

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: CITY DEVELOPMENT	Service area: FORWARD PLANNING
Lead person: MARTIN ELLIOT	Contact number: 39 51705

1. Title: Planning Policy for Gypsies and Travellers

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

As part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Core Strategy, the Council has prepared a Draft Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirement Study (2013) to support Policy H7 of the Core Strategy. Officers are currently engaging with Gypsy and Traveller groups and neighbouring local authorities on the Draft Study (a further requirement of national guidance). It is intended to submit the Study to the Inspector (as part of the Core Strategy process) in mid-September, which will provide an evidence base to support any modifications he may wish to make in order to ensure that the Policy is sound.

This report to Executive Board requests that the Draft Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirement Study be submitted to the Examination of the Leeds Core Strategy so as to support Policy H7 on Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The Submission version of the Core Strategy contains a policy which guides the development of accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The policy is a positive criteria-based policy and establishes the approach to be taken to identifying suitable sites through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		x
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 	x	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (**think about** the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

The proposal will affect the Gypsy and Traveller community. The proposal is a positive impact on this group as it sets out the level of need for pitches in the future.

Through the Core Strategy process there have been a small number of representations from members of the settled community objecting to the provision of new sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The Council has a responsibility to assess the needs of G&T in line with Government policy (DCLG, Planning for Travellers, 2012) and identify land to meet these needs.

A Council Scrutiny Board Inquiry was held during 2010 and concluded that the current cycle of unauthorised encampment was not meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, was leading to community tensions and was not delivering value for money in relation to use of the Council's resources. The immediate priority of the Council was to address the housing needs of 12 Leeds based roadside families.

The Council successfully applied for Homes and Community Agency grant funding to develop twelve new pitches at the Cottingley Springs site which meets the immediate and short term needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Leeds and is subject of a current planning application.

The Draft Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirement Study was prepared by the Head of

Housing Support, Environment and Neighbours. The Department is supportive of the approach being taken to the Core Strategy.

Consultation on Policy H7 of the Core Strategy was undertaken as part of the publication and pre-submission draft versions of the Core Strategy. A total of 9 representations were received which stated that the policy was unsound. One of these, from Bradford District Council, stated that the policy was not informed by an evidence base. No representations from the Gypsy and Traveller community were received.

Active consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community is ongoing as part of the Site Allocations process and the Gypsy and Traveller Exchange have been invited to comment on the evidence base. Comments from GATE will be reported verbally at the Executive Board meeting.

At the same time, so as to help satisfy, the Duty to Cooperate, the Council has been engaged with neighbouring authorities on the issue through the Duty to Cooperate officer group. Comments from neighbouring authorities will be reported verbally at the Executive Board meeting.

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The proposal will support the existing Core Strategy policy in Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople which has already been subject of EIA screening and will seek to positively address the issue of meeting the needs of these groups in Leeds. The policy advises that accommodation for these groups should be provided in much the same way as for the settled community.

If a Gypsy or Traveller is statutorily homeless the Council is obliged to secure them suitable accommodation. It is important to ensure that their cultural needs are met and recognise that there will be a cultural aversion to bricks and mortar housing for most Gypsies and Travellers. In addition the needs of all within this group to include in particular the young and old age categories need to be taken into consideration.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

The evidence base has been subject to specific consultation with Gypsy and Travellers groups and their representatives, any findings will be reported to the Inspector at the Core Strategy Examination and inform the Core Strategy policy.

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5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
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Date to complete your impact assessment	
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Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	
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6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date

7. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

Please send a copy to the Equality Team for publishing

Date screening completed	1 st August 2013
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Date sent to Equality Team	
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Date published	
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(To be completed by the Equality Team)