

Diversity impact assessment

CHATHAM CENTRE DESIGN CODE
21 March 2024
DAVE HARRIS, CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER
1 Summary description of the proposed change
<p>Medway was awarded £120,000 from the Department of Leveling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in 2022 to produce an exemplar design code and design code process for Chatham Centre.</p> <p>The Chatham Centre Design Code establishes a vision and associated design coding to deliver a connected network of distinctive routes and spaces and high-quality, contextual development that contributes to vibrant and urban streetscapes.</p> <p>The code aims to reflect local views on what Chatham should look like in the future and how it can function better for a wider range of people whilst also being a more healthy, sustainable, safe, and beautiful place.</p> <p>This Code will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The adoption of the Design Code will help to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and accessible development in Chatham Centre</p>
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment
<p>The code is informed by a comprehensive evidence base, and engagement with the Local Community, Key Stakeholders, Members and Officers.</p> <p>Additional engagement and awareness has also taken place through Child Friendly Medway and the University of Kent School of Architecture and Planning, with associated projects intended to continue into the future.</p>

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3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	Yes
Disability	No	Yes	Yes
Gender reassignment	No	-	Yes
Marriage/civil partnership	No	-	Yes
Pregnancy/maternity	No	-	Yes
Race	No	-	Yes
Religion/belief	No	-	Yes
Sex	No	-	Yes
Sexual orientation	No	-	Yes
Other (eg low income groups)	No	Yes	Yes

4 Summary of the likely impacts

The code promotes sustainable development in Chatham Centre.

It aims to transform the high street and associated mixed use streets into a thriving centre with enhanced public realm, greater modal shift to more active and sustainable modes of transport, and introduce greater greenery. New desire lines and routes to adjacent streets will be enhanced with new homes that create welcoming frontages along streets. Chatham Centre will have more diverse uses and welcome a

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greater number of people as residents and visitors. Embedded principles promote small to larger business opportunities and existing heritage will be retained, enhanced and celebrated. The design code will result in a centre that benefits a wide range of local residents, visitors, business owners and the wider community.

The information and guidance within the code will support existing and emerging planning policies within the Council's Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), including those relating to sustainability, sustainable development, and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The code sets out opportunities to increase biodiversity, tree planting, improve air quality, Sustainable Urban Drainage and the environmental quality of new development.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

Engagement is a key strand of the preparation of design codes.

Continued engagement and collaboration across various departments and community groups in Medway. This interdisciplinary approach involves services like Planning Policy, Development Management, Highways, Green Spaces, Climate Change, Public Health, Child Friendly Medway, Culture and Events, Regeneration, Town Centres, Communications, and Medway Housing Company.

Continued engagement with local community groups such as Arches Local, Medway Urban Greenspaces Forum, Medway Plus, Fort Amherst, St Johns Rochester Anglican, Parkinson's Group, and Create Medway, along with Network Rail, and various town centre landowners.

This collective effort is shaping the emerging Design Code and ensuring its alignment with other adopted policy guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), particularly those covering Planning Policy and Development Management.

This integrated approach is key to creating a sustainable and inclusive urban environment that meets the needs of all stakeholders and people who live, learn, work, and visit Medway.

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6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence.

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Review of DIA in line with preparation of Supplementary Planning Document.	Planning Service	April 2024
Review of DIA in line with review of Supplementary Planning Document.	Planning Service	April 2027

7 Recommendation

It is recommended to proceed with the adoption of the Chatham Centre Design Code.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Mark Breathwick

Date of authorisation

30 April 2024