



LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

July 2009

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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| Name of Service Area Assessed | N/A |
| Name of Employment Area Assessed | N/A |
| Title of plan, policy and/or procedure being assessed, with date | Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, May 2009 |
| Staff conducting assessment, including contact details | Oliver Jefferson (oliver.jefferson@islington.gov.uk x1869) |
| Date of assessment | 07/05/2009 |
| Reason for assessment | New policy document |

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| Aims of the Policy/Strategy/Plan under Impact Assessment | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide developers, the community and other stakeholders with a clear indication of likely planning obligations to be sought on new major development in the Borough • To establish the policy background and the processes involved in securing planning obligations | |
| Main Stakeholders/Beneficiaries | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers, organisations and people applying for planning permission • People that live, work and visit Islington • Organisations responsible for delivering infrastructure / facilities / services operating within the Borough, such as Transport for London, Primary Care Trusts and community organisations • London Borough of Islington | |

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This policy document is considered neutral in terms of its impact upon equalities issues in the Borough; however, the implementation of the document is considered likely to have positive equalities implications, as detailed in the following discussion.

The document itself establishes the range of planning obligations that the Council will seek to negotiate in relation to planning applications for new developments, and includes a set of standard formulae to provide a reasonable degree of certainty to developers. The range of obligations sought are intended to mitigate the impact of developments upon the site locality, and include payments or non-financial obligations in relation to range of matters, including transport and public realm, open space, sport and recreation, employment training and local procurement, community provision, children and young people's play and informal recreation, and construction practice, though this list is not exhaustive.

The processes of seeking planning obligations in these areas is not related specifically to the end-users / beneficiaries of these obligations, but is predominantly related to the impact of the proposed development, in-line with central Government Circular 05/2005 and planning policies at a local, regional and national level. As such, the policy document itself is not considered likely to have any overt equalities impacts.

The implementation of the policy is likely to require a consideration of equalities issues, and there is a paragraph within the document, which provides a statement of intent in relation to compliance with relevant equalities policy and legislation. It is considered that the policy is likely to have a positive impact upon all groups within society though in addition it is likely that works or other obligations provided as a result of S106 obligations will be likely to benefit a number of specific groups in society as well as benefitting the population as a whole. Specific impacts are considered in more detail below.

The allocation of funding towards specific projects is likely to have the most significant potential to impact upon particular groups within society. It is considered that the process of allocation will be responsive to local needs - the process of allocations will be based upon infrastructure plans, strategies and other relevant documents, and will involve consultation with elected Members. Comments received from members of the public through consultation on planning applications will also be taken into account. The required Annual Monitoring report will detail public involvement in the process.

The following paragraph is in the SPD, under the section 'Implementation':

'The impact of projects funded through S106 contributions upon equality will be considered in accordance with the Council's equality and diversity policy 'Dignity For All'. The organisations involved in the implementation of projects will be required to comply with relevant equalities policy detailed within the 'Dignity For All'. This is available at the following link: http://www.islington.gov.uk/DownloadableDocuments/CommunityandLiving/Pdf/dignityforall_booklet.pdf

There is a requirement for annual monitoring of the document and its impacts, which may allow for consideration of the effects of the policy implementation upon equalities issues.

The following section details the main areas in which obligations are likely to be sought, according to the policy document, and discusses potential equalities impacts associated with the implementation of this policy.

Transport and Public Realm

Contributions may be put towards the implementation of the Islington Sustainable Transport Strategy, where relevant to the specific development, which identifies a number of programmes and measures to manage, maintain and improve the transport infrastructure in the borough. The use of planning obligations is intended to help to ensure that new development can be accommodated without any unsustainable transport impacts.

The Sustainable Transport Strategy was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and therefore the implementation of this strategy is not considered to raise concerns with respect to equality issues. The strategy identifies a broad range of works that are intended to be undertaken in the Borough to improve the transport infrastructure and to make transport more accessible – these are likely to benefit all groups, but particularly those with mobility problems and those more reliant on public transport (which may include poorer groups).

Works provided or funded through planning obligations may include highways reinstatement, public realm and streetscape improvements, or other issues related to the development. These are considered likely to have a positive impact on all groups, through improvements to the quality and accessibility of the public realm, but particularly for disabled and elderly people, because improvements will be required to comply with relevant legislation, such as the DDA, and are likely to include the replacement of

broken paving, the installation of new or improved pedestrian crossing points (including accessibility measures such as tactile paving), better road junction layouts thereby increasing user safety, and so forth.

There will also normally be a requirement for site-specific transport obligations, including highways and footways reinstatement, site-specific works to enable the development to take place (such as alterations to site access) and accessible parking provision. There is also a requirement for a Travel Plan with some schemes, subject to the criteria set-out within the SPD, and for the removal of residents' eligibility to apply for a parking permit (not including disabled badge holders).

