

LOCAL ENFORCEMENT PLAN FURTHER CONSULTATION

YOU SAID WE DID SUMMARY

WE ASKED

We sought feedback and input on our draft Local Enforcement Plan.

Specifically, we wanted to know if our proposed planning enforcement priorities reflected those of our Westminster communities, and whether they were clearly set out and explained.

In addition, we sought feedback on the way that we triage our planning enforcement breaches into three categories: significant harm, medium harm and low harm.

YOU SAID

The majority of respondents thought the four identified priorities were clear, but comments were received that suggested the following:

- Prioritise safety/amenity concerns, environment/climate change concerns and heritage
- Ensure the document uses plain English and is not too long
- Outline the harm caused by the issues more clearly
- Outline the penalties and how the Council will enforce

With regard to the triaging of planning enforcement breaches, the majority of respondents thought that the breaches categorised as significant were correct, although there was greater variance in relation to the medium harm breaches and low harm breaches.

Overall, the respondents felt that more clarity was required over what 'harm' meant in this context, and felt that the document would benefit from the use of examples of each breach to provide more explanation of the harm

WE DID

We have now published the Local Enforcement Plan online and are undertaking social media advertising to make our communities aware of the publication.

With regard to the planning enforcement priorities set out in the Plan, we implemented the following changes as a result of the consultation:

- Limiting the use of the term 'harm' and adding more detail (including photographs) under each priority to aid understanding
- Adopting positive language to describe the priorities e.g. changing "Preventing harm to residential amenity" to "Protecting residential amenity"
- Including more links to other planning guidance, and using active links to our 'Useful Terms' page to improve clarity of understanding
- Amending the icons used to accurately visualise the priority

We made the following improvements to the page of the Plan that describes how we triage new investigations:

- Providing a definition of the term 'harm' as used in planning enforcement
- Including examples and providing links to further guidance to aid understanding
- Making various changes to the language used under each heading, as highlighted by the consultation respondents, to further strengthen clarity