

**Draft Harrow Small Sites Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)  
Consultation Statement (pre-consultation)  
December 2021**

**1. Draft Harrow Small Sites Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

This consultation statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 12 (a) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

**2. Name of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

Draft Harrow Small Sites Design Code SPD

**3. Purpose of the Document**

The purpose of the draft SPD is to provide design guidance for development on small sites (less than 0.25 hectares) within the borough. Such guidance seeks to support and provide further guidance to policies in the current Harrow Local Plan (and any subsequent Plans) as well as the London Plan 2021.

Specifically, Policy H2: Small Sites of the London Plan indicates that boroughs should pro-actively support well-designed new homes on small sites in order to significantly increase the contribution of small sites to meeting London's housing needs. The preparation of design codes (such as the draft SPD) is one means identified in Policy H2 to achieve this. Such an approach is also consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021.

The SPD provides Harrow-specific design guidance, reflecting Harrow's character and context as identified in the Harrow Characterisation Study 2021. Its structure seeks to follow the approach outlined in the National Model Design Code.

Once adopted, the SPD will provide specific guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies for future planning applications which come forward on small sites. It will be a material consideration when determining these planning applications.

**4. Stakeholders consulted during preparation of the SPD**

Internal stakeholders were the focus of engagement activity during the preparation of the draft SPD. In particular, a series of workshops were held with senior Development Management officers, Principal Urban Designer and Chief

Planning Officer. Focused discussions were also held with other relevant internal and external officers, including Principal Landscape Architect, those from the Council's domestic refuse collection service, Highways Authority, and Secure By Design officers within the Metropolitan Police.

Additionally, the draft document / background work was presented to the cross-party Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG), which considers matters relating to the Harrow development plan (i.e. London Plan, Harrow Local Plan, and supplementary planning documents).

The draft document has also in part being informed by a review of appeals relating to small sites to understand potential issues with existing guidance and its application to individual development proposals.

Cabinet considered the SPD at its meeting in November 2021 prior to agreeing to undertake consultation on the document.

## **5. How were stakeholders consulted?**

Stakeholders were engaged through a series of online workshops during various stages of the development of the draft Design Code. This included the site typology design work forming part of the linked Small Sites Capacity Study that tested design-principles on a number of small site typologies via 'representative' sites. In terms of the actual draft document, workshops covered each aspect / section of the document, with key diagrams discussed and amended based on feedback. A full draft of the code was provided for review and feedback by officers.

The PPWG engagement included provision of the draft document, presentation and opportunity to provide comment.

## **6. Summary of the main issues raised during initial consultations and how the Council is responding**

A range of issues were raised, spanning from the overarching approach to the document (i.e. flexibility versus prescription), incorporation / continued use of existing local guidance / approaches versus national / more widely used standards (i.e. 45 degree rule), use of the 'traffic light system' (two or three colours etc). The draft document responds to these issues.

A comparison between the draft document and existing guidance (Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD (2010)) has been prepared at the request of the PPWG to inform their consideration.

## **7. Next steps for Public Consultation**

The next stage of consultation will consist of a seven-week public consultation (more than the statutory four-week minimum and extended to take into account

that the period will run over Christmas / New Year). The consultation process will include:

- a. *Website* - will provide information on the draft Small Sites Design Code SPD and host the consultation documents.
- b. *Hard copies* – to be made available for inspection at the Council's offices, Harrow Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 2XY, between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday; due to Covid-19, the preference will be that the Council is contacted by anyone wishing to inspect the document prior to attending to ensure access arrangements are in place.
- c. *Email and letter notifications* to stakeholders and contacts on the Harrow Local Plan consultation database.
- d. *Social media presence and messaging* - Promoting the draft SPD consultation on social media will assist a rapid digital outreach to a wide range of local people, including those in younger demographics. Harrow Council's communications team has social media resources that can be drawn on.
- e. *Online drop-in sessions* - events allow the presentation of key consultation material to an audience, combined with direct questions and feedback. Due to Covid restrictions / emergence of new variants, these events will not be carried out in-person and will be held online. Two sessions will be held.
- f. *Questionnaire* – to seek respondent views an online questionnaire will be prepared.

The consultation period will run from Friday 17 December 2021 through to Monday 7 February 2022.

Upon completion of the consultation period, consultation responses / outcomes of drop-in sessions will be compiled and analysed, and the draft document amended as considered appropriate, in consultation with the stakeholders identified in section 4 above. The amended document will be presented to Cabinet in March or April 2022 for final adoption.

16 December 2021, Version 2.