

Sheerwater Regeneration EqIA
Equality Impact Assessment Summary Table

Summary Equality Impact Assessment

Group impacted	Nature of Impact	Mitigating Actions
Housing		
<p>Demolition of social housing including sheltered accommodation – secure tenants, vulnerable tenants, including those in one-bedroom properties, and tenants in sheltered housing.</p>	<p>The majority of tenants in Sheerwater are local authority tenants (63%) and are directly impacted. This groups comprises tenants on low incomes, among which, black and minority ethnic groups, lone parents with dependent children, and disabled people are disproportionately represented. In addition, vulnerable tenants currently residing in the one-bedroom properties and studio flats with medium to high level support needs are also directly impacted.</p>	<p>The proposals increase and enhance housing provision to the meet existing, future and changing need of Sheerwater’s diverse population. The proposals secure a wider mix of provision with sufficient properties of suitable size, which includes sufficient provision for vulnerable tenants currently residing in the one-bedroom properties and studio flats. This means that all residents can have the opportunity to remain in Sheerwater, if it is their wish to do so. The housing proposals are allied to wider economic and social objectives for the area. The development will see increased affordable housing and will maximise accessible and adaptable housing.</p> <p>The Sheerwater Regeneration and Housing Support Team is working with highly vulnerable secure tenants. An Independent Tenants Adviser has also been appointed by the Council to provide advice to secure tenants and to respond to their enquiries on a face-to-face basis for those tenants who request it.</p>
<p>Demolition of private rented properties – children, young people, black and minority ethnic groups and those on low incomes.</p>	<p>Tenants who are privately renting are one of the most vulnerable and insecurely housed groups, comprising a significant proportion of children, young people, and ethnic minority groups and low-income households.</p>	<p>WBC has no legal commitment to house private tenants. However, to ameliorate some of the negative impacts, WBC is providing support to private tenants in finding suitable new accommodation.</p>
<p>Housing change to tenure mix – impact on tenants and residents spanning the protected characteristics including vulnerable and disabled tenants, those on low income, black and minority ethnic tenants, lone parents, children and young people.</p>	<p>The housing proposals will deliver a significant net increase in mixed tenure accommodation, including a significant increase in affordable housing, and appropriate size of housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents.</p>	<p>More evenly balanced tenure mixed with increased overall affordable housing and sheltered housing provision that is fit for purpose. In addition, the significant increase in one-bedroom properties as part of the revised proposals will have a positive impact in enabling vulnerable residents currently in the studio</p>

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		one-bedroom properties to remain in Sheerwater and to have their needs met.
<p>Secure Council Tenants and Housing Association Tenants – groups with protected characteristics with secure tenancies including vulnerable and disabled tenants, those on low incomes, black and minority ethnic tenants, lone parents, children and young people.</p>	<p>Direct potentially negative impact through changes to tenancy agreements for secure tenants and potential loss of affordable housing under new housing management arrangements.</p>	<p>There will be complete re-provision of affordable housing. Rents will remain at social rent levels and will not increase beyond local market housing allowance levels and will be in line with S106 planning agreements.</p> <p>An Independent Tenant Adviser has been employed by the Council offering advice to secure council tenants and responding to their enquiries in writing or on a face-to-face basis for those who request it.</p>
<p>Demolition of owner-occupied housing – direct impact on groups spanning the protected characteristics, particularly low-income owner occupiers.</p>	<p>Residential properties in Sheerwater are less expensive relative to the rest of Woking and are more likely to be owned by older residents and black and minority residents and disabled residents on relatively lower incomes.</p>	<p>The Community Charter sets out compensation levels for owner occupiers which are above the statutory minimum. Moreover, the Community Charter sets out an integrated package of support for vulnerable and disabled residents, and assisted purchase arrangements for low-income homeowners impacted by the development, in circumstances where mortgage affordability may be an issue, and some residents have already taken up these mortgage offers.</p>
<p>Community, leisure and recreation</p>		
<p>Community groups – smaller community groups that use the Parkview Community Centre for their activities and provide services to groups spanning the protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Smaller voluntary and community organisations and community groups using the Parkview Community Centre for a range of activities that serve the local diverse community living in Sheerwater.</p>	<p>There will be complete re-provision within the Parkview Community Centre, and this means that all of the smaller community groups operating there will be able to remain. There is a Muslim Education facility currently operating from the premises of the former butcher's shop in the regeneration area and this will also be relocated within the wider Sheerwater area. There is an ongoing discussion regarding the relocation of the Mascot Centre.</p>

