

Equality impact assessment – Appendix C

Date assessment completed: 11 November 2024

Title of equality impact assessment: Shopfront Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Service: Strategic Growth and Regeneration

Team: Forward Planning

Focus / aim of equality impact assessment

To examine the potential impacts of adopting the Shopfront Design SPD for the purposes of assessing planning applications in the area.

Names and roles of officers completing the assessment

Caroline Hardy – Forward Planning Officer

Contact telephone number of lead officer 01279 446562

Policy / service / function details

This is a new policy/service/function

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

The Shopfront Design SPD sets out principles to be followed when designing or altering shopfronts, both historic and modern. It is primarily aimed at developers (including the Regeneration Team) and planning agents involved in submitting a planning application and planning officers involved in the determination and enforcement of planning applications.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Landowners, developers and planning agents involved in submitting a planning application.

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

Harlow Local Development Plan which sets out the policies which is the focus of this SPD.

Who is affected by the policy / service / function?

Landowners, developers and planning agents.

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

The planning section at Harlow Council has developed the SPD. It was published for consultation for a period of 4 weeks in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The responses have informed a revised document.

Which staff carry out the policy / service / function?

The SPD 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 in Harlow.

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 SPD will include Regeneration Team and Planning Team. This is approximately 15 officers.

What gaps are there in the quantitative data?

There may be other departments that will use the SPD but this is not known.

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 SPDS 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, as well as the elected members of the Council, where appropriate.

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 SPD and changes have been made accordingly. However, there were some consultees who did not respond to the consultation. Therefore, it is difficult to understand their potential inputs into the document. However, the SPD is a document which sets out principles for designing and altering shopfronts and there will be ample opportunities for further discussions as and when applications are submitted.

What other qualitative data do you need?

As set out above, some consultees did not respond to the consultation. This is not considered necessary for this particular SPD which is a technical document.

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?
Shopfront Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	11 October – 8 November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory bodies • Local Plan database contacts • Internal departments • Social media channels • Hard copies • Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifying the use of latticed or perforated shutters should be considered first rather than solid shutters for shopfront security measures. 	As previously stated some consultees did not respond	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.

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 retail and public realm.

What do people tell you?

This is a technical document that sets out the principles to be followed when designing or altering shopfronts.

What does this mean?

That the Council will endeavour to ensure the promotion of good design for shopfronts.

What can you do?

The SPD amplifies the requirement of policy in the Local plan and will ensure the promotion of good design for shopfronts.

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

Overall, it is considered that the SPD will have a significant impact on the development management process giving planners additional tools to achieve Council Policy.

Action plan

Number of action plans N/A

Project Manager

Project Manager: Caroline Hardy (Forward Planning officer)

Date: 11 November 2024

Assistant Director Tanusha Waters (Assistant Director – Planning & Environment)

Date 11 November 2024