



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

Policy, practice, function or project assessed	Open space in new developments SPD
Lead Officer	James Fisher/Paul Derry/Claire Spencer
Team	Planning and New Communities
Start date of assessment	21/01/2011
Completion of assessment	

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice.

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

The purpose of the SPD is to expand on Policies SF/10 and SF/11 in the adopted Development Control Policies DPD, adopted in July 2007.

The SPD details the requirement for onsite provision of public open space and play facilities within new developments and provides a summary of the standard required by the District Council for the different types of open space as defined in the DPD. The SPD includes a calculation for offsite commuted sums to be paid to facilitate the provision of additional or improvements to existing open space, sports pitches and play areas.

The overarching objective of the SPD is to assist achievement of the Development Control Policies DPD Objective SF/h: “to ensure the proper provision and maintenance of open space and sports facilities consistent with levels of planned residential development and identified open space standards.”

Specific objectives of this document are to:

- Assist applicants gain planning permission quickly by informing them of what contributions are required and why, as well as how provision and payments should be made;
- Ensure that Parish Councils and / or the local community are involved in decisions that affect public open space provisions within new developments;
- Ensure that new facilities provided are appropriately designed to maximise amenity;
- Ensure that facilities provided are properly managed and maintained for maximum community benefit.

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

The Open space in new developments SPD supplements the adopted Development Plan Document policies SF/10 and SF/11 in the Development Control Policies DPD: www.scams.gov.uk/ldf/dcpoliciesdpd.

It is linked to the following Council Aims:

Aim B. We Are Committed to Ensuring that South Cambridgeshire Continues to be a Safe And Healthy Place for You and Your Family

Aim C: We are Committed to Making South Cambridgeshire a Place in which Residents can Feel Proud to Live

Aim E: We are Committed to Providing a Voice for Rural Life

<http://www.scams.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/CorporateObjectivesandPriorities/Corpplan.htm>

The open space in new developments SPD is associated with the Landscape in new developments SPD and District Design Guide SPD

www.scams.gov.uk/ldf/spds.

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

The policy is intended to mitigate the impact of new development by providing areas of onsite public open space, as well as funding improvements to existing recreation infrastructure for the benefit of new residents.

Monies received are secured via legal agreements under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (section 106 agreements) and are normally paid directly to South Cambridgeshire District Council for onward transmission to Parish Councils who are responsible for the allocation.

The provision of formal and informal open space will directly and indirectly benefit all sectors of the community, whether local residents, businesses or visitors to the area. Open space helps make places which are attractive, healthy and give a good quality of life to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.

Stakeholders include:

- Current and future residents and Local Members in South Cambridgeshire.
- Parish and Community Councils in South Cambridgeshire.
- Businesses in South Cambridgeshire.
- Visitors to South Cambridgeshire.

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

Yes, the SPD applies district wide, and links with several Council aims (see A.2 above). Provision of formal and informal open space has the potential to impact on all people, both directly and indirectly.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

The policy may eventually be incorporated in some part in a future Planning Obligations SPD and charging schedule as part of the community infrastructure levy regulations 2010.

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

The SPD adopted in January 2009 supplements and amplifies the adopted Development Plan Document policy that was adopted in July 2007.

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

The open space in new development SPD followed and was supported by a recreation study undertaken in 2005 (www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/Archive/RecreationStudy) that assessed the quantity and quality of all areas of open space within South Cambridgeshire villages. Annex 1 to the assessment identified, for each village, the current sports and children's play provision, a comparison with the recommended playspace standard, current use and demand, and was therefore able to identify where necessary improvements should be prioritised at a local level. A quantitative update of this study was carried out in 2010 with a questionnaire to be issued to Parish Councils in 2011 to understand the current qualitative situation.

The purpose of the recreation study was to also provide the Council with a 'standard' of necessary open space per person to calculate onsite provision from new residential schemes but to also calculate a cost of providing and maintaining this area if an offsite contribution was sought. The amount of money required from new development does not alter depending on which village the development is located, therefore whilst the needs of each Parish vary considerably monies requested from developers will be based on the generic impact the new residents would bring.

