



Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Redevelopment of Centrepoint Community Centre site
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Person completing the EIA	Kathryn Robson
Type of policy, function or service:	New/Proposed X
Version & Date	September 2018 V4. Updated January 2019 V5.

1. Background

The need for socially rented housing

Watford, like many parts of the country, is facing an unprecedented demand for housing. As a vibrant and successful town, with good job opportunities, local amenities (including high performing schools) and excellent transport links to London and other parts of the region, its popularity as a place to live has increased significantly in recent years. This high demand to live in Watford runs across the full remit of housing options from owner occupier, mixed tenure and privately rented to socially rented.

For many the cost of housing is proving a significant challenge. Watford Borough Council, led by its Elected Mayor, wants Watford to remain a 'balanced' town, one which offers a range of housing solutions for residents and, certainly, to consider ways to increase the availability of socially rented housing for those for whom this is the only solution to gaining a settled home within the borough.

There are a number of routes by which a local authority can deliver affordable housing in its area. Watford works closely with developers to ensure developments deliver affordable housing (35% on appropriate sites) but recognises that other solutions can work alongside this development led approach to achieve additional units. These other solutions, which include the council working alongside the borough's housing associations play an important role in finding permanent housing solutions for those currently on the council's housing register.

It is also important to note that affordable housing does not necessarily mean socially rented homes (other forms of 'affordable' coming into this definition, include affordable rent and shared ownership). Although there are number of socially rented homes being delivered through the planning system as planning applications are granted, the supply is not as the council would like. In view of this and the commitment made by the Mayor to provide 16-18 new social housing units per year over the next three years, the council is currently exploring ways it can work with Watford Community Housing (the borough's largest housing association) to identify opportunities for developing sites that will deliver socially rented homes

Watford faces a substantial challenge in terms of finding sufficient land to meet all its housing needs. Through its Local Plan, the council is seeking to balance the many demands for land within the borough (housing, employment, retail, social infrastructure, open spaces) and recognises that previously developed sites (brownfield land) provide one opportunity for future development, where the case can be made for better use of the land in the interests of the community as a whole. This includes where it is currently the landowner.

Current housing needs

As of end of September 2018, there were 149 households in temporary accommodation in Watford of which 109 had children or were expecting a child.

The council also knows that the demand for housing is predominantly for two three and four bedroom properties, suitable for families.

Recommendation 1: Ensure that the housing need is updated in line with this EIA

UPDATE: (figures updated between version 4 and version 5)

Proposal for the use of the Centrepont Community Centre site for the delivery of social housing units

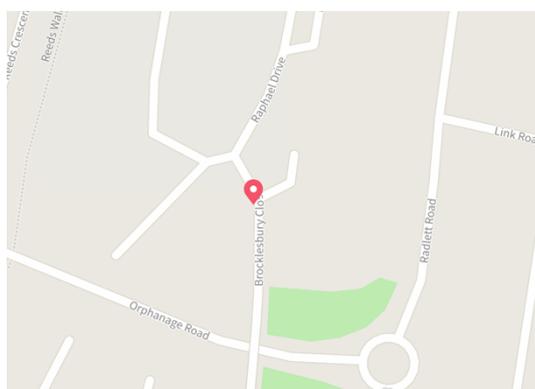
A unique and possibly limited opportunity has arisen through a wider national review of social housing post-Grenfell. Homes England (HE) has recently introduced a programme to fund the provision of social rent in areas of high rental value. HE funds have been set aside to create opportunities to provide in the region of 12,500 new socially rented homes. Presently, affordable rent attracts up to £35k grant per dwelling but the social rent upper limit, so far untested, is predicted to be up to double this figure.

Watford BC and Watford Community Housing have sought to make a bid for this grant to deliver the aspiration to increase the supply of socially rented homes. A number of sites have been examined which are capable of being developed in the next three years. This includes the Centrepont Community Centre site.

UPDATE: The council and Watford Community Housing received confirmation that the grant application had been successful in December 2018.

Centrepont Community Centre site

The Centrepont Community Centre is on Raphael Drive in Tudor ward, Watford. It is situated within the 'Radlett Road estate'. Adjacent to the Community Centre is a convenience store also in the ownership of the council, the only located within the estate.



