

DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

The purpose of this form is to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for quarterly consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise and will be referenced in the biannual review of progress made to the Minister and in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission.

Further advice on completion of this form and the screening process including relevant contact information can be accessed via the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Intranet site.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

When considering the impact of this policy you should also consider if there would be any Human Rights implications. Guidance is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/human-rights-and-public-authorities>

Should this be appropriate you will need to complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment. A template is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>

Don't forget to Rural Proof.

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step-by-step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Incorporating online / digital engagement into the pre-application community consultation process.

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised Policy

What is it trying to achieve? (Intended aims/outcomes)

The overall objective is to improve the pre-application community consultation (PACC) process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

No

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

Who owns and who implements the policy?

DfI own the policy.

Prospective applicants seeking planning permission implement the policy.

Background

Section 27 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act) introduced a requirement to undertake PACC before submitting a planning application for major development. Major development is defined in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015¹ (the Development Management Regulations).

Section 27 also requires prospective applicants to prepare and submit a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) outlining their details, information on the proposed major development, and its location. The Development Management Regulations also require the PAN to outline the nature and extent of community consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake prior to submitting a planning application, which must include at least one public event and a corresponding newspaper advert. The PAN must be submitted to the council or Department at least 12 weeks prior to submitting the planning application.

In practice, a person seeking planning permission for major development is required to engage with the community, where the proposed development will be located, on the draft development proposal, in advance of submitting a planning application. The aim is to allow local communities an opportunity to view and comment on development proposals in their area and provide opportunities to engage with the prospective applicant about potential issues before a formal planning application is submitted. The intention is to add value and improve the quality of the development proposals, by addressing community issues, misunderstandings, and mitigate potential negative impacts at an early stage in the development process.

Prospective applicants must inform the council or Department on how they intend to consult with the public, confirming when and where this consultation will take place. As a minimum, this consultation should include at least one public event (in-person), which must be advertised beforehand in a local newspaper. In practice, the applicant arranges to display the draft proposals in an accessible public venue, such as a community centre within the local area on an arranged date and time. The information displayed usually

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2015/71/contents/made>

consists of text explaining the proposal and drawings outlining a graphic vision of what is planned.

Details of the venue, opening times, and proposed development are published in local newspapers, with an open invite for members of the public to come along and view the displayed information. The applicant and their design team attend the event, meet the public to discuss queries and record feedback on the draft proposals. This feedback is important in identifying any potential issues, misunderstandings, and possible negative impacts, and is analysed by the prospective applicant following the public event.

However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, DfI temporarily removed the requirement to hold the in-person public event in line with public health guidance. In response, prospective applicants diversified their consultation methods and made use of digital /online methods including web/online based engagement (such as webinars, online Zoom / MS Teams web events) and increased their use of social media to raise awareness of development proposals and invite feedback from local communities.

Following the pandemic, feedback received as part of the Review of the Implementation of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (24 of 59 responses - 40.6%) and the Planning Engagement Partnership (PEP) indicated that the introduction of the digital / online options during the PACC process were a positive addition to community engagement. It was felt that during the pandemic the online display of development proposals yielded numerous benefits, including:

- widening the sphere of community engagement by raising awareness of the proposals to a wider geographical audience;
- altering the profile of those getting involved in planning to a younger demographic;
- enhancing access to proposals for major development;
- improving accessibility for those wishing to feedback comments to an applicant on a development proposal; and
- using social media as a tool for signposting consultations and development proposals.

The Department acknowledged this and committed to bringing forward proposals that provide for both in-person and online/digital public engagement as part of the PACC process.

Following detailed consideration, the Department is proposing two potential options for incorporating digital / online engagement into the PACC process

and is seeking views and feedback from the public and stakeholders on these. In summary, the two options are:

Option 1

This option retains the requirement for an in-person public event for all major development. However, it would introduce an additional requirement for prospective applicants to display information for all major developments on a website for a specified period, during the pre-application phase.

A link to the website would be included on the newspaper notice, and it would display information on the proposal and drawings outlining graphical illustrations of the development. The website would also have the facility to accept comments and feedback online and would provide information on how to contact the applicant in relation to queries.

It is anticipated that the date of the in-person public event would coincide with the live website. This would enable members of the public to view and consider the proposals online, with the option of attending the public event and engaging with the applicant to provide comments in person.

Option 2

This option retains the requirement for a public event for all major development, however, proposes to introduce an element of flexibility enabling it to be facilitated either as:

- a) an *in-person consultation event* held in the locality of the proposed development; or
- b) an *online consultation event*, where members of the public can attend virtually to engage with the applicant and provide comments on the proposed development.

In practice, the prospective applicant would propose the type of public event it believes to be the most appropriate based on the detail of the proposed development and its site location, and agreement would be sought from the council or Department as part of the PAN process.

Similar to Option 1, this option seeks to introduce an additional requirement for prospective applicants to display information for all major developments on a website for a specified period, during the pre-application phase. A link to the website would be included on the newspaper notice, and it would display information on the proposal and drawings outlining graphical illustrations of the development. The website would also have the facility to accept comments and feedback online and would provide information on how to contact the applicant in relation to queries.

