



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the [Dorset Council style guide](#) and also use the [accessibility checker](#) to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

1. Initial information

Name of the policy, project, strategy, project or service being assessed:

Green Seafront Ground Stabilisation Project - Swanage

2. Is this a:

Project

3. Is this:

External (residents, communities, partners)

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

1. Maintain & Improve Quality of Swanage's Green Seafront
2. Support Dorset's Economy
3. Improve Delivery of Services on the Green Seafront
4. Reduce Cost of Providing Services on the Green Seafront
5. Ensure Statutory & Regulatory Compliance

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

In recent years, monitoring, inspections, and geotechnical assessments have been undertaken along the Swanage Green Seafront in response to significant ground movement and slope instability. These investigations have identified 55 defects (as of October 2025) across the site with some affecting the highway network at De Moulham Road, Walrond Road, and Shore Road.

Geotechnical advice indicates that the risk of sudden and severe ground movement will increase over time. This presents a growing threat to the community's ability to safely use the local highway network and adjoining green spaces. Without intervention to stabilise the land, there would also be major impacts on the local economy, particularly during the summer visitor season when events are held on the Green Seafront.

The objective of the project is to stabilise and enhance these important Green Seafront areas for the long-term benefit of both the Swanage community and its visitors. Ground movement is ongoing, and works are essential to ensure safety and safeguard future use. Monitoring continues and some areas have already been restricted for public safety.

During the first round of the Green Seafront Engagement in 2023, two options were presented: the essential option (£4.5m) and the enhanced option (£11.5m). The enhanced option was considered unaffordable and therefore not progressed to round two. In the second round (2025), views were sought on the previously presented essential option and a new alternative

option. The new option aims to deliver many of the benefits of the earlier enhanced option but at a significantly lower cost, currently estimated at £6.9m.

Key Features of the Essential Option:

- This option would stabilise the area and retain Sandpit Field as an events field, whilst retaining current features of the fields with greenery and stone walls.
- Replacement of the planting on the beach side of the field to create an attractive, biodiverse area close to the sea.
- Additional beach huts will be provided on the Spa area, in a very similar orientation and style to those that were there previously.

Key Features of the New Option:

- Filling in Walrond Road to make a continuous green seafront and enhanced events space across Sandpit and Weather Station Fields.
- Two new accessible pathways from Shore Road onto the Green Seafront, a new pathway around the event space and accessibility improvements across the site.
- A new toilet block offering accessible toilets on Shore Road.
- Accessible space providing a new seafront kiosk café and seating area adjacent Shore Road.
- Significant additional planting for wildlife and biodiversity, plus more trees for shade.
- A secondary quiet green space offering space for families and small groups with views along the bay.
- Improvements and alterations to the Spa Beach Hut area including 46 new beach huts and accessible chalets, an accessible toilet for chalet users and an improved look and feel to the area.
- Increased accessible seating across the site including new sculptural, stepped seating offering views across the bay.

The 2025 round-two engagement shows a slight public preference for the new option. However, full funding for this option has not yet been secured. As a result, the project team is continuing to progress both options while actively seeking the additional funding required to deliver the new option. This EqlA therefore considers both options and assesses the impact of each in relation to the protected characteristics.

Evidence gathering and engagement.

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

- Regular monitoring of movement, risks and defects on the Green Seafront and surrounding areas.
- Public engagement for Seafront Masterplan (2022-23)
- Public engagement for Green Seafront – Round One (2023)
- Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) with Heidelberg Ltd.
- Public engagement for Green Seafront – Round Two (2025)
- Dorset Insights – Area profile for Swanage
- Google Maps
- Visitor data from Southwest Research Company (2026)
- Topographical survey for area.
- Design drawings for Essential and New Options

