

Sunderland City Council

Health Impact Assessment Developer Guidance February 2020

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Developer Guidance

Purpose

The purpose of this developer guidance note is to provide applicants with the detail that is expected to be included within a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to be submitted to Sunderland City Council in support of a planning application.

It is intended to support the creation of healthy communities and promote the wellbeing of residents and visitors to Sunderland, through the spatial planning and development management processes.

Background

Residents of Sunderland generally experience a higher level of social and economic disadvantage than the England average and there is a strong link between high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and poor health. The 2015 Indices of Deprivation ranked Sunderland as the 37th most deprived local authority out of the 326 local authority areas in England. Whilst the average life expectancy at birth has improved, Sunderland continues to lag behind and residents live, on average, shorter lives than the England average¹. They also live, on average, a greater part of their lives with illness or disability which limits their daily activities.

Unhealthy lifestyles remain a key cause for our increased rates of premature death. Many people in Sunderland continue to follow unhealthy lifestyle behaviours when compared with England as a whole². This is directly linked to a range of social, economic and environmental factors. Childhood obesity rates within the city are higher than the national average with 24% of Year 6 children being classified as obese when compared to the national average of 19.8%³.

Sunderland also possesses a relatively high number of hot food takeaways, with 17 of the 25 wards within the city having a higher concentration of hot food takeaways per head of population than the national average⁴.

Many factors influence our health, including the lifestyles we lead, the environment we live in and the opportunities we have to exercise and access health and other facilities. A wider sense of wellbeing is influenced by a variety of factors such as

¹ Life expectancy at birth and at age 65 by local areas in England and Wales, 1991-93 to 2012-14

² Local Alcohol Profiles for England. Local Authority Indicators for Crime and Consumption (Updated September 2014). Public Health England: September 2014; 2012 Lifestyle Survey for Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. NHS South of Tyne and Wear

³ Public Health England: Sunderland Health Profile 2017

⁴ Public Health England: Density of Fast Food Outlets (2016)

opportunities for work and recreation, attractive environments, personal relationships and feelings of safety and being part of a community.

An integrated approach to planning the built environment is required to optimise good health and wellbeing in new developments. Many of the major disease and health issues affecting the population today, including Sunderland, are effected by the environment in which people live, work and play (Marmot, 2010⁵). If health impacts of developments are not adequately considered they may adversely impact on people's health (Ross and Chang, 2012⁶).

Spatial planning plays an important role in improving the environment in which people live, through conscientious place making which promotes health and well-being. The link between planning and health outcomes is long established and most recently reinforced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and the Government's public health strategy 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People'.

Planning Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019⁷) recognises the way in which we build and shape the environment holds great potential to address public health issues, such as obesity and inactivity which contribute to the growing burden of ill health in Sunderland. The wider determinants of health, such as access to woodland, green spaces, clean outdoor environments, good quality housing and community connectedness must be considered when making planning decisions as poor-quality development can have a sustained long-term negative impact on people's health and wellbeing.

National Planning Policy Context

The NPPF (2019) dedicates a chapter to promoting healthy communities.

Paragraph 91 stipulates that planning policies and decisions should aim to "achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling".

⁵ Marmot M, (2010) The Marmot Review: implications for Spatial Planning. https://www.nice.org.uk/media/default/About/marmot-review-implications-for-spatial-planning.pdf

⁶ Ross A, Chang M. (2012) Reuniting health with planning – healthier homes, healthier communities. Town and Country Planning Association.

⁷ National Planning Policy Framework (2019) Revised National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework

The following paragraphs of the NPPF continue the theme of health and well-being and promote both priorities at the heart of the decision-making process.

- Paragraph 96 states that "access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities."
- Paragraph 122(e) states that "planning policies and decisions should support development that takes account of the importance of securing well designed, attractive and healthy places."
- Paragraph 127(f) states that "planning policies and decisions should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users".
- Paragraph 180 (a) states that "planning policies and decisions should avoid noise from development that would give rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life."

Local Planning Policy Context

The promotion of health and well-being is implicit within the planning policies of Sunderland's Local Plan and it is a key criterion within the Plan's Spatial Vision.

The following policies of the adopted Core Strategy and Development Plan (2015-2033) embed the principles required to plan for healthy communities:

- Policy SP7 (Healthy and Safe Communities) seeks to improve health and wellbeing of Sunderland through the application of six criteria when determining planning applications. This includes: the protection of existing health facilities; the support of new health infrastructures; collaboration with the NHS to improve health outcomes; promoting and facilitating active and healthy lifestyles; supporting the integration of health facilities and services with other community uses; managing the location/number of and access to unhealthy eating outlets; and ensuring new developments comply with a further seven sub criteria to deliver health and wellbeing benefits, one of which is to submit a HIA as part of any planning application.
- Policy HS1 (Quality of Life and Amenity) protects the amenity and quality of life of residents.

