



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Service	Place
Policy, practice, function, or project assessed	Draft Affordable Homes in New Developments SPD
Project Lead	Alex Rosser-Trokas
Team	Planning Policy & Economic Development
Start date of Assessment	19/07/2024
Completion date of Assessment	06/11/2024

Is this an initial EqIA	Yes	
Is this a full EqIA		No

Initial Assessment Impact on People (EqIA)

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

The SPD provides guidance on the provision of affordable homes when preparing a planning application. Its aim is to help applicants meet the requirements for affordable homes set out national planning policy and local planning policy (Policy H2-Affordable Housing) set out in the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032 (HLP32), which sets out the levels and types of affordable homes that are required in relation to qualifying developments, as well as support pre-application discussions and the submission of planning applications.

More specifically the aim of the guidance is to recommend that affordable homes are considered early in the planning process and ensure that the Council is better placed to secure social rented accommodation as part of the “65% affordable housing for rent” Policy H2 requirement.

This will ensure that the optimum quantity, mix, type and tenure of affordable homes for rent that meet local needs is delivered. It will also clarify the Council’s approach to off-site provision and the calculation of financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision.

The SPD will replace the Affordable Homes with New Development Technical Advice Note (TAN), 2024.

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

Yes. The SPD provides guidance to support the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032 Policy H2-Affordable Housing. The SPD also supports the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2023-2027; particularly the objective in relation to providing more social rented homes.

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function?

The SPD applies across the whole administrative area of Hart District Council and therefore it is considered that there will be many people who will benefit from the guidance it contains. For example, the SPD will benefit applicants who live in or work in the District by providing clearer guidance to inform their submissions and the evidence required to support a planning application e.g. the Council’s approach to off-site provision and the calculation of financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision has been clarified.

Importantly, it will also have a positive impact upon local residents by ensuring that the optimum quantity, mix, type and tenure of affordable homes for rent is provided in order to meet local needs.

In addition, the guidance will assist Officers and Members in robust and consistent decision making.

A4. How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

The SPD applies across the whole administrative area of Hart District Council and will potentially affect all those submitting development proposals for housing which are captured by the requirements of Policy H2 of the Local Plan. Therefore, this guidance potentially applies to all sections of the community. While the precise number of people affected is difficult to quantify a useful indication is the number of planning applications received in the 2023/24 financial year, which was approximately 730.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

No. The SPD does not set new policy, nor would any new development arise as a direct result of the guidance. Rather it would assist in the implementation of Policy H2-Affordable Housing contained in the Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032. There are no significant changes proposed to the Local Plan policies in the immediate future. The SPD has been through a public consultation process, subsequent amendments and this is the final version.

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

No. This is not a new Policy of function but sets out further advice and guidance to support existing policy.

B. EVIDENCE/DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining the likely impact of the policy or function. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research, or consultation reports. If you do not have equality information about people with particular protected characteristics, consider whether you need to fill information gaps.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which helps you to assess the likely impact of the policy or function?

As stated in section A above the ultimate aim of the guidance is to ensure that the optimum quantity, mix, type and tenure of affordable homes for rent that meet local needs is delivered. It will also benefit applicants who live in or work in the District by providing clearer guidance to inform their submissions and the evidence required to support a planning application.

The best indication of overall local affordable housing need in the district the number of households which feature on the Council's Housing Register, which as at July 2024 totalled 1449. However, no equality data is collected for the purposes of the housing register as it is not relevant to a person or household's housing need.

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show? For example, are certain protected characteristics underrepresented.

N/A

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

N/A

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

A public consultation will be conducted on the draft SPD for a six week period between the 8 November 2024 and 20 December 2024. This will be carried out in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, 2021. Following the consultation period, the Council will review all representations received and produce a consultation statement which summarises the representations made and the Council's associated responses. In responding to representations the Council will give due regard to all relevant national and local planning policies and guidance, plus legislation such as the Equality Act 2010 and Part 5 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation statement will be made available to view on the Council's website.

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

Whilst there has been no formal or widespread consultation on the SPD prior to the public consultation, Hart Council Officers have had some dialogue with Hart Council Officers in the Housing and Development Management teams which has helped with the drafting of the document.

Following the public consultation period, the Council will review all representations received and produce a consultation statement which summarises the representations made and the Council's associated responses. In responding to representations the Council will give due regard to all relevant national and local planning policies and guidance, plus legislation such as the Equality Act 2010 and Part 5 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation statement will be made available to view on the Council's website.

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

N/A

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION Assess the potential impact on each of the equality strands/groups. The impact could be negative, positive, or neutral. If you assess a negative impact, then refer to the evidence for your initial conclusions.				
Protected Characteristics:	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Evidence
Sex: Identify the potential impact of the policy of function on men and women	Yes			<p>As set out in section A2 above the SPD provides guidance to support the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032 Policy H2 - Affordable Housing. The SPD also supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027.</p> <p>It is considered that none of the protected characteristic groups will (or could potentially) experience adverse effects as a result of adopting this SPD. Rather, all sections of the community will potentially positively benefit from the guidance it contains, particularly those who feature on the Council's Housing Register, as they are in the greatest known housing need in the District.</p>
Race: A group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins	Yes			
Disability: A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities	Yes			
Age: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups	Yes			
Sexual Orientation: Identify the potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, or heterosexual people	Yes			
Religion or Belief: Identify the potential impact of the policy on people with different religions or beliefs	Yes			

Gender Reassignment: The process of transitioning from one gender to another	Yes			
Gender Identity: Examples: non-binary, gender fluid, transgender	Yes			
Marriage and Civil Partnership:	Yes			
Pregnancy and Maternity: Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. This includes pregnancy related sickness absence. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding	Yes			
Social and Economic Status: Does the HDC activity impact adversely on people on lower incomes?	Yes			
Other: Examples: Carers, Rurality	Yes			

C2.	<p>Could you minimise or remove any potential adverse impact that is high, medium, or low significance?</p> <p>No adverse impacts have been identified.</p>
C3.	<p>Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?</p> <p>The SPD provides further guidance on the application and implementation of policy set out in Hart's Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032. All the policies therein were subject to an EQiA. Whilst it is considered that the document will promote equal opportunities in all sections of the community, as stated above, it is expected to have particular benefits for those who feature on the Council's Housing Register and who are in the greatest known housing need.</p>
C4.	<p>Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions, but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.</p> <p>N/A</p>

D.	CONCLUSIONS
D1.	<p>Was there sufficient data to complete the assessment?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
D2.	<p>If "NO," what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment?</p> <p>N/A</p>

ACTION PLAN to minimise or remove potential adverse impacts or enhance positive impacts.

Action	Planned Milestone	Officer Responsible
N/A	N/A	N/A

Resources: Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

N/A

Signature of Executive Director or Chief Executive:	 Mark Jaggard Executive Director – Place Services
Date:	7 November 2024