

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

1. Title	
Title: Rother Valley Country Park – Levelling Up Project	
Directorate: Regeneration and Environment	Service area: RIDO / Green Spaces
Lead person: Lorna Vertigan / Neil Best	Contact number: 07748142833 / 07917086428
Is this a: Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If other, please specify:	
Proposal for the development and improvement of Thrybergh Country Park (Phase 1A).	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
<p>Rother Valley Country Park has been a key asset for Rotherham for many years and is relied upon for free-to-use green space for local people to visit to get exercise, make use of the facilities and enjoy the outdoors.</p> <p>Grant funding via a successful Levelling Up Fund bid has been approved and will be used to modernise the part facilities. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new, unique, state of the art lakeside building including café and function space designed to preserve and enhance the natural country park setting that will transform the hospitality offer. • The new building will improve the quality of visitor amenities and enable additional functions and events. • New and improved parking facilities will provide safe and accessible bays. • New high quality public realm and seating areas with views across the park and the lake will create an attractive and peaceful setting for visitors and promote enjoyment of the outdoors. • A new play area will provide opportunities for play and development in the centre of the park. • A new rationalised layout will improve wayfinding and accessibility. • The improvements will attract additional events to the already popular location.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
<p>Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?</p> <p><i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i></p>	X	
<p>Could the proposal affect service users?</p>	X	
<p>Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?</p> <p><i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i></p>	X	
<p>Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?</p> <p><i>(It is important that the Council is transparent, and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i></p>		X
<p>Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?</p> <p><i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i></p>		X
<p>Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?</p> <p><i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i></p>		X
<p>If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason</p>		
<p>N/A</p>		

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above, please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above, please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

We have undertaken the key screening assessment and worked through each PCG's. Conversations with representatives from key community groups were ongoing to obtain their views on the best ways to mitigate any negative impacts as a result of our proposals.

- **Key findings**

Negative impacts:

Temporary impact on access to / around the site for those with limited mobility, whilst the works are ongoing.

Limited / no facilities during the works for anyone with a condition which requires close proximity to WCs (e.g. Crohn's disease)

Potential impact on those with limited sight due to reduced or changing lighting during the works.

Construction noise / dust / vibration may be distressing for the neurodiverse.

Potential impact on both old and young park visitors during the works as a result of all the aforementioned items.

Benefits:

The improvement of the facilities at Rother Valley will actually improve access to and around the park, as the development will see a state-of-the-art café, improved parking provision, and improved lighting. The new site layout will also improve orientation and wayfinding thus improving accessibility.

Any potential negative impacts will arise during the construction works, which include demolition, landscaping and new-build. These activities may result in short-term impacts including noise, dust, vibration, disruption of the existing pathways / wayfinding and a lack of public facilities (WCs).

Disruption during the demolition and build process will be considered with the successful contractor, and plans put in place to mitigate any impact on PCG's.

- **Actions**

Our key action is to undertake a Part B Equality Analysis Form which will consider the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access in design process – i.e. level access to the café / provision of accessible WCs • Disabled access during construction process – maintaining clear pathways and keeping noise and disturbance to a minimum • On completion, the café facilities are inclusive and comply with Council policy and procedure • Request Equal Opportunities statements from all partners (i.e. successful main works contractor) 	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	September 2022 (already in progress)
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	November 2022
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Rory Battye, Business Development Officer, Rotherham Development and Investment Office

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Lorna Vertigan	RMBC – Project Sponsor	13.04.2023
Megan Hinchliff	RMBC – Project Manager	13.04.2023

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	November 2022 Updated April 2023
Report title and date	Rother Valley Country Park – Levelling Up Project
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	N/A

Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement

equality@rotherham.gov.uk

13.04.2023

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, services and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: LUF Full Business Case: Rother Valley Country Park	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 13 th April 2023	
Directorate: Regeneration and Environment	Service area: RIDO
Lead Manager: Lorna Vertigan RIDO/ Neil Best	Contact number: 07748142833 (Lorna Vertigan)
<p>Is this a:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>If other, please specify:</p> <p>Proposal for the development and improvement of Rother Valley Country Park (Levelling Up Fun project)</p>	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (e.g. service user, managers, service specialist)
Neil Best	RMBC	Project Lead
Lorna Vertigan	RMBC	Project Sponsor
Rory Battye	RMBC	Project Manager

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known):

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, other groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.

