

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Reference –

Department	Growth	Version no	1
Assessed by	Cameron Wilson	Date created	27/08/2025
Approved by	Stephen Broadbent	Date approved	11/11/2025
Updated by		Date updated	
Final approval		Date signed off	

Please keep a record of when updates are made and who has made them. Final approval should be given before the EqIA is published. A referencing system will be in place for annual budget changes, but outside of this, you should use your service's own reference. The reference should remain the same from initial proposal through to implementation and ongoing reviews. Please remember that a full EqIA **ONLY** needs completing if you have decided there are impacts (positive or negative) on people at **stage 1** of the EqIA process. If there are no impacts, then this should be recorded both on the EqIA and in a publicly available format (e.g. a committee report) **with a summary of why you have reached this conclusion.**

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have **due regard** to the need to

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- foster good relations between different groups

Section 1: What is being assessed?

1.1 Name of proposal to be assessed

1.1.1 Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Policy Document Update

1.2 Describe the proposal under assessment and what change it would result in if implemented.

1.2.1 The Council is reviewing, updating and consolidating two existing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) into one new SPD. Its purpose is to provide guidance to planners and developers on the design of retail premises, shopfronts and signage, as well as the integration of security measures. It will aim to encourage entrepreneurship and economic activity by recognising the important part design

can play in achieving this. In particular, it will look at the strengths of existing buildings and streetscapes, and how these can be enhanced by better design. The SPD will support and supplement Policies EN3 and DS3 of the adopted Core Strategy (and Policies EN4 and DS3 of the emerging Local Plan).

- 1.2.2 As the previous documents were produced and adopted nearly two decades ago, national level legislation has changed in the meantime. With the introduction of the Equalities Act 2010 and an update to the Approved Document M of Building Regulations 2025, the new SPD document needs to be updated to meet these new requirements. By applying current best practice for accessibility, the design policy will be able to meet disabled, young and old people's needs to access shops.
- 1.2.3 As the above legislation has been adopted at a national and local level, they will have already undergone an Equalities Impact Assessment to measure their effects on protected characteristics. Due to this assessment being on a guidance document created to support the adopted local plan, the associated impact lies within the adoption of new policy within the local plan. Nevertheless, if accessibility is incorporated correctly within the guidance, it should have a positive impact by informing the designers and planners to be able to incorporate accessibility into their work. As there will be a positive impact a full EqIA has been completed making sure that the equality of opportunity for different groups has been advanced.

1.3 Stage 1 Assessment:

In order to assess whether this proposal requires a full EqIA, a stage 1 assessment must be completed on all proposals. Once complete, please inform the EqIA with the outcome explaining how it was reached and who was consulted. Please also state if the need for an EqIA may be revisited, and if so under what circumstances.

Protected Characteristics:	Impact Y/N
Age	Y
Disability	Y
Gender reassignment	N
Race	N
Religion/Belief	N
Pregnancy and maternity	N
Sexual Orientation	N
Sex	N
Marriage and civil partnership	N
Additional Consideration:	
Low income/low wage	N
Care Leavers	N

Stage 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment:

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The full impact assessment process outlined below, will examine what the impact of the proposal is likely to be on protected groups, low-income groups and care leavers. The Equality Act 2010 requires that we give due regard to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. Will your proposal support either of these two aims? It is particularly important that positive impacts are highlighted when they affect a lot of people or have high impact on a small number of people.

2.2 Will this proposal advance equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic and/or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not? If yes, please explain further. Please ensure you have understood the meaning of 'equality of opportunity' and 'fostering of good relations' and 'protected characteristics'- before answering this part.

- 2.2.1 Yes. One aspect of the consolidated SPD is to support planners and developers to produce shopfront designs that give the entire community the opportunity to access them. Incorporating accessibility into the design process allows for individuals with protected characteristics to be at the forefront of design. Therefore, fostering good relations between both people who have a protected characteristic and people who do not as they will be able to share the same space.