It is considered that reinstatement works and junction alterations will have a positive impact on accessibility and safety, to the benefit of all groups, but particularly those with mobility problems, and that the provision of accessible parking spaces will benefit mainly those with accessibility problems. Accessible parking spaces could be considered to disadvantage other road users through taking up spaces for specific groups; however, there is a greater need for parking spaces for those with mobility problems. Changes to Traffic Management Orders, that govern on-street parking, would in any case be subject to consultation. Where accessible parking provision is not an option, funding may be used for alternative accessible transport measures. Travel Plans help to predict, manage and control to the traffic impacts of a new development, with a view to promoting sustainable transport methods, and should benefit all groups through lessening the impact of new development upon transport infrastructure, whilst providing different means by which people can travel to and from the development site. A restriction on residents applying for parking permits, or an out-right ban, will benefit all groups in the population, due to positive impacts on traffic levels and pollution – disabled persons would still be able to apply for permits where they are available.

Public Open Space

Where developments do not meet the minimum open space requirements set out in the Development Plan, it is necessary for obligations to be entered into in order to address these shortfalls and to make this aspect of the proposal acceptable in planning terms.

Islington has the second-lowest density of green space of all Local Authorities in England, and in the absence of any opportunity for significant on-site provision, a financial contribution is required.

This contribution will be put towards improvements to local open spaces, in order to enable the increased population associated with the development to be accommodated without the quality of the open space or its utility to members of the public being reduced. The proposal is likely to benefit all groups within the Borough, through improvements to these public amenities. In particular, improved parks are likely to be more accessible to disabled and elderly people, safer for children to use (in terms of the design of play equipment) and safer for those more at risk of crime, such as women and the elderly, due to better design (designing out crime).

Sport and Recreation

A contribution towards the provision of local sports and recreation facilities is justified within the SPD, and the level of provision required is based on the Islington resident standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment, with the costs of providing facilities being based upon guidance from Sport England.

This contribution will be used to improve sport, recreation and leisure facilities within the Borough, and may include improvement to leisure centres, for example. The implementation of this aspect of the policy document is likely to benefit all groups in the community, as facilities will be publically available. It is likely that those on lower incomes may benefit more than wealthier groups, where the latter may have a higher up-take of private health facilities. In addition, depending upon the specific projects funded or undertaken, improvements may particularly benefit certain groups. For example, for those with some mobility problems, such as the elderly or disabled, improved provision of swimming pool facilities may be of particular benefit, due to the low-impact nature of the exercise permitted. Equally, however, those involved in sport may be more likely to be of a younger age. In any case, such facilities will be publically accessible to all groups in society, and any improvements or redevelopments will be required to comply with relevant equality policies and legislation.

Employment, Training and Local Procurement

The policy document includes provision for negotiation an obligation for the developer to provide work placements for local people during construction of the development (or to provide a financial contribution in lieu, to be put towards local training and employment initiatives), and to provide a financial contribution towards employment and training to aid local people in gaining access to new jobs associated with the operation of a new development post-construction (for commercial / employment

developments). There is also a Code of Local Procurement, which developers are required to comply with, to ensure that the procurement of goods and services through the construction phase allows for opportunities for local businesses to tender for these.

It is considered that this aspect of the policy is likely to have positive equalities benefits for groups with a higher than average incidence of unemployment, such as disabled people and people from BME groups, though the provision is intended to provide opportunities for all residents in the Borough who are not in employment.

Community Provision

A financial contribution is normally required for the provision of community facilities, or for improvements to community facilities. These provide spaces for groups to meet and access a range of important local services. Community facilities may include a broad range, such as libraries, nurseries and other childcare provision, community halls and centres, meeting rooms, places of worship, public toilets and facilities for cyclists. It is considered that the policy document itself does not have any equalities impacts in this regard; however, specific community facilities may be targeted towards specific groups. The process of allocating funds towards community groups will, as with any other proposed project bid under the other headings discussed, be subject to consultation with various internal sections of the Council, and with locally elected Members. The involvement of Members is intended to ensure a democratic and transparent approach, and it is considered that this is the best approach to ensure that no one group is unfairly prioritised above another in allocating funding.

Children and young people's play and informal recreation

In lieu of sufficient on-site provision of facilities, a financial contribution will be required, which will be put towards improvements to nearby facilities. This policy will benefit children and young people, and also those responsible for looking after children and young people. The policy may also be considered to have wider / longer-term societal benefits, which will benefit all groups through the beneficial effect of providing constructive ways for children and young people to spend their time. It is not considered that there are any negative equalities impacts associated with providing facilities for the benefit of a specific group in this instance.

Construction Practice

Developers will be required to comply with the Council's Code of Construction Practice, which covers issues such as construction hours, noise and dust pollution, construction traffic management and so forth. It is not considered that this will have any particular equalities impacts, rather that the policy will benefit all those living close to a building site subject to such an obligation.