

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
Purchase of Affordable Homes at ATS/Murketts

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-development
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/affordable-housing-programme

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?
The ATS & Murketts site is located on Histon Road, situated within the Cambridge City Council boundary. It is located within the Arbury ward, north of Cambridge Central, whilst also bordering Castle ward. The site is adjacent to the Castle and Victoria Road conservation area that includes Histon Road Recreation Ground.

This report seeks approval for a capital budget to purchase 28 affordable homes from the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP), as Council homes.

The aims of the Council in redeveloping this area are:

1. Provide additional social housing to help meet the shortfall in Cambridge and replace the Council's existing housing stock which no longer meets present-day standards. The new buildings will be designed to as close to Passivhaus or equivalent performance standards to reduce energy usage and tackle fuel poverty.

4. Responsible service

Cambridge City Council's Housing Development Agency (HDA)

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

The plan to redevelop this area impacts on:

- Housing applicants registered on Home-Link (the Council's choice-based lettings system) i.e. households who need to find somewhere to live.

Home-link prioritises applicants based on needs criteria. The priority bandings also take into account housing needs related to related to abuse, medical circumstances and disability, pregnancy and maternity.

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act determines the categories of homeless applicants which the council owes a 'main' statutory housing duty to. The council must make suitable accommodation available to applicants it owes a 'main' housing duty to. These categories include 16/17 year olds, young people leaving care, older people, those with physical or learning disabilities, mental health issues, victims of domestic abuse.

In relation to the Equalities impact, many of those on the housing register (particularly those on the highest banding for need) will have a level of vulnerability. Although not all vulnerabilities are captured under the Equality Act 2010, many will be, such as disability (including mental health), age, pregnancy and maternity. For those residents who are existing tenants or leaseholders, many of them will also have a protected characteristic as it may be the reason they are able to access social housing. This will be considered in more detail under the following sections which look at each of protected characteristics.

By adding to the general housing stock within the City, housing opportunities are also increased for staff seeking to relocate.

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

- New
- Major change
- Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

- Customer and Community Services – advice on community facilities being provided through this new development as well as consulting with local community groups and stakeholders through the process
- Housing Management - managing the new homes
- Estates & Facilities - maintaining the new homes
- Property Services - advice on land issues, valuations, disturbance costs, commercial leases etc in connection with new developments
- Housing strategy – informing the need for tenure mix and specialist or adapted housing
- Finance Team - to provide funding for every aspect of developing the new homes from initial surveys to construction, all in line with projected cash flow
- Streets and Open Spaces - advice and input on the design of new open spaces and equipment provided as part of the new homes, subsequent maintenance
- Safer communities – providing advice on the design of the new schemes and homes from a community safety and designing out crime perspective
- Health & safety – commentary on the design of new schemes and homes from a personal safety, fire safety and usability perspective
- 3Cs Legal Services - dealing with land title and transfer to facilitate putting together the sites on which to build the new homes, subsequent issue of leases
- CCC parking services – collaboration in re-provision of parking facilities where affected by the development
- Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) - a joint venture partnership between CCC and Hill Partnerships to assist in the delivery of the Councils Affordable home goals.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

The report on the proposed development at ATS/Murketts is to be presented to the Housing Scrutiny Committee meeting of 12th March 2024.

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The HDA has undertaken a detailed internal review process toward identifying council stock which has known shortcomings, and which may most appropriately be redeveloped to provide new energy efficient housing and community facilities.

Officers from Housing Service and Housing strategy have additionally been consulted to identify a target unit delivery mix for the overall housing programme which best serves forecast demand across the city. Individual consultation with Housing is further conducted on a scheme-by-scheme basis and data is included by the HDA for scheme reports to the Strategy and Resources or Housing Scrutiny Committees. The data records the numbers of those on CCC waiting list as provided quarterly by Housing strategy. Further information on housing need and strategy can be found as follows: www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-research

Consultation has been undertaken with affected residents, commercial leaseholders, service users and local communities prior to planning applications being submitted. To date consultation has taken the form of letter-drop notifications, in-person drop in events, flyers, posters, website and online webinars to introduce the proposal to all residents. Assisted by internal council services, consultation methods are tailored to the individual requirements, ie use of translation services where required, use of digital and non-digital materials, in person and/or telephonic or written correspondence as most appropriate to the consultee.