Centrepoint Community Centre usage

The community centre is open to the public and available for hire Monday to Sunday from 9am to 10pm. It offers free Wi-Fi and has a number of rooms available for hire: the Main Hall accommodates 50 people seated or 75 people standing with access to kitchen facilities, two rooms each accommodating 25 people seated or 35 people standing and a small Meeting Room - accommodating 8 people seated with small IT facilities.

Current activities include:

- Street dance (5+ years)
- Let's dance
- Unity 3 Dance School - A variety of adult and child classes available
- Seated exercise
- Stay & Play session
- Bumps & Babies session
- Dine out Tuesday lunch club
- Coffee morning
- Random Cafe
- P.H.A.B. (Able bodied & disabled social group)
- Sahaja yoga
- Gentle Restorative yoga
- Activity club (ages five to 12 years)
- Vathalayam Spiritual Group
- Watford Indian Association yoga
- Watford United Pentecostal Church

The limited car parking provision on site (six spaces outside the centre and shop) has had a direct and negative impact on the ability of the facility to meet the needs of the centre users and generate adequate levels of income for the council.

An analysis of regular community use undertaken last year (2017) showed the following:

Centrepoint Community Centre	Sports Activity	Cultural Activity	Informal Education	Social Activities
	10	2	2	9

These regular bookings do not take into account the 'one off' bookings for activities such as children's parties and training workshops/courses.

Recommendation 2: To review and update the current usage of Centrepoint to include both the regular bookings and the 'one off' bookings in terms of extent and reasons for hire

Convenience store

As well as the community centre, the site includes a unit for a convenience store. This is also included in the proposals for development and, therefore, would be a lost amenity to the local community.

Recommendation 3: To understand the locations of the nearest other convenience store amenity for local residents.

Impact on current staffing

The council currently manages the community centre directly. The impact of the proposal to develop

Centrepoint Community Centre for social housing units will be on two (part time) permanent members of Watford Borough Council staff and one (part time) agency member of staff.

All three people currently working within the centre are female.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the initial proposal to consider the redevelopment of the Centrepoint Community Centre site for the delivery of social housing units, in the context of the borough's housing needs.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

3. What we know about the Watford population

Whilst Centrepoint Community Centre is situated within the 'Radlett Road estate' within Tudor ward, the amenity is available to the entire borough and its residents – as well as people from beyond the borough. Therefore, in terms of potential impacts these would be on the Watford population as a whole, with specific reference to those residents within the immediate vicinity of the centre.

UPDATE: Feedback from the recent consultation / engagement strongly indicates that the users of the Centre, particularly the regular users, live within very close proximity to the Centre.

Population

The current population of Watford is 96,600 (mid 2017 estimate revised) and is estimated to grow by 16% by 2026. Population growth estimates stated that they expected Watford to reach 100,000 by the end of 2017. In terms of gender breakdown, there are estimated to be fractionally more female than male residents but the difference is not significant.

The population density for Watford is circa 4,500 people per square kilometre. This makes it the most densely populated district area in England and Wales. However, in comparison with some metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, the density is relatively low

Ward level populations

Mid-2016 year population estimates show Central has the highest population of any ward in Watford and Tudor the lowest at 6,059. The 'Radlett Road estate' is situated within Tudor ward but is close to the boundary with Central ward.

	2016
Callowland	7,983
Central	9,101
Holywell	8,716
Leggatts	7,910
Meriden	7,870
Nascot	8,721
Oxhey	6,949
Park	8,464
St anborough	7,645
Tudor	6,944
Vicarage	8,986
Woodside	7,484

This is ONS experimental data ([Ward Level Mid-Year Population Estimates \(experimental\), Mid-2016](#))

Population projections

The ONS interim 2014-based subnational population projections are an indication of the future trends in population to 2024.

- Watford's population is projected to be 109,600 by 2022 with the population reaching 100,000 in 2017 (we will know if this was accurate with the release of 2018 population estimates (released mid 2019))
- The bulk of the estimated 14.8% increase for Watford over the ten years from 2014 to 2024 is expected to stem from natural change of 8.8% (more births than deaths), net migration within the UK of 5.2% and net international migration of 0.7%. The level of natural change can be attributed to the relatively young age structure of the current population, with a high proportion of child bearing age.

Households

The average household size in Watford is currently 2.45. This is average for the region.

Number of households

The ONS data, based on the census, says that there were 36,681 households in Watford at the time of the Census; as of 31 January 2017 the figure was 39,052.

Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire.

