

Appendix 3 - EQIA Stage One: Initial Screening Assessment Form

This should be used once it has been decided that a specific strategy, policy or project requires an initial screening.

Name of strategy, project, policy: Expansion of Conservation Grazing across Burnham Beeches
Department: Open Spaces
Officer/s completing assessment: Andy Barnard

The strategy, policy or project		
1.	What is the main purpose of the policy?	To expand conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches SSSI
2.	Is the policy affected by external drivers for change?	By the need to ensure that Burnham beeches SSSI remains 'in favourable condition'. A government requirement monitored by Natural England
3.	List the main activities of the policy?	Expansion of current grazing scheme (approx. 30% of site is grazed) to approximately 95% of the site being grazed. This will be achieved by a new fencing technique i.e. 'invisible fencing' and 'virtual cattle grids'. The livestock will be grazed on site for 8 months each year and be 'offsite' during winter.
4.	Who implements the policy?	The Director of Open Spaces

5.	Who will be affected by the policy?	<p>1. The Beeches is visited by 585,000 people each year of every faith, race and sexual/physical orientation. A very small minority of visitors currently avoid the livestock (generally dog walkers who have concerns about the behaviour of their pets in the presence of livestock). However, the density of livestock provided by the new policy is extremely low which means that it will be uncommon for visitors to come across them. Further, the livestock will also quickly develop predictable grazing habits (i.e. they will tend to use the areas with the best grazing) so those wishing to avoid them should be able to do so.</p> <p>2. Immediate neighbours. These range from large private farms to a small number of individual house holders. The livestock will graze up to their boundary. Generally this is seen to be positive although some private boundary structures may need to be improved</p> <p>3. Car drivers and other road users. The livestock will cross the public highways that run through Burnham Beeches SSSI.</p>
6.	What outcome do you want to achieve, why and for whom?	<p>The ultimate outcome is that Burnham Beeches SSSI is maintained in favourable condition. This is best achieved by the use of livestock. Most visitors enjoy having access to the livestock and the 2009 visitor survey indicated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% of visitors supported the expansion of grazing across the site (11% had no opinion). • 72% felt that the benefits of grazing outweighed any possible dis-benefits (16% had no opinion) <p>'The policy' will also reinstate the practice of wood-pasture management (carried out extensively across the site since medieval times) that established the historical, cultural and biological features that are so highly prized today.</p>

7.	Are any other organisations involved?	The main partner has been Transport for Buckinghamshire whose roads pass through the Beeches. We have also worked very closely with neighbouring landowners and individuals as well as District and Parish Councils; all are supportive of the policy.
8.	Are there any existing assessments or inspections?	Yes - several forms of feasibility study that examined various options.
9.	Who have you consulted on the policy?	<p>We have consulted very widely – main consultees include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2009 visitor survey (900 visitors). • The Epping Forest and Commons Committee • The Burnham Beeches Consultation Group (BBCG - represents local users) • Natural England • The National Trust • The Woodland Trust • South Bucks District Council • Buckinghamshire County Council • Transport for Bucks • Farnham Royal parish Council • Burnham Parish Council

10.	Who are the main beneficiaries of the policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Burnham Beeches SSSI and associated habitats and wildlife • The City of London – the policy will assure that the target of ‘favourable condition’ is maintained in a sustainable manner • Site visitors – will have access to livestock which will enhance the rural experience and facilitate access (via browsing o flower branches) throughout the site. • This is already used as an educational tool by local schools and colleges and these opportunities will increase. • Neighbours – house values tend to increase next to land that is used for conservation grazing
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The Impact:	Tick the boxes which apply for each ‘target group’					
Equality Target Group	Positive Impact		Neutral Impact	Negative Impact		Reason/Comment
	High	Low		High	Low	
Gender						
Women			X			The presence of livestock is not gender specific
Men			X			The presence of livestock is not gender specific
Transgender			X			The presence of livestock is not gender specific
Race						
Asian – Asian Bangladeshi; Asian British; Asian Indian; Asian Pakistani; Asian Other		X				Cattle are considered to be of high significance to some Asian groups

The Impact:	Tick the boxes which apply for each 'target group'					
Equality Target Group	Positive Impact		Neutral Impact	Negative Impact		Reason/Comment
	High	Low		High	Low	
Black – Black African; Black British; Black Caribbean; Black Other			X			None anticipated
Chinese			X			None anticipated
Irish			X			None anticipated
Mixed – Asian & White; Black & White; Mixed Other			X			None anticipated
White – White British; White European Union; White Other			X			None anticipated
Disabled people	X					The use of invisible fencing and virtual grids means that many existing fences and gateways can be removed thereby improving access for all, particularly disabled people
Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals			X			None anticipated
Older people			X			None anticipated
Younger people and children	X					Educational tool for local schools
Faith groups		X				Cattle are considered to be of high significance to some faiths

Further Action	
Does the policy have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups? If so, you will need to proceed to Stage 2	No
Is the negative impact assessed as being of high significance? If so, you will need to proceed to Stage 2	No
Is progression to Stage 2: Full Assessment required?	No

Signed (Completing Officer):

A. Barnard

Date: 19th October 2012

Signed (Departmental Equality Champion):

D. Whelton

Date: 22nd October 2012

Actions Arising from Initial Screening

Issue	Action Required	Lead Officer	Timescale	Resource Implications	Comments
Monitoring the impact of the policy in terms of equality issues	Ensure all comments received following the implementation of the policy are recorded and discussed/resolved through the EFCC and the BBCG	Andy Barnard	2013 onwards	Not significant and would be dealt with through existing channels e.g. Ranger Service, Response Desk, complaints procedure etc.	