



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

**CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2040
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PAPER 2: OPTIONS**

September 2021

Equality Impact Assessments

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) reviews the **Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options**. The assessment includes the policy themes and options contained within the consultation paper.
- 1.2. The purpose of the EqIA is to ensure that equality is placed at the centre of policy development and identifies the likely impacts of the policy themes and options presented in the consultation document on our district’s existing and future communities. The EqIA can anticipate and recommend ways to avoid any discriminatory or negative consequences for particular groups. To do so, it will consider what impact the policy themes and options presented in the consultation paper might have on different sections of the community referred to as the ‘protected characteristics’ as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. These are:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 1.3. Equality Impact Assessments systematically assess and record the actual, potential or likely impact of a service, policy or project – or a significant change in the same – on different groups of people. The consequences of policies and projects on particular groups are analysed and anticipated so that, as far as possible, any negative consequences can be eliminated or minimised and opportunities for ensuring equality can be maximised. The EqIA will be updated as the plan-making process moves forward to ensure that any new equality issues are identified. It will be published on the Council’s website and sit alongside other key documents that support the Cherwell Local Plan Review.
- 1.4. This EQIA highlights the steps that have been undertaken to evaluate the potential impact of the policy themes and options set out in the **Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options** on those in the community with protected characteristics, and what steps have been taken to address any negative impacts. The assessment follows the Council’s standard methodology as outlined below:

Stage 1 involves the Initial Screening of the assessment and is intended to check whether the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options has an adverse impact on particular equality groups and identify relevant actions and likely costs/resources associated with any proposed improvement. **Appendix 1** contains the initial screening of the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options.

Stage 2 of the Council’s EQIA requires the completion of an In Depth (Full) Assessment if the answer is yes to more than one of the Initial Screening questions.

The initial screening of the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options resulted in a YES response to the Initial Screening question: Is the proposed policy or activity likely to have a negative effect on our relations with some sections of the local community?

Some of the policy themes and options contained in the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options may have a negative effect on our relations with some sections of the local community. However, this is not an equality issue and does not disproportionately impact those with protected characteristics. Due to the nature of plan-

making, it is likely some local communities will not support the policy themes and options presented.

- 1.5. Following the initial screening of the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options it is concluded that an In Depth (Full) Equality Impact Assessment is not required because only one of the answers to the Initial Screening questions resulted in a YES response.

Equality Impact Assessment

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

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

Strategy
Policy
Service

Y
Y

Existing
New/Existing
Development

NEW

New/Existing

Name of Strategy, Policy or Service Development:

Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options

AIMS, OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE OF THE POLICY OR ACTIVITY:

The Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 will be the statutory document that will shape the future of the District, containing the policies and proposals that will guide development to 2040. The Local Plan Review will include the identification and delivery of strategic and non-strategic development sites for housing, employment, open space and recreation, community facilities and other land uses. It will contain planning policies to manage development and meet local priorities, it will review and update existing policies, and support the implementation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

The Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 will when 'adopted' contain:

- A vision for Cherwell District in 2040;
- Objectives and a strategy showing how we will get there;
- Land allocations for development where these are needed; and
- Policies which will be used to determine planning applications.

An options consultation paper has been prepared as the second stage of public consultation in the process of preparing the Cherwell Local Plan Review. It has been prepared having regard to national policy and guidance, existing Local Plans, the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and other plans, programmes and policies.

The preparation of the emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review will be guided by the timetable in the Council's Local Development Scheme and its public participation and consultation guided by the Statement of Community Involvement. Its performance and progress will be monitored by the Annual Monitoring Report.

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 Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 will set out planning policies for change and include a strategy for delivering any required future growth in the District until 2040. Therefore, it could have an impact on all those that live and work in or visit the District. The Council has established a Planning Policy consultation database that acts as a resource for consultation with stakeholders including residents, local businesses, stakeholders, staff, and 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

