

Waltham Forest Local Development Framework



Walthamstow Town Centre Area Action Plan - Preferred Options Equality Impact Assessment Report

August 2011

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

The Equalities Duties

The Council has statutory equalities duties in relation to gender, race and disabilities

The Council must have 'due regard' to the need in the following areas to:

Gender:

- eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment (including for transsexual people)
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women

Race:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Disability:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; **and**
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

NB Please note the additional disability duty to provide for positive discrimination for disabled persons to "level the playing field" with non-disabled persons, e.g. in accessing services through dedicated car parking spaces)

Name of policy/service/function	Waltham Forest Local Development Framework (LDF) – Walthamstow Town Centre Area Action Plan
Date of Assessment	June 2011
Directorate	Environment and Regeneration
Head of Service	Gordon Glenday
Name of Lead Assessor	Ian Butcher
Reason for completing assessment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Planning Policy 	

Context

What is the purpose or desired outcome of this policy/proposal from an equalities perspective?

This AAP sets out the vision for the centre together with objectives, policies and site proposals to guide its future regeneration and growth. This AAP aims to enhance Walthamstow's character and environment, provide new homes, promote sustainable development and improve the quality and range of facilities and services available to residents, businesses and visitors. The AAP aims to revitalise deteriorating areas of the centre and identify the significant development sites and investment opportunities within the centre. The AAP will provide a coordinated approach in order to manage the town centres regeneration, growth and development over the next 15 years. From an equalities perspective, the documents will seek to ensure regeneration occurs in a manner that secures maximum gains/benefits for all sectors of society, and that these benefits are shared equally among people with different race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion / faith, or any disability.

Stage 1 Gathering and Reviewing Evidence

What are the equality issues including barriers to access or success that are relevant to understanding the equality dimension of this policy/proposal?

(Look at race, gender, disability, faith, age, sexual orientation, trans-gender and any other potentially disadvantaging factors such as ex-offender background, being a gypsy or traveller, being a looked-after child)

Gender

- *The total population of the Walthamstow Town Centre and its immediate surrounding area is 25,701, which is around 10.6% of the total population of Waltham Forest. The proportion according to gender*

- *Walthamstow includes a significant number of local community areas which are amongst the top 5% most deprived areas in London. Moreover, a relatively high proportion of local residents are without qualifications and skill levels are significantly below the London average. Unemployment has been consistently higher in Walthamstow compared to surrounding areas. Policies which include jobs brokerage and training will help this sector of society.*
- *Data from the Local Economic Assessment (2010) suggests a higher instance of unemployment among young men than women. Unemployment has been consistently higher within Walthamstow compared to the Borough or London as a whole (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007).*
- *Walthamstow is within the top 5% most deprived, in terms of crime, in London. Fear of crime is higher amongst the female gender as evidenced in the resident's panel report 2009. Policy which improve community safety will reduce future crime and fear of crime.*
- *Generally females are in greater housing need. ONS data suggests that the number of single parents' households in the borough is 14.5%. Increasing the supply of housing and particularly affordable housing will benefit this group.*
- *Women's travel patterns are understood to be generally shorter than men's. The provision of a range of shops and services in an accessible new neighbourhood centre within Walthamstow will therefore be a major benefit to this sector of society.*
- *Women with families are also more likely to use open spaces and parks (as set out in the Councils Open Space Strategy). Providing new open spaces and improving public access to open spaces such as Walthamstow Wetlands will therefore also benefit them.*
- *The Local Economic Assessment (2010) has shown that unemployment in the borough is much higher amongst men (8.6%) than women (3.4%). Protecting and encouraging new employment opportunities will therefore help out of work males in the area secure gainful employment.*

Race

- *The local population is ethnically diverse, with larger proportions of all non-white ethnic groups than the Borough, London or England averages. The ethnic profile of Walthamstow Town Centre differs slightly to the other regeneration areas in that the profiles of all ethnic groupings apart from White (other) and Asians is below the*

