



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the [Dorset Council style guide](#) and also use the [accessibility checker](#) to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Use the [Hemingwayapp](#) to check the readability of your document, to do this, click the edit button on the top right of the hemminwayapp screen, paste your text and the app will highlight if there are any problem areas.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

Initial information

Name of the policy, project, strategy, project or service being assessed:

- Climate Change Interim Guidance and Position Statement
- Interim Guidance Note - Sustainability Statement and Checklist for Planning Applications
- Listed Buildings – what you can do for climate change

This EQIA is being undertaken in relation to the production of the above documents, however a 6 week public consultation is planned to give public oversight of the documents, allow for comments from the public, Town and Parish Councils, developers and organisations to help shape the work, and provide additional weight to the documents' use in future decision making.

1. Is this a (please delete those not required):

- New policy, project, strategy, project or service
- Review of policy, project, strategy, project or service

2. Is this (please delete those not required):

- Both internal and external

3. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

[Climate Change Interim Guidance and Position Statement](#)

The aims and objectives of this work is to:

- Establish the weight to be attributed to reducing carbon emissions, and contribution to achieving net zero in accordance with the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, when assessing and determining planning applications.
- Provide an overview of national planning policy and guidance, and adopted local plan policy relating to climate change
- Provide a Position Statement on sustainable design and construction (relating to the Sustainability Statement requirement in the Local List for planning applications, and the Sustainability Checklist (see below))
- Provide a Position Statement on renewable energy development and decision making in relation to key issues.

[Interim Guidance Note - Sustainability Statement and Checklist for Planning Applications](#)

- To guide applicants in measures to achieve low levels of carbon emissions and develop to higher environmental standards e.g. in terms of water consumption, green infrastructure.
- To capture in a single document the measures an applicant is taking to address the climate emergency in their proposal.
- To raise awareness for applicants about the need to design low energy and carbon developments in order to tackle climate change.

[Listed Buildings – what you can do for climate change](#)

- Outlines the importance of the historic heritage and issues to consider when looking at energy efficiency in Listed Buildings.
- Provides information on general good practice and quick wins, as well as conversation principles and techniques.

- Sets out when energy efficiency measures require listed building consent, planning permission and building control approval.
- Provides Information relating to solar panels and double glazing in listed buildings, with reference to national policy.
- Gives case studies where works have been undertaken to listed buildings.

4. Please provide the background to this proposal?

Responses to the Dorset Council Local Plan consultation (2021) inferred we didn't go far enough on climate change issues, including in terms of setting criteria and targets for sustainable design and construction.

A new Local List requirement for a Sustainability Statement to accompany planning applications was added in October 2022. This requirement sets out that an accompanying statement is required which sets out an applicant's approach to ensuring a proposed development will be sustainable. It was felt that to complement this requirement, a checklist to be completed by applicants, alongside further guidance on sustainability measures, would aid the decision maker in understanding measures proposed, and give applicant's useful information on how to make their proposal climate friendly.

Additionally, due to the prominence of the Climate Change issue, and the potentially significant period until adoption of a Dorset Council Local Plan, which would include up to date policies relating to Climate Change, there is considered to be a need for some interim guidance for decision making. This includes assessment of measures in reducing carbon emissions of development and sustainability in design, and guidance on decision making for renewable energy development.

Evidence gathering and engagement

5. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

Multiple sources of evidence have informed the production of the documents, and the requirement to consult including:

- National planning policy and guidance – including guidance for undertaking consultation on non-statutory planning documents
- Accessibility guidance provided by the Council
- Review of policy and guidance documents of other local authorities, and their processes of adopting such documents
- Discussions with internal colleagues in planning and other relevant departments, such as the Sustainability Team, the Communications Team, and the Consultation and Engagement Team.
- Discussions with staff members of other local authorities

- Representations received as part of the Dorset Council Local Plan consultation in 2021 (comments made by members of the public, Parish and Town Councils, Statutory Organisations, Local Organisations)
- Information published by environmental organisations (for example the South West Energy Hub and LETI)
- The Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy
- Legal advice
- Information regarding the population profile of the Dorset Council area

6. What did this tell you?

The information and research used so far has told us that the documents we produce need to be fully accessible and written in plain language (as far as possible) so as to ensure that readers can fully understand the content. Reviews of policy and guidance documents of other authorities indicated that such documents can be long and complex and therefore we considered that those we produce should be concise and text based. Previous experience with planning consultations, speaking to consultation experts, and using consultation software has highlighted the importance of producing an accessible consultation.

The sheer number of representations received to the Dorset Council Local Plan consultation, which related to climate change issues, as well as internal legal advice, gave a clear grounding for holding a public consultation on the documents.

7. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

As noted above, we have engaged with various external sources, such as staff members at other local authorities, and other organisations. We have also consulted with internal experts on varying subjects, including legal officers, communications officers, and other internal departments with expertise in the content of the documents.

We have previously engaged with our web team and consultation experts to gain insight into accessibility and reaching a larger audience.

8. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

N/A

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.

- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

9. Key to impacts

Positive Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Positive & Negative	<p>All age groups</p> <p>Positive impacts:</p> <p>The consultation will be held digitally in a fully accessible format and will be open to responders of all ages.</p> <p>Engagement events with Parish and Town Councils will help to spread the word about the consultation to all age groups.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all age groups and members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it.</p> <p>Groups aged 15-55 years</p> <p>Planning policy consultations are generally under-responded to by younger age groups and therefore it is hoped that this</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>one will represent a step in the right direction.</p> <p>Social media campaigns can be used to promote the consultation and garner response from a potentially younger age profile of responder.</p> <p>Groups aged 55+ years</p> <p>The consultation will be hosted on a fully accessible online platform and will be simple to use and respond to. This will be of benefit to all age groups, including older people who may struggle with digital technologies.</p> <p>Negative impacts:</p> <p>It is possible that older groups may be put off responding to the consultation due to its digital nature.</p> <p>Positive impacts:</p> <p>We have a dedicated phone line in Planning Policy, which will be advertised so that people can talk through the process, and how to respond. Email and postal responses will also be accepted albeit we will promote using the online consultation as the best approach. Hard copy response forms will be made available upon request.</p>
Disability	Positive & Negative	<p>All groups</p> <p>Positive impacts:</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it.</p> <p>Those who have a physical impairment.</p> <p><u>People who are deaf or are a person with a hearing impairment.</u></p> <p>Negative impacts: Those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment may be BSL users and English may not be their first language and therefore may not be able to easily read the consultation documents.</p> <p>Positive impacts: Officers will be available during the consultation period or over the telephone to provide help and advice in completing the consultation form (Telephony with deaf capability (Type Talk) is available via the Customer Services Team). Interpreter support can be provided upon request, and Induction Loops can be made available at two of the engagement events, where required. Facilitators will be at tables to communicate and discuss the issues.</p> <p><u>People who are blind or visually impaired</u></p> <p>Negative impacts: Those with vision impairment may have difficulty reading the consultation.</p> <p>Positive impacts: The documents and consultation will be made screen reader friendly to ensure accessibility</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>standards are met. Large print or alternative formats will be available during the consultation period upon request.</p> <p><u>Wheelchair users and people with physical impairments</u> Negative impacts: Wheelchair users and people with physical impairments may have difficulty accessing engagement venues</p> <p>Positive impacts: Venues for engagement events have been selected on the basis of their accessibility for wheelchair users.</p> <p>People who have learning disabilities Negative impacts: People who have mental impairments or with learning disabilities may also have difficulties reading the consultation documents.</p> <p>Positive impacts: Easy read or alternative formats will be available during the consultation period upon request.</p>
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	It is not anticipated that the activities will have an impact on this group.
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	It is not anticipated that the activities will have an impact on this group.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive/neutral	The best practice guidance in the Sustainability Checklist would result in an energy efficient home that is essentially cheaper to heat and live in. Therefore, the Position Statement and Checklist will