It is anticipated that the date of the in-person public event would coincide with the live website. This would enable members of the public to view and consider the proposals online, with the option of attending the public event and engaging with the applicant to provide comments in person.

With both options, the council or Department can still request further consultation with the community, where they deem it necessary to do so.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Legislative:

Amendments will be required to regulation 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Main stakeholders affected.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

Staff: Yes

Service users: Yes

Other public sector organisations: Yes

Voluntary/community/trade unions: Yes

Others (Please specify): Yes

- Members of the public
- Prospective applicants / developers
- Planning Consultants, Architects, and Legal profession

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

• **What are they?**

➤ None

- **Who owns them?**

- N/A

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Religious belief evidence / information:

The 2021 Census provides a religious breakdown of the NI population by Age as well as different geographic areas i.e., Electoral Area, Health Trust etc. The 2021 Census finds that of the total NI population, 42.3% are from a Catholic background, 37.3% are from a Protestant background and 20.3% were classified as Other/ No religion/ Not stated.

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

The table below indicates the number of planning applications where PACC would have taken place for years 2018-2023.

Year	Total Number of Applications	Pre-Application Community Consultation (PACC) Required		
		Local	Major	Regionally Significant (S.26)
2022/2023	11,217	11,072	144	1
2021/2022	13,600	13,454	145	1
2020/2021	12,833	12,709	123	1

2019/2020	12,207	12,058	149	-
2018/2019	12,541	12,404	137	-

Political Opinion evidence / information:

The 2021 Census provides a national identity breakdown of the NI population. The 2021 Census finds that of the total NI population, 31.9% identified themselves as British Only, 29.1% identified as Irish Only, 19.8% identified as Northern Irish only and 19.2% identified within more than one of these categories, or as Other.

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

See table above.

Racial Group evidence / information:

The 2021 Census provides an ethnicity breakdown of the NI population. The 2021 Census finds that of the total NI population, 96.5% are from a white ethnic group, with all other ethnic groups making up 3.5% of the NI population.

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

See table above.

Age evidence / information:

Although the planning system does not request or hold information on age, the 2021 Census finds the NI population aged 18 years old or over to be 1,468,081 as of March 2021.

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process. It may also encourage people of a younger demographic to become more involved with planning and inspire greater interest in developments within their local area and beyond.

See table above.

Marital Status evidence / information:

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulation 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

See table above.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

See table above.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

See table above.

Disability evidence / information:

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process. Enhanced use of online methods may also encourage people who fall into this category to become more engaged with the planning process and promote greater awareness of developments within their local area and beyond.

See table above.

Dependants evidence / information:

Although the planning system does not request or hold information on age, the 2021 Census finds the NI population aged 18 years old or over to be 1,468,081 as of March 2021.

While there is no robust planning information in Northern Ireland on this S75 group, it is likely that those who fall into this group will benefit from the proposed amendments to regulations 4 and 5 in The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

These changes will improve the pre-application consultation process, by encouraging methods which will increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to

participate in the pre-planning process. Enhanced use of online methods may also encourage people who fall into this category, for example those with caring responsibilities, to become more engaged with the planning process and promote greater awareness of developments within their local area and beyond.

See table above.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

The proposed revisions to the current PACC requirements are procedural changes in the statutory planning process, with the overall objective of increasing awareness of development proposals and enabling greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

All members of the public have a right to access and participate in the planning process. It is important that they have opportunities to give their views on development proposals which will affect their property, livelihood, and local communities. The current system encourages people to get involved in the planning process by:

- Encouraging participation in pre-application community consultation exercises for major development proposals.
- Publishing lists of new planning applications submitted in local newspapers and inviting the public to comment.
- Notifying neighbours of proposed developments in their local area and inviting comment.
- Providing opportunities to make their views and concerns known to the council and its elected members about proposals at planning committee meetings.

In practice, both options 1 and 2 retain the mandatory requirement for an in-person public event however both options provide additional online / digital opportunities for the general public, including S75 groups, to become involved in during the pre-application stage.

Through the display of information on a website during the pre-application phase, information is more freely available and accessible to the general public for an extended period of time. It provides an additional opportunity for those who cannot attend in-person events on a particular date/time, to view and comment on proposals at a more convenient time, for example those with young children. The ability to access information online may also encourage those from a younger demographic (who may be within section 75 groups) to get involved in the planning process and may also raise awareness to a wider geographical audience. In this context, the additional website is considered to result in a beneficial impact.

Option 2 introduces flexibility on how the public event itself will be facilitated – either online or in-person. This will be agreed between the prospective applicant and the council or Department and will be based on the specifics of the proposed development and the site location. Where the public event is facilitated online, it is possible that those members of the public, including section 75 groups, who do not have access to the internet could be excluded from the pre-application process and unable to engage with the applicant. This minor negative impact will apply to all S75 groups equally.

Religious belief

The proposal to incorporate online / digital engagement into the pre-application community consultation process forms part of the Planning Improvement Programme being taken forward by DfI and local councils. The overall objective is to increase awareness of development proposals and enable greater opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the pre-planning process.

