



# **1 Background**

- 1.1.1 The Shopfront Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was produced to provide further design guidance on shopfronts within Harlow. The 2011 Design Guide refers to Neighbourhood Centres and Hatches only and is not applicable to the town centre. To address this 'gap' in the guidance and to take into account changes in planning policy and national guidance a Shopfronts Design SPD has been prepared. To ensure consistency of approach important elements of the Design Guide is included in the SPD. The SPD will also be beneficial in supporting place making objectives and enhance the attractiveness of developments that come forward in the town centre, for example Strawberry Star and any developments within Westgate, Broad Walk and Market Square.

# **2 Town and Country Planning Regulations**

- 2.1.1 The SPD was produced in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The relevant regulations relating to the consultation process are set out below.
- Regulation 12:
    - a) Requires the Council to produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated into the SPD.
    - b) Requires the Council to publish the documents for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received and identify the address to which responses should be sent.
  - Regulation 35:

Requires the council to make documents available by taking the following steps;

    - a) Make the document available at the principle office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
    - b) Publish the document on the Council's website.

# **3 Consultation and Responses Received**

- 3.1.1 The consultation period started on 11 October 2024 and closed at 5pm on 8 November 2024.
- 3.1.2 The Council complied with the legislative requirements for consulting on an SPD, as well as the requirements set out in the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3.1.3 This included:
- Notifications being sent to people, organisations and businesses who have either recorded an interest in SPDs or are statutory consultees (see Appendix A);
  - A notice being published in the local newspaper (see Appendix B);
  - Posts about the consultation being made on the Council's social media channels;
  - Hard copy of the SPD being available at the Civic Centre
  - An online version being available on the Council's website and GoVocal

3.1.4 In total, 8 people, organisations or businesses responded to the consultation. From these responses, 8 points were extracted which are detailed, along with a Council response to each, in Appendix C. A summary of the main issues raised during the consultation which required amendments to the draft SPD are as follows:

- Specifying the use of latticed or perforated shutters should be considered first rather than solid shutters for shopfront security measures.

## 4 Appendix A Consultees

The following statutory organisations, groups and charities were notified about the consultation on the draft Shopfront Design SPD. These are in addition to individuals and companies who were notified.

Affinity Water	Highways England
Anglian Water	Historic England
British Telecom/Openreach	Home Builders Federation
Canal and River Trust	Hunsdon Parish Council
Chelmsford City Council	Lee Valley Water
Chris Vince MP	Little Hadham Parish Council
Department for Education	Matching Parish Council
East Hertfordshire District Council	National Grid
East of England Ambulance Service	Natural England
Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council	Nazeing Parish Council
Environment Agency	Network Rail
Epping Forest District Council	NHS England
Epping Upland Parish Council	North Weald Parish Council
Essex County Council	Pear Tree Mead Academy
Essex County Fire and Rescue Service	Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust
Essex Police	Roydon Parish Council
Fawbert & Barnard's Primary School	Sawbridgeworth Town Council
Harlow Alliance Party	Sheering Parish Council
Harlow and District Sports Trust	Sport England
Harlow College	Thames Water
Harlow Council Officers and Councillors	Theatre Trust
Harlow Ethnic Minority Umbrella	UK Power Networks
Harlow Fields School and College	
Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB	
Hertfordshire County Council	

## 5 Appendix B Press Notice

### **DRAFT SHOPFRONT DESIGN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)**

Harlow Council is consulting on the Draft Shopfront Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). You can view and comment on the SPD online at <https://engage.hggt.co.uk/en-GB/projects/shopfront-design-spd> or view the document in the Civic Centre during normal opening hours. If you are unable to access the document, please contact us and we can send you a hard copy.

The consultation starts on **11 October 2024 and closes at 5pm on 8 November 2024.**

Comments received after this date may not be accepted.



## 6 Appendix C Consultation Responses

Name	Response	Council Response (changes in bold)
Environment Agency 15/10/2024 – email	<p>Thank you for consulting us on the above Supplementary Planning Document.</p> <p>Based on a screening of the draft strategic plan against environmental constraints within our statutory remit, we have <b>no comments</b> to make at this stage.</p> <p>However, we welcome continued engagement with yourselves on strategic plans relevant to our remit.</p>	Noted
Natural England 18/10/2024 – email	<p>Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 11th October 2024.</p> <p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p>Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.</p> <p>Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, Natural England have no comments to make on this occasion.</p> <p>Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.</p>	Noted
Hertfordshire County Council 21/10/2024 – email	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above consultation. This letter relates to the services of the Growth &amp; Environment Department, which also incorporates other services provided by the county council where relevant.</p> <p>Having reviewed the document published online, Hertfordshire County Council does not consider the content, as drafted, would have an impact on HCC services and as such does not wish to provide any comments at this stage.</p>	Noted

