



# CONSULTATION STATEMENT

## Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space Supplementary Planning Document



## **1. Background**

- 1.1. The Council already has an Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation SPD which was adopted in 2007. The Green Infrastructure and Public Open Spaces SPD will replace the 2007 SPD in its entirety.
- 1.2. The SPD was prepared in order to amplify and aid the effective and consistent implementation of the open spaces, GI and landscaping, trees and hedgerows and biodiversity and geodiversity aspects of the HLDP, specifically Policies L1, PL7, PL8 and PL9.
- 1.3. The Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space SPD includes seven sections as set out below.
  - I. Section 1: Green and Blue Infrastructure Principles
  - II. Section 2: Biodiversity in new developments including Net Gain
  - III. Section 3: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
  - IV. Section 4: Public Open Space Standards
  - V. Section 5: Sporting Facilities
  - VI. Sections 6: Design Guidance
  - VII. Section 7: Submission of a Supporting Statement

## **2. Town and Country Planning Regulations**

- 2.1. The draft SPD was produced in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The relevant regulations relating to the consultation process are set out below.
  - Regulation 12:
    - (a) Requires the Council to produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated in to the SPD.
    - (b) Requires the Council to publish the documents for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received and identify the address to which responses should be sent.
  - Regulation 35:

Requires the Council to make documents available by taking the following steps;

Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;

Publish the document on the Council's website.

## **3. Consultation and Responses Received**

- 3.1. The consultation period started on Monday 6 December 2021 and closed on Friday 11 February 2022.

- 3.2. The Council complied with the legislative requirements for consulting on an SPD, as well as the requirements set out in the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3.3. This included:
- notifications being sent to over 200 people, organisations and businesses who have either recorded an interest in SPDs or are statutory consultees (see Appendix 2 for a full list);
  - a notice being published in the local newspaper (see Appendix 3);
  - posts about the consultation being made on the Council’s social media channels;
  - hard copies of the SPD being available at the Civic Centre and libraries in Harlow; and
  - an online version being available on the Council’s website.
- 3.4. In total, six people, organisations or companies responded to the consultation, including members of the public who completed and returned the questionnaire.
- 3.5. From these responses, 27 points were extracted which are detailed, along with a Council response to each, in Appendix 1.
- 3.6. The table below summarises the main issues raised during the consultation which required amendments to the draft Addendum.

Issue	Amendment
The SPD does not include clear and consistent guidance for built sports facilities as already detailed in the Council’s Sports Facilities Strategy (2017) Chapter 14 of the Council’s Sports Facilities Study Part 2 Built Facilities Strategy provides guidance on the approach to securing provision for built sports facilities through new development which is endorsed by Sport England	The SPD has been updated to include an additional chapter on how to deal with the provision of built sports facilities including reference to the Sports Facilities Study where appropriate. This includes information on using the Sports Facilities Calculator to determine off-site costs and the provision of standards for certain built facilities.
Map 1 which includes the various open space typologies in the district is out of date	The Map has been updated and now moved to the appendix.
Table 13 proposes the use of quantity and accessibility standards for playing pitches and outdoor sports. The use of standards is contrary to the approach recommended in the Council’s 2017 Sports Facilities Strategy which sets out detailed step by step guidance on how the additional needs for outdoor sports generated by developments should be assessed,	Standards for playing pitches have been removed and instead this will be determined using the information set out in the Sports Facilities Study and the Sport England’s Playing Pitch Calculator. Reference to these tools and documents are now included.

calculated and secured in practice.	
Tables 15 and 16 includes proposed off-site contributions and maintenance costs for playing pitches but the use of the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator will automatically generate this cost as part of this process	Changes made to the document to remove Playing Pitches from Tables 15 and 16 and instead use the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator to identify the suitable off-site costs and maintenance costs (as well as ancillary costs such as changing rooms) for playing pitches.
Fields in Trust guidance should not be used instead of Sport England in relation to built facilities and playing pitches. Sport England guidance is more up to date.	Fields in Trust Standards removed and replaced with references to Sport England guidance instead.
Reference should be made to the Essex GI Strategy and proposed Essex GI Standards	Added to chapter 4.
The document should include the provision of appropriate buffer strips around river courses and ponds as well as opportunities for development to restore and enhance rivers	Wording added to the Blue Infrastructure section on how buffers and opportunities for river restoration and enhancement can improve habitats and ecology.

