

# Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA): Statement of Community Involvement

## Introduction – Please read


The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced under the Equality Act 2010, requires all public bodies, including local authorities, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that we are meeting this legal duty by demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Identify possible negative impacts on individuals and groups with protected characteristics, plan mitigating action and seek to maximise opportunities to advance equality within our activities.

EqIAs provide a methodical approach to the assessment of impacts across the [nine protected characteristics](#) and should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

Throughout the course of this form, please hover over the  symbol for guidance in relation to specific questions. When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to [equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk). If you require any additional support completing the form, please email the above address.

# Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

## Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1** Officer completing EqIA:  
Ciaran Davis, Planning Policy Officer
- 1.2** Team and Service:  
Planning Policy, Strategy and Economy - Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service
- 1.3** Title of proposal:  
Statement of Community Involvement
- 1.4** EqIA completion date:  
13.09.2023
- 1.5** Proposal implementation date:  
Consultation anticipated for October – November 2023, formal adoption of the SCI anticipated for Spring 2024.
- 1.6** Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal:  
Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils through the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service

## Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1** Type of proposal:  
Policy

**2.2** Is the proposal:  
An update

**2.3** State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):  
June/July 2019

**2.4** What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Approximately 250 words)

The review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will engage the public in the planning process. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, stakeholders and interest groups within the local authority areas can engage in the creation/influence local planning policy and the planning application process which shapes where we live and work. This is essential to help improve understanding and openness of the planning process.

There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning applications. It is important that this is undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient and proportionate manner. 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.

The SCI has been split into three main 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 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.

**2.5** Which of South Cambridgeshire District Council's business plan priorities does this proposal link to?

- Helping Businesses to grow - ✓
- Building homes that are truly affordable to live in -
- Being green to our core - ✓
- A modern and caring council - ✓

**2.6** Which of South Cambridgeshire District Council's equality objectives (as detailed in SCDC's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community- ✓
- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings -
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district - ✓

**2.7** Which of Cambridge City Council's equality objectives (as detailed in CCC's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively - ✓
- To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities - ✓
- To work towards a situation where all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community - ✓

**2.8** Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- Service Users ✓
- External Stakeholders ✓
- Employees ✓
- Councillors ✓
- Other ✓

If other, please specify – all residents and visitors to the Greater Cambridge area.

**2.9** How will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later on in the form) (approximately 250 words)

The SCI sets out how the public will have an opportunity to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge. 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 and work. Therefore the SCI has the potential to affect a large and wide cross section 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 land owners, developers, infrastructure providers, transport providers
- Community organisations
- Statutory, general and wider consultation bodies
- Local businesses

**2.10** How many people will this proposal affect? (Approximately)

Land use planning and associated development have a fundamental effect on peoples live who live within Greater Cambridge.


The Planning Service's 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


**2.11** If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how SCDC will ensure that they will meet equality standards?  
(Approximately 250 words)

No external partners will deliver this policy but there is guidance on how developers should engage with local communities through the planning process.

## Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1** Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand how [protected characteristic groups](#) are likely to be affected? Please list any key sources that you used to obtain this Information. 
- (Approximately 250 words)

The Officers who are responsible for producing the SCI have examined census data, case studies of best practise at other councils, reports from professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Town Planning, and researched Civil Service information about correct terminology. The data sources are embedded within the SCI document as hyperlinks. As part of the Consultation, GCSP is keen to hear from people who do fall within protected characteristic groups to understand how they can better engage with the Planning Service.

- 3.2** Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on any other groups of people not mentioned in the nine [protected characteristic groups](#) (for example people who live in rural areas, who live in areas of high growth, or from low income backgrounds). 
- (Approximately 250 words)

The Officers who are responsible for producing the SCI have examined census data, case studies of best practise at other councils, reports from professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Town Planning, and researched Civil Service information about correct terminology. The data

sources are embedded within the SCI document as hyperlinks. As part of the Consultation, GCSP is keen to hear from people who do not fall within protected characteristic groups to understand how they can better engage with the Planning Service.

- 3.3** If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place. [📖](#)  
(Approximately 250 words)

Subject to formal approval, consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement will take place in 2023.

## **Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics**

### **4.1** [Age:](#)

- 4.1.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.2 Disability**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.1.2)**

- 4.1.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. [📖](#)
- approximately 250 words per impact



Positive, medium impact.

