Polling place review - templates

The following templates have been designed for use in evaluating the suitability of buildings as polling places and polling stations.

Part A – to be completed by the local authority with the details of the current polling places.

Part B – to be completed by the local authority to evaluate external areas' access and facilities both outside the perimeter of the building and within the boundary of the building itself.

Part C – to be completed by the local authority to assess internal access to the polling station, but excluding the polling station itself (i.e. covering the corridors leading to the polling station accommodation, but not the area in which polling will be carried out), and the facilities available within the building. Should the proposed building, room or area to be used as the polling station have direct access to the road/pavement or external parts, Part C can be excluded from this assessment.

Part D – to be completed by the (Acting) Returning Officer with the details of the area that is, or is likely to be, used as the polling station(s).

(If local authorities already have up-to-date detailed information to assist with the completion of Parts B, C and D, this can be inserted into the individual templates together with any diagrams and/or photographs to enable the building to be re-assessed on a site visit. The information should be verified as part of the visit.)

Part E – to be completed by the local authority with any comments or complaints received from stakeholders as part of the consultation exercise. Completion can provide evidence that the review considered the submissions as part of the formal evaluation process.

Any alternative proposals or suggestions put forward for new polling places/stations should be evaluated using the templates, and the results should be collated to facilitate the provision of appropriate feedback.

Polling place / polling station – evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details	
Polling place identifier	
Polling place name	
Polling place address	
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	
Building availability for future elections /referendums	

Polling place review

Check	✓	Comment
Are there suitable transport links?		
Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.?		
Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment to provide a good service to voters? Is the size sufficient to provide necessary private areas or privacy screens for photographic identification checks? Is the size big enough to ensure the flow of voters and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?		
Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?		
Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?		

Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events
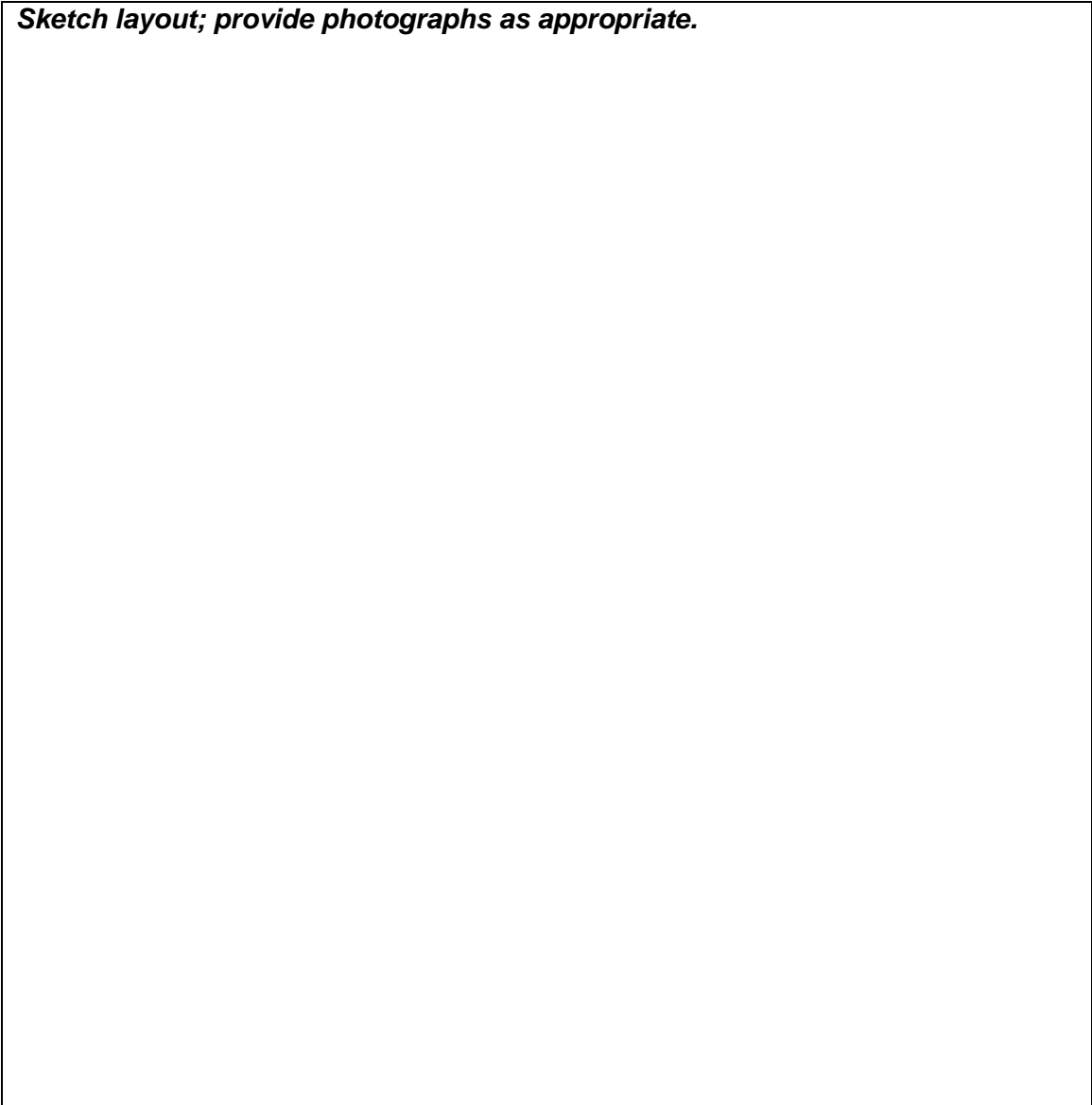
Part B – External areas access and facilities

Check	✓	Comments
Are there good public transport links to the polling place?		
Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?		
Is the building clearly identifiable?		
Is additional signage required between street and entrance?		
Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?		
Are there parking facilities for disabled people?		
Are there parking facilities for polling staff?		
Does the approach to the building have external lighting?		
Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no – Has a purpose built ramp been installed? If so, does it have a handrail? Does the ramp have a gentle slope? Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?		
Is the entrance door wide enough to ensure good access for all?		
Are the doors light enough for all voters to open?		
Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises in a position so it can be read by all voters?		
Does the building have a hearing loop installed?		
Are there any external security concerns?		
Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?		