This Business Case proposal outlines the Rother Valley Country Park Levelling Up Funded project that will:

- Secure outline planning consent for development in the park
- Appoint a principal contractor to facilitate the main works
- Progress enabling works and relocation of key operational activities
- Construct a new lakeside state-of-the-art café
- Improve the external area immediately surrounding the café to include seating areas and a new play equipment
- Improve the public realm and create new amenity space
- Create and enhance parking facilities in the park including the provision of additional vehicle charging points

An initial screening exercise identified that there could be minor ‘implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community.’ This has triggered a full analysis to identify and mitigate against any potential negative implications.

The analysis identified the potential impacts on the following Protected Characteristic Groups (PCGs):

- Age (accessibility for older people, safety for young children)
- Disability (accessibility during construction, design scheme)
- Pregnancy and Maternity (accessibility during construction, design scheme, access to services)
- Carers (accessibility)

Mitigations on negative impacts are discussed below.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Information is available on the local area from the following sources:

- 2021 Census.
- Integrated Household Survey (National Office for Statistics)
- Birth Summary Tables, England and Wales 2018, UK Statistics Authority
- Rotherham Data Hub (<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/data/socio-economic>)

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

No

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

Initial discussions have been held within the project team to discuss the likely impacts on PCG's throughout the project stages, including construction and into full use.

There has been liaison internally with the Equalities team to ensure all aspects have been considered and all impacts (both potential and actual) have been identified.

Contact has been made with representatives of key stakeholder groups to brief them of the proposals and understand any positive or negative effects that they anticipate as a result of the project.

3 x consultation events have been held onsite at the park to give the public an opportunity to learn more about the proposals and offer their feedback. These events were successful and had circa. Two hundred visitors.

All of the actions above will be further reviewed once the project progresses, and further considerations will be taken account of in the scheme design, construction and management of the site:

- Accessibility (physical accessibility, access to information, accessible design)
- Safety and security (particularly during construction where there may be diversions in place)
- Environment (impact of construction and operation on noise, air quality and overall feel of the local environment)
- Severance (between communities and as a result of construction routes); and
- Employment (creation of employment opportunities – both temporary during construction and permanent during operation).

It is recommended that the Equality Analysis process is reviewed and updated at appropriate stages throughout the project to determine any further likely impacts, as a result of Phase 1A of the development.

<p>Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Customer and audience research and consultation has taken place across Rother Valley Country Park in preparation of the original funding bid and throughout the lifetime of the project. Both operations undertake a biennial survey of existing park users, building a profile of existing user habits and preferences and providing feedback and consultation on future developments. In Spring 2020, QA Research was commissioned to undertake detailed visitor surveys with a focus on both regular visitors and those who do not currently frequent either park, with more than four hundred in depth consultations completed.</p> <p>In Summer/Autumn 2022, additional engagement with key stakeholders and visitors to the park was carried out.</p> <p>In November 2022 statutory consultation on the planning application was carried out, planning permission was approved in February 2023.</p>
<p>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Engagement has taken place with the project team including the Park Managers and Rangers to determine the most appropriate design solutions based on user requirements. This has taken place throughout the design process and will continue to be monitored.</p>

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups?

Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

This process will seek to ensure that positive outcomes on PCGs are maximised, and any negative impacts are mitigated appropriately.

The improvement of the facilities (café and surrounding area) at Rother Valley will improve access to the café so that all PCGs can enjoy the park and make the most of the mental and physical benefits associated with spending time outdoors.