LEAD OFFICER: Heather Seale

TEL: 01295 227985

SERVICE AREA: Planning and Development
DIRECTORATE: Environment and Place

ASSESSMENT REVIEW DATE: 23 August 2021

Equality Impact Assessment

STAGE 1 – INITIAL SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Q	Screening Questions	Y/N
1.	Does the policy or activity knowingly prevent us in any way 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 Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 will be the statutory document that will shape the future of the District, containing the policies and proposals that will guide development to 2040. The Local Plan Review will include the identification and delivery of strategic and non-strategic development sites for housing, employment, open space and recreation, community facilities and other land uses. It will contain planning policies to manage development and meet local priorities, it will review and update existing policies, and support the implementation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p> <p>The Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options highlights three overarching key themes for the Local Plan Review. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1: Maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy • Theme 2: Meeting the challenge of climate change • Theme 3: Healthy place-shaping <p>A vision and objectives have been drafted for the consultation paper. The purpose of the vision is to set out an image of the future that we are seeking to create. This is then delivered through the objectives, the strategy for the plan and any detailed policies. The consultation paper sets out the options to inform draft policies, framed around key topics including housing, economic development, transport and the natural environment. The options for how the places in Cherwell – Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and surrounding villages, Heyford Park and the rural areas – may develop over the Plan period are also presented.</p> <p>The emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review is being prepared following extensive public consultation and having regard to national policy and guidance, existing Local Plans, the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and other plans, programmes and policies. It is being prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) July 2016 and Addendum 2020. The SCI sets out who the Council will engage with in preparing key planning policy documents, including Local Plans, and how and when they will be engaged. It actively seeks involvement in planning from all sections of the</p>	

	<p>community. The SCI 2016 and Addendum 2020 are available to view on the Council's website.</p> <p>To date, public engagement on the Cherwell Local Plan Review has taken place at one stage of plan preparation. In July 2020 the Council published an initial community involvement paper on Local Plan issues for a six-week period of public consultation. 271 responses were received which have been taken into account in preparing the options consultation paper.</p> <p>Full details of all consultation on preparation of the emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review to date are reported in the Consultation Statement which also includes summaries of all individual comments made in response to the consultation. The statement will be kept up to date when consultation on the Local Plan Review is carried out and an addendum statement detailing consultation on the options paper will be produced to supplement the Consultation Statement.</p> <p>The preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan Review is being informed by a range of evidence documents and key data which use population forecasts, need assessments and relevant ONS statistics.</p> <p>The consultation paper is written for all members of the community and not for specific individuals or groups and does not make key decisions or set policy at this stage. As a result, it is unlikely to have a disproportionate impact on any particular individual or group.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the options presented will have a direct impact on those with protected characteristics related to marriage and civil partnership; religion or belief; gender reassignment; and sexual orientation as a result of the policy themes and options proposed in the options consultation paper.</p> <p>It is considered that the policy options are likely to have some positive effect for people with the following protected characteristics: sex; age; disability; and pregnancy and maternity. This includes through facilitating social inclusion; fostering healthy communities and access to health care facilities; broadening the choice and quality of housing; employment opportunities; and sports and recreation provision. Cumulatively, the impact of the policy themes and options presented in the consultation paper should help to reduce inequalities and broaden opportunities available for residents – particularly those in the defined equality groups.</p> <p>The responses to the consultation will be reviewed and monitored to consider potential impacts as the plan develops and will ensure that the consultation is prepared in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement to consult widely and encourage participation of all sections of the community.</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 policy themes and options contained in the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options may have a negative effect on our relations with some sections of the local community. However, this is not an equality issue and does not disproportionately impact those with protected characteristics. Due to the nature of plan-making, it is likely some local communities will not support the policy themes and options presented.</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>	N

	<p>The Council has established a consultation database of individuals, organisations and other bodies that acts as a resource for consultation with stakeholders. In addition to statutory and non-statutory consultees, these include voluntary bodies and groups which represent the interests of different societies, residents' groups, charities and special interest groups.</p> <p>To date, public engagement on the emerging Local Plan Review has taken place at one stage of plan preparation. In July 2020 the Council published an initial community involvement paper on Local Plan issues for a six-week period of public consultation. 271 responses were received which have been taken into account in preparing the options consultation paper.</p> <p>The Community Involvement Paper 2: Options, subject to approval by the Executive, will be subject to a six-week period of public consultation. Those groups on the database will be notified, printed copies placed in libraries and various communications will help to raise awareness amongst different groups. All comments and representations will be taken into account and will help in influencing the formation of the next stages of plan preparation.</p> <p>The Council's EQIA contact officer was consulted on the preparation of this EQIA.</p>	
11	<p>Has this assessment missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes?</p> <p>No. The Council will continue to encourage the participation of all sectors of the community in the preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan Review.</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 EQIA is required by the Council and take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed by:

