

City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	Customer and Corporate Services		
Service Area:	Carbon Reduction Team, Corporate Policy & Strategy		
Name of the proposal :	York Community Woodland		
Lead officer:	Shaun Gibbons		
Date assessment completed:	18/08/21		
Names of those who contributed to the assessment :			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Laura Redhead	Woodland Engagement Manager	CYC	Engagement strategy
Paul McCabe	Project Manager	CYC	Project management
Shaun Gibbons	Head of Carbon Reduction	CYC	Strategy & Management
Woodland Stakeholder Advisory Group		Woodland Trust Forestry Commission White Rose Forest	Experts Local Business Interest Groups

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		<p>Woodmeadow Trust Local Landowners Ward Members Rufforth with Knapton Parish Upper Poppleton Parish Council Ward Members – Rural West Ward, CYC York St John University University of York St Nicholas Field Tremendous York Environment Forum Askham Bryan College Knapton Allotment Association Sustrans</p>	<p>Local organisations Local landowners</p>
<p>Woodland Internal Officer Group</p>		<p>Officers representative of the below departments:</p> <p>Design, conservation and sust' development Climate reduction Planning Transport Health and Well Being Procurement Finance Communities Skills Parks, open spaces and agriculture Communications</p>	

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.
	<p>City of York Council is creating an extensive community woodland on 78 hectares of land to the West of York with the ambition to plant 50,000 trees by 2023 as a nature based solution to climate change mitigation.</p> <p>The new woodland will be a well-designed, bio-diverse, green space providing a place for peaceful contemplation and leisure for the people of York. This will create a new stray for the city, enhance the setting of the city and make York an even greater place to live, work and visit, as well as acting as a small 'carbon sink'.</p> <p>The Woodland's design has been shaped by extensive community and stakeholder engagement and will incorporate opportunities for ongoing community involvement.</p> <p>Key outputs of the woodland's creation include carbon sequestration, biodiversity net gain, improved public health and wellbeing outcomes and new green jobs, skills development and volunteering opportunities.</p>

1.2	Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)
	<p>Woodland creation is subject to approval from the Forestry Commission. Approval is granted by assessing proposals against the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS).</p> <p>UKFS is the reference standard for sustainable forest management across the UK, and applies to all woodland, regardless of who owns or manages it.</p> <p>The standard ensures that international agreements and conventions on areas such as sustainable forest management, climate change, biodiversity and the protection of water resources are applied in the UK.</p> <p>The UKFS outlines the context for forestry in the UK. It sets out the approach of the UK governments to sustainable forest management by defining requirements and guidelines, and providing a basis for regulation and monitoring - including national and international reporting.</p>

1.3	Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?
	<p><u>York Community Woodland team, CYC</u> : Delivery of the woodland and engagement strategy</p> <p><u>Woodland delivery partners</u>: In July the council joined the government's Northern Forest initiative which aims to plant 50 million new trees across the north of England. The initiative is a partnership between the Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission and other organisations committed to tree-planting across the North of England including the White Rose Forest which covers the Leeds City Region and York.</p> <p><u>Internal Officer Group</u>: A range of council services and teams reflecting the multiple objectives relating to the woodland project</p> <p><u>Woodland Stakeholder Advisory Group</u>: We are working in partnership with a number of experts, local business, interest groups, local organisations, local landowners who will be providing best practice advice and helping to shape the vision of the woodland.</p> <p><u>Woodmeadow Trust</u>: We have worked with the Woodmeadow Trust to establish a woodmeadow on part of the woodland site. We work with this expert group to receive advisory information.</p> <p><u>Local farmer</u>: We are currently working with the local farmer within the area to maintain the land on site.</p>

1.4	What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.
	<p>The woodland will enable the council to deliver the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plant 50,000 trees by 2023 for carbon capture (absorbing carbon from the atmosphere), as part of a wider commitment to reach net zero carbon by 2030 • increase access to green space in York and improve the health and wellbeing of local residents • increase biodiversity, wildlife habitats and protect endangered species • enhance York's active travel network, including new walking and cycling routes • opportunities for new green jobs, green skills development and volunteering opportunities <p>The woodland objectives clearly reflect the Council Plan in the following key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good health and wellbeing • getting around sustainably • a greener and cleaner city • plant 50,000 trees by 2023

Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

2.1	What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.	
	Source of data/supporting evidence	Reason for using
Public 'Co-design' Consultation with community		As part of the woodland community co-design process, a public consultation ran from 14 th April – 26 th May 2021. The goal of this phase was to receive feedback on

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	<p>the vision, objectives and concept plans, and to guide the final stage of woodland design.</p> <p>The consultation aimed to reach a wide and diverse audience from across the City of York. Access points were provided through an online survey, online meeting/webinars, postal surveys, school surveys and direct contact with a wide range of community & local interest groups, including parish councils, local ward councillors, local businesses, charities, schools, colleges and universities.</p>
Public Survey	<p>The questions within the survey were designed to understand the needs and requirements of people visiting a woodland. We asked the public for feedback on questions such as;</p> <p>Which of the objectives are most important to you? What do you feel is most important for a community woodland? How would you prefer to travel to the woodland site? If you have any concerns about the new woodland, please tell us below? Would you like to be involved in creating the woodland? Age and Postcode</p> <p>The feedback provided has guided and impacted the final woodland design.</p>
School children survey	To reach a wide group through consultation phase.
Public Webinar session	<p>To enable to the public to ask questions, feedback thoughts and address any concerns regarding the woodland concept designs.</p> <p>To provide an extra platform for feedback for the public. Some people prefer to feedback through interaction rather than taking a survey.</p>
Woodland Stakeholder Advisory Group	Made up of woodland experts, interest groups, local businesses, landowners and local members, the group provides advice and support for the co-design and overall project.

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<p>Woodland 'Keep informed list' data base/ Woodland Public Inbox</p>	<p>The woodland project 'Keep Informed List' is used to communicate with the public to provide project updates and information throughout the project. The public are able to sign up on the Woodland web page and receive information regarding project milestones and up and coming opportunities for involvement.</p> <p>The Woodland inbox is a dedicated email address for the Woodland Project and interested parties. The engagement manager is in regular contact with the public and addresses any questions, comments or concerns regarding the project.</p>
<p>Woodland Internal Officer Group</p>	<p>An internal council officer group representing a wide range of service areas has also met regularly to help steer the project forward and ensure shared objectives are maximised.</p>
<p>Research reports? Views directly equality groups? Participants?</p>	<p>During the Woodland Co-design phase we reached directly to different equality groups to raise awareness of the woodland consultation by working with the Minority Officer, CYC and the Communities & Equalities team, CYC , made up of Community Involvement Officers. These roles represent a connection gateway through to equality groups across the city.</p> <p>Direct contact was made with equality groups such as community groups, young people, older people disabled people/ people with accessibility issues</p> <p>The consultation survey was anonymous, however, all feedback received has been acknowledged and led to an inclusive final woodland design.</p>

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.		
Gaps in data or knowledge		Action to deal with this	
We are confident that we have assessed and factored in any potential impacts to the design at this stage of the project.		n/a	

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	<p>The woodland has been designed to appeal to people of all age groups and abilities, a space that is welcome and has something for everyone.</p> <p>The woodland design includes a network of pathways that link, providing people with a choice to take shorter or longer routes and try out different routes and experiences each time they visit.</p> <p>The design has been influenced by people of different age groups and interest and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's play area 	Positive	High

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commemorative / contemplative wood area - New tracks, trails (incl. horses) and cycle routes to enable public access and encourage leisure and active travel. - Forest school facilities and coppice areas to support nature based learning, education and green based skills development - Signage and interpretation - Benches and seating - Low key events space - Community agroforestry and foraging opportunities in the form of a community orchard 		
Disability	<p>We are focused on providing an accessible, welcoming and safe space, so that people have confidence in visiting the site and managing their own risks.</p> <p>The site has been designed to be inclusive, the most important aspects of this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signage that is at a height and position so it can be easily seen by everyone - Signs are in plain English (clear and straightforward as possible) - Colour coded/waymarked to encourage exploration and so people can plan appropriate routes - Cycle and bike paths are well signed posted - Braille /Large print/ Pictograms available on signs - Car parking/bike parking with designated spaces for people with a disability - The paths/trails will be of different lengths and surfaces to cater for all needs (incl. wheelchair users and people with mobility aids) 	Positive	High

