STOKE CLIMSLAND PARISH
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - STAGE TWO

Submission Draft, April 2026

Prepared for	Stoke Climsland Parish Council / NDP Steering Group
Document assessed	Submission Draft Stoke Climsland Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2026-2030
Stage	Stage 2 equalities and diversity assessment statement

1. Introduction

This Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment Statement has been prepared for the Submission Draft Stoke Climsland Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan. It updates the Stage 1 assessment by considering the final vision, objectives, spatial strategy and policies of the Plan, and by reviewing whether the Plan is likely to have a positive, neutral, or negative effect on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of the statement is to demonstrate that equality and diversity considerations have been taken into account in plan-making, that likely impacts have been assessed in a proportionate way, and that any potential risks of disadvantage have been identified together with appropriate mitigation. It also considers the Cornwall-relevant issues of socio-economic inequality and rural isolation, as these can intensify disadvantage for protected groups in a dispersed rural parish.

2. Methodology

The assessment draws on the demographic and socio-economic evidence compiled for the Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment, together with the Submission Draft NDP itself, including its vision, objectives, spatial strategy and policy framework. Each objective has been reviewed against the protected characteristics using a simple impact rating of Positive, Neutral, Negative Low, Negative Medium, Negative High, or a qualified rating.

The assessment is proportionate. It does not attempt to predict the outcomes of individual planning applications. Instead, it considers whether the wording and overall direction of the Plan are likely to promote inclusion, accessibility and fair treatment, or whether the Plan could unintentionally disadvantage any group if applied without safeguards.

The assessment covers the nine statutory protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Marriage / civil partnership, Pregnancy / maternity, Race and ethnicity, Religion / belief, Sexual orientation and gender reassignment. It also covers three additional considerations: socio-economic circumstances, rural isolation and Experience of Care. Socio-economic circumstances and rural isolation can compound disadvantage across different groups. Experience of Care is recognised by Cornwall Council as a locally protected characteristic and covers experience of children's social care at any point in a person's life .

3. Summary data and equality profile

Characteristic / issue	Summary position in Stoke Climsland Parish
Age	The parish population was 1,657 at the 2021 Census and has an ageing profile. The proportion aged 65 and over had risen to 28.9%, while the proportion of younger workers had fallen sharply. Age is therefore a major equality issue, particularly in relation to accessibility, suitable housing, health, transport and local support.
Disability	About 18.8% of residents were disabled under the Equality Act definition. When combined with people reporting long-term physical or mental health conditions that did not limit day-to-day activities, around 27.1% of residents were living with a long-term condition or disability-related issue.
Sex	The population is broadly balanced by sex, with 49.9% female and 50.1% male. Safety, access to services, care roles and transport remain relevant considerations.
Marriage / civil partnership	Household data shows a high proportion of one and two person households, with a notable concentration of older single person households and older family households. This increases the importance of downsizing options, accessible homes and local support networks.
Pregnancy / maternity	Direct parish data is not available, but the Stage 1 evidence estimated around 14 conceptions per year. This is a small but relevant group in relation to safe movement, family-friendly facilities, access to services and housing design.
Race and ethnicity	The parish is not ethnically diverse overall. Around 98.6% of residents identified as White and about 99% of households had English as their main language. Minority ethnic groups are therefore numerically small and may be less visible in consultation and decision-making.
Religion / belief	Around 54.8% of residents stated that they had a religion, overwhelmingly Christian. The Plan should remain neutral and inclusive of all beliefs and of those with no religion.
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment	Parish-level data is limited. Cornwall-wide and national evidence indicates a small but material LGBTQ+ population, and the Stage 1 assessment used a reasonable working assumption that approximately 83 to 116 residents may be LGBTQ+ if national policy assumptions are applied locally.
Socio-economic circumstances *[local characteristic/issue]*	Overall deprivation is comparatively low, but there are continuing issues around barriers to housing and services and aspects of the living environment. The evidence also suggests a risk that a smaller core of less well educated or poorly housed younger people may face increasing deprivation.
Rural isolation *[local characteristic/issue]*	The parish has a dispersed settlement pattern and substantial dependence on travel outside the parish for services, health care, schooling and employment. Limited public transport, housing affordability and digital variation can intensify disadvantage for older

	people, disabled people, carers and lower-income households.
Experience of Care ***[Cornwall Council local characteristic/issue]***	Benefits depend on delivery, affordability and eligibility. Local-connection arrangements may present difficulties for people whose care placements have taken them outside the parish or disrupted family connections.

