



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN SUBMISSION

September 2013

Equality Impact Assessments

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) September 2013 reviews the Cherwell Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2012, Changes to the Local Plan Proposed Submission March 2013 and the Local Plan Submission October 2013 in light of their potential equalities impact.

The equality groups covered by the Council's EqIA at present are Race, Gender, Disability, Sexuality and Religion in employment by 2003 and Age by 2006. This EqIA was prepared in liaison with the Council's Equalities and Diversity Officer.

Stage 1 involves the Initial Screening of the assessment and is intended to check whether the Local Plan has an adverse impact on equality groups and identify relevant actions and likely costs/resources associated with any proposed improvement. **Appendix 1** contains the initial screening of the Local Plan and its 2013 submission.

Stage 2 of the Council's EqIA involves the preparation of an In Depth (Full) Assessment if the answer is yes to more than one of the Initial Screening above questions.

The initial screening of the Local Plan resulted on a YES response to the Initial Screening question Is the proposed policy or activity likely to have a negative affect on our relations with certain equality groups or local community?

Some of the policies contained within the Local Plan may have a negative effect on our relations with some sections of the local community. However this is not necessarily an equality issue. Some local communities will not support the housing requirements and strategy for delivering the houses, for example large strategic site locations.

Following the initial screening carried out on the Changes to the Local Plan Proposed Submission 2012 and the Local Plan Submission 2013, it is concluded that an In Depth (Full) Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX 1 STAGE 1 - INITIAL SCREENING DETAILS ASSESSING POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES

Notes:

1. As a result of this exercise, you will have checked that your policy or activity does not have adverse impact on equality groups and you will have identified relevant action that you need to take, and the likely costs/resources associated with any improvement. The equality groups covered are at present: Race, Gender, Disability, Sexuality and Religion in employment by 2003 and Age by 2006.

Note. This is not simply a paper exercise - it is designed to make sure that your policy or activity is delivered fairly and effectively to all sections of our local community.

2. Please note that the Council is required to publish the results of these assessments, and updates, therefore **your completed Appendices may be public documents.**

3. Appendix 1 questionnaire (to be completed for each relevant Strategy, Policy or Service Development) is for use regardless of whether your policy or activity is aimed at external customers or internal staff.

Please tick/delete as appropriate: Is this EIA for a,

Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Existing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New/Existing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	New/Existing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Strategy, Policy or Service Development:

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

AIMS, OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE OF THE POLICY OR ACTIVITY:

The Local Plan is a statutory requirement. It will set out broadly how the district will grow and change in the period up to 2031. The Local Plan will set out the long term spatial vision for the district and contain policies to help deliver the vision.

All the other Development Plan Documents produced by the Authority must be in conformity with this Local Plan.

PLEASE LIST THE MAIN STAKEHOLDERS/BENEFICIARIES IN TERMS OF THE RECIPIENTS OF THE ACTIVITY OR THE TARGET GROUP AT WHOM THE POLICY IS AIMED:

The Local Plan guides all development across the District until 2031 and could have an impact on all those that live, work and visit the District. Therefore the main stakeholders are all Cherwell's communities and those with an interest in the Cherwell District. These include residents, local businesses, stakeholders, staff, partners.

IF THE ACTIVITY IS PROVIDED BY ANOTHER DEPARTMENT, ORGANISATION, PARTNERSHIP OR AGENCY ON BEHALF OF THE AUTHORITY, PLEASE GIVE THE NAMES OF THESE ORGANISATIONS/AGENCIES:

N/A

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STAGE 1 – INITIAL SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Q	Screening Questions	Y/N
1.	Does the policy or activity knowingly prevent us in anyway from meeting our statutory equality duties under the 2010 Equality Act?	N
2	Is there any evidence that any part of the proposed policy or activity could discriminate unlawfully, directly or indirectly, against particular equality groups?	N
3	Is there any evidence that information about the policy or activity is not accessible to any equality groups?	N
4	Has the Council received any complaints about the policy or activity under review, in respect of equality issues?	N
5	Have there been any recommendations in this area arising from, for example, internal/external audits or scrutiny reports?	N
6	Will the proposed policy or activity have negative consequences for people we employ, partner or contract with?	N
7	This Strategy, Policy or Service Development has an impact on other council services i.e. Customer Services and those services have not yet been consulted.	N
8	Will there be a negative impact on any equality groups? If so please provide brief details below.	N
	<p>Equality Impact: Evidence:</p> <p>The Local Plan sets out the strategy for how Cherwell District will develop over the period to 2031. It is a high level strategy setting out how much growth and broadly where this growth will take place and how it will be delivered. A number of other documents such as the Development Management DPD, Local Neighbourhoods DPD as well as a set of Supplementary Planning Documents will deliver the higher level policies set out in this plan.</p> <p>The Objectives of the Local Plan (No changes since the Changes to the Local Plan Proposed Submission March 2013)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 1. To facilitate economic growth and employment and a more diverse local economy with an emphasis on attracting and developing higher technology industries • SO 2. To support the diversification of Cherwell's rural economy • SO 3. To help disadvantaged areas, support an increase in skills and innovation, improve the built environment and make Cherwell more attractive to business by supporting regeneration • SO 4. To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability, distinctiveness and safety of Cherwell's urban centres. • SO 5. To encourage sustainable tourism • SO 6. To accommodate new development so that it maintains or enhances the local identity of Cherwell's settlements and the functions they perform • SO 7. To meet the housing needs of all sections of Cherwell's communities, particularly the need to house an ageing population and to 	

meet the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, in a way that creates sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities

- **SO 8.** To improve the affordability of housing in Cherwell and to provide social rented and intermediate housing to meet identified needs whilst ensuring the viability of housing development and a reliable supply of new homes
- **SO 9.** To improve the availability of housing to newly forming households in rural areas
- **SO 10.** To provide sufficient accessible, good quality services, facilities and infrastructure including green infrastructure, to meet health, education, transport, open space, sport, recreation, cultural, social and other community needs, reducing social exclusion and poverty, addressing inequalities in health, and maximising well-being.

- **SO 11.** To incorporate the principles of sustainable development in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts including increasing local resource efficiency (particularly water efficiency), minimising carbon emissions, promoting decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate and ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased
- **SO 12.** To focus development in Cherwell's sustainable locations, making efficient and effective use of land, conserving and enhancing the countryside and landscape and the setting of its towns and villages.
- **SO 13.** To reduce the dependency on the private car as a mode of travel, increase the attraction of and opportunities for travelling by public transport, cycle and on foot, and to ensure high standards of accessibility to services for people with impaired mobility.
- **SO 14.** To create more sustainable communities by providing high quality, locally distinctive and well designed environments which increase the attractiveness of Cherwell's towns and villages as places to live and work and which contribute to the well-being of residents.
- **SO 15.** To protect and enhance the historic and natural environment and Cherwell's core assets, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets and archaeology, maximising opportunities for improving biodiversity and minimising pollution in urban and rural areas.

The Local Plan proposals are based on a wide range of evidence documents which use population forecasts and need assessments which include breakdowns of gender, age, race/ethnicity and disability. Such documents include the Cherwell Housing Strategy 2012 - 2017, Census 2011 and the Cherwell Community Plan and Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013. The Local Plan evidence base is available on the Council's website and is accessible using <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3244>

Strategic development set out in the Local Plan will guide land uses and provision of physical infrastructure. However, the delivery of services is dealt with by service providers such as the District Council (departments other than 'Planning'), County Council, health authorities and utility providers. The Local Plan will affect everyone in the areas where it is delivered because its policies are land-use based but will not have a direct impact on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

The Local Plan has undergone extensive public consultation during its early stages (2006-2010) and its formal stages the Draft Core Strategy 2010, the Local Plan Proposed Submission 2012, Changes to the Local Plan Proposed Submission March 2013 and this stage (Local Plan Submission).

The Local Plan is prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning

	<p>(Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out how and when people can be involved in the preparation of planning policy and consultation on planning applications.</p> <p>These two documents ensure that in the preparation of the Local Plan, the Council consults with individuals and bodies which represent interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups, religious groups and disabled persons. The SCI contains a list of the groups engaged with in Appendices 1 and 2.</p> <p>The results of consultation are reported in a Statement of Consultation which is kept up to date at any new stage of consultation on the Local Plan.</p> <p>The SCI and Statement of Consultation can be accessed on the Council's website following the link: SCI: http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3298 Statement of Consultation: http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1730</p>	
9	<p>Is the proposed policy or activity likely to have a negative effect on our relations with certain equality groups or local community? If so please explain.</p> <p>Some of the policies contained within the Local Plan may have a negative effect on our relations with some aspects of the local communities. However this is not necessarily an equality issue. Some local communities will not support the housing requirements and strategy for delivering the houses, for example large strategic site locations.</p>	Y
10	<p>There has been no consultation with equality groups about this policy or activity? Answer yes if you agree with this statement. If there has been consultation, please list the equality groups you have consulted with:</p> <p>Cherwell District Council intends that all sectors of the community have the opportunity to have their say in how their community is planned and developed, irrespective of age, sex, ability, ethnicity, background or disability.</p> <p>As part of the Local Plan preparation the Council produced a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which was adopted in July 2006. This is a full consultation plan for how the Council will engage with the community in the preparation of the Local Plan DPD and other documents.</p> <p>In particular, efforts are made to ensure people who traditionally have not been involved with planning policy have the opportunity to have their view heard.</p>	N
11	<p>Has this assessment missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes? No. The Council will continue to ensure all aspects of the community are encouraged to get involved with the preparation of all documents that are within the Local Plan.</p>	N

Proceed to In Depth (Full) Assessment (complete **Appendix 2) if the answer is YES to more than one of the above questions.
For any YES answers include an improvement action in your Equality Improvement Plan.**

Declaration

I am satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy or activity and an In Depth (Full) Equality Impact Assessment is not required. I understand that the EIA is required by the Council and take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed by:
Countersigned by Head of Service

Date: 23rd September 2013
Date: 23rd September 2013

Equality Impact Assessment

Please detail below your evidence which has determined whether you have answered either Yes or No to the initial screening questions.

