

Olympic Delivery Authority
One Churchill Place
Canary Wharf, London E14 5LN
Reception +44 (0) 203 2012 000
Fax +44 (0) 203 2012 001
www.london2012.com



Olympic Delivery Authority

Parklands and Public Realm and Greenway

Equality Impact Assessment

Executive summary



MAYOR OF LONDON

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1 Introduction

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to collate and analyse the baseline evidence which exists in relation to the impact of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games venues which will be delivered by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA).

The EqIA assessment will:

- identify the issues which may cause disproportionate impacts to people in the equality and inclusion target groups;
- provide evidence of how these impacts have been addressed; and
- will be developed into an action plan and framework to address issues going forward.

1.1 Programme of work

During the Games, the new parklands will provide a fantastic setting for the new sporting venues, and places for spectators to relax and soak up the atmosphere before and after events. The Parklands and Public Realm PPR (Olympic Park) will deliver a vital part of green infrastructure by leaving, in Legacy, 102 hectares of Metropolitan Open Land, and containing 45 hectares of new wildlife habitat. This Legacy Parkland will extend outwards to existing green spaces, creating a linked network that will reach out to Hackney Marshes in the north, to Victoria Park in the west and to the Greenway in the south. The Greenway will also form part of the Olympic Park project and will provide Olympic and Paralympic Games spectator access and deliver new legacy connections to the Olympic Park and the Lea Valley.

After the Games, temporary infrastructure, such as the large screens showing the sporting action in the Park, will be removed and much of the pedestrian area used by spectators will be converted into parklands. The river valleys will be opened to the public as soon as possible after the Games, and the remaining parklands will be gradually opened as temporary venues are removed and areas landscaped.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the programme of work

The detailed proposals for the PPR have flowed from a set of established strategic objectives the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). These objectives have underpinned the project from the very start of the masterplanning process. These objectives are set under the following 10 overarching themes:

- celebrate the Games;
- be a catalyst for economic development;
- restore the waterways;
- enhance biodiversity;
- promote culture and the arts;
- build community cohesion;
- encourage healthy living;
- develop skills and education;
- provide connections; and
- integrate infrastructure.

1.3 Links to other programmes of work

In addition to providing the backdrop and setting for the London 2012 Games, the parklands play an important role in linking numerous other important programmes or projects, like the venues. As such, the equality objectives of the PPR and other programmes or projects are co-dependent and will require joint working. The table at section five of the full assessment document provides details of these key links.

1.4 Delivery of ODA Priority Themes

The London 2012 vision is to use the power of the Games to inspire change. This is the vision that will define the venues that are built, the Games that are staged and the Legacy of the Games.

The values which underpin this vision are

- to achieve our vision we must be inspirational;
- to do this we must be open and respectful;
- only by working as a team;
- can we deliver something truly distinctive.

As stated in the ODA Corporate EqIA¹ the ODA primary role is to make sure the venues and infrastructure for the London 2012 Games are delivered on time, to budget and are fit for purpose.

The ODA's role and the London 2012 vision and values are underpinned by six priority themes:

- equality and inclusion;
- design and accessibility;
- employment and skills;
- health, safety and security;
- Legacy; and
- sustainability.

1.5 Measuring the impact

To fully understand the impact of the ODA venue projects and PPR, the ODA has completed a baseline assessment and policy review which is available to download from the London 2012 website EqIA pages. This section provides an overview of the socio-economic context of the study, within six equality strands and additional socio-economic categories, referred to as the Equality & Inclusion (E&I) target groups, which help identify and convey the diverse population's characteristics thoroughly, including:

- age;
- ethnicity;
- disabled people;
- faith
- gender;
- transgender;
- sexual orientation; and
- low Income.

¹ Available on the London 2012 website

1.6 Existing situation and key issues for consideration

The following section reviews information from the baseline and expands upon the likely impacts, and sets out a number of key issues around the priority themes that need to be considered through the PPR EqIA.