3.7. Other issues were also raised which did not require an amendment to the SPD.

Consultee	Section/ Topic	Summary of representation	Council Response and Proposed Amendment
Sport England	<u>Chapter 4 – National and Local Policy Background</u>	This chapter should include reference to the key Local Plan evidence base documents that support the content of the SPD as this would provide context for the detailed guidance in subsequent chapters. In relation to outdoor sport, reference should be made to the Sports Facilities Study which provides a detailed and robust assessment of facility needs and advice on how provision should be made to support new development which is directly relevant to the SPD.	<b>1. Reference to the Council’s Sports Facilities Study to be included within Chapter 4 of the SPD. Any other evidence base of note will also be included.</b>
	<u>Chapter 5: Implementation of the Public Open Space Standards</u>  <i>Table 1</i>	Sport England is supportive of Table 1. However, it is likely to be difficult to justify nursing homes making provision for playing fields as the residents are unlikely to generate a demand for outdoor sports facilities. This should therefore be reviewed to avoid potential challenges from developers.	<b>2. Will remove playing fields from Nursery Home requirements in Table 1 of the SPD.</b>
	<i>Paragraph 5.11</i>	It is acknowledged that guidance on built sports facilities may be inappropriate in a Public Open Space related SPD. However, it is considered that clear and consistent guidance is required for developers on how to make provision. Dealing with it on a case by case basis as proposed in paragraph 5.11 would not provide the necessary clarity and consistency and is more likely to be subject to challenge by developers and potentially Inspectors. Chapter 14 of the Council’s Sports Facilities Study Part 2 Built Facilities Strategy provides guidance on the approach to securing provision for built sports facilities through new development which is endorsed by Sport England. However, as the strategy does not have the status of a SPD and is not presented in the format of a SPD it is advocated that this guidance is developed into a wider Planning Obligations SPD (if one is to be prepared in the short term by the Council) or otherwise included in a revised Public Open Space related SPD given the inter-relationship with outdoor sports facilities. Without this there would be a concern about whether the additional built sports facility needs generated by new development would be appropriately considered and provided for in practice. For example, while paragraph 5.11 advocates the use of Sport England’s Sports Facilities Calculator (which is welcomed), as the calculator only estimates the demand generated by any given population, it will not provide guidance on whether the individual development generates an additional need for sports halls, swimming pools or indoor bowls halls, it will not provide guidance on whether provision should be made on or off site and will not provide guidance on how financial contributions will be spent. Guidance in a	<b>3. Will include a separate section on the provision of Built Facilities within the SPD – this will include information from the Sports Facilities Study on how to calculate financial contributions and requirements and if information is available, whether this is on-site or off-site. It is suggested that an entirely new chapter is included with reference made to the study where appropriate and any successor documents.</b>

