

Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) (“the Act”), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give ‘due regard’ to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid ‘due regard’ to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
Martina Olley	Scheme Development Manager (A326 & BSIP) Hampshire 2050	martina.olley2@hants.gov.uk

Title:	A326 Waterside Improvements Update - December 2025
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: 522
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Strategic Transport
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	The A326 Waterside Improvements scheme is part of the Government’s national Large Local Majors (LLM) programme, which is itself part of the Major Road Network (MRN) funding stream. The scheme is a transformative scheme in the County Council’s Waterside Transport Strategy, which was adopted in November 2022. The scheme also fits in with the emerging Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), in terms of focusing investment in highway capacity schemes on a limited number of key strategic highway corridors across Hampshire, in locations where this will help to enable economic growth. The proposed scheme involves a series of junction improvements and road widening along the A326 in the Waterside area of the New Forest, between the Michigan Way junction west of Totton (to the north), and the Main Road junction at Dibden (to the south).

	The scheme will increase highway capacity and provide improved facilities for people walking and cycling, including new crossing facilities.
New/changed service/policy/project	The purpose of the Decision Report is report is to provide an update on the development of the A326 Waterside Improvement scheme; set out the background to the project and provide the latest information on its development; describe the changes to the scheme proposals since the previous Decision report, including details of the updated costs; provide details of the situation regarding the Local Match funding that would be required to deliver the scheme; flag the requirement for work to carry on at risk during the planning determination period, post any OBC approval; summarise the key project risks; and reconfirm approval to submit the Planning Application and Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme.

Engagement
Public consultation took place in summer 2023. The feedback from the consultation was fed into the scheme development, the preliminary design, which has now been completed and is reported on. The detailed outcome of the consultation was reported on in the previous report of 22 January 2024.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Age, the scheme is overall expected to have a positive impact, as it will include a number of measures that will make crossing the road easier and safer, something that will be of particular benefit to the young and to the elderly.
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Disability, the scheme is overall expected to have a positive impact, as it will include a number of measures that will make crossing the road easier and safer, something that will be of particular benefit to those with disabilities or mobility impairments.
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Gender Reassignment, the scheme is overall expected to have a neutral impact, as there no elements of the scheme that would have a particular impact on this protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Pregnancy & Maternity, the scheme is overall expected to have a positive impact, as it will include a number of measures that will make crossing the road easier and safer, something that will be of particular benefit to people that are either pregnant or in maternity, for example using a pushchair.
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Race, the scheme is overall expected to have a neutral impact, as there no elements of the scheme that would have a particular impact on this protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Religion or Belief, the scheme is overall expected to have a neutral impact, as there no elements of the scheme that would have a particular impact on this protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Sex, the scheme is overall expected to have a neutral impact, as there no elements of the scheme that would have a particular impact on this protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Sexual Orientation, the scheme is overall expected to have a neutral impact, as there no elements of the scheme that would have a particular impact on this protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design. With regard to Marriage & Civil Partnership, the scheme is overall expected to have a neutral impact, as there no elements of the scheme

	that would have a particular impact on this protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design.</p> <p>With regard to Poverty, the scheme is overall expected to have a positive impact, as it will improve access to and from the Waterside and reduce journey times from the Waterside to Southampton and the motorway network, thereby facilitating easier access to jobs, education and leisure. However, due to the closure of some links, a few local journeys might increase slightly in duration and length. The same link closures will equally be beneficial for active travel modes and allow safer and easier movements for people on bikes and foot to access local locations for jobs, education and leisure.</p>
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>During the preliminary design one of the key aims was to design a scheme suitable for all users of the transport network. This will continue into the next stage of design, the detailed design.</p> <p>With regard to Rurality, the scheme is overall expected to have a positive impact, as it will improve access to and from the Waterside and reduce journey times from the Waterside to Southampton and the motorway network, thereby facilitating easier access to jobs, education and leisure. However, due to the closure of some links, a few local journeys might increase slightly in duration and length. The same link closures will equally be beneficial for active travel modes and allow safer and easier movements for people on bikes and foot to access local locations for jobs, education and leisure.</p>
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:New Forest

Equality Statement

Additional information:

None

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 01005

Date of production of EIA for publication: 26/11/2025