

HDC Due Regard (Equality Analysis)

Due Regard (Equality Analysis) is an on-going proactive process which requires us to consider the effect our decisions are likely to have on local communities, service users and employees, particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of disadvantage.

This template has been designed to assist in the collation of information and evidence required to support the 'Due Regard' process when introducing new policies/procedures/functions and services or reviewing existing ones.

For help with this template please view the guidance document, which contains advice to assist you when you are considering the impact (both positive and negative) of the proposed actions on each of the protected equality characteristics.

Name of policy/procedure/function/service being analysed: Planning Application Local Validation List

Department and section:

Name of lead officer: Adrian Eastwood

Other people involved (assisting or reviewing – including any service users or stakeholder groups etc.): Various – see consultation below

Date assessment completed: 2nd September 2020

Step 1: Defining the policy/procedure/function/service

Is this a new, amended or reviewed policy? What are the aims, objectives and purpose and how will they be achieved? What are the main activities and which communities are likely to be affected by these activities? What are the expected outcomes?

The purpose of Planning Application Local Validation List is to provide guidance to assist the making of planning applications.

It is to inform the making of those submissions in the appropriate way to progress a planning consultation and decision.

A necessary feature is that there should be equal and unbiased access for all in a transparent decision process.

The validation list may impact the whole community of the district including: individuals; businesses, groups / bodies representing them and stakeholders serving the area. It covers all sections of the community, including those with protected equality characteristics, living in all parts of the district. The expected outcome of the list is that the wider community understands with its guidance what information to submit with planning applications.

Step 2: Data collection & evidence

What relevant evidence, research, data and other information do you have and is there any further research, data or evidence you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on different communities? Include quantitative data as well as qualitative intelligence such as community input and advice.

The Local Validation List is informed by knowledge of the characteristics of the districts population and business community as set out in the Local Plan Spatial Portrait (Local Plan Appendix D), Sustainability Appraisal Report (Part 1 Scoping, Chapters 6 &8) and Settlement Profiles, all available on the Council's website.

Past experience and anecdotal information on Development Management work with Traveller and Gypsy communities identifies some difficulty engaging with the Development Control process e.g. with 'form filling' to which planning staff have responded by being available to assist when difficulties for users from this group, or others with literacy or visual impairments are identified, through the planning duty system available. In consulting on the Local List the service will seek to include the Leicestershire County Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer to improve its communication with these communities.

Step 3: Consultation and involvement

Have you consulted and if so outline what you did and who you consulted with and why?

A group of planning officers has been consulted.

Progress of the validation list is expected to include further consultation to obtain views from organisations likely to include Parish Councils, Homebuilders Federation, Traveller Liaison Officer, etc...

Once the validation list is approved by Cabinet / Council an expected period of at least 6 weeks of public consultation will take place. Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the adopted SCI. This will involve contacting organisations and individuals on the Strategic Planning contact database, a media release / publicity via the Council's website and making the document available for inspection.

A record of response received will be maintained and available.

Step 4: Potential impact

Considering the evidence from the data collection and feedback from consultation, which communities will be affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face in relation to Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities and also the potential impact on

Community Cohesion. Remember people have multiple characteristics so the impact of a policy on a particular community may impact people within the community differently. Where possible include numbers likely to be affected.

The planning validation list provides guidance for making planning applications. It does not itself set planning policy. The basis for making planning applications is set out in national policy and guidance.

Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact

If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs have identified can be addressed.

There is anticipated to be no overall adverse equality impact of the planning application validation list.

Step 6: Making a decision

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Harborough District Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights. Does it contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty – eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

The validation list shall contribute to HDC's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights by setting out guidance to making planning applications.

Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/procedure/service change

What monitoring systems will you put in place to promote equality of opportunity, monitor impact and effectiveness and make positive improvements? How frequently will monitoring take place and who will be responsible?

Continue to undertake satisfaction surveys of users of the planning application service, at the point Decision Notices are issued. Analyse data and use it to inform improvements to process and practice within the Development Management Team.

Explore the potential to collect and analyse equalities monitoring data via any online consultation system (Planning policy) or alternative consultation methods to enable a better understanding of the profile of users, identify any gaps or barriers for particular groups and to inform future consultation practices (beyond the statutory minimum) for the planning service.

Equality Improvement Plan

Equality Objective :

Action: Explore the potential cost / benefits of collecting data on development management use surveys to the operational effectiveness of those surveys.

Officer Responsible: A.Eastwood

By when: 30th June 2021

Equality Objective :

Action: Record equality issues arising from consultations on validation list to inform the approach to the use of any specific additional consultation methods and techniques.

Officer Responsible: A.Eastwood

By when: 30th June 2021

Signed off by: A.Eastwood

Date: 2nd September 2020

Once signed off, please forward a copy for publication to Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer
e-mail: j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk , telephone: 01858 821070.