The section headings have been identified as important in understanding the impact of service delivery on equality and inclusion in the following documents:

- ODA Equality & Inclusion (E&I) objectives
- London Plan and Supplementary Guidance
- Olympic Park EqIA
- Legacy Masterplanning Framework (LMF) Baseline Report
- Parklands and Public realm planning documents
- Statements of participation for Olympic Park venues

1.6.1 Inclusion and community cohesion

- Ensuring a sense of community ownership will depend to a large degree on the use and management of the PPR in Legacy. However, the ODA will need to deliver a platform for venues, events and facilities that can foster a sense of ownership.
- Extensive public consultation and engagement throughout the design phase and regular communication during the construction and transformation phases will be vital to fostering a sense of involvement and community ownership of the PPR.
- Given the cultural diversity of the local area and the large international draw of the Games, the design of the venues, and surrounding areas will need to accommodate a wide range of cultural and faith requirements.
- There is a strong likelihood that English will not be the first language spoken by many people accessing the Park, therefore measures are needed to ensure the Park can be used and navigated easily by local, national and international people alike whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems.
- Wayfinding and information provision across the Olympic Park during construction, the Games and in Legacy will need to ensure that the space can be used by, and attract people from across London where there are over 300 different languages spoken, 167 in the PPR host boroughs alone.
- During Construction mode when access to the Olympic Park is highly restricted, the PPR will act as a physical barrier between neighbourhoods. During Games mode, the PPR will only be accessible to those with a ticket, a factor which could reduce community cohesion and reduce a feeling of 'ownership'.
- The diversity of the local community should be reflected through detailed design elements such as arts commissions, venue and landscape design.
- Understanding the likely impact on transport infrastructure is vital to ensure that the local community have an affordable, more sustainable and efficient mode of transport to get to and from employment during the construction phase and to access the PPR and venues during the Games and in Legacy.

1.6.2 Inclusive design and accessibility

- The baseline review has highlighted that disabled people disproportionately encounter multiple barriers in accessing goods, services and facilities such as social and transport infrastructure. Positive action can be implemented in a number of ways to remove these barriers from the PPR, including the implementation of ODA Inclusive Design Standards in the design and construction phases.
- As the connective ‘glue’ between sports venues and facilities, inclusive design of the PPR is needed to make these amenities easily accessible to all during the Games and Legacy.
- Consultation and baseline evidence highlights that step-free access would provide people with easy and dignified use of the areas by a number of groups, such as older people; some disabled people, including visually impaired and blind people; and wheelchair users.
- The landscaping of river banks could inhibit use of the waterside walkways which will be key routes for navigating the Park and reaching venues. Inclusive design will need to be applied to ensure concourse routes and bridges can be used by all.
- The surfaces of walkways and the concourse will need to be constructed from a material which does not become slippery even in wet conditions and should be free of trip hazards.
- The large scale of the PPR and the associated long distances to be covered mean that without sufficient attention to seating and rest areas, the areas may not be useable by people with mobility or health issues.
- Ticket barriers which are not designed to be inclusive and obstacles (such as bollards and street furniture) could act as a physical hindrance which excludes groups such as visually impaired and blind people from using certain spaces by making them inaccessible.
- Furthermore, such obstacles could also generate overcrowding which negatively impacts disproportionately on the usability of areas by parents and carers with children, wheelchair users, visually impaired and blind people.
- The North Park’s ‘natural’ character and focus on promoting biodiversity, while creating a space which is ideal for relaxation, could potentially inhibit access.
- The lighting strategy has impacts beyond influencing personal safety. Lighting levels will have an impact on peoples’ ability to identify others, assist lip-reading, and help navigation for people who are visually impaired.
- The public realm can preclude the use of the space by women, if they feel that their needs have not addressed in the design phase.
- The inclusive design and accessibility of the construction site will influence the ability of disabled people to take advantage of job opportunities which address their under-representation in the construction industry.

1.6.3 Safety and security

- As the baseline shows, crime and the fear of crime affects use of the public realm by the majority of E&I target groups. Designing out opportunities for crime and the fear of crime is therefore a key objective of the PPR.
- Consultation highlighted that dark, enclosed spaces which are not overlooked are seen as promoting crime. As such, good lighting and designs which promote natural surveillance and visibility will assist in designing out crime. The location of entrances to

sites and venues will also affect the safety of the people, in particular the proximity of entrances and routes to transport connections.

- Although lighting and security measures along key routes in the PPR is vital to safety, a good lighting strategy that reduces crime and fear of crime will go beyond simply making all areas well-lit. Reducing lighting along certain routes could prevent leading people into spaces that may be unsafe for reasons beyond their relative darkness, such as isolation from transport links or poor visibility.
- Since territory, often linked to postcodes, is an important component underpinning gang crime, the creation of a new piece of open space could become a new focus for territorial struggle. Joint-working with the Metropolitan Police and the local boroughs will be important to identifying how best to address these potential issues.

