

# Basildon Borough Council

## Rapid Service Impact Assessment



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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose

- 1.1.1. The purpose of this paper is to set out Basildon Council's consideration of how their preferred spatial planning strategies and policies affect people with the protected characteristics<sup>1</sup> under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 aims to ensure that "...public authorities work to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in all their activities. This means that when developing policies or practices...public authorities must comply with their statutory equality duties. Public authorities must ensure that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness, and do not have a disproportionately negative effect on people because of one or more protected characteristic<sup>2</sup>."
- 1.1.2. To warrant that people with protected characteristics has been considered when drafting a policy, an assessment tool known as the Rapid Service Impact Assessment (RSIA) is carried out at an initial stage to identify adverse impact on protected characteristic. A Full Service Impact Assessment (FSIA) may follow depending on the findings of the RSIA. The Service Impact Assessment is essentially the same as the Government's Equality Impact Assessment.
- 1.1.3. The RSIA will be carried out as the policies are developed, so that conclusions and actions can be applied where necessary. The first spatial planning policy document to be produced is the Core Strategy, and subsequently the first to have an RSIA.

### 1.2. Core Strategy

- 1.2.1. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document is Basildon Borough's overarching spatial planning policy document setting out the Council's strategic policies to deliver its vision for the Borough to 2031. The Core Strategy aims to maximise the positive social, environmental and economic impacts of development for the benefit for the community as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race (including gypsy-travellers) and gender.

<sup>2</sup> Basildon Rapid Service Impact Assessment, 2011

### **1.3. Collecting the information**

- 1.3.1. To be able to consider whether the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is accessible to different people and communities, it is essential that the relevant information is gathered and the demographic profile of the Borough is understood.
- 1.3.2. A demographic profile has been provided by the Policy & Performance team, and also draws from engagement with stakeholders and the Core Strategy's evidence base.
- 1.3.3. The Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2011 documents the changing characteristics of the Borough, and the performance of the Development Plan and other strategic policy interventions such as town centre masterplans. It also documents any consultations that have occurred for the production of Local Development Framework which, in accordance with the LDF Statement of Community Involvement must include measures to engage with residents and stakeholders and not inadvertently discriminate against anyone with protected characteristics.
- 1.3.4. Additionally more information can be collated when the public, businesses, communities and stakeholders make comments at the consultation of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report that will begin on the 27 February 2012 for six weeks until 5pm on the 9 April 2012.

### **1.4. Further work**

- 1.4.1. As the Core Strategy is at Preferred Options stage, there is still further work to do before the Core Strategy is submitted to the Secretary of State and adopted by Basildon Council. Consequently, the equalities assessment will continue to be reviewed alongside the evolution of the Core Strategy DPD to make sure it remains effective and fit for purpose.
- 1.4.2. As the document evolves, it is envisaged that more engagement work with local people and stakeholders will be carried out. All this additional information will provide further evidence to evaluate whether the Core Strategy's policies have considered accessibility to different people and communities.

## 2. Structure of the assessment

### 2.1. The Rapid Service Impact Assessment Method

2.1.1. The Rapid Service Impact Assessment has been completed in line with the Government's Equality Impact Assessment. The RSIA requires eight parts to be completed as set out below.

- Part 1: Contact Information
- Part 2: Identifying impact and consultation
- Part 3: Human Rights
- Part 4: Outcomes
- Part 5: Documents Used / Comparing with Local Authorities
- Part 6: Monitoring
- Part 7: Signing Off
- Part 8: Rapid Service Impact Assessment Action Plan

2.1.2. The RSIA has focused on the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD as a whole rather than a detailed assessment of all the individuals and functions. When reference is made to the term policy, all policies are encompassed.

### 2.2. Part 1: Contact Information

2.2.1. Part 1 requires the ownership and commitment of the RSIA on the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD.

### 2.3. Part 2: Identifying impact and consultation

2.3.1. Under Part 2, the impacts of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD have to be assessed. It is the role of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD to deliver positive change and regeneration in areas where it is appropriate to the benefit of the whole community, meeting the needs of current and future generations. It will be assessed under part 2, if the Core strategy Preferred Options Report DPD is delivering this from an equality perspective.

## **2.4. Part 3: Human Rights**

- 2.4.1. Part 3 investigates whether the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD meets standards to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

## **2.5. Part 4: Outcomes**

- 2.5.1. Part 4 enquires about the necessary outcomes required. As the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD will be assessed as a whole, it is fundamental to make sure all policies are considered. This could mean that parts of the assessment do not have a negative impact (and may even have a positive impact), but as the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD is to be assessed as a whole it could be found to have negative outcome, and subject to a Full Service Impact Assessment<sup>3</sup>

## **2.6. Part 5: Documents Used / Comparing with Local Authorities**

- 2.6.1. Part 5 address the documents that have been used to inform the RSIA and how the policy compares with other Local Authorities. It is important to note that the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD is built on a robust evidence base and therefore a large quantity of documents will have been used to produce the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report DPD. The RSIA needs to have an understanding of most of the supporting documents to the Core Strategy DPD so that the RSIA can be carried out comprehensively.

## **2.7. Part 6: Monitoring**

- 2.7.1. Part 6 identifies the monitoring of the policy to ensure there is no negative impact in the future. If a negative impact has been identified, then the policy should be subject to consultation.

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<sup>3</sup> A Full Service Impact Assessment (FSIA) investigates negative impact to Human Rights in more detail than a Rapid Service Impact Assessment (RSIA). The FSIA requires justification for the negative policy or identification of ways to reduce the impact. The FSIA also ensures that the impact is monitored and puts in place a full action plan.

## **2.8. Part 7: Signing Off**

- 2.8.1. Part 7 requires the RSIA to be signed off by the Head of Service, and if an Action Plan is required (under part 8), then the Inclusion and Diversity Department within Basildon Council will need to approve RSIA too.

## **2.9. Part 8: Rapid Service Impact Assessment Action Plan**

- 2.9.1. The RSIA Action Plan if necessary is set out in part 8. The Action Plan lists the nature of any adverse impact (issues) and any recommendations for actions that are to be implemented as the result of the RSIA. The conclusions and recommendations of the report will be used to inform policy development prior to implementation.

### 3. The Rapid Service Impact Assessment

#### 3.1. Part 1: Contact Information

<b>Service Impact Assessment for:</b> Core Strategy Preferred Options Report	
<b>Name of lead assessing officer:</b> Sarah Neill	
<b>Department:</b> Forward Plans	
<b>New policy:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Existing policy:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Telephone:</b> 01268 294502	
<b>Date of assessment:</b> January 2012	<b>What date will the next review take place?</b> At the Core Strategy Submission Stage
<b>Has this been through an SIA Challenge?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

<b>1) Please give a brief description of the policy being assessed and who it is meant to benefit. (For the purpose of this document the term policy is used broadly to refer to policies, projects, services, strategies, practices, functions, procedures, plans and decisions. When completing this form, please note impact on staff as well as the community)</b>	The Core Strategy DPD is a spatial planning policy document that provides an overarching vision for development within the Borough in line with the priorities set out in the Borough's Community Strategy. The Core Strategy DPD applies to the whole Borough and has the potential to benefit anyone who lives or works in the area, not to mention those who choose to visit the area or invest in it in the future.
<b>2) Will this policy be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Some elements of the Core Strategy's evidence base have been produced by contractors, although the Core Strategy itself will be produced by the Planning Service of Basildon Council.
<b>b) If yes have you included Equality &amp; Human Rights considerations into the contract?</b>	Yes                      No
<b>3) Please give details of council officer involvement in this assessment. (E.g. names of officers consulted)</b>	Sarah Neill, Planning Officer Matthew Winslow, Senior Planning Officer Ndunge Kivuitu, Manager of Inclusion & Diversity

### 3.2. Part 2: Identifying Impact and Consultation

3.2.1. Which protected characteristics communities could be positively or negatively affected by this policy<sup>4</sup>?

#### a) Identifying Impact

Characteristic	Positively	Negatively	No Impact	Not Known	Consultation
Gender			X		
Gender Reassignment			X		
Religion or Belief			X		
Disabled People	X				
Age	X				
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual			X		
Race (include gypsies & travellers)	X				
Pregnancy & Maternity			X		
Marriage/civil partnerships			X		
Carers			X		
Community Cohesion	X				
Other (please state) Future generations		X			

<sup>4</sup> **NB:** Please place an X in the box which best describes the "overall" impact. It is possible for an assessment to identify that a positive policy could have some negative impacts and visa versa. When this is the case please identify both positive and negative impacts in Part 2 of this form. If the impact on a protected characteristic community is not known please state how you will gather evidence of any potential negative impacts in box in Part 2 section b (Consultation)

## b) Consultation

<b>Is there a need to collect further evidence or to involve or consult protected characteristics communities on the impact of the proposed policy<sup>5</sup>?</b>	<p>Consultation on the Core Strategy is a statutory requirement, and must be carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement Local Development Document 2011.</p> <p>A series of roadshows, focus groups and special events will be carried out during the consultation to try and encourage as many people as possible to consider the Core Strategy and respond with their views. Efforts have been made to encourage hard to reach groups to participate in the consultation, allowing a wider range of information to be collated.</p>
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### 3.3. Part 3: Human Rights

- 3.3.1. Human Rights are about our basic needs as human beings. They act as a set of minimum legal standards that need to be met to ensure individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Human Rights apply to all people regardless of whether individuals are identified with, or consider they belong to, any of the groups protected by equality legislation.
- 3.3.2. In considering human rights impact, think about where and how the policy, strategy, service, project or practice is delivered. Does it impact an individual's privacy, dignity or respect?
- 3.3.3. Human rights should be balanced. One person having the benefit of their human rights should not limit or prevent another person having theirs.

<b>Is there any positive or negative Human Rights impact?</b>	<p>The Core Strategy Preferred Option DPD aims to provide a range of housing, protect and enhance the environment, offer healthier lifestyles, whilst limiting our impact on the environment, etc. The total number of new dwellings to be provided over the plan period (2011-2031) is 6,500. This is not based on needs identified by population forecasts figures<sup>6</sup>, rather urban land supply which could mean that there are not enough dwellings to house future generation within the Borough, which would require them to move out.</p> <p>Whilst the Core Strategy Preferred Option has policies to offer a better quality of life to Borough's</p>
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<sup>5</sup> Example: if the impact on a community is not known what will be done to gather the information needed and when?

	<p>residents, building entirely within the existing urban area could mean that higher densities are necessary, open spaces are lost and the opportunity to deliver more facilities and improvements or new infrastructure may not be viable. Consequently, this could have a negative impact on the quality of life.</p> <p>Under the Preferred Option, the existing environment including the Green Belt will be protected and enhanced where possible.; This could allow people to enjoy the same open countryside and landscapes.</p>
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### 3.4. Part 4: Outcomes

a) Based on the findings (above) tick what applies.

Outcome 1: No need to change the policy. <b>No negative impact has been found.</b> No need to conduct Full SIA		
Outcome 2: Adjust the policy: <b>potential barriers (negative impact) to one or more protected characteristics have been found but you can easily adjust or amend policy to remove the barrier.</b> No need to conduct Full SIA but an Action Plan must be completed (section 8)		
Outcome 3: Continue with the policy: <b>even if negative impact has been found.</b> A Full SIA is required. <b>It must clearly set out the justification for continuing with the policy.</b> An Action Plan must be completed (section 8)	X	<p>The Preferred Options Core Strategy has set a target for 6,500 dwellings, which does not take into consideration population projections and consequently future generations. The 6,500 dwelling figure will be set out in the statutory Preferred Options Core Strategy consultation document.</p> <p>However, there are two other options which propose a higher number of dwellings and make better allowances for future generations. These other two options are not the Council's preferred approach to development as they require Green Belt release. The Preferred Options Core Strategy consultation document will provide information on the Preferred Option and the other two options, along with</p>

<sup>6</sup> Population projections consider a number of scenarios to forecast the level of natural growth and migration growth for the Borough.

	<p>supporting background documents, so that the consultation is comprehensive.</p> <p>The consultation will allow consultees to respond to whether they agree with the Council's preferred option or not.</p> <p>Another issue raised in the Rapid Service Impact Assessment is with regard to 'quality of life'. Whilst the policies in the Preferred Options Core Strategy seek to offer a good quality of life, confinement of development entirely within the urban area could compromise this. However, the ability to enjoy the existing open countryside and landscapes through the protection of the environment and the Green Belt could equally provide additional benefits to residents' way of life, i.e. healthier lifestyles.</p> <p>Additionally, the provision of new or enhanced infrastructure, regardless of need, could be limited as the contributions from Development towards the provision or improvements for the necessary infrastructure may not be obtained due to not enough development being planned for or viability of urban schemes.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Stop, change or remove policy: <b>Unlawful discrimination has been found and the policy should be removed, stopped or changed. Seek legal advice or speak to the Inclusion &amp; Diversity team.</b></p>	

### 3.5. Part 5: Documents Used and Comparing with other Local Authorities

<p><b>Please list any documents which have been used to inform this Rapid Service Impact Assessment.</b></p> <p><b>How does your policy compare to other Local Authorities?</b></p>	<p>The Core Strategy Preferred Options 2012, The Spatial Options paper, the topic papers (1-9), the technical papers (the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and its supporting documents, the Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment, the Habitats Regulations Assessment), the Statement of Community Involvement 2011, Planning Policy Statements, The Local Development Framework evidence base &amp; The Equality Act 2010.</p>
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	<p>All Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Core Strategy by law. Not all Core Strategies have had a SIA carried out on them and therefore it is hard to determine and compare. Basildon's Core Strategy Preferred Options Report is different from other authorities as the Core Strategy must be locally distinctive. However, the same broad issues, Housing, Environment, etc are addressed. But a direct comparison cannot be drawn from this.</p>
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### 3.6. Part 6: Monitoring

