

Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Name of service change:

Shropshire Local Plan Partial Review: Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development October 2017

Contextual Notes 2016

The What and the Why:

The Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, for example due to low income or to safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, eg Age. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. Carrying out ESIIAs helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

The How:

The guidance and the evidence template are combined into one document for ease of access and usage, including questions that set out to act as useful prompts to service areas at each stage. The assessment comprises two parts: a screening part, and a full report part.

Screening (Part One) enables energies to be focussed on the service changes for which there are potentially important equalities and human rights implications. If screening indicates that the impact is likely to be positive overall, or is likely to have a medium or low negative or positive impact on certain groups of people, a full report is not required. Energies should instead focus on review and monitoring and ongoing

evidence collection, enabling incremental improvements and adjustments that will lead to overall positive impacts for all groups in Shropshire.

A **full report (Part Two)** needs to be carried out where screening indicates that there are considered to be or likely to be significant negative impacts for certain groups of people, and/or where there are human rights implications. Where there is some uncertainty as to what decision to reach based on the evidence available, a full report is recommended, as it enables more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Please note: prompt questions and guidance within boxes are in italics. You are welcome to type over them when completing this form. Please extend the boxes if you need more space for your commentary.

Name of service change

Shropshire Local Plan Partial Review: Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development October 2017
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Aims of the service change and description

<p>The existing Shropshire Local Plan currently comprises the Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (adopted 2015). These documents set out proposals for the use of land and policies to guide future development in order to help to deliver the sustainable growth in Shropshire for the period up to 2026.</p>
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<p>Local Planning Authorities are required to keep under review any matters that may affect the development of its area or the planning of its development. There is a requirement to objectively assess the development needs of the County and this also permits a longer term view to be taken for the period to 2036. In addition, there continue to be significant national policy and procedural changes along with opportunities and challenges at the national and regional level which will impact, to varying degrees, on Shropshire.</p>

<p>These matters are to be addressed through a partial review of the Local Plan to help to ensure the continuing conformity of the Local Plan with national policy. The Council is keen to maintain a robust and defensible Local Plan for Shropshire and the partial review will help to ensure that there is an up to date and deliverable Plan which will help to ensure that local, rather than national policies act as the principal benchmark for planning decisions. Maintaining an up to date Local Plan will support local growth by generating certainty for investment in local development and infrastructure through a policy framework that establishes an up to date and objective assessment of our development needs and supports</p>

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change
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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communities across Shropshire and the organisations which represent them, |
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- including town and parish councils and the voluntary and community sector;
- Organisations with strategic and cross boundary economic and environmental interests, including neighbouring local authorities, and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP);
- A range of stakeholders, including the development industry, local businesses, housing associations, utilities companies, and the land based sector;
- Government Departments and Agencies

Evidence used for screening of the service change

Many of the existing policies in the Core Strategy & SAMDev do not need to be amended and will be carried forward as part of the new Plan. The partial review will therefore focus on key areas of change, including options for the level and distribution of new housing and strategies for employment growth during the period to 2036, together with any amended policies and new site allocations which are needed to demonstrate that these requirements can be delivered.

The partial review of the Local Plan will be informed by an extensive evidence base which will be made available through the Council's web pages here:

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/> The 'Preferred Scale and Distribution of Growth' stage is the second stage of the partial review process and takes into account feedback from consultation on 'Issues & Options' earlier in the year. About 400 responses from a range of stakeholders including members of the local community were received to the consultation and analysis of the responses indicates that:

- Whilst there was a slight preference for the 'moderate' growth option, there was also a good level of support for 'high' levels of housing growth.
- A new approach which supports a 'step change' in economic productivity and the quality of employment provided in the County was preferred, reflecting the aims of the draft Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy published in March 2017.
- There was a slight preference to see a more urban focus for development.
- Most respondents supported the proposed criteria-based methodology for identifying the settlement hierarchy, including which settlements function as 'Community Hubs'.
- Both the use of criteria-based policies and the proposed criteria which will be used to manage development in 'Community Hubs' and 'Community Clusters' were considered appropriate by most respondents.
- Significant concern was expressed about the proposed removal of development boundaries which were considered to crucially provide clarity, certainty and consistency in such settlements.

The wider policy context for the review includes the Council's Corporate Plan and other key corporate documents, including the developing economic vision for the Council, together with existing Place Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The 'Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development October 2017' stage is the second stage of the partial review process. Subsequent stages will also be informed by the responses received. Consultation will be undertaken in line with the standards set out in the Council's published Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and national guidance. Consultation documents will be made available on the Shropshire Council web-site, and paper copies will be provided at libraries and council offices in the main towns. A significant number of organisations and individuals will continue to be notified directly of the publication of the consultation documents in accordance with the SCI. The Plan Review process provides for active and ongoing liaison and dialogue, such as with town and parish councils. Electronic responses are encouraged using an online survey form.

An Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) was carried out ahead of the start of the Local Plan Partial Review, in order to seek to identify likely equality impacts of the service change on all communities in Shropshire and on people in Protected Characteristics groupings. This indicated that once the likely impact on particular geographical areas or communities was better understood, a separate communication and consultation exercise with a range of stakeholders and with the general public would be beneficial. It was also anticipated that a further Stage One screening equality impact assessment would need to be carried out, to support the subsequent stage in the process and accompany report to Cabinet.

The follow up ESIIA has been undertaken and is attached to the Cabinet report. The aspiration remains for a low to medium positive impact on all groupings within the community as a result of the intended service change, and a positive impact for groupings of Age, Disability, and Social Inclusion. Further consultation will enable more information to be collected in this regard, with consequent opportunity to take any necessary actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the intended service change.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
 - the potential impact of this service change on them, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended;
 - the potential barriers they may face.
2. If the intended audience and target groups have not been consulted directly, have their representatives or people with specialist knowledge been consulted, or has research been explored?
3. Have other stakeholder groups and secondary groups, for example carers of service users, been explored in terms of potential unintended impacts?
4. Are there systems set up to:
 - monitor the impact, positive or negative, intended or intended, for different groups;
 - enable open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences through a variety of methods.
5. Are there any Human Rights implications? For example, is there a breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?
6. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on:
 - fostering good relations?
 - social inclusion?

Initial assessment for each group

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)			✓ +	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			✓ +	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓ +
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓ +
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓ +
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				✓ +
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				✓ +
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓ +
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				✓ +
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			✓ +	

Guidance on what a negative impact might look like

High Negative	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available: urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, workforce
Medium Negative	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are: would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, workforce
Low Negative	Almost bordering on non-relevance to the ESIIA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion can be exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy affecting degree of local impact possible)

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	✓	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		✓

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change

The Local Plan Partial Review is likely to have a positive effect on all groups in society and is intended to do so, given its aim of driving Shropshire's sustainable development, economic recovery and proactive responses to climate change and other environmental considerations, consistent with the Council's strategic vision and objectives.

The Plan is anticipated to generate a positive impact for the following groups in particular:

- Hard to reach in rural areas such as families, children and young people, older people, rural businesses, gypsies and travellers, and low income households;
- Vulnerable households in market towns, including families, older people and people on low incomes.

It is not possible at this stage to say with certainty what the likely impacts of the service change will be upon the community and upon groupings within the community.

Officers will also need to work with the intended audiences for the service change,

on the basis that this is all who live, work in and visit Shropshire.

From a specific engagement angle, therefore, officers will need to work with elected Members in their community leadership role to communicate the rationale for the proposed policy, and to seek to mitigate or enhance potential impacts on groupings in Shropshire.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change

The 'Issues & Strategic Options' stage was the first stage of the partial review process. The further development of the Plan, including this further revised ESIIA to complement the Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development stage, will be informed by consultation and engagement with stakeholders throughout the review process, and by further use of evidence sources about likely negative or positive impact upon groupings within the community. The implementation of the Local Plan is monitored annually and published through the annual 'Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)'.

From an ongoing engagement angle, the service area consults formally with local communities via town and parish councils on an annual basis as well as with regard to specific proposed developments. The service area also receives feedback via customer comments, liaison with LJCS, meetings with developers, and use of other forums where opportunities for engagement may arise, such as via the Marches LEP.

From an outcomes angle for communities, engagement with all Members as community leaders, and through Cabinet and Portfolio Holder, will help the service area and therefore the Council to ensure that information, feedback and concerns are raised through a variety of channels and that actions may then be identified as necessary to seek to mitigate any negative impacts.

The partial review of the Local Plan is designed to ensure that local policies respond to and are in general conformity with current national policy. Shropshire Council will continue to carefully monitor the impact of changes in national policy on the Local Plan and is an active contributor to national policy consultations which may have a differential or adverse impact on the county.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i> Adrian Cooper, Planning Policy & Strategy Manager	A Cooper	18 th September 2017
<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> Mrs Lois Dale Rurality and Equalities Specialist	L Dale	22 nd September 2017
<i>Head of service</i> Gemma Davies	G Davies	25 th September 2017

**This refers to other officers within the service area*

***This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg from a peer authority*

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer's name</i> Adrian Cooper	A Cooper	18 th September 2017
<i>Head of service's name</i> Gemma Davies	G Davies	25 th September 2017