

Equality Impact Assessment

Richmondshire Local Plan (Reg. 18) Preferred Options

May 2021

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a public sector organisation, Richmondshire District Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to ensure that the objectives and policies within the Richmondshire Local Plan:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 1.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is often used by public sector organisations to demonstrate how this duty has been met.
- 1.3 This report seeks to identify and make suggestions to diminish possible negative impacts on equalities and health that may result from the Richmondshire Local Plan.
- 1.4 It is presented in five parts:
- Chapter 2 sets out the purpose of the document;
 - Chapter 3 presents baseline information;
 - Chapter 4 assesses the proposed policies against equalities issues; and
 - Chapter 5 summarises any potential conflicts identified in the assessments and includes recommendations for improvements and monitoring.

2. Purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment

- 2.1 Richmondshire District Council is required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of its policies, plans and strategies to ensure that they do not discriminate against any group or individual in the community.
- 2.2 EqIAs are required by law to include a range of equalities issues. To incorporate EqIAs into the plan-making process we also need to take into account some of the wider issues of social inequality, in particular rural isolation and related deprivation such as fuel poverty.
- 2.3 Therefore, the following equality areas are used in a matrix to determine whether the Local Plan has potential implications in relation to the protected characteristics:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 2.4 The matrix in part three identifies where the policies are compatible and where they have potential or likely conflict with the equality areas.
- 2.5 This document provides an EqIA of the Local Plan Preferred Options Draft prior to the Preferred Options consultation.

Preferred Options Local Plan

- 2.6 Richmondshire District Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted in 2014), with a new Local Plan to cover up to 2039. The development of the new Local Plan is currently at the Preferred Options stage but will be presented for Reg. 18 consultation in the form of a draft Local Plan containing all the preferred policies.

2.7 These policies set out what type of development is and is not acceptable in the Richmondshire Plan Area, in conjunction with national planning policies. The Plan also sets out a vision for Richmondshire and a strategy to achieve these ambitions through planning decisions.

3. Implementation

3.1 The main stakeholder groups on whom the policies in the Local Plan will impact include:

- Residents;
- Service users;
- People wishing to move to Hambleton;
- Tourists;
- Business owners; and
- Developers.

3.2 The Local Plan represents a long-term strategy for managing growth to meet the needs for development in Richmondshire. The proposed strategy will be subject to several rounds of consultation prior to a statutory period for representations and submission to the Secretary of State.

3.3 Once adopted there are no anticipated issues in ensuring the policies and proposals of the Local Plan are drawn upon in decision making. However, implementation of the growth proposals within the Local Plan will largely be led by landowners and private developers. The specific delivery of proposals within the Local Plan will consequently be subject to the financial viability of development and the submission of proposals for development that are acceptable to the Council in accordance with the policies contained in the plan. The Local Plan is expected to include a monitoring and implementation framework that will review progress made in the implementation of the Local Plan and enable action to be taken where issues arise.

3.4 The Local Plan and supporting documentation is prepared by the Council's Policy Team and, when adopted, the policies in the Local Plan will be used by the Council's planning committee and Development Management Team when determining planning applications.

4. Baseline Information

- 4.1 Statistics have been gathered to create a baseline of information from which to determine whether the Local Plan may affect the people in Richmondshire.
- 4.2 Please note that all statistics were found using several sources but largely from the Office of National Statistics and Nomis. They were correct as of May 2021. Much of the data below is based on the 2011 Census unless more recent publications have been made. Results from the 2021 Census (which took place in March 2021) will be accounted for in an updated EqIA once those results have been published.

Age (and Population)

- 4.4 Richmondshire (including the National Park) has a population of 53,244. The population of Richmondshire is expected to age in line with national projections, with the Old Age (85+) group expected to increase by 25% and the Retirement (65-84) group by 14%. Younger male workers (20-44) make up the highest proportion of the population, but this is heavily skewed by military workers at Catterick Garrison.

Current population in Richmondshire (2018) (ONS)							
Group	Ages	Overall		Males		Females	
		Pop.	%	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
Children/ Teens	0-19	11,341	21.3%	6,161	21.7	5,180	20.8%
Younger Workers	20-44	15,954	30%	9,526	33.6	6,428	25.9%
Older Workers	45-64	14,715	27.6%	7,435	26.2	7,280	29.3%
Retirement	65-84	9,950	18.7%	4,767	16.8	5,183	20.9%
Old Age	85+	1,284	2.4%	503	1.8	781	3.1%
		53,244	TOTAL				

Disability

- 4.5 Disability figures from the most recent census (2011) show that in Richmondshire over 15% of the population have a disability that limits their daily activities to some extent. Almost 85% of the population either do not have a disability or their disability does not limit their daily activities.

Disability figures for Richmondshire from 2011 Census (NYCC data.gov.uk)			
Population (2011)	Daily activities limited a lot	Daily activities limited a little	Daily activities not limited
51,965	3,261 (6.27%)	4,662 (8.97%)	44,042 (84.76%)

- 4.6 The most recent information on NOMIS/ONS (November 2016) reports that 960 people are in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit, with a further 170 receiving Disability Living Allowance.

Gender Reassignment

- 4.7 There are no statistics for this protected characteristic in Richmondshire. The 2021 Census for the first time asked adults (16+): '*is the gender you identify with the same as your registered sex at birth?*' The results should provide better evidence to assess equality for gender reassignment in Richmondshire.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

- 4.8 The 2011 Census recorded that 22,752 or 53.3% of all people 16 and over in Richmondshire were married. The 2011 Census also recorded that 112 or 0.3% of Richmondshire residents aged 16+ were in registered same-sex civil partnerships. This proportion is similar to regional and national averages.

Pregnancy and maternity

- 4.9 Richmondshire had 417 births in 2019 (ONS, 2020). The birth rate is 7.8 per 1,000 of the population. This is lower than the regional North Yorkshire average of 8.2, and much lower than the national average of 10.8. Of the 417 births in Richmondshire, 250 were inside a marriage or civil partnership and 167 were outside.

Race

- 4.10 White ethnic people make up 95.4% of the population in Richmondshire. This is lower than North Yorkshire at 97.3%, but much higher than the national average of 86%. In Richmondshire, 'other ethnic groups' account for 4.6% of the population. 91.6% of people were born in the UK, 3.6% in the EU and 4.8% from elsewhere.

Religion or belief

- 4.11 The 2011 Census showed Christianity as the predominant religion, followed by 69.4% of the population. 21.4% of people are not religious and 2.3% follow other religions. The remaining 6.9% did not state their religion.

Sex

- 4.12 Male residents in Richmondshire make up 52.7% of the population and female residents 47.3%. This differs from the North Yorkshire average where males account for 49.2% and females 50.9% of the population. The higher proportion of males in Richmondshire is considered to be due to the significant military population at Catterick Garrison.

Sexual orientation

- 4.13 This group is estimated to make up 2.5% of the population (Public Health England, 2017). No official data at regional or national levels currently exists. However, the 2021 Census will for the first time ask for voluntary responses to sexual orientation.

5. Policy Assessment Summary

- 5.1 The Local Plan contains multiple policies and has the underlying principle to deliver sustainable development to secure a better quality of life for everyone now and for future generations. All the policies within the Local Plan contribute towards achieving sustainable development with policies promoting the location of new homes, jobs and economic growth, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and built heritage, improved infrastructure, renewable energy, green spaces and the development of balanced communities.
- 5.2 Each policy within the Local Plan is subject to assessment to identify the potential impact of the policy on different equality target groups. The potential impact could be negative, positive or neutral. Those that are likely to have a negative or positive effect will be assessed in further depth. The full assessment is provided at Section 9 of this report.
- 5.3 Individual site allocations have not been assessed within this EqIA. The allocations are subject to the higher-level policies within the Local Plan such as H2 and E3. These policies have been subject to the EqIA so it is not felt necessary to assess individual sites.
- 5.4 In broad terms the policies identified within the Local Plan are considered to have a positive impact upon protected characteristics in particular on certain age groups and the elderly. Many of the policies within the Plan will benefit the wider community in Richmondshire and not specifically those with protected characteristics. Where policies are judged to have a neutral impact because the policy will have a positive impact on the community as a whole rather than any particular group.
- 5.5 As well as looking at the potential impacts of individual policies in the Plan, the following text summarises the overall impact of the Plan.

