

# WOODCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2013-2035

## Basic Conditions Statement

### Attachment B: Equality Impact Assessment



NOVEMBER 2021

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Woodcote Parish Council  
The Parish Office  
Woodcote Village Hall  
Reading Road  
Woodcote  
RG8 0QY

[www.woodcote-online.co.uk](http://www.woodcote-online.co.uk)

[www.woodcotendp.org.uk](http://www.woodcotendp.org.uk)

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## Section 1: Introduction to Equality Impact Assessment

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The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on all public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.

### Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is the systematic analysis of a policy or policies, in order to identify the potential for an adverse impact on a particular group or community, in particularly those with a protected characteristic. It is a method of assessing and recording the likely differential and/or adverse impact of a policy on people from different groups so that if a policy results in unfairness or discrimination then changes to eliminate or lessen the impact be considered.

“Protected characteristics” are defined in the Act as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

This document presents the results of the assessment of the **Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP2)** to ensure that Woodcote Parish Council is satisfying its statutory duties in this regard.

### 1.1 Aims of the Equality Analysis

The purpose of the analysis is to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision-making and to nurture a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality and fairness at the heart of public policy. The aim in conducting the analysis is the promotion of fairness and equality of opportunity and thus it is the outcomes that are of primary concern.

The sections below consider the goals and objectives of the WNP2 and then assess the impact of policies and proposals on groups with protected characteristics.

### 1.2 Methodology

An assessment has been made on whether the WNP2 has a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of the protected characteristics (in so far as data is available). A brief justification of the policies and proposals in the WNP2, and notes of any mitigation, has been provided. If the impact is negative, this is given a high, medium or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

<b>High impact</b>	a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.
<b>Medium impact</b>	some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence.
<b>Low impact</b>	almost no relevancy to the process, for example an area that is very much legislation-led.

## Section 2: Baseline Data

Data for Woodcote is available for the following protected characteristics: age, disability, race, religious belief, and sex. Data is not readily available for the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and sexual orientation. Unless stated otherwise the data source is the 2011 Census.

- At the last census in 2011 there were 2,604 people living in Woodcote. 53.3% of these were male, and 46.7% were female. Comparable figures for the UK were 49.3% male and 50.7% female.
- Woodcote has a slightly higher proportion of people:
  - aged 0-15 (20.9%) than the UK (18.9%)<sup>1</sup>; and
  - aged above 65 (17.2) than the UK (16.3%);

Updated figures from the ONS for 2017 suggest that these proportions have changed to reflect the ageing of the community:

- 18.5% of the community was aged between 0-15 years, down from 20.9%; and
- 25.1% were over 65, an increase of nearly 8 percentage points.
- Woodcote has a lower proportion of people whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot (4.9%) compared to the national average (8.3%) and a slightly lower proportion of people whose day-to-day activities are limited a little (8.1%) compared to the national average (9.3%).
- In 2013 there were 35 people in Woodcote receiving Employment and Support Allowance or incapacity benefits (1.3%) compared to 6.3% of the population nationally<sup>2</sup>.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The profile of ethnic origin for Woodcote in 2011 was: These figures indicate that Woodcote has low Non-white population (144 persons in 2001) compared to the national average.</li> </ul>	▶ <b>British white</b>	<b>Woodcote</b>	<b>UK</b>
	▶ <b>Other white</b>	90%	80%
	▶ <b>Non-white</b>	5.5%	5.7%
		4.5%	14.3%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Religious belief in Woodcote is weighted towards Christianity: These five non-Christian religions comprise only 1.18% of the population in total compared to 8.26% in the UK as a whole. 25.42% of people in Woodcote declared no religion and 6.72% did not state their religion.</li> </ul>	▶ <b>Christian</b>	<b>Woodcote</b>	<b>UK</b>
	▶ <b>Muslim</b>	66.32%	59.38%
	▶ <b>Hindu</b>	0.53%	5.01%
	▶ <b>Buddhist</b>	0.07%	1.52%
	▶ <b>Sikhs</b>	0.49%	0.45%
	▶ <b>Jewish</b>	0.03%	0.79%

- In 2011 4.45% of the population in Woodcote was aged 0-4 years, compared to 6.25% in the UK. This suggests that the proportion of people with young families is smaller in Woodcote than it is nationally, and that pregnancy and maternity rates are also lower than the national average. In 2017 the share was 4%.
- Gender reassignment and sexual orientation are generally invisible characteristics for which little reliable data exists at local level.

In summary Woodcote has:

- a slightly higher proportion of young (because of the boarders at the Oratory school) and old people than the national average;
- a significantly lower proportion of persons with incapacity or with limitations on their day-to-day activities than nationally;
- a much lower proportion of non-white persons than the national average;
- a much lower proportion of people who practice religions other than Christianity than nationally; and
- a lower proportion of people with young families than the national average.

