

The **public sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. The Council's Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal:

Townhill Park Regeneration:

TOWNHILL PARK DECOMMISSIONING ORDER 2021 REVISION

Townhill Park Regeneration continues the momentum already achieved in delivering new homes in several council estates. The project has planning consent for the delivery of 665 new homes (May 2016), including improvements to open space and Meggeson Avenue.

The aim of the Townhill Park Estate Regeneration project is to comprehensively regenerate the area providing a mix of new apartment blocks and houses. The new homes will be designed with an emphasis on improving energy efficiency and reduction of carbon footprint.

In addition, the external environment will be improved for the benefit of both existing residents and those occupying the new homes. Environmental proposals include a new green space in the centre of the development with play facilities. There is also improved walking, cycling and access to neighbouring green spaces. A series of infrastructure improvements to Meggeson Avenue, has just been completed, to calm the traffic and provide a more pedestrian friendly environment.

56 new homes have been built on Plot1 Roundhill Close and work is ongoing to deliver homes on the other currently vacated plots. The regeneration will provide a much improve living environment for the new and existing residents of Townhill Park.

For the regeneration outcomes and benefits to be achieved, it is necessary to relocate residents from their current homes and provide alternative suitable accommodation.

Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)

The council has already undertaken considerable decommissioning which includes: Plots 1 - Roundhill Close, Plot 2, - Meggeson Avenue Paulet Close Townhill Way, Plot 10 Copse Road, Plot 8 the Meggeson and Ozier Road blocks. Decommissioning is almost completed on Plot 9 Rowlands Walk and decommissioning of Plot 5 has begun with the first of the Benhams Road blocks.

Current decommissioning follows the plan approved in November 2017. In 2020, as a result of discussions with some local residents and reconsidering the potential benefits to alter the sequence of redeveloping sites at Townhill Park, the council agreed to review the current approved plan and suggest a number of changes to the decommissioning sequence.

The remainder of the decommissioning, subject of the consultation, directly affects around 190 homes, which are still required to relocate. These households are the primary focus of this decommissioning review. There are also 2 commercial premises. However, the consultation was also widely promoted to all residents in Townhill Park, local schools and other community organisations.

Summary of Impact and Issues

The consultation on the changes to the timetable for the decommissioning of blocks to be redeveloped raised several areas of concern. Comments were received raising concerns for certain groups:

- the vulnerable and elderly and
- families with school children
- the impact of the temporary loss of service of the local convenience store, while a new facility is built.

Southampton City Council acknowledges that there are concerns for vulnerable groups such as older people, disabled or those with mental health issues and that these groups may find the process of decommissioning difficult. Also, that families with school age children face particular issues when required to move home, which may also involve changes of school.

In recognition of this the council provides the support of a Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) dedicated to all Townhill Park decommissioning council tenants. This service provides extra support where it is required. The initial stages of the decommissioning process include determining what the tenant's needs are, and what extra support is available to support them through the whole decommissioning journey in order to minimise the impact.

During the decommissioning review consultation, the council identified potentially vulnerable groups and offered additional support to fill in the questionnaire.

Potential Positive Impacts

The mix of homes will be based on current need as well as the anticipated future need of the local community. There will be opportunities to meet specialist needs as well as general needs of people on the housing register.

The aim is to provide more opportunities for Affordable housing including: Social Rent, Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership.

Experience and data from previous estate regeneration schemes has shown that only a small proportion of residents that are decanted wish to return to the redeveloped properties. However, as the plots are developed and available for occupation, this should create opportunities for tenants decanting from future redevelopment plots to be relocated in Townhill Park in the new build properties if they desire, rather than relocating elsewhere in the city.

The implementation of the Townhill Park regeneration is being phased to lessen the impact on residents.

The new homes will offer a significant improvement in terms of quality and energy efficiency from existing properties and this includes the open space environment that they sit within.