Heather Seale – Planning Research and Monitoring Officer
Date: 23 August 2021

Countersigned by Assistant Director Planning and Development

David Peckford
Date: 25.08.2021

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 any way from meeting our statutory equality duties under the 2010 Equality Act?	<p>There is no evidence that the Cherwell Local Plan Review-Community Involvement Paper 2: Options prevents us in any way from meeting the equality duties.</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement sets out who the Council will engage with in preparing key planning policy documents, including Local Plans, and how and when they will be engaged. It actively seeks involvement in planning from all sections 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 of the equality groups have been disadvantaged through the preparation of the emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review to date.</p>
Is there any evidence that information about the policy or activity is not accessible to any equality groups?	<p>There is no evidence that information about the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options is not accessible to any equality groups.</p> <p>The preparation of the Local Plan Review has been the subject of widespread publicity including in newspapers and social media, and through workshops, meetings and consultation events. The consultation requirements are set out within the Statement of Community Involvement which will be followed for this stage of consultation. The SCI is itself subject to an EqIA.</p> <p>Examples of measures to be taken include:</p> <p>All documents are made available on the Council's website, in the Council's main office and public libraries within Cherwell District.</p> <p>The Council has established a consultation database of individuals, organisations and other bodies that acts as a resource for consultation with stakeholders. In addition to statutory and non-statutory consultees, these include voluntary bodies and groups which represent the interests of different societies, residents' groups, charities and special interest groups. Therefore, representatives of a range of equality groups will continue to be consulted as part of the plan making process.</p> <p>Direct notifications are sent to specific, general and all other relevant consultees and stakeholders on the Planning Policy consultation database at relevant consultation stages of the plan's production. Requests can</p>

	<p>be made for a copy of a consultation document in an alternative format by contacting the Planning Policy team. A reasonable charge may be levied for requests for printed copies of the documents to cover the cost of production.</p> <p>Stakeholders will be given the option of responding to Local Plan Review consultations through an online consultation portal, electronically by email or by post.</p>
Has the Council received any complaints about the policy or activity under review, in respect of equality issues?	No. There is no evidence to suggest that any equality issue related complaints have been received.
Have there been any recommendations in this area arising from, for example, internal/external audits or scrutiny reports?	No recommendations received.
Will the proposed policy or activity have negative consequences for people we employ, partner or contract with?	There are no negative outcomes identified. The Cherwell Local Plan Review is for land use development in the District.
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.	Internal teams have been consulted in the preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan Review – Community Involvement Paper 2: Options and none have highlighted equality impacts. Consultation has taken place at the service and directorate level and through working with Oxfordshire County Council and District Councils during the preparation of the Plan.
Will there be a negative impact on any equality groups?	No. The Community Involvement Paper 2: Options is written for all members of the community and not for specific individuals or groups. As a result, it is unlikely to have a disproportionate impact on any particular individual or group. However, there is the potential for the policy themes and options to have differential impacts on different equality groups as they are developed through latter stages of plan making.
Is the proposed policy or activity likely to have a negative affect on our relations with certain equality groups or local community? If so, please explain.	Yes. Some of the policy themes and options contained within the Community Involvement Paper 2: Options consultation paper may have a negative effect on our relations with some of our local communities. However, this is not due to impacts on protected characteristics. Some local communities will not support the policy themes and options presented.
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:	Engagement and community involvement are key aspects of the Council's approach to equalities, diversity and inclusion. The Council takes public and stakeholder engagement seriously and the options consultation paper seeks to ensure that there is opportunity for all to participate and shape the Local Plan in the planning process. The Statement of Community Involvement sets out who the Council will engage with in preparing key planning policy document and how and when they will be engaged.

	<p>The Council has consulted the general public and other groups as required and as set out in its Statement of Community Involvement. Over 1,300 individuals, organisations and other bodies are currently registered on the Council's Planning Policy consultation database. In addition to statutory and non-statutory consultees, these include voluntary bodies and groups which represent the interests of different societies, residents' groups, charities and special interest groups.</p> <p>Full details of all consultation on preparation of the emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review to date have been outlined in the Consultation Statement which also includes summaries of all individual comments made in response to the consultation.</p>
<p>Has this assessment missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes?</p>	<p>No. The Council will continue to encourage the participation of all sectors of the community in the preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan Review.</p>