

Title of proposed EIA	Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document Adoption
Reference No	EQUA664
EA is in support of	New Policy
Review Frequency	Annually
Date of first review	18/05/2022
Directorate	Inclusive Growth
Division	Planning and Development
Service Area	North West Development Planning
Responsible Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Charis Blythe
Quality Control Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Richard Woodland
Accountable Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Simon Delahunty-Forrest
Purpose of proposal	Adoption of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document
Data sources	Consultation Results; relevant reports/strategies
Please include any other sources of data	NA
ASSESS THE IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	.
Protected characteristic: Age	Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community
Age details:	Consultants undertook engagement as part of the masterplans production. To ensure residents of all ages (such as those with work commitments) would have the best possible chance of attending their local consultation events these were ran in the week and on weekends.  Consultation ran by the City Council on the masterplan draft SPD was published online and all those on the consultation database were notified. The database includes a wide range of volunteers covering voluntary, ethnic, religious, disability, environmental and businesses groups, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders.  In terms of responses to the SPD consultation 57 responses were received with 39 individuals completing the equalities data questions. Out of

these only 3 responses were received by people under the age of 30. Social media was used to promote the consultation with the aim of engaging with younger people who are generally less likely to get involved in planning consultations. Given the age profile of Sutton Coldfield the high level of response from people over 60 was to be expected. The proportion of residents who are 65 and above is 20%, well above the figure for Birmingham at 13% (data from Sutton Coldfield Profile 2015). 18 of the respondees to the masterplan consultation were over 60.

Some issues were raised in response to the consultation around the impact of the proposals on the older generation. These related to the location of the bus interchange, the topography of the town centre and how easy it will be for those with mobility issues to move between the interchange and the shops. Further work is being undertaken on the location and design of the interchange which will include a review on its accessibility for all user groups. The masterplan actually proposed a location for the interchange that is better located to the town centre heart than originally planned and one of the main reasons for this is how accessible it is to get from the bus stops to the heart of the shops. The masterplan also proposes a number of improved linkages throughout the centre. The objective of Connectivity has been updated to clearly state that the town centre will be accessible for all.

Protected characteristic: Disability

Disability details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Consultation ran by the City Council on the masterplan draft SPD was published online and all those on the

consultation database were notified. The database includes a wide range of volunteers covering voluntary, ethnic, religious, disability, environmental and businesses groups, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders.

Any requests for support with responding to the consultation were met, including the provision of printed copies of the document in order to ensure that no one was excluded from responding to the consultation. Out of the 39 individuals who provided equalities data 5 individuals responded to confirm they considered themselves to have a disability, 4 people declined to answer and 30 selected no.

There was a request in the masterplan that the town centre is accessible for all. The Connecting objective has therefore been updated to make a direct reference to the town centre being accessible to all to ensure this is clearly stated upfront in the masterplan.

There were a few comments that the proposals which to limit the impact of cars on the town centre unfairly impact on car users and those who need to access the centre by car. The masterplan takes a balanced approach that looks to reduce the impact of the Ring Road and create more people focussed streets. It does not look to make any of the town centre inaccessible but rather ensures the centre is accessible for all. Further modelling work is being undertaken to ensure we understand the full impact of the highway proposals and a car parking strategy will be undertaken.

The masterplan looks to address issues around how accessible the town centre is by including proposals that focus on people friendly environments and tackling the barrier caused by the road network. This will help to deliver a town centre that is accessible to all.

Technical design matters will be addressed through the accordance with other legislation and planning policy (e.g. Access for People with Disabilities SPD and Design Guide)

Protected characteristic: Sex

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Gender details:

Consultation ran by the City Council on the masterplan draft SPD was published online and all those on the consultation database were notified. The database includes a wide range of volunteers covering voluntary, ethnic, religious, disability, environmental and businesses groups, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders.

The masterplan looks to transform the town centre, which will help to protect and attract businesses to the centre. Traditionally the retail and service sector is well represented by a female workforce, so ensuring the health of the centre should have a positive impact.

There were no issues raised through the consultation. Out of the equalities data provided 9 were female, 23 male and 7 chose not to answer.

Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment

Not Applicable

Gender reassignment details:

Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Not Applicable

Marriage and civil partnership details:

Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Pregnancy and maternity details:

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businesses groups, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders.

The masterplan looks to focus services and facilities, such as health care, into the town centre within an environment that is accessible to all.

There were a couple of responses to the masterplan who positively welcome the provision of new public space and facilities within the town that will help create a family friendly environment.

Protected characteristics: Race

Race details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

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The masterplan looks to deliver a town centre that provides services and opportunities for all in an environment that fosters strong community.

There were no issues raised through the consultation. The equalities data suggests that the response to the consultation was not diverse with 33 out of the 39 individuals selecting white British. However, the constituency is less ethnically diverse, than the city as whole with 88% of the working age population being from a White background compared to 59% for Birmingham (data from Sutton Coldfield Profile 2015).

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Religion or beliefs details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Consultation ran by the City Council on the masterplan draft SPD was published online and all those on the consultation database were notified. The database includes a wide range of volunteers covering voluntary, ethnic, religious, disability, environmental and businesses groups, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders.

The masterplan looks to protect and enhance historic buildings in the town centre, and this was positively received during the consultation.

The majority of respondees who completed the equalities data selected Christian (17) followed by no religion at (13). This is considered representative of the demographics of Sutton Coldfield.

#### Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

##### Sexual orientation details:

#### Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Consultation ran by the City Council on the masterplan draft SPD was published online and all those on the consultation database were notified. The database includes a wide range of volunteers covering voluntary, ethnic, religious, disability, environmental and businesses groups, statutory bodies and other key stakeholders.