For Watford, the Census 2011 shows the following breakdown in terms of ethnicity: White British (61.9%), White other (7.7%), Pakistani (6.7%), British Indian (5.5%) and British other Asian 4.4%). Census information is now nearly 10 years old and it is likely that the ethnic profile of the borough has changed during this time. For example, it would not have captured the more recent EU arrivals to the borough (EU2 countries – Romania and Bulgaria, who were given residency rights in 2014). We know from other data such as National Insurance Registration that Watford has experienced a relatively high increase in nationals from the EU2 countries applying for National Insurance registrations as Watford residents. This follows a period of a high number from EU8 countries (including Poland, Latvia, Lithuania) who were given freedom of movement to the UK from 2004. Throughout the period the arrival of new residents from south Asia (e.g. Pakistan / India) has remained relatively constant.

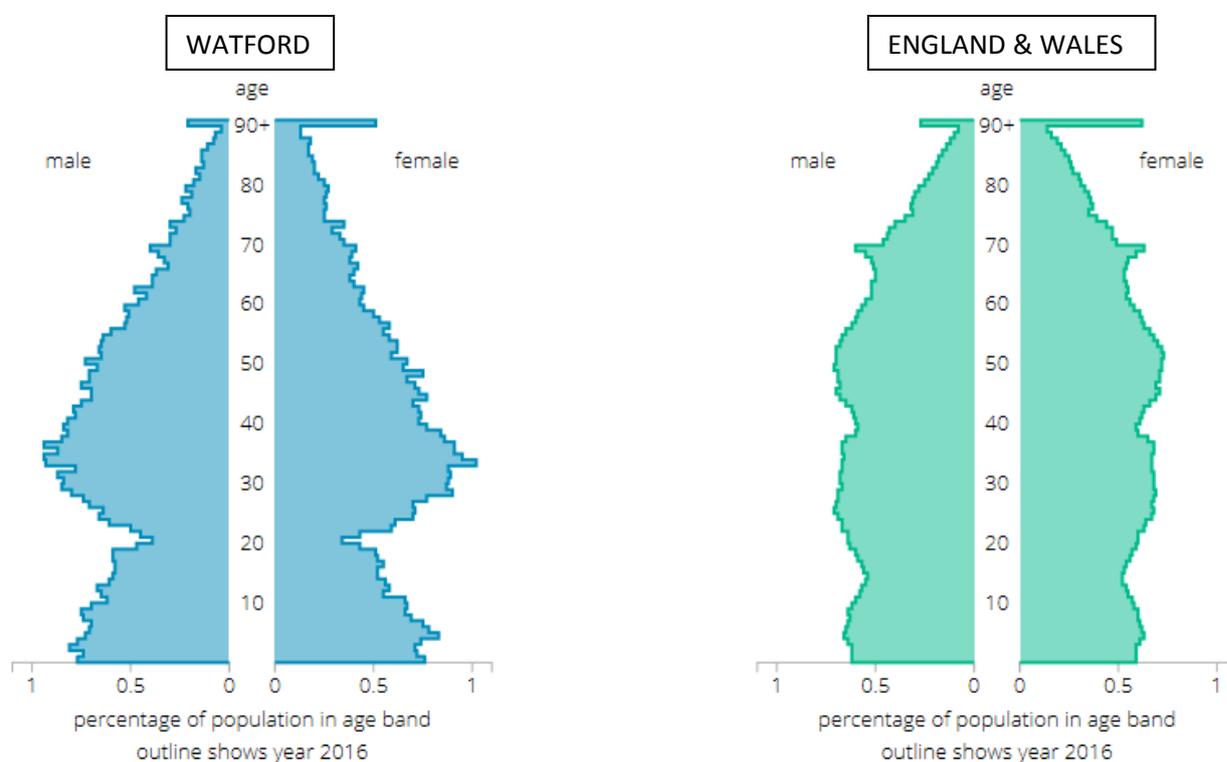
Other data sources, including a school language survey on the languages spoken by Watford school children at home, endorse the National Insurance findings with English still the predominant language (at around 60%) followed by (in order of selection): Urdu, Polish, Tamil, Pahari, Gujarati, Portuguese, Romanian and Hindi.

Age

The largest populations by age band in Watford are:

- 25-44 (31,700)
- 45-59 (18,100)

The numbers in each successive age-band fall progressively until there are estimated to be 6,000 who are 75+. We know that around 74,000 residents are of voting age in Watford and that the borough has a younger profile than the rest of England and Wales.



