

EARLS BARTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EQUALITY ASSESSMENT



CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Aims of the Equality Analysis
3. Methodology
4. Baseline Data
5. Goals and Objectives of the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan
6. Impact of Policies and Proposals on Groups with Protected Characteristics
 - 6.1. Age
 - 6.2. Disability
 - 6.3. Maternity and pregnancy
 - 6.4. Race
 - 6.5. Sex
 - 6.6. Religion, Gender Re-assignment and sexual orientation
7. Conclusion

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on all public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.
- 1.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is the systematic analysis of a policy or policies, in order to identify the potential for an adverse impact on a particular group or community, in particularly those with a protected characteristic. It is a method of assessing and recording the likely differential and/or adverse impact of a policy on people from different groups so that if a policy results in unfairness or discrimination then changes to eliminate or lessen the impact be considered.

“Protected characteristics” are defined in the Act as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

It is no longer a legal requirement for public bodies to produce an Equality Impact Assessment to cover every policy document or project. However, this document forms part of the assessment of the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan (EBNP) to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan does not have any equalities impacts and that it conforms the requirements of the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans.

2. Aims of the Equality Analysis

- 2.1 The purpose of the analysis is to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision-making and to nurture a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality and fairness at the heart of public policy. The aim in conducting the analysis is the promotion of fairness and equality of opportunity and thus it is the outcomes that are of primary concern.
- 2.2 The sections below consider the goals and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and then assess the impact of policies and proposals on groups with protected characteristics.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 An assessment has been made on whether the EBNP has a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of the protected characteristics (in so far as data is available). A brief justification and explanation of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan are provided below.
It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

Negative and Positive impacts are weighted in relation to their significance.
 High impact - a significant potential impact or beneficial outcome.
 Medium impact - some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures may be necessary or limited benefits accrue
 Low impact - almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation-led or extremely low benefits.

4. Baseline Data

4.1 Data for Earls Barton is available for the following protected characteristics: age, disability, race, religious belief, and sex. Data is not readily available for the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and sexual orientation. Unless stated otherwise the data source is the 2011 Census.

4.2 In 2011 there were 5,387 people living in Earls Barton. 48.6% of these were male, and 51.4% were female. Comparable figures for the UK were 49.3% male and 50.7% female.

- Earls Barton has a slightly higher proportion of people in the following age ranges:

	Earls Barton	England
aged 0-15 yrs	19.5%	18.9%
older than 65 yrs	17.9%	16.4%
But slightly less		
of working age	62.6%	64.7%

- The percentage of population in Earls Barton within the 0-4 years age range (6.2%), is directly comparable to the national average (6.3%). This suggests that the proportion of people with young families is the same in Earls Barton along with pregnancy and maternity rates as nationally.
- Earls Barton has a lower proportion of people whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot (5.6%) compared to the national average (8.3%) and half the proportion of people who define themselves to have very bad health (0.6%) compared to the national average (1.2%).
- In August 2013 there were 270 people in Earls Barton receiving Employment and Support Allowance or incapacity benefits (7.8%) compared to 13.6% of the population in Great Britain.
- The profile of ethnic origin for Earls Barton in 2011 was:

	Earls Barton	England
British white	95.5%	79.8%
Other white	2.1%	5.7%
Non-white	2.4%	14.5%

These figures indicate that Earls Barton has low Non-white population (131 persons in 2011) compared to the national average.

- Religious belief in Earls Barton is strongly weighted towards Christianity:

	Earls Barton	England
Christian	61.2%	59.4%
Buddhist	0.3%	0.5%
Hindu	0.3%	1.5%
Jewish	0%	0.5%
Muslim	0.2%	5.0%
Sikhs	0.02%	0.8%
Other Religions	0.3%	0.4%
No Religion	29.5%	24.7%

The top five non-Christian religions comprise only 0.82% of the population in total compared to 8.3% in England as a whole.

- Gender reassignment and sexual orientation are generally invisible characteristics for which little reliable data exists at local level.

In summary Earls Barton has:

- a slightly higher proportion of young and old people than the national average and slightly less people of working age;
- a significantly lower proportion of persons with incapacity or very bad health than nationally;
- a much lower proportion of non-white persons than the national average;
- a much lower proportion of people who practice religions other than Christianity than nationally; and
- a lower proportion of people with young families than the national average.

5. Vision and Objectives for Earl Barton Neighbourhood Plan

5.1 The EBNP will provide a framework of policies and proposals for the development of the village to 2031. The current Core Strategy for North Northamptonshire allocates 12,800 dwellings to the Borough of Wellingborough to 2021 of which 1,210 are designated for rural areas.

5.2 The EBNP allocates a main site for the village to accommodate growth to 2031 providing up to 280 dwellings. In fill development and exceptions sites will also be permitted where acceptable. Know commitments together with the main allocation site total almost 400 new houses. This housing requirement is based on the Housing Needs Survey undertaken for the village in 2013.

5.3 Vision - The EBNP vision is that ;
Earls Barton will be a thriving community delivering access to local facilities and services for a growing population while maintaining its rural, village character.