4. Community engagement strategy

The Stoke Climsland NDP has been informed by engagement over several stages. A scoping survey was carried out in 2014, followed by further surveys, meetings and drop-in sessions between 2014 and 2018 with residents, businesses, young people and others. A Vision, Objectives and Policy Directions event was held in April 2019, work was refreshed in 2024 with updated evidence and community engagement, and formal Regulation 14 consultation then ran from 17 November 2025 to 5 January 2026.

This range of methods has helped reduce exclusion by offering more than one way to participate. However, some groups can still remain under-represented in planning processes, particularly older people with mobility limitations, disabled residents, younger households, lower-income households, minority ethnic residents and LGBTQ+ residents. Mitigation therefore remains the continued use of plain language, multiple channels of communication, accessible venues and careful attention to how the Plan is implemented and reviewed.

5. Vision and aims of the NDP

The Vision of the NDP is for Stoke Climsland Parish to be a well-designed, well-connected parish with a strong sense of place, leading on climate action and nature recovery, remaining pleasant and tranquil, celebrating its environment, heritage and landscape, supporting a busy and active community, and meeting the needs and aspirations of all sections of the community through an appropriate choice of homes, jobs and community facilities.

Overall, the vision is equality-positive. It promotes social inclusion, local access, community well-being, environmental quality and a fairer response to local housing and service needs. There is no evidence that the vision is inherently discriminatory. The main equality issue is therefore not the vision itself, but whether the detailed policies are implemented in ways that remain accessible, inclusive and proportionate.

6. Plan objectives and likely equality effects

Objective	Likely equality effect
Climate Change	Likely overall positive, particularly for older people, disabled people and lower-income households, through flood resilience, energy efficiency, low-carbon heat, sustainable drainage and support for climate adaptation.
Built Environment and Heritage	Likely neutral to positive. Protecting local character and requiring good design can improve quality of place, but implementation must ensure that inclusive design is not subordinated to heritage or appearance considerations.
Natural Environment and Landscape	Likely positive through biodiversity, green infrastructure, landscape protection and dark skies, provided routes, spaces and recreational assets remain inclusive and physically accessible.

Community Facilities	Likely strongly positive because the Plan supports the retention and enhancement of community facilities, recreation, local services and spaces that are important to social inclusion and community well-being.
Accessibility	Likely strongly positive for age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and socio-economic equality, because these policies relate directly to movement, transport, pedestrian links, least restrictive access and digital connectivity.
Housing	Likely strongly positive because the Plan supports housing mix, accessible and adaptable homes, affordable housing and homes suited to older people, younger households and families.
Economy and Employment	Likely positive through support for local jobs, rural enterprise, working from home and digital connectivity, although accessibility and transport remain important to avoid exclusion.

7. Policy framework and objective mapping

Objective	Related NDP policies
Climate Change	Policies CC1 to CC9: sustainable design and low carbon heat, energy storage, community-led renewables, wind, solar PV, energy diversification, carbon sequestration, transition from oil and gas heating, window replacement, sustainable drainage and natural flood management.
Built Environment and Heritage	Policies HCD1 to HCD3: the World Heritage Site, heritage, Cornish distinctiveness and design, and general design principles.
Natural Environment and Landscape	Policies NEL1 to NEL5: green infrastructure, habitat and biodiversity, trees, Cornish hedges and hedgerows, landscape, and dark skies.
Community Facilities	Policies CF1 to CF3: protection and enhancement of community facilities, local green spaces, and key recreation spaces and sports pitches.
Accessibility	Policies CF4 to CF8: transport and highways, development layout parking and links, footpaths and bridle-ways, digital infrastructure resilience and investment, and mobile signal infrastructure.
Housing	Policies H1 to H5: infill, rounding-off and brownfield land, open areas of local significance, housing mix, rural exception affordable housing sites, and infill within hamlets and small groups of dwellings.
Economy and Employment	Policies EE1 to EE4: new commercial space and business expansions, rural business diversification, rural tourism development, and working from home and home-based businesses.

8. Detailed assessment by objective and protected characteristic

The following tables summarise the Stage 2 assessment. They focus on the direction of the Plan rather than on individual development schemes. Where a potential adverse effect is identified, its significance and the

measures needed to address it are described. Positive assessments indicate potential benefits from the policy framework; their delivery will depend on individual proposals, implementation and, in some cases, action by service providers outside the scope of the NDP.

This part of the assessment covers the nine statutory protected characteristics and three additional considerations: socio-economic circumstances, rural isolation and Experience of Care. Socio-economic circumstances and rural isolation can compound disadvantage across different groups. Experience of Care is recognised by Cornwall Council as a locally protected characteristic and covers experience of children's social care at any point in a person's life[1].

