

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of Policy/Service Instruction/Report/Plan Projects/Events/Consultation/Functional Plans or Strategy	TDA Development and station merger Project
Department:	Cross-Directorate
Date:	Consultation
Completed by:	GM - Ben Ryder ED&I Advisor - Michelle Kirk

1: What are the main aims and objectives outlined in the Projects/Events/Consultation/Functional Plan etc. and are any of them in your opinion Positive / Negative or Neutral in relation to those protected groups outlined in section 6 below

Scope of the EIA

The key proposals of the project are listed below and are the basis of the completion of this EIA.

The purpose of this EIA is to review information and intelligence available at an early stage in the development of options for the Long Lane Project. It is intended that the EIA can be used to help inform decisions as the options progress and will help Principal Officers and Authority Members to understand equality related impacts on the decisions being made in relation to local diverse communities.

The EIA will be a living document which will developed further during the life cycle of the consultation stages. This initial EIA will provide be an opportunity to plan ahead for various activities such as community and staff consultation and equality data gathering.

The Project

As proposed in the 2021-24 IRMP:

- To purchase a 12-acre site at Long Lane, Aintree, Liverpool
- To combine Aintree and Croxteth Fire Stations (Station 18 and 19) at a new station Specialist Rescue Station on Long Lane, Aintree, Liverpool.
- To build a new state of the art Training and Development Academy inclusive of a National Resilience Centre of Excellence at Long Lane, Aintree, Liverpool

The EIA will be conducted in a number of stages:

Stage 1 - Desk Top Assessment

A desktop assessment has been completed in order to consider ED&I implications for this initial draft.

Stage 2 - Consultation (External and Internal):

Following approval of the project by MFRA on 30th June 2021, a twelve-week public consultation took place from **15th July to 7th October 2021** regarding the merger of Croxteth and Aintree Stations.

The consultation process aimed to develop and maintain a positive engaged response from staff, partners and local communities. To deliver key messages in multiple formats to encourage a clear understanding of the proposed benefits of the new development and to gather valuable feedback and to ensure equality impacts are considered throughout the process and included in the final version of the EIA for review by final decision makers. The standard consultation process was restricted in line with Covid 19 restrictions and Zoom was used for all but one consultation meeting. Having used that method in October 2020 for IRMP consultation, we were confident to use it again.

Stage 3 - More detailed assessment

Following the consultation process all responses have been considered and findings used to update this document.

EQUALITY IMPACT

The proposals set out in the project are considered at this time to have a positive impact for both staff and communities.

- The creation of a new superstation will have a positive impact for both staff and communities. The proposed new site is well located to highway networks with ease to major trunk roads. Our research shows that relocating the two stations will actually improve our response time to emergencies in the Croxteth and Aintree areas. The redistribution of specialist appliances will help us to deal more efficiently and effectively to emergencies in areas where there is a likelihood of a particular risk occurring. Training our staff in the use of specialist equipment will have a positive impact on their

development as it will build skills and confidence in delivering a service which is effective in meeting the need of all the communities we serve.

- The proposal of a new Training and Development Academy and development of a centre of excellence will have a positive impact allowing MFRS to expand and increase training and provide modern facilities with accommodation and facilities appropriate for all. This will allow staff to be well trained, developed and empowered to deliver our services.
- The new builds will be designed in accordance with MFRS Leadership message, equality legislation and building regulations to ensure they are fit for purpose, fully accessible to end users and visitors who may require disabled access, suitable for those who wish to practise their faith and facilitate nursing mothers etc.
- The site at Long Lane, Aintree will exponentially improve the Services provision for community facilities. This comes in the form of a specifically designed area on the fire station for children and young people. This facility is purpose built to deliver a range of youth engagement activities that the Service offer (Fire Cadets, PT, BEACON, Healing Together etc.).
- The TDA main building will be a state of the art learning facility for the FRS and a large proportion of the facilities will be available for the use of the local community. This will enable community group to access and use the facilities.

