



# Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

## *Progress Report*

Mid Ulster Council Local Development Plan 2030

November 2016



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

## **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)- Progress Report**

This EQIA progress report has been prepared in conjunction with the publication of the Mid Ulster District Council's Local Development Plan, Preferred Options Paper (POP) on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

In preparing the Local Development Plan, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the council in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependents and persons without

In addition, without prejudice to the above obligations, public authorities are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and race.

The Local Development Plan (LDP) will comprise of two development plan documents; the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan and both will be accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment. The first stage in the LDP process is the publication on the Preferred Options Paper. The Preferred Options Paper identifies key issues in the plan area and formulates a series of options for dealing with them. The POP indicates the Councils preferred option for growth and development in the Mid Ulster Area. As the Councils preferred option is indicated, suggested policy wording has been included for the preferred option. At the draft Plan Strategy stage, the Council will screen its policies to determine which would require a fuller equality analysis in the form of an impact assessment.

In preparation of the Preferred Options Paper the Council has prepared a series of position papers on a wide range of planning related subjects. These include Position Paper One: Population and Growth. Paper One provides baseline information on population and population growth in the Mid Ulster District Council Area up to 2030 and the implications of population change on land use needs. Paper One provides the screening for the EQIA issues relevant to this Local Development Plan and also sets out the likely impacts of those. This paper, alongside the other position papers, have been used to inform the main planning issues particular to the Mid Ulster District Council Area as contained within the Preferred Options Paper. These are available to view at [www.midulstercouncil.com](http://www.midulstercouncil.com) alongside the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment) Interim Report.

### **Assessment of Impacts**

This EQIA Progress Report identifies the planning policy areas where the POP is likely to have impacts on Section 75 Groups, as identified in Paper One Table 16, and what mitigating impacts the POPs policy approach has included to alleviate them. The table overleaf focuses only on the groups identified in screening as having potential impact.

Of the 9 section 75 groups, 2 groups namely marital status and sexual orientation were not considered to be potentially impacted upon by the preferred options and suggested policy wording. To ensure the cultural and social inclusion of all groups in the Local Development Plan process, Mid Ulster District Council will be undertaking a series of focus group meetings targeting Section 75 groups. These focus groups will be held in December 2016 to ensure that section 75 groups help inform how Mid Ulster develops in the future.

Table 1: A preliminary assessment of the preferred options/suggested planning policies likely to have an impact on section 75 groups

Policy Type	Assessed Impacts upon relevant Section 75 groups
<b>Settlement:</b> Designation / status of settlements and identification of development opportunities and limits may impact on these section 75 groups due to the spatial distribution of such groups	<p><u>Religious Belief</u></p> <p>The proposed settlement hierarchy re-positions a number of existing settlements. Many villages in both the former Cookstown and Dungannon and South Tyrone Districts have been re-classified to small settlements. Several small villages in the former Magherafelt local government district have been re-classified to villages. Tullywiggan has been identified as a new small settlement. The 3 main towns / hubs are geographically spread across the district as a whole. Having considered the geographical spread of settlements across the District, the Council are satisfied that groups of religious belief / political opinion are not unduly disadvantaged by the proposed settlement hierarchy. Tullywiggan is located adjacent to the southern border of Cookstown Development Limit and has been in existence for many years. The identification of development opportunities and limits will be brought forward in the second stage of the Plan, the Local Policies Plan (LPP).</p> <p><u>Political Opinion</u></p> <p>Same as religious belief group above.</p>
<b>Housing:</b> Quantum and distribution of zoned housing lands; the amount whether it is urban / rural, accessible, social/private.	<p><u>Religious belief</u></p> <p>The POP advocates for an equitable split housing allocation between settlements. This option would seek to grow the hubs whilst ensuring other settlements and the rural area get their 'fair share' based on existing household distribution as per the 2011 census. Given that the urban / rural areas are to get their fair share the council are satisfied that this group are not disadvantaged by the proposed housing allocation. The POP suggests that there is no strategic need for additional housing land zoning in any of the five towns. However the distribution of any potential further zoned housing lands in settlements will be identified in the Local Policies Plan. The policy approach in terms of facilitating quality residential developments states that housing developments of a certain size / number will be required to provide a minimum number of social houses. This policy approach may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><u>Political Opinion</u></p> <p>Same as religious belief group above.</p> <p><u>Racial Group</u></p> <p>As urban/ rural areas are to get their fair share the Council are satisfied that this group will not be disadvantaged by the proposed housing allocation. The POP has identified that there are no Traveller Accommodation needs for the District. Should a future need arise policy will be brought forward at the plan review stage. The POPs potential policy approach states that housing developments of a certain size / number will be required to provide a minimum social housing number. This policy approach may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><u>Age</u></p> <p>The equitable split will allow for a greater choice in housing locations whether its urban or rural. Accessibility will be dependent on location with the rural areas likely to be less accessible to this group as it would require car dependency. The POP advocates a tailored housing policy for future planning applications to provide a range of house types, size tenures and integration with centres of employment, community services and blue and green infrastructure. The promotion of a range of house sizes on sites of 25 units or of 1 hectare or over, to cater for the needs of smaller families</p>



