

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Brent Community Review Panel
DEPARTMENT:	Spatial Planning
TEAM:	Urban Design
LEAD OFFICER:	John Stiles
DATE:	24/08/2023

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

As part of the council's ongoing commitment to increase participation of local people in the planning process, it is proposed to progress establishment of a Brent Community Review Panel (CRP). A CRP is typically a group of 10 or more local people that reflect the demography of a local area. It is chaired by an industry professional, typically with engagement experience, and reviews development proposals at the confidential pre-app stage. They operate in a similar way to a Quality Review Panel, with members offering advice based on their experiences living in the local area.

Initiative: Set up a Brent Community Review Panel.

Objective: To increase the participation of local people in the planning process in line with the ambitions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Intended Results: The aim is to encourage a shift towards a more proactive approach to development in the borough, by bringing conversations with the community to the start of the planning process, ahead of when statutory consultation is likely to take place. The aim is to also benefit applicants by allowing a local voice to influence development proposals and inform how aspects of a scheme might be adapted to better support the needs of the community.

Overall, it is considered that a CRP will provide an additional level of scrutiny in the planning process and provide even greater certainty for applicants and decision-makers.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

The CRP will primarily affect applicants (developers and landowners) who are seeking planning permission for the redevelopment of their sites across the borough. Schemes referred to the CRP will incur additional costs, though these will be set out to applicants as part of the council's standard planning performance agreement.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes. The CRP will be formed of a representative group of local people recruited to comment on and influence development proposals for the benefit of all people living, working and visiting the borough. The CRP correlates with all protected characteristics.

4. Please indicate with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age	X		
Sex	X		
Race	X		
Disability	X		
Sexual orientation	X		
Gender reassignment	X		
Religion or belief	X		
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage		X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		X
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?		X
<p>If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B. If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.</p>		

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

The 'Equality Profile of Brent March 2019' and 'Community profiling: diversity in Brent – evidence pack to inform 2021 Census planning and engagement March 2021' has been used to determine proportions of those with protected characteristics in the borough. This will underpin the recruitment process and, alongside our collaboration with colleagues in Community Engagement deliver both widespread and targeted outreach, will ensure the CRP members are truly representative of the borough and its demographics.

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

AGE	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough. The CRP recruitment process will be open to anyone over 18 living, working, or studying in Brent. The practicality of expanding eligibility to include anyone over 16 is currently being assessed to increase youth participation in the planning process. The CRP membership will seek to be balanced in terms of age based on borough-specific demographics.
SEX	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough. The CRP membership will seek to be balanced in terms of gender based on borough-specific demographics.
RACE	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough. 64% of people in Brent identify as BAME and the CRP membership will seek to be balanced in terms of race based on borough-specific demographics, similarly to the Quality Review Panel.
DISABILITY	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough. The CRP recruitment process will be open to anyone regardless of ability and the CRP membership will seek to be balanced in terms of disability based on borough-specific demographics.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough. The CRP membership will seek to be balanced in terms of sexuality based on borough-specific demographics.
PREGANCY AND MATERNITY	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough.
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	
Details of impacts identified	The CRP will positively influence development proposals coming forward and will benefit everyone that lives in, works in, and visits the borough.

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No.

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

Not applicable.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

Not applicable.

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

Not applicable.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

The impact of the CRP will be monitored through review meeting reports and at annual review meetings. This information can be fed into the department's Authority Monitoring Report.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

In conclusion, there are obvious benefits to the council from having a CRP. It supports greater participation of the local community in the planning process and could over time encourage a shift towards a more proactive approach to development in the borough. It also brings conversations with the community to the start of the planning process, ahead of when statutory consultation is likely to take place.

As such, there are also benefits for applicants. A CRP allows a local voice to influence development proposals and inform how aspects of a scheme might be adapted to better support the needs of the community. If an applicant demonstrates they have consulted the CRP and responded to its comments, it may positively influence decision-making and give greater certainty about whether a scheme is likely to be considered acceptable.

SECTION D – RESULT

<i>Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".</i>		
A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Positively influence development proposals.	Improved development proposals meeting policy requirements in London and Local Plan.	Development Management Officers, Planning Policy Officers, Urban Design Officer.	On-going

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	John Stiles
REVIEWING OFFICER:	Ciara Whelehan
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Gerry Ansell