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Recreation and leisure facilities – All groups spanning the protected characteristics including children and young people, women, and older people.	The new and enhanced leisure facilities will be re-provided before the existing facilities close.	The scheme is being led by the social and recreational provision and there will therefore be minimal disruption in provision.
Cultural and social milieu – residents across the protected groups including black and minority ethnic groups, LGBT residents, older people, and parents and lone parents.	The loss of social and cultural milieu as a result of the disruption to long-established connections between people living in the area.	There will be no demolition of housing in advance of housing re-provision with residents being given the opportunity to remain in Sheerwater if that is their wish. The phased approach to demolition and rehousing means that disruption to existing networks of support is kept to a minimum and people will be able to remain living in Sheerwater if that is their wish.
Business and employment		
Small Businesses – The regeneration will have a direct impact on small businesses located in the Dartmouth parade of shops as they fall within the redline area.	There will be an impact on small businesses and in particular black and minority ethnic family run businesses.	<p>The Council has engaged with small businesses, has explained the proposals, and has obtained their views. There are some businesses, for example, Sheerwater Glass that will be relocating to suitable premises outside of Sheerwater but will remain in the borough. There are others such as the pharmacy which want to remain in situ and will therefore be relocating within the regeneration area, as well as the minimart which provides a wide offering including Asian produce.</p> <p>There are sufficient commercial units being built in Sheerwater to enable those businesses that are viable and want to remain, to relocate in Sheerwater. The process of relocation will involve one-to-one conversations and active engagement with businesses to facilitate a smooth transfer of operations. A number of businesses that are not commercially viable will however cease operation. The Council has developed a package of support measures which include advice, and monitoring the end destination of those business owners, and an employment and skills plan.</p>

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		<p>The Council is trying to get a definitive date for exit of the retailers. Where leases have expired, the Council is intending to offer a fixed term lease with provision for termination to be made at any time. This will allow those businesses operating to continue, thus giving them the flexibility to carry on if there are any delays. This will have benefits for residents and for the businesses.</p> <p>The post office in Sheerwater has recently closed but is in the process of being re-provided in Londis.</p>
<p>Employment and training – unemployed people, and those with low educational attainment living in Sheerwater, women, LGBT groups, disabled people, and older people under-represented in construction and allied trades.</p>	<p>Opportunities for employment and training arising from construction and allied trades.</p>	<p>The proposals include active engagement with schools and community agencies operating in the area to promote employment and training opportunities locally. These include, a job skills club to provide people with assistance in securing employment, the development of a partnership with Job Centre Plus to ensure that site vacancies are advertised and promoted in the regeneration area, and partnerships with other local agencies and training providers as part of the work of an Employment and Skills Group.</p> <p>Pellikaan have specifically set out the actions it will take to create positive local outcomes and community value. These include making contact with local schools regarding work experience weeks, traineeships, and onsite tours, using local suppliers and subcontractors, networking and meet the buyer events. The Pellikaan offer also includes promoting specific job opportunities locally including Trainee Site Manager, Plant Operatives, Traffic Marshall, and General Operatives. This will ensure that there is long-term support. There are plans to organise a career fair to promote wider understanding of the construction industry and the broad spectrum of</p>

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		<p>potential employment and skilled training opportunities that are available within the sector.</p> <p>Gilbert Ash held an employability event in February 2020 at the Mascot Hub on Dartmouth Avenue to provide school leavers and job seekers with the opportunity to find out more about the type of careers available in the construction industry. The session covered skills, training, current opportunities, how to apply, and also addressed issues in relation to women in construction.</p>
<p>Living wage – black and minority ethnic groups, older workers and disabled people who are disproportionately more likely to be in lower paying employment, unemployed and on lower incomes.</p>	<p>Employment is no longer a guaranteed route out of poverty given the impact of low pay and the rise of in work poverty.</p>	<p>As part of an approach to implementing the employment proposals, the notion of a Living Wage will be central to the proposals and to the arrangements entered into with contractors.</p>
<p>Public realm, open space, safety and security</p>		
<p>Risk of crime and fear of crime – black and minority ethnic groups, women, young people, in particular young men, LGBT people and disabled people.</p>	<p>Fears for safety and security may be compounded during the development and construction phases.</p>	<p>The scheme is signed up to considerate contractors and properties have been properly boarded up to reduce the risk of crime in areas that might potentially be subject to it. As part of a Community Safety Campaign, the empty properties in the regeneration area have had metal panels fitted over the doors and windows to ensure that they do not become vandalised and unsafe. The Sheerwater Regeneration Housing Support Team carry out regular patrols and have been working with ThamesWey and Serco to secure void spaces and stairwells to deter rough sleeping and loitering. There is consideration being given to a third-party guardian scheme whereby properties earmarked for demolition can be let to meet a housing need on a short-term basis, rather than having the property shuttered up.</p>

