

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 and Implementation
Lead person: Steven Wilkinson	Contact number: 0113 2478078

1. Title: Oulton and Woodlesford Community Design Statement (NDS)

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

Other = Guidance

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

Main aim:

The aim of the Neighbourhood Design Statement (NDS) is to describe the characteristics of the locality and provide a design guidance to influence future development and improve the physical qualities of the area. It amplifies existing planning policies which are set out in higher level planning policy documents for example, the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the emerging Leeds Core Strategy.

Once the Council formally adopts a NDS as a Supplementary Planning Document, the content of the document is then used to guide all future planning applications.

Purpose:

The production of the NDS which includes an informal and formal consultation

requirement is a community led process. A Neighbourhood Design Steering Group comprising of local residents was set up at the start of the process to manage the production of the document. One of the aims of the Steering Group was to engage all equalities groups by ensuring a range of different consultation methods are used in order to help facilitate appropriate community involvement and inclusiveness.

Document content:

A NDS does not contain any new planning policies but provides detailed guidance to supplement those relevant policies as set out in the Leeds UDP and emerging Core Strategy. An NDS influences the planning process for the benefit of the community and their aspirations for the area. The document describes the character and appearance of the village and gives guidelines to help the preservation and enhancement of this character. The NDS forms a record of what local people value about their home environment, so this can be considered when any changes take place. The Oulton and Woodlesford NDS broadly covers the following themes:

- § A description of the character of the area
- § The history of the area
- § The geographical setting of the area
- § The landscape and setting of the area
- § Architecture
- § Design and character assessments of character areas inc green areas, open spaces, local housing and building styles.
- § Moving about - Access, roads and footpaths
- § Guidance for development
- § Management plan

These chapters within the document set out the current situation within the area and set out the aspirations of the community and guidelines/context for future development.

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?		✓
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		✓

Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		✓
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		✓
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 	✓	

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?

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

In 2004, the Government committed to changing the culture of planning to make it more responsive, positive and pro-active. Diversity and equality are at the very heart of the new planning agenda. Community involvement is one of the key themes underpinning the planning reforms. Local authorities had a new legal requirement to produce and implement a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

In 2007, the Council published its own SCI which was prepared in accordance with requirements of the Race Relations Act (2000) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). The SCI is a planning document which sets out how the local authority will involve local people and stakeholders in the decisions making process which relates to planning matters, plan making and planning applications. It also outlines how consultation will take place with other stakeholders (any interested groups) and statutory consultees (groups the Council has to consult by law) and identifies a range of different consultation methods which should be used in order to help achieve effective community involvement and inclusion.

The aim of the SCI is to help ensure community ownership of the local planning system, documents and decisions and to strengthen community involvement in planning over time. It also aims to improve overall representation and involvement across all sections of the community. The implementation of the SCI has helped to ensure that equality,

diversity, integration and community cohesion issues have become embedded in all aspects of planning practice.

In order for the Oulton and Woodlesford Design Statement document to be formally supported and adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, the preparation of the NDS would have to fully comply with the Council's SCI standards and requirements. The NDS has clearly achieved this as it has been a community led process which has involved a large proportion of the community.

The NDS was initiated in September 2008 through two initial public meetings, with a steering group established shortly afterwards in order to oversee the Design Statement's preparation. The steering group consists entirely of local residents. Since the commencement of the NDS the document has been developed through a significant public consultation process including questionnaires to every household within the area, consultation with local interest groups, several public exhibitions/meetings and a series of workshops enabling local residents to analyse the character of the neighbourhood through both map-based tasks and fieldwork.

Detailed internal consultation on the NDS has also taken place with a number of key stakeholders within Leeds City Council including Highways, Forward Planning and Implementation, Planning Services, Nature Conservation etc. Following this initial consultation the document was amended to take into consideration the views of the key stakeholders.

In order to gain approval as a Supplementary Planning Document the Neighbourhood Design Statement must also satisfy the statutory consultation process. The approved Consultation Draft was subject to formal consultation from 19th September – 31st October, 2011. Formal notices were issued to both statutory consultees and local organisations. The document was posted on the City Council's website together with response forms. A formal planning notice was published in the Yorkshire Evening Post and an article within the Rothwell Record during this period. Hard copies and response forms were also available at the Development Enquiry Centre in the Leonardo Building and at Rothwell Library. Additional hard copies were available on request.

In summary a total of 4 representations were received within the formal consultation period. The responses were all from statutory or non-statutory groups/organisations. No representations were received from individual members of the public or local interest groups. The comments within the representations have been assessed and amendments made where appropriate within the document to reflect these comments.

Key findings

The process of creating the document, as well as the NDS itself is an example of a local community taking a more active role in local issues. The entire community has been consulted and many were involved on some level within the process. The NDS is fundamentally an exercise in neighbourhood ownership of communities, and a way in which communities can have more input in the planning process and decision-making that affects their local area.

The eligibility of people/businesses/groups etc to use document is entirely based on geographical location rather than any personal or group characteristics, as the guidance contained within the document only relates land/buildings contained within the defined area. Whilst the document cannot be used to supplement or inform proposals located outside the area, this lack of opportunity applies to all proposals outside the area with no specific detrimental impacts on any particular groups. Other areas also have the opportunity to create a community-led plan for their neighbourhood, indeed many neighbourhoods across Leeds have already produced similar SPD's.

The impact on the various equality groups has been considered and no impact for various groups including BME, disabled, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious or carers has been identified. As a consequence it is considered that the creation of the design statement does not impact negatively on equality, diversity, cohesion and/or integration.

Actions

No negative impacts have been identified. The processes involved in the creation of the document have attempted to actively involve all members of local community and their views throughout. As such any guidance which aims to be consistent with and helps to deliver the views and aspirations of the whole community should be seen as having a positive impact. The enhanced community relations which are likely to have been developed throughout the development of the document are likely to be of benefit and can be built further upon in future planning work within the community. This will be integral in helping the community be successful in emerging community-led planning work areas such as Neighbourhood Planning where the key principle is incorporating all aspects of the community.

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
Robin Coghlan	Planning Policy Team Leader	23/11/12

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

15th November 2011

Date sent to Equality Team

Date published

(To be completed by the Equality Team)