The proposals for the new café are fully accessible in accordance with Part M of the current building regulations and will include fully accessible unisex WC facilities and lowered counter sections to account for wheelchair users.

Overall, the improvement of the levels / surfacing around the café, and the café floors, lighting and wayfinding will benefit all PCG's once the site is operational by being entirely

user-friendly, particularly those with accessibility requirements including pregnant women, young children / older people and those with a disability.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

There will potentially be access issues during the construction phase of the project. This may be an impact for those with a disability, pregnant women, carers and young children / older people.

It is recommended that the successful contractor appointed to provide the main works adopts responsible and considerate contractor procedures, including noise reduction, dust / vibration mitigation (especially during demolition), clear fencing off of works, working within particular hours and appropriate signage / lighting.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

Once the project is completed, parking facilities, accessible visitor amenities, surfacing and wayfinding and the quality and variety of the hospitality offer on site will be greatly improved, and so access and facilities for pregnant women / carers and those with mobility issues or a disability will be enhanced – e.g. by providing facilities which are on one level and so are easy to navigate using a wheelchair / pushchair. These improvements will also benefit young children / older people who may require clearer wayfinding and even surfacing to navigate around the site.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations?

May also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another.

It is envisaged that the scheme will have a positive impact on community relations. The project will upgrade the existing facilities of a key community provision and safeguard its use as a popular green space for years to come.

Communication and engagement with key stakeholders and local groups representing PCGs impacted will continue as required throughout the programme and good relations will be maintained with the neighbouring businesses via regular communication and mutually agreed access routes during construction.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Rother Valley Country Park
Directorate and service area: RIDO / Green Spaces
Lead Manager: Lorna Vertigan/ Neil Best
Summary of findings:
<p>A Screening and Full Equality Analysis has been completed to ensure that positive outcomes on Protected Characteristic Groups are maximised, and any negative impacts are mitigated appropriately. The main considerations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing a modern café with safe and secure facilities that is DDA compliant• Creating a positive impact on the park as a whole, safeguarding its status as a key community asset• Ensuring the impacts on PCGs of the construction works are fully considered so that the main contractor can act responsibly <p>These will be further reviewed once the project progresses, and further considerations will be taken account of in the scheme design, construction and management of the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility (physical accessibility, access to information, accessible design)• Safety and security (particularly during construction where there may be diversions in place)• Environment (impact of construction and operation on noise, air quality and overall feel of the local environment)• Severance (between communities and as a result of construction routes).

Appendix 6 – Rother Valley Equalities Impact assessment Parts A and B

It is recommended that the Equality Analysis process is reviewed and updated at appropriate stages throughout the project to determine any further impacts likely as a result of the development.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Accessible café designed and built: work with the architects, consultants and Park Manager to create a cafe that is well-designed, accessible and safe.	A/D/PM/C	October 2025
Accessibility around the site during construction: work with successful main works contractor to ensure paths and access routes are not blocked or alternatives found for those who are pregnant/carers or have a disability.	A/D/PM/C	September 2024 – October 2025
Minimal negative impacts on park users as a result of the construction works including demolition – incl. noise / dust / vibration suppression. Potential for mitigation measures to be stated by contractor at tender stage.	All groups	September 2024 – October 2025
Review Assessment at various stages of the project in case other potential impacts emerge once planning is approved and contractor selected.	All groups	Throughout the project

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.		
Name	Job title	Date
Simon Moss	Assistant Director, Regeneration and Environment	
Councillor Taylor	Cabinet Member, Regeneration and Environment	

7. Publishing	
<p>The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.</p> <p>If this Equality Analysis relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.</p> <p>A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk or record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.</p>	
Date Equality Analysis completed	13 th April 2023
Report title and date	Full Business Case: Rother Valley Country Park Project
Date report sent for publication	28 April 2023
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	13 April 2023