	SPD would cover these matters.	
<i>Paragraph 5.12</i>	Map 1 is out of date with respect to Outdoor Sports Facilities as it is based on data from the 2013 Open Space and Green Infrastructure Study. The outdoor sports related data in this study was superseded by the audit data contained in the Council's 2017 Sports Facilities Study. For example, the former private sports grounds on London Road in Harlow have long since closed and been redeveloped since the 2013 study was completed. Paragraph 5.12 should therefore signpost to the Sports Facilities Study for more up-to-date data on existing outdoor sports facilities.	<b>4. Map 1 has been updated and a new map included. Reference will also be made to the Sports Facilities Study for any further information.</b>
<p><u>Chapter 6: Public Open Space, Play Space, Allotment and Sports Facilities Standards</u></p> <p><i>Table 13 and paragraphs 6.6-6.7</i></p>	<p>Sport England is surprised that Table 13 proposes the use of quantity and accessibility standards for playing pitches and outdoor sports. The use of standards is contrary to the approach recommended in Chapter 6 of the Council's 2017 Sports Facilities Strategy Part 3: Playing Pitch Strategy which sets out detailed step by step guidance on how the additional needs for outdoor sports generated by developments should be assessed, calculated and secured in practice. For example, use of Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator is used for calculating the demand generated for playing pitches and estimating financial contributions and this is the current industry standard approach used by most local authorities for calculating playing pitch provision in new development. This guidance in the Council's strategy was endorsed by Sport England and the sports governing bodies when the strategy was prepared. As this strategy provides the Council's current evidence base for sports facilities, it is difficult to understand why the SPD is proposing to use national Fields in Trust standards which appear to have been used in the Council's historic 2013 Open Space and Green Infrastructure Study. The Sports Facilities Strategy superseded the outdoor sports element of the Open Space and Green Infrastructure Study and is considered to be more robust and provide current best practice guidance on this matter. As paragraph 1.1 states that the SPD is intended to reflect the adoption of the Harlow Local Development Plan and the need to take into account new evidence and best practice, it is therefore surprising that a standards based approach is proposed for outdoor sport when this is no longer consistent with the Local Plan's most up-to-date evidence base or current best practice. The use of standards for outdoor sport in general terms is not advocated in current Government policy and is not supported by Sport England. Sport England's Community Infrastructure Levy and Planning Obligations Advice Note <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport">https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport</a> provides advice on the limitations of using standards and this advice was prepared partly in response to challenges from developers and Inspectors that local authorities were experiencing when using standards in practice.</p>	<b>5. To ensure consistency with existing evidence base, as supported by Sport England, and to be consistent with EHDC new SPD table 13 and successor paragraphs will be replaced by the Sports Facilities Study requirements.</b>

		<p>Sport England therefore <b>objects</b> to this element of the SPD and if it is maintained in an adopted SPD it is considered likely that the approach will be challenged when it is applied in practice by developers and potentially Inspectors when assessing individual planning applications and appeals. If asked for impartial advice in these scenarios (which Sport England regularly is) on the Council's approach we would not be able to support it in such scenarios.</p> <p>To address these concerns and help ensure that the SPD is consistent with the Council's most up-to-date evidence base and current industry standard best practice, it is advocated that the FIT standards based approach proposed is replaced with the approach set out in Chapter 6 of the Council's 2017 Sports Facilities Strategy Part 3. Sport England would be happy to provide advice and support to the Council on how to do this in practice. As an example, neighbouring East Hertfordshire District Council adopted a new Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD in 2020 <a href="https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents">https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents</a> which was based advice in EHDC's 2017 Sports Facilities Strategy. The Harlow and East Herts sports facility strategies were both prepared in 2017 by the same consultants with a view to ensuring a consistent and co-ordinated approach to sports facility provision in development across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area. The advice on the approach to outdoor sports provision in new development is the same in both strategies and the EHDC SPD uses the advice in the strategy for assessing playing pitch needs in new developments including the use of the Playing Pitch Calculator. It does not use a standards based approach. The approach in the EHDC SPD has been subsequently used for calculating the needs for new outdoor sports provision in the current Gilston Garden Community planning applications. A further concern therefore is that if the standards based approach proposed in the Harlow SPD is adopted in practice there would be an inconsistent approach taken towards outdoor sports provision in new development across the wider Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area.</p>	
	<p><u>Chapter 7:</u> <u>On-Site</u> <u>Provision, Off-</u> <u>Site</u> <u>Contributions</u> <u>and</u></p>	<p>The list of circumstances in paragraph 7.3 should be extended to include whether public open space can be provided in a form that is responsive to community needs and sustainable to manage. This is pertinent for outdoor sports facilities because while it may be possible to practically accommodate a small single pitch playing field for instance within a residential development this may not be suitable for meeting community needs because sports clubs that use playing fields generally prefer larger multi-pitch sites where multiple</p>	<p><b>6. Changes – agree to include this wording as part of para 7.3:</b></p> <p><b>'whether public open space can be provided in a form that is responsive to community needs and sustainable</b></p>