- *Within the town centre has a high proportion of households are classified as overcrowded (22.4%). Many of these homes are occupied by BME groups. Policies to increase the number of larger homes will benefit this sector of society (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007).*
- *Half of all households in the borough are BME. According to the HNMA (2007) 61.8% of households said their home was inadequate, citing that it was too small. Within Walthamstow, a high proportion of households are classified as overcrowded (22.4%). Many of these homes are occupied by BME groups. 77.4% of BME households, who wished to move but stated an inability to do so, specified this was due to being unable to afford to buy a home. As such housing policies which seek to increase housing supply and which increase the amount of affordable housing will benefit this group. This policy will reduce the level of overcrowding in this group and provide more housing options. Development within the centre will create community cohesion and reduce isolation. Housing will also be highly accessible.*
- *Walthamstow includes a significant number of local community areas which are amongst the top 5% most deprived areas in London (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007). BME groups are disproportionately more likely to be living in poverty than their white counterparts. Policy which create job opportunities and training and diversify the local economy will therefore benefit these groups.*
- *Unemployment is highest amongst Asian or Asian/ British (Local Economic Assessment 2010). Increasing job opportunities and training for this sector of the community will particularly be enhanced.*
- *Travel pattern of black minority ethnic groups show high share of public transport trips. Therefore, this policy will benefit this equality group. Providing a range of attractive travel options within the centre to support economic regeneration and access to jobs, reducing car dependency by promoting sustainable modes of travel and coordinating land use and transport planning will benefit with community group.*
- *Evidence suggests BME groups are less likely to drive cars than white counterparts; therefore they will benefit policies which prioritise sustainable transport methods such as walking, cycling and public transport within the centre.*
- *Improving access to existing open spaces could benefit BME groups due to the benefits it brings in terms of improving physical and mental health. The 2006 AESOP study of ethnicity and psychosis (Department*

- There is a good mix of ethnically owned businesses within Walthamstow town centre which reflects the diverse local population. Indeed, the business survey identified that 28% of businesses were operated by the Pakistani and Asian British population, 26% operated by the White British population and 10% operated by the Indian and Asian British population. The remaining 36% are operated by people with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. *Policies which restrict uses within the centre such as such as Hot Food Takeaways could disproportionately adversely affect this group.*

Age

- *Walthamstow has a relatively low skilled labour force with below average qualifications. 28.4% of the population have no qualifications compared to 23.7% in London. This results in an above average proportion of local residents in low skilled jobs, with 16.9% of the population in the bottom two occupation groups compared to 13.9% in London (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007).*
- *Walthamstow has a larger proportion of young people than the Borough or London as a whole. The proportion of the population within the 0-17 year old age cohort increased at a faster rate within the Inner Zone than within the Borough, London or England. In addition, GLA population projections expect that the 0-15 year old age cohort will see the fastest rate of growth (0.5%) between 2004 and 2016(Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007).*
- *The proportion of the older population in Walthamstow is declining at a faster rate than the Borough or London as whole.*
- *Walthamstow has a greater proportion (65.5%) of the population of working age (between 18 and 65) than the Borough (64.3%), London (65.0%) or England (61.5%) (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007).*
- *Unemployment has been consistently higher within Walthamstow compared to the Borough or London as a whole.*
- *In High Street Ward – 68.5% of JSA claimants are aged 25-49, which is the highest proportion in the borough (Local Economic Assessment, 2010).*
- *Fear of crime affects both older and younger people, as evidenced in the resident's panel report 2009. This found that elderly people would avoid going out after dark, whilst younger people found teenagers hanging around shops a problem. Policies which improve community safety will reduce future crime and fear of crime.*

- *Young people and elderly are often more dependent on modes other than the private car. Active promotion of cycling and walking in circumstances and places where they feel unsafe could have a negative effect on elderly people in circumstance and places where they feel unsafe.*
- *Provision of new education facilities particularly at Mission Grove School and improved access to open space, will be of benefit to the areas young population.*
- *Policies which seek to protect and increase the level of social infrastructure and entertainment uses such as youth and community centres and cinemas within the centre will benefit the young, working age population, and the elderly; who may be less mobile. Development within the centre will create community cohesion and reduce isolation. Such facilities will also be highly accessible.*
- *Promoting a range of homes, including smaller units close to the station, will benefit young couples and single person households in providing for their needs.*
- *Increasing the amount of family housing within the centre will not benefit older people.*

Disability

- *Markhouse Ward has one of the most significant Asian communities in the borough, and has a fairly high proportion of young IB claimants (Local Economic Assessment, 2010).*
- *Walthamstow is within the top 5% most deprived, in terms of crime, in London. Fear of crime is higher amongst those with disabilities as evidenced in the resident's panel report 2009. Policies which improve community safety will reduce future crime and fear of crime.*
- *According to the HNMA (2007) 24.2% of households in the borough include a member with a disability. 44.1% of these with a disability suffer from mobility difficulties and 6.2% contained a member who is a wheel chair user. The requirement that homes, shops and other facilities should be accessible to all members of the community and meet the needs of residents throughout their changing life cycle will benefit this group.*
- *Disability may limit travel options and may make more difficult to access opportunities and to travel safely and conveniently. Active promotion of cycling and walking in circumstances and places where they feel unsafe could have a negative effect on disabled people in circumstance and places where they feel unsafe.*

