of a European site.
Health Impact Assessment (HIA)	Assesses the effects of the Local Plan on the health and well-being of the population and its ability to access health-related facilities and services.
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	Identifying what the Council is going to do over the next three years to prepare new and revised planning policy which will form part of the Development Plan.
Local Plan (LP)	Plan which sets out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities.
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	Local government body that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions for a particular area. i.e., South Ribble Borough Council
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)	Grants planning permission for specific development which complies with the Order.
Neighbourhood (Development) Plan (NDP)	Enable communities to take the lead in producing part of the statutory development plan for the area.
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	Adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents should be read together.
Prescribed Bodies	These organisations are required to cooperate with local planning authorities subject to Duty to Cooperate.
Scoping Report	This scoping stage identifies the relevant plans, policies, programmes, and objectives that will inform the Integrated Assessment and the Local Plan.
Soundness	Described in paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
Statement of Common Ground	Record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Sets out how the local planning authority will notify and consult the community on new planning policy and planning applications.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The requirements of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is incorporated into Sustainability Appraisals.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	Assessing the extent to which the emerging Local Plan proposals and policies, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic, and social objectives.
The Regulations	The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.