<p><u>Maintenance</u> <i>Paragraph 7.3</i></p>	<p>teams in different age groups can play on different pitches at the same time rather than a single pitch site which is not responsive to this need. Furthermore, small single pitch sites are less efficient to manage over a long term period and are more vulnerable to falling out of operational use.</p>	<p>to manage’</p>
<p><i>Table 14</i></p>	<p>While no objection is made to the thresholds for on and off site playing field provision in Table 14, as there will not be many residential site allocations of over 600 dwellings in Harlow (and therefore not many opportunities to secure new playing fields through development), the Council should give consideration to whether any of the site allocations of less than 600 dwellings in the adopted local plan would be suitable and desirable for accommodating playing pitches as the adoption of the SPD with this threshold will make it difficult to justify securing on-site provision when assessing individual planning applications at a later date. If there are any such allocations, the Council may wish to review this threshold or qualify how it will be applied in practice.</p>	<p><b>7. There are no other suitable Local Plan allocations that would be suitable for including on-site provision however that is not to say that any future sites may come forward unexpectedly through regeneration opportunities and redevelopment. Wording will be changed to refer to the East of Harlow site but to retain the table as is.</b></p>
<p><i>Paragraph 7.11</i></p>	<p>Support is offered for the recognition in paragraph 7.11 that a District-wide catchment may be appropriate for playing pitches. This is consistent with the Council’s evidence base in the Sports Facility Strategy and is exemplified by rugby and cricket pitches for instance where there are only 1 or 2 club sites serving the whole district and therefore it would not be appropriate to apply more localised catchments. However, it is noted that this approach may not be consistent with the accessibility standards for playing pitches/outdoor sports set out in Table 13 (which is not supported for the reasons set out above).</p>	<p><b>8. Accept comments and as a result will amend table 13 in accordance with Sport England recommendations.</b></p>
<p><i>Table 15</i></p>	<p>While no comment is made on the specific costings proposed for playing fields set out in Table 15, it should be noted that if the Playing Pitch Calculator was used for calculating playing pitch demand as advocated in comments made above on Table 13 it would automatically calculate the capital cost in terms of both pitches and changing facilities of meeting the demand generated by a new population. It is noted that the contributions in the table only calculate the cost of meeting the pitch needs. They do not calculate the cost associated with providing ancillary changing room/pavilion provision which will be necessary for supporting the use of pitches. Unless this is accounted for, there is a high risk that the contributions secured will not be adequate for meeting the actual additional facility requirements that are generated and this would then place pressure on the Council and voluntary sector facility providers to bridge the funding gap which is pertinent given that the cost of changing facility buildings is usually greater than the cost of the pitches. This could be addressed if the Playing Pitch Calculator was used as advocated</p>	<p><b>9. Change table 15 to remove playing pitches and instead include paragraphs around how this will be calculated referencing the Playing Pitch Calculator.</b></p>



