

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: Rotherham Markets and Central Library Redevelopment	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment	Service area: Regeneration
Lead person: Alice Bancroft	Contact number: 01709 249955
Is this a:	
☐ Strategy / Policy	☒ Service / Function
☐ Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
Redevelopment and repurposing of the Rotherham Markets Complex, new Central Library relocation and public realm improvements, delivering key components of the Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan 2017.
Previous public and stakeholder consultation for the Town Centre Masterplan and the Cultural Strategy identified a need to improve the cultural and leisure offer within Rotherham town centre. This involves improving the proximity and

connectivity between key amenities, upgrading the quality of the built environment and delivering inclusive access to the different facilities on offer. The scheme, together with the Forge Island development, will regenerate the town centre, creating new economic opportunities through well designed, lower carbon and inclusive spaces. This will have spillover effects for the wider town.

Bringing together the library, markets, food hall and gallery/ event spaces on one site will provide the potential to increase footfall and in turn help support and sustain the future of the library service and the market. It will also provide the opportunity for the library and markets to work closely together in order deliver a more compelling offer to a wider range of residents and visitors.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment freely open to all which encourages participation, creativity and mutual learning and support. This will be enhanced through more collaborative working internally and externally with partners and services such as the markets, colleges, local schools, voluntary organisations, to ensure that all needs are captured.

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		

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?**

The aim of the project is to increase use of the markets, library, the public realm and the wider town centre, to create accessible, thriving spaces through inclusive, community-led facilities. Throughout the entire design period, extensive engagement has been undertaken on emerging proposals with a wide range of stakeholders.

Following an 18-month programme of consultation and engagement, the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 was adopted by the Council on 11th November, 2020. A key priority detailed within the Strategy was to create a new library for the town centre. Following this a design brief was created through information collected by RMBC's libraries team on current uses, and ways to improve the service so that more people can benefit from the services on offer.

The project is designed with the service users fully in mind, through assessing and accommodating wherever possible, the requirements of different groups.

For the design of the markets, extensive consultation has been undertaken with businesses currently operating and trading from within the Markets complex itself.

Engagement with businesses operating within the Markets complex will continue through the redevelopment period with a range of relocations, both temporary and permanent, required to facilitate the planned works. Acknowledging this challenging and disruptive period, the Council approved a rent concession of 50% for market traders to be implemented from the Summer of 2023 and to be continued throughout the construction programmes duration. Engagement with traders will be undertaken more frequently as the decant period nears. The markets operations team are in daily dialogue with traders.

- **Key findings**

Despite the library at Riverside House delivering a good service, highly-valued by existing customers, borrowing and physical visits never recovered following the transfer of location from Walker Place in 2012. The relocation resulted in an immediate 31% reduction in the number of annual visits to the central library. Relocation to be part of a wider cultural hub will create more of a destination, with better public transport links, and walking and cycling routes. Schools and a number of community groups are located in the Eastwood area, which is convenient for the new site.

The Council's Improving Places Select Commission undertook a review of Rotherham Markets and the emerging redevelopment proposals as reported at the meeting held 07 June 2022. A key finding of this was:

That any re-design of markets spaces duly consider usability and aesthetics, availing market research to optimise spaces for inclusiveness and accessibility, and to make the offer especially attractive to students and young people.

For both services the aim is to provide spaces for different groups to meet, fostering a sense of community. There will be opportunities to host a range of events in the new facilities. This will positively benefit community cohesion within the town centre.

- **Actions**

A Part B was completed for the Rotherham Markets and Central Library Redevelopment in 2023. This covers all equality implications and has continued to be updated throughout the project.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	See above
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	See above
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Alice Bancroft Project Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	Job title	Date
Lorna Vertigan	Head of Regeneration	12/03/2026

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	10/03/2026
Report title and date	Date: May 2026 Title: Rotherham Market & Libraries
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	10.03.2026