



Darlington Local Plan Equality Impact Assessment

December 2020

1.0 Introduction

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is the principle tool we have available to help with a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, service or function whereby the diverse needs and requirements of individuals and communities are considered. It is undertaken when fulfilling the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which was created and came into force under the Equality Act 2010 (The Act). The duty must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The purpose of this EqIA is to analyse, anticipate and recommend ways to avoid any discriminatory or negative impacts within Darlington’s Local Plan policies on different groups of people in the community and how the needs of such groups have been taken into account in relation to the development of policies.

Darlington has a diverse community and the Council is committed to serving every member of the community to the best of its ability by monitoring the way the council works and supporting employees to fulfil their legal responsibility for equality. This will help address disadvantages that may impact on members of the community for any reason, but particularly because of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race/Ethnicity
- Religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

2 Equality Impact Assessment

Like the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, the EqIA is an iterative process with several stage:

Table 1: The Equality Impact Assessment Process

Stage 1: Screening	Identify the purpose and aims of the policy/plan to be assessed and the need and scope for an EqIA.
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Stage 2: Scoping the Assessment	Consideration of policy function
Stage 3: Consideration of data and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of existing data • Consideration of mitigation or methods to further promote equality; • Consultation and further research; • Repetition of previous stages as necessary.
Stage 4: Assessment	Assess the impact or effects of the policy on equality target groups. Decide when further assessment is necessary.
Stage 5: Reviewing and scrutinising the impact	Outline future arrangements for monitoring and review

3. The Borough and the People of Darlington

Darlington covers an area of 75.9 square miles and is the most westerly of the five unitary authorities which make up the Tees Valley sub region. The market town of Darlington is the main settlement and outside the urban area there are three larger villages, Heighington, Middleton St George/Middleton One Tow and Hurworth/Hurworth Place. The remainder of the area consists of villages and open countryside.

The 2017 ONS mid-year population estimates for Darlington was 106,300, which is estimated to increase by 1.2% to 107,600 by 2027.

Age and Sex (gender)

Table 2: Population Figures (2017)

Population	Darlington	North East	England & Wales
All Ages	106,347	2,644,727	58,744,595
Males	51,725	1,297,924	29,021,256
Females	54,622	1,346,803	29,723,342

Disability

2011 Census information shows 19.6% of the population of Darlington have a limiting long term illness, this is a fall from the 20.4% 2001 census but is higher than the national average of 17.9% for England and Wales.

Gender Re-assignment and Sexual Orientation

While there is very little information available regarding gender reassignment and sexual orientation the following provides an indication of the UK and local position.

The figures are diverse when looking at the Trans community in the UK, where estimates range from 65,000 (Johnson, 2001) to 300,000 (GIRES, 2008) (Source: ONS, 2009, Trans Data Position Paper). Locally, GADD advise that they have in excess of 20 Trans people awaiting gender service access with the NHS alone.

2% of the UK population ages 16 and over identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in 2016. 4.1% of 16-24 year olds in the UK identified themselves as LGB compared with 0.7% of the population aged 65 and over. (*Office for National Statistics, 2016, Sexual Identity, UK: 2016 Statistical Bulletin*).

However, these figures only demonstrate the percentage of the population are prepared to divulge their sexual preference to a cold calling stranger on the doorstep and local GADD (Gay Advice Darlington/Durham) further point out that the Department of Health and the Home Office use a figure of 6% to 7% of the population as an estimate. A recent Public Health England report, "Producing modelled estimates of the size of the lesbian, gay and bisexual population of England" analysed 15 surveys representing the general adult population in England and calculated a weighted estimate of people identifying as LGB or 'other' as 2.5%, with an upper limit of 5.89% identified when including all respondents selecting 'prefer not to say', 'don't know' or giving no answer were taken into account i.e. assuming all of those respondents were LGB.

The figure of 2.5% implies approximately 2,640 adults in Darlington would identify themselves as LGB.