7. What did this tell you?

- Ground is unstable and moving – currently 55 defects identified (October 2025)
- The cost of the enhanced option is unaffordable at £11.5m.
- Broad public support for the scheme. However, some questioning the need for stabilisation.
- Improved access and accessibility are consistently supported, in 2025 engagement 63.9% agreed the new option would enhance overall access and 60.2% supporting the filling in of Walrond Road.
- Most important factors for consideration in the 2025 engagement cited as improved green public space, accessibility, improved toilet facilities and cost of the project.
- Slight preference for the new option over the essential option with objections to the new option based on cost.
- Visitor data for 2023 suggests that Swanage received around 123,000 staying trips with 549,000 overnight stays and 807,000 - day visits. It is estimated that these 2023 visitors led to a local economy benefit of over £77m while visiting Swanage (The South West Research Company, 2025).
- Diversity – 93.1% white British and 6.9% ethnic minority
- Health of Swanage residents is generally good with almost 77% of Swanage residents reported having very good or good health
- Age of residents is higher than the rest of Dorset – 37.4% are 65+ compared to Dorset 30.5% and 18.9% for England and Wales.
- Older persons housing located near to Green Seafront.
- Some people park their cars on De Moulham and Walrond Roads to walk down to the beach for sea swimming.
- Walrond Road is on a steep gradient – 1:14 i.e. 1m rise for 14m travelled. Highway design guidance suggests a 1:20 is generally considered the maximum gradient for pedestrians and cyclists. It is not possible to achieve a shallower gradient than 1:20 due to the topography of the site.
- Blue badge parking availability is a concern for residents.
- The secondary event space provided in the new option is likely to be of a benefit to neurodivergent people as they can enjoy the seafront area away from the noise and activity of the beach.

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

Information gathered from rounds one and two engagement have informed this assessment. The following stakeholders were consulted:

- Swanage Town Council.
- Dorset Council Ward Members.
- Dorset Highways.
- Event Organisers.
- St. Aldhelm's Court Residents & Staff.
- Swanage & District Chamber of Trade.
- Local bus company.
- Accessible Swanage.
- Members of the Public.

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

No

Is an EQIA required?

Not every proposal will need an EqlA. The data and research should inform your decision whether to continue with this EqlA. If you decide that your proposal does not need an EqlA, please answer the following question:

This project requires an EqlA.

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.
- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Essential Option Neutral New Option Positive	Essential Option This option does not impact this characteristic as the Green Seafront will be reinstated in its current form. New Option Positive impact due two new accessible pathways from Shore Road onto Green Seafront, increased seating and shallower gradient paths replacing Walrond Road - 1:20 rather than 1:14. Additional accessible toilets in plaza area will be a significant positive to this group. Hard surface pathways around the Green Seafront will be provided to improve and level walking routes.
Disability	Essential Option Neutral New Option Positive	Essential Option This option does not impact this characteristic as the Green Seafront will be reinstated in its current form. New Option Highly positive impact on disability. Accessible toilets in plaza area will assist disabled people to use these facilities. Secondary event space will provide a quiet area for neurodiverse people to enjoy Swanage's seafront. Blue badge parking on De Moulham Road is being investigated with highway authority for access to primary and secondary event spaces. The two existing stepped paths from Shore Road will be replaced with steady gradient ramps at 1:20. Surfaced pathways around the Green Seafront will be provided to improve and level walking routes.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Essential Option Neutral New Option Positive	Essential Option This option does not impact this characteristic as the Green Seafront will be reinstated in its current form. New Option Accessible toilets in plaza area will be unisex which help to reduce the risk of discrimination or discomfort for trans and non-binary people.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Marriage or civil partnership	Essential Option Neutral New Option Positive	Essential Option This option does not impact this characteristic as the Green Seafront will be reinstated in its current form. New Option Potential for wedding and commitment ceremonies to be held on secondary event space.
Pregnancy and maternity	Essential Option Neutral New Option Positive	Essential Option This option does not impact this characteristic as the Green Seafront will be reinstated in its current form. New Option Potential for accessible toilets in plaza area to include baby change facilities. The existing stepped paths will be replaced with steady gradient ramps at 1:20 which are easier to navigate with pushchairs and buggies. Surfaced pathways around the Green Seafront will be provided to improve and level walking routes.
Race and Ethnicity	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.
Religion and belief	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.
Sex (consider men and women)	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.
Sexual orientation	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
People with caring responsibilities	Essential Option Neutral New Option Positive	Essential Option This option does not impact this characteristic as the Green Seafront will be reinstated in its current form. New Option Accessible toilets in plaza area may assist carers to help people to use these facilities. Secondary event space will provide a quiet area for neurodiverse people to enjoy Swanage's seafront providing opportunities for carers to utilise this space. Blue badge parking on De Moulham Road is being investigated with highway authority for access to primary and secondary event spaces this will help carers access the Green Seafront. The existing stepped paths will be replaced with steady gradient ramps at 1:20 which are easier to navigate with mobility aids. Surfaced pathways around the Green Seafront will be provided to improve level walking routes.
Rural isolation	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.
Socio-economic deprivation	Essential Option Positive New Option Positive	Essential Option Events held on the Green Seafront include those that are free to attend. Failure to stabilise the Green Seafront would mean that these events no longer take place. Therefore, the retention of the Green Seafront even in its current form is a positive for those that are socio-economically deprived. New Option The new option is likely to represent a greater positive impact on this group. The increased size and year-round usability of the event space will encourage more events to be held providing more opportunities for low or no cost family entertainment. Improved and accessible public green space enhancing free to access open space on the seafront.
Single parents	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Armed forces communities	Essential Option Neutral New Option Neutral	Essential Option No impact on this characteristic. New Option No impact on this characteristic.