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate number of benches and seating areas for people to rest - Easy access to amenities - Open areas with a good line of sight to feel safe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access routes and car/bike parking provision, with an emphasis on sustainable transport modes in line with community feedback and expressed travel intentions. Bus routes will be clearly communicated. - Easy access from existing sustainable transport infrastructure such as the Knapton to Rufforth bridleway – and access points/linkages to surrounding settlements 		
Gender	<p>The woodland will welcome all genders and we will follow best practice to provide information on a safe visit to the site for everyone.</p> <p>Full site information will be available for visitors, this will also be available on the woodland website so that people can plan their visit and know what to expect, helping them to enjoy the area and stay safe.</p> <p>People visiting alone of any gender will be able to plan routes to feel confident – open areas with good line of sight and safe.</p> <p>Site management will be considered as the woodland establishes.</p>	Positive	Medium
Gender Reassignment	<p>The woodland will welcome all members of the community. People visiting will be able to plan routes to feel confident, so open areas with good line of sight and where they feel safe.</p>	Neutral	

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Marriage and civil partnership	The woodland will welcome all members of the community.	Neutral	
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Signage and interpretation, so that pregnant women or women on maternity can plan routes they feel confident doing and able to access amenities, where there is good line of sight and they feel safe.</p> <p>Benches and seating will be provided so pregnant women and women on maternity have the opportunity to take regular rests where necessary or perhaps find places in the shade to feed their baby.</p>	Positive	Medium
Race	No impacts identified- the woodland will welcome all members of the community. Option for signage and information available in different languages.	Neutral	
Religion and belief	No impacts identified- the woodland will welcome all members of the community.	Neutral	
Sexual orientation	No impacts identified- the woodland will welcome all members of the community. People visiting will be able to plan routes to feel confident with open areas with good line of sight where they can feel safe.	Neutral	
Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer	<p>Full site information will be provided on site and on the woodland website for people to enjoy the area and stay safe.</p> <p>Provides a safe and welcoming outdoor place for carers to visit with the people they are caring for, giving enjoyment and health benefits to all</p>	Positive	Medium
Low income groups	The woodland will welcome all members of the community. Access routes and car/bike parking provision will be provided, with an emphasis on sustainable transport modes in line with community feedback and expressed travel intentions.	Neutral	

Veterans, Armed Forces Community	The woodland will welcome all members of the community.	Neutral	
Other			
Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.		Neutral	

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p>Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or across services, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
<p>Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	<p>Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?</p>
<p>Our findings show that the final woodland design is positively represented. The Woodland is an ongoing project and will continue to assess impacts and effects as the project progresses.</p> <p>We have designed a woodland that will welcome all age groups and provided specific areas for all ages to enjoy. As the project progresses we will continue to provide opportunities for everyone to be involved in the woodland project. We will look to foster good relations by encouraging involvement in the woodland through volunteering, educational visits and once the woodland is established, a 'Friends of Group'. We are aware of the importance of maximising awareness for people who may not have visited a woodland before and aim to consider this throughout the project when communicating to the public.</p> <p>The woodland has been designed to welcome everyone. We have included easy access routes, sustainable travel and access routes through car/bike provision. Access on the site is designed to be safe and enjoyable for everyone- including paths/ trails / signage and interpretation and benches and seating. We are committed to making sure that this information is understood from the public and all relevant and required information will be in place, well communicated and easily accessed.</p>	

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	<p>Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:</p>	
<p>- No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.</p>		
<p>- Adjust the proposal – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality or to foster good relations.</p> <p>- Continue with the proposal (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty</p> <p>- Stop and remove the proposal – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.</p> <p>Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.</p>		
Option selected	Conclusions/justification	
<p>No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact</p>	<p>The EIA has not found any negative impacts. We have listened to the feedback from our community engagement co-design phase, stakeholder group, interest groups and woodland experts and implemented this into the woodland design. This is a working document that will be added to during the woodland project delivery.</p>	

<p>and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.</p>	
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Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.			
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
n/a			

Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

8. 1	How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?
	Monitoring will be carried out against a Forest Management Plan (FMP) that will incorporate the proposals mention in the EIA. A FMP is a requirement of the UKFS and will be created by Forestry England under the terms of the lease agreement. The FMP provides a comprehensive basis for assessment and will be continuously monitored and periodically updated by the project delivery team. All publicly owned forests are managed using forest management plans which are available for public comment.

	<p>Additional public engagement and consultation will be carried out in addition to the requirements of the FMP. These will be undertaken at various stages of delivery and led by the Council. We will also use the Stakeholder Advisory Group to continuously monitor and make improvements to the project.</p>
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