- Policy HS2 (Noise-sensitive Development) directs noise-sensitive development to appropriate locations.
- Policy HS3 (Contaminated Land) ensures appropriate remediation is undertaken when developing contaminated land.
- Policy HS4 (Health and Safety Executive Areas and Hazardous Substances) gives careful consideration to potential risks associated with development of or near to 'notifiable installations'
- Policy H4 (Travelling Showpeople, Gypsies and Travellers) ensures
 development of new plots/pitches does not have an adverse effect on the
 health and wellbeing of any site occupiers or on others as a result of
 development.
- Policy VC4 (Hot Food Takeaways) limiting the number of hot food takeaways in areas of over-concentration and/or areas which suffer from poor health.
- Policy VC6 (Culture, Leisure and Tourism) supports leisure development which contributes to healthy lifestyles.
- Policy BH3 (Public Realm) improvements to public realm that improves people's health by creating inclusive environments that encourage people to walk, cycle and interact socially.
- Policy NE1 (Green and Blue Infrastructure Network) provides a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits including direct recreational benefits providing opportunities to promote health and well-being.
- Policy SP10 (Connectivity and Transport Network) seeks to improve public transport routes (bus, rail and Metro) and the cycle and walking network to facilitate sustainable movement around the city area and mitigate against the environmental and health impacts of traffic.
- Policy ST1 (Urban Core Accessibility and Movement) seeks to improve priority for pedestrians and cyclists using the Urban Core and improve connectivity to Sunderland by rail and bus.
- Policy SP11 (Mineral Extraction) ensures human health is conserved, managed and enhanced during the process of mineral extraction and human health is protected from issues such as noise, vibration and air quality.
- Policy ID1 (Delivering Infrastructure) seeks to deliver new health and social infrastructure in accordance with priority needs.

 Policy ID2 (Planning Obligations) seeks to secure planning contributions for infrastructures, including greenspace, play space, health, transport and education infrastructures.

Local planning policies are also complemented by delivery mechanisms, such as Section 106 Agreements, which secure financial contributions to deliver physical and social infrastructures; a key tool in maximising health benefits of new developments (Powell et al⁸).

What is a Health Impact Assessment?

The International Association for Impact Assessment (2006⁹) defines a HIA as:

"A combination of procedures, methods and tools...that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, programme or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population and identifies appropriate actions to manage those effects. The method of undertaking a HIA may include desktop analysis of policy, area profiling of potentially affected communities, stakeholder consultation and impact analysis."

Whilst there is no statutory requirement to undertake HIAs, they are increasingly recognised as making an important contribution towards establishing the potential impacts and benefits of a development, plan or policy. HIA's provide a systematic process which enables informed policy decisions to be made based on a validated assessment. HIAs are based on a social model of health and assess the potential impacts of a development, plan or policy on the health of the population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA allows for an assessment of the impact on health inequalities, which are avoidable and unfair differences in health status between groups of people or communities (Public Health England, 2017¹⁰). Most planning decisions benefit some groups of people more than others, and so may either exacerbate or alleviate existing or new inequalities. Whilst there is no statutory duty to undertake a HIA as part of the development of a new Local Plan, the approach was strongly advocated by Government in recognition that public health is the outcome of a range of wider determinants and not just access to services and as such, Policy SP7 of the Core Strategy and Development Plan

⁸ Powell J, Gray S, Barton H, Lease H, (2011) Collaborating Centre University of the West of England, Bristol Spatial Planning & Health, The cost effectiveness of integrating health into the planning process Decision models of the additional costs and benefits of integrating health into spatial planning appraisal and development. https://www.nice.org.uk/

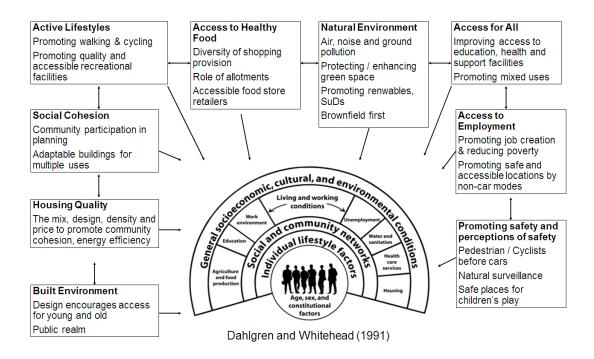
⁹ International Association for Impact Assessment, 2006 adapted from 1999 ECHP definition. http://www.iaia.org/publicdocuments/specialpublications/SP5.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

¹⁰ Public Health England (2017) Spatial Planning for Health, An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places, PHE publications, gateway number: 2017151.

requires the submission of a HIA as part of any application for large scale development. Figure 1 depicts the links between planning and health agendas.

