



Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

# Local Development Plan 2020-2035



**Belfast**  
City Council

## Consultation

We are committed to listening and responding to the views of our stakeholders. This draft EQIA report has been prepared primarily for the purposes of consultation.

All relevant documents can be accessed on the Council's website at [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP)

The consultation period will last for a period of 12 weeks starting 26th January 2017 and will end on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Please submit all comments to:

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**Survey:** An opportunity to respond electronically to the EQIA is available as an online survey on the council's website at:  
<https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/planning-and-place/eqia-pop>

**Freedom of Information Act 2000** – in accordance with this Act all responses to consultations may be disclosed if requested. We will contact you before any disclosure to get your views about Freedom of Information requests received

**Access to information**

As part of our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations, we want to ensure that everyone is able to access the documents we produce. We would therefore be happy to provide any of the information in this document, and its availability in alternative formats (including Braille, disk and audio cassette, and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English). If required please contact:

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**Deadline for comments:** 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017

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## 1. Overview

- 1.1 The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 Act (the 2001 Act) transferred responsibility for the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP's) from the Department of Environment (DOE) (now known as Department for Infrastructure (DfI)) to councils and established a plan-led system which gives priority to the LDPs in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.2 The policy underpinning the 2011 Act was subject to equality, regulatory and human rights impact assessment, and to extensive public consultation from July to October 2009 by the DOE before finally being agreed by the Executive in February 2010. The Act was subject to scrutiny in the Assembly from December 2010 to March 2011.
- 1.3 LDPs guide the future use of land in their respective areas and inform developers, members of the general public, communities, government, public bodies, representative organisations and other interests of the policy framework.
- 1.4 There are three stages in the development of the LDP
  1. First stage in the LDP process is the publication on the Preferred Options Paper.
  2. Second Stage is the preparation of the LDP Plan Strategy (PS)
  3. Third Stage is the preparation of the LDP Local Policies Plan (LPP)
- 1.5 The Preferred Options Paper identifies key issues in the plan area and formulates a series of options for dealing with them. Belfast City Council (the Council) has prepared a draft Preferred Options Paper (POP). The draft POP outlines the vision, objectives and key planning issues affecting the city, possible approaches to new development and planned growth, and the justification for the Council's Preferred Option for Belfast.
- 1.6 These preferred options have been developed to support the aspirations and vision set out in the emerging Community Plan for the city (the Belfast Agenda). The POP will provide the Council with the opportunity to consult with the public and stakeholders to encourage inclusive engagement that will stimulate discussion on key planning issues in a more meaningful way at this early stage of the LDP preparation.
- 1.7 The public and stakeholder comments concerning the POP will be taken into account in formulating the draft EQIA LDP -Plan Strategy.

## 2. Background

2.1 Local development plans apply regional policies at the appropriate local level and inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide development decisions within a specified area.

### Legislative Context

2.2 **Part 2** of the 2011 Act provides for the preparation of a local development plan by Belfast City Council for its district, which will (when adopted) replace the current development plan the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan September 2015 (BMAP) produced by the Department of the Environment. The LDP will comprise of two development plan documents;

- The Plan Strategy (PS); and
- The Local Policies Plan (LPP).

2.3 Public participation and engagement in formulating the LDP and progress through to adoption is facilitated through a Statement of Community Involvement and Timetable which was agreed between Belfast Council and the DFI (former DOE) in February 2016.

2.4 The LDP will fulfil the following functions:

- provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of a council's district in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development;
- facilitate sustainable growth by co-ordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the well-being of the community;
- allocate sufficient land to meet society's needs;
- provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within their local area should take place;
- provide a plan-led framework for rational and consistent decision-making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals; and
- deliver the spatial aspects of a council's current community plan.