- *Access to open space is understood to have benefits in terms of physical and mental health. In this respect, disability groups will therefore benefit from the new policies.*
- *The encouragement of new social infrastructure within opportunity sites, including health facilities, could enhance the availability of care for the disabled.*

Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgendered (LGBT)

- *Walthamstow is within the top 5% most deprived, in terms of crime, in London. Fear of crime is higher amongst those from GLBT groups as evidenced in the resident's panel report 2009. Policies which improve community safety will reduce future crime and fear of crime.*
- *According to research carried out by ELOP there is little safe or sheltered accommodation for LGBT people and what is available is allocated to young people. Older adults are particularly vulnerable in supported care and become invisible. Policies which aim to increase housing supply in the borough, particularly increasing housing choice for 'vulnerable communities' would further meet the needs of LGBT. Development near local services and facilities creates community cohesion and reduces isolation. The focus on family housing could have a negative effect on LGBT as this could restrict the supply of smaller and more affordable non self-contained housing options.*
- *LGBT groups are proportionally more likely to experience a mental illness (ELOP: East London's Lesbian and Gay Centre, 2010). The approach in the new policies to improve public access to existing open spaces and improve existing spaces will therefore benefit this group; due to the links between access to open space and physical and mental wellbeing.*

Faith

- *Christianity is the largest stated religion in Walthamstow, with Islam second largest (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007).*
- *Walthamstow is within the top 5% most deprived, in terms of crime, in London. Fear of crime is a concern amongst residents of being abused due to their religion. Policies which improve community safety will reduce future crime and fear of crime.*
- *The town centre has a high proportion of households which are classified as overcrowded (22.4%), as does Hoe Street (22.8%) (Walthamstow Socio-Economic Master plan 2007). Those from religious or faith groups will generally live in overcrowded housing and are therefore seeking to larger homes. The protection of family homes and seeking a larger proportion of larger homes in new development will provide for the needs of these groups. Development near local*

- *Policies encourage the development of new social infrastructure to help serve existing and new communities in the area. This could include the provision of new community and cultural centre, which will help promote community cohesion.*
- *Some faith groups housing needs are for larger properties, as different generations of the family live together. Policies within the documents aimed at providing for a range of household sizes throughout the Blackhorse Lane area will benefit these groups.*

Where are the gaps in this evidence; which groups or issues do we know least about?

- *No gaps in evidence have been identified.*

Where you have involved or consulted on this policy/proposal with equality stakeholders and what did they tell you?

- *No specific equality feedback was received as part of the consultation on issues and options.*

Stage 2. Making an Assessment of the Impact

Drawing on aims of the policy, the evidence of issues and barriers and the outcomes of involvement activity please list all potential **negative impacts** on;

- people from the equality groups
- the promotion of equality in general and
- the promotion of community cohesion.
 - *The construction phase of new developments is expected to result in an increase in air pollutants and noise, which will have a negative impact on people with health issues.*
 - *Furthermore, the level of development proposed in the area will inevitably lead to some increases in local traffic, which will have a negative impact on vulnerable road users, including children, older people, and the disabled.*
 - *Policies which restrict certain uses in the centre may have a disproportionately adverse affect BME groups. There are a large number of BME retailers and operators within the centre.*

- *Increasing and protecting the amount of larger 'family' housing within the centre will not benefit single, older and GLBT groups and potentially reduce their housing options.*

Please specify what action you could take to remove or partially mitigate each **negative impact**.

- *Disruption during the construction period of new developments will cause inconvenience to everyone, and should be only for a limited time. Eventually these negative impacts will be outweighed by the benefits new developments will bring. Where possible disruption will be minimised through section 106 agreements, which will limit hours of working and ensure that works are carried out in accordance with the considerate construction code. These will also be negotiated through the planning application process.*
- *The impact of developments on local traffic will be minimised by both documents focussing on providing for sustainable travel choices; since this will minimise any increase in car use in the area. Measures will include a requirement on new developments to provide and accord with a travel plan. This will be secured through the planning application process.*

If any of these **negative impacts** cannot be mitigated at all please provide justification for this.