2: Who will be affected by the objectives proposed in the Projects/Events/Consultation/Functional Plan etc. and will this be Negative /Neutral or Positive ?

The project is likely to positively impact on the following:

- Local communities of Aintree and Croxteth
- MFRS operational and support staff
- Representative bodies (trade unions and staff associations)
- Partner agencies

The consultation process has provided valuable insight into the opinion of our staff, communities and partners. There were a few initial areas concern which were addressed during the consultation meetings. These related to:

- Response time – This project has a positive impact improving response times in Aintree, Croxteth and across Merseyside (as detailed in report CFO- 040-21.)
- Traffic Congestion – The Authority has appointed Flinders Chase to advise the Service of highways solution. This will be a key element of the formal planning application/process if approved by Authority.
- Firefighter Numbers – The IRMP 2021-24 increases the number of fire appliances from 29 (plus the Special Rescue Appliance) to 31 (plus the Special Rescue Appliance) by expanding our Hybrid duty system.

After hearing MFRS's reasoning and evidence for the project, consultation participants supported the proposals.

3: What monitoring data have you considered?

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this Projects/Events/Consultation/Functional Plan. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.

What monitoring data have you considered?

Station 18 and 19 Incident Data

Data shows that the combined area of Aintree (Station 18) and Croxteth (Station 19) saw a 3.1% increase (+37) in the overall number of incidents in 2019/20 when compared to 2015/16. The combined area has seen a reduction of 12.5% (-176 incidents) when comparing 2019/20 to 2018/19, the lowest since 2015/16.

The increased count of incidents over the five-year period is specifically related to increases in Special Service calls including: assisting other agencies, effecting entry to property and road traffic collisions. It is worth noting that we have entered into arrangements with other blue light partners specifically to assist them (e.g. effecting entry to homes where a call for an ambulance has been made) and we do not aim to reduce those types of incidents. Other types of Special Services such as Road Traffic collisions are incident types we aim to reduce and work with communities to do so. This type of incident fits with our proposal for Long Lane to be a specialist rescue station.

Facility Location Planner Analysis

To identify the best possible location for a new merged station and Training Academy, MFRS utilised software called Facility Location Planner (FLP) which was developed by a supplier called Process Evolution. The software uses Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) geography to identify the best location for a site within a given area. This process was simulated twice, initially for best performance and then for quickest response time.

The map above shows the current fire stations, locations for the Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) for the best performance (red border) and for the quickest travel time (blue border) and a

<p>IRMP Considerations</p>	<p>Positive - based on the current proposals, it is predicted that overall response to life risk incidents within 10 minutes would be achieved 93.7% of the time, with an average attendance time of 5m 52 seconds. Closing Aintree and Croxteth and building a merged station on Long Lane results in a minor gain in terms of attending life risk incidents pan Merseyside. This results in a prediction of 93.9% of life risk incidents being attended within 10 minutes and an average attendance time of 5m 50 seconds. Modelling shows, that based on the Long Lane location the 10-minute response time would be achieved on 98% of occasions (up from 94.3 based on current proposals) for life risk incidents attended within the current Aintree station area. And for the Croxteth station area, modelling identifies that performance would be achieved on 96.5% of occasions, slightly lower than the current 97.8%.</p>
<p>Staff Implications</p>	<p>Positive - the new TDA site with an infrastructure fit to meet the ambitions of the Service will exponentially improve the working conditions and training provision for MFRA personnel. If the station merger is approved the implications to our staff will be carefully considered and managed by the Aintree and Croxteth station management teams and POD. This will include engagement with representative bodies and staff and take account of employee’s personal circumstances. Any outcomes will be logged in this EIA and considered by the project board.</p>
<p>Legal Implications</p>	<p>It is considered that in carrying out the extensive twelve-week consultation that is proposed, the Authority will be fully complying with legal requirements and best practice guidelines. The outcomes of this twelve-week public consultation process will be fully reported to Authority prior to a decision being made. Dialogue continues with the owner’s representative of the Long Lane site, however any agreement for the purchase of the land would be subject to full Authority approval. The legal searches and draft terms for any conditional exchange continue to be undertaken. Subject to Fire Authority approval to purchase the identified site and feedback from the public consultation, the legal parameters for the sale of the two existing fire stations that</p>