Climate Change

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Positive**	Flood resilience, sustainable drainage, low-carbon heat and energy efficiency can particularly benefit older residents, who are more likely to be affected by cold homes, heat stress and mobility limits.
Disability	**Positive**	Policies on sustainable design, drainage and resilience can reduce risk and improve comfort, but implementation should continue to secure inclusive access and avoid barriers created by adaptation works.
Gender reassignment	**Neutral**	No specific differential effect identified. Mitigation is to maintain inclusive and safe public environments when climate-related infrastructure is designed.
Marriage and civil partnership	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified beyond general household resilience benefits.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Positive**	Safer movement, reduced flood risk and more resilient infrastructure can benefit parents and carers. Mitigation should include routes and public realm that work for prams and family movement.
Race	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified, although scheme-specific consultation should remain accessible.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sex	**Positive**	Lower energy costs, safer routes and reduced

[1] Assessment is practically difficult as "Experience of Care" concerns past or present experience of children's social care, rather than everyone receiving health services or adult social care, and there is no reliable data available that would facilitate an assessment of the impact that the NDP is likely to have on the characteristic. Also, many of the issues related to experience of care are outside the scope of NDPs. For example, care benefits depend on delivery, affordability and eligibility, whilst local bus services may present difficulties for people whose care placements have taken them outside the parish or disrupted family connections whilst NDPs do not determine individual housing allocations. These are potential implementation risks, not areas where the NDP policies unlawfully exclude care-experienced people.

		environmental risk can particularly assist carers and households managing higher service access needs.
Sexual orientation	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified. Safe and inclusive public environments remain the key mitigation
Socio-economic circumstances	**Positive, subject to affordability**	Energy efficiency, flood resilience and appropriate low-carbon heating can improve living conditions and reduce exposure to energy costs. However, initial costs and differences between owner-occupied and rented housing may restrict access to improvements. Implementation should consider installation and running costs, maintenance requirements and opportunities for financial support, so that lower-income households can share in the benefits.
Rural isolation	**Positive**	Resilient buildings, drainage and energy infrastructure can benefit dispersed households, particularly where disruption affects access to services. Implementation should consider remote properties and settlements as well as the main village, including the practical availability of installation, maintenance and support services.
Experience of Care	**Neutral, with potential indirect benefits**	No distinct effect arising from care experience itself is identified. Care-experienced residents facing low incomes or insecure housing may benefit from warmer, more efficient and resilient homes, but may have limited control over improvements in rented accommodation. Relevant affordability and tenure barriers should be considered without assuming that all care-experienced people face the same circumstances.

Built Environment and Heritage

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Neutral**	Good design and heritage-sensitive development can improve legibility and quality of place, but accessibility must not be outweighed by appearance.
Disability	**Negative Low**	There is a low risk that heritage or design considerations could be applied too rigidly in individual cases**. Mitigation** is already built in through Policy HCD2, which notes that users should carefully take into account the needs

		of groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
Gender reassignment	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Marriage and civil partnership	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified, though good design benefits all users.
Race	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified. The interpretation of local distinctiveness should remain inclusive and not narrowly exclusionary.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sex	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sexual orientation	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Socio-economic circumstances	**Neutral, with potential adverse effects**	Good design and the conservation of local character can improve residential environments. However, requirements relating to materials, detailing or adaptation of older buildings may increase costs for lower-income households.
Rural isolation	**Neutral**	Design and heritage policies do not directly resolve isolation, but the layout and adaptation of buildings can influence access to facilities and opportunities for social contact.
Experience of Care	**Neutral**	No specific differential effect is identified. Well-designed, safe and welcoming places may provide general benefits.

Natural Environment and Landscape

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Positive**	Green infrastructure, landscape quality and dark skies can support health, walking, recreation and social contact, subject to accessibility.
Disability	**Negative Low**	Environmental enhancement is generally positive, but some routes, spaces or recreational areas may remain less accessible if not designed carefully. **Mitigation** including inclusive path design, seating, gradients and wayfinding where relevant, s covered in Policy CF6 [see below].
Gender reassignment	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.