Members of the public and this S75 group may consider that the proposed change to provide a consultation website for all major development will raise greater awareness of development proposals which could affect their local area and provide more opportunities to engage with the applicant at an earlier stage in the pre-planning process. This can be considered to enhance the pre-application community consultation process, which will improve the quality of the proposed development overall and streamline the statutory consenting process.

Members of the public and S75 groups may consider that the potential for holding public events online may limit access by those who are elderly, with little experience of the internet and/or do not have access to the internet.

A public consultation on the proposed options for incorporating online / digital engagement into the pre-application community consultation process is scheduled for Autumn 2023. Any S75 issues raised in respect of this group during the public consultation will be recorded in this screening and considered during revisions to the draft policy.

Political Opinion

As outlined above.

Racial Group

As outlined above.

Age

As outlined above.

Marital status

As outlined above.

Sexual orientation

As outlined above.

Men and Women Generally

As outlined above.

Disability

As outlined above.

Dependants

As outlined above.

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. **What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?**

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

This is likely to have a minor positive impact on this S75 group. They may consider the proposed change to provide a consultation website for all major development will raise greater awareness of development proposals which could affect their local area and provide more opportunities to engage with the applicant at an earlier stage in the pre-planning process.

What is the level of impact? [Minor positive](#)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

[As outlined above.](#)

What is the level of impact? [Minor positive](#)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

[As outlined above.](#)

What is the level of impact? [Minor positive](#)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**:

[As part of Option 2, on online-only public consultation could possibly impact on those section 75 groups of an older age who are not comfortable using technology and/or do not have the facilities to take part in an online event.](#)

What is the level of impact? [Minor negative](#)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

[This is likely to have a minor positive impact on this S75 group. They may consider the proposed change to provide a consultation website for all major development will raise greater awareness of development proposals which could affect their local area and provide more opportunities to engage with the applicant at an earlier stage in the pre-planning process.](#)

What is the level of impact? [Minor positive](#)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

[As outlined above.](#)

What is the level of impact? [Minor positive](#)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**:

[As outlined above.](#)

What is the level of impact? Minor positive

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**:

This is likely to have a minor positive impact on this S75 group. Enhanced use of online methods may also encourage people who fall into this category to become more engaged with the planning process and promote greater awareness of developments within their local area and beyond.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

This is likely to have a minor positive impact on this S75 group. Enhanced use of online methods may also encourage people who fall into this category, for example those with caring responsibilities, to become more engaged with the planning process and promote greater awareness of developments within their local area and beyond.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief:

No – PACC is part of the planning process in limited circumstances, which only applies to certain types of planning applications and as such there is no opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people within this S75 group.

Political Opinion:

No – As above.

Racial Group:

No – As above.

Age:

Yes - As part of Option 2, an online-only public consultation could possibly encourage younger members of the public the opportunity to engage with the planning process. An in-person consultation public event provides a good opportunity for those who prefer and are able to attend in person, however, for those who may have difficulty attending in-person, the online option offers them an alternative.

Marital Status:

No – As above for Religious Belief.

Sexual Orientation:

No – As above for Religious Belief.

Men and Women generally - No:

No – As above for Religious Belief.

Disability:

Yes - An online public consultation could offer those with a disability the opportunity to engage in the planning process.

Dependants:

Yes - An online public consultation could offer those with dependants, who would not normally be able to attend an in-person event, the opportunity to engage in the planning process.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief:**

The policy is unlikely to impact on good relations between different groups. PACC is part of the planning process in limited circumstances, which only

applies to certain types of planning applications and as such there is no opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people within this S75 group.

What is the level of impact? None.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

As outlined above.

What is the level of impact? None.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

As outlined above.

What is the level of impact? None.

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief:

As outlined above.

Political Opinion:

As outlined above.

Racial Group:

As outlined above.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

This is likely to have a minor positive impact some S75 groups such as Age, Disability and Dependants. People with multiple identities will most likely be positively impacted particularly those who may have difficulty attending an in-person event. The option of participating in the planning process by using online means as a positive alternative and potentially encourages a larger participation by society in the process.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Overall, introducing online/digital processes to PACC is a minor positive to all S75 groups. It is not considered that an equality impact assessment is required.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated, or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

N/A

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may

be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion [Author pick 1 2 or 3 if a full EQIA is to take place]

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Social need **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Effect on people’s daily lives **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Relevance to a public authority’s functions **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

No

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

A minor positive impact on all S75 groups has been identified during the screening of the draft proposals to incorporating online / digital engagement into the pre-application community consultation process. Following consideration of the mitigating factors identified in this screening, there are no proposals to monitor the direct impact on S75 groups in the immediate future.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Anne Maguire/Aideen McFerran
Position/Job Title: Staff Officer/SPTO
Date: 16 October 2023

Approved by: Nola Jamieson
Position/Job Title: PPTO
Date: 23 October 2023

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

For Equality Team Completion:

Date Received: 23.10.23
Amendments Requested: Yes

Date Returned to Business Area: 24.10.23
Date Final Version Received / Confirmed: 30/10/23
Date Published on Dfl's Section 75 webpage: