

Pewsey Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)



Equality Impact Statement

September 2014

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Stage 1: Screening for Relevance.

Name of Strategy

Draft Pewsey Neighbourhood Development Plan

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1. Does the Pewsey Neighbourhood Plan, produced by Pewsey Parish Council, require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

- **What are the main aims, purpose and outcomes of the strategy and how do these fit in with the wider aims of the organisation?**

To provide a local planning document that will guide development decisions in the Pewsey area. The NDP provides a framework for the physical development of Pewsey, within which the Parish Council exercises a range of functions, to 2026.

The Pewsey Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) will be in conformity with the Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS).

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Wiltshire CS Submission Document January 2012 states:

“The underpinning idea of the strategy is to strengthen communities, wherever possible, by maintaining and increasing the supply of jobs to ensure that Wiltshire remains strong and prosperous. The underlying principles of the strategy seek to manage future development to ensure that communities have an appropriate balance of jobs, services and facilities and homes, to ensure that the growth required to meet local needs is managed so that it is in the most sustainable locations, protects both the natural and built environment and tackles local social problems such as areas of social exclusion and deprivation.”

Pewsey NDP shares these aspirations. It aims to add a local level of detail to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, whilst reflecting the priorities of the local community.

The aspirations of the Pewsey NDP are:

- sustainable development in the right places and of good design
- a housing mix to suit the ages and needs of the local people
- a diversified local economy that supports more local employment
- improved local retail choice
- a strengthened economy in the village centre
- maintenance and/or improvement of the services and facilities in the village for all age groups
- to protect and enhance the heritage, landscape and wildlife of the area
- to protect the village Conservation Area and Listed Buildings
- to support and enhance the existing community facilities and recreation area

2. How will these aims affect our statutory duties?

These aims are entirely consistent with the overall aim of the Parish Council which is to serve the needs of the local community.

The EIA for the Wiltshire CS Submission Document January 2012 states that the WCS will help meet the statutory duties of the Council related to equalities and diversity in the following manner:

- Promote equality of opportunity by ensuring that there is an adequate supply of housing to meet all ranges of affordability
- Ensure that new development is planned in or close to service centres thereby promoting access to services
- Plan for the expansion of employment opportunities to provide local opportunities for all.
- Safeguard and improve the environment and townscape for the benefit of all.

The draft Pewsey NDP also fulfils these factors for Pewsey as it identifies new sites for housing, retail and employment opportunities and has followed a site selection process based on sustainable principles. The plan has been developed by thorough public consultation and has reached out to all sections of society to request their views. This is evidenced through the Consultation Statement Report.

3. Are there any aspects of the strategy including how it is delivered, or accessed, that could contribute to inequality? This should relate to all areas of our statutory duties.

The draft neighbourhood plan will provide for a diverse society and will help reduce housing inequality. It is possible that some properties will be affected by housing development close to their boundaries, but scale is modest and these are likely to be minimal. Generally all properties are expected to continue to enjoy access to a good environment.

4. Will the strategy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including members of particular communities and groups? What evidence do you have for this?

The plan will have a significant positive overall impact on the community. It will:

- improve access for all to a decent affordable home. New homes will be designed to respect the local character and the primary focus of new housing development will be located in the most sustainable locations possible.
- provide for local employment opportunities through the allocation of sites
- protect and enhance the best of the build heritage and natural environments, including the protection of the North Wessex Area of Natural Beauty (AONB)
- protect and improve sport and recreational facilities for all
- retain and support existing community facilities including retail
- strengthen the local economy and provide a positive context for business.

5. Are particular communities or groups likely to have needs, experiences and attitudes in relation to the strategy/policy/procedure/practice?

Perhaps - but Pewsey is a relatively homogenous community and the NDP aims to meet the needs of all sections of the community.

6. Is an EIA required?

Given the wide scope of the plan, its duration and likely impacts, the answer is “yes”.

Stage 2: Full Assessment.

Step 1: Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment: Pewsey Neighbourhood Development Plan

1.2 What are the main aims, purposes and outcomes of the NDP and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation?

To provide a local level planning document that will guide development decisions in the Pewsey parish area. This will assist the Parish Council in representing the community in planning matters.

The Pewsey NDP will be in conformity with the Wiltshire CS.

The EIA for the Wiltshire CS Submission Document January 2012 states:

“The underpinning idea of the strategy is to strengthen communities, wherever possible, by maintaining and increasing the supply of jobs to ensure that Wiltshire remains strong and prosperous. The underlying principles of the strategy seek to manage future development to ensure that communities have an appropriate balance of jobs, services and facilities and homes; to ensure that growth required to meet local needs is managed so that it is in the most sustainable locations, protects both the natural and built environment and tackles local social problems such as areas of social exclusion and deprivation.”

The Pewsey NDP shares these aspirations; it aims to add a local level of detail to the Wiltshire CS whilst reflecting the priorities of the local community.