<p>Risk Management, Health and Safety and Environmental Implications</p>	<p>are proposed to merge would also be sought and executed as appropriate.</p> <p>A risk register has been developed to manage and mitigate associated risks. The register is reviewed regularly at the Project Board. The Chair/Vice Chair of the Project Board or Project Manager escalate risks by exception to the project's Executive Group. MFRA will reduce any associated corporate risk by completing extensive consultation on the proposed station merger. Any outcomes from the consultation and EIA process that potentially pose risks will be included in the risk register.</p>
<p>Demographics of the merged area</p>	<p>The proposed merged station area of Aintree and Croxteth has a combined population of 108,857 people, making the proposed station area the second largest in Merseyside. There are approximately 16,645 residents above the age of 65, this is 15.3% of the area's population, this is below the Merseyside average of 18% and proportionally the 7th lowest station area for over 65s. Concerning ethnic backgrounds of residents, according to the 2011 census, 93.1% of local residents are White British. Overall, the merged station area lies within the 10-20% most deprived LSOA's within England.</p>

<p>5. Consultation</p>
<p><i>Summarise any consultation you have had ,when developing the Projects/Events/Consultation/Functional Plan etc. with any protected groups (listed in 6 below) both internally and externally to the organisation about how the objectives might impact them either positively or negatively or natural</i></p>
<p>Engagement – The project manager has engaged extensively with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the staff networks.</p> <p>Station Change Methodology – The station change methodology is informed by station merger projects in Knowsley, Wirral and St. Helens. The project team has engaged with staff to gather lessons learned which will inform the current project e.g. learning from accessibility audits from other MFRA sites.</p>

TDA Development – The project team and TDA staff have engaged extensively with other FRS's in order to gather information on lessons learned during capital build projects. There has been a particular focus on recent training and development projects in neighbouring Service's such as Cheshire and Manchester.

National Resilience – MFRA have engaged extensively with each of the capability leads to ensure that we have best practice examples from the sector lead delivery model for our training zones.

Public Consultation

A twelve-week public consultation has taken place between 15th July and 7th October 2021. The consultation process was held in order for the Authority to gain an understanding of the views of the residents of Aintree and Croxteth and other stakeholders about the proposal to combine Aintree and Croxteth fire stations into a new superstation, including development of a Training and Development Academy (TDA) and National Resilience Centre of Excellence, at a new site on Long Lane, Aintree.

The consultation included an online questionnaire, three externally facilitated online deliberative focus groups (two for residents of Aintree and Croxteth station areas and one all-Merseyside group - to consider the wider implications of our proposals), three open public meetings (two were online and one face to face at Service Headquarters), a joint stakeholder meeting and several staff and individual stakeholder meetings including three with local ward councillors.

Promoting and marketing the consultation:

Following Authority approval on 30th June 2021, on 15th July a consultation document and on-line survey were published on the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority website, Facebook, Twitter and a press release were used to launch the consultation.

Consultation documentation was printed and distributed widely across the Aintree and Croxteth areas, published on the Authority website and promoted via social media and the press. Consultation documents were placed in public buildings including libraries, one stop shops and community centres and supermarkets across the two station areas.

The consultation document was sent by email to the offices of all local Members of Parliament, Merseyside Police Chief Constable, Northwest Ambulance, Police and Crime Commissioner, City Region Mayor Steve Rotherham, Liverpool City Region, all local ward councillors and the Democratic Services teams at each of the five local councils.

Authority social media accounts were used during the consultation period to direct people to information and encourage participation in the consultation process.

The Chief Fire Officer consulted with a number of local ward councillors in the two station areas to explain our proposals and to seek their views.

The Chief Fire Officer consulted the City Region Mayor and the Mayor of Liverpool on our plans.