The average age of Watford residents is 36.8 years, which puts it amongst the youngest cities and towns in England.

Disability / Health

Around 85% of the population of Watford state that they have 'good health' and just under 14% record a disability. We do not have details as to what these disabilities are but they will include a wide range of physical and mental health disabilities or impairment.

The 2016 NHS Health Profile's summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is 'varied' compared with the England average. About 14% (2,700) of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average (which is an improvement on previous years when men's was lower).

The profile also shows that the percentage of physically active adults has remained stable since 2016 at 54.4%, compared to the England average of 57%. There has been a very small increase from 58.9% to 60% in the percentage of adults classified as overweight or obese in Watford, although significantly better than the England average of 64.8%. Also remaining consistent is the percentage of obese children in Year 6 (aged 10-11) at 16%, significantly better than the England average, which is 19.8%.

Religion / belief

The religious breakdown in the Census 2011 of the main religions in Watford was: Christian (54.1%), Muslim (9.8%), Hindu (4.8%), with no religion stated at 21.4%.

Sexual orientation / Transgender

Watford has no specific data on the transgender community within the borough

Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 were published by the Government in September 2015, and updated the previous 2010 Indices, published in March 2011.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 uses 37 separate indicators, grouped into seven domains (three of which contain sub-domains); the domains are Income; Employment; Health and Disability; Education, Skills and Training; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment. In addition to the domains and their sub-domains there are two supplementary income deprivation Indices: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOPI).

In the IMD 2015, Watford is ranked 189 out of 326 authorities, putting it in the 6th decile nationally. This means that, overall, Watford is less deprived than half the authorities in England.

Watford is the third most deprived authority in Hertfordshire. (Stevenage and Broxbourne are the most deprived.) However, three Hertfordshire authorities are among the 10% least deprived authorities in England (Three Rivers, East Herts and St Albans).

The combined deprivation index, which weights income and employment more heavily than the other domains, obscures the more deprived areas in Watford, which are affected by crime, living environment deprivation and education, skills and training deprivation in particular. This is, at least in part, because income and employment deprivation are less of an issue for Watford.

The ten most deprived LSOAs in Watford, as ranked in the IMD 2010, are as follows.

The most deprived LSOA includes Raphael Drive and Brockleberry Close, both roads within the 'Radlett Road estate' and overall all roads within the estate are within the LSOA. The reason why they are identified as being in Central ward in 2015 is that, since this time, there have been ward boundary changes in Watford. The 'Radlett Road estate' was included within the Tudor ward.

Watford rank	Ward	LSOA code	Hertfordshire		England	
			Rank	Decile in Herts (1st = most deprived)	Rank	Decile (1st = most deprived)
1 (2)	Central (Water Lane, Gladstone Road, Grosvenor Road, part of Radlett Road, Brockleberry Close, Raphael Drive, top part of Queens Road)	E01023860	5 (5)	1st (1st)	5005 (7683)	2nd (3rd)
2 (1)	Meriden (Garsmouth Way, Aldbury Close, Harvest End, part of York Way)	E01023876	19 (7)	1st (1st)	7590 (7539)	3rd (3rd)
3 (5)	Holywell (Caractacus Green, part of Charlock Way, Moor View, Jellicoe Road, Stripling Way, Rose Gardens)	E01023865	22 (32)	1st (1st)	7800 (9818)	3rd (4th)
4 (7)	Holywell (Ascot Road, Greenhill Crescent, Caxton Way, Croxley View)	E01023866	30 (40)	1st (1st)	9203 (10445)	3rd (4th)
5 (4)	Stanborough (Clarke Way, Rushton Avenue, Orbital Crescent, Harris Road)	E01023891	31 (21)	1st (1st)	9377 (9075)	3rd (3rd)
6 (11)	Meriden (Ravenscroft, part of the Phillipers, Whitwell Road, Ivinghoe Close)	E01023873	33 (57)	1st (1st)	9628 (11634)	3rd (4th)
7 (9)	Woodside (Haines Way, Queenswood Crescent, Sheriff Way, Nottingham Close)	E01023906	41 (46)	1st (1st)	10062 (10768)	4th (4th)

