



Update to rapid Health Impact Assessment Report on West Lancashire Local Plan

June 2012

Amy Witherup, Public Health Associate, NHS Central
Lancashire
11/06/12

Contents

Chapter	Page
1. Purpose	3
2. Background	3
3. Update to rHIA based on changes following consultation	3
4. Recommendations from previous HIA	14
5. Summary of amendments in relation to the previous recommendations and potential health impacts	14
6. Summary and recommendations	17
7. Bibliography	17

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the rapid Health Impact Assessment Report on the West Lancashire Local Plan, following changes made as a result of consultation on the Local Plan in January/February 2012.

2. Background

2.1 Background to Local Development Framework and the Local Plan.

The Borough Council had been previously preparing a Core Strategy document to sit within the Local Development Framework (LDF). In April 2011 a rapid Health Impact Assessment (rHIA) was undertaken on the Core Strategy Preferred Options. The report from this can be viewed at; <http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/PDF/Final%20report.pdf>

The new National Planning Policy Framework expects Local Planning Authorities to prepare a Local Plan rather than an LDF. Subsequently, West Lancashire moved away from the LDF to produce a Local Plan for the Borough. The West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 contains a Vision and Strategy that will set out how the Council wants West Lancashire to develop over the period to 2027. This Local Plan Preferred Option document includes an updated version of the draft policies that were provided in the LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options paper. It also adds some Development Management and Site Allocations aspects, as well as adding brand new policies on specific Development Management issues to help assess planning applications and allocations for specific types of development. As a number of changes were made during the transition from the Core Strategy Preferred Options to the Local Plan; not least the introduction of a new set of policies, a second rHIA was required. This was undertaken in November 2011. The report from this can be viewed at; <http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/pdf/WL%20rHIA%20on%20Local%20Plan%2030th%20Nov%202011%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf>

2.2 Summary of background to Health Impact Assessment

The majority of proposed plans and policies will have an impact on health to some extent. Health Impact Assessment is intended to help make decisions by predicting the health consequences of a proposal being implemented. It should also seek to make recommendations on how positive impacts on health can be enhanced, and negative impacts minimised. It looks at the distribution of health impact and whether certain elements of proposals have a greater impact on certain population groups.

3. Update to Rapid Health Impact Assessment based on changes following consultation

3.1 Rationale

Following consultation activity in January and February 2012, a number of small changes have been made to the policies of the plan and an additional policy to cover agricultural workers dwellings has been included. As such there is a need to consider the potential health impact of these changes and additions.

3.2 Process

The policies were initially reviewed by members of the Public Health Directorate, NHS Central Lancashire and split into three categories;

- a) those which were not specifically considered during the rapid health impact assessment in November 2011 (either because they had not changed significantly since April 2011, or were not considered to have significant potential effects on health)
- b) those that were specifically considered by groups in November 2011
- c) new policies.

The policies were then individually considered to identify whether the changes could have a potential significant impact on health, and a decision taken as to whether an additional/updated rHIA was required. The table below summarises the results from the initial review of the policies.

Table 1: Results from initial review of the policies

Policy	Category	Decision	Rationale
EC1 The Economy & Employment Land	a	No further rHIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
EC2 The Rural Economy	a	No further rHIA required	Note the positives around broadband.
EC3 Rural Development Opportunities	a	No further rHIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
EC4 Edge Hill University	a	No further HIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
EN1 Low Carbon Development and Energy Infrastructure	b	Update rHIA	Changes in relation to contributions to a community energy fund and wind development.
EN2 Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Natural Environment	b	Update rHIA	Comment on recreation vs. biodiversity.
EN3 Green Infrastructure & Open Recreational Space	b	Update rHIA	Positive impacts around allotments and pedestrian/cycle routes.
EN4 Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire Historic Environment	b	Update rHIA	Positive around crime impact statement.
GN1 Settlement Boundaries	b	No further rHIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
GN2 Safeguarded Land	b	No further rHIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
GN3 Criteria for Sustainable Development	b	Update rHIA	Positive impacts in relation to recommendations made in the November r HIA.
GN4 Demonstrating Viability	b	No further HIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
GN5 Sequential Tests	b	No further rHIA required	No significant changes to the policy.
IF1 Maintaining Vibrant Town and Local Centres	b	No further rHIA required	Comment on addition of requirement to rHIA any large proposed developments.
IF2 Enhancing Sustainable Transport	b	Update rHIA	Welcome the addition re links to Cycling in