## Role of parties involved in the local development plan process

- 2.5 **The Department:** Under the local development plan process, the Department will have an oversight and scrutiny role. Belfast City Council will be required to submit its local development plan to the Department to ensure that it is aligned with central government plans, policies and other guidance. The Department will also have general powers to secure the delivery of local development plans and ensure that they are up to date.
- 2.6 **Council:** Part 2 (8) and (9) of the 2011 Act requires a council to prepare a Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan which will constitute the local development plan for their area. A council must prepare a local development plan in consultation with consultation bodies and the public. Belfast City Council will therefore have responsibility for local planning in its area
- 2.7 **Consultation Bodies:** Consultation bodies are set out in Regulation 2 of the Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. These include government departments for example DfI and also council(s) which cover any adjoining district. Meaningful engagement early in plan preparation is considered key to a council producing better informed and locally distinctive plans. As such, consultees will play a key role in providing input at various stages of the plan preparation process including the POP and also the independent examination as they can provide detailed information on potential constraints to development.
- 2.8 **Local Community:** Public participation, particularly at the early stages of local development plan preparation is regarded as crucial in identifying relevant issues and local views in the plan process from the outset. The local community will therefore have an important role to play in the plan preparation process particularly at the preferred options stage and also at the draft plan stage when they will have the opportunity to make representations. Belfast Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will set out the key stages for public engagement and inform the community of how and when they can become involved.
- 2.9 The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 introduces a statutory link between the community plan and a council's local development plan, in that the preparation of the LDP must take account of the community plan. It is intended that the LDP will be the spatial reflection of the community plan and that the two should work in tandem towards the same vision for a council area and its communities and set the long term social, economic and environmental objectives for an area.

- 2.10 The POP represents the first step in the preparation of the Belfast Local Development Plan 2035. The POP provides the basis for consulting with the public and stakeholders on a series of options for dealing with key issues within the plan area. It aims to stimulate public comment and provide interested parties with an opportunity to put forward their views and be part of the plan from the beginning of the process. We have agreed to Equality Impact Assess all stages of the process.
- 2.11 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires all public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between :
- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
  - men and women generally;
  - persons with a disability and persons without; and
  - persons with dependants and persons without.
- 2.12 In addition, without prejudice to the above obligation, public authorities must, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 2.13 The Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 introduced new duties requiring all public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to –
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
  - encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
- 2.14 As part of the development of the council's draft LDP 2020-2015, Belfast City Council will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to ensure these obligations are met to the fullest possible extent and that the promotion of equality of opportunity will be at the core of the LDP. The initial screening was undertaken and 'screened in' for an Equality Impact Assessment.
- 2.15 As the development of the LDP is a five year process it was agreed internally to divide the EQIA LDP into three phases namely:
- First phase EQIA LDP -Preferred Options Paper at a strategic level
  - Second phase EQIA LDP- Plan Strategy (PS)
  - Third phase EQIA LDP -LDP Local Policies Plan (LPP)
- 2.16 The issues identified in this phase 1 of the EQIA LDP - Preferred Options Paper will act as a guide to development of subsequent assessments, reports and consultations; but each stage of the LDP will be subject to separate



equality assessment.

2.17 The purpose of this EQIA is to –

- consider the potential equality and good relations impacts of the LDP-Preferred Options Plan at a strategic level focusing on the key inequalities which the preferred options can help to reduce;
- provide an outline analysis of data and research on current major inequalities experienced by people in the Section 75 groups in relation to the key commitments under the Local Development Plan
- establish the positive equality impacts which the future Local Development Plan can make.

2.18 In carrying out the EQIA, council has followed the guidance of the Equality Commission on the practical conduct of impact assessments (2005). This recommends that there should be seven stages in the EQIA process:

- Stage 1: Definition of the aims of the policy
- Stage 2: Consideration of available data and research
- Stage 3: Assessment of potential and actual impacts
- Stage 4: Consideration of Measures
- Stage 5: Formal consultation
- Stage 6: Decision and publication of the results of the EQIA
- Stage 7: Monitoring for adverse impact

2.19 This report has been written primarily to provide information to consultees during the formal consultation Phase (stage 5) of Preferred Options Paper and includes findings of the process.

2.20 In line with the Council's Equality Scheme, a 12 week consultation period applies to the consultation on the draft EQIA.

2.21 All Equality Scheme consultees will be notified of the availability of the draft report and invited to comment. The report will be made available on the council's website and comments will also be invited from any individual with an interest in the proposals. Comments will be welcomed through the consultation hub on Citizen Space. Other formats are also accepted.