5.4 The plan contains four themes, Services, Development, Design and Access and each has a related objective and sub-objectives which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to attain. The four objectives are:

Services – Improve residents’ quality of life by improving the facilities and services within Earls Barton.

- Support Earls Barton’s shops and services
- Develop sports and leisure facilities for all
- Create more community meeting space
- Support the redevelopment/expansion of the Infant and Junior schools

Development – Allow limited housing and commercial development to meet local needs and increasing local employment opportunity while providing some degree of expansion.

- Allocate 280 new dwellings
- Focus growth of the village around ‘the Grange’
- Promote in-fill development where appropriate – within the defined village envelope.
- Provide a greater range of affordable and shared ownership housing
- Provide a range of different housing types across all tenures
- Maintain opportunities for small businesses within the village centre – promote a business centre for small and start-up businesses

Design – Protect, conserve and enhance natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural resources, areas of natural habitat or nature conservation value and both designated and non-designated heritage assets and promote high quality design in all new developments.

- Provide more open space sympathetically designed with new housing
- Protect existing heritage and village character
- New development should reinforce the character and quality of Earls Barton
- New development should have an appropriate layout and density and minimise the impact on street parking

- Protect and enhance the natural environment through improved management of national and internationally protected sites.

Access – Increase accessibility within Earls Barton and to other areas through improved transport links and provide better parking and access to the centre of Earls Barton.

- Ensure that major new development has direct access to main roads to minimise traffic congestion
- Integrate new housing into Earls Barton and the surrounding area with good pedestrian, cycle and bus connections
- Ensure that car parking within the village supports the vitality and viability of the village centre.
- Enhance public transport links promoting smarter choices as alternative modes of travel to better meet people’s needs

5.5 All of the objectives of the plan attempt to improve the conditions for all of the population and achieve benefits for all members of the community. However, objectives for *Services*, *Development* and *Access* support policies and proposals which might impact on persons with certain protected characteristics differently than they might affect the general population. In each case they aim to create an environment which would benefit persons with protected characteristics by providing decent homes, by reducing the need for cars and improving public transport and making village facilities more accessible to those with mobility problems, or by enhancing the prospects for local employment.

5.6 The EBNP Objectives for:

- *Services* - seeks to provide a greater range of services and facilities which could be accessed by all people included those with a disability, in central locations which provide greater ease of access.
- *Development* – seeks to provide a greater number of homes for local residents, particularly affordable homes, and a range of different types which would include a greater number of smaller homes which are suitable for both the elderly or young families seeking their first home. Good performance against the Sustainable Design guide will require a level of adaptation of housing to support lifetime homes and the elderly being able to remain living at home longer. Local employment provision is promoted which will help benefit young people and those with young families and the potential for live/work units which would be of particular benefit for disabled persons with limited mobility.
- *Design* - seeks to enhance and protect local open space which would need to be accessible to all of the community including disabled people, the elderly and young people.
- *Access* - seek to improve accessibility and connectivity to village services and facilities, which will be of particular benefit to older people, the disabled and those with limited mobility.

6. Impact of Policies on Groups with Protected Characteristics

The EBNP aims to create benefits for everyone who lives, works, shops, or spends leisure time in the village. This will be achieved by developing new and better housing, particularly affordable housing and smaller housing, enhancing the prospects for local employment development, preserving social, community and leisure facilities, improving access to local services and facilities, and preserving and enhancing the quality of the environment.

Groups with the various protected characteristics will be affected in different ways by the Neighbourhood Plan and the purpose of the analysis in this section of the assessment is to identify how various groups will be affected and whether the proposals and policies in the EBNP will adversely affect disproportionately those in the groups with protected characteristics. Without exception where policies in the Neighbourhood Plan do have an impact on groups with protected characteristics, it is a positive impact and not a negative one.

6.1 Age

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to provide and protect play facilities for children when new development is being considered.

Policy EB.OS1 seeks to retain areas of open space within the village particularly the recreation which have existing play facilities for all young people any new sports and leisure facilities to be developed around the Grange. Allotment land is also protected through this policy which tends to be cultivated by more elderly people and can help to maintain mobility and health in advancing years.

Policy EB.G1 and EB.GD1 support the need to provide local affordable housing (30% or equivalent future policy level) on site or off-site contributions *Policy EB.GD2* specifically links exceptions sites to local need which would allow for young people to access housing when they leave home.

Policy EB.DC1 requires developers to consider contributions towards community facilities and prioritises young people's facilities.

With regard to older people there are a range of housing policies which recognise and seek to meet their needs:

Policy EB.GD1 and EB.GD2 seeks to require development of consider adaptability of buildings and whether they conform to Lifetime Homes giving older people an opportunity to live in their homes for longer. A greater proportion of smaller houses which needs to be provided in line with the Housing Needs Survey will provide the opportunity for older people to purchase market housing to downsize and stay in the village.

The Neighbourhood Plan also contains policies which seek to improve and retain key facilities and services used by older people:

Policy EB.LB1 provides a mechanism to resist proposals which would result in the loss of the existing retail and service provision within the village centre such as the Chemist, Post Office and convenience shops which will be relied on proportionally more by older people.