<sup>1</sup> The presence of pupils at the Oratory School boarding schools adds some 100 males aged 11-18 to this number

<sup>2</sup> Source: Nomis Ward Labour Market Profile for Woodcote

## Section 3: Goals and Objectives of the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan

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The WNP2 will provide a framework of policies and proposals for the development of the village to 2035. A key element of this is the allocation of sites for new housing and employment.

### Goals

The WNP2 contains seven goals, each of which is supported by a related set of objectives which the WNP2 seeks to deliver. The seven goals are:

1. To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home.
2. To seek opportunities for landscape, recreational and biodiversity gain while minimising the environmental impact of development.
3. To reduce the contribution to climate change by seeking to minimise or reduce the impact of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
4. To reduce the need for travel by car and shorten the length and duration of journeys.
5. To reduce road traffic congestion.
6. To enhance the prospects for local employment.
7. To maintain the character and vitality of the village.

Goals 2, 3, 5 and 7 impinge no differently upon persons with a protected characteristic than to anyone else in the Neighbourhood Area; goals 2, 3 and 5 seek to achieve environmental improvement which will benefit all members of the community, and goal 7 seeks to maintain and, ideally, improve the village as a good place to live which, similarly, benefits all residents.

Goals 1, 4, and 6 are supported by policies and proposals which might affect persons with certain protected characteristics differently from the general population. In each case Goals 1, 4 and 6 aim to create an environment which would benefit persons with protected characteristics by providing decent homes, by reducing the need for cars, shortening journeys and making village facilities more accessible to those with mobility problems, or by enhancing the prospects for local employment.

The WNP Aims and Objectives for:

- **Housing** (Goal 1) seek to provide a greater range of affordable homes, and a mix of housing types including smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and new homes for families or young people seeking their first homes.
- **Reducing the need for travel by car** (Goal 4) seeks to improve accessibility and connectivity to village services and facilities, which will be of particular benefit to older people, the disabled, those with limited mobility, and those with young children and push chairs. The plan requires new development to be within easy walking distance of, and linked by footpath to, the essential village facilities (a bus stop, the surgery, a shop, the schools, and the Village Hall or Community Centre).
- **Enhancing the prospects for local employment** (Goal 6) seeks to encourage and support home working, which will be of particular benefit for disabled persons, young mothers and persons with limited mobility, and requires new employment sites to be within easy walking distance of, and linked by footpath to, both new and existing developments thus easing access for those with limited mobility.

## Section 4: Impact of Policies on Groups with Protected Characteristics

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The WNP2 aims to create benefits for everyone who lives, works, shops, or spends leisure time in the village. This will be achieved by developing new and better housing, particularly affordable and smaller housing, enhancing the prospects for local employment development, preserving social, community and leisure facilities, improving access to local services and facilities, and conserving and enhancing the quality of the environment.

Groups with the various protected characteristics will be affected in different ways by the WNP2 and the purpose of the analysis in this section of the assessment is to identify how various groups will be affected and whether the proposals and policies in the WNP2 will adversely affect disproportionately those in the groups with protected characteristics.

Without exception where policies in the WNP2 do have an impact on groups with protected characteristics, it is a positive impact and not a negative one.

### 4.1 Age

The WNP2 recognises the need to provide and protect play facilities for children when new development is being considered.

- ▶ **Policy E1 Green Space and Landscaping** seeks to retain areas of open space within any new development.
- ▶ **Policy C2 Sports Facilities at Schools** encourages the provision of additional sports facilities at existing schools sites in the village to meet the requirements of the school and the local community, providing existing playgrounds and playing fields are retained.
- ▶ **Policy E5 Local Green Spaces** seeks to retain existing local safe recreational spaces within, or adjacent to, the developed area of the parish.

The WNP2 also recognises the need to provide local affordable housing for young people when they leave home:

- ▶ **Policy H2 Tenancy Mix** supports the provision of affordable homes for those unable to purchase an open-market home;
- ▶ **Policy H3 Affordable Housing** requires 40% of new housing to be affordable.
- ▶ **Policy H4 Allocation of Affordable Housing** seeks to help those with a strong connection to the village and whose needs are not met to obtain the tenancy or shared ownership of new affordable homes.

In addition, WNP2 policies HS2 to HS9 inclusive seek to give local young people an early opportunity to purchase open-market housing before it is released for general sale. Text accompanying these policies expresses the Parish Council's wish that local residents be given the sole opportunity to purchase open-market housing for a period of three months before going on general sale, thus giving young people who have grown up in the parish the opportunity to buy a home locally.

With regard to older people there are a range of housing policies which recognise and seek to meet their needs:

- ▶ **Policy H6 Type of Homes** requires that two-thirds of new homes should be terraced or semi-detached, thereby providing opportunities for older persons to downsize.
- ▶ **Policy H7 Size of Homes** requires that one-third of new homes be one- or two-bedroomed, thereby providing opportunities for older persons to downsize.

In addition, the text accompanying policies HS2 to HS9 expressing the Parish Council's wish that local residents be given the sole opportunity to purchase open-market housing for a period of three months increases the opportunity for older residents wishing to downsize and remain in the community.

