

Core Strategy Submission Draft Initial Impact Assessment Report Disability Discrimination Act

Purpose of Assessment

- 1.0 The purpose of the assessment is to see if the policies and provisions of the Council's submission draft Core Strategy discriminate against particular persons/groups. To do this consideration must be given to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as Amended 2005).

Disability Discrimination Act

- 2.0 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on Public Authorities such as Wokingham Borough Council to do a number of things with respect to disability equality:
- Promote equality of opportunity
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination
 - Eliminate disability-related harassment
 - Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
 - Encourage disabled people's participation in public life
 - Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities even where that involves more preferential treatment.

Disability Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.0 The impact assessment requires that actions and policies carried out by the Council take into account disability equality. The objectives of a disability equality impact assessment are to:
- Identify if a policy or action can have a positive impact on disabled people
 - To eliminate or reduce any negative impacts on disabled people
 - To identify the likelihood of any impact on disabled people as a result of the policy
 - To promote existing good practice in disability equality
- 3.1 The need for an impact equality assessment can be triggered by a number of things. The most relevant to this equality impact assessment is the review or development of a policy or procedure. The submission draft Core Strategy is a Development Plan Document that will form part of the Borough's Local Development Framework. The documents that comprise the framework will replace the Council's Local Development Plan.
- 3.2 There is a need to screen the policies in the submission draft Core Strategy to determine the purpose of the policy and who is intended to Benefit.
- 3.3 This approach reflects the advice in paragraph 16 of Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) which seeks to reduce social inequalities and

address accessibility (both in terms of location and physical access) for all members of the community.

- 3.4 In drawing up the draft submission Core Strategy consultation has taken place with a number of organisations, including those who represent disability groups. Any comments received have helped in producing the policies. The draft submission Core Strategy has also been looked at by the Council's Access Officer and any comments have been included in the document.

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy

4.0 The Core Strategy sets out the Borough's long term spatial vision and the strategy to be applied in promoting and controlling development throughout its area. It identifies the approach for the distribution of development and high level policies to guide implementation.

4.1 The spatial issues that the Core Strategy needs to address are:

- i) Achieving sustainable development
- ii) Protecting the character of the borough
- iii) Maintaining the separate identity of the area's towns and villages
- iv) Maintaining and enhancing the infrastructure, including roads, schools, healthcare and open space provision through new development taking account of the health and wellbeing of residents
- v) Limiting development in those areas at most risk of flooding and pollution
- vi) Protecting the most important areas for biodiversity, landscape and heritage from development
- vii) Maintaining and enhancing the high knowledge and skills base of the borough
- viii) Ensuring design is in keeping with the area
- ix) Addressing the views of the public following consultation and engagement

4.2 New development is proposed to be provided in Strategic Development Locations and through modest or limited growth elsewhere. Public consultation has supported this approach as the one most likely to provide adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of the existing and new communities.

The Assessment

5.0 This is a screening assessment of the policies in the core strategy. Each of the policies in the Core Strategy is summarized below. Following the summary there is a commentary based on the following checklist:

- What is the purpose of the policy and why?
- Who is intended to benefit and how?
- What consultation, statistical or qualitative information is available to aid assessment?

- To what extent will the proposed policy or provision achieve equal opportunities for disability groups or impact upon them
- Is there a risk associated with the proposed policy or provision that the disability equality duty will not be met if it has an impact on particular persons or groups

5.01 The Core Strategy contains 22 policies. The screening assessment of each these policies, is set out below.

Core Strategy Policy CP1 Sustainable Development

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that development is sustainably located and maintains or enhances the quality of the environment.

Commentary:

Although this policy will bring with it financial costs for those undertaking development, it is considered this will not have a disproportionate effect on different sections of the community. Consequently it will not discriminate against particular persons and groups.

Core Strategy Policy CP2 Inclusive Communities

The purpose of this policy is to ensure development is provided to meet diverse needs.

Commentary:

The policy will prevent direct and indirect discrimination by ensuring the requirements of all are considered when development is proposed.

Core Strategy Policy CP3 General Principles for development

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new development is appropriately integrated into its surroundings, contributes to the character of the area and does not result in a loss of residential accommodation.

Commentary:

Provided sites for housing are delivered across the District to meet identified housing need there will not be a net loss in housing provision overall across the District and general community needs will be met. Maintaining the character of individual areas may in some instances restrict the provision of some types of new housing in parts of the District. This should not in itself lead to disadvantage for particular groups or indirect discrimination by the segregation of groups within the community provided a range of housing types are provided overall.

Core Strategy Policy CP4 Infrastructure Requirements

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that a mechanism is in place to provide appropriate and necessary mitigation measures and improvements to infrastructure when new development takes place.

Commentary:

This requirement may add to the cost of development, which developers may pass on to purchasers but will not discriminate on disability grounds against

particular persons or groups. It provides a mechanism to secure types of development not provided by the market.

Core Strategy Policy CP5 Housing Mix Density and Affordability

The purpose of this policy is to meet the housing needs of as many households as possible both within built areas and by exception outside designated development limits.