The new park, currently under construction, in the centre of the Meggeson Avenue will be a focus for the whole community and the improved walking, cycling and access to open spaces will benefit all residents. The traffic calming of Meggeson Avenue has created a more pedestrian friendly residential environment.

The regeneration proposals also include a new retail facility

Responsible Service Manager	Tom Putt - Service Manager Regeneration & Development
Date	23 June 2021

Approved by Senior Manager	Tina Dyer-Slade – Head of Property
Date	23 June 2021

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
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<p>Age</p>	<p>Older people may find moving home more challenging mentally and physically</p> <p>Children may find moving to a different location difficult and may need to move schools</p>	<p>The Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) would identify additional needs and concerns at the initial meeting with the tenant and work with the tenant and other areas of the council and agencies to support the move.</p> <p>The council's Allocations Team work with the RLO to support the tenant and their family throughout the move. Through the choice based letting system every effort is made to relocate tenants to an area of their choice.</p> <p>Decants will be managed in accordance with the Council's Decommissioning of Housing Stock Policy and Acquisition and Compulsory Purchase Policy.</p> <p>New affordable homes will be allocated as per Lettings Policy.</p> <p>Ensure consistent implementation of the Council's adopted policies and plans.</p> <p>Ensure through design of the scheme that mobility and accessibility are maximised in both housing and the surrounding environment.</p> <p>There is potential for specifying housing types that meet the housing needs of the people on the housing register</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Those with mental and physical disabilities may find the decommissioning process of moving home more challenging and harder to understand and adjust to change</p>	<p>Support was available for those who had difficulty completing the questionnaire either online or on paper</p> <p>Once a block has been notified of the start of its decommissioning the needs of tenants are identified through the Resident Liaison</p>

	<p>Those who live in adapted properties require the equivalent when they move, and it can take time to find suitable accommodation</p>	<p>Officer's meeting with each tenant.</p> <p>Where required a Vulnerability Assessment can be completed with tenants and the Council's Specialist Assessment Unit can provide support and advice to Housing Management.</p> <p>The Resident Liaison Officer supports the tenant through the duration of their move and will be able to arrange necessary support where it is required, including working with Allocation to find suitable properties.</p> <p>Decants will be managed in accordance with the Council's Decommissioning of Housing Stock Policy and Acquisition and Compulsory Purchase Policy</p> <p>New affordable homes will be allocated as per Lettings Policy.</p> <p>The Council has a range of policies and procedures which support the Council's equality and diversity standards</p> <p>Ensure consistent implementation of the Council's adopted policies and plans.</p> <p>Ensure through design of the scheme that mobility and accessibility are maximised in both housing and the surrounding environment.</p> <p>Council guidelines on wheelchair liveable homes to be followed and set out in the specification.</p> <p>Potential for specifying housing types that meet the housing needs</p>
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		of the people on the housing register.
Pregnancy and Maternity	The decommissioning plan may have an impact on pregnancy and maternity. It may be more challenging to move during pregnancy and maternity. Also, the arrival of a new baby may change the requirements of required housing allocation	<p>Once a block has been notified of the start of its decommissioning the needs of tenants are identified through the Resident Liaison Officer's visit to each tenant.</p> <p>The Resident Liaison Officer supports the tenant through the duration of their move and will be able to arrange necessary support where it is required</p> <p>Decants will be managed in accordance with the Council's Decommissioning of Housing Stock Policy and Acquisition and Compulsory Purchase Policy</p>
Community Safety	During the acquisition process, community safety risks could increase as a site becomes vacant.	<p>Appropriate security measures will be provided to keep tenants, residents, and the property itself as safe and secure as is reasonably possible.</p> <p>Ensure through design of the scheme that security is maximised and minimise potential for anti-social behaviour in any new housing on the site and comply with the Secured by Design criteria.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No identified impact	The new build affordable rent properties will be allocated under the council's approved Allocation policy (Sept 2019). The ESIA for the policy did not identify any specific aspects for this group.
Race	No identified impact	The new build affordable rent properties will be allocated under the council's approved Allocation policy (Sept 2019). The ESIA for the policy did not identify any specific aspects for this group.
Religion or Belief	No identified impact	The new build affordable rent properties will be allocated under