South Cambridgeshire District Council as the local planning authority collects these monies from new development on behalf of Parish Councils, although it forgoes any responsibility in terms of project allocation. Parish Councils are responsible for determining how the money is to be spent in accordance with changing priorities and against any adopted Parish Plan. In South Cambridgeshire there are currently 16 plans (including one refresh) being undertaken and 28 plans completed.

It is common for Parish Council's to have aspirations for increasing the size of recreation areas and improving the standard of children's play.

The County Council Research Group provide a break down of Census information in district and ward level profiles. This includes useful information on Age. The next Census will be undertaken in 2011, however in the interim the Group have also produced estimates of population for 2008.

The following Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report indicators help address the success of the SPD:

- Core Output Indicator CO-H6 – Quality of new housing developments.
- Local Output Indicator LOA6 – Cumulative % of dwellings completed on previously developed land.
- Local Output Indicator LOB1 – Gains or losses of open space and outdoor recreation land resulting from new developments and percentage of planning permissions meeting open space standards

- Local Output Indicator LOB2 – Density of new housing developments on sites of 9 or more dwellings.
- Local Output Indicator LOB3 – Average density of new housing developments on sites of 9 or more dwellings.
- Local Output Indicator LOE1(i) – Average size of housing developments split by settlement category; (ii) – Largest housing development in each settlement category; and (iii) – Total dwellings built by settlement category.
- Local Output Indicator LOF1 – Investment secured for infrastructure and community facilities through developer contributions.
- Site Specific Indicator SSLO11 – Progress of open space allocations.
- Area Action Plan Indicators NS06 (Northstowe), CE06 (Cambridge East), CSF06 (Cambridge Southern Fringe) – Distance to public open space.
- Area Action Plan Indicator NWC08 (North West Cambridge) – Public open space and recreation facilities.
- Significant Effect Indicator SE1 - % of new and converted dwellings completed on previously developed land.
- Significant Effect Indicator SE2 – Average density of new dwellings completed.
- Significant Effect Indicator SE8 – Area of Local Nature Reserves per 1,000 people.
- Significant Effect Indicator SE10 - % of Rights of Way that are easy to use.
- Significant Effect Indicator SE13 – (i) Residents’ satisfaction with the quality of the built environment; and (ii) % of residents ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with their local area as a place to live.
- Significant Effect Indicator SE26 – Hectares of strategic open space per 1,000 people
- Significant Effect Indicator SE27 – number of sports pitches available for public use per 1,000 people

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

New development has the potential to deliver formal and informal open space and recreational facilities that will impact on all people in some way or form, whether they are local to the area or visiting.

The County Council Research Group provide a break down of Census information in district and ward level profiles for the resident population, however, there is no readily available information on people working in or visiting the district. Therefore, there is no complete profile for all the people who may be affected.

The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2010 monitors the indicators identified in section B1 above:
www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/amr.

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

The provision of formal and informal open space will directly and indirectly benefit all sectors of the community, whether local residents, businesses or visitors to the area. Open space helps make places which are attractive, healthy and give a good quality of life to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.

The District Council is keen to ensure its quantitative and qualitative information is up to date to ensure that the policy is defensible against challenge and remains relevant and reasonable. However as it is only responsible for collecting the monies and is not responsible for allocating monies collected against local projects, it does not undertake any monitoring to assess whether this is being done in the most effective manner, incorporating all groups within the community.

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

There was an article in the Summer 2008 edition South Cambridgeshire Magazine about the consultation.

The draft SPD was subject to six-weeks public consultation with a range of external stakeholders from 6 June to 18 July 2008. During the consultation the draft SPD was available on the SCDC website www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/spds. A Statement of Consultation has been produced and details the representations received and subsequently amendments have been incorporated into the final adopted SPD.

A total of 68 representations were received during the consultation period of which 9 were supporting and 59 objecting to the draft SPD. The issues raised include:

- Concern that there are parts of the SPD which appear to be seeking to create new policy rather than providing greater detail on the policies in adopted Development Plan Documents.
- Concern that the full hierarchy of green infrastructure has not been considered in the Draft SPD, with Strategic Open Space not included.
- Suggestion that greater clarity about the application of the Open Space SPD to Area Action Plans should be provided.
- Concern over the insistence on 50% of equipped play space and there being no justification in national policy guidelines.
- Concern that non-residential developments are required to contribute towards outdoor playing space, as there is no such reference in Policy SF/10.
- Concern over the use of Cambourne as the model for occupancy rates and sports participation rates, as Cambourne is considered unrepresentative of overall patterns of supply and demand throughout the District.
- Concern over the period of maintenance contributions, calculations used, and consistency with Circular 05/2005.
- Various concerns over the areas included in list of areas and facilities that do not contribute towards Open Space Standards.