Choices			Sefton.
IF3 Service Accessibility and Infrastructure for Growth	b	No further rHIA required	
IF4 Developer Contributions	b	No further rHIA required	
RS1 Residential Development	b	Update rHIA	Positive impacts re increased provision for aging population.
RS2 Affordable and Specialist Housing	b	No further rHIA required	
RS3 Provision of Student Accommodation	b	No further rHIA required	
RS4 Provision for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	b	Update rHIA	Welcome the addition of fixed number of sites.
RS5 Accommodation for temporary agricultural/horticultural workers	c	rHIA required	New policy, therefore potential health impacts have not been assessed.
SP1 A sustainable Development Framework for West Lancashire	a	No further rHIA required	
SP2 Skelmersdale Town Centre (Final)	a	No further rHIA required	
SP3 Yew Tree Farm Burscough – A Strategic Development Site	a	No further rHIA required	

	<p>Better environment, cheaper, encouraging healthy lifestyles Better design and reduces fear of crime Shade trees provide protection and shade, reduce climate change Positive addition in relation to supporting and protecting allotments Addition of cycle/pedestrian routes EN4 Better quality housing and buildings Better environment, cheaper, encouraging healthy lifestyles Better design and reduces fear of crime Shade trees provide protection and shade, reduce climate change</p>	problems? Costs?
Social environment	<p>EN1 Jobs – increase in renewable industry</p> <p>EN2 Encourages social interaction Enhances free leisure facilities Some employment opportunities Reduces stress</p> <p>EN3 Provide employment Positive addition in relation to supporting and protecting allotments</p> <p>EN4 Provide employment Positive addition in relation to crime impact statement requirement</p>	
Equality	<p>EN2 Provision of free leisure activities – reduces health inequalities Need to ensure awareness and green transport to facilities Map of footpaths/cycle paths would be beneficial</p> <p>EN3 Access to all regardless of cost, encourages social cohesion</p>	EN1 Discriminates against those who can't afford improvements to existing homes

	<p>Cheap, accessible</p> <p>EN4 Access to all regardless of cost, encourages social cohesion</p>	
Physical environment	<p>EN1 Reduce pollution – improve environment Reduction in fuel costs, warmer homes – health benefits for elderly Positive addition in relation to ensuring that developers provide information on how impacts will be addressed.</p> <p>EN2 Protection of natural environment resources, biodiversity, wildlife, landscape Provision of better areas to live in Encourage reduction in climate change e.g. trees Replacement of any trees lost during development. Development not permitted if there isn't sufficient information provided to the council.</p> <p>EN3 Protects assets, provides identity and character protected Social interaction encouraged Positive addition in relation to supporting and protecting allotments Resisting developments that do not provide significant in terms of open space and recreation facilities as well as other community benefits. Addition of cycling/pedestrian routes.</p> <p>EN4 Protects assets, provides identity and character protected</p>	<p>EN1 Noise of wind turbines/impact of other renew schemes on people – visual impairment etc. Consideration now given to assessing impact of this within the policy.</p>
Access to and quality of services	<p>EN2 Better living conditions, fewer mental health problems</p>	<p>EN4 Possible impact on prohibiting development due to sensitivity of heritage assets</p>

