



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

**PARTIAL REVIEW OF THE CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 (Part 1):
Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs**

Adoption

September 2020

Equality Impact Assessments

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Equality Impact Assessment reviews the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1): Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs. The assessment includes the policies contained within the plan to provide Cherwell's share of the unmet housing needs of Oxford to 2031. Equalities Impact Assessments were undertaken as an integral part of the preparation of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- 1.2. The purpose of this Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is to assess what impact the Local Plan Partial Review policies will have on different sections of the community referred to as the 'protected characteristics' which include:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Sexual orientation
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Gender
- 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. This EQIA will be published on the Council's website with the Local Plan Partial Review.
- 1.4. The EQIA was prepared in liaison with the Council's Policy and Projects Officer. This EQIA highlights the steps that have been undertaken to evaluate the potential impact of Local plan policies 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 Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 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 Proposed Modifications to the Submission Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1.

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.

- 1.5. The initial screening of the Local Plan Partial Review 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 policies contained within the Local Plan Partial Review may have a negative effect on our relations with some aspects of the local community. However, this is not necessarily an equality issue. The Plan proposes changes to the area and allocates sites to provide housing and infrastructure. The proposed changes include new housing including affordable housing, improved accessibility to the countryside including for disabled and wheelchair users, new services and facilities and public transport infrastructure.

- 1.6. Following the initial screening of the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 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

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

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

Name of Strategy, Policy or Service Development:

Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1: Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs

AIMS, OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE OF THE POLICY OR ACTIVITY:

The Local Plan is a statutory spatial plan. The Partial Review of the Local Plan contains proposals helping to meet Oxford's housing need to 2031. When adopted, it will be part of the statutory development plan for the District. The Partial Review Plan does not supersede any of the policies in the adopted development plan.

All the other Supplementary Development Plan Documents produced by the Authority and Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the 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 Partial Review includes development proposals in the District until 2031 and could have an impact on those that live and work in the District. Therefore, the main stakeholders are the Cherwell community and those with an interest in the Cherwell District. These include residents, local businesses, stakeholders, staff, and partners. The Plan addresses Oxford's unmet housing need.

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 227026
SERVICE AREA: Planning and Development
DIRECTORATE: Place and Growth

ASSESSMENT REVIEW DATE: 14 August 2020

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
	Equality Impact: The Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1): Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs sets out the strategy for how Cherwell District will help meet Oxford's unmet housing need to 2031. It indicates how much growth and broadly where the growth will take place, and how it will be delivered. The Partial Review Plan will be part of the statutory development plan for the District when adopted. The Vision of the Partial Review for meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs in Cherwell is: "To provide new development that meets Oxford's agreed, identified housing needs, supports the city's world-class economy, universities and its local employment base, and ensures that people have convenient, affordable and sustainable travel opportunities to the city's places of work, study and recreation, and to its services and facilities". This development will be provided so that it: i. creates balanced and sustainable communities ii. is well connected to Oxford iii. is of exemplar design which responds distinctively and sensitively to the local built, historic and environmental context iv. is supported by necessary infrastructure v. provides for a range of household types and incomes reflecting Oxford's diverse needs vi. contributes to improving health and well-being, and vii. seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment The Partial Review contains four additional Strategic Objectives to those contained in the adopted Local Plan: • SO16: To work with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council, and other neighbouring authorities as required, in delivering Cherwell's contribution to meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs with its required infrastructure by 2031. • SO17: To provide Cherwell's contribution to meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs so that it supports the projected economic growth which	