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

Yes, internal consultation was undertaken during the preparation of the SPD. The Consultation Statement details the comments received: www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/spds.

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

The SPD was published for a six-week public consultation, as detailed in B4 above. A public notice was placed in the Cambridge News at the start of the public consultation. A number of stakeholders were sent a letter and CD-Rom containing each of the public participation documents, supporting documents, and forms for making comments. All documents were available to view and / or download from the Council's website: www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/spds, and a link was included from the home page. Interactive online versions of documents were also available to enable people to make comments online during the consultation period, as well as Word and PDF versions of a response form that could be completed and emailed / posted to the Council. South Cambs Magazine, which is delivered to every household in the district, also included information on the consultation. Printed copies of the document were also available to view or purchase at the Council's offices.

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the following protected characteristics. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT	Nature of Impact (Positive, Neutral, Adverse)	Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High)
AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups.	Positive	
<p>The open space SPD satisfies the open space requirements from all ages of society.</p> <p>Young people are a particular focus of the SPD and the types of facility that are to be provided as part of new development are based according to age group and needs. The policy also references the inclusion of buffer zones which are multifunctional in that they provide a sound buffer but also provide a distance from housing to play area thereby improving child safety.</p>		
DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people.	Neutral	
<p>Where onsite public open space provision is a requirement of a new development, design and landscaping will take account of the needs of all users and shall meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.</p>		

GENDER REASSIGNMENT: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people that have changed gender identity.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit those who are undergoing a change of gender identity, but is not specific to them.		
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are married or in a civil partnership.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit those who are married or in a civil partnership but is not specific to them.		
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on pregnant or maternal mothers and those women who wish to breastfeed.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit women who are pregnant or maternal mothers but is not specific to them.		
RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different ethnic groups, including national origins, colour and nationality.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit people of any race but is not specific to race.		
RELIGION/BELIEF: Identify the potential impact the policy or function on different religious/faith groups.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit those of any religion or belief but is not specific to them.		
SEX: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit people of either gender but is not specific to gender.		
SEXUAL ORIENTATION: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people.	Neutral	
The Open Space scheme will benefit those of any sexual orientation but is not specific to sexual orientation.		

OTHER CHARACTERISTIC SPECIFIC TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE – RURALITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are rurally isolated.	Positive	
The policy improves access to open space in rural areas by providing offsite financial contributions to the Parish Councils, via the District Council who may acquire additional land thereby providing rural villages with access to additional facilities.		

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how.

Not applicable

C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?

The Open Spaces strategy promotes equal opportunity as it will benefit the whole community as they will all have equal access and use of the open spaces we provide.

The contributions received under the policy are passed to Parish Councils to allocate against the most relevant projects within villages. A quarter of Parishes in South Cambridgeshire have adopted Parish Plans that are based on consultation responses issued to everyone living in the village. It is envisaged that a policy raising additional income streams for local communities would result in an increase level of active participation in local governance and therefore improve and create relationships.

Through the following Council Aims, the SPD helps to promote better community relations:

Aim B. We Are Committed to Ensuring that South Cambridgeshire Continues to be a Safe And Healthy Place for You and Your Family

Aim C: We are Committed to Making South Cambridgeshire a Place in which Residents can Feel Proud to Live

Aim E: We are Committed to Providing a Voice for Rural Life

C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.

D. CONCLUSIONS			
D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment?
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment?
	No?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities? No Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? No
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments? Not as of yet.

D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

Recommendation/ issue to be addressed	Planned Milestone	Planned completion of milestone (date)	Officer Responsible	Progress
The success of the Open Space in new developments SPD will be addressed through the Annual Monitoring Report	-	Annually	Who will be responsible for this?	

RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

Signature of Lead Officer

Date:

Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer:

Date:

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.