

Appendix C – Equality impact assessment

Xxxxxx (ref. no.)

Date assessment completed: 29th June 2023

Title of equality impact assessment: Harlow Town Centre North Development Brief

Service: Strategic Growth and Regeneration

Team: Forward Planning

Focus / aim of equality impact assessment

To examine the potential impacts of adopting the Town Centre North Development Brief for the purposes of assessing planning applications in the area.

Names and roles of officers completing the assessment

Vicky Forgione – Principal Forward Planning Officer

Contact telephone number of lead officer 01279 446878

Policy / service / function details

This is a new policy/service/function

What is the purpose of the policy / service / function?

The Town Centre North Development Brief has been prepared to guide the regeneration and redevelopment of the area between Velizy Avenue to the east, Fourth Avenue to the North, Haydens Road to the west and the top of Broad Walk to the south. This is known as Opportunity Area 3 in the Town Centre Masterplan SPD. The development brief will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for the area. The aim of the brief is to ensure that development in the Town Centre North area is brought forward in a comprehensive way.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Harlow Council as local planning authority and landowner in the area, businesses or local services located within the Town Centre North area and other landowners, residents who live within or who live close to the area, Essex County Council and other infrastructure providers/statutory bodies who will have an interest in the delivery of this area, developers who currently have or may have an interest in bringing forward development in this location.

Are there any other documents / strategies linked to this policy / service / function?

Harlow Local Development Plan which sets out strategic policies for the area. The Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document which identifies this area as an area for growth and redevelopment. Regeneration proposals for the Bus Station (Sustainable Interchange funded by Towns Fund Bid).

Who is affected by the policy / service / function?

Businesses, landowners and developers who reside or have an interest in the area and residents who live within or close to the site. This includes Princess Alexandra Hospital who use the area for car parking for the hospital, the Royal Mail Delivery Office as a large business, Harlow Council as a major landowner of the public realm. Essex County Council and other statutory bodies where development may affect services or infrastructure.

Who has been involved in the development of the policy / service / function?

The planning section at Harlow Council has developed the brief. It was published for consultation for a period of 4 weeks in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and businesses, landowners, nearby residents, and infrastructure providers were also contacted. Their responses have informed a revised document.

Which staff carry out the policy / service / function?

The development brief will be uploaded onto the Forward Planning webpages of the Council's website. It will be used by the planning team to help discuss and determine proposals and applications for the area. It will also be used by other departments when considering uses on the land including the potential relocation of uses and public realm opportunities.

Quantitative and qualitative data

Quantitative

Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables – and generalise results from a larger sample population.

What quantitative (numerical) data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?

The number of employees who will use the brief will include Regeneration Team, Estates Team and Planning Team. This is approximately 15-20 officers. There are number of landowners (cannot be definitive of exact number – approximately 15-20 different landowners) There are approximately 40-45 businesses/shops. There are also a number of residential units – approximately 250 homes but this includes the current Joseph Rank House which will be relocating residents from the premise. This also excludes new planning consents that are not yet completed/being built.

What gaps are there in the quantitative data?

The exact numbers of residents living in the area, change in numbers of businesses in the area, other departments who may use the document.

What other quantitative data do you need?

N/A for adopting the document in the form it is in.

Qualitative

Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relies on the direct experiences of

human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives.

What qualitative data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?

Based on previous experience of preparing development briefs and similar documents it will mostly be officers of Planning, Regeneration, developers and statutory consultees who will use the document to help inform decision making and regeneration considerations. Other officers in the Council may also consider the requirements in the brief when relocating businesses, creating businesses, delivering affordable housing on some of the sites etc.

What gaps are there in the qualitative data?

The Council undertook a detailed consultation with landowners, businesses, residents and statutory bodies/infrastructure providers on the brief and changes have been made accordingly. However there were some businesses and residents who did not respond to the consultation. Therefore it is difficult to understand their potential inputs into the brief. However the brief is just an initial step in the delivery of the Town Centre North Elm area and there will be ample opportunities for further debate and discussion with landowners and businesses through additional engagement and with residents when applications are submitted.

What other qualitative data do you need?

As set out above, some businesses and landowners did not respond to the consultation. This is not considered necessary for the Town Centre North brief and further engagement will be undertaken as the area progresses including consultation through the planning application processes.

Consultation

Number of formal or informal consultation that have taken place or that you are planning to hold to inform your Equality impact assessment

Formal 4 week consultation in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (in relation to consulting on SPD documents)

Title of consultation	Date	Who did you consult with?	What were the main issues raised?	Gaps in data	If further consultations are needed to fill these gaps – state with whom, by whom, when and how is this going to be done?
Town Centre North Development Brief	15 th May 2023 – 9 th June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory bodies - Landowners - Local Plan database contacts - Internal departments - Social media channels - Hard copies - Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for redevelopment of certain sites - Concerns over tall buildings and effects on wind tunnelling - Support for more sport, leisure and entertainment uses - More shops and a market - Need more modern architecture and better quality materials - Protect features - Concerns over congestion - More on biodiversity, SuDS and reference to SPZ 3 - Additional guidance on potentially contaminated sites - Potential secondary school places contribution - Support for comprehensive approaches, urban park and natural play areas and possible architectural competitions - Ensure links across Fourth Avenue to Sainsbury's - Need for a Heritage Impact Assessment - PAH parking needs - Concerns from Royal Mail over their operations and loss of parking 	As previously stated some existing businesses and local residents did not respond	<p>Engagement between the planning/ regeneration teams and businesses and landowners will be made.</p> <p>Further consultation with residents/ businesses/ statutory bodies will be made as planning applications are submitted. This will be done in accordance with the relevant Planning Regulations when the applications are submitted.</p>

Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010

Assessment of Impact – Based on the data you have analysed and provided, and the results of the consultation or research you have undertaken, list below how the policy or function will or does work for each of the following equalities groups.

Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010 - Age, Disability

What do you know?

Development must be accessible to all disabilities in terms of housing and public realm. Where development provides family accommodation the correct level of play space and education requirements are provided

What do people tell you?

That movement around the Town Centre North area must be easy for disabled people. Essex County Council have stated that financial contributions towards secondary school, as well as primary/early years, may also be required

What does this mean?

This means that contributions will need to be sought from developers and that the design of proposals must take into account movement of disabled people.

What can you do?

The brief and separate site briefs already ensure that any future development or regeneration proposals clearly identify improvements for the movement and accessibility for visitors and residents in the area, identifying better connections. Policies in the Harlow Local Development Plan already ensure that suitable amenity space, design and development standards are in place when designing and developing buildings and spaces. The inclusion of reference for secondary school places ensures that the right contributions are being sought towards healthcare, education and other services and facilities.

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

The Town Centre development brief has little to no impact on the equalities of residents/businesses. A consultation was undertaken and responses taken into account. Further engagement will be undertaken and this brief only informs the submission of planning applications for the site. This is where further consultation will be undertaken and where details of schemes can really be assessed on their impact. The document is a material consideration only.

Action plan

Number of action plans N/A

Project Manager

Project Manager: Vicky Forgione (Principal Forward Planning officer)

Date: 29-06-2023

Assistant Director Pauline Elliott (Interim Head of Planning and Building Control)

Date XX