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

Essential Option

The Essential Option delivers a largely neutral impact across most protected characteristics, as it reinstates the Green Seafront in its current form without introducing significant new features or removing existing ones. The main benefit relates to the continued safety and usability of the seafront following stabilisation works, preserving current levels of community access to green space and free or low-cost events, which provides a positive socio-economic impact.

New Option

The New Option provides substantial positive impacts across several protected characteristics due to improvements in accessibility, inclusive design and the diversification of usable spaces. The replacement of steep and stepped paths with 1:20 accessible gradients, the addition of new accessible toilets, and the provision of a quieter secondary event space significantly improve the seafront's usability for older people, disabled people, neurodivergent people, carers and families with young children. The increased seating, shade and clear routes offer improved comfort and accessibility for people of all ages. The introduction of unisex accessible toilets also provides a positive impact for transgender, non-binary and gender-diverse people.

The expanded and more functional events area supports greater socio-economic benefits, enabling more year-round free or low-cost activities and reducing financial barriers to participation. No negative impacts have been identified for any protected group.

Construction Phase Impacts

Construction is planned to take place between September '27 and April '28 which is outside of the peak visitor and event season and will help to minimise disruption. The entire Green Seafront area will be closed for the duration of the works, which will temporarily impact access. Noise, vehicle movements, and changes to usual movement patterns may also present challenges for people with protected characteristics.

These impacts will be managed through a construction phase plan (CPP), which will set out how access and safety will be maintained throughout the works. The CPP will be supported by a communications plan which will include clear plans for advance communication of closures and diversion routes, consistent on-site signage and predictable phasing of activities.

Although the area must remain closed for safety reasons, the plan will aim to minimise uncertainty and disruption, particularly for disabled people, carers and neurodivergent individuals. Once works are complete, access and usability will be restored under the Essential Option and significantly improved under the New Option.

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Construction Phase	Clear construction phase and communications plans that ensure safe access is maintained and changes to routes are clearly communicated.	Project Team	September '27
Blue Badge Parking	Continued working with highway authority to secure blue badge parking on De Moulham Road that relates well to accessing both the main and secondary event spaces.	Project Team	April '28
Baby Change Facilities	Ensure baby change facilities are provided in new accessible toilets.	Project Team	April '28

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA: [Joseph Rose \(Dorset Council\)](#)

Officers involved in completing the EqIA: [Martin Ayres, Gail Percival & Culvin Milmer \(Swanage Town Council\)](#)

Date of completion: [9 April 2026](#)

Version Number: [3](#)

EqIA review date:

- [During development of Construction Phase Plan and Communications Plan – Date TBC](#)
- [At construction start – Anticipated September 2027.](#)
- [At construction mid-point – Anticipated Mid December 2027](#)
- [At construction completion – Anticipated April 2028.](#)

Equality Lead Sign Off: [James Palfreman-Kay – 9 April 2026](#)

Next Steps:

- the EqlA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqlA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqlA, to get a better understanding.
- EqlA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#)