	<p>underpins the agreed Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 and the local economies of Oxford and Cherwell.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO18: To provide housing for Oxford so that it substantively provides affordable access to new homes for those requiring “affordable” housing, new entrants to the housing market, key workers and those requiring access to Oxford’s key employment areas, and to provide well designed development that responds to both needs and the local context. • SO19: To provide Cherwell’s contribution to meeting Oxford’s unmet housing needs in such a way that it complements the County Council’s Local Transport Plan, including where applicable, its Oxford Transport Strategy and so that it facilitates demonstrable and deliverable improvements to the availability of sustainable transport for access to Oxford. <p>The Partial Review proposals are based on a range of evidence documents which use population forecasts and need assessments. These include breakdowns of gender, age, race/ethnicity and disability. Such documents include the Oxford City Council’s Housing Strategy 2015-2018 (as the Plan proposals seek to meet Oxford’s unmet housing need), Census 2011, and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014, which considers the housing needs of specific groups such as older people, minority groups and people with disabilities. The Partial Review evidence base is available to view on the Council’s website.</p> <p>Development proposals set out in the Partial Review will guide land use, and the provision of physical infrastructure. However, the delivery of services is dealt with by service providers. The Partial Review will affect everyone in the areas where it is delivered because its policies are land-use based. The SHMA takes into account the needs of all sections of the community including the elderly and the disabled. It is not considered that it will have a negative impact on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion.</p> <p>The Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1): Oxford’s Unmet Housing Needs has been prepared following extensive public consultation. There were four stages of consultation. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues Paper Consultation was held for six weeks from 29 January 2016 to 11 March 2016. • Options Consultation Paper was held for eight weeks from 14 November 2016 to 9 January 2017. • The Proposed Submission Plan Consultation was held for fourteen weeks from 17 July 2017 to 10 October 2017. • The Proposed Main Modifications Consultation was held for six weeks from 8 November 2019 to 20 December 2019. <p>The representations have been taken into account in preparing the Local Plan Partial Review.</p> <p>The Partial Review is 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 https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/33/planning-policy/383/statement-of-community-involvement, (with addendum 2020) which sets out how and when people can be involved in the preparation of Local Plans.</p>	
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	<p>This ensures that in the preparation of a Local Plan, the Council consults widely.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council Statement of Community Involvement Adopted on 18 July 2016 contains a list of the groups who should be engaged with in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council's Statement of Community Involvement Addendum (July 2020) makes temporary amendments in respect of publicity of planning policy documents and planning applications during the COVID-19 outbreak and it was adopted in July 2020. The purpose of the SCI Addendum is to reflect latest government planning advice in response to COVID-19 and make public reasonable steps to help the involvement of those in our community who may experience difficulties getting involved in the planning process through the internet.</p> <p>Since the publication of Cherwell's SCI Addendum, the Government brought into force the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 temporarily removing the requirement on a local planning authority to make documents available for public inspection at the authority's principal office and at such other places as the authority considers appropriate. They also make temporary changes to regulation 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to remove the requirement on a local planning authority to provide hard copies of documents made available under regulation 35. Documents are still required to be made available on the local planning authority's website.</p> <p>The results of consultation during the different stages of Local Plan preparation are reported in the Partial Review Consultation Statement. The statement has been kept up to date when consultation on Local Plan documents is carried out.</p> <p>The SCI July 2016, the SCI Addendum 2020 and the Consultation Statement can be viewed on the Council's website.</p> <p>Following the examination of the Plan and its evidence (including Equalities Impact Assessment and the Plan's Statement of Consultation) the Planning Inspector concluded in his Final report (para 11): '<i>I have had due regard to the aims expressed in S149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This has included my consideration of several matters during the examination, notably the provision of affordable housing.</i>'</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 Partial Review Plan may have an impact on relations with the local communities who would experience development. However, this is not an equality issue per se. The Plan proposes changes to the area and allocates sites to provide housing and infrastructure. This includes affordable housing, improved accessibility to the countryside including for disabled and wheelchair users, new services and facilities and public transport infrastructure.</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.</p> <p>If there has been consultation, please list the equality groups you have consulted with:</p> <p>Cherwell District Council considers 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>Cherwell District Council Statement of Community Involvement adopted in July</p>	N

