

# **Northampton Borough Council**

## **Northampton Central Area Action Plan**

**Proposed Main and Minor Modifications**

**Equalities Impact Assessment:**

**September 2012**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 During the examination of the Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) September 2012, the Planning Inspector recommended a number of minor and main modifications to the CAAP. The addition of a ‘Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Policy’ is the only major alteration to the CAAP which requires an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

1.2 EqIA is a process that investigates the potential equalities outcomes of a project or strategy. It aims to identify potential positive and negative impacts upon equalities and diversity and their distribution upon community groups. Its recommendations inform the decision-making process, with a view to wherever possible reducing or removing negative impacts or inequalities from a project or strategy.

1.3 This EqIA should be read in conjunction with the EqIA published with the pre-submission and the focused changes CAAP. This document will outline all equality impacts of new CAAP policy.

## 2.0 CAAP Focused Changes – Policy Equality Impact Assessment

2.1 Each policy or group is the scored on a scale ranging from very good, to neutral to very negative (+, ++, 0, -, - -).

### ***Policy: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development***

2.2 At the examination of the CAAP the Planning Inspector recommended the inclusion of an additional policy to encourage sustainable development in the Central Area and to reflect guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework. The policy effectively seeks to ensure that the Council takes a positive approach to development by ensuring sustainable development proposals are granted planning permission if they are consistent with the contents of the Plan. If the development is not consistent with the Plan, refusal of development would only not be allowed if the adverse effects would significantly outweigh the benefits.

2.3 On this basis the assessment of the potential impact has been based on the content of the plan as a whole, taking account of the previous assessment that relates to the Plan as a whole.

Equality Group	Positive Impact		Negative Impact	
Race, including different ethnic groups	+	The design and layout of development proposals will increase active frontage onto the street and increase natural surveillance of the street to reduce crime levels and the fear of crime.  Increased access to jobs and training.	0	None specifically identified

Equality Group	Positive Impact		Negative Impact	
Gender	++	<p>Increased access to housing</p> <p>The design and layout of development proposals will increase active frontage onto the street and increase natural surveillance of the street to reduce crime levels and the fear of crime.</p> <p>Increased access to jobs and training.</p> <p>Increased access to housing</p>	0	None specifically identified
Disability	+	<p>The design and layout of development seeks to address issues of those with a disability, e.g. shopfront design guide provides specific guidance in relation to door width opening and the use of materials for the visually impaired.</p>	0	None specifically identified
Religion or belief	+	<p>The Plan seeks a positive approach to providing the opportunity for new religious facilities to be provided by identifying specific sites for such development.</p>	0	None specifically identified
Age	++	<p>The design and layout of development proposals will increase active frontage onto the street and increase natural surveillance of the street to reduce crime levels and the fear of crime.</p> <p>Increased access to jobs and training.</p> <p>Increased access to housing to meet the specific needs to particular age groups, e.g. family housing, specialised housing.</p> <p>The provision of new facilities for younger and older people to meet recreational needs within green infrastructure.</p>	0	None specifically identified
Sexual Orientation	0	None specifically identified	0	The Plan identified the minor potential for adverse impact in relation to facilities used for homosexuals

Equality Group	Positive Impact		Negative Impact	
				and lesbians socialising, but considered that advances in communications media would essentially change/address this issue in any case
Gender reassignment	0	None specifically identified	0	None specifically identified
Pregnancy and maternity		The design and layout of development seeks to address issues of those pregnant or caring for children, e.g. shopfront design guide provides specific guidance in relation to door width opening.	0	None specifically identified
Marriage and civil partnership	0	None specifically identified	0	None specifically identified

### 3.0 Performance and Monitoring Arrangements

#### When will the action plan be reviewed?

3.1 Following formal adoption with the approval from the Secretary of State the Equalities Action Plan will be reviewed in 2014/2015.

#### Who will carry out monitoring?

3.2 Planning Officers within the Planning Policy Team at Northampton Borough Council.

#### What needs to be monitored?

3.3 The effectiveness of each policy within the Central Area Action Plan and its ability to deliver what it sets out to do.