- *The adverse impacts on BME retailers and operators may not be able to be overcome. Restricting the overconcentration of uses such as Hot Food Takeaways, Betting Shops, Off Licences etc are aimed at improving the vitality and viability of the town centre which such uses can undermine. Restricting such uses will also improve health and well being for all residents in and around the centre.*
- *Increasing and protecting the amount of larger 'family' housing within the centre is important in order to create a mixed and balanced community. The existing housing stock in the centre is imbalanced towards 'flatted' homes. However, there is a significant need for larger homes in the area. This policy will aim to rebalance the housing stock to provide a range of unit sizes to meet the need of all sectors of the community.*

Drawing on the evidence, the outcomes of involvement activity and the detail of the policy please list any **additional improvements and positive benefits** that can be made to better promote equality and community cohesion.

- *Protecting existing and creating additional social infrastructure will provide new/improved facilities for young people from a wide variety of different ethnic backgrounds.*
- *The addition of additional learning, leisure and entertainment facilities*

- *Protecting existing and creating additional social infrastructure will provide new/improved range of support services whose facilities meet the needs of the older and disabled people.*
- *Protecting existing and creating additional social infrastructure such as community and cultural facilities will provide new/improved facilities for the wide mix of ethnic and religious groups.*
- *Improving access to existing open spaces will help improve mental and physical health and hence benefit vulnerable groups such as BMEs and LGBTs.*
- *Locating uses within the centre provide accessible shops and services for women, older people and the disabled.*
- *Protecting existing, encouraging new employment opportunities and further diversifying uses with the centre will benefit those sectors vulnerable to unemployment such as young males and BMEs.*
- *The provision of new health facilities may be of particular benefit to the elderly and disabled.*
- *Focussing on sustainable transport will benefit those with less access to cars, which is proportionally more likely to be BMEs and women.*
- *Providing additional/extended education facilities in the area will primarily benefit those of school age.*
- *Policies which include jobs brokerage and training will help this sector of society, but particularly the young.*
- *Policies to increase the number of larger homes will benefit all families but particularly gender, race and religious groups.*
- *Policies which increase the amount of new homes in the centre which will contribute to reducing the level of overcrowding will particularly benefit BME and religious groups.*
- *Policies which reduce crime and the fear of crime will benefit all social sectors.*
- *Requirement that homes, shops and other facilities should be accessible to all members of the community and meet the needs of residents throughout their changing life cycle will benefit all groups but particularly the old and disabled.*

Stage 3 Planning Mitigating and Improvement Action

Complete the action-plan template attached to show what action will be taken to mitigate each negative impact and action each improvement, how will be take it and when it will be done.

Stage 4 Governance, Monitoring and Review

Which group, Board or Officer will be responsible for the implementation and review of the action plan?

The Spatial Planning Team is responsible for the Council's statutory plan making work. The performance of LDF policies, including those contained in the AAP, will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR assesses nationally determined core indicators, locally derived indicators and contextual indicators that relate to the specific circumstances of the borough. The outcomes derived through monitoring may lead to policy reviews.

Stage 5 Recording and Communicating the Results of the Assessment**Checklist to ensure proper completion of the assessment**

Executive Director has signed off this assessment

Cabinet report EIAs has been signed off by the Portfolio holder

The results of the assessment are included in the relevant report and this record is attached as background information

The assessment is available on the Council's website

Relevant officers are aware of the action allocated to them in the action plan

EIA Action Plan

Negative impact or improvement	Action required	Lead Officer	Time scale	Expected Outcome
Potential disruption to residents and businesses in the area during the construction phase of new developments.	Conditions or section 106 agreements will be attached to planning permissions to limit hours of working during the construction phase of developments.	Gordon Glenday (Head of Spatial Planning)/ David Scourfield (Head of Development Management and Building Control)	Up to 2026 (plan period)	Disruption to neighbours of development sites during the construction phase is minimised.
Increase in local road traffic arising from new developments and the subsequent increase in population in the area.	Travel plans will be required in support of planning applications, which will identify strategies to minimise impacts and potential mitigation measures through the planning system (section 106 or equivalent).	Gordon Glenday (Head of Spatial Planning)/ David Scourfield (Head of Development Management and Building Control)	Up to 2026 (plan period)	Increase in road traffic in the area is minimised.



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