



# Statement of Community Involvement

Adopted April 2019

## What Is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?

The Statement of Community Involvement, or SCI, explains how you can get involved in the planning of new development in your local area. This includes preparing planning policies, and helping the council make decisions on new development.

### The Structure of the SCI

The SCI looks at the two main parts of the planning system in England – plan-making and development management.

**Plan-Making** is the way that local councils like Tower Hamlets create a Local Plan for the area. The Local Plan sets out how land will be used and developed in the area. The plan is based on national and regional planning law and guidance, and informed by local evidence. This is on pages 7-14 of the full SCI.

**Development Management** is the way that decisions are made on planning applications. Most decisions are based on the Local Plan for the area. This is on pages 15-28 of the full SCI.

On the other side of this sheet, we explain the process for both of these parts of the planning process.

### Our Consultation Principles

When we run public consultations on planning matters, we will aim to follow these standards:

- Clear information, using plain English and avoiding technical words when possible.
- Early engagement, allowing the community to shape development at an early stage.
- Appropriate scale, in line with the potential impact of the proposals.
- Flexibility, holding events at a range of times and places.
- Variety of methods, such as workshops, drop-in sessions, online surveys, and social media.
- Outreach and accessibility, talking to groups that aren't usually involved in planning.
- Coordination, to avoid repeating things without reason.
- Openness, explaining how we listened to responses.
- Monitoring and seeking feedback.
- Privacy, in line with data protection law.

## Contact Us

If you have any questions about the Statement of Community Involvement, contact us at [planning@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:planning@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or 020 7364 5009.

You can also find out more on our website at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/planning_and_building_control/planning_and_building_control.aspx)



## The Local Plan Process

### First Consultation Stage

This is for presenting 'issues and options'. If big changes are made, this stage can be repeated. Proposals will be detailed and based on evidence, but we still need your comments to identify potential problems and to ensure the plan reflects everyone's needs and interests. This is the stage for thinking big and making bold suggestions.

### Second Consultation Stage

At this stage, a full draft of the Local Plan is published. Focus your comments on whether the plan is 'sound'. In planning law, a plan is 'sound' if it is positive, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy. This is the stage for making changes to the plan, to make sure it is acceptable.

### Examination Stage

After consultation, the plan is sent to the government. They appoint an inspector to examine the plan and suggest changes that are needed for the plan to be 'sound'. Public hearings are held as part of this stage. Anyone can watch these hearings, and people who sent comments during the second consultation stage can request to speak.

## The Planning Application Process

### Pre-application Stage

Developers are strongly encouraged to talk to the council and to residents at an early stage. This is the point where residents can have the biggest influence on proposals. There are many ways to get involved. Sometimes developers hold pre-application events, provide information online, or receive comments through social media. You can also discuss any concerns with your local councillor.

### Application Stage

When an application is submitted, the council holds a consultation. Residents are invited to make comments on the proposals. The SCI explains the consultation methods for each type of application. At this stage, your comments could influence whether a development is approved, amended, or rejected. To get involved, look at the plans and documents, and submit your comments online, by email, or post.

### Decision Making Stage

Most decisions are made by senior planning officers. If there is a lot of public interest in the proposal, the decision may be made at a planning committee meeting. Applications for certain large-scale developments are always made by committee. Residents are able to request to speak at these meetings. The best way to get involved is to speak to our customer service team or your local councillor. If you make comments on a planning application, we will always inform you of the final decision.