	<p>2016 sets out how the Council will engage with the community in the preparation of Local Development Plan Documents.</p> <p>Extensive structured consultation has taken place during the preparation of the Partial Review Plan with the wider general public, community representatives, other public and private sector organisations and the voluntary sector. All comments and representations have been taken into account and have helped in influencing the formation of the policies of the Partial Review. To ensure accessibility of information to all and to engage with a wide range of parties/people, the Council produced materials with different audiences in mind. This included publicising information through various traditional and electronic media channels and meeting with local communities. The Local Plan Partial Review and all supporting documents were published on CDC's website and hard copies were made available to view at deposit locations. The Council also placed advertisements in the local press. The preparation of the Partial Review Plan has been the subject of widespread publicity including in newspapers and through exhibitions and meetings. During the stages of the preparation of the Partial Review Plan, as some of the consultation documents have been quite large documents, leaflet summaries were produced. All consultation materials were clear and concise, avoiding jargon where possible to enable a wider audience to understand the Plan proposals. Written information is made available in alternative, accessible formats if requested.</p> <p>Each stage of plan preparation is accompanied by public participation and consultation on the proposed plan, inviting comments and representations on the plan. These are summarised in the Consultation Statement.</p>	
11	<p>Has this assessment missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes?</p> <p>No. The Council has encouraged the participation of all sectors of the community in the preparation of the Partial Review 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:

Heather Seale - Planning Research and Monitoring Officer
Date: 14 August 2020

Countersigned by Assistant Director Planning and Development:

David Peckford
Date: 25 August 2020

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 Partial Review of Local Plan Part 1 prevents us in any way 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 planning documents, 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 of the protected groups have been disadvantaged through the Local Plan preparation process or will be negatively affected by policies contained in it.</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 Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 is not accessible to any equality groups.</p> <p>The Local Plan Partial Review and all supporting documents are available on CDC's website.</p> <p>Prior to the restrictions imposed by COVID 19, hard copies of the relevant Local Plan documents were also available to view at all Council offices and public libraries. The Council has placed advertisements in the local press.</p> <p>The preparation of the Partial Review Plan has been the subject of widespread publicity including in newspapers and through exhibitions and meetings.</p> <p>During the stages of the preparation of the Partial Review Plan, as some of the consultation documents have been quite large documents, we have also produced leaflet summaries to enable a wider audience to understand the Plan proposals.</p> <p>Copies of documents can also be obtained in large print, Braille, audio tape or in other languages.</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 issues under consideration within the Partial Review of the Local Plan. These are discussed within the report on consultations.</p>
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 Local Plan 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 Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan – Part 1, and none have highlighted equality impacts. Consultation has taken place at the service, directorate and working with the County Council, District Council and City Council during the preparation of the Partial Review.
Will there be a negative impact on any equality groups?	<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). • Text modification to provide more support for the provision of housing which better meets the needs of the elderly and disabled people.

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 policies contained within the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 may have a negative effect on our relations with some aspects of the local communities. However, this is not an equality issue per se. The Plan proposes changes to the area and allocates sites to provide housing and infrastructure. This includes affordable housing, improved accessibility to the countryside including for disabled and wheelchair users, new services and facilities and public transport infrastructure.
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>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 has produced a Statement of Community Involvement, which was adopted on 18 July 2016. This is a plan for how the Council will engage with the community in the preparation of the key planning policy documents.</p> <p>The Council has consulted the general public and other groups as required and as set out in its Statement of Community Involvement. Over 5,000 individuals, organisations and other bodies were registered on the Council's consultation database. In addition to statutory and non-statutory consultees, these included voluntary bodies and groups which represent the interests of different sections of the community, for example, clubs, societies, residents groups, charities and special interest groups.</p> <p>Full details of all consultation on preparation of the Partial Review of the Local Plan have been outlined in the Plan's Consultation Statement. It includes analysis of the representations from the consultations.</p> <p>Following the examination of the Plan and its evidence (including Equalities Impact Assessment and the Plan's Statement of Consultation) the Planning Inspector concluded in his Final report (para 11): <i>'I have had due regard to the aims expressed in S149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This has included my consideration of several matters during the examination, notably the provision of affordable housing'.</i></p>
Has this assessment missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes?	No