

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details	
Officer completing Full EqIA	Jonathan Dixon, Planning Policy Manager.
Team and Service	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Policy Team / Planning and Economic Development
Title of policy, strategy, service, project or function	Statement of Community Involvement
EqIA start date	28/05/2019
Date of Full EqIA completion	14/06/2019
Date of update	01/05/2020
Date of proposal implementation	15/06/2020

Section 2: Proposal to be assessed
2.1 Is the proposal:
Statement of Community Involvement
2.2 Is the proposal:
Reviewing SCI previously adopted July 2019 (update of assessment to consider impacts of Addendum May 2020).
State last reviewed date:
01/05/2020
2.4 Will the proposal cause a significant affect?
This Statement out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will engage the public in the planning process. An Addendum to the SCI has been prepared, to set out which elements are impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, and how the Councils will continue to enable full involvement of people in planning matters.
2.5 Please explain your proposal, addressing each of the following questions.
What are the aims? There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning applications. This SCI is an important document as it will establish a minimum standard of consultation and publicity on planning matters for both Cambridge City and South



Cambridgeshire District Councils. It is important that this is undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient and proportionate manner.

What are the objectives that will help achieve these aims?

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) describes how the public, businesses and interest groups within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning application process which shapes where we live, work and trade. This is essential to help improve understanding and openness of the planning process.

The Councils are committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, and wants to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to be involved in the planning process. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are constantly evolving, and this SCI will be revisited at regular intervals to ensure it is fully up-to date and reflects local and national priorities, practices and policies.

Update May 2020:

The Councils are committed to keeping essential services running during the COVID-19 outbreak. Planning has an important role to play in supporting our economy and our communities. It is important that we find a way to keep the planning process moving forward. There are a number of ways in which the Councils are having to adapt the approach to planning applications and plan making while movement restrictions are in place.

An Addendum to the SCI has been prepared, to set out which elements are impacted by current restrictions, and how the Councils will continue to enable full involvement of people in planning matters. Updating the SCI reflects advice from the Planning Advisory Service. Each of the changes proposed is explained in the Addendum.

This EqIA considers how equality implications apply differently or impacts might be exacerbated during the period of amended practice.

What are the main activities that will take place as part of this proposal?

The SCI has been split into three sections which cover the following roles and responsibilities of the planning service:

- Planning Policy including the production of planning policy documents including the Local Plan
- Development Management including how the councils consider and publicise planning applications, and
- Neighbourhood Planning setting out how the councils will assist groups who are preparing neighbourhood plans

The SCI was originally adopted in July 2019 and is now being updated to account for COVID-19 impacts.

Which of the Council's business plan priorities does this proposal link to?

It is linked to the 2019/20 Council's Aim of putting the heart into Cambridgeshire by:
Growing local businesses and economies – Supporting our businesses to be greener by allowing them to engage in the planning system using electronic communications.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in – Working with developers, parish councils and local people to raise the standards of new homes and communities through effective lines of communication.

Being green to our core – Making sure the environment is fully considered in all new major transport routes, including tree planting and habitat enhancement to offset developments by consulting with the relevant local and national environmental and biodiversity organisations. Reducing how much waste we generate as a community, increasing recycling and reducing recycling contamination by continuing to consult on planning policy and applications through electronic methods.

A modern and caring Council – Using technology to improve access to Council services for businesses and residents so they track the progress of things they report, pay, and apply for online.

Whose needs is it designed to meet?

The SCI sets out how the public will have an opportunity to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge.

How many people will this proposal impact? (Approximately)

All South Cambridgeshire residents and businesses.

2.6 Does or will the proposal affect:

The SCI has the potential to affect a large and wide-ranging proportion of the community, including:

- Residents across Greater Cambridge
- Local Parish Councils and designated Neighbourhood Forums
- District and City Council Members
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Adjacent Local Authorities
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Delivery partners, including landowners, developers, infrastructure providers, transport providers
- Community organisations
- Statutory, general and wider consultation bodies
- Local businesses

Please specify here how these will be impacted.

