

# Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (March 2017)

## **Section 1: Your details**

**EIA lead Officer:** Rob Belcher

**Email address:** robbelcher@wirral.gov.uk

**Head of Section:** Mary Worrall

**Chief Officer:** Nicky Butterworth

**Directorate:** Neighbourhoods

**Date:** 23 October 2020

## **Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?**

### Birkenhead Park's heritage project

Birkenhead Park is one of the foremost historic public parks in Britain - reputed to be the world's first publicly funded municipal park. It is so special that Wirral Council is on an exciting journey to seek its inscription by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Alongside that ambition, and recognising the Park's international importance, is the desire to realise its full potential by focusing on the restoration of significant elements of its historic environment while achieving substantial improvements in visitor facilities. It will also contribute to the wider social, economic and environmental regeneration of the Wirral peninsula, and specifically the local Birkenhead area.

Significant elements of the project include: restoring the Park's horticultural experiences, particularly views and vistas; improving its external presentation - its entrances, boundary and edge treatments; and investing in better experiences for visitors. As well as seeking physical restoration the project will focus on ways to achieve greater participation in, and use of, the Park by visitors and volunteers, while maximising its learning opportunities, particularly through engaging with the local community as well as people from further afield.

This project is currently at an early stage. The proposed package of improvements listed above will require detailed development.

**Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?**

**Yes** If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date

Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup>  
November 2020

**Please select hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on  
the Council's website**

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

**Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick  
relevant boxes)**

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)

**Section 4:**

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All	<p>The benefits of Birkenhead Park becoming a World Heritage Site are potentially enormous for Wirral and its communities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- increase in international awareness;</li><li>- increase in community and civic pride;</li><li>- growth of local visitor economy;</li><li>- increase in inward investment and significant positive impact on local regeneration;</li><li>- as well as the protection and improved management of this unique heritage asset for future generations.</li></ul> <p>When created in the 1840s Birkenhead Park was conceived on egalitarian principles – to be fully available and enjoyed by all people</p>				

	<p>regardless of social status and differences. This continues to be the case and the heritage project will strive to ensure this continues.</p> <p>The Park is extremely popular and welcomes nearly 2 million visitors each year. The majority of these are from the local Birkenhead area (circa 10,000 people live within 1km) where there is a high incidence of social deprivation. It helps to relieve the pressures and symptoms of deprivation by providing a freely available, attractive, refuge in the conurbation. It provides a 'common ground' in a relatively demographically diverse community and contributes to well-being, fitness and health, improved relationships and a greater sense of cohesiveness. Through a high-quality restoration project and supported by people-based activities focused on participation and learning, it can play an even greater role in helping to regenerate the local area for all.</p> <p>Restoration and enhancement of the Park will complement and greatly strengthen the area's wider regeneration strategy, enhancing the experience of all residents, workers, shoppers, and students, benefit local businesses, as well as supporting the ongoing investment of Wirral Growth Company and its partners in transforming the surrounding area.</p>				
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<p>Disability and Race (language)</p>	<p>At this still relatively early stage of the project it is possible that during the development and delivery stages ahead, appropriate community engagement and communication could be an issue for these protected groups.</p>	<p>The project will ensure that Communications colleagues are fully engaged throughout to advise, and lead as necessary on ensuring that all engagement and communications are timely, accurate and fully appropriate to the needs of our communities. Where buildings and meeting places are used for engagement events, we will ensure that venues are as accessible as possible.</p> <p>We will produce consultation documents in appropriate formats and languages, within a reasonable timeframe, so that no one is excluded. Where that is not possible, suitable translators will be engaged to assist.</p>	<p>Communications</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Cost of translation service</p>
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**Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?**

A working group will be established to oversee the day-to-day detailed development of the project. The actions will be monitored as part of that group's role.

**Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?**

In many respects the heritage project is still in its early stages and therefore this is an initial 'overview' EIA. As a 'live' document, it will of course be reviewed on a regular basis as the project progresses. In addition, the project has many facets and it is envisaged that there will be a number of specific EIAs produced as the project develops. Consequently, the negative impacts are considered to be few at this time.

**Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?**

A great deal of research has been undertaken on the heritage significance of the Park, along with its historic development and present condition. This has contributed to the development of the project to date.

Some work has been done to obtain information on visitors to the Park but much more will need to be done to enable a greater and comprehensive understanding (i.e. numbers of visitors and demographics, where they travel from, when they visit, how they enjoy the Park, how long they stay, what they like or don't like, etc.) This will be commenced during the project's development phase.

**Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?**

Yes

If 'yes' please continue to section 7.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)

**Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?**

During 2019 consultation with visitors was undertaken as part of the whole range of events and activities which were hosted in the Park, including The Tour of Britain, the Food and Drink Festival, The Witching Hour, Love Parks Week, Wirral's Heritage Open Days, and the Annual Celebration of the Park's Opening. Their responses to the ambitions for the Park – seeking World Heritage Site status and planning further major improvements – were overwhelmingly positive and supportive.

The long-established community group, the Friends of Birkenhead Park, is working extremely closely with the Council in our aspirations for the Park and is fully supportive.

A consultation plan for the project is yet to be developed. However, a vital part of the future development of the heritage project will be the ongoing involvement of the local community - a comprehensive programme of consultation with visitors, local people, and wider stakeholders. It will be focused on gaining a thorough understanding of the Park's use, views and perceptions.

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal publishing requirements. The EIA will need to be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 4. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing.

## **Section 8: Have you remembered to:**

- a) Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published (section 2a)**
- b) Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts? (section 4)**
- c) Send this EIA to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) via your Chief Officer?**
- d) Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**