

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:	16 th August 2022
Service:	Place and Growth (Delivery & Infrastructure)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan – Consultation and Examination
Completed by:	James McCabe (Growth and Delivery Team, Principal Planning Policy Officer)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	 Trevor Saunders Assistant Director Planning Service
Sign off date:	16 th August 2022

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.

<p>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:</p> <p>Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.</p> <p>Finchampstead Parish Council have prepared a draft neighbourhood development plan for their area.</p>
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The report to Executive seeks agreement to publish the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan for consultation and to delegate the appointment of an examiner and the submission of the examination documentation to the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Local Plan. Consultation and examination are required under the regulations governing neighbourhood development plans.

The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, which is anticipated to be formally submitted by Finchampstead Parish Council to Wokingham Borough Council by September 2022.

Public consultation on the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan is planned to take place for a minimum period of six weeks, starting from Monday 10th October 2022 and ending on Monday 21st November 2022.

Other supporting documentation including the Environmental Report and Habitats Regulation Assessment also form part of the consultation.

Finchampstead Parish Council consulted on an earlier full draft Neighbourhood Plan in February to March 2021 (Regulation 14) and a further targeted consultation between October and November 2021 (also Regulation 14).

Public consultation on the recommended version of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan is a legal requirement under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The consultation will be undertaken in line with the principles set out in the council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and all relevant legislation and regulations governing that process.

If 'made' (adopted), the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would help shape new development and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the neighbourhood area.

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 publication of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken in accordance with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for planning policy consultations. This will involve sending emails/letters to those registered on the consultation database, including organisations (general and specific consultation bodies specified in the Regulations), councillors and internal officers. Advertising and further information will be placed on Finchampstead Parish Council's and Wokingham Borough Council's website and publicised through social and other forms of traditional media to promote the consultation.

Stakeholders including the Assistant Director of Planning and Director of Place and Growth are engaged through the Place and Growth Leadership Team and Corporate Leadership Team. Lead Specialists from Growth and Delivery have also engaged with members of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood

Planning Steering Group and Finchampstead Parish Council and provided policy advice and support on earlier iterations of the neighbourhood plan and supporting documentation.

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

The Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan has been produced by Finchampstead Parish Council (the qualifying body) and volunteers with the input of officers in the council's Growth and Delivery team, communities and stakeholders through previous consultations on a draft plan (under Regulation 14). If 'made' (adopted), the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would become part of the Development Plan for the parish and therefore be considered alongside the council's planning policies when making decisions on planning applications and help shape how development is managed in their area.

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

Public consultation on the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate engagement in the plan-making process, by providing a further opportunity for individuals and organisations (including statutory and prescribed bodies) to comment on proposals, prior to an examination by an independent person (to be appointed jointly by the council and Finchampstead Parish Council).

The Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, will become part of the Development Plan and would help set out a vision and general planning policies for the development and use of land in the area, and in so doing guide decision making on planning applications in the area alongside the council's planning policies.

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:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Gender:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Disabilities:	Positive	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Age:	Positive	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Sexual orientation:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Religion/belief:	Positive	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

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....

Trevor Saunders

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Saunders', with a horizontal line underneath.

Assistant Director Planning Service

Date:....16/08/2022