Age

- 5.6 In terms of the Local Plan, how and where new development is located affects overall levels of accessibility for people. For older age groups, proximity to services, such as healthcare, is especially important and/or the means to access

these by public transport. Accessing quality jobs and establishing themselves on the property ladder is a key issue for younger people.

- 5.7 Provision of appropriate accommodation in the right locations to meet needs is vital and this tends to be magnified as an issue for either end of the age spectrum. For the older age groups, the suitable provision and location of lifetime homes, retirement, sheltered housing and/or extra care housing are important. At the younger end of the age range, affordable housing can be the key to enabling people to live independently from family.
- 5.8 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all with some having differentially positive impacts on this group. The Local Plan aims to bring improvements to all age ranges in Richmondshire with the promotion of aged balanced communities. The Plan recognises that Richmondshire's older population is increasing. Sustainable Development is a key theme throughout the Plan and promoting social wellbeing is part of this. Provision of facilities to meet people's needs such as community facilities, affordable housing and open space is inclusive of all ages.
- 5.9 Two policy areas that have a positive impact on the elderly and young people are the housing policies and the transport and accessibility policies. The Plan (Policy H4) supports a mix of housing taking into account local requirements and should meet the minimum space standards. The policy also encourages specialist older persons accommodation in sustainable locations. Policy SD3 to improve accessibility in and to town centres will be of particular benefit to the young and old who generally have less access to private cars.

Disability

- 5.10 The Local Plan will guide the location of future development. For disabled people, isolation from services and or communities as well as an undersupply of specialist housing can be a barrier. The Plan seeks to cater for these specialist needs of the population.
- 5.11 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all with some having differentially positive impacts on this group. Two policy areas that have a positive impact on people with a disability are the housing policies and the transport and accessibility policies. Policy SD3 to improve accessibility in and to town centres will be of particular benefit to people with disabilities who may have access difficulties. Policy H4 supports a quota of new dwellings to be constructed to M4(2) or M4(3) Building Regulations standards for accessibility and adaptability to cater for the needs of inhabitants.

Gender Reassignment

- 5.12 Please note, The Equality Act provides protection for transgender people – defined as someone who proposes to, has started, or completed a process to change his or her gender.

5.13 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all and as having no differential impact this group. The Plan is inclusive of all members of the community and does not discriminate against any gender reassignment.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

5.14 Married or civil partnership couples could face barriers through the size of homes, access to suitable facilities and services and a lack of local economic opportunities forcing longer commutes out of the area.

5.15 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all and as having no differential impact this group. The Plan is inclusive of all members of the community and does not discriminate against any relationship status.

Pregnancy and maternity

5.16 A proportion of the population will always be pregnant and or looking after young children. They will have childcare needs, including affordable accommodation and access to services and facilities, which have implications for how the environment is planned. These issues which are relevant to the scope of the Local Plan.

5.17 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all with some having differentially positive impacts on this group. The impact of the Plan on pregnant women or those who are taking care of infant children is potentially positive in terms of promoting easier access to local facilities through improved public realm and access to public transport.

Race

5.18 For the purposes of the Act 'race' can mean your colour, or your nationality (including your citizenship). It can also mean your ethnic or national origins, which may not be the same as your current nationality. For example, you may have Chinese national origins and be living in Britain with a British passport.

5.19 Gypsies and Travellers are often undercounted in official censuses due in part to their nomadic lifestyle. This ethnic minority group have particular specialist needs in terms of spatial planning and access to services, which is addressed through a specific policy (H8) in the Local Plan.

5.20 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all and as having no differential impact this group. The Plan is inclusive of all members of the community and does not discriminate against any race.

