

# Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

The [EIA guidance notes](#) will help you complete this assessment.

If you need help or advice please contact Paul Harding. [P.harding@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:P.harding@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

**Organisation prepared for**

**Somerset West and Taunton Council**

**Version**

**1**

**Date Completed**

**30 September 2021**

## Description of what proposed change or policy is being impact assessed

The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide is a new planning policy guidance document under the adopted Local Plan and is proposed to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. Once adopted the SPD would be a material consideration when considering any planning applications. The Design Guide sets out the Council's aspirations for improving the quality of design in all types of new development and provides guidance for creating resilient and sustainable built environments which are responsive to everyone, regardless of age, ability, gender and income.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code advocate that local authorities produce design guides as a means to achieve a higher quality of development which addresses the aims above. The NPPF recommends Design Guides should be adopted as SPD's in order they are given as much weight as possible in the decision making process.

The document has been subject to three separate public consultations over an 18-month period (minimum of 6 weeks each) and has involved consultation with an extensive range of stakeholders, including all those shown in Appendix A of the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

This SPD provides clear guidance for the creation of high quality buildings and places. Para 124 of the NPPF states that 'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'. The Council places equal importance on the creation of sustainable placemaking as well as accessibility for all, particularly for those people from the disabled community.

As part of the preparation of the document several workshops took place with SCC Highways to inform its preparation, particularly on the section Streets, Places and Parking. This has involved SCC officers also updating their own highways guidance.

## Evidence

**What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups?** Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide has been reviewed.

This design guide document builds upon advice set out in NHCLG's National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code.

It also builds on work undertaken in the development and approval of other 'live' strategies:

- SWT Corporate Strategy;
- Taunton Garden Town Vision;
- Taunton Garden Town Charter and Checklist
- SWT Economic Development strategy;
- Improving Lives in Somerset (Health & Wellbeing) 2019-2028,
- Somerset Housing Strategy -2019-2023,
- Somerset Growth Plan 2017-2030

Each of the above which have been evidence-based using such sources as Office of National Statistics, Somerset Intelligence Partnership, Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA).

**Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups?** If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

Officers within the Council with an overview of the Equalities function, who have experience of identifying impacts on those with protected characteristics have been consulted for this initial identification of potential impacts.

The SPD document has been subject to three separate public consultations (for a minimum of 6 weeks each consultation). These consultations have included the relevant community and interest groups and individuals associated with protected characteristics.

The groups consulted in the consultation events have included the below organisations:

- i) Disability groups – Action on Disability and Development, Alzheimer's Society – Somerset, Autism Somerset, Bridgwater & Taunton Deane Deaf Club, Compass Disability Services, ESCAPE Support Groups, Maggie's Centre (Cancer Care),

