

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This advice note is aimed primarily at developers and planners in the local planning authority areas of Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk.

Its purpose is to assist in implementation of the Health Impact Assessments required by Policy 7 of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) dealing with health issues. The relevant part of the policy states

Appropriate and accessible health facilities and services will be provided across the area including through new or expanded primary health facilities serving the major growth locations. **Health Impact Assessments will be required for large-scale housing proposals.** Provision will be made for the expansion of the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital to meet the needs of growing communities.

Healthier lifestyles will be promoted by maximising access by walking and cycling and providing opportunities for social interaction and greater access to green space and the countryside.

The supporting text to this policy emphasizes that new development must seek to enhance the quality of life for existing and new residents. It also reflects the spatial planning objectives including encouraging the development of healthy and active lifestyles, sustainability of new housing, reducing deprivation, ensuring ready access to services and employment, addressing climate change, and the development of safe communities.

There is no prescribed methodology for assessing development proposals, and this note is intended to help developers and planners implement this part of the policy.

## 2. HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Health Impact Assessment is a method of identifying potential effects of a development proposal on health, both physical and mental. Because health is about far more than the lack of illness, the assessment needs to include, but look beyond the capacities of existing health treatment facilities, and consider the nature of the development itself. One consequence may be the identification of the need for new facilities, or the nature of any facilities proposed. An equally important outcome, however, is likely to be refinement of the form of the development.

This means that the assessment is likely to form part of the overall design process. Policy 2 of the JCS requires that a major development in areas providing over 500 dwellings and areas of particular complexity will be masterplanned using an inclusive recognised process, and it would make sense for the health impact assessment to be included within this. This will

therefore be expected in all locations where over 500 dwellings are proposed, even if the development proposal in question forms only a part.

Health impact assessments will also be expected in the case of proposals for over 100 dwellings in areas not identified in the JCS, or another development plan document for development of this scale.

It will need to include an assessment of the environmental characteristics of the area as well as the demographic characteristics of likely residents.

### **3. SUGGESTED METHODOLOGY**

The suggested approach follows a number of distinct stages

#### **3.1 Screening**

In the case of developments of over 500 houses, this will simply be a matter of considering whether there are any reasons why it would be unnecessary to proceed to the next stages. In the case of smaller developments of particular complexity, it will involve consideration of whether the circumstances of the development proposal mean it would be advisable to undertake an assessment. Similarly, there may be occasions in the case of non residential development where the proposer and local planning authority agree an assessment would be appropriate and helpful.

An HIA will be required for relevant developments at the outline stage, and, depending on the level of detail included, a subsequent HIA may be required at the detailed stages.

#### **3.2 Scoping**

This stage involves deciding how to undertake the assessment what to include, and how conclusions will be derived. It should be undertaken in dialogue with the local planning authority (who will involve other relevant Council departments), and the relevant health agency (currently NHS Norfolk). This may result in identification of other stakeholders who should be involved. The outcome of this stage it should be an agreed appraisal framework including the factors to be taken into account, recognising the potential for indirect effects, a scoring approach and a weighting mechanism to reflect the relative importance of the factors ( for example in terms of a potential impact on the whole population, a major part of it or the severity of any impacts). This could take the form of a matrix. A scoring and weighting approach leading to a clear representation of the outcomes, perhaps in a “traffic light table” is suggested rather than an approach which attempts to ascribe statistical precision to factors, some of which will be matters of judgment. In that sense, the exercise represents a structured and transparent illustration of judgments made.

A potential matrix is included at appendix 1, and a potential list of factors is included at appendix 1 to this note.

### **3.3 Conduct assessment** – consider integrating with inclusive design process mentioned above

This stage involves gathering evidence and making judgments about each of the factors. It will also need to take account of the likely demographic composition of the users of the development and whether any groups will be particularly affected by any of the factors under consideration. The first stage will therefore be the establishment of an environmental and demographic baseline for the locality.

Applying judgments and the agreed scoring/weighting mechanism should enable conclusions to be reached highlighting any areas where modifications to the scheme, or mitigations should be introduced. It should also highlight any disproportionate impact on particular groups and what can be done to ensure inequalities are not widened.

The assessment should also consider how any particular features of the environmental and demographic baseline may need to be addressed.

Indirect effects should also be reported, for example policies promoting social integration might also promote mental health and policies promoting community safety might help to allay community concerns.

### **3.4 Report** – consider integrating with inclusive design process mentioned above

The results of the assessment should be presented in a clearly understandable report, highlighting any changes or mitigations arising from the assessment, or any future actions to be taken as part of a planning obligation or secured by condition.

The report should be submitted as part of, or with the design and access statement. Unless a screening process has determined with the agreement of the local planning authority that an assessment is not required, the inclusion of the assessment report as part of the design and access statement will be a requirement for validation of any planning application. In appropriate cases it may be possible to integrate the HIA with an Environmental Impact Assessment or Sustainability Appraisal where appropriate, provided it can be clearly demonstrated that all relevant health factors have been incorporated.

### **3.5 Evaluation by the local planning authority**

Any submitted assessments will be evaluated alongside or as part of the design and access statement. An assessment will be expected to include:

- Description of the characteristics of the site and surrounding area including any health related factors, and current land uses
- Relationship to any other projects

- Description of the demographic characteristics of the expected population, including any existing residents, and highlighting any vulnerable population groups
- Any consultations undertaken in scoping the assessment
- Any constraints or uncertainties limiting the effectiveness of the assessment
- Explanation/justification of the scoring/weighting system used
- A description of the factors included in the assessment including predicted and potential effects, causal pathways, and highlighting any population groups particularly affected taking into account the expected population profile. This could use a matrix of the type suggested in Appendix 1.
- Estimated duration of construction, and any specific health issues are likely to be encountered in this stage
- Conclusions, including justification of any particular weighting of specific factors
- Description of changes to the proposal incorporated as a result of the assessment
- Mitigation proposals for any further effects, and an indication of how these will be secured
- Proposals for monitoring outcomes where applicable
- Executive summary

### **3.6 Monitoring and evaluation** (applicable to larger developments)

In the case of locations for large scale development, of which the proposal will form only a part, an arrangement should be put in place to evaluate the actual outcomes against those predicted by the assessment to improve the assessment methodology for future developments

## **4. REFERENCES**

A number of sources have been drawn on in preparing this note. These include

- London Health Observatory website
- Methods of Health Impact Assessment: a Literature Review; Medical Research Council, December, 1999
- Screening Questions for Health Impact Assessment: Department for Health,  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/Healthassessment/DH\\_4093617](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/Healthassessment/DH_4093617)
- European Policy Health Impact Assessment; European Commission May 2004
- Steps to Healthy Planning: Proposals for Action ; Spatial Planning and Health Group, June, 2011 ( in particular the potential factors draw on this document)
- Health Impact Assessment Tools; Department of Health, July 2010

Appendix 1: Potential assessment matrix

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Baseline information</b>	<b>Direct effects</b>	<b>Indirect effects</b>	<b>Groups particularly affected</b>	<b>Causal pathways</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Conclusions / degree of impact</b>	<b>Proposed mitigation</b>

Appendix 2: Possible Factors and Effects for consideration

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Effects</b>
<b>Mix of land use</b>	Will the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a diverse mix of land uses?</li> <li>• Improve the availability, affordability and quality of housing and accommodation for all sections of the community?</li> <li>• Promote diversity?</li> </ul>
<b>Street layout and connectivity and active travel</b>	Will the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance neighbourhood attractiveness, layout and design?</li> <li>• Improve walkability and cyclability?</li> <li>• Promote physically active travel (such as walking and cycling) and general levels of physical activity?</li> <li>• Limit traffic speeds and traffic noise, and make the street environment safer and more pleasant for walking and cycling and community interaction?</li> <li>• Reduce or avoid steady flows of traffic preventing communal use of the street on streets where people live?</li> </ul>
<b>Access to public and other services</b>	Will the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access to health care, education, employment, leisure facilities, and social, cultural and sporting facilities?</li> <li>• Increase access to services for marginalized groups?</li> <li>• Provide for new facilities where the assessment indicates a need?</li> </ul>
<b>Safety and security</b>	Will the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce crime and fear of crime?</li> <li>• Address any existing potential sources of danger?</li> </ul>
<b>Open and green space</b>	Will the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide open spaces and a green infrastructure (such as tree planting in urban areas)?</li> <li>• Positively enhance connectivity of green infrastructure to meet strategic requirements</li> <li>• Preserve and enhance existing green infrastructure, for example with green roofs, green security, planted areas,</li> </ul>

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	living walls?
<b>Affordable and energy efficient housing</b>	<p>Will the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce energy use?</li> <li>• Help the development of practices and/or technologies that are low-carbon or carbon neutral?</li> <li>• Reduce fuel poverty?</li> </ul>
<b>Food access</b>	<p>Will the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the location of food production and availability of local food outlets to meet local needs?</li> <li>• Improve opportunities for growing local produce such as allotments?</li> <li>• Provide for the control of outlets for unhealthy food?</li> </ul>
<b>Air quality and noise</b>	<p>Will the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance land, air and water quality?</li> <li>• Enhance pollution prevention and control?</li> <li>• Create any adverse noise impacts, or address any potential noise impacts within of the locality?</li> </ul>
<b>Access to Employment</b>	<p>Will the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence investment, including the creation of employment and the development of employment skills, including for vulnerable groups?</li> <li>• Offer opportunities for training?</li> <li>• Include local employment opportunities and services</li> <li>• Promote the local economy in any other ways?</li> </ul>
<b>Address climate change</b>	<p>Will the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve water management and reduce flood risk?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of the area to the potential impacts of climate change?</li> <li>• Increase water efficiency</li> <li>• Address heat island effects of urban development and provide summer shade</li> <li>• Positively promote biodiversity</li> </ul>

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