

## HDC Due Regard (Equality Analysis)

Due Regard (Equality Analysis) is an on-going proactive process which requires us to consider the effect our decisions are likely to have on local communities, service users and employees, particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of disadvantage.

This template has been designed to assist in the collation of information and evidence required to support the 'Due Regard' process when introducing new policies/procedures/functions and services or reviewing existing ones.

For help with this template please view the guidance document, which contains advice to assist you when you are considering the impact (both positive and negative) of the proposed actions on each of the protected equality characteristics.

**Name of policy/procedure/function/service being analysed:** Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

**Department and section:**

**Name of lead officer:** Adrian Eastwood

**Other people involved (assisting or reviewing – including any service users or stakeholder groups etc.):** Various – see consultation below.

**Date assessment completed:** 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020

### Step 1: Defining the policy/procedure/function/service

Is this a new, amended or reviewed policy? What are the aims, objectives and purpose and how will they be achieved? What are the main activities and which communities are likely to be affected by these activities? What are the expected outcomes?

The purpose of Development Management SPD is to provide guidance to assist decisions on planning applications in accordance with the Harborough District Local Plan and any other material factors.

Its purpose is to inform decisions allowing sustainable development and preventing unacceptable proposals.

A necessary feature is that there should be equal and unbiased access for all in a transparent decision process.

The SPD potentially impacts the whole community of the district including individuals; businesses, groups / bodies representing them and stakeholders serving the area. It covers all sections of the community, including those with protected equality characteristics, living in all parts of the district. The expected outcome of the SPD is that the wider community understands with its guidance and the Council will take planning decisions

**Step 2: Data collection & evidence**

What relevant evidence, research, data and other information do you have and is there any further research, data or evidence you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on different communities? Include quantitative data as well as qualitative intelligence such as community input and advice.

The SPD is informed by knowledge of the characteristics of the districts population and business community as set out in the Spatial Portrait (Local Plan Appendix D), Sustainability Appraisal Report (Part 1 Scoping, Chapters 6 &8) and Settlement Profiles, all available on the Council’s website.

The Harborough Local Plan sets the policy for this SPD. The Local Plan gives evidence about the housing and economic needs of the district and that Harborough has an aging population (with an older demographic than England) and a lower proportion of people from ethnic minority communities. As a mainly rural district, it also has issues relating to access to services for those without their own transport which can lead to isolation for many groups.

Past experience and anecdotal information on Development Management work with Traveller and Gypsy communities identifies some difficulty engaging with the Development Control process e.g., with ‘form filling’ to which planning staff have responded by being available to assist when difficulties for users from this group, or others with literacy or visual impairments are identified, through the planning duty system available daily and publicised by Customer Services staff. In preparing the SPD the service will liaise with Leicestershire County Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer to improve its communication with these communities.

**Step 3: Consultation and involvement**

Have you consulted and if so outline what you did and who you consulted with and why?

A group of planning officers has been consulted. Feedback shall be collated and included in the SPD.

Progress of the SPD is expected to include further consultation to obtain views from organisations likely to include the public, Parish Councils, Homebuilders Federation, Leicestershire Police, Traveller Liaison Officer, HDC Open Space Manager etc...

Once the draft revised SPD is approved by Cabinet / Council an expected period of 7 weeks of public consultation will take place. Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the adopted SCI. This will involve contacting organisations and individuals on the Strategic Planning contact database, a media release / publicity via the Council’s website and making the document available for inspection.

A record of response received will be maintained and available.

**Step 4: Potential impact**

Considering the evidence from the data collection and feedback from consultation, which communities will be affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face in relation to Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities and also the potential impact on Community Cohesion. Remember people have multiple characteristics so the impact of a policy on a particular community may impact people within the community differently. Where possible include numbers likely to be affected.

The SPD provides guidance for planning decisions. It does not itself set planning policy.

The Development SPD is not anticipated to set out a need for differentiation when taking planning decisions. The basis for planning decisions is statutorily set out

### **Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact**

If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs have identified can be addressed.

There is anticipated to be no overall adverse equality impact of the SPD document.

### **Step 6: Making a decision**

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Harborough District Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights. Does it contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty – eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

The SPD shall contribute to HDC's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights by setting out guidance to planning decisions.

### **Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/procedure/service change**

What monitoring systems will you put in place to promote equality of opportunity, monitor impact and effectiveness and make positive improvements? How frequently will monitoring take place and who will be responsible?

Continue to undertake satisfaction surveys of users of the planning application service, at the point Decision Notices are issued. Analyse data and use it to inform improvements to process and practice within the Development Management Team.

Explore the potential to collect and analyse equalities monitoring data via any online consultation system (Planning policy) or alternative consultation methods to enable a better understanding of: the profile of users, identify any gaps or barriers for particular groups and to inform future consultation practices (beyond the statutory minimum) for the planning service.

## Equality Improvement Plan

### Equality Objective :

**Action:** Explore the potential cost / benefits of collecting data on development management use surveys to the operational effectiveness of those surveys.

**Officer Responsible:** A.Eastwood

**By when:** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

### Equality Objective :

**Action:** Record equality issues arising from consultations on SPD to inform the approach to the use of any specific additional consultation methods and techniques.

**Officer Responsible:** A.Eastwood

**By when:** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

**Signed off by:** A.Eastwood

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020

Once signed off, please forward a copy for publication to Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer  
e-mail: [j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk](mailto:j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk) , telephone: 01858 821070.