



1. Background

- 1.1. The Council has prepared a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), in conjunction with the consultants Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners and McBains, in order to provide a masterplan framework to provide interim planning guidance to shape and guide development in Harlow Town Centre.
- 1.2. It is intended that this document should be read in conjunction with the Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP), which was formally adopted by the Council in 2020, particularly in respect of policies RS2 and PR5, together with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other key local guidance documents that may be appropriate.
- 1.3. The Harlow Town Centre Masterplan Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) contains the following chapters as set out below.
 1. Introduction
 2. Portrait of Harlow Town Centre
 3. Planning Policy Context
 4. Vision and Objectives
 5. Masterplan Framework & Guidance
 6. Public Realm Guidance
 7. Building Height Strategy
 8. Opportunity Area Guidance
 9. Delivery

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, following an extension of time to take into account the Christmas period and the impact of COVID restrictions, concluded on the 11th 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 people, organisations and businesses who have either recorded an interest in SPDs or are statutory consultees;
- a notice being published in the local newspaper;
- posts being made on the Council's social media channels to advertise the consultation;
- hard copies of the SPD being available at the Civic Centre, Latton Bush Centre and libraries in Harlow; and
- an online version being made available on the Council's website.

3.4. In response to the consultation some 23 representations were received from organisations and individuals who made over 100 comments in respect of the document. This included Essex County Council (ECC), Sport England, the Theatres Trust, Environment Agency, Historic England, Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Board members, Harlow Civic Society, the Canals and Rivers Trust together with developers and members of the public.

3.5. The comments made in respect of this consultation are summarised in the attached schedule.

Consultees

The following statutory organisations, groups and charities were notified about the consultation on the draft 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

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 for the Town Centre Masterplan SPD
- openspaceSPD@harlow.gov.uk for the Public Open Space Standards and Biodiversity SPD
- Myharlow@harlow.gov.uk for the Updated Statement of Community Involvement and Validation Checklists

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

Comments received after this date may not be accepted.

- The SPDs can be viewed online at www.harlow.gov.uk/spd
- The SCI can be viewed online at www.harlow.gov.uk/sci
- The Validation Checklists can be viewed online by going to 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).