<p>Canal River Trust</p> <p>21/10/2024 - email</p>	<p>Thank you for your consultation on the Draft Shopfront Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation.</p> <p>We are the charity who look after and bring to life 2000 miles of canals &amp; rivers. Our waterways contribute to the health and wellbeing of local communities and economies, creating attractive and connected places to live, work, volunteer and spend leisure time. These historic, natural, and cultural assets form part of the strategic and local green-blue infrastructure network, linking urban and rural communities as well as habitats. By caring for our waterways and promoting their use we believe we can improve the wellbeing of our nation. The Trust is a statutory consultee in the Development Management process.</p> <p>Having reviewed the draft document, the Trust have no comments to make.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Councillor Tony Edwards</p> <p>22/10/2024 - email</p>	<p>Can I ask that the Council consider specifying in planning guidance the use of “latticed or perforated” rather than “closed” shutters</p> <p>Here is a link to an example of the style <a href="https://unityshutters.sg/perforated-roller-shutters/">https://unityshutters.sg/perforated-roller-shutters/</a></p> <p>I believe the use of such shutters would provide the necessary security whilst at the same time avoid the “close steel shutter look” which I believes blights our shopping areas. It would also enhance the street scene as we seek to encourage the nighttime economy.</p>	<p>Principle 10: Security will be amended as follows:</p> <p>b) <b>External and internal solid shutter use is discouraged as they can create an unwelcoming, hostile environment and harm the streetscene. Security glass or latticed or perforated shutters are preferred unless it can be demonstrated that other shutters are necessary.</b></p>

<p>National Highways</p> <p>24/10/2024 – email</p>	<p>National Highways welcomes the opportunity to comment on the consultation of the above.</p> <p>National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is our role to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth.</p> <p>In relation to the Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP), our principal interest is in safeguarding the operation of the M11.</p> <p>This current consultation on the Draft Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be providing design guidance on shopfronts within Harlow, both historic and modern frontages.</p> <p>National Highways consider this current SPD consultation will not have a significant impact on the operation of the SRN.</p> <p>We have no further comments to provide.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Historic England</p> <p>05/11/2024 – email</p>	<p>Thank you for consulting us on the Council's Draft Shop Front Design Supplementary Planning Document. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process, and therefore welcome the opportunity to comment on these proposals.</p> <p>While we do not currently have the capacity to comment, we will be interested in receiving future consultations on this and related projects.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

<p>Harlow Civic Society</p> <p>12/11/2024 – email</p>	<p>In 1981 Essex County Council's Listed Buildings and Conservation Officers : David Stenning, Peter Richards, and the late Robin Carpenter produced an excellent booklet entitled <b>Conservation in Essex No.5</b> relating to <b>shopfronts</b> primarily in Conservation Areas. Two sentences in the Introduction remain relevant : "New shopfronts should be regarded as an opportunity to enhance the street scene by providing something that respects the traditional concepts, forms a logical part of the overall elevation and emphasises the uniqueness of a particular village (cf. Harlow's neighbourhood centres) or town".</p> <p>"Where opportunities occur, it should be the long-term aim to achieve replacement shopfronts which re-emphasise the individual components of the frontage by being less obtrusive and better related to the overall proportions of the building". The Essex CC guidance was primarily aimed at improving shopfronts in Conservation Areas or in historic buildings, e.g. in Old Harlow Station Road there is now an opportunity for sensitive commercial infill between Gothic House (agreed site for John Graham's Blue Plaque) and the Zenz restaurant fronting Station Road.</p> <p>I was Planning Officer at the time of the redevelopment of Staple Tye neighbourhood shopping centre in the early 1990's and took inspiration from the traffic-free Boscombe shopping arcade in Bournemouth for the overall frontage canopies, arguably a throwback to Edwardian times, but on a more modest scale with "Bookends" formed by Lidl supermarket and what is now the Poundland shop. Staple Tye remains well used in "Greater Parndon" and it has been good to see the Dorringtons the bakers' shops at both Staple Tye and The Stow reverting to 1950's company light green and cream pastel-shaded style of shop front which should set the standard for other nearby units. The Nuffield House dental surgery seems to have fitted into The Stow seamlessly, although the original surgery, attached to the first Harlow New Town GP surgery by the Nuffield Foundation in 1954 (see the internal plaque), was a good example of form following function.</p>	<p>The Council appreciates the references made to Essex County Council's 1981 booklet on shopfronts and shopfronts across Harlow and believe that the principles set out in the Shopfront Design SPD will ensure shopfront design will continue to contribute to the public realm and character of the area.</p>
---	---	--