## 3.0 Definition of the aims of the policy

### The LDP Vision and Objectives

- 3.1 The vision set out in the Community Plan and the LDP intend to respond to these and other issues, confronting the city of Belfast.

### City Vision (Community Plan)

- 3.2 The Community Plan known as the Belfast Agenda has a bold and ambitious vision:

*'Belfast will be a city re-imagined. A great place to live for everyone. It will re-energise and drive a successfully economy where everyone can reach their potential. Beautiful and well connected, it will be a shared city and loved by all its people and admired around the world. It will be a producer of and a magnet for talent, investment, innovation and creativity, a compassionate place where people create value and are valued'.*

*To achieve this vision we will work towards these outcomes:*

- *Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy*
- *Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all*
- *Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential*
- *Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing*
- *Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city.*

### The Local Development Plan Vision

- 3.3 Like the Community Plan the LDP vision sets out an ambitious but realistic spatial vision:

*'Belfast will be a globally successful dynamic smart Regional City, with a vibrant economic heart, bustling with sustainable mixed use businesses that attracts investment, talent and visitors; and is surrounded by thriving, well connected neighbourhoods where people love to live'.*

*A strong local economy will support progressive, healthy, safe and vibrant communities and provides a gateway to opportunities locally, nationally and worldwide.*

## **Strategic Aims**

- 3.4 To help deliver the city envisaged in 2035 there are a series of strategic aims and related objectives which have been identified below to support the vision realisation.
- 3.5 Although the LDP's Strategic Aims and Objectives do not align directly with the Community Plan's long-term outcomes and shorter-term priorities, the POP seeks to identify the linkages and synergies throughout. This includes an indication of which Community Plan Outcomes each Strategic Aim is contributing to, as well as an indication of the relevant outcomes and priority 'Pillar' in relation to each preferred option.
- **Shaping a Liveable Place** – promoting development which enhances the health and well-being of communities, neighbourhoods and places.
  - **Creating a Vibrant Economy** – a strengthened Belfast as the regional economic driver.
  - **A Smart Connected and Resilient Place** – improving connectivity supporting the efficient movement of people, goods, energy and information to create a dynamic innovative 21<sup>st</sup> century city attractive to investors, businesses, residents and visitors, and encourage the capacity for adaption to environmental challenges and the transition to a low carbon city.
  - **A Green and Active Place** – a protected, enhanced and attractive natural setting comprising the surrounding hills, coastline, Belfast Lough and the Lagan Valley Regional Park by reinforcing their uniqueness and accessibility to all who live, work and enjoy the City.
- 3.6 Belfast has witnessed a revival in recent years in terms of inward investment, including significant regeneration within the Titanic Quarter and waterfront areas, major growth in tourism and the Ulster University redevelopment in the city centre. However, there continues to be a range of issues that inhibit the ability of the city to fully function as one of the main urban centres in Europe. There are areas of the city that are fractured, disjointed and poorly presented. There are infrastructure and environmental constraints, such as traffic congestion and poor air quality.
- 3.7 There are opportunities to reconnect the city, to improve public transportation networks and extend service provision. This could be encouraged by

promoting appropriate design in new developments to make the city more permeable and aid both vehicular and pedestrian movement. New development could be encouraged along routes connecting the city centre to inner-city neighbourhoods that are currently poorly integrated with the urban core.

- 3.8 There are opportunities through planning and regeneration processes to increase equality of opportunity and contribute to a breakdown of the physical and psychological aspects of division. There is an opportunity to plan for regeneration that seeks to rejuvenate interface areas and facilitate the removal of barriers and other forms of infrastructure or architecture that serve to reinforce patterns of division within the city. There are opportunities to promote development of shared sites and facilities that provide safe access for all of the community and have potential to foster greater levels of social integration.
- 3.9 There are also opportunities to support and promote the continued regeneration of the city centre to attract inward investment and encourage a more diverse economy that will contribute to an enhancement in livability and the City Centre as a place. Such opportunities offer potential to attract residents to the city and facilitate initiatives to address dereliction and poor-quality environments within the city, and to promote the night-time economy.
- 3.10 There is opportunity to foster civic leadership and support joined-up governance to address the challenges identified from the issues raised in the Belfast Conversation and those that have emerged through evidence based research.
- 3.11 Overall, delivering significant investment in Belfast, through the implementation of the LDP, is likely to have a positive impact on all Section 75 groups, both directly and indirectly by contributing to the economic, social and environmental regeneration and wellbeing of the city. The Council believes that the future LDP will not have specific adverse impacts for any Section 75 group but the analysis of available data and research and the consultation will help to address any key inequalities which the LDP may help to address.

