

## EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

<b>POLICY/PROPOSAL:</b>	Draft Affordable Workspace Supplementary Planning Document
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Regeneration & Environment
<b>TEAM:</b>	Regeneration
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Honey Nounou
<b>DATE:</b>	17/12/21

*NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.*

### SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

The Council in 2020 adopted the [Brent Affordable Workspace Strategy & Action Plan](#), which outlines eight actions to increase supply in the borough. Action 1 proposes a Brent Affordable Workspace Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide additional guidance on how Local Plan Policy for affordable workspace is expected to be delivered.

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD provides detailed guidance to optimise Affordable Workspace in new developments, provides clarity to planning applicants, will inform the assessment of planning applications, and be a material consideration for future planning decisions. Furthermore, the SPD:

- details Affordable Workspace policy and context;
- provides guidance on affordability, discounts to market rents and service charges;
- explains delivery outcomes and minimum sizes;
- outlines leasing and disposal arrangements to operators;
- illustrates the calculation and circumstances for commuted sums;
- provides location and specification recommendations; and
- outlines the management plan requirements and monitoring obligations.

Standardised Affordable Workspace s106 obligation templates and Affordable Workspace Management Plans are included to provide further clarity. To ensure the SPD remains relevant over the Local Plan period, the Council will be expected to review the document every 5 years.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD would affect various groups of people in the borough, including developers, Affordable Workspace operators, businesses, residents, ward members, town teams and community groups.

#### **Disadvantaged groups**

Access to low cost workspaces has the potential to benefit disadvantaged groups, particularly economically disadvantaged groups. The proposed SPD will facilitate the delivery of new, high-quality Affordable Workspace in higher-value locations within the borough including

Wembley and Kilburn. Affordable Workspace operators provide start-ups and SMEs with managed affordable space to work and grow their business. All new affordable workspace buildings will be Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant and meet current building and accessibility standards.

#### **Women**

Women could also be positively impacted. Affordable Workspace is often available on flexible, easy-in easy-out terms, thereby accommodating working pregnant women and mothers, who may only want to work on a part time basis and not be able to commit to a long term lease (particularly self-employed women).

#### **BAME Community**

Brent is ethnically diverse with 65% of its population from black, Asian and ethnic backgrounds (BAME). The SPD aims to prioritise and meet the workspace requirements of local residents and businesses, including the Black Business Network and the aims of the Black Community Action Plan.

#### **Young People**

Affordable Workspace provides young entrepreneurs with a space to test their ideas and grow their businesses, with the physical space often overlaid by business support packages and networking opportunities. Younger people will generally have less wealth and less disposable income and by facilitating more Affordable Workspace, the SPD will have a positive impact on younger people in Brent.

#### **Developers**

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD provides planning and development guidance to facilitate the delivery of Affordable Workspace by developers across the borough, and sets out a clear and robust framework for collaboration with operators from the earliest stages of development.

#### **Operators**

The SPD has been drawn up based on market research conducted with Affordable Workspace operators. Research included typology, quantum and location preferences. The SPD therefore provides a framework for the delivery of workspace most suitable for operators and residents in Brent.

#### **Mitigating impacts**

There must be proper planning for the impacts that workspaces and their operations will have upon places, and transparent engagement with people likely to use Affordable Workspace in advance of their delivery. Affordable Workspace should be monitored to gauge supply and demand for different types of space and sectors in the borough, and this intelligence fed into planning policy and guidance.

All promotional materials should be provided in an accessible way, such as being published online, in plain English and in an accessible format, so they are readily available to the public.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes, there is relevance to the council's public sector equality duty, and due regard to such is paid in drawing up this equality analysis. The principles and proposals in the draft Affordable Workspace SPD will guide delivery of Affordable Workspace in the borough over the coming

years, and therefore should aim to remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to characteristics of protected groups.

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD aims to provide guidance for developers in delivering suitable workspace across the borough. Increased provision of Affordable Workspace is expected to advance equality of opportunity, by giving those with less financial security the opportunity to access spaces in the borough. End users and tenants could potentially be prioritised or referred from disadvantaged groups (see above at Q2).

4. Please indicate with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age	X		
Sex		X	
Race	X		
Disability	X		
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity	X		
Marriage		X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		X
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	X	
<p><b>If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.</b>  <b>If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.</b></p>		

## SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD is a direct result of Brent's adopted Affordable Workspace Strategy and Action Plan, which itself was supported by extensive research on affordable workspace and local affordability, including council commissioned research and business survey work undertaken by consultants Hatch Regeneris.

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD has built on robust baseline analysis and followed engagement with internal and external stakeholders; Greater London Authority (GLA), local authority best practice, operators, developers, council management team and lead member. Brent's draft Local Plan sets out four new Affordable Workspace policies (BE1, BE2, BE3 and BE4), and was extensively consulted upon and subject to its own equality impact assessment:

[https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16415876/core\\_gen\\_04-equalities-impact-assessment.pdf](https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16415876/core_gen_04-equalities-impact-assessment.pdf).

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD was drawn up by colleagues in the Regeneration Team, who conducted market research with 49 London-based workspace operators across different typologies (offices, creative studios, makerspaces, kitchens and mixed workspaces) to form a substantive evidence base for this SPD. The findings of the market research can be found in Appendix 1 of the draft Affordable Workspace SPD.

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD will be subject to formal public consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. This will provide the opportunity for developers and local businesses, residents and communities to provide input into the SPD.

2. For each "protected characteristic" provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state "not applicable".

<b>AGE</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Workspace provides young entrepreneurs with a space to test their ideas and grow their businesses. Younger people will generally have less wealth and less disposable income, and by facilitating more affordable workspace, the SPD will have a positive impact on younger people in Brent.</li> </ul>
<b>DISABILITY</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new developments including Affordable Workspace are required to be DDA compliant, accessible and meet current building standards. Disabled people will therefore benefit from access and be positively impacted by Affordable Workspace.</li> </ul>
<b>RACE</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SPD aims to prioritise and meet the workspace requirements of local residents and businesses, including the Black Business Network and the aims of the Black Community Action Plan. Consultation with the Black Business Network will inform how to</li> </ul>

	best provide Affordable Workspace for this community and will have a positive impact.
<b>SEX</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Sex is identified in this equality analysis.</li> </ul>
<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Sexual Orientation is identified in this equality analysis.</li> </ul>
<b>PREGANCY AND MATERNITY</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft Affordable Workspace SPD seeks to encourage the provision of affordable, accessible, flexible spaces in the borough that would accommodate pregnant women and mothers, particularly self-employed mothers and pregnant women.</li> </ul>
<b>RELIGION OR BELIEF</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Religion or Belief is identified in this equality analysis.</li> </ul>
<b>GENDER REASSIGNMENT</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment is identified in this equality analysis.</li> </ul>
<b>MARRIAGE &amp; CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</b>	
<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership is identified in this equality analysis.</li> </ul>

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No.

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD was developed through consultation with Affordable Workspace operators who provided a substantive evidence base. Successful delivery of Affordable Workspace requires partnerships between developers/landlords, the Council, Affordable Workspace operators, and end-users. The Council is committed to ongoing discussions with operators in the context of new Affordable Workspace in the development pipeline.

Applications to join the approved Affordable Workspace operator list will seek to ensure that operators take into account any impacts their occupancy of spaces will have upon protected groups in the borough, and how they can mitigate negative impacts and maximise the benefits.

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD also draws upon Brent's adopted Affordable Workspace Strategy & Action Plan and supporting evidence base. Evidence includes council commissioned research and business survey work which defines workspace affordability where cost of workspace should be up to 20% of annual turnover. This has informed the SPD guidance on how to define and secure affordability.

Statutory public consultation on the draft Affordable Workspace SPD will provide a further opportunity to engage developers and local businesses, residents and communities.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

N/A

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

N/A

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

The draft Affordable Workspace SPD outlines preferred delivery approaches, Affordable Workspace Management Plan requirements to be provided by planning applications at planning submission and secured under s106 obligations, as well as guidance on monitoring Affordable Workspace planning obligations and timing of payments.

All section 106 obligations pertaining to Affordable Workspace must be evidenced in writing and submitted to the Council in a timely manner (outlined in Table 1 on page 15). For additional information about meeting planning obligations, refer to the emerging Planning Obligation Supplementary Planning Document.

The Affordable Workspace Specification should include a comprehensive scope of works, detailing how the developer/owner is to meet the requirements of the section 106 agreement, including relevant reports and drawings from consultants. The Specification must also be submitted three months after the implementation of the development to the building(s) which are to contain the Affordable Workspace (or such other time as may be agreed by the council).

The Affordable Workspace Management Plan sets out a series of criteria for Affordable Workspace operators for each new Affordable Workspace, which must be agreed by the Council. Detail including affordable rents and services charges levels, and a target level of occupancy by local business and residents, must be agreed and plan performance monitored on an annual basis.

The Council's list of Preferred Affordable Workspace operators will also be monitored to ensure Affordable Workspace continues to deliver specific economic, social or cultural benefits to the local community. The Council has and will continue to have an ongoing relationship with these Operators.

### SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

The strategic objectives of the draft Affordable Workspace SPD are to provide a robust framework for an increased delivery of Affordable Workspace across the borough, for the benefit of local businesses, residents and communities.

This assessment of the draft Affordable Workspace SPD will likely have a positive impact on equality in the borough. The SPD aims to facilitate delivery of low cost space to support local businesses and communities, and provide opportunities for business and employment growth, in particular the BAME community who make up a large proportion of the Brent population. It will have positive impacts by providing new Affordable Workspace which will be accessible to disabled people. Women, including pregnant women and mothers, could be expected to benefit from Affordable Workspace due to the flexible lease terms provided, as will small and medium-sized enterprises for whom the costs of traditional workspace are too high. Additionally, young people who may not have so much disposable income will benefit from more Affordable Workspace, which will support them to start-up and grow a business.

The SPD will enable the Council to expand and diversify its list of preferred Affordable Workspace operators to ensure workspace continues to deliver specific cultural, social and economic development objectives to the borough. Finally, the SPD will facilitate the delivery of more affordable workspace in Brent, supporting social, cultural and economic outputs, economic recovery and provide a platform to reduce economic deprivation.

### SECTION D – RESULT

<i>Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".</i>		
<b>A</b>	<b>CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>	
<b>C</b>	<b>CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>	
<b>D</b>	<b>STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>	

### SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Statutory public consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks	Review of all comments received through consultation process	HN	Spring 2022
Modification made following consultation and Equality Analysis updated	Integrate all comments and feedback	HN	Spring 2022
Adoption of the Affordable Workspace SPD	The Affordable Workspace SPD will now apply, any development proposals must take into account and adhere to the principles set out and guidance provided.		Spring/Summer 2022
Review periodically (every 5 years)	Monitor and review equalities impacts	HN	n/a

#### SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

<b>OFFICER:</b>	Honey Nounou, Principal Regeneration Officer
<b>REVIEWING OFFICER:</b>	Angela d'Urso, Strategic Partnerships, Policy & Scrutiny Manager
<b>HEAD OF SERVICE:</b>	Jonathan Kay, Head of Regeneration