	<p>and small households, may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><u>Gender,</u></p> <p>The suggested housing policy, quality residential development in urban areas, states that proposed developments should demonstrate a safe and sustainable environment for current and future occupiers by providing connections and linkages to schools, community facilities, and public transport networks that connect to the wider community and blue and green infrastructure to avoid insular developments. In terms of safety this potential policy approach may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><u>Disability</u></p> <p>The promotion of a range of house types and sizes that are linked to the wider context should improve housing choice and accessibility for this group. The suggested housing policy, quality residential development in urban areas, requires proposed housing developments to adequately cater for motor vehicles but encourage other alternative modes of transport to meet the needs of those without a car.</p> <p><u>Dependency</u></p> <p>Housing policy to create quality residential development in urban areas will help provide a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures. This policy should afford greater choice of housing to those with dependants. Suggested minimum public and private open spaces (garden areas) for developments may be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Housing</b></p> <p>The Council are satisfied that the quantum of existing housing zonings and the reserving of phase 2 lands (in Dungannon , Cookstown and Coalisland) will cater for all the above equality groups. Phase 2 land will be identified in Magherafelt and Maghera in the LPP. The distribution of additional housing zonings will be identified in the LPP. The council are satisfied that the suggested housing policies meets the needs of all in terms of ensuring the creation of safe and accessible housing developments. The POPs preferred policy approach should ensure a range of housing capable of meeting the needs of families, the elderly and disabled, and single people at locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities will positively impact on the above equality groups at this stage.</p>
<p><b>Business and Industry:</b></p> <p>Quantum and distribution of employment land could result in differing access to employment.</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief and Racial Groups</u></p> <p>The POP has identified that at least 8,500 new jobs are needed within the District over the plan period and this will require 170 hectares of economic development land. This zoned industrial land is to be spread out across the 3 main towns. The POP has identified that there is sufficient existing zoned industrial land available for all 3 towns and district as a whole for the plan period. However the location and need for further economic land zonings is something that the Council wishes to investigate further. Growth options / directions are identified for the 3 towns. These are the most populated places and are mainly located to existing industrial zonings. These are suggested growth areas/ directions and the Council welcome any further suggestions on this matter. As no preferred options have been identified an assessment of equality impacts cannot be made at this stage.</p> <p><u>Political Opinion</u></p> <p>Same as religious belief group above.</p>

	<p><u>Age</u> Zoned industrial land is located within urban areas and suggested growth areas are adjacent to urban areas. The 3 main towns are the most populated places and therefore there would be reasonable accessibility to employment opportunities. The POPs suggested policy allowing small workshop accommodation for self-employment ancillary to a dwelling in the countryside may be beneficial as it may be more suitable for many in this group to work on a part time / evening time basis closer to home.</p> <p><u>Gender</u> The POPs suggested policy allowing small workshop accommodation for self-employment ancillary to a dwelling in the countryside may be beneficial to women in particular for those with dependants for whom it may be more suitable to work on a part time / evening time basis.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Business and Industrial Development</b> The Council are satisfied that by focusing business and industrial zonings within the main towns there is reasonable accessibility to employment opportunities for all. The council have also suggested opportunities for economic development growth in the smaller towns of Coalisland and Maghera through the introduction of Special Policy Areas for economic use and an option of zoning economic development land (Maghera High School). The Council have suggested identifying Rural Industrial Policy Areas, recognising the importance of clusters for the expansion for existing rural industry and allowing an opportunity to expand rural business and employment uses. Candidates for Rural Industrial Policy Areas have been considered but location will be identified in the LPP. Therefore the POP may be able to facilitate new jobs at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car. The POP promotes diversity in the range of jobs recognising the importance of employment in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and mining) secondary sector (industry and manufacturing) and tertiary sector (administration, commerce, retailing, leisure and tourism). The policy approach supporting a variety of economic lands and diversity in range of jobs will have a positive impact on all section 75 groups.</p>
<p><b>Open Space and Recreation:</b> Quantum and distribution of open space and recreational facilities could result in differing levels of access.</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief</u> The POP aims to build the 3 main towns as the main service centres for leisure activities. These are the most populated places and the town centres are the most accessible locations for people to travel to, including those without a car. The Councils preferred option is to protect existing open space and zone new open space zonings at the LPP. The POP recognises that much of the outdoor sports and recreation facilities in Mid Ulster are provided by local community and clubs, and the POP advocates a relaxed policy for the determination of outdoor sports provision so that it could occur anywhere subject to the tests of PPS8. The Councils preferred option for allowing small scale indoor and intensive outdoor facilities outside villages and small settlements to reflect the predominately rural population in Mid Ulster and predominance of clubs and societies. Therefore the Council are satisfied that the preferred options in relation to open space and recreation will not disadvantage this group.</p> <p><u>Political Opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p> <p><u>Age</u> The POP will facilitate large scale leisure on opportunity sites within or near town centres and smaller scale elsewhere within settlement limits. This</p>

