

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Version 4)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	Somer Valley Design Code Supplementary Planning Document 2025
Name of directorate and service	Planning Policy team, Sustainable Communities Directorate
Name and role of officers completing the EqIA	Alice Barnes, Planning Officer
Date of assessment	March 2026

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 people and different groups within our community. The main aim is to identify any adverse impacts (i.e. discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and to identify areas where equality can be better promoted). Equality impact Assessments (EqIAs) 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 (EqIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so mark N/A 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 following relevant service lead approval.

1.1 Identify the aims of the policy or service and how it is implemented

Key questions	Answers / notes
<p>1.1 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 preparation of the Somer Valley Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is included in the B&NES Local Development Scheme, the Council's formal Planning Policy work programme. Plan-making is a statutory process and follows national regulations.</p> <p>The project comprises preparation, consultation and adoption of a Design code SPD setting out the Council's approach to the design of housing developments within the Somer Valley (Midsomer Norton North, Midsomer Norton Redfield, Paulton, Peasedown, Radstock, Westfield). The SPD is a pilot project and sits alongside the adopted local plan.</p> <p>The SPD provides detailed guidance on the design of new housing within the Somer Valley. It will be used by the development management team when making decisions on applications for new housing. The SPD will support policies of D1-D10, High Quality Design, of the Local Plan.</p>

	<p>The Planning Policy team is responsible for the preparation of the planning policy framework including the design code SPD.</p> <p>Outcome: The aim of this project is to adopt the Somer Valley Design Code Supplementary Planning Document.</p>
<p>1.2 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 SPD will sit alongside the adopted local plan and provides supplementary guidance to existing adopted design policies.</p> <p>At a national level regard has been had to the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance and National Model Design Code.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>The SPD is in accordance with the Council's Development Plan. The Council's Development Plan and the planning system help to deliver the Council's broader aspirations such as the Housing Plan and Corporate objectives within the Corporate Strategy including the Climate and Nature Emergency.</p>

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
<p>2.1 What equality focussed training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?</p>	<p>The planning policy team have received corporate equalities training and EQIA training.</p> <p>A number of the service deliverers within the Council will have received corporate equalities training.</p>
<p>2.2 What is the equality profile of service users?</p>	<p>The B&NES Development Plan and the SPD has a focus on wards within the Somer Valley: Peasedown, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton North, Midsomer Norton Redfield and</p>

	<p>Paulton. Links to the most up to date data for the B&NES area (including Equalities data) can be found at: https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence</p> <p>The SPD requirements will be secured by the Development Management Team. The team is made up of a mix of gender, ages and ethnicities.</p>
<p>2.3 Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?</p>	<p>All five parish/town councils and their members were invited to take part in an early engagement workshop to understand what they valued about their local area. Three parishes, Radstock, Midsomer Norton and Peasedown took part. No equalities issues were raised during those consultations.</p> <p>The document has been subject to public consultation and no equalities issues have been raised.</p>
<p>2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p>	<p>There has been no separate consultation on this EqIA. However, there has been a consultation undertaken as referred to in section 2.3.</p>
<p>2.5 If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equality considerations within this?</p>	<p>The Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The Council's "My Neighbourhood: Neighbourhood Planning Protocol" explains how the local community can get involved in the preparation of planning policy documents.</p> <p>The SPD was subject to statutory public consultation in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement on Planning Documents.</p> <p>The consultation was published in an accessible format on the B&NES Council's website and includes contact details for further accessibility requirements. All people who have requested to be on the planning policy mailing list will be contacted about the proposed SPD.</p> <p>The consultation will have the most impact on residents of the Somer Valley and developers who are submitting planning applications in the Somer Valley.</p>

3. Assessment of impact: 'Equality analysis'

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:

- 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 equality groups

Key questions	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	The SPD will not have direct equality impacts as it predominantly relates to determining planning applications and planning law regulates the use of land in the interests of the public at large, rather than those of any particular group.	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD
3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.	The SPD does not directly address the impacts on women and men, as the objective of the SPD is to influence the design of housing within the Somer Valley and to contribute to sustainable communities for all groups.	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group
3.3 Pregnancy and maternity	The SPD does not directly address the impacts on pregnancy and maternity as the objective of the SPD is to influence the design of housing within the Somer Valley and to contribute to sustainable communities for all groups. Policy titled,	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.

