

Title of proposed EIA	City of Nature Plan
Reference No	EQUA803
EA is in support of	New Strategy
Review Frequency	Two Years
Date of first review	01/01/2024
Directorate	Inclusive Growth
Division	Planning
Service Area	
Responsible Officer(s)	■ Humera Sultan
Quality Control Officer(s)	■ Karen Huxtable
Accountable Officer(s)	■ Maria Dunn
Purpose of proposal	The Plan will detail what Birmingham could look like in 25 years' time as a City of Nature, one where all citizens in Birmingham have access to good quality green spaces.
Data sources	Survey(s); Consultation Results; Interviews; relevant reports/strategies; relevant research
Please include any other sources of data	

ASSESS THE IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Protected characteristic: Age	Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community
Age details:	<p>In terms of the Plan, people within certain age groups have different relationships with green spaces and therefore, there could be different impacts of the Plans key themes on age. The principle of the Plan is to ensure good quality green spaces are accessible for all and as such, the overall impact of achieving this is likely to be positive for all age groups.</p> <p>The Plan supports achieving a better quality of life for the citizens of Birmingham through the clean air agenda. Air pollution affects everyone, but certain age groups are more likely to be adversely affected by poor air quality (e.g. the very old or the very young). The Plan sets out the importance of green spaces in reducing the effects of air pollution and advocates for increasing tree canopy coverage and the number of trees, which both would have a positive impact on these groups in reducing the harmful effects of air pollution.</p> <p>Often, we struggle to engage with young people on this agenda, but our Earth Stories engagement has shown that over 50% of respondents were from those under the age of thirty, and the themes from their feedback have been used to develop the Plan.</p>

Protected characteristic: Disability	Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees
Disability details:	<p>In terms of the Plan, people with disabilities have different relationships with green spaces and therefore, there could be different impacts of the Plan's key themes on disability. The principle of the Plan is to ensure good quality green spaces are accessible for all and as such, the overall impact of achieving this is likely to be positive.</p> <p>Poor air quality is likely to impact on people with disabilities, particularly those with respiratory problems. The City of Nature Plan aims to improve the air quality of the city through increasing tree canopy coverage and planting more trees and there this is likely to have a positive impact on those with long term health issues. Moreover, green spaces have a positive physical health benefit to individuals who regularly interact with them, including reductions in cardiovascular diseases.</p> <p>As part of our Earth Stories work, 48% of people we engaged with said they had a mental or physical disability. We were able to capture key issues from them that have been used to develop our Plan.</p>

Access is a key part of our Fair Standard Audit, and this is reflected in the suggested changes to the public open spaces across the 6 priority wards.

We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristic: Sex

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Gender details:

The City of Nature Plan looks to provide a mixture of opportunities within green spaces that is safe and welcoming for all. We know that women report feeling more unsafe alone in certain green spaces; by improving the standard of our parks, they will become better used so that people feel less concerned about safety. 48% of respondents to our Earth Stories campaign were from women.

We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Gender reassignment details:

Although we have asked questions in our surveys on gender reassignment, we have not recorded any engagement with citizens making up this protected characteristic. Making parks welcoming to all our citizens is a key element of our 25-year Plan.

We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Service Users/ Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Marriage and civil partnership details:

The City of Nature Plan will set aspirations to increase volunteering opportunities within green spaces across the city which will support a range of people from families to single people, including those who are married or in a Civil Partnership.

We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Pregnancy and maternity details:

The City of Nature Plan aims for citizens to have access to good quality green space as well as supporting the clean air agenda through encouraging walking and cycling which will improve air quality.

Air pollution affects everyone, but in particular young children, with young children living in high pollution areas 4 times more likely to have reduced lung function when they become an adult. Therefore, the aspiration for a City of Nature to encourage walking and cycling within green spaces would particularly benefit pre-school age children. The focus on young children and the desire to make them little green champions will have a positive impact on this group.

We recognise pregnant women need more opportunities for rest, such as places to sit/ benches. This is part of our site audit process and recommendation for improving the quality of our parks.

We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristics: Race

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Race details:

We know from research that people from ethnic minorities do not find parks/ green spaces as accessible as other communities. Through Earth Stories, nearly 60% of respondents were from an ethnic minority, all sharing their hopes and dreams for the

future of green spaces. Our plan makes clear we need to support people from diverse communities to engage with their local parks and green spaces.

We also know our green spaces workforce in Birmingham does not reflect the diversity of the City, and there is a key ambition within the Plan to change this over the next 25 years.

We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Religion or beliefs details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

In terms of the City of Nature Plan, utilisation of green spaces can vary according for certain religious or culture groups. Therefore, there could be different impacts on the Plan based on this protected characteristic. The principle is that the more awareness and improvements in quality of green spaces, the more likely it is to cater to the needs of a broad range of groups, so the overall impact is likely to be positive. Over 70% of our responses to Earth Stories were from those belonging to a particular religion. We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Our Plan makes it clear that our parks and green spaces need to welcome all communities in Birmingham. Our Earth Stories campaign received feedback from 3% of people who were gay, lesbian or bisexual. 10% preferred not to disclose their sexuality. We have not identified any adverse impacts on this protected characteristic by our plan.

Socio-economic impacts

A key component of the City of Nature Plan is to utilise green space to tackle social injustice, ensuring each citizen in Birmingham has access to good quality green spaces. By citizens having access to good quality green space will result in an improvement in the quality of life.

Our approach focusses on the results of an environmental justice map, which highlights 13 wards in most need of intervention. We plan to tackle 6 wards in the first 5 years – 4 of these wards are in the top 5 of most need, and the other 2 are geographical neighbours which makes a central north -spine for intervention across a discrete area of Birmingham.

We are therefore prioritising those areas in most need of environmental impacts.

There will still be an offer to the remaining 63 wards in the first 5 years. Parks will be maintained, and the City of Nature Alliance will be active across the whole city, supporting community groups where there is interest.

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

None

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

Consultation analysis

Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact?

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

What data is required in the future?

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

Consulted People or Groups

Informed People or Groups

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

We have considered the impacts of this Plan on all protected characteristics, and presented all our findings to the Star Camber for Equalities on 24.11.2021. The whole point of this Plan is to improve equitable access of green spaces for the population of Birmingham, and presents a phased way to do so starting with those areas in most need.

QUALITY CONTROL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing?

Yes

Quality Control Officer comments

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Submit draft to Accountable Officer?

Yes

Decision by Accountable Officer

Approve

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

15/12/2021

Reasons for approval or rejection

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records

Yes

Content Type: Item

Version: 21.0

Created at 15/12/2021 10:22 AM by  Humera Sultan

Last modified at 15/12/2021 10:29 AM by Workflow on behalf of  Maria Dunn

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