External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.

External plan – B1

| Part C – Internal areas access and facilities |||

Check	✓	Comments
Are all doors easy to open for all users or do they need to be permanently locked back?		
Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?		
Are any doormats level with the floor?		
Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?		
Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?		
Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?		
Are there toilet facilities?		
Is there a kitchen that staff can use?		
Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?		
Is there adequate space for signage?		
Is there seating available if an elector needs to sit down?		
How many polling stations can the building accommodate?		
Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?		

Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

Show internal areas of the building, excluding the actual polling station where voting will take place, including corridors that link to the polling station, kitchen and toilets, and highlight any possible signage requirements and potential hazards. Also indicate door swing direction and ease of opening, any areas of poor lighting, and any areas of uneven floor, etc.

Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.

Part D – The polling station(s)

Check	✓	Comments
If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?		
Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?		
Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?		
Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?		
Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?		
Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?		
Can the official notices be clearly displayed and positioned, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s)so it can be read by all voters?		
Is there sufficient space to accommodate a private area or privacy screens for photographic identification checks?		
Is there enough space to ensure the flow of voters having their photographic ID checked and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?		

Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the size and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.
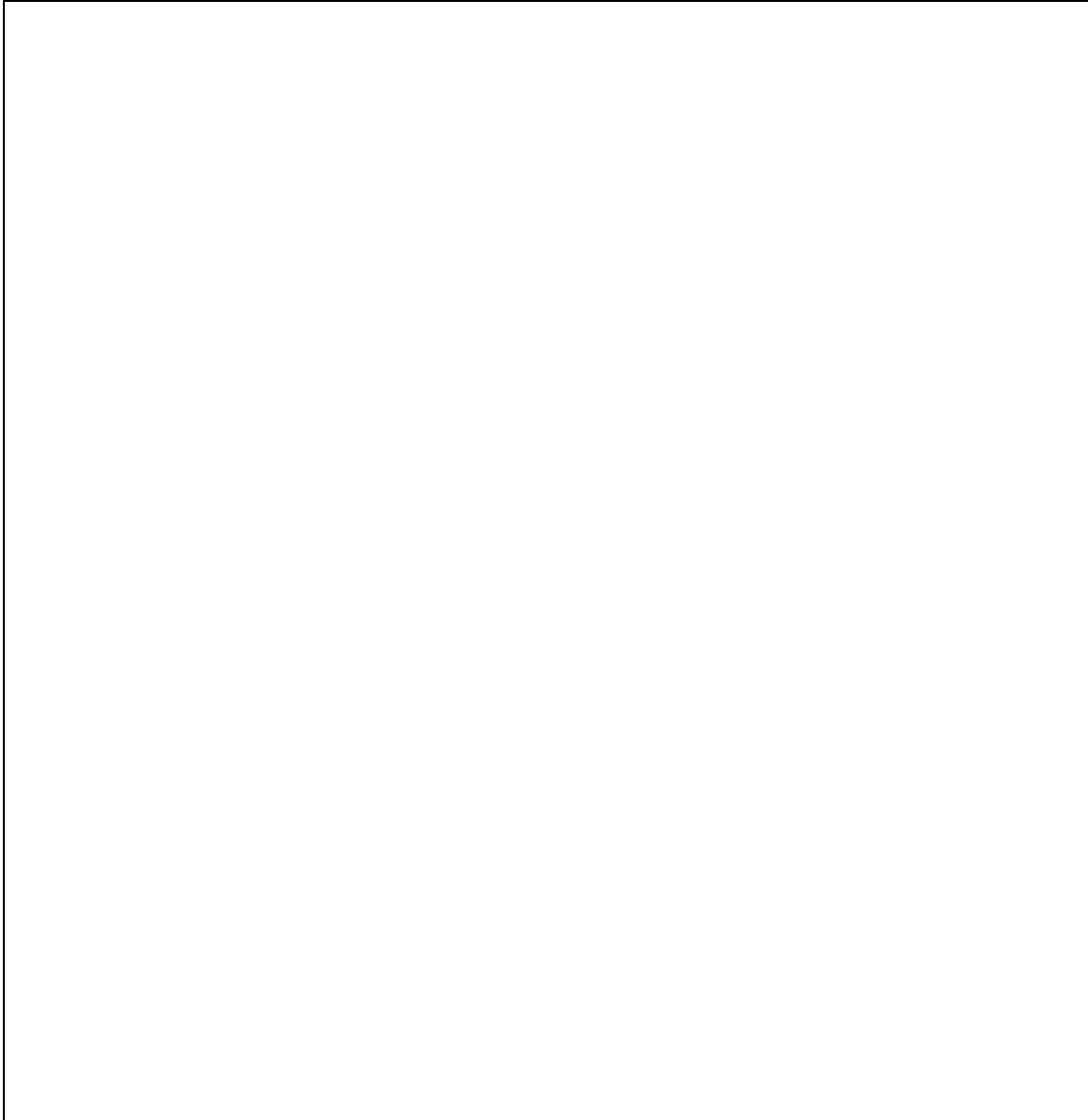
Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

Comment	Name/organisation	Response by (A)RO
	7	

Additional comments from (A)RO