Please be aware the impact will be discussed in section 4.

The SCI describes how the public, businesses, interest groups and individuals within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning application process aiming at shaping where we live, work and trade.



2.7 Who will be responsible for carrying out this proposal?

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Policy Team.

2.8 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how SCDC will ensure that they will meet equality standards?

N/A

3.1 Describe the research/analysis you have undertaken in order to understand how the protected characteristic groups are likely to be affected?

You will be asked to detail impacts on the protected characteristic groups later on in the form.

The SCI is concerned with the processes for enabling everyone to get involved in the planning process. The SCI was published for public consultation and the representations received have been considered in finalising the document.

The Council's [Equalities Scheme](#) shows South Cambridgeshire is a rural area with a population which is expected to grow at faster than the national average. A growing elderly population, greater mobility, immigration and other social trends are making changes to the population. These changes will accelerate as a result of the population growth facing the district in the next ten years or so, leading to a far more diverse society than previously. The following is a snapshot of the people of South Cambridgeshire:

- At present approximately 19% of the South Cambs population falls within the 65+ age group and this is expected to grow to approx. 22% in 2031.
- In 2011 approx. 14% declared a disability whereby day-to-day activities are limited a little or a lot.
- The 2011 Census data shows that in South Cambridgeshire 87.3% of the population were White British (which has fallen in the last ten years from 93.2%) and 6% declared themselves as White Irish, White Gypsy/Irish Traveller and White Other.

The SCI is expected to have neutral impacts on several protected characteristics; including age, disability, religion and rurality (see section 4 below).

The Authority Monitoring Report will include data on any consultations that have been undertaken during the relevant monitoring period, and will use the following indicators:

- Number of people participating in consultation
- Number of people using the councils' online website to make representations



3.2 Describe the research/analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on any other groups of people (not mentioned in the 9 Protected Characteristics).

The Council's [Equalities Scheme](#) shows South Cambridgeshire is a rural area with a population which is expected to grow at faster than the national average.

3.3 Share where your evidence and research has been gathered from. In particular, please detail useful sources in relation to specific protected characteristic groups.

- The Council's [Equalities Scheme](#).
- The Authority Monitoring Report will include data on any consultations that have been undertaken during the relevant monitoring period.

3.4 Have you consulted groups that are likely to be affected by the proposal you want to implement? If so, describe the consultations and the groups involved.

External Stakeholders:

Whilst there is no mandatory requirement for consultation on a draft SCI, Cabinet in January 2019 agreed that the draft SCI should be published to seek the views of the wider community on the draft document. The public consultation period commenced on Monday 11 February and concluded on Monday 25 March 2019. The consultation period was carried out in accordance with the requirements for Supplementary Planning Documents (see Table 2 of the SCI attached at Appendix 1). There were a total of 12 representations received during the consultation period and they have been considered when preparing the SCI. The representations are considered in further detail in the Consultation Statement. In summary, a single amendment was proposed to the SCI on the basis of the representations received, which was to include direct links to the webpages for viewing or commenting on planning applications for both Councils.

Staff:

The preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement has been a cross departmental process and has involved meetings and regular input from officers in Planning Policy, Development Management (including enforcement) and Planning Business Support. The document has also been informed by Cambridge City Council's Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer.

Update May 2020: Consultation on the SCI update and this EQIA was undertaken with Cambridge City Council's Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer, and the Policy and Performance Team at South Cambridgeshire District Council.

3.5 If you have not consulted or engaged with groups that are likely to be affected by the proposal, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation, or provide reasons why this is not necessary (please provide details of any approvals you have received for this approach).