The aspirations of the Pewsey NDP are:

- Sustainable development in the right places and of good design
- A housing mix to suit the ages and needs of the local people
- A diversified local economy that supports more local employment
- Improved local retail choice
- A strengthened economy in Pewsey village centre
- Maintenance and improvement of the services provided by the village
- Protection of the village Conservation Area and the listed buildings
- To support and enhance the existing community facilities and recreation areas

1.3 List the main activities relating to the strategy and identify who is likely to benefit from it.

- Propose the site locations for at least 104 dwellings within the Pewsey Limit of Development (LoD) that offer a housing mix to support the needs of local people. This will benefit anyone in the local community looking to buy a home, first time buyers and those who need low cost accommodation.
- Give more retail choice to those who cannot drive to other shops outside the neighbourhood area. Unemployed people will benefit from the jobs created.
- Identify new employment sites to help diversify the local economy. These measures should expand and diversify businesses bringing new investment to the village thus improving employment possibilities.
- Support any proposals to provide further or adult education which will reduce travel for those partaking.
- Encourage the tourist industry within the area providing more employment and stimulating the local economy.
- Protect and enhance the built and natural environments for the enjoyment of all.
- New development will be of a high quality and well designed to make a positive contribution to the distinctive character and form of the village which will bring benefit to all those who value these qualities.

1.4 What do you already know about the relevance of the strategy/policy/procedure/practice? What are the main issues you need to consider?

The Neighbourhood Plan is highly relevant to the Pewsey community as it faces the challenges of the early 21st century. The plan will deliver positive outcomes which will provide new opportunities for housing, employment, leisure and services - improved access that will be of benefit to all. Where necessary, positive actions have been included to help specific groups such as ensuring that a high proportion of new housing is affordable.

The aspirations of the community are at the heart of the Neighbourhood Plan and great efforts have been made to ensure that all have had an opportunity to participate throughout the plan-making process. This meaningful input from the community has continually shaped the plan and the objectives within it. The Consultation Statement shows how input from different sources led to new policies and changes in the ones first proposed.

The site allocation process was guided by consideration of impacts on those adjacent to the sites and every effort has been made to choose locations where these are minimised.

The plan will also have to go through referendum, so will only progress with the support of the community.

1.5 What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this EIA?

The Pewsey NDP is based on the collation and analysis of evidence including the Evidence Base of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Full details are given within the NDP itself and supporting documents.

This approach means using sound research and analysis to identify issues in the area and not basing the Plan on supposition and anecdotal evidence. This also means ensuring that the desired outcomes are tangible, realistic and deliverable. This is supported by a sound Sustainability Appraisal and Environment Assessment which is available for scrutiny.

Throughout the document, there are explicit references to the particular parts of the evidence base which justify the choices made and also explain why alternative options were not pursued.

1.6 What further data or information do you need to carry out the assessment?

No further data or information is required.

Step 2: Involvement, Consultation and Partnership.

2.1 Groups consulted

Equality Group	What was done to reach and involve this group?
Young people	Youth group meetings were held at Pewsey Vale School and at the parish offices. Some meetings were attended by youth representatives.
Older people	Public events were well advertised and held in various venues at different times during the week. This gave everyone in the community the option of attending regardless of age, gender, disability, race religion or sexual orientation.
Disabled People	Public events were well advertised and held in various venues at different times during the week. This gave everyone in the community the option of attending regardless of age, gender, disability, race religion or sexual orientation.
Gender	Public events were well advertised and held in various venues at different times during the week. This gave everyone in the community the option of attending regardless of age, gender, disability, race religion or sexual orientation.
Race / Religion / Sexual Orientation	Public events were well advertised and held in various venues at different times during the week. This gave everyone in the community the option of attending regardless of age, gender, disability, race religion or sexual orientation.

2.2 If consultation and involvement of specific groups did not take place, please state why.

The entire community was given the opportunity to attend the public meetings, engagements and respond to consultations. Generally speaking, the community is relatively homogenous and there seemed to be few issues from what is a land use plan that could directly impact on specific groups who would not be able to make their views known through the same open consultation and engagement methods.

Young people are however notoriously difficult to engage in a planning process, so special effort was made in their case.

2.3 What do previous consultations show about the potential take-up of any resulting activities or services?

The Pewsey community is a relatively active one and their continued input as the plan evolves is something one can be confident of.

2.4 How are external partners involved, or how do you intend to involve external partners, in delivering the aims of this strategy? (If applicable)

Pewsey NDP brings together representatives of Pewsey Parish Council and other stakeholders from the community. Parishes adjacent to the Pewsey parish boundary have been termed Primary Consultees and are circulated with all relevant documentation.

All other parishes in the Community area are informed by Reports circulated via Pewsey Community Area Partnership (PCAP). The Community Area Board has been informed by regular presentations at their meetings and an officer of Wiltshire Council is on the Steering Group.

Developers will be engaged through consultation and dialogue with the steering group.

A Masterplan may be necessary for the Marlborough Road site and discussions will take place based on planning applications submitted.

Step 3: Data collection and evidence.

3.1 What evidence or information do you already have about how this policy might affect equality, and what does this tell you.

A Housing Survey completed by Wiltshire Council for Pewsey parish provided evidence that there is a need for Affordable Housing (AF) and how much. The plan makes particular reference to the needs of the young people of the village and their need for affordable housing without which they would leave Pewsey to find accommodation elsewhere. The Housing Survey did not establish a need for additional accommodation for the elderly.