## 4. Analysis of available data and research

- 4.1 This EQIA has been carried out utilising a wide range of both quantitative and qualitative data, from sources both within and external to the council. Much of the general research relates to Northern Ireland as a whole but is particularly pertinent to Belfast. Wherever possible, data from the Council's own Section 75 monitoring systems has been included.
- 4.2 The analysis is presented under the headings of the nine Section 75 equality categories. However, these headings simply provide a framework; it is acknowledged that the effects of the LDP will be different for each individual person and will not necessarily relate to a specific Section 75 characteristic.
- 4.3 As noted in **Section 3**, the LDP Objectives are:
- **Shaping a Liveable Place** – promoting development which enhances the health and well-being of communities, neighbourhoods and places.
  - **Creating a Vibrant Economy** – a strengthened Belfast as the regional economic driver.
  - **A Smart Connected and Resilient Place** – improving connectivity supporting the efficient movement of people, goods, energy and information to create a dynamic innovative 21<sup>st</sup> century city attractive to investors, businesses, residents and visitors, and encourage the capacity for adaption to environmental challenges and the transition to a low carbon city.
  - **A Green and Active Place** – a protected, enhanced and attractive natural setting comprising the surrounding hills, coastline, Belfast Lough and the Lagan Valley Regional Park by reinforcing their uniqueness and accessibility to all who live, work and enjoy the City.
- 4.4 Recognising the strategic nature of this investment across the city, the analysis within this EQIA focuses on the potential of the LDP across the aims and objectives.
- 4.5 Overall delivering significant investment in Belfast, through the creation of the LDP, is likely to have a positive impact on all Section 75 groups, both directly and indirectly by contributing to the economic, social and environmental regeneration and wellbeing of the city. Belfast is the capital city of Northern Ireland and is acknowledged as the economic driver for the region.

Overall investment in the city has the potential to grow the city's attractiveness as a place to live in, work in, visit, study in or invest in. A more competitive economy in Belfast will bring the potential for increased prosperity to all residents and the potential for more sustainable employment. The Council believes that the LDP will have the potential for positive impacts for Section 75 groups.

- 4.6 The main purpose of this EQIA is to ensure that, in identifying and taking forward future planning policy within the LDP, the Council will give due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity by addressing inequalities within and between Section 75 groups. It is therefore important to identify clearly the key inequalities which the future LDP has the potential to address.
- 4.7 Recognising the strategic level of the future LDP, the analysis within the screening focuses on the potential impact of the future Planning Policy across these identified outcomes and priorities.
- 4.8 In preparation of the POP the Council has prepared a series of position papers on a wide range of planning related subjects.
- 4.9 The background position papers have been used to inform the main planning issues particular to the Belfast City Council Area as contained within the POP. These are available to view at [www.Belfastcity.gov.uk/Planning](http://www.Belfastcity.gov.uk/Planning) alongside the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment) Interim Report.
- 4.10 For ease of reference and management of considerable data sources it was agreed, internally, to summarise the available data and research and analysis of actual and potential impacts in a diagrammatic format.