	<p>should ensure that new open space areas and sporting facilities are convenient and accessible to this group. The POP aims to facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of transportation in accordance with the community plan.</p> <p><u>Disability</u> Same as Age group above</p> <p><u>Dependency</u> The POP provides suggested policy for the protection and safeguarding of public open space and requires the provision of open space in housing developments and where appropriate (over 25 units or sites 1 hectare or greater) equip it for children's play. The policy approach will be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Open Space and Recreation</b> The Council recognise that quantum and distribution of children's play areas may disadvantage some of the equality groups because of their location, access may not be convenient for all. The deficiency in children's play as identified in the POP will be addressed in the LPP. The POP recognises that Mid Ulster benefits from numerous informal and passive recreation facilities which are well distributed throughout the district in urban areas and in the countryside. Therefore the Council considers that none of the above equality groups are disadvantaged by the POPs preferred option to protect existing open space and zone new open space or indoor leisure where Mid Ulster is financially committed to acquiring the land at this stage.</p>
<p><b>Retailing and Town Centres:</b> The hierarchy of commercial/town centres, development opportunities and control policies that could result in differing groups of accessibility to retailing and leisure related services.</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief</u> The POPs proposed retail strategy promotes town centres first for retail and other main town centre uses. Town centres tend to be relatively neutral areas and the Council are satisfied that the retail strategy will not disadvantage this group. The retail strategy allows for shops within villages / small settlements catering for resident's daily needs and the surrounding catchment. The strategy will restrict retail development in the countryside but recognises the benefits of farm shops / craft shops. The pop identifies a retail hierarchy, however town centre boundaries and District Centre boundaries will be reviewed at the LPP.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p> <p><u>Gender and Disability Groups</u> The POP states that proposals to improve attractions, amenities and accessibility to town centres will be brought forward in the LPP.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Retailing and Town Centres</b> The Council are satisfied that proposed the retail strategy will not disadvantage the above equality groups as town centres tend to neutral areas. Any further potential Development opportunity Sites and reviews of town centre boundaries will be examined in detail for the LPP.</p>
<p><b>Community Uses:</b> Spatial and physical accessibility</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief, Gender, Disability and Dependency.</u></p>

to all services depending on location	<p>The remit of the Council does not extend to the provision of health and education facilities. The POP suggests policy to allow community uses within settlements. Any issues regarding spatial / physical accessibility to services depending on location will be considered on a case by case basis when such applications are received.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p>
<p><b>Transportation:</b> Differing levels of accessibility to all services depending on location/quality of infrastructure for identified groups</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief</u> The POPs Transportation strategy identifies the key policy areas including; protecting new transportation schemes, protection of disused transport routes, protection of town centre car parks and access to protected routes and other roads.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p> <p><u>Age and Gender Groups</u> The Pop supports the reduction in travel times within Mid Ulster and advocates for the protection of road users and improve road safety for car users, public transport, cyclists and walkers. This policy approach should be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><u>Disability</u> The POP promotes accessibility for all, to ensure the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired are given particular consideration in particular new transportation schemes. This policy approach should be beneficial to this group.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Impacts of Transportation</b> The Council are satisfied that the proposed transportation strategy and policy approaches identified in the POP will not disadvantage any of the equality groups listed above.</p>
<p><b>Environment:</b> Location of protected areas for conservation, archaeology or landscape could have differential impacts.</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief</u> The POP supports the protection, conservation and where possible, the enhancement of built and archaeological heritage. There are 27 Areas of townscape character (ATC's) and 118 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPA's) in Mid Ulster District. A review of the ATC's and LLPA's will be undertaken to inform the LPP. Therefore the Council are satisfied at this stage that there are no environment impacts on this equality group.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p>
<p><b>Minerals:</b> The location of areas protected for/ constrained from minerals proposals could have differential</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief</u> The POP suggests adopting Areas of Mineral Constraint and Mineral Reserve Policy Areas and maps the preferred options for each. However further research will need to be carried out before these maps are finalised. Part of this process will involve the Council writing to the Minerals Industry to</p>

