

## 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: Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) - Whitestone Solar Farm**

**Directorate: Regeneration and Environment**

**Service area: Planning and Building Control**

**Lead person: Nigel Hancock**

**Contact: Nigel Hancock or Lisa Brooks**

Is this a:

☒ **Strategy / Policy**
☐ **Service / Function**
☐ **Other**

**If other, please specify**

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

The delegation of all matters relating to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) and in particular the proposed Whitestone Solar Farm to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet member for Transport Jobs.

### 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? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		X
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		

An NSIP is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. They are projects of certain types, over a certain size, which are considered by the Government to be so big and nationally important that permission to build them needs to be given at a national level, by the responsible Secretary of State.

Instead of applying to the local authority for Planning Permission, the developer must apply to the Planning Inspectorate for a different permission called a Development Consent Order (DCO).

RMBC will therefore only be a statutory consultee, which will involve the submission of documents outlining potential impacts of the development for consideration by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and ultimately by the decision maker, the Secretary of State. It will be incumbent upon PINS to ensure relevant consultation is undertaken at appropriate stages of the NSIP process. Accordingly, whilst there may be an equalities

impact on individuals if the application is approved by the Secretary of State, the Council's duty is only to consider equalities at the point the Council prepare and submit documents to the Planning Inspectorate. Accordingly, there is no evidence to suggest that the decision to delegate these matters to the Strategic Director and Cabinet Member will negatively impact on the protected characteristics of an individual.

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?**

N/A

- **Key findings**

N/A

- **Actions**

N/A

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:

N/A

Date to complete your Equality Analysis:

N/A

Lead person for your Equality Analysis  
(Include name and job title):

N/A

#### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Nigel Hancock	Head of Planning and Building Control	12/06/2025

## 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](mailto: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.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	12/06/2025
<b>Report title and date</b>	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) - Whitestone Solar Farm
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	