## Section 4&5 Analysis of data and research and Actual and potential impacts

Policy Type	Assessed Impact upon relevant Section 75 groups
<p><b>How will we Grow Belfast?</b></p> <p>GR1 – Supporting Economic Growth</p>	<p><b>Community and Religious Belief</b></p> <p>The identification of development opportunities and limits will be brought forward in the second stage of the Plan, the LPP.</p> <p><b>Political Opinion</b> Same as community and religious belief group above.</p> <p><b>Multiple Identities</b></p> <p>The ‘cumulative impact’ of multiple sources of disadvantage – low incomes, dependency on benefits, limited skills and qualifications, absence of role models – are likely to combine together to create long term inequalities in our society. Deprivation levels in Belfast vary considerably across the city having some of the least deprived wards in Northern Ireland. The majority of these deprived areas are situated in the west and north of Belfast.</p>
<p><b>Shaping a Liveable Place</b></p> <p>LP1 – Accommodating New Homes <b>Preferred Option</b></p> <p>LP2 – Affordable Housing Preferred Option</p> <p>LP3 – Ensuring an Appropriate Mix of Housing</p> <p>LP4 – Specialist Accommodation for Older People</p>	<p><b>Community and Religious belief</b></p> <p>The POP suggests that there is a strategic need for additional housing land zonings. However the distribution of any potential further zoned housing lands in settlements will be identified in the LPP. The approach in terms of facilitating quality residential developments states that housing developments of a certain size / number will be required to provide a minimum number of social houses. This policy approach may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p>The remit of the Council does not extend to the provision of health and education facilities. The POP suggests policy to allow community uses at</p>

LP5 – Traveller Accommodation	<p>accessible locations. Any issues regarding spatial / physical accessibility to services depending on location will be considered on a case by case basis when such applications are received.</p> <p>The POP supports the development of our public realm. The preferred approach suggested states that access for all is provided. This would ensure that any proposed development allows for a movement pattern that provides for pedestrians, cyclists, those with mobility difficulties and those relying on public transport. The public realm policy supports development that is adequately designed to promote personal safety and deter crime. This policy approach should be beneficial to all these equality groups in terms of safety and access.</p> <p><b>Political Opinion</b> As above.</p> <p><b>Racial Group</b> The POP has identified that there are no Traveller Accommodation needs for the District. Should a future need arise policy will be brought forward at the plan review stage. The POPs potential policy approach states that housing developments of a certain size / number will be required to provide a minimum social housing number. This policy approach may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><b>Age</b> The equitable split will allow for a greater choice in housing locations. Accessibility will be dependent on location with some areas likely to be less accessible to this group as it would require access to a car. The POP advocates a tailored housing policy for future planning applications to provide a range of house types, size tenures and integration with centres of employment, community services and blue and green infrastructure. The promotion of a range of house sizes, to cater for the needs of smaller</p>
LP6 – Manage Student Housing Provision	
LP7 – Quality Design in Residential Developments	
LP8 – Promotion of Health and Well-being	
LP9 – Community Infrastructure	
LP10 – Community Cohesion	
LP11 – Urban Design	
LP12 – Arterial Route / Gateways Design	
LP13 – Promoting Greater Connectivity	
LP14 – Tall Buildings	
LP15 – Archaeology and Built Heritage	
LP16 – Local Distinctiveness	
LP17 – Energy Efficient Design	



families and small households, may be beneficial to this group.

***Gender,***

The preferred housing option states that proposed developments should demonstrate a safe and sustainable environment for current and future occupiers by providing connections and linkages to schools, community facilities, and public transport networks that connect to the wider community and blue and green infrastructure to avoid insular developments. In terms of safety this potential policy approach may be beneficial to this group.

***Disability***

The promotion of a range of house types and sizes that are linked to the wider context should improve housing choice and accessibility for this group. The suggested housing policy, quality residential development in urban areas, requires proposed housing developments to adequately cater for motor vehicles but encourage other alternative modes of transport to meet the needs of those without a car.

***Dependency***

Housing policy to create quality residential development in urban areas will help provide a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures. This policy should afford greater choice of housing to those with dependants. Suggested minimum public and private open spaces (garden areas) for developments may be beneficial to this group.

***Multiple Identities***

The difficulties faced by lone parents in particular the situation facing women in respect of economic and social well-being. Likewise, the older population may face particular difficulties in accessing public services.

	<b>Conclusion: Impacts of Housing</b> The council is satisfied that the quantum of existing housing zonings will cater for all the above equality groups. The distribution of additional housing zonings will be identified in the LPP. The council are satisfied that the suggested housing policies meets the needs of all in terms of ensuring the creation of safe and accessible housing developments. The POPs preferred policy approach should ensure a range of housing capable of meeting the needs of families, the elderly and disabled, and single people at locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities will positively impact on the above equality groups at this stage.