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		There are weekly site walks by the Sheerwater Regeneration Housing Support Team. The team has put up posters to provide information for people on how to report anything suspicious, and to address crime and fear of crime. The costs of having patrols on the site during the evenings and at the weekends to provide visible security to residents is currently being looked at.
Individual garden space and open space – protected groups including unemployed people, disabled people, young people, older people, and vulnerable people.	The potential loss of open space and reduction in individual garden space.	There will be no net loss of open space and the proposals have been developed to ensure that open space is re-provided. The proposals seek to optimise the use of land within the regeneration area and provide more open space that is useable. The proposed enhancements to the scheme further increase the amount of open space beyond that originally proposed. The loss of individual garden space is mitigated by the re-provision of sympathetically connected open space that is more useable and safe.
Community garden – protected groups including unemployed people, disabled people, and older people, and vulnerable people.	Loss of existing community garden space which provides an important focal point within Sheerwater.	As part of the regeneration of Sheerwater, a new community garden is currently located adjacent to the shopping parade on Dartmouth Avenue in two spaces with benches providing an attractive space where residents can relax. This was always a temporary arrangement. A new location will be identified with local residents either in the regeneration area or other parts of the estate nearer the time of the demolition.
Travel, transport and connectivity		
Transport accessibility – protected groups including black and minority ethnic groups, job seekers among low income and unemployed groups, disabled people, older people, and vulnerable people.	The issue of access to transport and connectivity and accessibility is an important equality issue for Sheerwater that the regeneration addresses and is important given the younger age structure of the population, as well as the ageing nature of the population.	The regeneration proposals will provide residents with a wider choice of travel that is more accessible and will include designs to encourage more bus services, thus facilitating wider access to public transport as well as other forms of travel to connect Sheerwater with wider geographical areas. This is

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		particularly important given the likely increase in population and therefore demand for public transport, and in the context of the current and changing demographics of Sheerwater.
Transport, travel and safety and security – protected groups including black and minority ethnic groups, job seekers among low income and unemployed groups, disabled people, older people, and vulnerable people.	The proposals for improvement in the public realm and open space and addressing issues of safety and security is designed to support and encourage travel and transport by a variety of means.	The regeneration proposals will provide residents with a wider choice of more accessible forms of travel, and will include designs to encourage more bus services.
Community cohesion – All communities living in Sheerwater with particular implications for those with protected characteristics.	There is little if any empirical evidence that tenure mix is an effective means for achieving the social objectives of neighbourhood regeneration as income, education, and so forth are the key influential factors. There is evidence that the process of regeneration can give rise to social divisions and conflict between different groups of interest, as well as competition between various interests seeking to influence the outcomes of the regeneration.	By enabling the recreational and social aspects of the regeneration to lead the process, the Council is seeking to work towards continuing to foster community cohesion. This is by providing high quality and supportive services, and safe, open, and useable spaces that build on what the community has to offer, and which provide spaces for mixing and interaction in significantly enhanced and accessible community facilities. The re-provision of community facilities is leading the development and occupies a central position within the plans for regeneration. This reflects the wider principles of the regeneration which seeks to bring the wider community together.
Implications of COVID-19 – all groups and in particular pregnant women, and people with long-term limiting illnesses identified as vulnerable, and those with challenging mental health issues.	Alongside official advice, there is a wealth of information emanating from a variety of sources including social media on COVID-19, some of it contradictory. This therefore provides a fertile space in which misinformation can breed, thus adding to the existing fears of residents who are already prone to anxiety, about the impact of the regeneration on them personally. There are also implications for further active engagement also given current advice on social distancing.	The Council is following the official advice in relation to Covid-19. It is important that communication with residents remains key and that what this means for individuals and for the community is spelled out clearly and sensitively. This will clearly be a challenge in the current climate and will require a strategy around ongoing communication.

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