Watford rank	Ward	LSOA code	Hertfordshire		England	
8 (3)	Central (Station Road, part of St John's Road, Rosslyn Road, Albert Road South and North)	E01023861	45 (15)	1st (1st)	10469 (8354)	4th (3rd)
9 (8)	Central (Queens Road, Sotheron Road, Estcourt Road, part of Beechen Grove)	E01023859	47 (45)	1st (1st)	10609 (10705)	4th (4th)
10 (6)	Oxhey (Deacons Hill, Blackwell Drive, Riverside Road, Eastbury Road, Thorpe Crescent)	E01023883	49 (34)	1st (1st)	10710 (10014)	4th (4th)

4. What we know about the community use of Centrepont Community Centre

In 2014, Watford Borough Council undertook a consultation with the users and the wider community on Centrepont Community Centre.

A hundred and fifty responses were received.

What the respondents to the survey said:

- **73% knew that there was a building for community use**
- **68% had used the community centre within the past year**
- **54% walked to the centre when they visited**
- **53% used the centre on a weekly basis (or more frequently)**
- **69% were satisfied with the centre, although 20% didn't know as they were not users**
- **65% were interested in attending the centre in the evening**

Of those responding to the survey, the following demographics were recorded:

Age:

Under 15 years	0.71%
15 - 19 years	2.13%
20 to 24 years	2.13%
25 to 34 years	19.15%
35 to 44 years	24.82%
45 to 54 years	19.86%
55 to 64 years	15.60%
65 to 74 years	12.77%
75 to 79 years	1.42%
80 +	1.42%

Disability:

These are the responses to the question 'are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?'

Yes, limited a lot	11.43%
Yes, limited a little	14.29%
No	74.29%

The use of the centre by PHAB would account, in part, for the high percentage of users with a disability

Ethnicity:

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	62.14%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%
Irish	0.00%
Any other White background (please write in below)	7.86%
White & Black Caribbean	0.71%
White & Black African	0.00%
White & Asian	0.71%
Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background (please write in below)	0.71%
Arab	0.00%
Caribbean	5.00%
African	2.14%
Any other Black background (please write in below)	0.71%
Indian	10.00%
Pakistani	2.86%
Bangladeshi	0.00%
Chinese	0.71%
Any other Asian background (please write in below)	2.14%
Other ethnic group (please write in below)	4.29%

The 'other' groups included Polynesian, Nepalese and Italian.

Sex:

Male	42.03%
Female	57.97%

This shows a significantly higher use by women than men, which probably relates to the activities geared at babies and children.

Additional feedback

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to comment on their use (or non-use) of the centre. Of those who use the centre, there were a significant number of comments on the value of the centre to the locality and appreciation of the staff running the centre.

Recommendation 4: The council has already indicated that it will undertake engagement with the local community on the Centrepoint Community Centre site. This consultation should include an understanding of the protected characteristics of those who use and don't use the centre and associated convenience store.

UPDATE: FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION ENGAGEMENT: 29 OCTOBER - 9 DECEMBER 2018

The council, in partnership with Watford Community Housing, undertook consultation and engagement on the proposals for the Centrepoint development during November / December 2018.

The approach comprised:

1. **A survey** – this was available online and paper copies for 6 weeks from 29 October - 9 December 2018

The survey was promoted extensively through social media and in Centrepoint itself where people could pick up a paper copy. Many of those who attended the engagement sessions (see 2. below) completed a paper copy of the survey.

Survey responses

As of 9 December 2018, 76 surveys had been returned or completed online.

A significant number of responses (25) were received from those attending the engagement event.

2. **Two engagement sessions** - on 15 November 2018 (morning and afternoon / evening)
These sessions were to provide an opportunity to view the initial plans for the Centrepoint development and for people to share views on whether they would wish to see a community space and / or a shop included within the Centrepoint development.

Attendance

45 people attended the engagement session (23 in the morning and 22 in the afternoon).

Overview of survey responses

Q1. Personal information

This showed that the significant majority of respondents live in close proximity to the Centrepoint Community Centre.

**Q2. Characteristics of those completing the survey.
Respondents could select more than one response**

- Live locally to Centrepoint Community Centre 90%
- User of the local shop 76%
- User of the Centre 69%

Q3. Use of Centrepont Community Centre

- Use the Centre Two thirds (67%)
- Do not use the Centre A third (33%)

Q4. Frequency of use of the Centre

- Most weeks 55%
- Once a month 11%
- A few times a year 24%
- Once or twice a year 7%
- Less than once a year 4%

Q5. Why people use the Centre

Respondents could select more than one response

- Attend an organised activity / session 64%
- Hire the centre for activities 17%
- Like to meet friends at the Centre 20%
- Use the IT suite 9%
- 'Other' – which included voting in elections 5%

Q6. Travelling to the Centre

Given responses to earlier questions, it is unsurprising that the vast majority of respondents who visit the Centre walk there.