Marriage and civil partnership	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Positive**	Accessible green space, safer routes and recreational opportunities can support family well-being. Mitigation should consider pram use and resting points.
Race	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sex	**Positive**	Better connected and well-used open spaces can improve confidence and access, especially where safety concerns affect use.
Sexual orientation	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Socio-economic circumstances	**Positive**	Accessible green spaces and local walking opportunities can provide low-cost recreation and support wellbeing. Benefits may be reduced where access requires a car, paid parking or other expenditure.
Rural isolation	**Positive, subject to access**	Green infrastructure and connections to paths and open spaces can improve local recreation and opportunities for social contact. Benefits depend on usable links from dispersed settlements, rather than proximity alone.
Experience of Care	**Neutral, with potential indirect benefits**	No distinct differential effect is identified, but accessible natural spaces may support wellbeing, recreation and social connection. Benefits will depend on practical access, affordability and individual preferences.

Community Facilities

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Positive**	This is one of the strongest positive areas of the Plan, as it supports community facilities, recreation, local services and social spaces that are especially important to older residents.
Disability	**Positive**	Policies on community facilities, recreation and local services can materially improve inclusion and day-to-day access. Mitigation should continue to prioritise step-free access, inclusive equipment, seating and usability.
Gender reassignment	**Positive**	Safer, more legible and better-used community spaces can help reduce exclusion and fear of harassment.

Marriage and civil partnership	**Positive**	Local facilities and meeting spaces support older couples, widowed residents and people living alone.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Positive**	Local facilities, play and recreation space, and nearby services are beneficial for parents, carers and young children.
Race	**Positive**	Improved access to shared facilities and inclusive engagement can help reduce invisibility and exclusion for small minority groups.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified, though inclusive community facilities can support all groups.
Sex	**Positive**	Community facilities and public space are especially relevant to women, carers and those concerned about safety and everyday access.
Sexual orientation	**Positive**	Inclusive, safe and well-used community spaces can support social inclusion and reduce the risk of marginalisation.
Socio-economic circumstances	**Positive**	Policies CF1–CF3 support facilities and recreational spaces that can provide affordable opportunities for participation and reduce the need to travel elsewhere. Retention of a facility does not itself ensure that everyone can use it.
Rural isolation	**Positive**	Retaining and enhancing local facilities can reduce journeys and provide meeting places that help sustain community networks. Residents in smaller settlements may nevertheless face transport barriers.
Experience of Care	**Potentially positive**	Welcoming community facilities and activities can provide opportunities to develop relationships, participate in community life and access informal support. Cost, transport and confidence in joining unfamiliar activities may be barriers for some residents.

Accessibility

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Positive**	The accessibility objective is strongly positive for older residents because it seeks better movement, safer links and improved access to services, schools and leisure opportunities.
Disability	**Positive**	Policies CF4, CF5 and CF6 are especially

		important to disability equality. They support safe walking links, account for protected groups in transport design, and apply least restrictive access principles to footpaths and bridleways. Implementation should prioritise inclusive path design, surfacing, gradients, seating, crossings and wayfinding where relevant.
Gender reassignment	**Positive**	Safer and more legible routes, public spaces and communications infrastructure can reduce exclusion and fear of harassment.
Marriage and civil partnership	**Positive**	Better transport and communication links help support people living alone, older households and carers with shared responsibilities.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Positive**	Safer footways, better links to services and least restrictive access can materially assist parents, carers and pram users.
Race	**Positive**	Better access to shared facilities, transport and digital infrastructure can reduce exclusion for small minority groups.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sex	**Positive**	Transport, public realm and digital access are especially relevant to women, carers and those managing everyday service journeys.
Sexual orientation	**Positive**	Inclusive and safe access arrangements can support wider participation in community life and reduce marginalisation.
Socio-economic circumstances	**Positive**	Policies CF4–CF8 can improve access to services, employment and learning through safer routes and better communications infrastructure. Lower-income households may nevertheless face transport costs, lack of a vehicle, or difficulties affording devices and connectivity.
Rural isolation	**Positive**	Improved links, footpaths and digital connectivity directly address some consequences of a dispersed settlement pattern. Infrastructure improvements alone cannot guarantee public transport services or affordable broadband, so liaison with relevant providers remains important.
Experience of Care	**Potentially positive**	Better physical and digital connections may help care-experienced residents reach education, employment, services and personal support networks, particularly when establishing independent living. Benefits depend on affordable transport and

		connectivity.