Figure 1: Planning and Health Agendas.

Linking the Planning and Health Agendas



Source: Linking Planning and Health (Allen 2017¹¹).

The benefits of HIA have been described by Laurence Carmichael (2017¹²) and include:

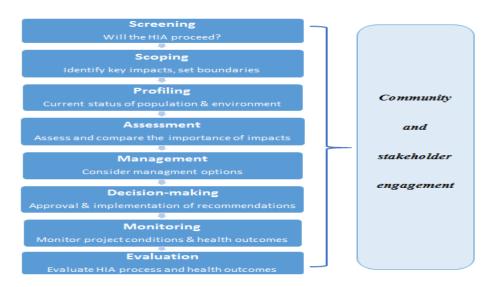
- Promoting equity in health;
- Maximising health and well-being benefits and minimising health and wellbeing risks;
- Increasing awareness amongst policy-makers across sectors of how decisions may affect health;
- Identifying the connections between health and well-being and other policy areas;
- Promoting evidence and knowledge based planning and decision-making; and

¹¹ Allen C, (2017) Core Strategy and Development Plan Health Impact Assessment, Sunderland City Council.

¹² Laurence Carmichael (2017) Health Impact Assessment: screening, scoping, appraisal, recommendations, Public Health England –South West, Health and planning: 6th September 2017Head WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Urban Environments Laurence.Carmichael@uwe.ac.uk

 Potentially reducing demand on NHS and social care services by investing in healthy policies, programmes and projects that prevent ill health

Figure 2: HIA Process



Source: en Health 201713

The key points of the HIA process, identified in Figure 2, include:

Screening - this is a decision-making process that identifies the need to undertake a HIA and the type of HIA required. In some cases, there may be a clear indicator for the type of HIA required, for example the particular type or size of the development or plan. Where there is no pre-defined requirement to do HIA, the main areas to consider are:

- Is the plan likely to impact on health and wellbeing or specific populations resulting in health inequalities?
- Is there an opportunity to influence the plan to improve outcomes?
- Is an HIA likely to provide useful information to influence decisions and the planning process?
- Implications on resources and capacity to undertake a HIA?
- What additional research, consultation or evidence is needed to properly inform the process?

Scoping - this process establishes the health impacts that will be included in the HIA, the population and communities affected, and the information, data sources and methods to be followed.

¹³ Brown H, Katscherian D, Spickett J, Maycock B, Hendrie D. (2017) Health Impact Assessment Guidelines, en HEALTH, World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health Impact Assessment and the School of Public Health at Curtin University. https://www.health.gov.au/internet/.../wHealth-Impact-Assessment-Guidelines

Assessment – this process completes the HIA matrix including making recommendations, reporting processes for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Health Impact Assessment Matrix

The HIA matrix is designed to investigate the likely health impacts of development plans and proposals, including planning frameworks, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal programmes and planning applications. It should be used prospectively at the early stage of planning or prior to the submission of a planning application to inform the design, layout and composition of a development proposal. The matrix focuses on the built environment and public health issues directly or indirectly influenced by planning decisions.

The Council advises that the matrix below is used when preparing a planning application. As set out within the adopted Plan, the HIA should be proportionate to the scale of development proposed and can be incorporated into other submission documents such as a Planning Statement or Design and Access Statement.

Health Impact Assessment Matrix (Source: adapted from the Healthy Urban Development Unit 2013).

1. Populations

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Could population groups be affected differentially by the	Yes □		Positive	
proposal?	No □		Negative □	
	N/A □		Neutral □	
			Uncertain □	
	Yes □		Positive	
physical disability, learning disability, sensory	No □		Negative □	
impairment, long term	N/A □		Neutral □	
medical conditions, mental health problems)			Uncertain □	
	Yes □		Positive □	
non-English speakers)	No □		Negative □	
	N/A □		Neutral □	
People with different religions or beliefs			Uncertain □	

Vulnerable groups such as	Yes □	Positive □
Lesbian, gay, bisexual.	No □	Negative □
People living in poverty / people of low income.	N/A □	Neutral □
Carers (include parents,		Uncertain □
especially lone parents; and		
elderly carers)		