	above or if Table 15 was amended to make provision for the costs of providing changing facilities.	
<i>Table 16</i>	While no comment is made on the specific maintenance costings proposed for playing fields set out in Table 16, it should be noted that if the Playing Pitch Calculator was used for calculating playing pitch demand as advocated in comments made above on Table 13 it would automatically calculate the estimated annual maintenance cost associated with the pitches generated by the development.	<b>10. Refer to Playing Pitch Calculator in respect of maintenance and remove playing pitches from table 16.</b>
<i>Paragraph 7.20</i>	The proposal to use the 2017 Sports Facilities Strategy to inform the spending of financial contributions for outdoor sports project is welcomed in principle as this strategy provides details of the priority projects. However, (as far as Sport England is aware), the priority projects in the strategy's action plan have not been updated since the strategy was completed almost 5 years ago and therefore will not account for new priorities in Harlow that may have emerged since then. The Council should work with Sport England, Active Essex and the sports governing bodies to update the action plan therefore in the interim of a new strategy being prepared in the future. Further advice on how the action plan can be updated in practice can be provided upon request.	<b>11. Welcome working with Sport England on updates to the Action Plan. No changes required to the SPD.</b>
<u>Chapter 8: Design Standards</u> <i>Paragraph 8.4</i>	Support is offered for the reference to Sport England's Active Design guidance as this will be relevant to the design of new open spaces and will be important in the context of the Council's wider priorities relating to providing open spaces that will encourage healthy and active lifestyles. The referencing to Sport England's guidance on sports facilities is also welcomed.	<b>12. No changes needed.</b>
<i>Paragraph 8.6</i>	It should be made explicit that new parks should be designed to be multi-functional and as well as the guidance provided it should be made clear that parks should be designed to be integral to existing and proposed active travel networks to help ensure that that they can be easily accessed by walkers and cyclists.	<b>13. Make reference to the following sentence in the report 'parks should be designed to be integral to existing and proposed active travel networks to help ensure that that they can be easily accessed by walkers and cyclists.'</b>
<i>Paragraph 8.9</i>	Paragraph 8.9 should make reference to amenity space being designed to encourage physical activity and should be designed in terms of size and layout to be multi-functional to encourage physical activity by all groups within the community e.g. space suitable for informal sport to encourage use by children and young people, circular walking/running/cycling routes around the open space to encourage activity close to people's homes etc. Further guidance is included in the Active Design guidance especially	<b>14. Agree, will include this wording under para 8.9</b>

	<p>under Active Design Principle 1 – Activity for All and Principle 5: Network of Multi-Functional Open Space <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design">https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design</a>. This should be referenced in the absence of other published guidance.</p>	
<p><i>Paragraph 8.14 and Appendix 1</i></p>	<p>It is unclear why Fields in Trust guidance has been referenced in paragraph 8.14 instead of Sport England guidance. Sport England maintains and updates guidance on design and dimensions for the sports sector and other partner bodies such as Fields in Trust refer to these in their publications if they wish to. A concern is that the Fields in Trust minimum sizes guidance as set out in the Appendix is not as comprehensive and up-to-date as the Sport England guidance which is directly based on the most up-to-date guidance provided by sports governing bodies. For example, the Fields in Trust guidance does not include the full range of football, rugby and hockey pitches including some of the most common pitch types and the minimum dimensions for a u9/u10 mini soccer pitch are no longer consistent with current Football Association advice. To address this, it is therefore advocated that the Fields in Trust guidance in Appendix 1 is replaced with the established Comparative Sizes of Sports Pitches and Courts (Outdoor) guidance which is attached and is on our website at <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces">https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces</a>. Support is offered for the reference to the Sport England guidance on other sports facilities in paragraph 8.15.</p>	<p><b>15. Remove FiT references and replace instead with Sport England documentation wording</b></p>
<p><i>Paragraph 8.24</i></p>	<p>Paragraph 8.4 should confirm that MUGAs designed for formal sport and/or are supported by sports lighting should have regard to Sport England’s Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sports <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces">https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces</a> and Artificial Sports Lighting <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-lighting">https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-lighting</a> design guidance.</p>	<p><b>16. Include this sentence within para 8.24</b></p>
<p><u>Chapter 9: Submission of a Supporting Statement</u></p>	<p>The requirement for applicants to prepare a supporting statement is welcomed as is the reference to Sport England’s Active Design guidance checklist in paragraph 9.3. It is requested that applicants are encouraged to engage with Sport England in advance of submitting a planning application where the application involves the loss of sports facilities or where new on-site sports provision is proposed. This is pertinent as Sport England will be a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing field and would usually be consulted as a non-statutory consultee for specialist advice on planning applications for residential developments that make on-site sports facility provision. Early engagement at</p>	<p><b>17. Wording to reference early engagement with Sport England to be included in para 9.2 of the SPD.</b></p>