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>hopefully have a positive impact on new homeowners who may experience increased financial pressures.</p> <p>Engagement venues that don't have baby changing facilities may have a negative impact, and so venues have been selected which do have changing facilities.</p>
Race and Ethnicity	Positive/neutral	<p>Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity (BAME): The current population statistics for the Dorset Council area indicate that the population is predominantly White British (95.6%). However, the overall statistic for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity (BAME) of 4.4% with 1.7% of the population not having English as their first language is still significant.</p> <p>People for whom English is a second language, may be less familiar with written or spoken English. This language barrier will be overcome by providing summary translations of the documents upon request, enabling all people to contribute to the consultation.</p> <p>There may be cultural issues surrounding the methods of correspondence during the consultation. For example, it could be inappropriate for members of some cultures to interact with officers of the opposite sex. The consultation team will therefore have a mix of male and female officers in order to respond sensitively to cultural needs.</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are a traditionally seldom heard group who can be suspicious of local government activities. It is hoped that attendance at the Gypsy and Traveller liaison group meeting and regular dialogue with Kushti Bok to explain the objectives of the consultation and documents will provide a direct route to engagement and help to bridge any concerns.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it.</p>
Religion and belief	Neutral	<p>The council will also ensure that the communication methods used do not compromise religious customs. For example, some religions do not consider it appropriate for a male officer to speak to a lone woman. Therefore, the council will be flexible in terms of the officer that conducts any conversation.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral	It is not anticipated that the activities will have an impact on this group.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	It is not anticipated that the activities will have an impact on this group.
People with caring responsibilities	Positive & negative	<p>Negative impacts: Non-paid or informal carers are likely to experience challenges based on their caring responsibilities, such as being less likely to be able to devote significant amounts of time to participating in public consultations. This would be a negative impact.</p> <p>Positive impacts: It is anticipated that a wider social media campaign will help to raise greater awareness among this seldom heard group.</p> <p>The online consultation will be quick and easy to use at any time of day, and the documents concise and accessible, for those with limited time to respond.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it</p>
Rural isolation	Positive & negative	<p>Negative impacts: Dorset is a large rural district with many communities located away from towns and urban centres where information is easier to access.</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>Positive impacts: It is anticipated that a wider awareness of the consultation can be achieved through greater engagement with Town and Parish Councils who will often have their own newsletter or notice board. We intend to notify directly by email everyone currently on our consultation database who has asked to be kept informed of events and consultations (an open database for anyone to register on). This will ensure that those who are rurally located, but on the database will be aware.</p> <p>A wider social media campaign supported by webinars is considered more inclusive and a positive for rural isolated residents.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it.</p> <p>People who live in rural areas may be affected by the impacts of a potential renewable energy development, as these are generally sited in the countryside. Therefore, the decision making guidance in the Position Statement will have a positive impact as it clarifies the balancing of impacts against the benefits of a scheme and the need for appropriate mitigation of impacts.</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>Additionally, the Listed Buildings guidance for sustainability will be of benefit for those living in rural areas, in Listed Buildings, as it will help them achieve greater energy efficiency in their property and reduce energy costs.</p>
Socio-economic deprivation	Positive and negative	<p>Negative impacts: Those who are in economic deprivation may not be able to afford to access digital services. Hard copy consultation forms will be available on request, and documents can be accessed online at local libraries.</p> <p>Positive impacts: It is anticipated that a wider awareness of the consultation can be achieved through greater engagement with Town and Parish Councils who will often have their own newsletter or notice board. We intend to notify directly by email everyone currently on our consultation database (an open database for anyone to register on). This will ensure that those who are rurally located, but on the database will be aware.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it.</p> <p>The best practice guidance in the Sustainability Checklist would result in an energy efficient home that is essentially cheaper to heat and live in.</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>Therefore, the Position Statement and Checklist will hopefully have a positive impact on new homeowners who may suffer financial difficulties.</p> <p>Additionally, the Listed Buildings guidance for sustainability may be of benefit for those suffering economic deprivation and living in Listed Buildings, as it will help them achieve greater energy efficiency in their property and reduce energy costs.</p>
Single parents	Positive and negative impacts	<p>Negative impacts: Single parent families are less likely to be able to devote significant amounts of time to participating in public consultations, which would be a negative impact.</p> <p>Feedback from previous Local Plan consultations undertaken by the former districts has often found that they struggled to contact single parent families through the usual communication channels.</p> <p>Positive impacts: It is anticipated that a wider social media campaign will help to raise greater awareness among this group, representing a positive. Additionally, the online consultation will be quick and easy to use at any time of day, and the documents concise and accessible, for those with limited time to respond.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		<p>help raise awareness of the issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it</p> <p>The best practice guidance in the Sustainability Checklist would result in an energy efficient home that is essentially cheaper to heat and live in. Therefore, the Position Statement and Checklist will hopefully have a positive impact on single parent new homeowners who may suffer financial difficulties.</p> <p>The Listed Buildings guidance for sustainability may be of benefit for those single parents who are under greater financial pressure, and who are living in Listed Buildings, as it will help them achieve greater energy efficiency in their property and reduce energy costs.</p>
Armed forces communities	Positive	<p>Dorset has a large military presence, with 3,150 serving personnel across 4 bases. It is estimated there are around 1,575 spouses and 2,389 children related to those personnel.</p> <p>We will make efforts to engage with military personnel through the Blandford and Bovington HIVE information centre through sending specific notification emails to this organisation.</p> <p>The climate emergency and the need to tackle climate change is a key issue for all members of the population. It is hoped that the Position Statement, Checklist, and Guidance will help raise awareness of the</p>

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
		issue, give useful guidance, highlight the importance of planning in tackling it

10. Please provide a summary of the impacts:

The Interim Position Statement, Sustainability Checklist, and Listed Buildings guidance will have a positive public impact in potentially resulting in more energy efficient (and less energy costly) homes and buildings being built, and more energy efficient listed buildings. The documents will publicly raise awareness of climate change and its relevant associated planning considerations.