Race/Ethnicity

Table 3: Racial Profile

Racial Profile	2001 Census		2011 Census	
	Darlington	England	Darlington	England
White	97.86%	90.92%	96.2%	85.5%
Chinese/Other ethnic group	0.38%	0.89%	0.2%	1%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	0.61%	1.31%	1%	2.2%
Asian/Asian British	0.93%	4.57%	2%	7.7%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.22%	2.3%	0.3%	3.4%

2011 Census: the proportion of Darlington residents identifying as Gypsy or Irish Traveller (Roma are treated as an 'other' ethnic group by the census) equates to 0.3% of the population.

Religion and Belief

Darlington has higher percentage (67.37%) of people who identify themselves as Christian than in England (59.38%) but is similar to the results for the North East (67.52%). The next largest religion in Darlington is Muslim at 0.92% of the population.

Table 4: Religion or Belief

Religion/Belief	Number	Darlington %	England %
Christian	71,122	67.37%	59.38%
Buddhist	307	0.29%	0.45%
Hindu	317	0.30%	1.52%
Jewish	45	0.04%	49%
Muslim	971	0.92%	5.02%
Sikh	361	0.34%	0.79%
Other religion	310	0.29%	0.43%
No religion	25,415	24.08%	24.74%
Religion not stated	6,716	6.36%	7.18%

Pregnancy and Maternity

In 2015 there were 1,217 live births (including multiple births) in Darlington: 631 male and 586 female. This equates to a Crude Live Birth Rate of 11.5 births per 1,000 population (all persons and all ages).

There 1,208 registered maternities in 2015, a maternity rate of 62.8 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44. A maternity is a pregnancy resulting in the birth of one or more children, including stillbirths.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Table 5: Census 2011 Marriage Summary Statistics

Partnerships	Number
All Marriages	577
Civil Marriages	466
Religious Marriages	111

4. Darlington Local Plan

The (DRAFT) Local Plan (<https://microsites.darlington.gov.uk/local-plan/>) is a framework of policies and proposals for using and developing land throughout the Borough of Darlington. The policies and proposals have been prepared with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and sub-regional and local strategies, including the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan, One Darlington; Perfectly Placed, the Darlington Economic Strategy, Darlington Housing Strategy, Darlington Local Transport Plan 3 and the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy.

A Strategic Framework was established for development in the Borough which sets out the vision, aims and objectives and guided the detail of the Local Plan.

Vision:

The vision for the Local Plan reflects comments made during the Strategic Issues and Scoping consultation process and sets out what the Plan is seeking to achieve.

'In 2036, Darlington Borough will have maintained its identity as a cohesive historic market town situated amongst the countryside and villages, whilst developing its reputation for ingenuity and its status as an economic driver in the Tees Valley. Its coherent community, natural and historic environment will continue to be cherished protected and celebrated. The opportunities available in Darlington and its links with other centres will make the Borough an attractive place for both residential and commercial investment, with the Borough's needs for housing, jobs and other development being met, supported by new and improved infrastructure and community facilities. Together with excellent national and regional connectivity and accessibility, these characteristics will mean Darlington continues to thrive and be a great place to live, work and invest.'

Overarching Aims:

- Deliver sustainable development to meet the Borough's needs through a cohesive plan which makes the best use of land and resources
- Protect and enhance the quality of Darlington's built, natural and historic environment, and to use it positively to create great places
- Deliver new development that is capable of facilitating local or strategic infrastructure
- Contribute to the satisfaction, fulfilment, health and wellbeing of the population of the Borough

Specific Aims and Objectives:

1. Facilitating Economic Growth – facilitate sustainable economic growth of 7,000 new jobs within the borough
2. Meeting Housing Needs – enable the development of at least 10,000 new homes in order to meet the housing needs and aspirations of those living and working in the borough
3. A Well-Connected Borough – to capitalise on Darlington's excellent existing connections to the national strategic transport network and seek improvements to regional connectivity across the borough. New development that supports delivery of key infrastructure and a sustainable pattern for growth will be supported.
4. Create Cohesive, Proud and Healthy Communities – create and support cohesive communities through good place-making to achieve lively, well located and distinctive places with an increased sense of civic pride.
5. Protect and Enhance the Countryside and Natural Environment – maintain and enhance the biodiversity, character and appearance of the countryside and wildlife habitats.

6. Responding to Climate change and Reducing Energy Consumption – support the continued move towards a low carbon community by encouraging efficient use of resources, good design and well-located development, whilst increasing resilience to impacts from climate change.