	Ensure all Places are Accessible for All and Street Design, encourage a street design that is accessible.	
3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people	The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley Area. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of all the community, including transgender people.	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.
3.5 Disability – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration of physical, sensory and mental health needs/differences)	<p>The SPD promotes features that will enhance movement for all users such as wide pavements and accessible crossing points.</p> <p>Paragraph titled,</p> <p>Ensure all Places are Accessible for All and Street Design, will encourage a street design that is accessible for disabled people with consideration of requirements for users of wheelchairs and or mobility aids.</p> <p>The SPD will sit alongside the Local Plan which has adopted policies on accessible housing such as policy H7.</p> <p>Therefore the SPD should have a positive impact on disabled people.</p>	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.
3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.

Commented [JD1]: Area?

	<p>helps meet the needs of all the community</p> <p>Planning considerations for accessible housing will support independent living for all age groups, including for people that rely on mobility aids. This may be more predominant for older people.</p> <p>The SPD will sit alongside the Local Plan which has adopted policies on accessible housing such as policy H7.</p>	
3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups	The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.
3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, questioning people	The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.
3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?	The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.
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.	The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community	No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.

<p>3.11 Socio-economically disadvantaged* – identify the impact on people who are disadvantaged due to factors like family background, educational attainment, neighbourhood, employment status can influence life chances (this is not a legal requirement, but is a local priority).</p>	<p>The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community.</p> <p>The SPD will sit alongside the Local Plan where policy CP9 requires the provision of Affordable Housing</p>	<p>No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.</p>
<p>3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>	<p>The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community</p>	<p>No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.</p>
<p>3.13 Armed Forces Community ** serving members; reservists; veterans and their families, including the bereaved. Public services are 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).</p>	<p>The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community.</p>	<p>No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.</p>
<p>3.14 Care Experienced *** This working definition is currently under review and therefore subject to change: In B&NES, you are 'care-experienced' if you spent any time in your childhood in</p>	<p>The SPD is designed to influence the design of homes within the Somer Valley. The creation of well designed homes helps meet the needs of the whole community.</p>	<p>No known negative impacts have been identified in the draft SPD on this target group.</p>

Local Authority care, living away from your parent(s) for example, you were adopted, lived in residential, foster care, kinship care, or a special guardianship arrangement.	The SPD will sit alongside the Local Plan where policy CP9 requires the provision of Affordable Housing	
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*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, the Armed Forces Bill (which came in on 22 Nov 2022) introduces a requirement to pay 'due regard' to make sure the Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged when accessing public services.

***The Equality Act does not cover care experienced people. B&NES adopted this group as a protected characteristic in March 2024 alongside over 80 other Local Authorities. Although we have data for care leavers and children/young people who are currently in the care of B&NES we do not have wider data on disadvantage experienced through being in care.

4. Bath and North East Somerset Council 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
Ensure that key stakeholders, communities and hard to reach groups are consulted	Undertake 6 weeks consultation	Prepare and undertake consultation.	Planning Policy Team	Consultation taken place

appropriately as required by the Statement of Community Involvement and Government legislation				October/November 2025
Ensure that a Consultation Statement is prepared to advise on equality issues raised.	Prepare consultation statement following consultation and state whether any equalities issues have been raised.	Prepare and complete Consultation Statement	Planning Policy Team	November/ December 2025

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 Equality Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), who will publish it on the Council's website. Keep a copy for your own records.

Signed off by: Richard Daone, Deputy Head of Planning (Divisional Director or nominated senior officer)

Date: 21st April 2026