

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(updated May 2024)

Title of service or policy	Somer Valley Enterprise Zone
Name of directorate and service	Enterprise Zone team, Sustainable Communities Directorate
Name and role of officers completing the EIA	Ella Thomas - Development Officer
Date of assessment	23/10/2024

Equality Impact Assessment (or ‘Equality Analysis’) is a process of systematically analysing a new or existing policy or service to identify what impact or likely impact it will have on different groups within the community. The main aim is to identify any discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and also to identify areas where equality can be better promoted. Equality impact Assessments (EIAs) can be carried out in relation to services provided to customers and residents as well as employment policies/strategies that relate to staffing matters.

This toolkit has been developed to use as a framework when carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so leave blank any that are not applicable.** It is intended that this is used as a working document throughout the process, and a final version will be published on the Council’s website.

1. Identify the aims of the policy or service and how it is implemented.		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes
1.1	<p>Briefly describe purpose of the service/policy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How the service/policy is delivered and by whom ● If responsibility for its implementation is shared with other departments or organisations ● Intended outcomes 	<p>The overall objective of the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone project is to provide a highly sustainable and attractive new location for business, drawing in new employers and skills, and reducing the need for commuting by local people, many of whom currently travel towards adjacent urban centres for employment. The project area is shown on the accompanying plan.</p> <p>The outcome will be the provision of circa 38,500 square metres of commercial floorspace, along with the provision of 1,300 new jobs. The project is currently seeking to acquire the land required for the SVEZ and the associated highways works, either via negotiations or a Compulsory Purchase Order.</p>
1.2	<p>Provide brief details of the scope of the policy or service being reviewed, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is it a new service/policy or review of an existing one? ● Is it a national requirement?). ● How much room for review is there? 	<p>The site has been allocated for employment uses via the B&NES development plan since 2007, and the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone project seeks to bring forward the delivery of the site.</p> <p>A Local Development Order (LDO) has been adopted as the planning mechanism for the site. The LDO will set the framework for how development on the site should come forward. An informal public engagement on the proposed masterplan took place in May and June of 2022, and the comments raised have fed-back into the proposed design of the site. An initial statutory consultation on the proposed LDO took place in January 2023, and a revised</p>

		<p>statutory consultation took place in 22nd September to 26th October, providing a further opportunity for the public to comment on the proposals.</p> <p>The Council has adopted Compulsory Purchase Powers for the acquisition of the land required for the SVEZ and associated highways works, although at the date of this assessment the CPO is yet to be published. The Council is also progressing a Side Roads Order (SRO), which will grant statutory permissions to carry out the required alterations to the highway network to support the delivery of the project in accordance with the LDO. The SRO does not itself consent any additional works which are not permitted pursuant to the LDO.</p> <p>This assessment represents an update to EIAs which the Council has undertaken previously in relation to the Scheme.</p>
1.3	Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?	This is not policy, but it does strongly support the Council's vision & values objectives – building a stronger economy, creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Monitoring data and other information should be used to help you analyse whether you are delivering a fair and equal service. Please consider the availability of the following as potential sources:

- **Demographic** data and other statistics, including census findings
- Recent **research** findings (local and national)
- Results from **consultation or engagement** you have undertaken
- Service user **monitoring data** (including ethnicity, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation and age)
- Information from **relevant groups** or agencies, for example trade unions and voluntary/community organisations
- Analysis of records of enquiries about your service, or **complaints** or **compliments** about them
- Recommendations of **external inspections** or audit reports

	Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
2.1	What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has had equalities training over the last 2yrs and refresher training with the Equalities Team is being planned • General equalities awareness training via Corporate courses • Information sharing to discuss good practice
2.2	What is the equalities profile of service users?	A 2021 profile of the Paulton Ward, in which the project area sits, provides a summary of demographic data. Whilst this gives an indication of the equalities profile of the project area, it should be noted that the project is a small area in the wider ward. The profile indicates that it has a higher proportion of economically active residents than B&NES as a whole; however, the proportion of those in senior positions such as managers and senior officials is lower than in the broader B&NES area. The proportion of those with Level 4 qualifications and above is also lower than the wider B&NES area and the England and Wales average. Taken together, these factors suggest that the ward has a higher percentage of socio-economic disadvantage compared to B&NES as a whole. The proportion of residents that are retired is slightly higher than the B&NES average and there are fewer female residents than the rest of the authority area.
2.4	Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?	There are no known customer satisfaction surveys relating to this area or type of development.
2.5	What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?	<p>The Council's Equalities Officer has been consulted to review the updated EQIA as the project moves forward.</p> <p>In terms of public engagement on the project itself, an informal public engagement was conducted in May and June 2022. The engagement consisted of a variety of in-person and online events and information sources, designed to facilitate access by all residents. For example, access by those in digital poverty was considered and advertisements were placed in a local newspaper, hard-copy information was available in local libraries, and a public meeting was held in a local village hall. However, as it is not always easy for residents to access these public spaces, particularly in rural areas such as the Somer Valley, information about the project was also disseminated via a radio interview.</p>

		<p>An initial statutory consultation was held for 28 days in January 2023, hosted by the Local Planning Authority. This gave opportunity for the public and statutory consultees to comment on the LDO.</p> <p>The project team attended Farrington Gurney Parish Council on the 18th September 2023 and the Somer Valley Forum on 20th September 2023.</p> <p>A revised statutory consultation was held from 22nd September 2023 to 26th October 2023.</p> <p>The project team also engages in regular meetings with a local Key Stakeholder Group, consisting of local Ward, Parish and Town Councillors.</p>	
2.6	If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equalities considerations within this?	The Council will be engaging with all persons directly affected by the CPO and if any matters come to light which may affect engagement with the CPO process due to any person's specific characteristics, then the Council will engage with them sensitively and assist their participation as needed.	
3. Assessment of impact: 'Equality analysis'			
	<p>Based upon any data you have considered, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to demonstrate you have analysed how the service or policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets any particular needs of equalities groups or could help promote equality in some way. ● Could have a negative or adverse impact for any of the equalities groups 		
		Examples of what the service has done to promote equality	Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this
3.1	Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics		

3.2	Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.	Gender split represented on the Key Stakeholder Group.	The SVEZ is considered non-gender specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.
3.3	Pregnancy and maternity	Meetings take place online and during the evening to further support attendance. For parents and those who work during the day	<p>The SVEZ is considered non-pregnancy or maternity specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.</p> <p>The project is not yet in the delivery phase and the form and nature of the buildings to be construction on the site will be determined by the developers of the individual plots, in compliance with the requirements and conditions of the Local Development Order. However it is expected that ongoing due diligence will be given to this protected characteristic.</p>
3.4	Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people	The SVEZ is considered non-gender specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities. (move this here)	<p>The SVEZ is considered non-gender specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.</p> <p>The project is not yet in the delivery phase and the form and nature of the buildings to be construction on the site will be determined by the developers of the individual plots, in compliance with the requirements and conditions of the Local Development Order. However, it is expected that ongoing due diligence will be given to this protected characteristic.</p>
3.5	Disability – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration both physical, sensory and mental	The design guide forms part of the LDO adoption and states how development should take place on the site. The design guide will consider site and building access for disabled people	<p>Provision for disabled and visually impaired groups is a paramount consideration as part of the scheme.</p> <p>If during the CPO or SRO process, any interested parties identify a disability affected by the</p>

	impairments and mental health)		<p>acquisition of their property of the scheme generally, then this will be taken into account in the Council's engagement with them. All documents published as part of the CPO process will be subject to the public sector accessibility requirements.</p> <p>During development of the scheme, any changes to the physical environment will be designed to have a potential positive improvement on access issues for disabled people. The Design and Access Statement for the LDO meets the statutory guidance for the physically impaired.</p> <p>The technical design for the associated highways works is yet to be completed, however all works including pedestrian crossings will be compliant with design standards, accounting for accessibility and disability.</p>
3.6	Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	<p>Members of the Key Stakeholder Group represent a range of age groups.</p> <p>The SVEZ aims to improve access to the site for all age groups. Potential positive impacts include provision of level, hard surfacing to allow better access for pedestrians with pushchairs and/or leading young children, elderly citizens. (move this here)</p>	<p>The informal public consultation engaged a range of age groups, and the formal public consultation similarly aims to engage with all age groups. During the informal public consultation, hard copies of all consultation materials were made available in public libraries for those who did not have access to the internet. Although the formal consultation will be run by the Local Planning Authority, it is expected that information will be available to those without internet access upon request.</p> <p>During the CPO process, age has the potential to be relevant to landowners whose interests are proposed to be acquired. Any potential impact will</p>

