

### **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:	19 January 2023
Service:	Delivery and Infrastructure
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan: Adoption
Completed by:	Ian Church –Team Manager Planning Policy (Growth and Delivery)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	Trevor Saunders, Assistant Director, Planning
Sign off date:	01/12/22

#### **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 Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (the Joint Plan) is to set out the long term land use strategy for mineral extraction and waste management. The plan period is to the end of 2036.

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 in line with the Regulations governing the preparation of local plans to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2021. The Secretary of State appointed two Planning Inspectors to examine the Joint Plan for its legal compliance and soundness. The examination process has considered all representations made in response to the pre-submission version. Written responses were supplemented by public hearing sessions over several days in September and October 2021.

As a result of examination a number of modifications were proposed to the Joint Plan in order to ensure it is 'sound.' Consultation on the main modifications took place in spring 2022. A total of 28 representations were made, which have been considered by the Planning Inspectors. The Planning Inspectors' final report was issued in October 2022, which recommended that with the incorporation of the main modifications, the Joint Plan is capable of adopted, being legally compliant and sound.

In total 82 main modifications have been recommended by the Planning Inspectors 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 (MM72 and MM77).
- Star Works, Know Hill: Clarity is provided in Appendix E (MM81) 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 (MM25).

Upon adoption, the Joint Plan will become part of the development plan which is the starting point for the determination of planning applications for minerals and waste related development. 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).

The adoption of the Joint Plan will reflect the latest government planning policy and guidance and is a key part of ensuring up to date land use planning policies are in place to guide decisions on planning applications in Wokingham Borough.

**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:**

Once the Joint Plan is adopted, the decision will be publicised in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement for planning policy consultations and the Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

A number of earlier public consultations have been undertaken as part of preparing the Joint Plan, including the Draft Plan consultation in 2018, a focussed consultation in spring 2020, Pre-Submission version in summer 2020 and main modifications consultation in spring 2022. This has allowed residents, businesses, landowners and other stakeholders the opportunity to review and respond to draft proposals. Public drop in consultation events were also held, where officers were available to discuss the draft proposals, and answer questions. The results of these consultations have been taken into account to guide the preparation of the Joint Plan.

Elected Members have been engaged during the preparation of the Joint Plan through briefing sessions, and attendance at the Joint Sounding Board which included Members and officers from each of the joint authorities. Other internal stakeholders have been engaged on a general or specific basis throughout the preparation of the Joint Plan including for Wokingham Borough Council's Corporate Leadership Team and lead specialists.

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

The Joint Plan and supporting documentation have been produced by Hampshire Services who were commissioned by 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, main modifications). In the longer term and once adopted, all residents of the borough (and the joint authorities) will benefit from having up-to-date planning policies to manage minerals and waste development proposals, ensuring that planning policy remains effective. This provides greater certainty on the future management and delivery of minerals and waste development.

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

The aim is for the Joint Plan to be adopted by all four of the joint 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	No adverse or positive impacts on any people of any race have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people of a particular race.
Gender:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people of any gender have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people of any gender.
Disabilities:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people with disabilities have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people with any disabilities. Any impacts potentially caused by a mineral extraction or waste management uses would be considered through the planning application process.
Age:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people in particular age groups have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people in particular age groups
Sexual orientation:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any person in relation to their sexual orientation have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people relating to their sexual orientation
Religion/belief:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people of faiths have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people of faiths.
Gender re-assignment:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people of any gender have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people of any gender
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people with pregnancy or maternity issues have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people who are pregnant or have young children.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No	No adverse or positive impacts on any people in a marriage/civil partnership have been identified as likely to result from the Plan. It is not considered that the Plan would be discriminatory to any people who are married or in a civil partnership.

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: 29/11/2022