A commonly expressed concern of older people is the security of their environment.

- ▶ **Policy D3 Secure by Design** requires new developments to incorporate the principles of ‘Secured by Design’<sup>3</sup> to ensure that a safe and sustainable community is maintained.

The WNP2 also contains policies which seek to improve and retain key facilities and services used by older people:

- ▶ **Policy C4 Community Facilities and Services** supports the provision of additional community facilities and services in the village.
- ▶ **Policy T6 Pedestrian Footways** requires access to local facilities and public transport links to be via convenient, direct paths suitable for those in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter.

## 4.2 Disability

The needs of persons who are disabled or who have limited mobility are recognised in:

- ▶ **Policy C3 Communications Infrastructure** which seeks to improve the provision of high-speed broadband, which will be of particular benefit to persons who have restrictions on their mobility by improving access to home-based employment and to online goods and services.
- ▶ **Policy T2 Parking for the Library and Community Centre** which supports the provision of disabled parking spaces at this location.

Where new development is provided:

- ▶ **Policy D1 Good Design** requires that it be inclusive, i.e. designed to accommodate the needs of a wide range of people including the disabled.
- ▶ **Policy T6 Pedestrian Footways** requires access to local facilities and public transport links to be via convenient, direct paths suitable for those in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter.

## 4.3 Maternity and pregnancy

Key issues for women who are pregnant or who have young children are access to appropriate housing, flexible employment, and access to facilities including health, developmental play, and recreational facilities.

The WNP2 has policies which help meet all of these needs:

- ▶ **Policy H2 Tenancy Mix** supports the provision of affordable homes for those unable to purchase an open-market home.
- ▶ **Policy H3 Affordable Housing** requires 40% of new housing to be affordable.
- ▶ **Policy H4 Allocation of Affordable Housing** seeks to help those with a strong connection to the village and whose needs are not met to obtain the tenancy or shared ownership of new affordable homes.
- ▶ **Policy H6 Type of Homes** requires that two-thirds of new homes should be terraced or semi-detached, thereby providing less expensive housing for women with young children.
- ▶ **Policy H7 Size of Homes** requires that one-third of new homes be one- or two-bedroomed, thereby providing less expensive housing for women with young children.
- ▶ **Policy C3 Communications Infrastructure** which seeks to improve the provision of high-speed broadband, which will be of particular benefit to mothers with young children who can work from home and have better access to online goods, services and advice.
- ▶ **Policy T6 Pedestrian Footways** requires access to local facilities such as the surgery and primary school, to be via convenient, direct paths suitable for those pushing a pushchair or walking with young children.
- ▶ **Policy T3 Safe Travel to School** Proposals to improve the safe delivery of pupils to both Langtree Academy and Woodcote Primary School on foot, by bicycle, school buses or by car will be supported.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

#### 4.4 Race

Non-white ethnic groups are a small proportion of the population in Woodcote – in 2011 only 4.5% of the population was non-white and within this there are several groups with different ethnic origins.

Non-white ethnic groups can experience difficulties around discrimination (sometimes leading to hate crime), language, health and well-being, deprivation and culture.

A public realm designed with safety in mind will minimise opportunities for hate crime. The WNP2 seeks to ensure that new development follows good urban design principles and provides safe and inclusive public environments.

- ▶ **Policy D1 Good Design** says that poor quality design which fails to respect the connections between people and places is inappropriate to its location.
- ▶ **Policy D3 Secure by Design** requires new developments to incorporate the principles of ‘Secured by Design’ and, wherever possible, to achieve SBD accreditation to ensure that a safe and sustainable community is maintained.

#### 4.5 Sex

The WNP2 contains no specific policies or proposals for any particular gender. The WNP2 has been written to provide equal opportunity to both sexes in respect of the provision of development, employment and access to facilities.

Neither sex is disadvantaged by any of the policies and proposals in the WNP2; on the contrary both sexes will benefit equally from the implementation of the WNP2.

#### 4.6 Religion, Gender re-assignment, Sexual orientation

Key issues for religious groups are discrimination relating to employment, housing and the provision of services, and their portrayal in the media.

Key issues for gender re-assigned people and homosexual men and women are personal relationships, transphobia and/or discrimination, and hate crime.

The WNP2 does not and cannot directly address the social attitudes that are involved in these problems. However, it does seek to provide a built environment which is open to all, with a safe public realm which all social groups can access and use equally.

### 5: Conclusion

The WNP2 provides a strategy for the development of the village, and a range of policies and proposals, which will result in positive benefits for many parts of the local community with protected characteristics: older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, disabled people and those with limited mobility.

The WNP2 does not explicitly address the needs of racial or religious groups, transgender, gay or lesbian groups, or women but does make equal provision for affordable housing and for a range of housing, and seeks to provide additional social, community and leisure facilities which will benefit these groups equally. It also seeks to provide a safer environment, particularly a safer public realm, where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to be subject to hate crime.