			<p>be taken into account where identified.</p> <p>All documents that are posted online will comply with accessibility requirements. CPO and SRO documents will also be available in hard copy at a local library.</p>
3.7	Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups	We do not have any examples	The SVEZ is considered non-race specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.
3.8	Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people	The SVEZ aims to provide new employment space in the Somer Valley, the scheme is non-sexual orientation specific.	The SVEZ is considered non-sexual orientation specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.
3.9	Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?	We do not have any examples.	The SVEZ is considered non-marriage and civil partnership specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.
3.10	Religion/belief – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.	We do not have any examples	The consultation events were not held in religious buildings, which helped to promote access for all. The SVEZ is considered non-religion specific as the proposed development is based upon providing new commercial floor space and employment opportunities.
3.11	Socio-economically disadvantaged* – identify the impact on people who are disadvantaged due to factors like family background, educational attainment,	The informal engagement included events designed to engage socio-economically disadvantaged sections of the population. For instance consultation information was available via the local newspaper, local libraries and the local radio station to reach	The SVEZ aims to provide new employment opportunities in the Somer Valley. The site will accommodate a wide range of uses, and therefore a range of business types. It is anticipated that a broad range of employment roles, with differing skill levels will be provided.

	neighbourhood, employment status can influence life chances (this is not a legal requirement, but is a local priority).	those in digital poverty.	
3.12	Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities	The Key Stakeholder Group includes representatives/business owners from across the Somer Valley area, many of whom live in the Somer Valley.	The SVEZ is in a rural area and will therefore directly affect rural communities. The land concerned will be transformed from arable fields to a mixed-use commercial development, providing 1,300 new jobs. The SVEZ is promoting active and sustainable transport links through development, including the provision of new and improved bus infrastructure and the construction of a new walking and cycling link to the Norton Radstock Greenway.
3.13	Armed Forces Community ** serving members; reservists; veterans and their families, including the bereaved. Public services will soon be required by law to pay due regard to the Armed Forces Community when developing policy, procedures and making decisions, particularly in the areas of public housing, education and healthcare (to remove disadvantage and consider special provision).	We do not have any examples	The SVEZ is not specific to the Armed Forces Community, however reservists, veterans and their family may wish to benefit from the new employment opportunities provided on site.

*There is no requirement within the public sector duty of the Equality Act to consider groups who may be disadvantaged due to socio economic status, or because of living in a rural area. However, these are significant issues within B&NES and have therefore been included here.

** The Equality Act does not cover armed forces community. However, when the Armed Forces Bill becomes law there will be a requirement to pay 'due regard' to make sure the Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged when accessing public services.

4. Bath and North East Somerset Council & NHS B&NES Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

Please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment/analysis. These actions should be based upon the analysis of data and engagement, any gaps in the data you have identified, and any steps you will be taking to address any negative impacts or remove barriers. The actions need to be built into your service planning framework. Actions/targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time framed.

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when
Equalities training for members of the Enterprise Zone team	Ensure that members of the SVEZ project team, and the Enterprise Zone team more broadly have the opportunity to develop their awareness and responsibilities of Equalities issues by attendance on a B&NES corporate course and/or by inviting the B&NES Equalities Officer to brief the Enterprise Zone team at a future team meeting.	Dates diarised with Equalities Team Training taken place	Ella Thomas	01/02/2025
Review of this EQIA	Diarise a review of this EqIA within maximum of 12 months and as and when any affected persons are identified.	Revised EqIA available	Ella Thomas	20/05/2025

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5. Sign off and publishing

Once you have completed this form, it needs to be 'approved' by your Divisional Director or their nominated officer. Following this sign off, send a copy to the Equalities Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), who will publish it on the Council's and/or NHS B&NES' website. Keep a copy for your own records.



Signed off by:
nominated senior officer)

Simon Martin

Director of Capital and Housing (Divisional Director or

Date: 25/10/24