

### **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:	12 April 2023
Service:	Place and Growth (Delivery & Infrastructure)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan
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:	<b>Trevor Saunders</b> <b>Assistant Director Planning</b>
Sign off date:	12 April 2023

#### **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.

<b>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:</b>
Finchampstead Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan to help shape how development is managed in their area. The Plan contains policies on issues including housing; settlement separation; the natural and historic environment; retail facilities; business and commercial development; transport; and design. It also proposes to allocate areas of land as Local Green Space. The post examination Plan does not include any site allocations.
This report considers the findings of the examination of the submission Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, the modifications recommended by the Independent Examiner, whether these should be accepted, and if so, seeks support for the modified plan to proceed to a public vote through a referendum. Once adopted, the neighbourhood plan will become part of the development plan for the Finchampstead area. Holding a referendum

is required by the Regulations governing the neighbourhood plan process. The referendum will be undertaken in line with Regulations governing that process.

Should more than half of those voting do so in favour of the Plan at the referendum, Wokingham Borough Council must 'make' (adopt) the Plan through a resolution of Full Council. Once made, the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan (alongside Local Plans) and be used in the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Finchampstead Parish.

**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 ect) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:**

The consultation framework for the preparation of the Plan has been undertaken in accordance with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. This involved sending emails/letters to a number of individuals, organisations, councillors and internal officers. Advertising and further information will be placed on the council's website and publicised through social media.

Stakeholders including the Assistant Director of Planning and Director of Place and Growth have been engaged through the Corporate Leadership Team. 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 technical support throughout the Plan's preparation.

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

The Plan has been produced by Finchampstead Parish Council (the qualifying body) with the advice and support of officers in the council's Growth and Delivery team, communities and stakeholders. The purpose of neighbourhood planning is to enable local communities to help shape how development is managed in their area. The main beneficiaries are residents and local businesses within Finchampstead Parish.

The Independent Examiner was also satisfied that consultation and publicity undertaken on the Plan had met the regulatory requirements.

The Plan, once made, will be used by Wokingham Borough Council to help determine the suitability of planning applications within the area, and to help defend any appeals against the refusal of planning permission.

<b>Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:</b>
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The purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to enable communities to help shape how development is managed in their area.
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## 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.*

<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Impact score</b>	<b>Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:</b>
Race:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Gender:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Disabilities:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Age:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Sexual orientation:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Religion/belief:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum will ensure fair access for the stakeholders who are being engaged.

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 or 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**

**Assistant Director, Planning**

Date:....12/04/2023

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