<b>Creating a Vibrant Economy</b>	<b>Community/ Religious Belief and Racial Groups</b>
<p>VE1 - Employment Land Supply</p> <p>VE2 - Strategic Employment Locations</p> <p>VE3 - Existing Employment Land</p> <p>VE4 - Supporting Development Needs of Higher Education Institutions</p> <p>VE5 – Network and Hierarchy of Centres</p> <p>VE6 – Centre boundaries</p> <p>VE7 – Vitality and Viability of Centres</p> <p>VE8 – City Centre Boundary</p> <p>VE9 – City Centre Primary Retail Area</p> <p>VE10 –Leisure and Tourism in the City Centre</p> <p>VE11 – City Centre Living</p> <p>VE12 – Shared Space in the City Centre</p> <p>VE13 – City Centre Development Opportunities</p>	<p>The POP has identified that at least 46,000 new jobs will be created within Belfast over the plan period and this will require between 486,400 - 608,000 hectares of employment land. This employment land is to be spread across the city with a significant proportion of those jobs being concentrated in the city centre. However the location and need for further economic land zonings is something that the council wishes to investigate further.</p> <p>The POPs proposed retail strategy promotes city centre first for retail and other main city centre uses. The city and district centres tend to be relatively neutral areas and the council is satisfied that the retail strategy will not disadvantage this group. The pop identifies a retail hierarchy, however town centre boundaries and district centre boundaries will be reviewed at the LPP stage.</p> <p>The POP promotes the importance of tourism to the city’s economy and places a particular emphasis on the clustering facilities such as hotels in the city centre where they can be close to museums, restaurants and other attractions. Given the perceived neutrality of the city centre, all groups will benefit from access to such resources and employment opportunities</p> <p><b>Political Opinion</b> Same as religious belief group above.</p> <p><b>Age</b> Employment land is located throughout the city and therefore there would be reasonable accessibility to employment opportunities.</p>

	<p><b>Gender</b></p> <p>The POPs suggested policy allowing localised employment opportunities at accessible locations may be beneficial to women in particular for those with dependants for whom it may be more suitable to work on a part time / evening time basis. The POP states that proposals to improve attractions, amenities and accessibility to town centres will be brought forward in the LPP.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Business and Industrial Development</b></p> <p>The Council is satisfied that by focusing employment land at accessible locations will help to provide employment opportunities for all. The POP may be able to facilitate new jobs at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car. The POP promotes diversity in the range of jobs recognising the importance of employment in the primary sector secondary and tertiary sectors.</p> <p>The approach of supporting a variety of economic lands and diversity in range of jobs will have a positive impact on all section 75 groups.</p> <p>The council is satisfied that the proposed retail strategy will not disadvantage the above equality groups as the city centre is considered neutral.</p>
<p><b>Smart Connected Resilient Place</b></p> <p>SCR1 – Telecommunication Infrastructure</p> <p>SCR2 – Water and Sewage Infrastructure</p> <p>SCR3 – Electricity and Gas Infrastructure</p>	<p><b>Community and Religious Belief</b></p> <p>The POP Transportation Strategy identifies the key policy areas including, protecting new transportation schemes, protection of disused transport routes, protection of town centre car parks and access to protected routes and other roads.</p> <p>The POP recognises the importance of facilitating the development of</p>