		pre-application stage is helpful for identifying design and layout issues in the masterplanning of a scheme and addressing them to avoid issues being raised during the planning application stage which could require major amendments to be made.	
Essex County Council	Chapter 4: Context	Environment Act will make biodiversity net gain compulsory as part of new development Emerging Essex GI Standards. The Essex GI Strategy needs to be referenced here as well - This Strategy was prepared on behalf of the Essex Green Infrastructure Partnership, which included Harlow Council.	<b>18. Added to Chapter 4</b>
	Para 10.7	Environment Bill should read Environment Act	<b>19. Amendment made</b>
Canals and Rivers Trust	General Comment	The waterways have a rich biodiversity, with many areas benefiting from SSSI, SAC, SLINC or CWS designations. Developments can have an adverse impact on the ecology of the waterways. The document references the importance of linear corridors such as the River Stort and the role they can play individually and as part of a connected Green/Blue Infrastructure network.	<b>20. No changes needed</b>
Environment Agency	Inclusion of buffer zones	A minimum of an 8m undeveloped buffer zone (measured from bank top) should be maintained around water courses..... River corridors and the adjacent riparian buffer zones are particularly effective habitat corridors. Such networks and corridors may also help wildlife adapt to climate change. Buffer zones can also protect and improve water quality. Development that encroaches on watercourses can have a potentially severe impact on their ecological value.....A 5m buffer zone for ponds would also help to protect their value for wildlife and ensure that the value of the adjacent terrestrial habitat is preserved.	<b>21. Additional wording included under Blue Infrastructure Section (8m buffer already included in Local Plan Policy PL11 as well).</b>
	Water Directive	Developments must be compliant with the Water Framework Directive, and should seek to enhance the river habitat and hydromorphology, delivering WFD actions and Thames RBMP objectives	<b>22. Agree with comment but reference already made in Local Plan Policy PL11</b>
	River enhancement and restoration	The importance of river enhancement and the restoration of rivers should be recognised within the SPD document, not only for the impact on biodiversity, but also in terms of natural methods of flood risk management and improvements to water quality. The enhancement of river habitat and river restoration should be seen as a matter of course	<b>23. Additional wording included within SPD (in addition to what is already included in Local Plan Policy PL11).</b>

		where development is proposed adjacent to rivers/water bodies. Any development adjacent to water courses should seek to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace hard engineering alongside and within river channels with soft engineering options where feasible.</li> <li>• Actively seek opportunities to reconnect rivers with their floodplains for flood risk reduction and resilience against climate change as well as habitat enhancement.</li> <li>• De-culvert river channels where possible, particularly through redevelopment. Do not culvert any river channels. Mitigation must be put in place where hard engineering solutions in river channels result in any loss of habitat (including buffer zones). This is to compensate for habitat loss and to ensure provision of overall net gain in biodiversity in line with NPPF.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of in channel and riparian zone habitat.</li> </ul>	
Harlow Civic Society	Linking GI	We support the content in this SPD. We would particularly highlight the design and location of open spaces and green infrastructure (GI) and the need to be 'landscape-led', to link to existing GI in adjacent sites and to relate to the overall green wedge and green finger layout.	<b>24. Agree with comment - SPD does refer to sites being landscape led and linking to existing GI as does Local Plan policies. No change needed.</b>
SSRE Investment 4 Ltd	Information Box 4	Currently states that the population of a new housing development should be based on the Harlow average household of 2.44 people for outline applications, but this fails to consider how flatted developments have a lower average level of occupancy compared to houses. So an outline planning application for a town centre flatted development should not be based on 2.44 people per household. It also states that reserved matters and full applications should have a population calculated based on paragraph 6.11, but there is no paragraph 6.11 in the document.	<b>25. The SPD includes wording already that states that as smaller dwellings are less likely to be occupied by families, the occupancy levels of the proposed dwellings will also be taken into account by the Council in calculating the off-site financial contribution for provision for children and young people, e.g. 1 bed dwellings are less likely to generate a lot of children. The table is also referred to as a guide only. No changes needed. Amendments made to refer to the correct information box.</b>
	Table 14	Specifies that for developments of 600+ dwellings, there should be on-site provision of playing fields. Similarly developments of 500+ dwellings are required to provide on-site NEAPs and Allotments. This is not an appropriate expectation for high density town centre	<b>26. The SPD includes wording that states that if the provision of open space, play area or allotment site,</b>