Stakeholders, including 22 businesses surrounding the proposed new site on Long Lane and 11 major sites in both station areas (including Aintree Hospital and HMP Altcourse), were invited to Service Headquarters to hear our proposals, ask questions and give their views.

The Chief Fire Officer spoke to staff on the affected stations to gather their views on the proposals.

The consultation events:

The consultation events that took place are detailed below. Due to the social distancing constraints of Covid 19 it was decided it was safer for public meetings to take place online (via Zoom) with just one face to face meeting planned for those who did not have access to the internet:

- Aintree station area focus group meeting – Tuesday 14th September
- Croxteth station area focus group meeting – Wednesday 15th September
- All Merseyside focus group meeting – Thursday 16th September
- All Merseyside online public meeting – Tuesday 21st September
- All Merseyside online public meeting – Wednesday 22nd September
- All Merseyside (face to face) public meeting – Thursday 21st September – Service Headquarters, Bridle Rd, Bootle
- Stakeholders (face to face) meeting – Tuesday 28th September – Service Headquarters, Bridle Rd, Bootle

Outcomes from the consultation:

Full analysis of the online questionnaire, focus groups, public meetings and other meetings with staff, interested and interested stakeholders can be found at Appendix 2.

A brief overview is provided below:

- The proposal would have a positive impact on equality, diversity and inclusion in terms of service delivery and employment.
- No negative equality, diversity and inclusion impacts were raised: participants could only see positives in terms of accessibility and inclusivity for station staff and the communities of Aintree and Croxteth.
- Participants were informed that, in developing its proposals, MFRS must consider whether they would have a particular impact (either positive or negative) on people with protected characteristics.
- No negative impacts were raised. In fact, participants could only see positives in terms of accessibility and inclusivity for station staff and the communities of Aintree and Croxteth. Moreover, one member of the cross-Merseyside group foresaw possible recruitment benefits as a result of opportunities to work in improved facilities.

6. Conclusions - Provide any conclusions ascertained from section 2 to 5 above about the equality impacts for each protected group – Describe the impact in terms of negative, positive or neutral.

(a) Age

People in this group are likely to fall into our vulnerable category, 15.3% of the merged area population are within this age group – though this merged station area has below the Merseyside average for over 65's. The largest concentrations of persons above the age of 65 are within the wards of West Derby (Liverpool) and Molyneux (Sefton). There are numerous sheltered housing locations, particularly in the existing Croxteth station area (359 against 66 in Aintree), though even in combination, this makes up only the 9th most populous station area for such housing. The number of people aged over 65 is increasing significantly across Merseyside. People are living longer but live with poor health for longer.

Positive Impact: The new build will consider accessibility for all.

The new build will have a bespoke youth engagement facility at the new super-station. This facility is purpose built and designed to create a positive environment for the children and young people learn and develop.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(b) Disability (including mental, physical and sensory conditions)

Positive Impact: The new build project will consider disability access requirements.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

The new build will learn from the findings of the recent Access/Inclusion Audits conducted on the current estate. Wilkinson Cowan Partnership Ltd has been incorporated into the Project Team and will input on the design of the new build.

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities or with physical disabilities often need extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. MFRS will ensure these needs are met with the installation of a Changing Places toilet.

MFRS will work closely with the MFRS Gender Network and Senior Sponsor for Disability on an ongoing basis to ensure the new build is inclusive

Furthermore, MFRS is a Disability Confident Employer and will be submitting an application to applying for level 3 accreditation by September 2022.

(c) Race (include: nationality, national or ethnic origin and/or colour)

According to the 2011 census, 93.9% of the merged area population is recorded as British white. Whilst there are small populations of Asian, Middle Eastern and European people, there is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(d) Religion or Belief

Positive Impact: The new build project will consider facilities to practice religion or belief. As part of MFRS commitment towards health and wellbeing including pastoral and spiritual and religious support will be considered to help provide holistic support to staff.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(e) Sex (Gender)

Positive Impact The new build project will consider accommodation and facilities that are inclusive and appropriate for all. MFRS will work closely with the MFRS Gender Network on an ongoing basis to ensure the new build is inclusive. There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(f) Gender Reassignment