		the council's approve Allocation policy (Sept 2019). The ESIA for the policy did not identify any specific aspects for this group.
Gender Reassignment	No identified impact	The replacement new build affordable rent properties will be allocated under the council's approve Allocation policy (Sept 2019). The ESIA for the policy did not identify any specific aspects for this group.
Sexual Orientation	No identified impact	The new build affordable rent properties will be allocated under the council's approve Allocation policy (Sept 2019). The ESIA for the policy did not identify any specific aspects for this group.
Poverty	There are currently insufficient affordable homes in the city and as a result there are approximately 8,600 households on the housing register.	<p>The development programme will provide a significant number of affordable homes.</p> <p>Moving people out of temporary accommodation and into their home has the potential to significantly improve the quality of life of those residents.</p> <p>An assessment has been undertaken of the impact of offering some properties at Affordable Rent This indicates that some tenants may be able to afford these properties, particularly those who are in existing tenancies whose income has increased during the lifetime of the tenancy. These tenants opting to move into new Affordable Rent properties would make more social rent properties available to new tenants.</p> <p>The council would like to provide a proportion of new build homes at social rent, which is lower than 'affordable rent', but this will depend on the financial viability of each scheme and the possible levels of grant achieved. Currently,</p>

		<p>Homes England are supportive of grant aid for social housing, but each scheme is judged individually.</p> <p>In Allocation policy terms: Applicants with a priority need, who have not contributed to their homelessness and meet the main homelessness duty within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing act 1996/ Homelessness Act 2002 (S193).</p>
Other Significant Impacts	<p>Decommissioning - wider impact</p> <p>A large-scale decommissioning project may have an impact on the availability of housing across the city, as large numbers of tenants could be displaced.</p>	<p>The council does not allocate all properties available for rent to regeneration in order that other priority groups can be housed</p> <p>The Council retains the right to balance housing register applications in circumstances in where there is high housing demand due to decommissioning.</p>
	<p>Demolition and Construction Period</p> <p>There will be some noise and inconvenience caused by the construction and traffic to and from the site during demolition and construction</p>	<p>Contractors will be required to operate under the 'Considerate Construction Scheme', or equivalent, to mitigate the impact as far as possible. There will be regular communication with residents, with project updates, programmes and key contact details for escalating any issues of concern</p>
	<p>Provision of new Retail unit</p> <p>Although there will be new retail provision it is likely that there will be a gap in convenience store provision until the new unit is built and operational</p>	<p>The council will work to minimise any gap between existing and new retail provision in Townhill Park.</p> <p>The build programme will be adjusted to prioritise the new retail provision</p> <p>The existing commercial tenants know of the redevelopment proposals and this is reflected in the terms of their lease. The council will keep them informed of</p>

		developments.
	<p>Local Employment Opportunities</p> <p>There are residents in the area who are unemployed, and regeneration brings opportunities to promote employment for local people</p>	<p>An Employment and Skills Plan will accompany any planning consent and ensure the construction phase includes opportunities for local employment and training.</p> <p>Provision continues to be made for the existing public transport within the traffic calming of Meggeson Avenue</p>
	<p>Health and Well-Being</p> <p>There is a link between quality homes and state of health</p>	<p>For the new build improved specification and energy efficiency of homes and access to well-connected green spaces and opportunities to walk and cycle will contribute to residents' health and well-being.</p> <p>Ensure through design of new homes that mobility and accessibility are maximised in both housing and the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The quality of design promoted in the Designer's Manual aims to deliver benefits in energy efficiency and build quality which provide opportunities to realise benefits in health and wellbeing.</p>