

EQUALITY SCREENING

Equality Impact Assessment guidance should be considered when completing this form.

POLICY/FUNCTION/ACTIVITY	LEAD OFFICER
Updated Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Judith Orr

A. What is the aim of this policy, function or activity? Why is it needed? What is it hoped to achieve and how will it be ensured it works as intended? Does it affect service users, employees or the wider community?

The aim of the updated Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to seek to ensure the effective and consistent implementation the Council's Spatial Development Strategy and the Affordable Housing Policies in the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan (July 2020) notably, policies:

- SL19: Housing Mix and Size Requirements
- SL20: Affordable Housing

and as such, it is a fundamental part of the planning policy 'toolkit'.

The Updated Affordable Housing SPD makes a number of changes/ updates to the adopted Affordable Housing SPD 2022. These changes were necessary as a result of several significant changes having taken place which impact on affordable housing provision in the last two years. These include the following:

- On 12th December 2024 the new government published an updated version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The new NPPF has significant implications for affordable housing delivery in Runnymede, and it is considered that these need to be clearly spelt out.
- Runnymede Borough Council, alongside many other local authorities, is finding it difficult to get Registered Providers to take on its affordable housing units, and consequently this change in circumstance, needs to be reflected in an update to the SPD.
- Having had the SPD in place for two years now it is considered that a couple of further miscellaneous updates to the document would be beneficial.

The updated document will be adopted as a supplementary planning document and will be an important material consideration for the determination of planning applications.

The SPD will not affect any employees or service users on the basis of (a) protected characteristic(s) they have. Any effects it has on the wider Borough community, including those groups with protected characteristics are likely to be beneficial in that the SPD will result in more effective delivery of Affordable Housing and ensuring that it is secured in perpetuity through the planning system.

B. Is this policy, function or activity relevant to equality? Does the policy, function or activity relate to an area in which there are known inequalities, or where different groups have different needs or experience? Remember, it may be relevant because there are opportunities to promote equality and greater access, not just potential on the basis of adverse impacts or unlawful discrimination. The Protected Characteristics are: Sex, Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Beliefs, Sexual Orientation, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity.

It is not considered that there will be any potential negative impacts on any individuals with protected characteristics if the updated Affordable Housing SPD were to be adopted. The SPD aims to make the housing market more affordable for both renting and other forms of low-cost affordable home ownership. As such, this is likely to bring positive impacts to those with the protected characteristics of race, disability, sex and age.

It is however anticipated that there will be positive impacts for anyone seeking affordable housing within the Borough particularly those with the protected characteristics of race, disability, gender and age. The Affordable Housing SPD is therefore likely to have a positive impact on health and well-being, including mental health and the well-being of lower paid Runnymede residents.

Continued monitoring of the Affordable Housing SPD will take place after it is adopted which may reveal any positive or negative impacts that exist and will assist officers in providing measures that seek to mitigate any negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics.

If the policy, function or activity is considered to be relevant to equality then a full Equality Impact Assessment may need to be carried out. If the policy function or activity does not engage any protected characteristics then you should complete Part C below. Where Protected Characteristics are engaged, but Full Impact Assessment is not required because measures are in place or are proposed to be implemented that would mitigate the impact on those affected or would provide an opportunity to promote equalities please complete Part C.

C. If the policy, function or activity is not considered to be relevant to equality, what are the reasons for this conclusion? Alternatively, if there it is considered that there is an impact on any Protected Characteristics but that measures are in place or are proposed to be implemented please state those measures and how it/they are expected to have the desired result. What evidence has been used to make this decision? A simple statement of 'no relevance' or 'no data' is not sufficient.

It is not considered that a full EqlA is required for the following reasons:

- It is not anticipated that the implementation of the SPD will have a negative impact on any of the nine protected characteristics.
- The SPD is likely to have positive impacts on the protected characteristics of race, disability, gender and age, by ensuring that future developments will make increased provision for affordable housing. This is likely to have a positive impact on health and well-being, including mental health and the well-being of lower paid Runnymede residents.
- The SPD will provide detailed guidance and advice to ensure effective and consistent implementation of the relevant affordable housing policies. It is fully consistent and complementary to the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, which had a detailed EqlA undertaken at each stage of Plan preparation. The Affordable Housing SPD provides detailed guidance to help implement the requirements of Policies SL19 and SL20 and the site allocation policies of the Runnymede Local Plan which have already been assessed under EqlA to have either positive or neutral impacts on protected characteristics of the population.

Date completed: 10/11/2025

Sign-off by senior manager: Georgina Pacey 12/11/2025