

# Wokingham Borough Council

## Equality Impact Assessment Update

<b>Name of Project</b>	Carnival Phase II Development	<b>Executive meeting date If applicable</b>	N/A
<b>Service area responsible</b>	Corporate Property		
<b>Name of completing officer</b>	David Smith	<b>Date Original EqIA created</b>	30/10/2017
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The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

In addition the Council complies with the Marriage (same sex couples) Act 2013.

Wokingham Borough Council also has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices.

This Equality Impact Assessment provides evidence for meeting the Council's commitment to equality and the responsibilities outlined above, for more information about the Council's commitment to equality; please visit the Council's website.

**Description of proposal including the relevance of the proposal to the general equality duties and protected groups. Also carry out your preliminary screening**

The redevelopment of the Carnival leisure centre, superbowl building and Southgate house to provide a leisure led development as part of WBC's Town Centre Masterplan. The scheme includes the delivery of a new improved and enlarged leisure centre (with a sports hall designed to also accommodate performances), a space to relocate the existing library (from Denmark Street), commercial units and 55 new residential flats; all set within a new public realm designed and orientated to link the existing multi-storey car to/from the Elmsfield development proposals and beyond to/from Wokingham town centre.

Inclusivity and accessibility have been key considerations for the duration of the design process, which commenced with the site masterplanning back in 2014 and which resulted in the iteration of the scheme that was presented to and approved at Planning Committee in November 2017. Further refinement to the scheme proposals have occurred through detailed design work.

The scheme was subject to an EqIA in October 2017. This document represents an up-date to that EqIA to capture changes that have occurred during the detailed design process. This document should be read in conjunction with the original EqIA document.

The new Leisure Centre and library building has been designed with inclusivity and accessibility as an integral component. It has been design in accordance with Approved Document M and includes accessible changing rooms, accessible WC's, pool access pods and a dedicated changing places room. Specialist group change facilities are also included for school and sensitive user groups use. The leisure centre includes generous corridor and lobby spaces and proposes two vertical circulation lifts. A dedicated "Live Well" gym is also provided for specialist needs, to compliment the primary fitness suite. The scheme now also includes a Splash Pad, a facility that was not previously included at planning.

The facility does not include its own dedicated parking, but will predominantly make use of the Phase 1 Multi-Storey Car Park where accessible spaces are provided at ground floor level adjacent to the main entrance, exiting direct onto a new pedestrianised public realm. In addition, since planning was granted, space has been identified for 4 disabled parking spaces to be located to the immediate south of the building within 50m travel distance to the leisure centre/library entrance. The routes to and from the buildings will be level and provided with seating in accordance with BS recommendations.

The decision to relocate the library from the current Denmark Street location was subject to its own separate EqIA.

**What impact will this proposal have on the following groups in terms of impact on residents and service delivery: Positive and negative impacts identified will need to form part of your action plan.**

	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>None – why?</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	The development would provide more accessible, improved and enlarged facilities for all	The 2 year closure of the leisure centre on this site during the construction period will limit access to leisure activities in the short term, with residents needing to look elsewhere.			
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>					
<b>Age</b>				Since planning, the scheme has introduced a splash pad; which will increase the appeal to younger users.	
<b>Disability</b>				Since planning, the design team have introduced 4 blue badge parking bays to the south of the library building. This is in direct response to a number of consultation responses received at the time of the planning application.	
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<b>Race &amp; Ethnicity</b>					
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>					
<b>Religion or Belief (or No Belief)</b>					
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>					
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership (note this only applies in relation to eliminating unlawful discrimination (limb 1))</b>					

### Consultation and follow up

At the time of planning, the scheme did not include any external disabled parking spaces nor a splash pad. The lack of these facilities received criticism from local residents in response to the public consultation. Notwithstanding, the application was approved without them.

Following on from the appointment of Places for People as the Leisure Centre operator the design team has taken the opportunity to re-introduce the splash pad. In addition, the landscape designers have been able to accommodate the blue badge parking spaces as close as practicable to the entrance to the buildings. These are both positive aspects of the scheme in terms of access and inclusivity.

The design team has also been provided with the post completion design/safety review undertaken on the market place refurbishment works with an instruction to incorporate any lessons learned from that project.

### Final impact analysis

The October 2017 EqIA concluded that “subject to the provisions set out in the planning submissions, which shall need to be worked up through detailed design and thereafter delivered under the requirements of the planning permission, the development has made all reasonable steps to optimise inclusivity and accessibility”. That further detailed design has facilitated the provision of both 4 disabled parking spaces immediately to the south of the building and to the provision of a splash pool – both aspects that were requested in the consultation responses received from residents to the planning application. In all other regards the accessible and inclusivity credentials remain as were identified in the original EqIA. It follows therefore that again it may be concluded that the design of the scheme has taken all reasonable steps to optimise inclusivity and accessibility.

The 2 year closure of the leisure centre on this site during the construction period will limit access to leisure activities in the borough in the short term, with residents needing to look elsewhere. This is an inevitable consequence of the development and will be outweighed by the longer term benefits of providing a modern leisure centre fit for the expanding population. Notwithstanding, the development has been programmed so that it will not commence until Bulmershe has completed and opened; so that the Borough does not have two of its leisure centres out of action at the same time.