N/A

Section 4: Impact of proposal

4.1 Age: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City.

It is anecdotally recognised that it can sometimes be more difficult to engage with younger age groups, and where possible and appropriate relevant organisations and individuals will be identified to reach as wide an age range as possible. This could include external organisations such as ChYPPS (Children and Young People’s Participation Service, Cambridge City Council). Evidence suggests that some older people and those from lower income households are also less likely to have access to the internet. The Council has a Digital Inclusion Strategy in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it.

Update May 2020: The increased reliance on technology for community involvement practices could have a negative impact on those most likely to be digitally excluded. This includes older people. Since 2011, adults over the age of 65 years have consistently made up the largest proportion of the adult internet non-users, and over half of all adult internet non-users were over the age of 75 years in 2018 (latest ONS stats available). Therefore, older people may be less able to participate. It also includes some disabled people who may struggle to access technology that is adapted to meet their needs - national statistics indicate that many disabled people are especially likely to be digitally excluded. Latest statistics from 2017, indicate that 56% of adult internet non-users were disabled, much higher than the proportion of disabled adults in the UK population in 2016 to 2017 that was estimated to be at 22%.

Cambridge City Council’s Digital Inclusion Officer has been working hard to increase capacity of local voluntary and community sector organisations that support disabled people and older people to get online. For instance, Cambridge Online are the regional coordinators for the Devices Dot Now initiative. This aims to get internet enabled devices and data allowances to those who have been identified as most digitally excluded. They are also providing telephone support and guidance during COVID-19.

Moreover, although we are not able to deposit documents in Council buildings which are shut during this time, we are providing contacts to email and phone so people can find out more information on issues they are concerned with, and get help accessing material if they need it. These will on our webpages and notices. If people



have accessibility needs they can still request documents in different formats if required (e.g. large print), as made clear on our website.

Nature of impact	Neutral
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Extent of impact	
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Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.2 Disability: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City.

The SCI identifies a range of external groups and organisations that may be consulted on planning matters, whilst the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service has a Disability Panel operating within Cambridge City helping to feedback on impacts new developments have on people with a range of disabilities.

The consultation document can be made available on request in large copy print, audio cassette or Braille and officers are willing to meet individuals and talk issues through. This approach would also apply, as necessary, to subsequent consultation documents that are prepared in the plan making process. In respect of planning applications, information can be made available in a range of formats if required.

Update May 2020: Cambridge City Council’s Digital Inclusion Officer has been working hard to increase capacity of local voluntary and community sector organisations that support disabled people and older people to get online. For instance, Cambridge Online are the regional coordinators for the Devices Dot Now initiative. This aims to get internet enabled devices and data allowances to those who have been identified as most digitally excluded. They are also providing telephone support and guidance during COVID-19.

Moreover, although we are not able to deposit documents in Council buildings which are shut during this time, we are providing contacts to email and phone so people can find out more information on issues they are concerned with, and get help accessing material if they need it. These will on our webpages and notices. If people have accessibility needs they can still request documents in different formats if required (e.g. large print), as made clear on our website.



Nature of impact	Neutral.
Extent of impact	

Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.3 Gender Reassignment: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic 

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

Nature of impact	Neutral
Extent of impact	

Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

Nature of impact	Neutral.
Extent of impact	



Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.5 Pregnancy and maternity: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic 

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City.

Where people are required to care for children, it may be difficult for them to engage in consultation events and meetings. A number of the planning policy consultation events take place within and outside of usual working hours to try and ensure residents and businesses are able to engage in the process. Planning applications are available for public inspection online and can be accessed at any time of the day.

Nature of impact	Neutral
Extent of impact	

Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.6 Race: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.



Nature of impact	Neutral.		
Extent of impact			
Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.			
Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?
4.7 Religion or Belief: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal on this protected characteristic 			
The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.			
Nature of impact	Neutral.		
Extent of impact			
Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.			
Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?
4.8 Sex: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal			
The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.			



Nature of impact	Neutral.
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Extent of impact	
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Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.9 Sexual Orientation: Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

Nature of impact	Neutral.
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Extent of impact	
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Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

4.10 Other : Describe what your research and consultation has shown on the potential impacts of your proposal

The SCI sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City.