impacts.	<p>ascertain further detail on the baseline regarding supply and demand as well as reserves that remain. This research will also involve further engagement with the Department for the Economy. The proposed constraint and reserve maps are indicative only at this stage and will be examined further in the LPP.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p>
<p><b>Countryside:</b> The location of policy areas and resultant protection / restrictions on development could have differential impacts.</p>	<p><u>All 9 Section 75 groups</u> The preferred option for housing in the countryside is similar in spirit to the outgoing PPS21 but has been tailored to reflect the particular needs of Mid Ulster, providing a little more flexibility by adding additional circumstances in which a single dwelling may be accommodated. This option will be available to those living in the countryside as a whole, not in particular policy areas and therefore will not disadvantage any Section 75 group. The council are satisfied that the policy approach for allowing dwellings in the countryside for care givers or those availing of care will have a positive impact on all equality groups as it recognises the needs of carers of the elderly and disabled and allows people to remain within their own communities.</p>
<p><b>Services and Utilities:</b> Differing levels of accessibility to public services and utilities depending on location of facilities provided.</p>	<p><u>Religious belief</u> The POP recognises the importance of facilitating the development of overhead powerlines and telecommunications. The provision of public utilities within the plan area is primarily the responsibility of a number of government Departments and statutory bodies as well as the District Councils, however the private sector is playing an increasingly important role. The LDP will not designate or zone specific sites for public utilities, however it will seek to locate new developments which maximise the efficient use of utility infrastructure whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The council are therefore satisfied that the suggested utilities policy approach will not disadvantage this group.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p>
<p><b>Tourism:</b> Location of areas protected for and constraining tourism proposals could have differential impacts</p>	<p><u>Religious Belief</u> The POP proposes new tourism opportunity zonings at Sixtowns Road Sperrins, Clogher Valley (Parkaneur Forest and Favour Royal Forest) and at Lough Neagh(Traad, Ballyronan). These areas of existing open space and forestry are considered relatively neutral areas. The proposed new Tourism Conservation Zones (Slieve Gallion, Broughderg and Davagh, North and east of the Sperrin AONB, Sperrin AONB west of Carntogher DRC) are indicative only at this stage. These Tourism Conservation Zones are concepts, once consultation representations are received and considered their location will be identified in the LPP.</p> <p><u>Political opinion</u> Same as religious belief group above.</p>

<p><b>Design:</b> Design both in terms of appearance and physical access affects everyone but has a particular impact on people with mobility difficulties such as the disabled, elderly and people with young children.</p>	<p><u><i>Age, Disability, gender and Dependency Groups</i></u> The POP supports the development of our public realm in urban areas. The potential policy approach suggested states that access for all is provided. This would ensure that any proposed development allows for a movement pattern that provides for pedestrians, cyclists, those with mobility difficulties and those relying on public transport. The public realm policy supports development that is adequately designed to promote personal safety and deter crime. This policy approach should be beneficial to all these equality groups in terms of safety and access.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



## **Conclusion**

The Mid Ulster District Councils Local Development Plan 2030 is still at an early stage in the plan process. The Preferred Options Paper is going through a consultation process until 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017. The views identified in the Preferred Options Paper are those of Planning Officers in Mid Ulster District Council. The Council welcomes comments on the LDP Preferred Options Paper and on our initial thoughts in relation to equality impacts.

Comments should be sent to:

Dr C R Boomer

Mid Ulster District Council Planning Department

Ballyronan Road

Magherafelt

BT45 6EN

Or by e-mail: [planning@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:planning@midulstercouncil.org)

To arrive no later than 5pm on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017.