2.3 Will this proposal have a positive impact and help to eliminate discrimination and harassment against, or the victimisation of people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.

- 2.3.1 This proposal will have a positive impact on people who are of a young/old age and/or are disabled. It will impact these protected characteristics as they face the greatest physical barriers of entry to premises. Planners, developers and shop owners will utilise the SPD, therefore eliminating these barriers within the design process. When a new shopfront is completed, everyone within the community will be able to access the same space.
- 2.3.2 If people with these shared characteristics are now able to access the same space as people who do not have a shared characteristic, then they are more likely to be involved and not discriminated against. It also allows for these people to have more independence and to participate in societal norms.

2.4 Will this proposal potentially have a negative and/or disproportionate impact on people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.

- 2.4.1 No

2.5 Please indicate the level of negative impact on each of the protected characteristics?

Proportionality needs applying when considering the level of the impact. A change in social care provision is likely to have much higher impact than reducing grass cutting, even though both could have impacts.

(Please indicate high (H), medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each)

Protected Characteristics:	Impact (H, M, L, N)
Age	N
Disability	N
Gender reassignment	N
Race	N
Religion/Belief	N
Pregnancy and maternity	N
Sexual Orientation	N
Sex	N
Marriage and civil partnership	N
Additional Consideration:	
Low income/low wage	N
Care Leavers	N

2.6 How could the disproportionate negative impacts be mitigated or eliminated?

2.6.1 N/A

Section 3: Dependencies from other proposals

3.1 Please consider which other services would need to know about your proposal and the impacts you have identified. Identify below which services you have consulted, and any consequent additional equality impacts that have been identified.

3.1.1 Pre-consultation engagement has been undertaken within the conservation service with planning and development management colleagues supporting the development of the SPD through redrafted content. Alongside this, the portfolio holder has been made aware of the SPD and has engaged to offer steer for the direction of the SPD at a preliminary stage.

- 3.1.2 A range of key external stakeholders will be consulted to offer their input into the production of the SPD before formal public consultation. Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statements have been received from Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. No other impacts on protected characteristics have been identified.

Section 4: What evidence have you used?

4.1 What evidence do you hold to back up this assessment?

- 4.1.1 Despite the national profile of 'planning' - only an estimated 3% of the public engage in individual planning application consultations and only 1% on local plans. (MHCLG UIN 24262, 29th June 2021)
- 4.1.2 Planning is not considered accessible to all. The systems are complex, and the language and systems seem to be from a previous age. People with money, education, access, and time can navigate the system – making it inequitable. (Paraphrased from - The Future of the Planning System in England, 2021)
- 4.1.3 Planning has also seen a reduction in public sector resources to deliver planning functions and wider socio-economic changes informing the continued uptake of digital technology.

4.2 Do you need further evidence?

- 4.2.1 Specific consultation with the Mobility Planning Group during the formal public consultation phase will allow for their comments to be incorporated into the SPD. The Mobility Planning Group are a user-led organisation that brings together services users and providers, so they have specific knowledge addressing mobility, accessibility and travel planning.
- 4.2.2 It is expected that the formal consultation of the SPD may yield further gaps in information and evidence. This will be brought into the finalised post-consultation update of the SPD and also any revisions required on the EQIA.

Section 5: Consultation Feedback

It is vitally important the proposal is consulted on with relevant protected groups and key partners to ensure the potential impact is understood.

5.1 Results from any previous consultations prior to the proposal development.

- 5.1.1 None

5.2 The departmental feedback you provided on the previous consultation (as at 5.1).

- 5.2.1 N/A

5.3 Feedback from current consultation following the proposal development (e.g. following approval by Executive for budget consultation).

5.3.1 This section of the EQIA will be updated following the public consultation phase for the updated version of the SPD – noting also the Council's legal requirements in relation to equalities.

5.4 Your departmental response to the feedback on the current consultation (as at 5.3) – include any changes made to the proposal as a result of the feedback.

5.4.1 This section will be updated in due course.