Positive: The new build project will consider accommodation and facilities that are inclusive and appropriate for all. MFRS will work closely with the MFRS LGBT+ Network and Senior Sponsor on an ongoing basis to ensure the new build is inclusive

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(g) Marriage or Civil Partnership

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(h) Pregnancy and Maternity

Positive: The new build project will consider facilities for nursing mothers

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic

(i) Sexual Orientation

The new build project will consider accommodation and facilities that are appropriate for all irrespective of their sexual orientation. MFRS will work closely with the MFRS LGBT+ Network and Senior Sponsor on an ongoing basis to ensure the new build is inclusive

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

(j) Socio-economic disadvantage

There is much deprivation within the proposed area, particularly within the: Croxteth, Norris Green and parts of Fazakerley wards, though there are less deprived areas including: West Derby and Aintree Village. Analysis has shown an improvement in average response times, so regardless of whether how deprived an area is, we are still able to achieve the 10-minute response standard. There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

The scheme will be used as a Team Liverpool / Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) case study. This will provide demonstrable evidence of the social value that the project will bring to the local area. As an anchor organisation it is vital that we use the CLES principles to improve the communities we serve.

The community facilities and specifically the youth engagement provision will provide an enhanced provision for the communities of Aintree, Croxteth and Merseyside.

7. Taking into account the information contained in the sections above what are the final Outcomes and Decisions

If the Projects/Events/Consultation/Functional Plan etc. or any of its objectives will have the potential to have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how this will be managed or mitigated or justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aims and objectives.

The information provided in this EIA explain the ways in which different protected groups may be affected by the aims and objectives set out in the proposed project.

It is believed that the proposals that are contained within the project offer the best service provision in the circumstances.

This is a draft EIA that will be added to during the consultation period for the proposed project.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

The following activities have been identified by the ED&I Team as part of the EIA reviewing and signing off process. They will assist with the improving implementation, ensuring that Equality Impacts are assessed and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off

The completed EIA form must be signed off by the ED&I Team before it is submitted to Strategic Management Team or Authority.

Signed off by: Currently in Draft

Date: 22/10/21

Comments:

See Action Plan in section 8 above where appropriate

For any advice, support or guidance about completing this form please contact the DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk or on 0151 296 4236

The completed form along with the related documents should be emailed to the ED&I Team at: DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk

Proposed Long Lane Site Station Profile

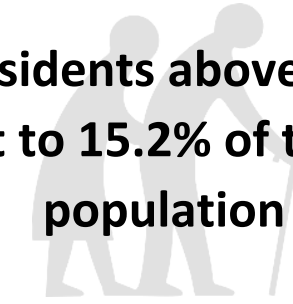


Primarily made up of the wards of: Warbreck, Fazakerley, Molyneux, Clubmoor, West Derby, Norris Green, Croxteth

Has a population of 108857 residents, equivalent to 6.5% of Merseyside's total population



Has 16645 residents above the age of 65. Equivalent to 15.2% of the station's population



6.1% of residents are Black, Asian, Minority Ethnicity (including: non English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish White population)



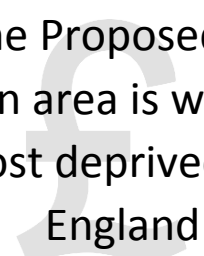
49585 homes



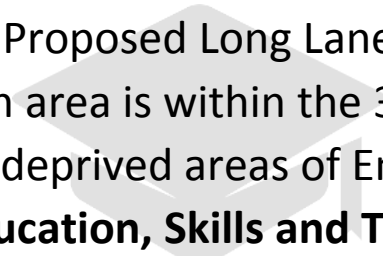
2528 places of work



Overall the Proposed Long Lane Site station area is within the 10-20% most deprived areas of England



The Proposed Long Lane Site station area is within the 30-40% most deprived areas of England for **Education, Skills and Training**



The Proposed Long Lane Site station area is within the 0-10% most deprived areas of England for **Health Deprivation & Disability**

