



DBC Equality Impact Assessment Form

Directorate: Housing and Regeneration

Service: Strategic Planning and Regeneration

Policy / function / activity being reviewed: Local Planning Framework (LPF)

Date completed and by whom: Laura Wood – April 2012

Review date: April 2015

Step 1 – Identifying the Purpose / Aims

1. What type of policy, service, activity or function is this?

Existing ▲ New ▲ **Changing/ updated** ▲

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, activity, service or function?

To provide the overall framework for development and to set the strategy for spatial planning in the district.

3. Outline any proposals being considered.

The Core Strategy, the first of the development plan documents (DPDs) that make up the LPF, is currently at Pre-Submission stage, with a series of issues and options having been previously considered.

Subsequent DPDs have yet to progress beyond a consideration of issues and options.

For all DPDs there is a statutory process to follow, culminating in adoption after an Examination by a Planning Inspector.

4. Who is the policy, activity, service or function intended to help / benefit / serve?

The Core Strategy (and other DPDs) should serve the needs of the whole community – residents, workers and visitors.

5. Does the policy, activity, service or function have any specific aims or objectives in relation to equality, social inclusion or community cohesion?

The Core Strategy sets out a series of strategic and local objectives that

embrace social inclusion. Subsequent DPDs will assist in ensuring these objectives are delivered on the ground.

Step 2 – Considering existing information and what this tells you

- Summarise any data / research or performance management information about the policy, function or activity that is available. This could include equalities monitoring information; surveys; complaints or grievances.

Data / Information

- the evidence base for the LPF includes information on housing land availability, the housing market (and needs), gypsy needs, open space, social and community facilities, indoor and outdoor sports/leisure facilities, employment and retailing and population characteristics.
- data relating to housing delivery and a range of other issues is included with the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), itself the subject of consultation and independent examination, explains the Council’s approach to engagement. This includes the approach to accessing hard-to-reach groups (via focus groups and the local strategic partnership in particular).
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA), which incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), is carried out at each stage of DPD production, culminating in a final SA Report. The role of SA is to identify the social, economic and environmental issues facing the district and to help ensure policies within the LPF take account of these. The final SA Report for the Core Strategy includes a statement on equalities impact.

- Is there any evidence of negative differential impact on any of the Nine Protected Characteristics or any other cluster group? (Some equality categories may be more relevant than others)

Race or Ethnicity

Provision for the gypsy and traveller community – while essential, this has attracted local controversy and in some cases highly inappropriate comment (which has been challenged and is not being taken into account).

Sex (Gender)

None

Gender Reassignment and Transgender

None

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|--|
| Sexual Orientation |
| None |
| Age |
| The provision of flexible and adaptable homes ('Lifetime homes'), transport and access to local services and facilities. |
| Disability |
| The provision of flexible and adaptable homes ('Lifetime homes'), transport and access to local services and facilities. |
| Religion or belief/ faith communities |
| The need to address the relative lack of appropriate meeting places and ensure existing facilities are adequately protected. |
| Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| None |
| Pregnancy and Maternity |
| None |
| Socio Economic Duties (Socially excluded communities or groups) |
| Affordable housing and any issues relating to transport, access to services and facilities and local service deficiencies. |

Step 3 – Assessing the Impact

8. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up of the service, facility or opportunity by any group /community and if so, is there an explanation for this?

The evidence gathered above and a full understanding of the issues has been used to formulate policies and proposals which form part of the Core Strategy (and subsequent DPDs). The Core Strategy aims to implement the aspirations and intentions of the Dacorum Community Strategy.

As part of the Sustainability Appraisal process a matrix has been developed to test policies and proposals against a range of social, economic and environmental objectives and indicators at key stages in the plan making process. The social objectives include the promotion of equity, avoiding discrimination (particularly with reference to ethnicity and disability), and social inclusion. The Equalities Impact Assessment is therefore integrated into the SA process and thus the Core Strategy (and wider LPF).

9. Could any of the associated rules, requirements or regulations of the function, activity or policy affect the accessibility of the service/ activity to any groups or communities?

Yes

10. If the impact or effects are adverse for any community or group, can they be defended i.e. in order to provide equality for another community under legislation or policy?

Yes ▲

NO ▲

Please give details below.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated. The process of SA is intended to assist the Council (as policy maker) to resolve such difficulties. However, where a level of disadvantage cannot be avoided due to other conflicting planning or legislative requirements, the SA will explain the reasons. Both the SA Reports and all DPDs will be subject to full consultation.

Step 4 – Dealing with adverse or unlawful impact

11. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

See answer to Q10.

12. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources available?

See answer to Q10.

Step 5 – Consultation and Feedback

13. Outline your proposals to consult with those affected on proposed changes.

Consultation policy is outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). It embraces:

- consulting with listed organisations (and maintaining an up to date consultation database)
- targeting groups as appropriate, and using focus group or workshops, the Citizens Panel and the local strategic partnership (which has the

widest representation available to the Council)

- maintaining news contact through Dacorum Digest (and the Council's website)
- Providing translations on request for specific documents (none has ever been requested).

Step 6 – The decision

14. What needs to be done?

To follow the framework for appraisal and consultation outlined above.

Step 7 – Monitoring, review and evaluation

15. What monitoring and review mechanisms are in place or will be developed?

The process of preparing the Core Strategy can be reviewed after completion, and any differential impact (relating to equal opportunities) assessed.

The impact of policies will be evaluated annually as part of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the LPF as a whole.

Step 8 – The service plan

16. What needs to be included in the Service Development Plan?

There are no new actions. The approach in Q14 must be maintained and regulatory steps followed. Service development, which improves electronic communication, can help some groups.

17. Does an Action Plan need to be put together to ensure everything is actioned?

No

Step 9 – Publishing the Results

The EqIA will be published on the Council's website; therefore as the author of the document it is your responsibility to ensure that it is written in an understandable way, free from Council jargon.

In order for the EqIA form to be published it must be reviewed and signed off by the relevant Group Manager. It is the service manager's responsibility to ensure that this is done.

Once the form this has been completed an electronic copy should be sent to Anne Stunell – Human Resources, ext. 2089 or Elissa Rospigliosi - Corporate Graduate, ext. 2541.