		<p>proposals, where there is not possible to make such provisions. The limitations of what on-site provisions town centre, flatted developments can provide should be clearly outlined.</p>	<p><b>cannot be provided in part or full on a development site due to site constraints and/or site location, then provision may exceptionally be provided off-site where it is located within the accessibility distance from the development site or relevant part of it to the open space. No changes needed</b></p>
	<p>Tables 15 and 16</p>	<p>The cost per sqm and per person set out in these tables does not seem to be supported by any form of evidence base to demonstrate how they have been reached. Furthermore, these costs do not seem to be informed by any form of development viability consideration. The Council's own evidence base for its Local Plan ('Local Plan Viability Assessment, Affordable Housing and Community Infrastructure Levy Review' by BNP Paribas Real Estate, March 2018) identified viability constraints for large flatted developments that meant the 30% affordable housing requirement will struggle to be met, so it is not clear how the Council can justify setting these additional development costs without having tested if developments can viability provide them. It is recommended that viability is highlighted as a consideration in agreeing any form of open space contributions.</p>	<p><b>27. The SPD is an update of the 2007 version which already seeks contributions towards off-site facilities and maintenance. The costs are based on the information stipulated in paragraph 7.11. As per Policy IN6, if a viability assessment is justified then this will be accepted in exceptional circumstances and appropriate review mechanisms put in place.</b></p>

## Appendix 2: Consultees

The following statutory organisations, groups and charities were notified about the consultation on the draft Design Guide Addendum SPD. These are in addition to individuals and companies who were notified.

Affinity Water	Highways England
Anglian Water	Historic England
British Telecom/Openreach	Home Builders Federation
Canal and River Trust	Homes and Communities Agency
Chelmsford City Council	Hunsdon Parish Council
Department for Education	Later Life Matters
East Hertfordshire District Council	Lee Valley Water
East of England Ambulance Service	Little Hadham Parish Council
Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council	Matching Parish Council
Environment Agency	National Grid
Epping Forest District Council	Natural England
Epping Upland Parish Council	Nazeing Parish Council
Essex County Council	Network Rail
Essex County Fire and Rescue Service	NHS England
Essex Police	North Weald Parish Council
Fawbert & Barnard's Primary School	Pear Tree Mead Academy
Forestry England	Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust
Greater Anglia	Robert Halfon MP
Harlow Alliance Party	Roydon Parish Council
Harlow and District Sports Trust	Sawbridgeworth Town Council
Harlow Area Access Group	Sheering Parish Council
Harlow College	Sport England
Harlow Council Officers and Councillors	Thames Water
Harlow Ethnic Minority Umbrella	Theatre Trust
Harlow Fields School and College	UK Power Networks
Hertfordshire County Council	West Essex CCG

## Appendix 3: Press Notice

### **Consultations on the Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the Public Open Space Standards and Biodiversity SPD, the Updated Statement of Community Involvement and the Updated Validation Checklists**

#### **Town Centre Masterplan SPD**

The Town Centre Masterplan SPD sets out a vision for Harlow Town Centre as being a successful, sustainable place which serves as the commercial centre for the existing town of Harlow and the wider Garden Town. The SPD has been developed to deliver this, building upon the work of the Town Centre Area Action Plan (work on the Area Action Plan was paused following adoption of the Local Plan). The SPD provides guidance on; movement; urban design; public realm; appropriate land uses; and tall buildings in the town centre. This is presented both through a set of overarching principles and through a series of drawings which lead to an indicative Masterplan of how the town centre could be developed as well as more specific opportunity areas.

