

## Rother Local Plan 2025-2042

### Regulation 18 Consultation: Development Strategy and Site Allocations

#### Equalities Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment must be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Councils are required in the exercise of their functions to have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic, and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between those who have a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of the persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

“Relevant protected characteristics” are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

On Section 2, please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the people with protected characteristics and/or those who may be socially-disadvantaged. The impacts may not necessarily be negative but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

On Section 3, please input details of any *meetings and discussions* and/or *public engagement activities* with all parties that have been involved or you have consulted with in this proposal.

<b>Section 1</b>	
Name of policy / initiative / Service to be impact assessed*	Draft Local Plan Consultation (Regulation 18)
Corporate objective being addressed*	Adopt a new Local Plan
Department / function carrying out the assessment*	Strategy and Planning

Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy / initiative / service? (function head /department manager)*	Head of Planning
Who is involved in the impact assessment?	Planning Policy Manager
What are the aims / objectives of the policy / initiative / service?	To carry out a public consultation in accordance with planning legislation as part of the process of preparing a new Local Plan, which once adopted, will form part of the Council's statutory development plan and be used in planning decisions. This draft Local Plan (2026) for consultation includes proposals for the development strategy, supporting area-specific policies, and site allocation policies.
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	All Rother residents, businesses and visitors.
What are the main outcomes of the policy (this is key to being able to identify what monitoring is needed)?	The adoption of a new Local Plan which will contain a suite of planning policies and site allocations to guide decisions on managing growth and new development in the district and help to both secure and steer decisions on funding for new investment in supporting infrastructure.
Is the policy for external or internal purposes?	External and internal.
Are other organisations involved in the delivery?	Yes. The Local Plan will set the strategic planning framework to guide development decisions over the plan period, 2025-2042. The implementation of the plan will involve a wide variety of stakeholders from both the public and private sector.
If yes please state who:	Developers, landowners, infrastructure providers and public sector stakeholders, including Government bodies.
What information/ past experience do we have i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (info can be demographic data i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other Services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises)	An EQIA was undertaken for the first Local Plan Consultation in April 2024. This identified no negative impacts on protected groups.
How will information be collected regarding the impact of the policy /initiative /service/ employment policy etc?	The results of the public consultation will be summarised in a Consultation Statement to be published at the next stage of the Local Plan process and inform its preparation. A Sustainability Appraisal is also carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Plan, and this considers potential impacts of the plan proposals on social, economic and environmental objectives. Once adopted, the Council will review and monitor the delivery of the Local Plan and its intended outcomes through a statutory Authority Monitoring Report process.

Date of Policy Review*	January 2026
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Impacts Identified<sup>1</sup></b>
Age	Positive. The plan's policies are expected to have a positive overall impact on the local population, including older and younger age groups. Policies in the housing chapter set requirements and targets for housing to meet identified local needs, including housing for older people (such as for specialised forms of accommodation and adaptable and accessible homes) for those with mobility issues, while planning for mixed household sizes will also promote housing for younger people. At the same time, the Green to the Core policies will require energy use standards that will reduce the costs of maintaining warm homes, including retrofit. Other significant actions include the overall aim of the development strategy to increase the accessibility of services and facilities for all modes of transport, together with policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities
Disability	Positive. The plan's policies are expected to have a positive overall impact on households that are affected by disability. Policies in the housing chapter set requirements for housing to meet the needs of those with mobility issues (such as adaptable and accessible homes). At the same time, the Green to the Core policies will require energy use standards that will reduce the costs of maintaining warm homes, including retrofit. Other significant actions include the overall aim of the development strategy to increase the accessibility of services and facilities for all modes of transport, together with policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities.
Gender	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts.
Race	Positive. The plan's policies are expected to have a mixture of positive and neutral impacts racial and ethnic minorities, but positive overall. This is due to policies that will encourage community interaction and mixed communities. At the same time, housing policies will include those directed to meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

<sup>1</sup> The impacts identified consider those anticipated from the proposed Development Strategy and Site Allocations set out in the draft Local Plan (2026), together with the thematic topic area policies in the draft Local Plan (2024).

Religion and Belief (including no belief)	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. The draft plan includes policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities, which includes religious facilities. There are no negative impacts.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts
Transgender	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, it is considered that the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, it is considered that the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts. The draft plan includes policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities, which includes health care. The draft plan also covers policies on development design, with requirements on high quality public realm to improve accessibility for the population.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, it is considered that the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts.

People experiencing or at risk of socio-economic disadvantage (including those with lower income or carers, ex-offenders and armed forces veterans)	Positive. The plan's policies will establish a strategy and a range of provisions that are expected to deliver positive benefits to residents and visitors that are socio-economically disadvantaged, including by helping to address the underlying causes of deprivation. These include housing policies aiming to deliver the district's need for affordable housing; economic policies that seek to improve the economy in all areas of the district, to higher levels of employment and wages, as well as direct interventions to assign jobs to local people where appropriate. Moreover, the overall development strategy of the plan aims to make services, facilities, and green infrastructure more accessible via public and active transport, benefitting those who are unable to drive or those for whom driving is financially burdensome.
<b>Section 3: Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	
<b>Meetings and discussions</b>	<b>Public engagement activities</b>
Public consultation to be carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to involve: online consultation website, newspaper advertisement, hard copy plans available to view at libraries and Bexhill town hall, public exhibitions. Representations to be accepted online, by email and by post.	This will be the second round of statutory public consultation on the draft Local Plan. The first Regulation 18 consultation was held from April-June 2024. An Interim Consultation Statement (2026) has been published - this provides a summary of the consultation process to-date and feedback received on the consultation, together with the main issues identified and how the Council has considered this feedback. This second Regulation 18 consultation will be carried out in accordance with the SCI, and an additional Consultation Statement will be prepared in due course. Both consultations will inform the preparation of the 'proposed submission version' of the draft Local Plan, which will be subject to a further statutory consultation (Regulation 19 stage), prior to being submitted to the Government for independent examination.