Housing

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Positive**	Policies on housing mix, accessible homes and support for older people can help residents downsize or remain in the parish as needs change.
Disability	**Positive**	The Plan supports accessible and adaptable housing, specialist accommodation and a better mix of homes. Mitigation is to ensure accessibility requirements are carried through at development management stage.
Gender reassignment	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified. Inclusive and fair access to housing should be maintained.
Marriage and civil partnership	**Positive**	The Plan supports a wider range of homes, including smaller homes relevant to older couples, widowed residents and single person households.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Positive**	Suitable family housing, proximity to facilities and a better housing mix are beneficial for households with children and caring responsibilities.
Race	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified, but affordability and fair access are beneficial to all groups.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sex	**Positive**	Housing affordability, safety and access to local services can particularly benefit women where care roles and lower mobility are relevant.
Sexual orientation	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified. Affordable and secure housing is beneficial to all residents.
Socio-economic circumstances	**Positive, subject to delivery and affordability**	Policies H3 and H4 support a wider housing mix, smaller homes, social rented provision and rural exception affordable housing. These measures respond to identified affordability pressures, but some ownership products may remain beyond the means of lower-income households. Implementation should pay particular attention to social rented housing, total housing costs and long-term affordability.

Rural isolation	**Positive, with potential locational risks**	Housing close to facilities can help residents remain within their communities and reduce travel requirements. Development in smaller settlements may, however, leave households dependent on a car or facing high travel costs.
Experience of Care	**Potentially positive, subject to fair access**	H3's support for smaller homes and social rented housing, together with H4's support for rural exception housing, may assist care-experienced people seeking suitable and affordable accommodation. Delivery does not guarantee access for an individual household.

Economy and Employment

Protected characteristic	Assessed impact	Comments and mitigation
Age	**Positive**	Support for local jobs, flexible working and home-based enterprise may help older residents remain economically active.
Disability	**Positive**	Home-working, adaptable workspaces and improved digital connectivity can widen access to employment, though inclusive design of premises and routes remains important.
Gender reassignment	**Neutral**	No specific policy barrier identified. Inclusive working environments and fair access remain the mitigation.
Marriage and civil partnership	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Neutral**	Flexible working and local employment can assist parents and carers, though the benefit is mainly indirect.
Race	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified, although fair access to employment and enterprise support should be maintained.
Religion and belief	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Sex	**Positive**	Flexible working and local business support can assist carers and those balancing work and family responsibilities.
Sexual orientation	**Neutral**	No direct differential effect identified.
Socio-economic circumstances	**Positive**	Policies EE1–EE4 can support local employment, enterprise and working from home, potentially reducing travel costs and widening opportunities. Benefits will depend on the availability of suitable jobs, skills and affordable workspace or equipment.

Rural isolation	**Positive**	Local business development and appropriate home-working can reduce the need for long journeys and help sustain economic activity in dispersed communities. Benefits depend on reliable connectivity and suitable premises.
Experience of Care	**Potentially positive**	Additional local employment and enterprise opportunities may benefit care-experienced residents, including young adults moving towards independence. Planning support for businesses does not itself secure recruitment, training or sustained employment.

9. Conclusions and overview

The Stage 2 assessment indicates that the Submission Draft Stoke Climsland Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan is overall positive in equality terms. The strongest positive effects arise in relation to age, disability, housing need, community facilities, safe movement, local services, digital connectivity and environmental quality. These matters are especially important in a parish with an ageing population, a substantial proportion of residents with disabilities or long-term health conditions, and marked rural access constraints.

The additional local protected characteristics assessment of socio-economic circumstances and rural isolation reinforces these findings. Comparatively low overall household deprivation does not remove the significance of housing affordability, poor housing conditions, transport costs and distance from services. The Plan's support for smaller and affordable homes, local facilities, connections and employment can help address these barriers. However, policy support does not guarantee delivery, affordable access or the provision of services outside the planning system.

For people with Experience of Care, the Plan offers potential benefits principally through housing, community facilities, accessibility and employment opportunities. No adverse effect arising solely from care experience has been identified, but individual circumstances may overlap with low income, disability, insecure housing or isolation. The absence of parish-specific evidence limits the certainty of this assessment and should not be interpreted as evidence that there are no care-experienced residents or no relevant needs.

A small number of low-level risks have been identified. These relate mainly to the possibility that heritage, design or environmental considerations could be applied too rigidly at implementation stage, or that routes and spaces could remain less accessible than intended if inclusive design is not pursued actively. The additional local protected characteristics assessment highlights potential barriers associated with the cost of improvements and activities, the location of housing and employment, digital exclusion, and access to affordable housing. These are not inherent flaws in the NDP and mitigation through accessible design and proportionate development management, and, where relevant, cooperation with housing, transport, community and support organisations is included in the NDP.

Accordingly, the overall conclusion is that the Plan is considered compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, subject to the mitigation and good practice identified in this statement and the NDP being

carried through, including careful application of the policies on heritage and design, transport and access, and continued review of equality effects during implementation and any future plan review.

Equality effects should remain under review during implementation and any future review of the Plan.