Screening Questions	Screening Narrative
Does the policy or activity knowingly prevent us in anyway from meeting our statutory equality duties under the 2010 Equality Act?	<p>There is no evidence that the Local Plan prevents us in anyway in meeting the equality duties.</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out how we will engage our community in the preparation of the Local Plan, actively seeks involvement in planning from all aspects of the community.</p>
Is there any evidence that any part of the proposed policy or activity could discriminate unlawfully, directly or indirectly, against particular equality groups?	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that any equality group is disadvantaged through the Local Plan.</p>
Is there any evidence that information about the policy or activity is not accessible to any equality groups?	<p>In my opinion there is no evidence that information about the Local Plan is not accessible to any equality groups.</p> <p>The Local Plan and all supporting documents are available on Council's website.</p> <p>Hard copies of the relevant Local Plan documents are also available to view at all Council offices and public libraries.</p> <p>The Council has placed advertisements in the local press.</p> <p>The preparation of the Plan has been the subject of widespread publicity on the Local Plan consultations including on TV, the local press, posters and exhibitions.</p> <p>We also offer translator services for all our publications.</p> <p>As some of the consultation documents have been quite large we have also produced leaflet summaries to enable a wider audience to understand the Local Plan.</p> <p>We have directly contacted many equality groups and attended the Councils Equality and Access Advisory Panel to raise awareness of the Local Plan during its preparation.</p>
Has the Council received any complaints about the policy or activity under review, in respect of equality issues?	<p>No. There is no evidence to suggest that any equality issue related complaints have been received.</p> <p>We have received many comments at each consultation stage to the various policies within the Local Plan. These are discussed within the report on consultations.</p>

<p>Have there been any recommendations in this area arising from, for example, internal/external audits or scrutiny reports?</p>	<p>No recommendations received.</p>
<p>Will the proposed policy or activity have negative consequences for people we employ, partner or contract with?</p>	<p>There are no negative outcomes. The Local Plan is to plan for land use developments across the entire District and all communities involved.</p>
<p>This Strategy, Policy or Service Development has an impact on other council services i.e. Customer Services and those services have not yet been consulted.</p>	<p>Internal teams have all been consulted in the preparation of the Local Plan and none have highlighted equality impacts. Consultation has taken place at the service, directorate and local strategic partnership level during the preparation of the Plan.</p>
<p>Will there be a negative impact on any equality groups?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>However for clarity, we have set out how planning and the Local Plan may impact on the various equality groups</p> <p>Age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Accessibility in the physical environment (e.g. relationship of housing to social and community facilities and ease of access by public transport) • Specific housing and community facilities provision for older people (e.g. changing demographics requiring homes for life and care home facilities) <p>Disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Accessibility in the physical environment <p>Gender (including Transgender):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Accessibility in the physical environment <p>Race (including Gypsy and Traveller):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can affect provision of land and facilities to meet specific lifestyle needs <p>Religion or belief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can affect provision of special facilities to meet needs for worship and lifestyle <p>Sexual Orientation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can affect provision of land and facilities to meet specific lifestyle needs <p>Other groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration and/or land use and facility related provision targeted to meet the needs of communities in particular locations that have special needs (e.g. rural deprivation or areas of high unemployment and socio-economic deprivation).

<p>Is the proposed policy or activity likely to have a negative effect on our relations with certain equality groups or local community? If so please explain.</p>	<p>Yes. Some of the policies contained within the Local Plan may have a negative effect on our relations with some sections of the local community. However this is not necessarily an equality issue. Some local communities will not support the housing requirements and strategy for delivering the houses, for example large strategic site locations</p>
<p>There has been no consultation with equality groups about this policy or activity? Answer yes if you agree with this statement. If there has been consultation, please list the equality groups you have consulted with:</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council intends that all sectors of the community have the opportunity to have their say in how their community is planned and developed, irrespective of age, sex, ability, ethnicity, background or disability. As part of the Local Plan preparation the Council produced a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which was adopted in July 2006. This is a full consultation plan for how the Council will engage with the community in the preparation of the Local Development Framework, including the Local Plan DPD.</p> <p>In particular, efforts are made to ensure people who traditionally have not been involved with planning policy have the opportunity to have their view heard.</p> <p>Full details of all consultation in the preparation of the Local Plan (formerly Core Strategy) will be provided in the Report on Consultations.</p>
<p>Has this assessment missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes?</p>	<p>No</p>