

Community Impact Assessment

Natural Environment Strategy

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A large, solid pink geometric shape, resembling a stylized mountain range or a series of peaks, is positioned at the bottom of the page. It starts from the left edge, rises to a peak, descends to a valley, rises to a second, higher peak, and then descends towards the right edge.

➤ **Equality Assessment**

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Age - older and younger people	There are benefits to everyone from supporting a healthy natural environment and functioning ecosystems.		
Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.		People with different abilities may be impacted by some measures, such as accessibility impacts from more natural roadside verges, or lack of accessibility to green spaces.	Undertake accessibility checks for measures that may impact on public access, such as verge management or access works to green spaces to ensure they consider inclusivity.
Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another		Evidence shows that people with some protected characteristics may be under-represented as users of the countryside and green spaces due to a variety of cultural, societal and physical factors. This could impact on the inclusivity of community engagement and involvement elements	Ensure that opportunities for community engagement and involvement, such as volunteering, are inclusively promoted and operated.
Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work			
Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers			
Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins			
Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A			

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered		of the proposals, such as volunteering.	
Sex - men or women			
Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes			

➤ **Workforce Assessment**

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
n/a			

➤ **Health, Well-being and Social Care Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The strategy proposes to support biodiversity recovery and enhance natural environments.</p>	<p>Evidence demonstrates that spending time in natural environments can reduce stress and support health and wellbeing. Natural environments also support climate adaptation, reduce air pollution, and support other essential ecosystem services that in turn support human health. The strategy aims to support biodiversity and natural processes.</p>	<p>Nature recovery is overwhelmingly positive for human health. There ay be minor risks of zoonoses (animal-derived disease) in some circumstances.</p>	<p>Follow appropriate guidance.</p>

➤ **Communities Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The strategy proposes to support biodiversity recovery and enhance natural environments, with a focus on council-owned land and council functions. Objectives include raising awareness and actively involving communities.</p>	<p>Supporting nature recovery and natural environments can bring many benefits to Staffordshire's communities, enhancing the county as a great place to live, work and visit. Communities have a vital role to play in supporting nature, for example through citizen science and volunteering. This in turn can support learning, health and wellbeing and community cohesion.</p>	<p>There is a risk that some communities that could benefit from nature can be harder to reach or may have less access to green space. For example, more deprived communities often have less accessible green space available to them and opportunities to benefit from nature can therefore be limited.</p>	<p>Ensure measures to ensure inclusion and accessibility are built into strategy implementation. Explore through the local nature recovery strategy ways to make nature more accessible to all communities.</p>

➤ **Economic Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The strategy proposes to support biodiversity recovery and enhance natural environments, with a focus on council-owned land and council functions. Objectives include delivery of biodiversity enhancement through the planning process, other strategies / plans and through our properties.</p>	<p>Functioning ecosystems support the economy in numerous ways, underpinning ecosystem services such as pollination of crops, reducing air pollution, flood reduction, nutrient cycling etc. A thriving natural environment also underpins the visitor economy and supports inward investment.</p>	<p>There may be impacts on costs of development and other strategy delivery due to requirements to deliver biodiversity gain / enhancement, however there are also economic opportunities e.g. through offering net gain units.</p>	<p>Planning for biodiversity at the early stage in plans and developments reduces costs and risks of delays.</p>

➤ **Climate Change Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The strategy proposes to support biodiversity recovery and enhance natural environments, with a focus on council-owned land and council functions. Objectives include linking to climate change delivery through nature-based solutions.</p>	<p>Actions include nature-based solutions such as tree planting and management of natural habitats to support carbon sequestration, plus the use of natural solutions to support climate adaptation – e.g. tree planting for cooling areas and watercourses, planting to reduce flooding.</p>	<p>Generally biodiversity enhancement supports climate and other environmental goals. There may be trade-offs to consider in relation to carbon uptake by different tree species, with some native species taking longer to deliver carbon benefits while some non-native species potentially offer greater carbon benefits in the short term which may help support net zero targets.</p>	<p>Consider an adaptive approach that delivers multiple benefits to support a range of outcomes – e.g. mixed planting that delivers both biodiversity and carbon benefits.</p>

➤ **Environment Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The strategy proposes to support biodiversity recovery and enhance natural environments, with a focus on council-owned land and council functions.</p>	<p>The strategy aims to support the environment and therefore delivers significant benefits.</p>	<p>Competition for land will require a considered approach to deliver multiple goals and ensure that wider objectives, e.g. agriculture, are also supported.</p>	<p>Seek multi-functional land uses where appropriate to deliver multiple outcomes.</p>