- Mind in Taunton & West Somerset, RNID (Action on Hearing Loss), Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Somerset Sight, Taunton and District Mencap Society.
- ii) Diversity groups – Avatar Indian Dance Somerset, British Bangladeshi Association Somerset, CHARIS, Devon and Somerset Anglo-Scandinavian Society, Diversity Voice, Johnny Mars Foundations, Minehead and District Refugee Support Group, Minehead Methodist Church- Little Fishes Toddler Group, Multicultural Parents Group, Oakwood Church, Philippine International Neighbourhood Association of Somerset (PINAS), Polish Association Taunton, Polish Voice TV, RAISE (Racial Awareness Inclusion Support and Education CIC, Somerset Art Works, Somerset Film, Somerset Gypsy and Traveller Forum, Somerset Portuguese Association, South Somerset Filipinos and Friends Association (SSFFA), Syrian Women’s Group, Taunton Malayali Prayer Group, Taunton Welcomes Refugees, Under One Sun, West Somerset Inter-Cultural Friendship Society, YMCA Somerset Coast
  - iii) Multicultural groups – Anglo Chinese Society, Equality & Human Rights Commission, Ethnic Minority Achievement and Traveller Education Service, Friends Families and Travellers, Somerset Multicultural Association, Taunton Deane Polish Association, The Diversity Trust.
  - iv) Religious Groups – Bahai Community, Catholic Church Clifton Diocese, Diocese of Bath and Wells, Diocese of Bath and Wells – Community Cohesion, Humanists, Jewish Community of Somerset, Minehead Baptist Church, Somerset Churches Together, Taunton Deane and South Sedgemoor Methodist Circuit.
  - v) Other Voluntary Groups – 10 Parishes, Age UK Somerset, Arc Inspire (Taunton Association for the Homeless), Campaign to Protect Rural England (Somerset), Citizens Advice Bureau (Taunton), Citizens Advice Bureau (West Somerset), Community Council for Somerset, Creating Learning Opportunities in Western Somerset (CLOWNS), Cycle Somerset, Engage West Somerset, Forum 21, FWAG South West England Office, Home Builders Federation, Minehead Conservation Society, Onion Collective CIC, People Plus, Quantock Eco, RSPB South West England, Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership, Somerset Association of Local Council’s, Somerset County Federation of Women’s Institutes, Somerset Gay Health, Somerset Lesbian Network (SLN), Somerset Playing Field’s Association, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset Youth Partnership, South West Seniors Forum, Sparkle Somerset, SUSTRANS, Taunton Area Cycling Campaign, Taunton Deane Tenants Forum, Taunton Open Door, Taunton Ramblers, Taunton Women’s Aid, The Exmoor Society, Transition Minehead and Alcombe, Transition Town Taunton, Taunton Deane Village Agent (East), Wellington & District Sports Federation, West Somerset Village Agent 1, West Somerset Village Agent 2, West Somerset and Exmoor Bridleways, West Somerset LETS Group, Wivey Action on Climate and Environment, Women’s Equality Network Somerset (WENS), YMCA – Taunton.

No representations were received from any of the above groups as part of the consultations carried out. Similarly, no representations were received from individuals suggesting that any changes be made to the draft document.

It is important to understand that where a planning application is brought forward it would be subject to additional public consultation on the details of the particular scheme and its impact on the community, including people with Protected Characteristics.

**Analysis of impact on protected groups**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The aim is to create streets and places for everyone, walkers, cyclists, drivers and all ages/abilities.</p> <p>A principle of the guidance is to encourage the provision of life time homes.</p> <p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p> <p>The guidance advocates that seating should be provided in main places.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<p>The guidance advocates that Design &amp; Access Statement should ensure that development proposals will be equally accessible to all users, residents and visitors.</p>			
<b>Disability</b>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The aim is to create streets and places for everyone, walkers, cyclists, drivers and all ages/abilities.</p> <p>A principle of the guidance is to encourage the provision of life time homes, this includes wheelchair accessible dwellings.</p> <p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p> <p>The guidance advocates that Design &amp; Access Statement should ensure that development proposals will be equally accessible to all users, residents and visitors.</p>	□	□	☒
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p>	□	□	☒

	<p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p> <p>The guidance advocates that Design &amp; Access Statement should ensure that development proposals will be equally accessible to all users, residents and visitors.</p>			
<p><b>Marriage and civil partnership</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Pregnancy and maternity</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p> <p>The aim is to create streets and places for everyone, walkers, cyclists, drivers and all ages/abilities. This would include mothers with pushchairs and buggies.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>Race and ethnicity</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Religion or belief</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Sex</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety. This can be of particular importance to lone women at night.</p> <p>The guidance advocates that Design &amp; Access Statement should ensure that development proposals will be equally accessible to all users, residents and visitors.</p>			
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The guidance shows how developing safe environments and active frontages may improve the safety of places and the feeling of safety.</p>	□	□	☒
<p><b>Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</b></p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>All members of the community, including the protected groups, should benefit from the guidance set out in The Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide, since this guidance will help improve the quality of design in the district by creating sustainable locally distinctive development and better places in which to live and work.</p> <p>The aim is to create streets and places for everyone, walkers, cyclists, drivers and all ages/abilities. This would include carers assisting people in wheelchairs, pushchairs and buggies.</p>	□	□	☒



**Negative outcomes action plan**

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
N/A	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>

**If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.**

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**Completed by:****Fiona Webb, Placemaking Specialist****Date****30/09/2021****Signed off by:**

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<b>Date</b>	
<b>Equality Lead/Manager sign off date:</b>	
<b>To be reviewed by: (officer name)</b>	
<b>Review date:</b>	