This policy also supports the provision of additional community facilities and services in the village which will be of benefit to older people who may not be able to drive.

Policy EB.DC1 requires developers to consider contributions towards community facilities and identifies allotments and a new community hall as priorities which elderly people would benefit from.

Policy EB.T1 proposes areas of constrained access which would reduce the pressure for on-street parking and would help to keep the pavements clear of parked vehicles such that people with a pushchair, in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter could use the pavements as intended.

MEDIUM POSITIVE IMPACTS

6.2 Disability

The needs of persons who are disabled or who have limited mobility are recognised in:

Policy EB.GD1, EB.GD2 and EB.T1 require that traffic generated by the development and parking impact does not result in unacceptable impact on pedestrian safety. This will include the impact of parked cars on pavements and inability of disabled people to negotiate these obstacles safely.

Policy EB.D1 requires developments conform and perform well against criteria within the Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document which requires housing to be adaptable and flexible meeting the different needs of disabled people.

LOW POSITIVE IMPACTS

6.3 Maternity and Pregnancy

Key issues for women who are pregnant or who have young children are access to appropriate housing, flexible employment, and access to facilities including health, developmental play, and recreational facilities.

The Neighbourhood Plan has policies which help meet all of these needs:

Policy EB.G1, EB.GD1 and EB.GD2 require that all new development will provide the appropriate level of affordable housing, which will help people starting a family to get a house of their own.

The Neighbourhood Plan also contains policies which aim to retain, and improve access to, key facilities and services used by young mothers and their children:

Policy EB.LB1 provides a mechanism to resist proposals which would result in the

loss of the existing retail and service provision within the village centre such as the Chemist, Post Office and convenience shops which will be utilised more heavily by mothers with young children.

Policy EB.G1 supports the potential location for additional community facilities alongside new sports and leisure provision which are likely to be used by groups supporting mothers with young children and *policy EB.DC1* prioritises developer contributions for this purpose.

Policy EB.T1 proposes areas of constrained access which would reduce the pressure for on-street parking and would help to keep the pavements clear of parked vehicles. This would assist mothers with a pushchair or young children to get around the village more safely. *Policy EB.G1* requires new pedestrian links from the proposed new development at the Grange which will make access to the village centre more direct and safe for mothers with young children.

Policy EB.OS1 – Provides for the safeguarding of open space and recreation grounds within the village which are likely to be more heavily used by mothers and fathers with young children.

MEDIUM POSITIVE IMPACTS

6.4 Race

Non-white ethnic groups are a small proportion of the population in Earls Barton – in 2011 only 2.4% of the population was non-white and within this there are several groups with different ethnic origins.

Non-white ethnic groups can experience difficulties around discrimination (sometimes leading to hate crime), language, health and well-being, deprivation and culture.

A public realm designed with safety in mind will minimise opportunities for hate crime. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that new development follows good urban design principles and provides safe and inclusive public environments.

Policy ED.D1 requires that high quality design and layout is achieved in all new development

Policy ED.D1, EB.GD1 and EB.GD2 require that development perform well against the Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document which includes the need to consider designing out crime and the accreditation of 'Secured by Design' where possible to demonstrate that new housing development will be safe and a sustainable community is maintained.

LOW POSITIVE IMPACTS

6.5 Sex

The Neighbourhood Plan contains no specific policies or proposals for any particular gender. The Neighbourhood Plan has been written to provide equal opportunity to both sexes in respect of the provision of development and access to facilities.

Neither sex is disadvantaged by any of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan; on the contrary both sexes will benefit equally from the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

NEUTRAL IMPACT

6.6 Religion, Gender re-assignment, Sexual orientation

Key issues for religious groups are discrimination relating to employment, housing and the provision of services, and their portrayal in the media.

Key issues for gender re-assigned people, gays and lesbians are personal relationships, transphobia and/or discrimination, and hate crime.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not and cannot directly address the social attitudes that are involved in these issues. However, it does seek to provide a built environment which is open to all, with a safe public realm which all social groups can access and use equally.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The EBNP provides a strategy for the development of the village, and a range of policies and proposals, which will result in positive benefits for many parts of the local community with protected characteristics: older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, disabled people and those with limited mobility.

7.2 The EBNP does not explicitly address the needs of racial or religious groups, or transgender, gay or lesbian groups, or women, the Neighbourhood Plan does make equal provision for affordable housing and for a range of housing, and seeks to provide additional social, community and leisure facilities which will benefit these groups equally. It also seeks to provide a safer environment, particularly a safer public realm, where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to be subject to hate crime.

7.3 The EBNP Project Group does not consider that there are any negative equality impacts that arise from the policies or proposals contained within the Neighbourhood Plan or that it raises any issues in relation to any of the convention rights in the Human Rights Act 1998. These rights are defined as;

- Right to Life
- Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Right to liberty and security
- Right from slavery and forced labour
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment with law
- Respect for you private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion

- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Right to marry and start a family
- Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property
- Right to education
- Right to participate in free elections

The plan either helps to reinforce these rights or is neutral in relation to them.