1.6.4 Employment and training opportunities

- The ODA, working with partners, will need to ensure that skills development and appropriate training is provided within the study area so that the local community is better able to access higher income employment opportunities in years to come.
- Job and training opportunities associated with the construction and management of the PPR could help reduce skills and employment gaps and have a positive impact on equality.
- Low attainment levels locally and labour market discrimination could, however, hinder the ability of certain groups from capitalising on employment opportunities.
- This is a particularly pressing issue because a large number of jobs associated with the PPR will be in construction, an employment sector in which the baseline shows several E&I target groups are under-represented.
- Without careful management and targeting of recruitment processes, overt and unintentional exclusion of E&I target groups could reinforce rather than alleviate employment equality issues.

1.6.5 Business opportunities

As small and medium enterprises (SME) and micro businesses form the majority of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) -owned enterprises in London and, given that there is a high concentration of BAME owned business in the London boroughs Newham and Tower Hamlets, particular attention will need to be given to the impact of employment opportunities for minority owned businesses.

- Local businesses and businesses owned by E&I target groups need to be incorporated into the supply chain and procurement processes associated with the construction and management. This will promote equality, and will help foster local community ownership of the PPR.
- If these opportunities bypass local businesses and E&I target group-owned businesses, the supply chain will be unrepresentative of the local community and the benefits will accrue elsewhere.
- Consideration needs to be given to the needs of smaller disabled-owned businesses who may favour home working.

1.6.6 Environmental impacts

- The PPR will need to be an attractive, safe environment in which all people feel inclined to use for passive leisure as well as active play. This will have benefits for both physical and mental health.
- Although the PPR itself will provide a focus for leisure, relaxation and informal exercise, the provision of community sports facilities within the PPR in Legacy will increase the likelihood of local residents using the PPR regularly for sports.

1.7 Consultation and engagement

This section outlines the approach taken and issues raised in the pre-planning application consultation for the Parklands and Public Realm planning submission. The application was submitted at the beginning of November 2008 and is, at the time of writing, undergoing formal consultation as part of the planning process. The application will be before the Olympic Delivery Authority Planning Committee on February 24th 2009.

Consultation activities have taken place throughout the development of the PPR designs up to the planning application. This has focused on both targeted and general public consultation and community involvement as well as more technical stakeholder engagement from specialists and statutory bodies.

Although all consultation events had the potential to capture equalities related issues, specific activities were undertaken to ensure that there was appropriate opportunity for equalities issues to be highlighted. In particular, these included:

- Olympic Park Development EqIA Focus Group Workshops;
- Technical Fora;
- Access and Inclusion Forum; and
- Built Environment Access Panel

Key issues identified through consultation related to:

- access and movement;
- safety and security;
- open space / use of space / play;
- environment and biodiversity;
- waterways;
- management; and
- games time issues.

Appendix 1 provides further details of the comments raised through consultation and the design responses.

1.8 Impact assessment

This section includes the positive and negative impacts identified during consultation and engagement; research; information and evidence gathered in relation to five sections of work; design; construction delivery; Games overlay; legacy transformation; and legacy planning. In addition to the impact, this section also identifies the key equality target groups affected and suggest potential ways to mitigate or remove potential negative impacts. The potential impacts identified are:

1.8.1 Design

- Gradients and surface treatments could have an impact on access.
- Steep river banks could act as a barrier to waterside areas.
- Obstacles within the PPR could exclude groups from certain spaces and impact on efficient visitor circulation.
- The large scale of the PPR and associated large walking distances could impact on access to venues and facilities.
- Wayfinding and signage could impact on the ability of certain groups to navigate the PPR with dignity.
- The PPR lighting strategy could contribute to inclusive design and access.
- Local ownership of the PPR will be influenced by levels of participation.
- The availability of space for personal faith observance will impact on the PPR's inclusivity.
- Local ownership could be influenced by the ability of people whose first language is not English to use the PPR.
- Designing-out crime will influence opportunities for crime and the fear of crime in the PPR which impacts disproportionately on certain groups.
- Lighting and CCTV is likely to influence levels of safety and security by affecting the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime in the PPR.
- Opportunities for informal learning could improve green skills and knowledge
- An active environment with opportunities for all groups to pursue healthy lifestyles could improve mental and physical wellbeing.

1.8.2 Construction

- The design of the PPR construction site will impact upon accessibility.
- The physical division of neighbouring communities during construction could mean the Park acts as a barrier rather than connective open space.
- Jobs and training programmes associated with PPR's construction could increase the participation and skills of local people and traditionally under-represented groups in the industry.
- Procurement of work, goods and services arising from the PPR's construction will present business opportunities for local businesses owned by E&I groups in the supply chain.
- The delivery of the planting strategy during construction could benefit mental health.