<p>SCR4 – Walking, Cycling and Sustainable Modes of Transport</p> <p>SCR5 – Public Transport Network</p> <p>SCR6 – Road Network</p> <p>SCR7 – Parking Demand Management</p> <p>SRC8 – Environmental Quality</p> <p>SRC9 – Mitigating Environmental Change</p> <p>SCR10 – Renewable Energy</p> <p>SRC11 – Adapting to Environmental Change</p> <p>SRC12 – Flood Risk</p> <p>SCR13 – Waste Infrastructure</p>	<p>infrastructure and telecommunications. The provision of public utilities within the plan area is primarily the responsibility of a number of government Departments and statutory bodies as well as the District Councils, however the private sector is playing an increasingly important role. The LDP will not designate or zone specific sites for public utilities, however it will seek to locate new developments which maximise the efficient use of utility infrastructure whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The council are therefore satisfied that the suggested utilities policy approach will not disadvantage this group.</p> <p><b>Political opinion</b> As above.</p> <p><b>Age and Gender Groups</b> The POP supports the reduction in travel times within Belfast and advocates for the protection of road users and improve road safety for car users, public transport, cyclists and walkers. This policy approach should be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><b>Disability</b> The POP promotes accessibility for all, to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are given particular consideration in particular new transportation schemes. This policy approach should be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Transportation</b> The Council is satisfied that the proposed transportation strategy and policy approaches to infrastructure provision identified in the POP will not disadvantage any of the equality groups listed above.</p>
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<b>Green and Active Place</b>	<b>Community and Religious Belief</b>
GA1 – Open Space, Sport, and Outdoor Recreation Preferred Option	<p>The Council's preferred option is to protect existing open space and zone new open space zonings at the LPP stage. Open space provides opportunities for sport and recreation, but also act as important transport corridors, which is especially important for those people who do not have access to a private motor car. Therefore the Council is satisfied that the preferred options in relation to open space and recreation will not disadvantage this group.</p> <p>The preferred option for housing in the countryside is similar in spirit to the outgoing PPS21 but has been tailored to reflect the particular needs of Belfast. This option will be available to those living in the countryside as a whole, not in particular policy areas and therefore will not disadvantage any Section 75 group.</p> <p><b>Political Opinion</b> As above.</p> <p><b>Age</b> The POP will facilitate leisure on opportunity sites throughout the city. This should ensure that new open space areas and sporting facilities are convenient and accessible to this group. The POP aims to facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of transportation in accordance with the community plan.</p> <p><b>Disability</b> Same as Age group above.</p>
GA2 Provision of New Open Space and Green Corridors Preferred Option	
GA3– Natural Heritage Preferred Option	
GA4 - Trees Preferred Option	

	<p><b>Dependency</b> The POP provides suggested policy for the protection and safeguarding of public open space and requires the provision of open space in housing developments and where appropriate (over 25 units or sites 1 hectare or greater) equip it a for children’s playground. The policy approach will be beneficial to this group.</p>
	<p><b>Multiple Identities</b> Cumulative impact of multiple inequalities as evidenced by health and lifestyle indicators. Deprived areas have lower life expectancy, worse health outcomes, suffer from increased morbidity and mortality, have substantially higher levels of teenage pregnancy than the region’s average and perform less well in terms of educational outcomes.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Open Space and Recreation</b> The Council recognise that quantum and distribution of children’s play areas may disadvantage some of the equality groups and because of their location, access may not be convenient for all. The deficiency in children’s play as identified in the POP will be addressed in the LPP. The POP recognises that Belfast benefits from numerous informal and passive recreation facilities which are well distributed throughout the city. Therefore the Council considers that none of the above equality groups are disadvantaged by the POP.</p>

## 5. Overall impacts

- 5.1 The implementation of the LDP will make an important contribution in terms of the development of the key planning issues affecting the city in terms of possible approaches to new development and planned growth. In addition they support the aspirations set out in the emerging Belfast Agenda. The Council believes that the LDP- POP will not have specific adverse impacts for any Section 75 group but the analysis of available data and research shows that there are a number of key inequalities which the Plan may help to address.
- 5.2 The main purpose of this EQIA is to ensure that the LDP through the Council and delivery agents will have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity by addressing inequalities within and between Section 75 groups.
- 5.3 Feedback from the consultation process will help to inform and highlight the importance of building equality implications into the future development of the draft LDP.
- 5.4 The importance of evidence and information to inform planning and decision making was also highlighted. Understanding these impacts will be important moving forward.



## 6. Consideration of measures

6.1 The LDP is likely to have a positive impact on all Section 75 groups, both directly and indirectly, by contributing to economic growth and social progress. It is anticipated, however, that some areas of development may have a differential impact on a number of Section 75 groups in a positive manner by addressing recognised need and these are highlighted below.