- Walk to the Centre 87%
- Drive to the Centre 13%

Q7. Reasons why people choose not to use the Centre

As the survey was mainly completed by those who use the Centre, there were only 21 responses to this question.

- Not sure what is offered at the Centre 62%
- Nothing of interest 24%
- Not somewhere would ever go 10%
- For others 5%

Q8. Interest in a community space in the new development

Respondents could select more than one response

- Would attend an activity session if it were of interest 71%
- Would hire for one off events 33%
- Would hire for a group / activity session 30%
- Would never / hardly ever use it 15%

Q9. Important for the area to have a community space for local residents

- Yes 96%
- Not sure 4%

Q10. Currently use the local shop

- Yes 79%
- No 21%

Q11. Frequency of use of shop

- Most weeks 85%
- A few times a year 10%
- Once a month 6%

Q12. Items bought from the shop

Respondents could select more than one response

- Food basics (bread / milk) 91%
- Snacks (sweets / crisps/ drinks) 67%
- Household items (washing powder / loo rolls / nappies) 65%
- Newspapers / magazines 48%
- Fruit and veg 33%
- Alcohol 30%
- Cigarettes 24%

It was also noted that people can pay bills (gas / electricity) and use the cashpoint at the shop).

Q13. Reasons why people choose not to use the shop

As the survey was mainly completed by those who use the Centre, there were only 13 responses to this question.

- Shop at a larger shop 62%
- Doesn't stock what is needed 31%
- Prices too high 15%

Q14. Important for the area to have a local shop for residents

- Yes 94%
- No 1%
- Not sure 5%

Q15. Additional comments

- Concern for the vulnerable members of the local community if the community facility and shop are not replaced
- Overall concern about additional homes proposed for the site – adding to numbers on the estate, potentially additional vulnerable households, which can bring additional challenges for the local area
- General comment on the upkeep of the Radlett Road estate – roads, open spaces, lighting (Reeds Walk was raised as there were 5 lamp posts out of service, large trees are obscuring lighting) and overgrown trees (again on Reeds Walk)
- Concerns raised re ASB on the estate
- Road safety is seen as an issue – could speed be reduced on Radlett Road and a barrier / handrail be provided on the single file pavement under the railway bridge on Radlett Road
- Parking is an issue on the estate – particularly commuter parking
- Estate needs better access to public transport
- Need for temporary facilities during build – particularly for the elderly and more vulnerable

Of those responding to the survey, the following demographics were recorded:

Q16. Sex

A disproportionately higher number of women than men completed the survey. The responses are, therefore, not representative in terms of sex.

Male	18%
Female	80%
Non-binary	2%

Q17. Disability

Over a fifth of respondents declared a disability.

No	77%
Yes, limited a little	15%
Yes, limited a lot	8%

Q18. Age

18-24	8%
25-34	18%
35-49	30%
50-64	27%
65-69	6%
70-74	8%
75+	3%

Q19. Ethnicity

English / Welsh / Scottish /Northern Irish / British	61%
Other White background	9%
White and Black African	1.5%
White and Asian	1.5%
Multiple ethnic background	1.5%
Indian	5%
Pakistani	6%
Chinese	1.5%
Other Asian background	1.5%
African	5%
Other ethnic group	8%

Q20. Ward

85% of respondents were either Tudor or Central ward. It is likely that many of those who identified as Central ward residents are Tudor ward residents but might not be aware of recent boundary changes (Radlett Road is now in Tudor ward).

Petition

In addition, a local resident and a regular user of Centrepoint Community Centre undertook a petition against the proposal to develop the Centre and adjoining site. They took the petition door to door across the Radlett Road estate and achieved around 200 signatures. These signatures did not include addresses in the majority of cases or any demographic information.

5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the proposals for Centrepont Community Centre site

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the proposals for the Centrepont Community Centre site:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

Watford Borough Council has a priority to **identify ways to manage the borough's housing needs.**

Whilst private development will secure the vast majority of the borough's housing targets, the council has identified that the need to deliver additional social housing units will require positive intervention and close partnership working with social housing providers.

The recent opportunity that has arisen to work with Watford Community Housing and to access Homes England funding to support the council's ambitions to contribute towards its ambitions to deliver 16-18 social housing units a year, has brought forward a proposal to develop the Centrepont Community Centre site.

Given what we know about the Watford population, the community around the 'Radlett Road estate, the usage of the community centre, the following is the assessment of the equality impacts, both positive and negative of the proposals for Centrepont Community Centre site.

A. Positive impacts

- the delivery of much needed socially rented homes will be of benefit to a number of families currently without more permanent accommodation. These are likely to be families with children and so there will be a positive impact on young people as well as their parents who are likely to be young adults.

Current estimates are for circa 17 homes (to be confirmed) to be built on the site thus benefitting 17 families, although we cannot say with any certainty what the make-up of these families will be, all are likely to have children / young people

- the council has committed to undertaking a consultation exercise and this includes the proposal for a community facility within the new development. Whilst this is unlikely to be a traditional community centre, it will offer a facility for the local community to meet and for events / classes / activities to be held within the immediate neighbourhood.

It would also be hoped that current users, many of which are aimed specifically at activities for those with protected characteristics, would be able to use the community facility.

The inclusion of an accessible community facility would meet the equalities duties to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

Recommendation 5: to ensure there is engagement with the community and current users on the inclusion of a community facility within the plans to understand the extent of need and parameters of what type of provision would meet this need

UPDATE: this has taken place – see above for results. It is clear from the engagement that has taken place that the community facility and local shop are valued by those responding to the engagement.

Recommendation 6: to ensure that any plans for a community facility are fully accessible, including facilities such as toilets.

UPDATE: plans to be shared on 10 January 2019.

B. Negative impacts

- **loss of current amenities**

the current proposals would mean the loss of a community centre and a community provision in terms of the convenience store.

As the facilities are of benefit to the whole community then this loss would impact all the population both those with, and without, a protected characteristic. However, the initial analysis of the current users shows that there are groups which are focused on meeting the needs of those with protected characteristics that use the centre (e.g. PHAB for people with disabilities, bumps and babies for pregnant women and new mothers, youth club). Therefore, loss of the community centre facility would impact disproportionately on some protected characteristics.

Recommendation 7: to undertake a mapping exercise of current users of the centre and investigate the different locations in the borough where these activities/bookings could be relocated across the existing community facilities network in the event of closure.

UPDATE: this has been actioned. All groups have been engaged and requirements discussed.

The loss of the convenience store would have a disproportionately negative impact on those who would find it more difficult to get to other shops. This would specifically impact on people with disabilities, elderly people with mobility issues and younger parents without easy access to a car and who would be required to use a pushchair.

UPDATE: A local shop as part of the new development has received positive endorsement from the community engagement.

- **use of the centre by those with protected characteristics**

we know from the consultation undertaken in 2014 that significantly more people with the following protected characteristics use the centre:

- women - a higher percentage of women than men
- people with disabilities - a higher percentage of people with disabilities than in the Watford population overall
- ethnicity – a high percentage of ethnicities other than ‘White British’

UPDATE: the profile of those taking part in the engagement reflects the findings from the 2014 survey:

- women – far higher percentage of women than men responded to the survey
- people with disabilities - a higher percentage of people with disabilities than in the Watford population overall responded to the survey
- ethnicity – a high percentage of ethnicities other than ‘White British’ responded to the survey, this reflects Watford’s diverse community

- **the local area**

We know from the IMD 2015 that the area in the vicinity of the centre is amongst the most deprived in Watford. Whilst deprivation is not a protected characteristic, the council has a priority to **‘provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities’** and would want to consider the effect on this local community when considering the impact of the proposals.

- **staff**

Two female (part time) permanent members of staff would be redundant from their current posts if the community centre closes and one female (part time) agency member of staff

Mitigation of negative impacts

The council would seek to mitigate the negative impacts by:

- the mapping exercise (Recommendation 2 & 7) will identify the extent to which current users will be displaced if there were to be no community facility in the area. Through this mapping exercise and feedback from the consultation (Recommendations 3 and 4), the council will be in a position to work with users to find either permanent or temporary (should a community facility be identified as a requirement for the new development) alternative facilities for current users

UPDATE: work on this has started and is ongoing

- through the engagement (Recommendations 4 & 5) build an understanding of the community demand for a local facility and what this might look like within the new development

UPDATE: actioned

- also through the consultation build an understanding of the extent of the loss of the convenience store to the local community and use this information to consider solutions, should this be raised as a need by the community. This could take the shape of a community shop or access to a travelling shop

UPDATE: actioned

- the council will ensure that affected staff are considered in line with its policies, including access to support / advice and redeployment

UPDATE: actioned

6. Overall conclusion

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty

This EIA has taken into account the council's public sector equality duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 and is intended to assist the council in meeting its duty. The council is required to have due regard to the need to:

- **advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it**

The proposals for the Centrepont Community Centre site currently include consideration of a purpose built community facility.

The council and Watford Community Housing are at an early stage of developing and articulating plans for the site but these would need to ensure they take into account the needs of those with protected characteristics as well as those who do not. This would include making sure issues such as accessibility are addressed in any design so that there are no barriers to participation or use.

This would also apply to any shop that might be considered.

The proposed consultation is a critical part of ensuring this duty is met. It will make sure any future plans are addressing equality of opportunity through a better understanding of how the proposals for the site could take into account the needs of those with protected characteristics.

UPDATE: plans have progressed, using feedback from the engagement. Both a community space and shop are included in the emerging plans. These plans will be shared with the community on 10 January 2019.

- **foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it**

The inclusion of the community facility and shop proposals would help foster good relations by providing amenities where all the community can meet and interact.

Recommendation 8: The plans for the development to be tested against the findings of this EIA to ensure that the council continues to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty

UPDATE:

Recommendation 9: This EIA to be updated as proposals progress

The overall conclusion of the EIA is that the positive impacts of the proposals outweigh the negative impacts, given the positive impact this will have on those families who will be able to access affordable housing and the proposal to explore the inclusion of a community facility and shop within the scheme. Whilst it is noted the loss of the current amenity could have negative impacts mitigation has been identified that reduces the negative impact overall, although it is noted that consulting and engaging with current users, the community and staff are critical to this mitigation being effective.

Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
<p>1.</p> <p>The proposals would result in the delivery of the provision of social rented units to Watford residents in need of permanent housing solutions, these households are likely to be families with children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age – children and younger people • Age – adults with parental responsibilities <p>Potentially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy and maternity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the proposals are taken forward the design of the new development would need to take into account the current demand for housing on the council’s housing register and take this into account when planning the development • Regular updates of this EIA through the development process
<p>2.</p> <p>Potential for a community facility based on community and user feedback to assess the need and demand</p>	<p>All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the engagement / consultation / communication with the community and user group allows for feedback on the need / demand for a community facility • Regular updates of this EIA through the engagement / consultation / communication process
<p>3.</p> <p>Potential for a community shop facility based on community and user feedback to assess the need and demand</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability • Age (older people) • Pregnancy and maternity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the engagement / consultation / communication with the community and user group allows for feedback on the need / demand for a community shop facility • Regular updates of this EIA through the engagement / consultation / communication process

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
<p>4.</p> <p>Community facility and shop to be accessible to all the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability • Age (older people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that advice / feedback is taken from the community on the accessibility of any community facility (.g. Disability Watford)

Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
<p>1.</p> <p>The loss of the current community amenity</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Particularly groups identified as current users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability • Age (older people and younger people) • Pregnancy and maternity • Religion 	<p>See above for proposal to engage / consult / communicate on a community facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed mapping exercise will identify those groups / organisations currently using the centre. These should be considered in terms of the activities provided for the community as a whole and for those with protected characteristics. Against this mapping exercise, the council should also explore alternative venues for these groups taking into account proximity, availability and cost. • Regular updates of this EIA through the engagement / consultation / communication process
<p>2.</p> <p>The loss of the current convenience store</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Particularly groups who would find it harder to access shops further afield</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability • Age (older people) • Pregnancy and maternity 	<p>See above for proposal to engage / consult / communicate on a community facility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council to understand alternative provision within the area. • Regular updates of this EIA through the engagement / consultation / communication process

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
<p>3.</p> <p>Two permanent members of staff (part time)</p> <p>One agency member of staff (part time)</p>	<p>Sex (female)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council's relevant policies will be applied and assistance provided as requested through the employee assistance programme.

This EIA has been developed by:

Kathryn Robson

Date 7 September 2018