1.8.3 Games time overlay

- The design of temporary facilities.
- Ticket barriers could act as a barrier to movement.
- Overcrowding could impact disproportionately on certain groups' ability to access and navigate the PPR.
- Access to the PPR restricted during Games mode by need for ticket.
- The provision and of faith facilities and their design will impact on the PPR's inclusivity.
- London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) tendering could improve the business prospects of local SMEs and E&I target group-owned enterprises.
- LOCOG temporary sports facilities could increase the uptake of sports and improve public health.
- Recruitment associated with the LOCOG overlay could address local employment inequalities.

- Lighting and other security measures are likely to influence levels of safety and security by affecting the opportunities for crime and reducing the fear of crime in the PPR.
- Childcare facilities will impact on the inclusivity of the PPR during the Games.

1.8.4 Legacy transformation

- Changes in topography, path widths and vegetation could affect inclusive access.
- The retention of structures from the LOCOG overlay could improve community cohesion.
- Specific health impacts on the public arising from pollution associated with Transformation – for example noise, air, land, groundwater.
- The retention of structures from the LOCOG overlay could open job opportunities.
- Business opportunities provided by the adaptive re-use of temporary structures.
- Increased connectivity will assist with the creation of walkable neighbourhoods.

1.8.5 Legacy Planning

- The impact of new development within the PPR.
- Events, festivals and celebrations could make the PPR as a focus for community cohesion.
- The physical connection between the PPR and local community
- Allotments located in the PPR could increase the sense of local ownership.
- Rising land values could potentially lead to displacement.
- Increase in natural surveillance associated with mixed-use development platforms
- Legacy-mode lighting can assist with the reduction of crime and the fear of crime, enhancing overall safety of the PPR.
- Potential for Park to act as a focus for territorial gang problems.
- Opportunities arising from the PPR's long-term management.
- The provision of an active environment with opportunities for all groups to pursue healthy lifestyles can improve mental and physical health.

1.9 Key recommendations and action plan

The main findings resulting from the EqIA are set out in the conclusion and structured into an Action Plan with assigned responsibilities. The key recommendations area set out below:

1.9.1 Design

- To ensure the highest standards of inclusive design are upheld, Built Environment Access Panel (BEAP) and the Access & Inclusion Forum (AIF) should be consulted when detailed designs come forward.
- The Design team should supplement the baseline with further research and data on the impact of open spaces on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) and transgender people to help inform design development.
- The forthcoming wayfinding strategy should involve input from the ODA Principle Access Officers and E&I Managers along with BEAP and AIF forums and incorporate recommendations from the full impact assessment section relating to audio-visual technology, easy to understand symbols and language.
- Lighting strategy has been submitted to the PDT and pending approval. Once permission is received, recommendations will need to be executed.
- E&I Stakeholders should be involved in the development of detailed designs which can contribute to the creation of appropriate spaces within the North Park.

1.9.2 Construction

- Ensure compliance with the ODA's July 2008 'Design and Construction Health, Safety and Environment Standard'.
- Joint-working between the PPR and Greenway Contractors and the ODA Employment & Skills, and relevant community groups should take place to ensure information is effectively channelled to BAME groups, women, LGB and transgender people, disabled people and local people.
- Ensure that contractual arrangements for monitoring the workforce lead to projects and programmes which successfully increase the representation of E&I target groups.
- The PPR and Greenway Contractors will work with the ODA to deliver business opportunities to meet ODA commitment to SMEs within the supply chain. Information and advice should be channelled to relevant E&I target groups and supply chain monitoring systems should be put in place to track progress towards objectives.
- PPR and Greenway Contractors will work with relevant ODA teams to investigate possibility of working with therapeutic horticultural programmes when detailed designs (including planting strategy) comes forward.

1.9.3 Delivery and Overlay

- Pass on best practice and advice on inclusive design to LOCOG through BEAP and AIF (on which LOCOG has representation).
- Work with LOCOG to ensure PPR detailed designs are compatible with the planned LOCOG overlay.
- Maintain ongoing dialogue between LOCOG, ODA on likely equality impacts of the Overlay and Games ticketing.
- Maintain ongoing dialogue between LOCOG, ODA and relevant stakeholders on likely equality impacts of LOCOG's tendering and recruitment strategies.

1.9.4 Legacy Transformation

- Revisit and update PPR EqIA when planning applications for Transformation works come forward in 2009.
- Maintain open dialogue between ODA, LOCOG and London Development Agency (LDA) on the emerging designs for the Legacy Masterplan Framework (LMF).
- Assess impacts in depth when detailed designs set out material and machinery.