The Plan Policies fall under the following themes:

- Sustainable Development
- Settlement Hierarchy
- Design and Construction
- Housing
- Employment for Economic Growth
- Town Centre and Retail
- Environment
- Transport and Infrastructure

5. Local Plan Consultation and Engagement

Extensive consultation and engagement has been carried out in the course of writing and developing the Local Plan allowing the Plan to be refined and amended following feedback received at each of the consultation stages (<https://microsites.darlington.gov.uk/local-plan/consultations/>). This has provided an opportunity for the local community and interested groups to influence the Plan before the Council produces the Proposed Submission Local Plan document that the authority considers ready for examination. The Engagement Plan outlines how the Council engaged with communities and Stakeholders and the methods undertaken throughout the process which has adhered to requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

During the summer of 2016 consultation was undertaken on the initial ideas for the Local Plan. The consultation asked key questions to help guide thinking and provide information on a number of topic areas. This formed the Issues and Scoping Consultation which set out initial thoughts on the scope of the new Local Plan and the planning issues needing to be addressed.

Following on from this, the Council engaged with all stakeholders to develop the strategic framework into deliverable plans and policies, working with landowners, developers and local residents developing a detailed plan which:

- Is the most sustainable plan for the Borough
- Will meet the Borough's development needs in full
- Is strategic and cohesive
- Can be delivered over the next 15 to 20 years
- Works with the plans of our neighbouring Boroughs

In the summer of 2020, the final consultation stage was undertaken whereby the Council invited comments, known as representation, on the Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) document. The consultation period ran from Thursday 6 August for six weeks. During the six-week representation period a copy of the Proposed submission Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal was made available for inspection on the Council's consultation portal:

<https://darlington-consult.objective.co.uk/portal>

The supporting evidence documents were available for inspection online at:

<https://microsites.darlington.gov.uk/local-plan/document-library/>

Due to restrictions of COVID-19 paper copies of both documents were made available, which could be viewed by appointment only, by contacting the Planning Policy team either by telephone or e-mail. Appointments could be booked up to 24 hours before between the hours of 10am and 15:00pm at the Town Hall whereby an hour slot (or a longer slot, or additional slots at a different time, could be booked if necessary) in a COVID-19 secure room was allocated.

All stakeholders and residents were given the opportunity to make comments on the plan before it went to the Government for independent examination in December 2020. Representations made during the six-week period will be considered in full by the Planning Inspector at the examination stage. A summary of the main issues raised during the 2018 consultation stage and how they have been considered will also be sent to the Planning Inspector.

Following on from this there will be a Public Examination of the Local Plan in May 2021 and a request approval from Cabinet will be made in August/September 2021 whereby the Council will then adopt the Local Plan.

6. Equality Impact Assessment on the Local Plan Policies

The assessment of the Local Plan policies against the key characteristics of the equality strands recognised in the report did not indicate negative impacts.

The following questions have been considered in order to evaluate the various equality groups.

Gender – is there any concern that this policy could cause a differential impact on the grounds of gender (including men, women and transgender people)?

Race – is there any concern that this policy could cause a differential impact on the grounds of race (all ethnic groups recognised under the Race Relations Act including Asian, Black, East Asian and white minority groups, including Eastern Europeans, Irish and Gypsy and Travellers)?

Disability – are there any concerns that this policy could cause a differential impact on the grounds of disability (all forms of disability recognised under the Disability Discrimination Act including sensory impairment, mental health, learning disabilities, mobility related conditions, conditions such as heart disease and asthma)?

Age – is there any concern that his policy could cause differential impact on the grounds of age (all age groups)?

Sexual Orientation – is there any concern that this policy could cause differential impact on the grounds of sexuality (including heterosexual, gay, lesbian and bisexual people)?

Religion or Belief – is there any concern that this policy could cause differential impact on the grounds of religion or faith (All faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and non-religious beliefs such as Humanism)?