- Future Planning Policy within the LDP will help the city to maximise inward investment and encourage economic growth. This economic growth will provide opportunities to target under-represented groups such as women, young people and disabled people.
- Future policies will be developed to help reduce segregation and promote inclusion and integration of different communities.
- Seek to ensure that services and facilities are more accessible. This will have particular benefits for those groups who currently experience barriers to access, including people from BME communities, migrant workers, disabled people, older people and people with dependants.
- Support and direct future investment including early years and lifelong learning projects targeted at young people and older people by enabling better use of local parks and leisure facilities.

6.2 The potential impacts of the LDP will only be realised when the Plan is fully developed. Equality Assessment will be undertaken at each stage of the LDP process.

## 7. Consultation

- 7.1 Belfast City Council is committed to consultation which is timely, open and inclusive, and conducted in accordance with the Equality Commission's Guiding Principles.
- 7.2 The consultation process in respect of this EQIA will last for a period of 12 weeks starting on 26th January 2017.
- 7.3 All Equality Scheme consultees will be notified of the availability of this report and invited to comment. The public will be made aware of the EQIA and information about the EQIA will be placed on the council's website; comments will be welcomed from any individual with an interest in the proposals.
- 7.4 All consultation documents can be made available in hard copy, email and alternative formats and can be accessed on the Council's website at: [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/planning](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/planning)
- 7.5 As much background information as possible has been included within this report. If there is any information which has not been provided, the Council will make every effort to do so on request. If any consultee has difficulty accessing the background information the Council will consider providing summaries in other formats or explaining issues on a face to face basis.
- 7.6 To facilitate this process you may wish to consider the following questions:
- 1 To what extent do you agree with the key findings and conclusions outlined in this document?**
  - 2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that all potential impacts have been adequately identified within the Preferred Options Paper?**
  - 3 What suggestions would you like to make to address any of the issues raised in the draft EQIA or any of the concerns you may have?**
  - 4 Do you have any other comments you would like to make on the draft EQIA report or any of the nine categories?**

7.7 All comments and queries regarding this report should be addressed to:

**Address** Keith Sutherland  
Development Planning and Policy Manager  
Local Development Plan Team  
Directorate of Planning and Place  
Belfast City Council  
Cecil Ward Building  
4-10 Linenhall Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8BP

**Telephone:** 03002007830

**Email:** [planning@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:planning@belfastcity.gov.uk)

**Survey:** An opportunity to respond electronically to the EQIA is available as an online survey on the Councils website at <https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/planning-and-place/eqia-pop>

**All comments are welcome and will be accepted in any format**

## 8. Further Steps

- 8.1. The Local Developmental Plan in all the stages including this POP report has at its core the aim of improving the wellbeing of all Belfast citizens. The plan making and decision making must balance and integrate a variety of complex, social, economic environmental and other matters that are in the long term public interest. To assist with the above mentioned the future LDP has at its core planning principles: -Improving Health and Wellbeing; Creating and Enhancing Shared Space; Supporting Good Design and Positive Place Making and Preserving and Improving the Built and Natural Environment.
- 8.2 The future LDP has the potential to not only promote equality of opportunity and good relations but to tackle barriers and addressing of investing in infrastructure.
- 8.3 At the end of the consultation period, the EQIA report will be revised to take account of all comments received from consultees. The EQIA report, together with a full report of the consultation process, will then be submitted to the council and it's to assist them to make final decisions on the LDP-POP. The decisions made will be incorporated into a final EQIA report which will set out the consideration given to the impact of alternative policies and mitigating actions. This will complete Step 6 of the EQIA process.
- 8.4 The final EQIA report will be made available through the council's website. Information will also be made available to publications and media associated with the Section 75 categories. The council will ensure that information is available in accessible formats in a timely fashion, paying particular attention to the special needs of particular groups within each equality category.
- 8.5 The next stage of the EQIA is Phase 2 - draft LDP -Plan Strategy it is at this stage a monitoring and evaluation framework will apply.
- 8.6 The results of ongoing monitoring of the equality impacts will be reviewed on an annual basis and included in the annual review on progress to the Equality Commission. This review will be published on the Council's website. This will complete Step 7 of the EQIA process.
- 8.7 If the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that there has been a greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the council and its community planning partners will take steps to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.