The 2011 Census provides information on the demographics of the Cambridge City population to assist strategic planning by CCC.

Census Data has been supplemented by a 2020 HDA Needs Analysis report compiled by CCC staff which accompanies and informs the New Development Programme planning.

[Albert Kennedy institute \(2014\), LGBT Youth Homelessness: A UK scoping of cause, prevalence, response, and outcome](#)

[Runnymede Trust \(2020\), The Colour of Money](#)

[Social Metrics Commission \(2020\), Measuring Poverty](#)

[Stonewall \(2016\), Building Safe Choices: LGBT housing futures](#)

[Stonewall \(2018\), LGBT in Britain: Trans Report](#)

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

Housing Register and Homelessness

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act determines the categories of people that are considered as priority need for social housing including because of their age, including older people, those with children, people aged 16 or 17, and care leavers aged 18 to 20. Further provision of social housing in Cambridge will have a positive impact for these groups.

Older People

The units to be delivered in this scheme proposal are made up of general needs accommodation and 5% adapted homes suitable for wheelchair users. All general needs housing is provided at adaptable M(4)2 standard.

The provision of new homes which are accessible for household members who are wheelchair users will mean these homes will be suitable for older people with reduced mobility as long as their needs require this type of home.

The provision of housing for older people in the city is generally good, and housing for older people is not generally in short supply. An older applicant on the housing needs register can apply both for specialist housing, which excludes other types of applicant, and for general needs housing as not all older people want to live in specialist housing.

Younger people

The homes on these proposed schemes will be a mix of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom homes. Young people with a need for this type of accommodation will be eligible to bid for these homes.

In our Housing Strategy consultation in 2015 the most common concerns raised amongst younger people were in relation to affordability and condition of the private rented sector, homelessness issues and the need to support vulnerable people. The provision of more affordable housing at social or intermediate rates will enable the Council to house more people who are in need of housing. This will also aid to alleviating the pressure on the private rented sector.

Cambridge has a relatively young population compared to the rest of Cambridgeshire and many other parts of the country. Around 35% of the population is aged 20-34.

Younger people are finding it increasingly difficult to get on the housing ladder, having to remain longer with parents or in expensive private rented accommodation. For example, England as a

whole has seen a significant increase in the proportion of younger households in the private rented sector over the last ten years. In 2004/05, 24% of those aged 25-34 lived in the private rented sector; by 2014-15 this had increased to 46%. (English Housing Survey 2014-15)

Affordability issues are particularly acute in Cambridge, with the price of even the cheapest 25% (the lowest quartile) of homes now standing at over £350k – more than nineteen times the lower quartiles lower earnings. Private rents are also significantly higher than most other parts of the country, with the average rent for just a one bedroom currently around £800 a month.

Increasing the supply of general needs Council housing through this programme will:

- Increase the supply of affordable homes in the city of Cambridge, enabling the council to provide a competitive accommodation option for younger people on low incomes;
- Ensure that the Council can provide accommodation to young people in acute housing need caused by homelessness or economic deprivation.

(b) Disability

The units to be delivered in this scheme proposal are made up of general needs accommodation and 5% adapted homes suitable for wheelchair users. All general needs housing is adaptable M(4)2 standard.

The HDA will remain actively engaged with Adaptations Officers, the Housing Advice Coordinator and other relevant partners to ensure that the new schemes deliver housing that is suitably adapted or adaptable.

Demarcated disabled parking will be provided at appropriate locations to serve tenants and service users, in line with planning guidance.