Table 6: Assessment

How will the activity affect people	No Impact	Positive impact	Negative impact	
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protected characteristics?				Why will it have this effect?
Age		X		<p>The Local Plan intends having a positive impact on all groups in society and will facilitate social inclusion across the borough in terms of housing choice and quality, sports provisions, leisure facilities and employment opportunities. The Plan intends to serve both the existing and new population into the area and will include facilities that serve all ages.</p> <p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DC2: Health and Wellbeing • DC5: Skills and Training • H4: Housing Mix • H5: Affordable Housing • E1: Safeguarding Existing Employment Opportunities • ENV4: Green Infrastructure • ENV9: Outdoor Sports Facilities • IN2: Improving Access and Accessibility • IN3: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans • IN4: Parking Provision Including Electric Vehicle Charging • IN10: Supporting the Delivery of the Community and Social Infrastructure
Disability (Mobility Impairment, Visual impairment, Hearing impairment, Learning Disability, Mental Health, Long Term Limiting Illness, Multiple Impairments, Other – Specify)		X		<p>The Local Plan intends to facilitate social inclusion and people with disabilities in all areas of life from housing choice, sports and athletics provisions, leisure facilities and employment opportunities. The Plan intends to serve both the existing and new population into the area and will include facilities that serve all ages and abilities.</p> <p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DC2: Health and Wellbeing • DC5: Skills and Training • H1: housing Requirement • H2: Housing Allocations • H4: Housing Mix • H5: Affordable Housing • E1: Safeguarding Existing Employment Opportunities • ENV4: Green Infrastructure • ENV6: Local Green Space • ENV9: Outdoor Sports Facilities • IN2: Improving Access and Accessibility • IN4: Parking Provisions including Electric Vehicle Charging

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IN10: Supporting the Delivery of Community and Social Infrastructure
Sex (Gender)		X		It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.
Race		X		<p>It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.</p> <p>The Council will seek to address the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs over the plan period as identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (2017).</p> <p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H9: Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation
Gender Reassignment		X		It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.
Sexual Orientation		X		It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.
Religion or belief		X		It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.
Pregnancy or maternity		X		It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.
Marriage or civil partnership		X		It is intended that the Local Plan will facilitate social inclusion and have a positive impact on all groups in society.
How will the activity affect people who:	No impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Why will it have this effect? (Refer to evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc)
Live in a rural location?		X		The Local Plan is intended to have a positive impact on all groups in society including those living and working within rural locations:

				<p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D5: Skills and Training • SH1: Settlement Hierarchy • H6: Affordable Housing • H7: Residential Development in the Countryside • E1: Safeguarding Existing Employment Opportunities • E2: Promotion of New Employment Opportunities • E4: Economic Development in the Open Countryside • IN1: Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network • IN2: Improving Access and Accessibility • IN3: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans • IN10: Supporting the Delivery of Community and Social Infrastructure
Are carers?		X		<p>The Local Plan is intended to have a positive impact on all groups in society.</p>
Are on a low income?		X		<p>The Local Plan is intended to have a positive impact on all groups in society and intends to meet the needs of people who are not able to access the general housing market, the provision of affordable housing will be expected in residential development schemes of 11 or more dwellings.</p> <p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D5: Skills and Training • H4: Housing Mix • H5: Affordable Housing • H7: Residential Development in the Countryside • E1: Safeguarding Existing Employment Opportunities • E2: Promotion of New Employment Opportunities • E4: Economic Development in the Open Countryside • IN1: Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network • IN2: Improving Access and Accessibility • IN3: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans • IN10: Supporting the Delivery of Community and Social Infrastructure • H6: Rural Exceptions

7. Commitment to Equalities

Making Darlington a fairer place is at the heart of what the Council does, the Darlington Borough Council Equality Policy 2018 – 2022 sets out the Council's approach to fulfilling its duty under the Equality Act 2010 and is an integral part of the Council's wider commitment to building fairer, inclusive communities.

The Council is committed to the One Darlington principle established in the Sustainable Community Strategy, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed which requires the Council to have regard to the needs of everyone in the community. Much of the Council's work, together with its partners is focused on narrowing the gaps in health, attainment, prosperity and quality of life between more vulnerable and disadvantaged people and the Darlington community as a whole and to ensure that groups of people at risk of disadvantage and discrimination are able to access and benefit from services and facilities fairly.