

# Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

The Custom and Self-Build Housing  
Supplementary Planning Document

August 2023



## Introduction

1. It is the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to undertake an Equality Impact Analysis at the time of formulating a decision, drafting a report, designing or amending a policy. This will ensure that the Council is considering and taking positive action where possible to promote access to services for all its communities, including wider communities. The Equality Impact Assessment Screening Assessment will assess whether there is any impact upon any of the groups with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act, which are listed in the table below. If an adverse impact upon any of these groups is identified, then a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be required.
2. The purpose of the Custom and Self-Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide guidance for those intending to design and build their own home. The SPD is divided into the following chapters.

### **Introduction**

3. The introduction provides an overview of the policy context for the SPD, which includes a summary of the key policies from the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans. These include policies most relevant to custom and self-build housing, which are listed below.
  - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy SCLP5.9 (Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing)
  - Waveney Local Plan policy WLP8.3 (Self-Build and Custom-Build).
4. The introduction also notes other Local Plan policies, as well as supplementary planning documents that may be of relevance to the Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD. The Chapter concludes by referencing the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, which provides the legislative background for custom and self-build housing. It also references the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which includes national policy guidance about custom and self-build housing.

### **What is custom and self-build housing?**

5. This chapter explains that the purpose of custom and self-build housing is to provide greater freedom for people to influence the design and construction of their own homes. Custom and self-build housing share the same legal definition, but both terms can best be understood as a spectrum of different levels of control over the final design of a house. These range from custom-build houses, through to self-build houses, which have a high degree of customisation. Table 1 of the SPD provides a brief summary of different types of

custom and self-build housing. The chapter also provides some national and local statistics about the uptake of custom and self-build housing.

### **Affordable Custom and Self-Build Housing**

6. This chapter sets out how self-build applicants can demonstrate that their schemes are also affordable housing. It also explains how custom and self-build housing planning applications can include affordable housing provision. This includes how affordable housing can be retained on a site in perpetuity. Crucially, self-build housing and affordable housing are two separate things. Where there is a conflict between affordable housing and custom and self-build housing, affordable housing will take precedence.

### **Servicing Plots**

7. This chapter sets out the level of servicing required for self-build plots. They must be connected to water, waste water, electricity, and have access to a public highway, as set out in legislation. Custom and self-build plots should also be serviced for telecommunications. The minimum 12-month marketing period will only commence once plots are connected to services.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

8. This chapter explains that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a fee levied on all development. It states that self-build housing is exempt but that it is the applicant's responsibility to apply for exemption. It explains the concept of phasing to ensure that CIL does not become liable on all plots, as soon as one plot is started.

### **Phasing**

9. This chapter sets out the phasing of custom and self-build housing delivery and explains the importance of phasing in developments that include custom and self-build housing.

### **Design Codes**

10. This chapter explains the importance of design codes and adds that it is important that custom and self-build housing is given as much freedom as possible when designing new housing. The chapter lists the different parameters to be considered when creating design codes. It also discusses some of the key elements to be considered when creating a design code.

### **Plot passports**

11. This chapter explains that plot passports provide a concise specification for owners about what can be built on a plot. Plot passports therefore provide certainty for plot purchasers as

to what they can and cannot design and build on the plot. The chapter lists the contents of a plot passport and refers to the model plot passport provided in the appendices.

### **Marketing Strategy**

12. This chapter sets out how custom and self-build plots should be marketed. It focuses on custom and self-build plots that are part of larger developments and sets out what a marketing strategy should contain.

### **Neighbourhood Planning/Community-Led Housing**

13. This chapter explains what community led housing is and states that custom and self-build housing can be particularly suited to community led housing. It is also well suited to small scale developments allocated in neighbourhood plans. The initial occupants of the building must have primary input into the design and layout to qualify as custom and self-build housing.

### **Appendices**

14. The document also contains the following appendices, which provide further information about planning custom and self-build schemes.

Appendix 1 – Recommended format of planning applications

Appendix 2 – Custom and self-build delivery statement

Appendix 3 – Model conditions

Appendix 4 – Model section 106 agreements

Appendix 5 – Model phasing plan

Appendix 6 – Model plot passport

Appendix 7 – Case studies

Appendix 8 – Glossary

15. The Equality Act 2010 lists nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. East Suffolk Council has added a tenth characteristic, socio-economic deprivation, in addition to the nine protected characteristics listed in the legislation. This reflects that pockets of deprivation that exist across East Suffolk.

## Screening of impact on different groups

	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Likely Impact</b> (positive/negative/no impact)	<b>Reason for your decision</b>
a	Age (Includes safeguarding issues)	Positive impact.	The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance about the design and delivery of custom and self-build housing. This helps enable people to build a home that is specific to their needs. It will therefore benefit those from different age groups. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different age groups.
b	Disability	Positive impact.	The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance about the design and delivery of custom and self-build housing. This helps enable people to build a home that is specific to their needs. It will therefore benefit those with a disability. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those with a disability.

C	Gender reassignment	No impact.	<p>The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who have undergone gender reassignment.</p>
D	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact.	<p>The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are married or in a civil partnership.</p>
E	Pregnancy and maternity	No impact.	<p>The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service</p>

			centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.
F	Race	No impact.	The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different racial groups.
G	Religion or Belief	No impact.	The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different religions or beliefs.
H	Sex	No impact.	The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own

			<p>house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate in terms of sexual identity.</p>
I	Sexual orientation	No impact.	<p>The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance to those who wish to influence the design and construction of their own house. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate in terms of sexual orientation.</p>
J	Socio-economic deprivation	Positive impact.	<p>The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD provides guidance about the delivery of affordable custom and self-build housing. It also provides guidance about the provision of smaller, more affordable plot sizes. Both of these measures will benefit those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation</p>



			will therefore not discriminate against those are experiencing socio-economic deprivation.
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## Consultation and Engagement

16. An initial consultation took place between 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The purpose of this initial consultation was to inform the structure and content of the Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD. The consultation took place online and consisted of a questionnaire, which sought the views of those taking part. There were also a series of six workshops. Three of the workshops were for architects, developers and housing associations. The other three were for those on the custom and self-build register. This division reflected different levels of knowledge about planning as well as custom and self-build housing. All workshops took place online.
17. There will also be a formal stage of consultation, which is scheduled to run between 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The purpose of this consultation is to enable respondents to comment on the draft Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD. The document will be made available online on the Council’s website to enable people to comment. We will email everyone on the planning policy mailing list, as well as those on the Custom and self-build register. The Council will also publish posters and a press release, as well as posting notifications on social media.
18. Copies of consultation documents will be available online, and hard copies made available for inspection in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres.
19. Anyone who is unable to view the consultation documents online, in libraries or in the Customer Service Centres can contact the Planning Policy and Delivery Team, and the publicity material provides contact details and an offer of assistance.

## Presentation in Different Languages

20. As part of a six-week period of formal consultation, the document will be published on the Council’s website as well as in libraries and customer service centres, with hard copies available on request for those who cannot access the consultation in the ways listed above. The document may be requested in a different language. When such requests are received the Customer Services Team will be involved with ensuring this request is actioned.

## Proposed Changes

21. The Council will analyse responses received during the public consultation and will make any appropriate changes as a result of comments received.

## Conclusion

22. This EQIA screening exercise shows that the Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD will not negatively impact upon any protected group or those experiencing socio-economic deprivation. Therefore, a full EQIA assessment is not considered necessary.