Religion or belief

5.21 Religious people may face barriers to accessing suitable places of worship, which may have particular requirements in terms of location and land. The Local Plan (through policies CR1 and CR2) can influence the protection and location of community facility developments and therefore influence the opportunities for religious groups to practice their religions.

5.22 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all and as having no differential impact this group. The Plan is inclusive of all members of the community and does not discriminate against any religion or belief.

Sex

5.23 In terms of gender issues in relation to the Local Plan, the pattern of development can be a factor. The lives of older women are often very different from those of older men. On average, women live longer but have lower incomes and are more likely to be disabled. Because women are also often younger than their partners, more women than men live alone in their later years. These factors will also impact on how the Local Plan needs to have regard for other protected characteristics (Age and Disability).

5.24 Traditionally, working-age women have been more likely to have varied working patterns compared to men, with one or more part-time jobs or leaving the labour market earlier. There is also a lower likelihood that women will have 24 hour access to a car. Therefore, the need for access to public transport, proximity to workplaces and the avoidance of isolated locations are factors to consider in planning for the needs of women.

5.25 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all and as having no differential impact this group. Equal opportunities are important to all. The Plan is inclusive of all members of the community and does not discriminate against sex/ gender.

Sexual orientation

5.26 The Act, protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people. Known barriers for these groups include isolation in rural areas, which may be stronger for minority groups, the effect of hate crime and poorer support networks, especially for older people with this characteristic.

5.27 The Local Plan policies were identified as being generally positive for all and as having no differential impact this group. Equal opportunities are important to all. The Plan is inclusive of all members of the community and does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

6. Assessment Methodology

- 6.1 Guidance to producing an Equality Impact Assessment is produced by UK Research and Innovation. Each policy of the Local Plan will be assessed on whether it has the potential to have a positive, neutral or adverse effect against any of the protected characteristic groups.
- 6.2 This will allow an overall evaluation of the equality impacts of the Local Plan to be made, as set out below:

Evaluation Decision

There are four options open to you:

- 1. No barriers or impact identified, therefore activity will **proceed**.*
- 2. You can decide to **stop** the policy or practice at some point because the evidence shows bias towards one or more groups*
- 3. You can **adapt or change** the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias, or*
- 4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (for example in **extreme cases** or where **positive action** is taken). Therefore, you are going to **proceed with caution** with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.*

In most cases, where disproportionate disadvantage is found by carrying out EIAs, policies and practices are usually changed or adapted. In these cases, or when a change has been justified, you should consider making a record on the project risk register.

7. Evaluation

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/ funding/ activity/ event being assessed	Richmondshire Local Plan (Preferred Options draft)
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/ funding activity/ event	Sets out the Council's policies that will guide development up to 2039 and meet the housing requirement for the plan area.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy?	A public consultation for the Issues and Options stage. This assessment is prior to a Preferred Options public consultation. A further public consultation for the Submission draft will also take place.
4. Who is affected by the policy/ funding activity/ event?	The policies have the potential to affect all residents, businesses and visitors to Richmondshire, and to some extent those of neighbouring local authorities.
5. What are the arrangement for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy?	A monitoring and implementation framework will set out what and how policies will be monitored. Local Plans are typically reviewed every 5 years.
6. Overall, will the proposed policy have a positive, negative or neutral effect?	<p>The proposed policies are considered to have a range of positive and neutral impacts.</p> <p>No barriers or impact identified, therefore activity will proceed.</p>
7. Are there any adverse impacts and what are the reasons for this adverse impact?	n/a
8. Can the impacts be justified or how are they intended to be dealt with?	n/a

9. Screening Summary

	Positive		Neutral		Negative
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Policy	Characteristics								
	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation
Vision									
Strategic Objectives									
Local Objectives									
SP1									
SP2									
SP3									
Sub-Area Strategies									
SD1									
SD2									
SD3									
SD4									
SD5									
H1									
H2									
H3									
H4									
H5									
H6									
H7									
H8									
E1									
E2									

E3									
E4									
E5									
E6									
E7									
CC1									
CC2									
CC3									
NE1									
NE2									
NE3									
NE4									
NE5									
NE6									
HE1									
CR1									
CR2									
D1									
I1									
I2									
	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation

Screening Detail

9.1 All 'neutral' results are considered to have:

- neither a positive nor negative impact, or
- the policy has no relevance to or impact on the protected characteristics.

9.2 Results with potential positive or negative impacts, as per the screening table above, are considered further below

Vision

9.3 The vision specifically supports '*the quality of life, health and wellbeing of communities and addresses their needs for homes, work and leisure*'. This has a potential positive impact for people of all characteristics.

Strategic Objectives

9.4 The strategic objectives aim to locate housing and services and facilities in sustainable locations which should break down barriers for those in the following groups: Age, Disability, Marriage or Civil Partnerships, Pregnancy or Maternity, and Sex.

- 9.5 The strategic objectives also hope to '*provide support for the economy and local social and community needs*'. This should positively impact the following groups; Gender reassignment, Race, Religion, and Sexual Orientation.

Local Objectives

- 9.6 Thriving and sustainable communities are supported by locating development where it will enable people to access jobs and key services like education, training, healthcare, recreation and other facilities.

SD2 – Amenity

- 9.7 This policy seeks to '*improve the local amenity and vitality of the area and is designed to reduce crime, social inequalities and disadvantages in the community*'. Therefore, it aims to have a positive impact on all characteristic groups.

SD3 – Access

- 9.8 This Preferred Policy seeks to ensure that new development can be adequately and appropriately accessed, minimises the need to travel and actively encourages and adopts more sustainable forms of travel. This should have a positive impact on those who find transport or mobility a barrier particularly through age, disability and pregnancy or maternity.

SD5 – Electronic Communications

- 9.9 This policy aims to expand and enhance the electronic communication network including mobile technology and full fibre broadband. Better connectivity should increase communications and opportunity for those of all age groups and prevent isolation of those with disabilities.

H1 – Scale and Distribution of Housing & H2 – Housing Allocations

- 9.10 These two policies aim to direct new housing development to sustainable locations. In doing so it will keep residents close to employment, schools, services and facilities thereby reducing barriers, improving accessibility and reducing isolation.

H3 – Affordable Housing

- 9.11 The Affordable Housing policy may give the opportunity to those in age groups where purchasing or renting a market value house may be difficult. The policy may also allow those with disabilities to find accommodation where barriers exist elsewhere. For married or civil partnership couples or those pregnant or on maternity affordable housing may offer an opportunity to have suitable accommodation for their characteristics.

H4 – Housing Mix

- 9.12 The Housing Mix policy seeks to cater new development to the different needs of the demographics in Richmondshire. New housing should take account of local requirements and therefore create more opportunities for married or civil

partnership couples or those pregnant or on maternity where appropriate. There are also specific criteria for older people and adaptability for disabled people.

H6 – Rural Conversions to Housing

- 9.13 This policy could potentially help create more suitable accommodation for a range of age groups and particularly enable older people to live in annexed accommodation with their family.

E1 – Scale and Distribution of Economic Development & E3 – Economic Allocations

- 9.14 This policy aims to direct new economic development to sustainable locations. In doing so it will keep residents close to employment opportunities and reduce the need to travel, reducing barriers for different age groups.

E6 – Sustainable Tourism

- 9.15 This policy will enable the sustainable development of tourism development and accommodation enabling all age groups to enjoy the attractions of Richmondshire.

E7 – Town and Local Centres

- 9.16 By enhancing and maintaining the vitality of town centres, in tandem with the location of housing, services and facilities will remain accessible to all age groups and those with disabilities.

CR1 & CR2 – Community Facilities

- 9.17 Retaining, enhancing or developing new community facilities will allow easier access and use by all age groups, those with disabilities or pregnant/ on maternity. As community facilities include religious buildings, it will positively impact religious people who will have more opportunities to worship or congregate.