

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment

If an officer is undertaking a project, policy change or service change, then an initial impact assessment must be completed and attached alongside the Project initiation document.

EqIA Titular information:

Date:	27 January 2022
Service:	Delivery and Infrastructure
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan: Main Modifications
Completed by:	Ian Church –Team Manager Planning Policy (Growth and Delivery)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	Mark Cupit: Assistant Director Delivery and Infrastructure
Sign off date:	9 December 2021

1. Policy, Project or service information:

This section should be used to identify the main purpose of the project, policy or service change, the method of delivery, including who key stakeholders are, main beneficiaries and any associated aims.

What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change, its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:

The purpose of the consultation on the Joint Plan: Main Modifications is to seek views on soundness of the main modifications proposed to the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (the Joint Plan). The Joint Plan is being prepared in partnership between Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) and Wokingham Borough Council (the joint authorities).

The joint authorities consulted on a pre-submission version of the Joint Plan from 3 September – 15 October 2020. The Joint Plan and supporting documents were subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2021. The public hearing sessions of the Joint Plan took place over several days in September and October 2021. As a result of these hearing sessions a number of modifications were proposed to the Joint Plan in order to ensure it is 'sound.' In total 85 main modifications are proposed. These modifications take into account updates to national planning policy and guidance and propose changes proposed policies.

Upon adoption, the Joint Plan will become part of the development plan which guides how planning applications for minerals and waste related development will be assessed across the joint authorities. At this time it will replace the existing planning policies contained in the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (adopted in 1995 but subject to Alterations in 1997 and 2001) and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (1998).

In total 85 main modifications have been recommended in order to make the Joint Plan sound. This includes revised development guidelines for proposed minerals sites in RBWM, and clarifying the purpose of mineral consultation areas as an internal tool to guide consultation. For clarity, the main modifications do not propose to include any new additional minerals or waste sites in Wokingham Borough.

For Wokingham Borough the key main modifications are:

- Brookside Business Park, Swallowfield: Proposed to be removed as a preferred waste area identified in Appendix A of the Joint Plan, due to the increase in flood risk as a result of the latest modelling data which takes into account climate allowances (MM78 and MM83).
- Star Works, Know Hill: Clarity is provided in Appendix E (MM84) that the site is proposed to be safeguarded for waste uses as an existing operational waste site.
- Policy DM15: Operator Past Performance, has been reconsidered and renamed 'Site History' to better focus on land use planning issues (MM27).

Public consultation on the above issues is anticipated to commence on from February 2022 for at least 6 weeks. The report to Executive and Special Council Executive Committee seeks authorisation undertake public consultation on the main modifications, including, agreement to the consultation framework, and agreement to delegate minor changes to the consultation documents.

Public consultation will include engagement with stakeholders, local communities, and town and parish councils. This will include a social media campaign, press and news releases and website updates. Consultation methods may need to be adapted due to the ongoing implications of Covid 19.

Outline how you are delivering your project, policy change or service change. What governance arrangements are in place, which internal stakeholders (Service managers, Assistant Directors, Members etc) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement for planning policy consultations of the joint authorities, but may be subject to adaptations due to the impact of Covid 19. The consultation will involve seeking feedback from a range of interested organisations and other parties (including general and specific consultation bodies specified in the Regulations) as well as councillors and officers.

This builds on a number of earlier public consultations, including the Draft Plan consultation in 2018, a focussed consultation in spring 2020 and Pre-Submission version in summer 2020. This allowed residents, businesses, landowners and other stakeholders the opportunity to review and respond to proposals. Public drop in consultation events were also held, where officers were available to discuss the proposals, and answer questions. The results of these consultations have helped to guide the preparation of the Joint Plan.

Members (including the Leader of the Council, Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement, and Executive Member for Environment and Leisure) have been engaged during the preparation of the Joint Plan through briefing sessions, and attendance at the Joint Sounding Board, constituting Members and officers from each of the central and eastern Berkshire authorities. Other internal stakeholders have been engaged on a general or specific basis throughout the preparation of this consultation including Corporate Leadership Team and lead specialists from across the council.

Outline who are the main beneficiaries of the Project, policy change or service change?

This consultation documentation has been produced by Hampshire Services and the joint authorities, with the input of officers, communities and stakeholders through previous stages of consultation (Issues and Options, Draft Plan, Focused Consultation, Pre-Submission). In the longer term and once adopted, all residents of the borough (and the joint authorities) will benefit from having a new Minerals and Waste Plan, ensuring that planning policy remains effective in managing decisions by the council. This provides greater certainty on the future delivery of minerals and waste development across the borough.

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:

Public consultation will generate comments from individuals and organisations (including statutory bodies), that will be submitted to the Planning Inspectors, to inform their final report on the Joint Plan.

The aim is for the Joint Plan to be adopted by all four authorities, to set out a robust and up to date strategy and development management policies for minerals and waste.

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age
- Religious belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership:

To find out more about the protected groups, please consult the EQIA guidance.

3. Initial Impact review:

In the table below, please indicate whether your project, Policy change or service change will have a positive or negative impact on one of the protected characteristics. To assess the level of impact, please assign each group a Positive, No, Low or High impact score:

For information on how to define No, low or high impact, please consult the EQIA guidance document.

If your project is to have a positive impact on one of the protected groups, please outline this in the table below.

For details on what constitutes a positive impact, please consult the EQIA guidance.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that this main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Gender:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that this main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Disabilities:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Age:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Sexual orientation:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Religion/belief:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Gender re-assignment:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the main modifications consultation will have any impact on this group at this point in time. The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation documentation.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low of high negative impact. If No impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by

Ian Bellinger

Ian Bellinger: Service Manager Growth and Delivery

Date: 09/12/2021