<p><b>How will the policy be monitored to ensure there is no negative impact in future?</b></p>	<p>Legally, the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report requires consultation to be carried out. This will happen from the 27 February for 6 weeks until 5pm, 9 April. All the responses will be taken into consideration when developing the Core Strategy for Submission stage and published in a Statement of Consultation, which will be made publically available.</p> <p>The consultation responses will also provide the necessary information to complete a Full Service Impact Assessment.</p> <p>Once the Submission document has been produced, this will be subject to another round of consultation. The Full Service Impact Assessment will go out alongside the Submission document. Once consultation for the Submission Core Strategy has finished, the document along with the consultation responses and supporting evidence will be submitted to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>The Secretary of State will hold an Examination in Public where people can make representations (if they have previously submitted comments on the Core Strategy). The Secretary of State will take all this information into consideration to determine whether the Core Strategy is sound. If the Core Strategy is found to be sound, then the Council can formally adopt the Core Strategy as a Development Plan Document of its Local Development Framework.</p> <p>The policies within the adopted Core Strategy will be monitored on at least an annual basis as required by the Localism Act 2011.</p>
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### 3.7. Part 7: Signing Off

<b>Approval of I &amp; D Department:</b> Ndunge Kivuitu	<b>Date:</b> 6 February 2012
<b>Signature of Head of Service:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 7/2/12
<b>Name of Head of Service:</b> GERRY LEVELLE	Head of E+CS.

If an action plan is required at this stage, the Inclusion & Diversity (I & D) Department approves the RSIA at this stage as well as the action plan prior to sign off by the Head of Service.

### 3.8. Part 8: Rapid Service Impact Assessment Action Plan

**Rapid Service Impact Assessment Action Plan:** List the nature of any adverse impact (issues) and recommendations (actions) that can be planned as a result of this assessment. This should include Community Cohesion findings if relevant.

**Department:** Planning Services

**Service Impact Assessment for :** Core Strategy Preferred Options

**Lead Assessing Officer:** Sarah Neill

Issues identified (Outcomes)	Actions Required	Deadline	Costs	Officer Responsible	Comments	Date Completed
Future generations	Consultation on the Preferred Options Core Strategy will require comments to be made on whether the preferred option is agreed with. The consultation period will run from 27 February 2012 for six weeks until 5pm, 9 April. This includes the provision for 6,500 dwellings, which even modest population forecasts would identify as an under provision. Once the consultation has finished, all comments will be analysed and taken into consideration when producing the next version of the Core Strategy (the Submission Core Strategy). This version and the consultation responses will be used for the Full Service Impact Assessment to be produced in October/November 2012.	Submission Core Strategy	c. £30k for consultation costs	Clive Simpson	Following consultation, the 6,500 dwellings may remain in the Submission Core Strategy. However, if necessary, a Full Service Impact Assessment will be published alongside the Submission Core Strategy, so that the impacts can be documented and taken into consideration.	The consultation will finish on the 9 April 2012

**Rapid Service Impact Assessment Action Plan:** List the nature of any adverse impact (issues) and recommendations (actions) that can be planned as a result of this assessment. This should include Community Cohesion findings if relevant.

**Department:** Planning Services

**Service Impact Assessment for :** Core Strategy Preferred Options

**Lead Assessing Officer:** Sarah Neill

Issues identified (Outcomes)	Actions Required	Deadline	Costs	Officer Responsible	Comments	Date Completed
Quality of life	As above, consultation will be carried out on the Core Strategy Preferred Options. The consultation period will run from 27 February 2012 for six weeks until 5pm, 9 April. Comments will be analysed and taken into consideration when producing the next version of the Core Strategy.	Submission Core Strategy	as above	Forward Plans		The consultation will finish on the 9 April 2012
Amount of infrastructure	As above, consultation will be carried out on the Preferred Options Core Strategy. The consultation period will run from 27 February 2012 for six weeks until 5pm, 9 April. Comments will be analysed and taken into consideration when producing the next version of the Core Strategy.	Submission Core Strategy	As above + c. £100k for supporting studies/ capacity modelling	Forward Plans, alongside partnership working with service providers for the Borough		The consultation will finish on the 9 April 2012

Approval of I & D department:



Date 7/02/12

Name of Head of Service:

GERRY LEVELE - Head of Environment & Community

Signature of Head of Service:



Date 7/2/12

## **4. What's Next?**

### **4.1. What happens to the RSIA now?**

- 4.1.1. The RSIA will be published alongside the Core Strategy Preferred Options and be made public at the consultation to start on the 27 February 2012 until 5pm on 9 April 2012.

### **4.2. What is the next stage?**

- 4.2.1. Once the Core Strategy Preferred Options consultation has finished, the responses will be analysed and published in a statement of consultation. The responses will be taken into consideration when producing the next version of the Core Strategy (the Submission Core Strategy). The Submission Core Strategy will be subject to consultation and a Full Service Impact Assessment will be carried out alongside.