

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).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title

Title: Land Acquisition for Flood Alleviation Schemes

Directorate:
Regeneration and Environment

Service area:
Highways and Flood Risk

Lead person:
Richard Jackson
Andy Saxton

Contact:
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Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify

Flood Alleviation Schemes

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

This screening is for the task of purchasing or leasing land for two Flood Alleviation Schemes which are detailed below. A further Cabinet Report will be submitted for the

construction phases of the schemes and any implications for Equality and Diversity will be considered at that time.

The proposed Flood Alleviation Schemes at Whiston Brook and Eel Mires Dike will reduce flooding and the impacts of flooding on the villages of Whiston and Laughton Common.

The flood protection will protect against overflowing riverbanks (fluvial flooding) and overwhelmed drainage systems (pluvial flooding) caused by heavy rainfall.

Proposed works: Whiston

Worrygoose Lane Retaining Wall

- Work will involve building a secondary pipe of channel (culvert) in parallel to the existing one to increase the capacity of water that passes under the road.

Flood Storage Reservoir

- Building an embankment around Moorhouse Lane and Little Common Lane to form a Flood Storage Reservoir that will collect floodwater during flood events. The works will also include the realignment and diversion of the main Whiston Brook Channel to align with the proposed reservoir.

Upsizing Royds Moor Culvert

- The existing B4610 (Royds Moor Hill) is proposed to be replaced with a new and larger concrete box bridge that will allow increased water flows and reduce incidences of overtopping the B6410 during flood events.

Pinchmill Brook Wetland Area

- The right floodplain of Pinchmill Brook is proposed to become a wetland to counteract the backwater impact of the reservoir basin during high flow events. The wetland would be connected to the main Whiston Brook channel via an overflow channel.

Proposed works: Laughton Common

- New flood storage area, watercourse/culvert improvement works and surface management works alongside and within the watercourses that flow through Laughton Common
- The proposed works at Laughton Common are not as advanced as those at Whiston.

To be able to undertake the proposed works described above, the land acquisition/lease of five parcels of land under separate ownership is required at Whiston.

In terms of Laughton Common, one parcel of land was already available as it was on the market to be sold and it was prudent to acquire this now as a potential new owner would be hard to identify until the Land Registry title had been updated, which would take a minimum of six months. The new owner may not be amenable to selling their land if they have only recently acquired it.

The negotiations with the landowners to date has been extensive. In some cases, individual landowners were reluctant to engage with Rotherham council initially due to previous negative relationships. However, face to face negotiations have enabled relationships with individual landowners to be formed and enhanced for the benefit of the Flood Alleviation Schemes and for Rotherham Council as a whole.

Negotiations are currently continuing with these landowners and their representatives with some reaching final agreements stage.

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
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <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>		X
Could the proposal affect service users? <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>		X
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <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>		X
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		X

<i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		
<p>This Cabinet Report sets out the reasoning for progressing land purchase / leasing and continuing negotiations with existing land owners where their land is required to be utilised to accommodate the subsequent construction of the schemes. The purchase of land in itself does not have any implications for Equality and Diversity. A further Cabinet Report will be submitted for the construction phases of the schemes and any implications for Equality and Diversity will be considered at that time.</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?**
- **Key findings**
- **Actions**

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	
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Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	
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Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	
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5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Andy Saxton	Highway Asset and Drainage Manager	08.04.2025
Richard Jackson	Head of Service for Highways and Flood Risk	08.04.2025

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	08.04.2025
Report title and date	Land Acquisition for Flood Alleviation Schemes
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	14 th July 2024
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	2 nd May 2025