Almost one in five people in the UK have a disability, with mobility being the most common impairment. At the same time there is a nationally recognised shortage of housing for people with disabilities. For example: around 2% of the UK population are wheelchair users, yet 84% of homes in England do not allow someone using a wheelchair to enter their home through their front door without difficulty. Around 15% of households containing at least one wheelchair user feel that their current home is not suitable for their needs, and so requires adaptations.

Around 22% of individuals living in social housing in Cambridge have a long-term health problem or disability.

Disabled people tend to have lower incomes and are twice as likely as non-disabled people to be social housing tenants.

Around 16% of the national population has a common mental health disorder, and professionals nationally and locally are reporting an increase in the number of service users with mental health issues. For example: increasing numbers of rough sleepers with mental health problems, many of

whom also have alcohol and substance misuse issues; and an increase in numbers of older people with dementia.

To ensure that all parties are fully informed and to cater for specific needs, all correspondence and information is made available to residents in varied formats when required.

(c) Gender reassignment

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Cambridge is expected to have a positive impact on those members of the community with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

According to research undertaken by LGBT+ charity Stonewall for their 2018 publication [LGBT in Britain - Trans Report](#), trans people commonly face a range of barriers to housing. One in four trans people have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, with a similar proportion having also faced discrimination when searching for housing in the preceding year. One in five non-binary people has also faced discrimination when looking for a new home.

By providing more general needs housing, the Council is in a stronger position to ensure that any residents, trans, non-binary or otherwise, who are facing homelessness will be able to find affordable accommodation through the Council. Similarly, applicants who are facing abuse in their current home environment will be able to apply for a wider range of housing options with the council. As with other equality groups, an increase in the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council, rather than relying on inconsistent practices within the private sector.

Improving the local community facilities; including community centre, library, open spaces, and recreation facilities will have a positive impact. These spaces will provide opportunity for community groups to meet and socialise.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to need in the affordable housing development programme.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

2 and 3 bedroom homes will be provided on this development. These will be available to bid on by women who are pregnant (24 weeks or more) or who have recently had children meaning they need to move to larger accommodation. Private and shared amenity space will be provided alongside the housing and community facilities including play equipment for children.

National policy dictates that certain groups of people are considered as priority need for social housing because they are more likely to be vulnerable, including women who are pregnant. Extra

support from Council officers will be offered to those that are affected by the redevelopment. Further provision of social housing in Cambridge will have a positive impact for these groups.

As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying on high rents in the private sector, which impact families with young children particularly severely.

(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Cambridge is expected to have a positive impact on those members of the community who are classified as Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME).

According to the annual Measuring Poverty report published by the Social Metrics Commission, 46% households in the UK where the head of the household is BAME are classified as living in poverty, compared with 19% where the head of the household is white. People in BAME families are also between 2-3 times more likely to be living in persistent poverty than white families. According to The Colour of Money (2020) for Indians the rate of poverty is 22%, for Mixed its 28%; Chinese 29%; Bangladeshi 45% and Pakistani 46%. This is due to lower wages, higher unemployment, higher rates of part-time working, higher housing costs, and slightly larger household size. It follows that BAME households are likely to have a greater need overall for a range of affordable housing options in the site though the need varies by ethnic group. In Cambridge, anecdotally according to voluntary and community sector groups, Bangladeshi people are especially likely to experience poverty.

Increasing the supply of general needs housing in Cambridge should therefore have a proportionate impact on housing options for BAME families in the city. As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying solely on high rents in the private sector.

The Council makes information available to residents in other languages where it’s needed.

(g) Religion or belief

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to the affordable housing development programme. Designs and specifications can however be enhanced to accommodate cultural preferences if instructed to do so by the relevant Housing Authority (for example facilitating spray taps adjacent to WCs).

The community centre to be reprovided may be used by different faith groups however consultation with local groups will continue and the need for this has not yet been identified.