Commentary:

Policy CP5 does this through a requirement for a mix of housing size, density, tenure and type. It provides for the provision of affordable housing. The mix of houses should include some larger dwellings as well as small units.

The more ways in which housing can be provided, including for those not able to compete in the market, the less the risk that the Planning Authority will be acting in a discriminatory way.

When need has to be demonstrated for a particular type of housing, provided the eligibility criteria are widely drawn, the provisions of this policy are unlikely to be indirectly discriminatory. If the amount of housing to which restrictions apply is not disproportionately large there will be less risk of indirect discrimination.

Core Strategy Policy CP 6 Managing Travel Demand

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that existing and proposed development is accessible for all by a choice of means in order to reduce pressure on the transport system.

Commentary:

This proposal seeks to accommodate the needs of the whole community and improve choice and will not discriminate against particular persons or groups.

Core Strategy Policy CP7 Biodiversity

The purpose of this policy is to protect and enhance the diversity of wildlife.

Commentary:

This policy will not discriminate against particular groups.

Core Strategy Policy CP8 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

The purpose of this policy is to limit cumulative impact on a sensitive environment protected under the Birds Directive because of predation by animals and disturbance by people as a result of additional development close to the Special Protection Area (SPA).

Commentary:

Unless mitigation can be provided, the policy restricts development in the parts of the district close to the SPA. This affects all parts of the community that propose new development within the area affected.

Core Strategy CP9 Scale and location of Development proposals

The purpose of this policy is to make efficient use of previously developed land.

It is also to ensure that the scale new of development within existing built areas relates to the levels of facilities and services already available or proposed.

Commentary:

This policy applies to all settlements in the district so will not have a disproportionate effect on any person or group. It will not discriminate against particular groups.

Core Strategy Policy CP10 Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network

The purpose of this policy is to keep transport networks efficient and safe and to maintain and enhance public transport provision on main routes. The policy indicates new roads to be constructed and major improvements to public transport provision during the plan period. It seeks to ensure new land uses and development will be accessible.

Commentary:

Although there will be impacts from the provision of roads and public transport this policy will not discriminate against particular persons or groups.

Core Strategy Policy CP11 Proposals outside Development Limits

The purpose of this policy is to prevent proliferation of development in the countryside but allows some exceptions where buildings are reused and environmental improvement achieved.

Commentary:

This policy affects all parts of the community that propose new development in the countryside. Housing and other allocations in the countryside on the edge of the built area that are brought forward through the LDF would be included within development limits.

Core Strategy Policy CP12 Green Belt

This policy prevents inappropriate development in the area of the District that is designated as Green Belt. This is in line with National provisions in PPG2.

Commentary:

Preservation of the Green Belt boundaries will restrict development for new housing or employment. The identification of sites elsewhere in built -up areas or rural areas of the district outside the Green Belt may mitigate for the restriction of new sites in the Green Belt. Locational need in most circumstances will not be so specific that disadvantage will occur. If very special circumstances are substantiated on a site already in the Green Belt development may take place.

Core Strategy CP13 Gaps

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the coalescence of towns and villages as a result of development.

Commentary:

The maintenance of physical and visual gaps between towns and villages will restrict development, however as these designations are less permanent than the Green Belt overriding needs for development, including for particular groups will be considered in the drawing up of the boundaries in

- a) The Core Strategy for Strategic Development Locations
- b) The Development Management and Allocations DPD for gaps between other settlements.

Core strategy Policy CP14 - Town centres and shopping

The purpose of this policy is to protect and maintain shopping in existing locations across the district and to allow for the designation of new centres through the Local Development Framework.

Commentary:

By protecting existing centres from economic harm the designation of new centres will not discriminate against particular persons/groups.

Core Strategy Policy CP15 – Growth and Renaissance of Wokingham Town Centre

The purpose of this policy is to identify the different elements that would be appropriate in Wokingham Town Centre.

Commentary:

Although one commercial area of the district is proposed for a higher rate of growth than other areas it is not considered that this will have a disproportionate effect. It will not discriminate against particular groups.

Core Strategy CP16 - Employment Development

Policy CP16 seeks to protect existing employment sites for employment use. It also seeks proportionate mitigation is provided where there is impact on the demand for housing, labour, skills traffic and highways.

Commentary:

This policy seeks to ensure a continuing supply of jobs close to where people live. It will not discriminate against particular persons/groups.

Core Policy CP17 - Science Park

The purpose of this policy is to allocate additional land for a specific type of employment use to complement existing provision.

Commentary:

This policy will not discriminate against particular groups

Core Strategy Policy CP18 - Housing Delivery

The purpose of this policy is to identify how the Council intends to meet its housing requirements. It identifies the assumptions it has made.

Commentary:
This policy will not discriminate against particular groups.

Core Strategy CP19 Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location

The purpose of this policy is to identify how the Council meets its housing requirements in this particular geographical area.