3.2 What does available data tell you about the potential take-up of any resulting activities and services?

Consultation suggests that Pewsey's Service Centre role is well used by the community and surrounding areas and that it must be preserved and, if possible, improved. To this end the plan supports the retention of existing retail outlets in the village centre and any appropriate development which will improve the economy without detriment to the historic nature of the village.

The plan underpins current activities of a sporting and recreational nature, their retention and, if possible, their enhancement.

Consultations have demonstrated that the community are, in the majority, supportive of the objectives in the plan. This support will be confirmed at the referendum stage of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

3.3 What additional research or data is required to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the strategy? Have you considered commissioning new data or research?

The Housing Survey was commissioned from Wiltshire Council. No other data is needed at this stage. The NDP will be monitored and reviewed as necessary throughout the period covered. Further research will be commissioned as required.

Step 4: Assessing impact and strengthening the strategy

4.1 How does/will the strategy and resulting activities affect different communities and groups?

Pewsey is a village of some 3500 inhabitants and the community is relatively homogenous, although there are inevitably disparities in wealth and income. The plan is aimed squarely at the entire community.

- The housing mix should suit the needs of all local people so the plan policy is a mixture of size and affordability.
- The social and recreational needs for young and elderly must be preserved.
- Employment will be supported for those of working age.
- Protecting the village heritage and the natural environment is of benefit to all.

4.2 What measures do, or could, the strategy include helping to promote equality of opportunity?

The plan will deliver the following outcomes which will make a significant positive impact upon the equality of opportunity:

- Ensure that there is access for all to a decent affordable home
- Increase local employment opportunities
- Protect and enhance the build heritage and natural environment
- Ensure that the community is viable, resilient and able to retain important services
- Improve sport and recreational facilities for all.

4.3 What measures does, or could, the strategy include to address existing patterns of discrimination, harassment or disproportionately?

This plan attempts to tackle any existing inequalities by delivering homes that are affordable and which meet the needs of anyone in need of accommodation.

4.4 What impact will the strategy have on promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

It is intended that the Neighbourhood Plan will continue to build on the promotion of good relations within the community and wider cohesion in the local area. The best way to do this is for Pewsey to strengthen the vitality of the centre, especially in terms of employment and retail, as well as recreational facilities. These changes, as well as improvements in sustainable transport around the village, will raise levels of social interaction and help continue Pewsey's tradition of being a friendly, thriving community.

Community consensus is required for the draft plan to progress to adoption and evidence suggests that the community is behind the draft Plan and support the aims and objectives.

The plan process itself creates an opportunity for people to meet and exchange views, forming a basis for a shared identity.

4.5 If the strategy is likely to have a negative effect (adverse impact), what are the reasons for this?

The process does involve allocating new development sites and there may be people who feel they are disadvantaged by the proximity of new buildings to their homes. The plan has been devised to, where possible, address these concerns if raised through the consultation process.

4.6 What practical changes will help reduce any adverse impact on particular groups?

Plan outcomes will be monitored for anything that might have an adverse effect on any particular section of the community.

4.7 What evidence is there that actions to address any negative effects on one area of equality may affect other areas or human rights?

The plan has been developed so that everyone is treated equally. Nevertheless it is possible that the impacts of accommodating housing for the wider benefit of the community could have locally negative impacts on individual property owners. However, the scale of development and control over design maintained by the plan is felt to be sufficient to keep these impacts at a relatively minor level.

Any unanticipated detrimental consequences in this respect will be detected from monitoring the outcome of the plan and would be redressed accordingly.

4.8 What will be done to improve access to, and take-up of, services or understanding of the strategy?

The Pewsey NDP Working Group will continue to promote the Plan within the community by a variety of means including the internet. Public involvement has been welcomed and encouraged throughout the process and this will continue following adoption of the Plan.

Step 5: Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing.

5.1 How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes?

This assessment will sit alongside other key documents such as the NDP Scoping Report, the Sustainability Appraisal and Environmental Assessment, the Consultation Report and the Basic Conditions Statement to show clearly what has informed the development of the Plan.

The outcomes of the Plan will be reviewed and monitored through a range of means, and the assessments in the toolkit will be reviewed and updated as required.

Changes in the law, guidance and best practice will be identified and incorporated wherever relevant.

5.2 How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the strategy?

During the plan period to 2026 Pewsey NDP Working Group or its successor will monitor and review the progress of the NDP. New development will be monitored closely through the planning process to ensure that the policies are adhered to.

The Working Group or its successor will continue to meet as often as required to ensure that the Plan's objectives are met. Where possible and relevant the plan will tap into the annual

monitoring of policy undertaken by Wiltshire Council since the plan aims to deliver Core Strategy objectives and these will be monitored by Wiltshire Council.

5.3 Give details of how the results of the impact assessment will be published.

The EIA will be made available on the Pewsey NDP website and on request. The assessment will form part of the Plan submission to Wiltshire Council so will also be available on the Wiltshire Council website also.

The steering group welcomes at any time feedback from any section of the community on