(h) Sex

No specific issues have been identified in relation to sex, although it is worth noting that most of those fleeing domestic abuse for whom we have a statutory responsibility will be women. This accounted for 3% of lettings last year. In domestic abuse cases the location where people are housed can be an important factor, for example away from the perpetrator or near to a family support network.

(i) Sexual orientation

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Cambridge is expected to have a positive impact on LGBT+ members of the community.

LGBT people face unique pressures within the housing system at present. [Current research](#) from the Albert Kennedy institute indicates that within the youth homeless population, LGBT people are greatly over-represented. Young LGBT people who are homeless are likely to have a reduced support network as a high proportion (62-69%) have become homeless due to parental rejection or family abuse.

Comparable conditions prevail among older LGBT people according to [research undertaken](#) by Stonewall Housing, with many older persons having a history of homelessness and a smaller family support network than non-LGBT older people. Older LGBT people are also more likely to live alone.

Overall there is a similar trend among the LGBT population where the limited options of Cambridge residents more generally are likely to be further reduced or placed under greater pressure by sexual orientation.

As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying on high rents in the private sector, which is likely to have a higher impact on LGBT people.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on:

- **Low-income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty**
- **Groups who have more than one protected characteristic that taken together create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Here you are being asked to consider intersectionality, and for more information see: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_159kt25q).**

Homelessness – positive impact

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act provides that the council has a duty to agree reasonable steps to try and prevent or relieve the homelessness of the those that are threatened with homelessness or homeless. A reasonable step under the Act could include advice and assistance with applying for social housing.

The development of new family sized homes on these schemes will allow homeless families currently living in temporary accommodation to have the opportunity to bid on the homes and secure a move to permanent accommodation.

Low-income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty– positive impact

Households living on low incomes come under greater housing pressure than those on higher incomes due to a range of factors. This has been discussed at length elsewhere in the document, but the primary driver behind the affordable housing programme remains the strictly limited housing options to which Cambridge residents on low incomes have access. Cambridge remains one of the most expensive places in the UK to live and an increase in the Council housing supply will provide more options for residents who choose to live in the city and will ensure that it is easier to build a mixed and balanced community within the city,

As can be seen elsewhere in this EQIA, the inequality in the housing market affects some groups more than others, but in all circumstances an increase in general needs Council housing will improve housing options across the board.

Groups who have more than one protected characteristic that taken together create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage – positive impact

Home-link prioritises applicants based on a variety needs criteria as set out in the council lettings policy and inclusive of consideration of protected characteristics. Priority banding within which prospective tenants will be informed by the full number of protected characteristics of the bidder, prioritising successful housing of the most at-risk groups. While the lettings policy does not specifically note prioritisation of need based on more than one protected characteristic, it does make allowance for the movement of applicants with multiple needs into higher priority banding for housing.

Fuel Poverty

The Council is committed to providing high quality homes which greatly supersede the energy efficiency of current housing stock. This pilot scheme proposes the delivery into council stock of flats meeting Passivhaus or equivalent performance standards. These will provide low running costs and greater alleviation to residents affected by fuel poverty.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqlA accordingly.)

A Housing Advice Coordinator, Adaptations Officer and other relevant partners will be consulted through design and building process to ensure the needs of those applicants in need on the housing register, in particular applicants that have disabilities, are considered.

This EqlA will be updated to reflect any additionally identified equalities implications on existing residents following further consultation activities. Detailed resident consultation will be assisted by internal council services, with methods tailored to the resident requirements, ie use of translation services where required, use of digital and non-digital materials, in person and/or telephonic or written correspondence as most appropriate to the consultee.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

None

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Benedict Binns, Assistant Director, Development

Original document completed 22nd September 2022. Other team members consulted: Jaques van der Vyver, Programme Officer. Kate Yerbury, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer.

Document updated: - February 2024.

All EqlAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Ctrl + click on the button below to send this (you will need to attach the form to the email):

Send form