The masterplan looks to deliver a town centre that provides services and opportunities for all in an environment that fosters strong community.

No issues were raised through the consultation. In response to the equalities data 30 respondees selected heterosexual and 9 selected that they would prefer not to say.

#### Socio-economic impacts

The health of the town centre impacts on the health of the surrounding areas

economy. Through attracting investment, securing jobs and delivering homes the masterplan will have a positive social-economic impact. There were some concerns raised through the consultation in regards to how the masterplan responds to Covid-19. The strategy is to diversify the town centre away from retail and create a vibrant mix of uses, in an attractive environment to draw people into the centre. The overall strategy in the masterplan has therefore not been amended. However, there are more references in the masterplan to the impact of covid-19 and the City Council's recovery strategy. Further wording has also been added around encouraging creative, cultural and education uses into the centre to further strengthen the approach towards diversification of uses and supporting communities.

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

The adopted masterplan will be monitored through the existing monitoring framework of the Birmingham Development Plan. Further work is required on individual projects and where these involve the City Council more detailed EAs can be undertaken to assess the impact of proposals within the masterplan on specific groups.

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

The masterplan was compiled by consultants and is based on a Background Report which reviewed the economic, social and environmental health of the town centre. Consultation was undertaken by the consultants on the masterplan proposals. Public consultation was then undertaken by the City Council in

on the draft masterplan in line with the Statement of Community Involvement.

## Consultation analysis

The consultant-led public consultation on the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan lasted for four weeks during the period of 13th February 2020 to 9th March 2020. There has been continuous engagement with landowners within the town centre to ensure the plan reflects their aspirations. Over the four-week consultation period around 200 people participated in and/or visited the nine organised workshops and drop-in events. Formal responses were sent by 97 people and another 32 people submitted fully or partially filled-in response forms. An overview of the consultation undertaken by the consultants, and the main themes is available on the City Council's website.

The City Council led public consultation on the draft SPD built on this earlier engagement, seeking formal views on the masterplan. The consultation document was published online and all those on the Planning Policy Consultation Database were notified. The City Council social media was used to promote the consultation. Partners such as the Town Council, Business Improvement District (BID) and friends of Sutton Coldfield library also helped to promote the consultation through their networks. Two consultation events were held online to provide an opportunity for interested parties to hear more about the masterplan proposals and ask any questions. These were advertised on our website and through social media.

Overall 57 individuals or organisations formally responded to the consultation (18 written responses and 39 on BeHeard). A number of these were with detailed responses, proposing positive



suggestions for the masterplan's improvement.

The main points raised during the consultation are summarised below:

- Support for the masterplan and agreement that the town centre needs a strategy for transformation
- Support for the vision and objections with suggestions for additions around design, heritage, culture and cycling.
- Support for the redevelopment of the Gracechurch Centre and the Red Rose Centre – including support for a new library facility.
- Support for the measures to improve the environmental quality of the town centre, including proposals around celebrating Plants Brook, green infrastructure and improving linkages with Sutton Park.
- Support for the proposals that look to reduce the impact of cars on the town centre and improve the cycling and walking experience.
- Support for town centre living and a better mix of uses to diversify away from retail.
- Requests for more details on the historic assets and how these will be complemented.
- Requests for more details on the design of new buildings, heights of buildings and sustainable design.
- Requests for the masterplan to consider creative, cultural and educational uses.
- Requests for references to safe and secure environments.
- Concerns about the level of detail in the masterplan, especially around the design of highway schemes and the delivery of projects.
- Concerns about the impact of the highway proposals on access via the car into the town centre, congestion and parking.
- Questions over whether the masterplan responds sufficiently to the impacts of Covid19 on the health of centres.

- Questions over whether the masterplan goes far enough to diversify the town centre away from retail.
- Detailed representations from site owners in support of their sites being included in the masterplan and requesting some amendments to the wording on projects.

Further details on the consultation, responses and how these have influenced the final masterplan are available in the Consultation Summary that support the adoption cabinet report.

Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

No adverse impacts were identified. Further delivery work is needed on the individual proposals which will allow this to be considered further. Detailed modelling work is being undertaken on the transport proposals and any adverse impacts will be mitigated.

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact?

Not necessary as no adverse impacts were identified. Further delivery work is needed on the individual proposals which will allow this to be considered further. Detailed modelling work is being undertaken on the transport proposals and any adverse impacts will be mitigated.

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

As the SPD provides further detail to the Birmingham Development Plan it will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report. Additional monitoring will be put place to consider the impact of the masterplan of the overall health of the centre.

What data is required in the future?

Town centre health indicators, such as footfall counts, number of vacant units, quality of the environment.

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

N/A

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

Consulted People or Groups

Informed People or Groups

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

The masterplan sets out a strategy for the transformation of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre. The masterplan is in line with the Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) policies, which were subject to an Equalities Analysis. The masterplan has been informed by an evidence base, including evidence on the health of the town centre and consultation with communities and other stakeholders. The masterplan identifies opportunities for investment that will allow the centre to adopt to meet the needs of the communities and businesses. There will be positive outcomes for the local population from having a successful centre including new homes, job opportunities, access to services, education and culture and infrastructure delivery such as public transport improvements.

#### QUALITY CONTROL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing?

No

Quality Control Officer comments

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Proceed for final approval

Submit draft to Accountable Officer?

No

Decision by Accountable Officer

Approve

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

Reasons for approval or rejection

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records

Yes

Julie Bach

Person or Group

Content Type: Item

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Close

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