### 4.0 Publication of EIA

#### How should the EIA be published?

4.1 This Equalities Impact Assessment will be published in full for consultation as part of the formal consultation on the Central Area Action Plan Modifications. A six week consultation period is expected to begin on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

#### Who will give feedback before publication?

4.2 As the Central Area Action is being approved by Cabinet for adoption post the consultation period, there is the opportunity for members and seniors officers to review the contents of this EqIA.

**When will consultees be notified of how their views informed the process and final decision?**

4.3 The Assessment will be amended to highlight any consultation responses received at this stage of the Central Area Action Plan adoption process. Amendments will also provide detail on how response points made either resulted in a change to the Central Area Action Plan, or resulted in changes to the recommended actions identified within the Equality Impact Assessment.

## 5.0 Conclusion

<b>Conclusion Areas of Concern within the EqIA</b>	<b>Recommended Measures / Actions</b>	<b>Risk in relation to Equality Impact</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resource implication</b>
<b>Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development</b>	Ensure opportunities to provide new social infrastructure and community facilities are taken within proposals in the Central Area.	Pressure to deliver new development in the Central Area, leads to new development coming forward without the necessary social infrastructure in place.	Ongoing	Low

## 6.0 Equality Impact Assessment Action and Improvement Plan

Area of concern / negative impact	Changes proposed	Measure of success /performance indicator	Lead Officer	Timescale	Resource Implication
<p>The Plan was identified as not specifically address the concerns of faith groups about a lack of ability to find additional facilities within the Central Area.</p>	<p>The Action Plan has been amended to identify sites where it is considered that such new facilities will be acceptable, e.g. Avon / Nunn Mills / Ransome Road and Great Russell Street. In addition policies within the Joint Core Strategy seek to protect existing community facilities and encourage their provision in association with new development.</p>	<p>Inclusion of correct policies within the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and associated Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.</p> <p>Monitoring the completion of S106 agreements that are required to deliver new social infrastructure, by identifying take up for religious facilities on sites specifically identified for these purposes and by monitoring other planning approvals.</p>	<p>Team Leader Planning Policy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Low</p>

## 7.0 Approval of Equality Impact Assessment

Paul Lewin – Planning Policy & Heritage Manager, Directorate of Planning and Regeneration

## Equality Impact Assessment: Summary Report

<b>Date of Assessment:</b> 17 September 2012
<b>Completing Officer's Title / Position:</b> Richard Palmer: Policy Team Leader
<b>Leading Officer's Name and members of the Equality impact assessment team:</b> Paul Lewin (Planning Policy & Heritage Manager) & The Planning Policy Team
<b>Policy/Activity that was Impact Assessed:</b> Central Area Action Plan Modifications
<b>Summary of findings:</b> <p>Consultation on the earlier parts of the Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) identified issues for some of the equality strand groups, for example older people felt threatened in the town centre at certain parts of the day, the young did not feel that there were enough facilities for them and religious groups highlighted the problems of obtaining sufficient premises. In addition the consultation processes identified a lack of engagement from groups such as the young in earlier rounds of consultation. This was addressed through more targeted approaches to this group.</p> <p>Previously there has been a broad consistency in the responses made with the wider demographic of Northampton, therefore the CAAP is considered to have positive impacts across the whole range of equality groups. This related to increased accessibility through improving public transport facilities and concentrating jobs and services in areas with good accessibility to public transport. Well designed buildings and spaces will provide more inclusive places that will assist in providing greater sense of security to the equality strand groups.</p> <p>The CAAP has been amended at Pre-Submission Stage to provide more clarity on specific sites where facilities for religious groups might be appropriate.. At a strategic level the issue is also being suitably addressed in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, which identifies the broad range of facilities required, the potential for developer contributions for such facilities if appropriate and also the need for protection of such facilities where there is a proven need for them.</p> <p>A minor potential for adverse impact in relation to facilities used for homosexuals and lesbians socialising was identified in relation to the Waterside and the Drapery areas. However, it was considered that advances in communications media would essentially change/address this issue in any case.</p>
<b>Summary of Recommendations and Key Points of Action Plan:</b> There will be a monitoring of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy to ensure that it has sufficiently robust policies on community facilities.



Groups that this policy will impact upon: ALL or:

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Disability
- Religion or Belief