It is anecdotally recognised that it can sometimes be more difficult to engage with younger age groups. Where possible and appropriate, relevant organisations and individuals will be identified to reach as wide an age range as possible during specific consultation and engagement activities. This could include external organisations such as Cambridge City Council’s Community Development Team) as well as the GCSP Youth Engagement Project. Evidence suggests that some older people and those from lower income households are also less likely to have access to the internet. South Cambridgeshire District 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. Where documents or information is required they can be accessed or be viewed at accessible council offices. Planning applications are publicised by site notices and letters to neighbouring/adjacent properties or land.

**4.1.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement

Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
---	---	-------------	---

## 4.2 Disability:


**4.2.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

**Yes**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.3 Gender Reassignment**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.2.2)**

**4.2.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium impact

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. Forums or meeting are held at fully accessible public buildings e.g. council offices.

Evidence suggests that disabled people are more likely than non disabled people to be digitally excluded as IT equipment sometimes is not adapted to their individual needs. 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.

**4.2.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the	Greater Cambridge	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will

consultation is complete	Shared Planning service		ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
--------------------------	-------------------------	--	---

### 4.3 Gender Reassignment:


**4.3.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

**No**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.3.2)**

**4.3.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

**4.3.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
--------	---------------------	--------------------------	------------------------------------

--	--	--	--

#### 4.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership:

**4.4.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.5**

#### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.4.2)**

**4.4.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 📖
- approximately 250 words per impact

**4.4.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?


#### 4.5 Pregnancy and Maternity:

**4.5.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.6 Race  
If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.5.2)**

**4.5.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

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 people are able to engage in the process and several take place online which can be more convenient for people to attend or watch back at an alternative time. Planning applications are available for public inspection online and can be accessed at any time of the day.

**4.5.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.

#### 4.6 Race:

**4.6.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.7 Religion or Belief**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.6.2)**

**4.6.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 📖
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

Under represented groups such as Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities are noted in the SCI as a known hard to reach group, and the SCI notes that in certain circumstances, the councils will consider targeted engagement with specific hard to reach groups/communities as we have done previously as part of the Local Plan process.

**4.6.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI



			actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
--	--	--	---

#### 4.7 Religion or Belief:


**4.7.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.8 Sex**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.7.2)**

**4.7.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

**4.7.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

## 4.8 Sex:

**4.8.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

**Yes**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.9 (Sexual Orientation)**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.8.2)**

**4.8.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 📖
- approximately 250 words per impact

Low, positive

Through undertaking public engagement and encouraging public participation on a range of planning matters, it is anticipated that a range of people will respond to consultations on both planning policy and planning applications. The Councils have a duty to take into account all comments and responses received, regardless of sex/gender. There are also opportunities for people to engage in Neighbourhood Planning.

**4.8.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

4.9

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.

### Sexual Orientation:


**4.9.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.10 (Other)**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.9.2)**

**4.9.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

**4.9.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

#### 4.10 Other: (e.g. rurality, growth, socio-economic status etc.).


**4.10.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 5.1**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.10.2)**

**4.10.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium

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 Councils have a Digital Inclusion Strategy and Digital Access Strategy

in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it. Planning policy documents and planning applications are made available to be viewed at Council Offices.

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.

**4.10.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI

			actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
--	--	--	---

## Section 5: Summary

- 5.1** Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Approximately 250 words)

The EQIA demonstrates that the Statement of Community Involvement will potentially have positive impacts for a number of groups. GCSP is keen to carry out consultation on this document to incorporate the views of the public to see how we can enhance these positive impacts and reduce any potentially negative impacts. GCSP is also committed to monitoring the efficacy of this document to ensure that it actually delivers the positive benefits set out in this EQIA, and we are willing to work with Equality Officers at both Councils to achieve these aims.

- 5.2** Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA (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** Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Ciaran Davis

**5.4** Date of completion:  
13.09.2023

## **Section 6: Sign Off**

**6.1** Approving officer EqIA review outcome: (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.

**6.2** Do you give permission to publish this EqIA on SCDC website (delete as appropriate)? If no, please state reason  
Yes

**6.3** When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be?  
Spring 2024, post public consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement

**6.4** Approving officer signature:  
Helen Crowther / Kate Yerbury / Emma Pearson

**6.5** Date of approval:  
13/09/2023

Please send a copy to [Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk)