

## **Appendix 10 – Summary of findings from the Equalities Impact Assessment of the Draft Regulation 19 Horsham District Local Plan, December 2023**

- 1.1 This appendix summarises the findings of an assessment of the likely effects on equalities issues of the Regulation 19 Horsham District Local Plan 2023.
- 1.2 The requirement to undertake formal Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) of plans was introduced in the Equality Act 2010 but was abolished in 2012 as part of a Government bid to reduce bureaucracy. Despite this, authorities are still required to have regard to the provisions of the Equality Act, namely the Public Sector Duty which requires public authorities to have due regard for equalities considerations when exercising their functions.
- 1.3 In fulfilling this duty, it is useful to produce a written record documenting how equalities issues having been specifically considered and that is the purpose of this report.
- 1.4 The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine '*protected characteristics*' and seeks to protect people from discrimination on the basis of these. They are:
1. Age
  2. Disability
  3. Gender reassignment
  4. Marriage and civil partnership
  5. Pregnancy and maternity
  6. Race
  7. Religion or belief
  8. Sex
  9. Sexual orientation
  - 10.
- 1.5 There are three main duties set out in the Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup>, which public authorities including Horsham District Council must meet in exercising their functions:
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited.
  - To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.
  - To foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 .

## Method

- 1.6 The Regulation 19 Horsham District Local Plan has been reviewed to consider the likely impacts of the 46 land use policies and 21 site allocation policies on each of the *nine protected characteristics* from the Equality Act 2010 listed above. For each protected characteristic, consideration has been given to whether the options considered for inclusion in the Local Plan are compatible or incompatible with the *three main duties* of the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.7 The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that the local plan policies are providing equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination for everyone. The Council takes account of the needs, circumstances and experiences of those in the community who it intend to benefit from a policy.

## EqIA Non housing allocations Policy Assessment - Summary of findings

- 1.8 Policies which seek to secure the provision of community services and facilities in the District, support development that enhances community access to these facilities, or prevent development that would limit access to such facilities (in particular Policies 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 14, 15, 27, 28, 35, HA1 and 41) are all expected to result in a positive effect in relation to the protected characteristics of **pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation** and **religion or belief**. These policies are likely to contribute to the development of, and convenient access to, community facilities that could support meetings related to the LGBTQ+ community, pregnancy or maternity and faith groups in the District.
- 1.9 Policies 2 and 3 support development at locations with a good range of services and facilities (Policy 2) and where it is demonstrated that it will enhance community services and facilities (policy 3). This policy does in addition allow some limited smaller scale development in smaller secondary settlements, which have less direct access to services and facilities. Whilst in some instances residents in the smaller secondary settlements may have reduced access to community services and facilities in their immediate locality, these services and facilities will still be provided in settlements which are close by. This will also impact a relatively small number of individuals given the small scale of development involved. It should also be noted that some development in smaller settlements may also help retain existing services thereby maintaining access to services for a those in the identified protected groups as well as the wider community.
- 1.10 Policy 39 seeks to deliver affordable housing in rural areas, including that which would support people who provide important community services. This policy may therefore help to ensure the provision of community services to support pregnant women and faith groups at more rural locations. However, residential development outside of larger settlements may leave some residents with more limited immediate access to

community services and facilities. It should also be noted that development contributions will also be made to secure upgrades and the provision of new facilities within the District which will benefit new residents which would help mitigate this impact.

- 1.11 Policies 15 and Policy 16 seek to restrict development outside of built-up areas. These rural countryside areas are sparsely populated and are some distance from most services and facilities. Continuing to retain the settlement pattern has a positive effect on ensuring that development is located within or adjoining areas with the greatest population and therefore maximise access to services and facilities for those with protected characteristics (and the population as a whole).
- 1.12 There are a number of policies which were identified as having the potential to help deliver a more legible environment which is easy to navigate would benefit the local population which is becoming increasingly elderly. The design of development is particularly crucial in this respect.
- 1.13 Strategic Policies 19 and 20 seek to guide development require new development to be inclusive. During the course of plan preparation this assessment identified that this could be made more explicit to ensure the design of development was explicit in meeting the needs of all. The policy was updated to ensure development is designed to be 'attractive and inclusive, meeting the needs of all users, with particular consideration given to disability, age and gender, as well as addressing the needs of those with caring responsibilities'.
- 1.14 Policy 5 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to the characteristic of **age**, as it seeks to support development which is well laid out and provides convenient and legible connections. The mix of uses on site would also advance equality for the protected characteristics of maternity by providing a range of services and facilities in one location. Improvements to accessibility could also benefit parents with prams. Policy 5 has the potential to have a positive effect on the protected characteristic **disability** provided that the connections between place make provisions for those in wheelchairs, the blind and deaf.
- 1.15 The level of housing to be delivered over the plan period is set out in Policy 37. Delivering additional housing over the plan period is likely to respond more favourably to addressing housing affordability in the plan area. This is to be of particular benefit to young people wishing to get on the housing ladder. Policies that seek to ensure the provision of a range of housing sizes and types for specific groups of the community (Policies 38,39,40 and 42,) are likely to provide benefits in terms of helping young people to get on the housing ladder as well as ensuring that homes are suitable for older people. A positive effect is therefore expected in relation to the protected characteristic of **age**.
- 1.16 Housing suitable for people with disabilities is supported through a number of policies including Policy 18 ((the provision of housing suitable for wheelchair users), Policy 20, (the delivery of retirement homes and specialist care housing) and Policy 23, (support for annexes to properties that can be used by elderly family members or for staff supporting a dependent or family member). These three policies are expected to have a positive effect on the protected characteristic of disability, with Policy 23 also having a positive effect on age.

- 1.17 The Local Plan also includes policies which specifically seek to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Policy 27 sets out that development must meet the 'specific needs of minority groups within the District, including Gypsies and Travellers and Policy 43 acknowledges that the Council will meet the identified current and future accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. As such, both policies are expected to have a positive effect in relation to the protected characteristic of race.
- 1.18 Certain groups in the District are likely to be particularly vulnerable to air pollution. This includes younger and older people, people with cardiovascular or respiratory problems as well as pregnant women. Policies 11 and 12, require the minimisation of air pollution in the District in order to protect human health. This is required through Policy 12 through the use of appropriate mitigation measures such as the implementation of local Air Quality Action Plans, minimisation of traffic measures, the use of cleaner fuels and electric car charging points. These policies are therefore likely to have a positive effect in relation to **age, disability and pregnancy and maternity**.
- 1.19 Ensuring that appropriate parking is provided at developments in the District will have benefits for groups who are likely to experience mobility issues. This is supported through Policy 25 and therefore this policy is expected to have a positive effect in relation to **age and disability**.
- 1.20 Policy 27 (Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing) is likely to benefit all of the protected characteristics in the District. This policy seeks to address the requirements of all members of the community in new development. This includes the specific needs of older and younger people, minority groups, faiths and other community groups within the district. Furthermore, development is required by this policy to be designed to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.

## **Findings for the Proposed site allocations Policies**

- 1.21 A number of sites are proposed as housing allocations in the Plan. This includes 3 strategic scale allocations and a number of 'smaller' scale site proposals in villages and towns across the District. The 3 proposed strategic allocations adjoin two larger settlements in Horsham District as well as the town of Crawley. New residents would have access to existing facilities in these settlements and would in addition be expected to deliver new infrastructure to support new development. Strategic allocations require the delivery of a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of young families, older people including Gypsies and Travellers. As such, the allocation of these sites may result in additional benefits in relation to **age and race**.
- 1.22 Other smaller scale development is also located in larger villages and towns settlements with good access to services and facilities. Again development is expected to deliver on site where appropriate, or provide contributions to infrastructure to support the new development. It is recognised that the plan allocates some development in some smaller settlements and may provide more limited access to existing community facilities. However, all sites have some degree of local

provision and would also be required to contribute (via CIL) to the delivery of new infrastructure to support development. Furthermore, such development is expected to help retain existing services and facilities. As such, non strategic site allocations are expected to have a neutral to positive effect in relation to the protected characteristics of **pregnancy and maternity, race and religion or belief** in terms of access to with access to community facilities.

- 1.23 Policy 38 and Policy 39 are expected to help ensure that housing is provided in the District to meet the needs of younger and older people as well as to meet the needs of people with disabilities. As such, the allocation of strategic and non strategic allocations will help deliver additional benefits in relation to **age and disability**.

## Conclusion

- 1.24 The EqIA has examined whether the Horsham Regulation 19 Horsham District Local Plan 2023 has an adverse impact on or discriminated against different groups in the community with specific consideration to groups identified under the nine protected characteristic as identified in the Equalities Act 2010.
- 1.25 The assessment identified that all policies within the Local Plan are likely to have either a positive, mixed positive and negative or neutral impact on the protected characteristics. No adverse impacts have been identified meaning it is not necessary to move further into the EqIA Process and require action planning. The identified benefits will also have benefits for the wider community.
- 1.26 Based on the judgements made in the EqIA, it is not considered that any measures are required to mitigate against any adverse impacts. Due regard has been given to the three aims expressed in paragraph 149 of the Equalities Act and it is considered that the plan will work to eliminate discrimination by including policies that are inclusive, provide equal opportunity for all and foster good relations between persons where possible within the remits of Local planning.
- 1.27 The Council will monitor the implementation and impact of the Local Plan policies through the production of its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).