It can be difficult to contact some low income groups if they have limited access to the internet and transport, and the SCI sets out that where additional mechanisms

are required to improve levels of engagement on planning matters that bespoke methods may be used. This will be considered in detail taking into account the subject matters and geographic scope of each new stage of plan making, and in respect of planning applications.

Evidence suggests that some older people are also less likely to have access to the internet. The Council as a Digital Inclusion Strategy in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it.

Rural access to high speed internet is also an issue within the district and part of the council's Business Plan is to work with partners to improve broadband and mobile phone coverage across the district. To assist with viewing planning documents online, the councils' will generally split large documents, such as a Design and Access Statement, when they exceed 50 pages or 10MB in file size to assist users with downloading and viewing large files.

Update May 2020: People might not have access to devices or good broadband due to being on low incomes. Before the COVID-19 crisis and beyond this, Cambridge City Councils' Housing Service has been working hard to provide people in our council homes access to reliable and cheap broadband. Many people on low-incomes might not have access to computers but are more likely to have access to smart phones. Most also have limited data allowances, or use pay as you go. Cambridge City Council's and South Cambridgeshire District Council's websites meet the EU Web Accessibility Directive requirements, which also requires that our websites be compatible for use on smartphones.

Moreover, although we are not able to deposit documents in Council buildings which are shut during this time, we are providing contacts to email and phone so people can find out more information on issues they are concerned with, and get help accessing material if they need it. These will on our webpages and notices. If people have accessibility needs they can still request documents in different formats if required (e.g. large print), as made clear on our website.

Nature of impact	Neutral.
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Extent of impact	
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Please complete the table below to detail the actions that will be taken to address impacts raised in relation to this group.

Action	Who is the responsible officer for ensuring this action is completed?	How will the actions be monitored and when will the action be achieved?	If not achieved, what is the action plan?

Section 5: Evaluation, Conclusion and Monitoring

5.1 Briefly highlight the key findings of the EqlA and any significant equality issues to which the decision-maker should have due regard to when deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal. This section serves as an Executive Summary of the EqlA and can be duplicated into any reports for decision makers.

The SCI has a neutral impact on equalities as it sets out how all members of the community can participate in the planning process across both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. However, this EqlA identifies that certain age groups can be difficult to engage with, different disabilities have accessibility needs while lower income, and some rural, households are less likely to have access to the internet causing increased digital exclusion. Measures have and continue to be put in place to mitigate this. The Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy supports people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and the skills they need to use it. While those with accessibility issues can make requests for specific support such as large copy print, and Cambridge City Council operates a Disability Panel identifying the impacts new developments can have on a range of disabilities.

The May 2020 addendum provides an update on the work that Councils has been doing to support disabled and older people get online in a time where we have seen an increased reliance on technology. Officers have supported initiatives such as Devices Dot Now which helps to get internet enabled devices and data allowances to those identified as digitally excluded. It has also made email and phone details available so that people can find information on issues of concern and receive help in accessing materials, even whilst Council buildings are closed due to COVID-19.

The Councils will continue to monitor the success of their consultations.

5.2 Confirm the outcome of the EqlA.

Delete as appropriate.

- Approved (No major change): Your analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust, and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.



5.3 Who will review this proposal, when will it be next reviewed, how often will this proposal be reviewed?

Planning Policy Team

Subject to the findings of ongoing monitoring, it will be reviewed next time the SCI is updated. Councils are required to review their SCI at least every 5 years.

5.4 Do you give permission to publish this EqlA on SCDC website? If no, please state reason.

- Yes

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqlA	J Dixon
6.2 Date of completion	19/06/2019
6.3 Details of the review	Review of the May 2020 update
6.4 Date of review	01/05/2020
6.5 Signature indicating approval of EqlA	



6.6 Date of approval	
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EqlA can be translated into different languages (if requested).