2. Access to healthy food

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal	Yes □		Positive □	
facilitate the supply of	No □		Negative □	
local food, e.g. community farms and farmers'	N/A □		Neutral □	
markets?			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal	Yes □		Positive □	
encourage or discourage	No □		Negative □	
people from making healthy food choices	N/A □		Neutral □	
and/or growing their own food?			Uncertain □	
Is there a range of retail	Yes □		Positive \square	
uses, including food	No □		Negative □	
stores and smaller affordable shops for	N/A □		Neutral □	
social enterprises?			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal avoid	Yes □		Positive □	
contributing towards an	No □		Negative □	
over-concentration of hot food takeaways in the	N/A □		Neutral □	
local area?			Uncertain □	

3. Access to open space and nature

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal retain	Yes □		Positive □	
and enhance existing	No □		Negative \square	
open and natural spaces?	N/A □		Neutral □	
			Uncertain □	
In areas of deficiency,	Yes □		Positive □	
does the proposal provide	No □		Negative \square	
new open or natural space, or improve access	N/A □		Neutral □	
to existing spaces?			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal provide	Yes □		Positive	
a range of play spaces for	No □		Negative □	
children and young people?	N/A □		Neutral □	
people:			Uncertain □	
Are the open and natural	Yes □		Positive □	
spaces welcoming and	No □		Negative □	
safe and accessible for all?	N/A □		Neutral □	
			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal set	Yes □		Positive □	
out how new open space	No □		Negative □	
will be managed and maintained?	N/A □		Neutral □	
			Uncertain □	

Does the proposal create	Yes □	Positive
	No □	Negative □
promotes or hinders physical activities such	N/A □	Neutral □
as sport, active play and		Uncertain □
active travel?		

4. Accessibility and active travel

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal prioritise and encourage walking (such as through shared spaces?) Does the proposal prioritise and encourage cycling (for example by providing secure cycle parking, showers and cycle lanes)?	Yes No N/A Yes No N/A No N/A No N/A N/A		Positive Negative Neutral Uncertain Positive Negative Negative Uncertain Uncertain	
Does the proposal connect public realm and internal routes to local and strategic cycle and walking networks?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal include traffic management and calming measures to help reduce and minimise road injuries?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	

Is the proposal well connected to public transport, local services and facilities?	Yes □ No □ N/A □	Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □
Does the proposal seek to reduce car use by reducing car parking provision, supported by the controlled parking zones, car clubs and travel plans measures?	Yes □ No □ N/A □	Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □
Does the proposal allow people with mobility problems or a disability to access buildings and places?	Yes □ No □ N/A □	Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □

5. Social cohesion and lifetime neighbourhoods

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal connect with existing communities, e.g. layout and movement which avoids physical barriers and severance and land uses and spaces which encourage social interaction?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal include a mix of uses and a range of community facilities?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal provide opportunities for the voluntary and community sectors?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	

Will the proposal have an impact on community spirit, community interaction or health inequalities?	Yes □ No □ N/A □	Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □
Consider whether the proposal will impact on the supply of alcohol and tobacco? Will it create an environment that discourages illegal sales and use?	Yes □ No □ N/A □	Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □

6. Air quality, noise and neighbourhood amenity

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal minimise construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration and odours?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal minimise air pollution caused by traffic and energy facilities?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal minimise noise pollution caused by traffic and commercial uses?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	

7. Crime reduction and community safety

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate elements to help design out crime?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □	
Does the proposal create a safe and inclusive environment that acts to prevent accidents and discourage crime and antisocial behaviour?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Uncertain □ Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Has engagement and consultation been carried out with the local community?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	

8. Access to work and training

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide	Yes □		Positive □	
access to local	No □		Negative □	
employment and training opportunities, including	N/A □		Neutral □	
apprenticeships and volunteering?			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal	Yes □		Positive	
provide childcare	No □		Negative □	
facilities?	N/A □		Neutral □	
			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal	Yes □		Positive □	
include managed and	No □		Negative □	
affordable workspace for local businesses?	N/A □		Neutral □	
local businesses:			Uncertain □	
Does the proposal include	Yes □		Positive □	
opportunities for work for local people via local procurement	No □		Negative □	
	N/A □		Neutral □	
arrangements?			Uncertain □	

9. Climate change

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate renewable energy?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Will the proposal have an impact on energy use and waste. How will energy use, carbon emissions and waste be minimised? How will effects of climate change be dealt with?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	

10. Minimising the use of resources

Assessment criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential health impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal make best use of existing land?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal encourage recycling (including building materials)?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	Yes □ No □ N/A □		Positive □ Negative □ Neutral □ Uncertain □	

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