Commentary:
This policy will not discriminate against particular groups

Core Strategy C20 South of the M4 Strategic Development Location

The purpose of this policy is to identify how the Council meets its housing requirements in this particular geographical area.

Commentary:
This policy will not discriminate against particular groups

Core Strategy CP21 North Wokingham Strategic Development Location

The purpose of this policy is to identify how the Council meets its housing requirements in this particular geographical area.

Commentary:
This policy will not discriminate against particular groups

Core Strategy CP22 South Wokingham Strategic Development Location

The purpose of this policy is to identify how the Council meets its housing requirements in this particular geographical area.

Commentary:
This policy will not discriminate against particular groups

Appendix 1 Supporting Information

Table 1 shows the total number of people within Wokingham Borough receiving Disability Living Allowance.

Table 2 shows the number of people within Wokingham Borough receiving Disability Living Allowance for 5 years or more.

The data is taken from Nomis (Department of Work and Pensions data) provided by the Office of National Statistics February 2007.

Nomis defines the mobility component for people who have had walking difficulties for at least 3 months and are likely to continue to have these difficulties for at least a further 6 months. Higher rate applies to people who are physically unable or virtually unable, to walk. Lower rate applies to people who can walk but need guidance or supervision from another person when walking out of doors on unfamiliar routes.

Table 1 Total Number of People Receiving Disability Living Allowance

| condition | any entitlement | higher care and higher mobility | higher care and lower mobility | middle care and higher mobility | middle care and lower mobility | lower care and higher mobility | lower care and lower mobility | higher mobility only | lower mobility only |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| any disabling condition | 2,970 | 530 | 190 | 380 | 580 | 250 | 170 | 350 | 80 |
| arthritis | 300 | 40 | ~ | 70 | 10 | 60 | ~ | 90 | ~ |
| muscle / joint / bone disease | 220 | 50 | ~ | 50 | 10 | 30 | ~ | 50 | ~ |
| blindness | 80 | ~ | ~ | ~ | 30 | ~ | 30 | ~ | 10 |
| stroke related | 110 | 30 | ~ | 30 | 10 | 20 | 10 | ~ | ~ |
| learning difficulty | 550 | 70 | 80 | 10 | 240 | ~ | 60 | ~ | 40 |
| other mental health causes | 490 | 60 | 70 | 10 | 210 | ~ | 60 | ~ | 20 |
| epilepsy | 50 | 10 | 10 | ~ | 20 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| deafness | 80 | ~ | ~ | ~ | 30 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| malignant disease | 50 | 30 | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| chest disease | 50 | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 20 | ~ |
| back ailments | 110 | 10 | ~ | 30 | ~ | 30 | ~ | 30 | ~ |
| heart disease | 60 | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| Parkinson's disease | 20 | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| diabetes mellitus | 90 | ~ | ~ | 10 | 10 | ~ | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| renal disorders | 20 | ~ | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| AIDS | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| skin disease | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| frailty | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| multiple sclerosis | 110 | 40 | ~ | 30 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| other disabling condition | 550 | 150 | 10 | 100 | 20 | 60 | 10 | 130 | ~ |
| Total | 5,930 | 1,050 | 370 | 760 | 1,150 | 500 | 350 | 710 | 160 |

Table 2 Number of People Receiving Disability Living Allowance for 5 years or more

| condition | any entitlement | higher care and higher mobility | higher care and lower mobility | middle care and higher mobility | middle care and lower mobility | lower care and higher mobility | lower care and lower mobility | higher mobility only | lower mobility only |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| any disabling condition | 1,970 | 420 | 110 | 250 | 390 | 160 | 110 | 250 | 60 |
| arthritis | 220 | 30 | ~ | 50 | ~ | 50 | ~ | 50 | ~ |
| muscle / joint / bone disease | 150 | 40 | ~ | 30 | 10 | 20 | ~ | 40 | ~ |
| blindness | 60 | ~ | ~ | ~ | 20 | ~ | 30 | ~ | 10 |
| stroke related | 70 | 20 | ~ | 20 | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| learning difficulty | 450 | 70 | 60 | 10 | 210 | ~ | 50 | ~ | 30 |
| other mental health causes | 250 | 60 | 30 | ~ | 100 | ~ | 20 | ~ | 10 |
| epilepsy | 30 | 10 | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| deafness | 50 | ~ | ~ | ~ | 20 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| malignant disease | 10 | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| chest disease | 20 | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| back ailments | 60 | 10 | ~ | 20 | ~ | 20 | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| heart disease | 30 | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| Parkinson's disease | 10 | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| diabetes mellitus | 50 | ~ | ~ | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| renal disorders | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| AIDS | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| skin disease | 10 | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| frailty | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| multiple sclerosis | 70 | 40 | ~ | 20 | ~ | 10 | ~ | 10 | ~ |
| other disabling condition | 410 | 120 | ~ | 80 | 10 | 40 | ~ | 120 | ~ |
| Total | 3,950 | 830 | 230 | 490 | 780 | 330 | 220 | 500 | 120 |