#### **Public Open Space Standards and Biodiversity SPD**

The Public Open Space Standards and Biodiversity SPD seeks to meet the open space, sport and recreational needs of Harlow, protect and enhance the district's Green Infrastructure and biodiversity (including calculating net-gain) and ensure appropriate on-site and/or off-site contributions are made for open space. Upon adoption, it will replace the existing Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation SPD adopted in 2007 which will be revoked.

#### **Updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The SCI explains how the Council involves the community in the preparation, alteration or review of local planning policies as set out in various Development Plan Documents, and in determining planning applications. The SCI has been updated to make reference to the Quality Review Panel, additional information on pre-application advice and how residents can be informed of applications through on-line mapping. Changes also include a more flexible approach when engaging with planning applications and an expectation that applicants will undertake more pre-application engagement.

#### **Updated Validation Checklists**

The Council has prepared updated Validation Checklists, which relate to specific policies in the Harlow Local Development Plan and set out the information that applicants must submit when making a planning application. The requirements depend on the nature and scale of the development proposed in an application. There are separate Checklists for major, minor and householder applications. By requiring information at an early stage, the Council can make decisions quicker and the quality of decisions can be improved.

**We are now seeking your views on the two SPDs and updated SCI and Validation Checklists.** The most efficient way to provide comments is by email:

- [towncentreMP@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:towncentreMP@harlow.gov.uk) for the Town Centre Masterplan SPD
- [openspaceSPD@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:openspaceSPD@harlow.gov.uk) for the Public Open Space Standards and Biodiversity SPD
- [Myharlow@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:Myharlow@harlow.gov.uk) for the Updated Statement of Community Involvement and Validation Checklists

The consultation starts on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and **closes at 5pm on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022.**

Comments received after this date may not be accepted.

- The SPDs can be viewed online at [www.harlow.gov.uk/spd](http://www.harlow.gov.uk/spd)
- The SCI can be viewed online at [www.harlow.gov.uk/sci](http://www.harlow.gov.uk/sci)
- The Validation Checklists can be viewed online by going to [www.harlow.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control](http://www.harlow.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control) and clicking 'Make a planning application'.

Copies of the SPDs and SCI can also be found in Harlow libraries and the Civic Centre during normal opening hours. If you are unable to access any of the documents, please contact us and we can send you a hard copy.

By responding, you give consent to the Council to hold & process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation. Your name, organisation & comments may be available for others to view at the Council offices & on the Council website. The SPDs and SCI have been prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

## **Appendix 5: Public Questionnaire on Council Website**

### **Section 1: Tall Buildings**

Do the definition and categories of tall buildings reflect what you consider tall buildings to be?

How many storeys do you feel a building should have to be called a tall building?

Thinking about the height and scale of tall buildings, are there any specific places in Harlow which you think would benefit from them?

In the town centre specifically, would you prefer individual tall buildings or clusters of ones which are at different heights?

What heights do you think are acceptable (in storeys)?

Aside from the points mentioned in Chapter 1, are there any other potential impacts of tall buildings which should be addressed?

### **Section 2: Privacy and Overlooking**

Do the minimum separation distances provide suitable privacy between houses?

Do the light angle distances provide suitable protection against impacting neighbouring properties?

Comment

### **Section 3: Amenity Space and Gardens**

Are the minimum acceptable standards for rear gardens for new dwellings appropriate?

Please explain why/Comment

### **Section 4: Householder Guidance**

Do you think the extension principles will ensure houses remain well-proportioned and local character is respected?

Do you think the householder guidance provides suitable protection against impacting neighbouring properties?

As householder guidance is normally used by individual homeowners when planning work on their property, do you find it easy to understand?

Comment

### **Chapter 5: Climate Change**

Are there any design aspects relating to the effects of climate change, other than those identified in Chapter 5, which should be considered?