The documents and consultation will be produced in a fully accessible format, and it will be possible to respond in a number of ways. Access to the consultation documents will be limited to digital and online, and therefore this may negatively impact those without access to the internet. However, information and guidance will be available from Planning Policy Officers throughout the consultation, including by telephone, and hard copies of the forms can be made available, upon request.

Publicity for the consultation will take place largely online but will be advertised to Town and Parish Councils, the local press, and to those currently on the Planning Policy contacts database. It is hoped this will ensure that news of the consultation is widespread. Briefing sessions will be held with Town and Parish Councils during the consultations to provide further guidance relating to the documents. The sessions and venues will be accessible to wheelchair users and support will be provided to those who may have other accessibility requirements. Additionally, presentation packs will be distributed to attendees after the sessions.

Action Plan

11. Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Engagement with people of all ages	<p>The documents and the consultation will be drafted in an accessible format and open to anyone of any age to respond to. Publicity will take place digitally, through social media, in the press, and through Parish and Town Councils.</p> <p>The consultation itself will be hosted on Citizen Space, a fully accessible and widely used consultation tool.</p> <p>Briefings will be held with Town and Parish Councils during the consultation to provide further information and guidance regarding the documents.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Team/Communications Team</p> <p>Chris Lee Sara Hardy</p>	20 th April 2023
Support for members of the community who are deaf or with hearing impairment	<p>Officers will be available during the consultation period over the telephone to provide help and advice in completing the consultation form (Telephony with deaf capability (Type Talk) is available via the Customer Services Team).</p> <p>Engagement events can provide interpreter support, induction loops, and facilitators will be on hand to assist with communication.</p> <p>Event invites have been sent on a personal basis to attendees, with questions asked about the accessibility requirements of attendees.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Team/Planning Business Support Team</p> <p>Chris Lee Sara Hardy Planning Business Support Team</p>	During the consultation - 20 th April – 8 th June 2023
Support for members of the	Large print or alternative format will be available during the consultation period upon request. The accessible version of	Planning policy team/Graphics department	During the consultation - 20 th

community who are blind or visually impaired	<p>the consultation supports screen readers and other adaptive software.</p> <p>Event invites have been sent on a personal basis to attendees, with questions asked about the accessibility requirements of attendees.</p>	Chris Lee Sara Hardy	April – 8 th June 2023
People with physical impairments, and wheelchair users	<p>Engagement event venues will be accessible to wheelchairs.</p> <p>Event invites have been sent on a personal basis to attendees, with questions asked about the accessibility requirements of attendees.</p>	<p>Planning policy Team/ Planning Business Support Team</p> <p>Chris Lee Sara Hardy</p>	18 th , 19 th , 27 th April
People from minority backgrounds may be less familiar with written or spoken English	<p>Offer help in understanding the documents and their implications.</p> <p>Provide translation support and make documents available in other languages when required.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Team/ Communications Team</p> <p>Chris Lee Sara Hardy</p>	During the consultation - 20 th April – 8 th June 2023
Some members of the community do not have access to the internet or the digital skills to feedback their comments on-line.	A range of methods will be used to advertise the consultation, including via Parish and Town Councils, who can advertise on public notice boards. The dedicated Planning Policy phone line will be available for people to ring in with queries and provide feedback.	<p>Planning Policy Team in liaison with Parish and Town Councils</p> <p>Chris Lee Sara Hardy</p>	During the consultation - 20 th April – 8 th June 2023
Support for members of the community who have less time	Many in society have less free time or are unable to travel, for example with mobility issues or caring commitments. The consultation documents will be available on the website to	<p>Planning Policy Team</p> <p>Chris Lee Sara Hardy</p>	During the consultation - 20 th April – 8 th June 2023

or are unable to travel. For example; carers, pregnant individuals, young families, the elderly and those isolated in rural communities	view and comment on at a location and time convenient to them.		
Due to cultural reasons, it may be inappropriate for some people to speak with a member of the opposite sex	Both male and female officers will be available to answer questions.	Planning Policy Team Chris Lee Sara Hardy	During the consultation - 20 th April – 8 th June 2023

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA: Christopher Lee

Officers involved in completing the EqIA: Sara Hardy

Date of completion: 21/03/2023

Version Number: 3

EqIA review date: 14/04/2023

Inclusion Champion Sign Off: James Palfreman-Kay

Equality Lead Sign Off: James Palfreman-Kay