

Date of EIA June 2005
 Directorate Environment and Leisure
 Function or policy to be assessed **Planning & Building Control**

Is it a policy or function	Function – Planning & Building Control covers: Development control Building Regulations Local Land Charges
Is it a new or existing policy or function?	Existing
Aim / objective / purpose of the policy or function	<p>The Council's Development Control service encompasses the following functions: planning application advice, guidance and determination and enforcement.</p> <p>The service plays a key role in delivering the Council's vision, which is:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>To make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive: living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment.</i></p> <p>The service does this by contributing to four of the Council's fifteen Medium Term Objectives as follows:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1. <i>To lead the regeneration of Bracknell to provide a town fit for the 21st Century</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Building Control team's service aim is to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ensure that our Building Control Service meets the needs of all our customers and exceeds the quality of our competitors through total commitment to excellence in all that we do.</p> <p>The service does this by contributing to four of the Council's fifteen Medium Term Objectives as follows.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2. <i>To promote sustainable communities through innovative housing strategies and effective maintenance</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">11. <i>To create and maintain a quality environment</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">15. <i>To maintain quality and extend access to all services</i></p>
Who is responsible for the policy or function?	Head of Planning & Building Control
With regard to	The main clients are:

<p>the equalities themes, which groups might be impacted by the policy or function?</p>	<p>Bracknell's residents and businesses</p> <p>Residents, architects, builders and developers responsible for schemes that require planning permission and / or come within building regulations</p> <p>Solicitors etc carrying out conveyancing</p> <p>Disabled people and people who read or speak little or no English could be affected through the ways in which information is made available and lack of understanding of how decisions are made;</p> <p>Disabled people on low incomes could be affected by the cost of having to pay for building regulations permission when installing aids or adaptations. There is no charge for adaptations to dwellings requiring planning permission where disability is evidenced.</p> <p>Recently arrived people (builders and residents) who lack knowledge of the planning process and the need to obtain buildings regulation consent and find themselves facing enforcement action.</p>
<p>Which groups might be affected adversely?</p>	<p>Disabled people and people who read or speak little or no English are likely to be adversely affected through the ways in which information is made available;</p> <p>Recently arrived people (builders and residents) who lack knowledge of the planning process and understanding of the buildings regulation.</p>
<p>What evidence has been found to indicate this? (include any consultation undertaken)</p>	<p>Information about the section's functions is made available via the Council's website, leaflets, at meetings and via Customer Services Centre in Times Square</p> <p>The CSC has not been fully adapted to meet the needs of disabled people e.g. no indication that information will be provided in other formats; small computer screens on which most information is displayed; no dropped counter for wheelchair users.</p> <p>No information is available in languages other than English</p> <p>There is limited evidence that recently arrived people are in more in breach of planning and building regulations than others. The section seeks to inform builders etc with whom it has contact about recent changes to building regulations. Recently arrived people (builders and residents) who lack knowledge of the planning process are unlikely to be part of this network.</p>
<p>On what grounds can adverse or differential impact be justified?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>What changes are proposed to the policy or function to</p>	<p>A disability access audit should be undertaken of the CSC;</p> <p>The section should advertise that it is able to provide information in other formats and languages upon request</p> <p>The section needs to develop links with representatives from</p>

reduce or remove adverse or differential impact?	recently arrived groups in order to explain about the planning system's requirements
In to which plan or strategy has the necessary action been incorporated?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statement of Community Involvement (submitted to the Secretary of State for independent Examination, Oct 2005) sets out the framework the Council will follow in engaging with the community on planning applications. 2. The Development Control Improvement Plan 2005/8 will require review to take account of accessibility issues. 3. The Building Control Service Plan 2005/8 submitted to the Secretary of State for independent Examination,
What monitoring arrangements have been put in place?	The section seeks to monitor the satisfaction residents have of the development control and buildings regulations services. In future this will be done using nationally developed questionnaires. It is not known if these include equalities monitoring questions.
What conclusions have been drawn or recommendations have been made?	<p>Planning will continue to monitor the services provided to ensure that all residents receive an effective and efficient service.</p> <p>The Council does not have a policy to provide information in Plain English. Planning tries to do this but would welcome a council wide policy and advice to do this.</p>
Has the information in this EIA been made publicly available?	Yes – on the council website