

## Initial assessment or screening

*(to be used to decide whether or not an equality impact assessment is needed)*

**Name of policy, service or decision:** Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

**Lead directorate:** Regeneration and Enterprise

### 1. Description – what is being assessed?

The Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being considered at cabinet for adoption.

The existing 'New Housing Development SPD' was first adopted in 2007 and updated in 2013. The updated SPD will be retitled 'Residential Design Guide SPD' and will incorporate the Council's Planning Guidance Note (PGN) 17 – Housing Extensions, thus bringing all guidance relating to new housing development and residential extensions into one document.

The aim of the SPD is to provide localised guidance in relation to design and density to ensure that residential applications, including new housing development and householder extensions, respect the local character, identity of the borough and achieve a high level of design.

The Updated SPD will include new sections and guidance to address the changes to peoples living and working environments following Covid-19 Pandemic, such as a greater move to home working and running a business from home. As well as including guidance in relation to the Council's approach to assessing applications for Homes of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) and Children's Care Homes.

Following consultation and adoption of the SPD, the 'Residential Design Guide SPD' will supersede current guidance and will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The SPD is being prepared under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations (2012)

**2. Lead officer on assessment:** Robyn Bennett (Planning Officer)

**3. Head of service:** Carl Mellor

**4. Members of assessment team:** Robyn Bennett (Planning Officer)

Elizabeth Vesty (Principal Planning Officer)

**5. What are the main issues relating to each protected characteristic?  
Consider all three parts of the public sector equality duty.**

<b>Protected characteristic</b>	<b>Issues</b>
All protected characteristics	It is considered that there would be no significant impacts as a result of the SPD and it is not anticipated to have any significant impact on the protected characteristic classes (reviewed below).
Age	<p>The SPD provides guidance relating to the requirement for a mix of housing types and tenures which would have a positive impact on both younger and older people by requiring different housing types to meet the needs of varying demographics.</p> <p>Additionally, guidance is provided requiring new developments to incorporate accessibility and sustainable design measures. This will have a positive impact on younger and older generations who rely more on public transport to access local amenities and facilities.</p> <p>The overall guidance requires a high level of design and the creation of sustainable developments, which will have a positive impact for all ages, creating a healthier living environment, and help mitigate against climate change.</p>
Disability	While the SPD does not provide specific guidance for accessibility for disabilities, as this is covered in the existing Access for All SPD, the Residential Design Guide SPD does require accessibility and legibility for new developments, as well as wider connectivity of new developments. This would result in a positive impact on residents with disabilities through improved accessibility.
Gender reassignment	No potential impacts have been identified for this group as a result of the guidance contained within the SPD.
Pregnancy or maternity	No potential impacts have been identified for this group as a result of the guidance contained within the SPD.
Race	No potential impacts have been identified for this group as a result of the guidance contained within the SPD.
Religion or belief	No potential impacts have been identified for this group as a result of the guidance contained within the SPD.

Sex	No potential impacts have been identified for this group as a result of the guidance contained within the SPD.
Sexual Orientation	No potential impacts have been identified for this group as a result of the guidance contained within the SPD.
<b>Are there any significant issues relating to other groups of people e.g. through social class or in particular parts of the borough?</b>	
None	
<b>6. Outline any information, such as from data collection, engagement feedback or complaints, which indicates a differential impact on particular protected groups.</b>	
<p>Part 5 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012) sets out the requirements for public consultation to be undertaken in the preparation of the SPD.</p>	
<p>A six-week consultation on the draft SPD took place between Monday 9th January 2023 until Monday 20th February 2023. In accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, all Statutory Consultees were consulted along with other key stakeholders considered appropriate. In addition, residents, and organisations on the Dudley Local Plan Consultation Database, as well as agents/developers who regularly submit planning applications in the Borough were contacted.</p>	
<p>The consultation was advertised via the Council's website and social media channels and copies of the draft SPD were available to view in the following locations:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Dudley Council House,</li> <li>o Dudley Library</li> <li>o Brierley Hill Library</li> <li>o Stourbridge Library</li> <li>o Halesowen Library</li> </ul>	
<p>A total of 12 representations were received during the consultation. All representations received were analysed and addressed in the production of a final version of the SPD. A consultation statement detailing the comments received and how they were addressed has been produced and will be published alongside the Residential Design Guide SPD, once adopted.</p>	
<p>None of the representations received raised any additional comments relating to the EqIA.</p>	

**Conclusions**

**7. On the basis of sections 5 and 6, is an equality impact assessment required? Provide a justification for your answer.**

As the SPD provides guidance on existing policies contained within the Local Plan, it is considered there would be no significant impacts and therefore no equality impact assessment is required.

It is considered that the guidance contained within the SPD will result in the requirement for well-designed and accessible new developments which respond to climate change and ensure housing developments are well designed, more accessible, built to higher environmental standards and create a sense of place. Therefore, there is likely to be an overall positive impact for residents, including equality groups.

**8. If no, list any actions identified. If yes, what priority do you assign to the EIA (high, medium, low) and why?**

This screening document will be published alongside the SPD on the Council's Website

**Signed assessment lead officer:** Robyn Bennett

Date: 17/05/2023

**Signed head of service:** Carl Mellor

Date: 24/05/2023