3.3.2 General Development Policies

General Development Policies		
GN1: Settlement Boundaries. GN2: Safeguarded Land GN3: Criteria for Sustainable Development GN4: Demonstrating Viability GN5: Sequential Tests		
Area of impact	Positive	Negative
Lifestyle		
Social environment	Flexible attitude to new uses of existing buildings that are no longer viable i.e. pubs converted to residential use (All groups)	
Equality		
Physical environment	Better design of communal waste storage (wheelie bins); safer, easier for bin lorries, better environment (All groups) Opportunity through GN4 to remove inappropriate employment uses in residential areas? (All groups) EN3 Cross reference to EN1 sustainable development Addition of detail about flood risk Addition of other environmental considerations such as recycling, ground condition.	More space required for recycling – less normal space Transport issues reduce employment opportunities Lack of transport (particularly in Skelmersdale) increases use of personal cars & CO2 emissions (All groups) Few restrictions on student accommodations which creates safety risks, fire etc. (Students)
Access to and quality of services		

3.3.3 Infrastructure and Services

<p>IF1: Maintaining Vibrant Town & Local Centres. IF2: Enhancing Sustainable Transport Choice IF3: Service Accessibility & Infrastructure Growth. IF4: Developer Contributions</p>		
Area of impact	Positive	Negative
Lifestyle	<p>IF1 Diet and nutrition – greater choice shops, more accessible, financial accessibility (all groups) Education – greater knowledge of diet and nutrition – (unemployed, young, elderly, students) Greater facilities, vibrant town centre – less youth crime/substance use etc. – (young people new businesses) Less car dependent – (all groups) IF2 Improvement in activity levels and health benefits Safe cycle routes needed Addition of council support for a cycle network for commuters and leisure and with neighbouring areas. Improved access to education/employment, Access to better amenities – food shops etc.</p> <p>IF3 Broadband connection – better health knowledge Access to basic amenities – health implications</p>	<p>IF1 Potential fragmented development encourages car use</p> <p>IF3 Broadband – isolated communities, poor use of town centres, less vibrant</p>
Social environment	<p>IF1 Better facilities – more employment – (working age, unemployed) Better facilities – improved social status, less social division – (vulnerable groups)</p> <p>IF4 Improved community safety Improved access to sports facilities</p>	<p>IF1 Balancing development to ensure one area doesn't lose out</p>
Equality	<p>IF2 Improved access transport for all</p>	
Physical environment	<p>IF2 Reduction in car use e.g. pollution Reducing congestion – accidents Positive addition that Transport schemes should consider</p>	<p>IF2 Public transport – greater transmission of infectious disease</p>

	biodiversity and cross reference with EN1 Recognition that transport policies have an important role in sustainable development and health. Looking at improvements to reduce congestion	
Access to and quality of services	IF2 Improved access to all services General wellbeing – greater access to facilities Looking at improvements to reduce congestion	

3.3.4 Providing for Housing and Residential Accommodation

Providing for Housing and Residential Accommodation		
RS1: Residential Development RS2: Affordable and Specialist Housing RS3: Provision of student accommodation RS4: Provision for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People RS5 Accommodation for temporary agricultural/horticultural workers		
Area of impact	Positive	Negative
Lifestyle	No provision for allotments- many health benefits and environmental benefits (All groups)	Green spaces close to homes to encourage people to walk(All groups)
Social environment	Housing in cul de sacs as opposed to alleyways is desirable Housing overlooking green space is desirable Improved community cohesion when a mix of housing styles is used (All groups)	
Equality	Limiting student accommodation would have a beneficial effect on community cohesion (Students) RS1 Affordable housing to make up at least 50% of housing on any site. RS1 Encouragement of housing for the elderly RS4 Specifying number of sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People RS5 Provision of accommodation for temporary workers	No specific policy promoting specialist accommodation for disabled people(People with disabilities) Safety issues with unofficial traveller sites (Travellers)
Physical environment	Lack of policy to provide buffer zones between residential and industrial development and discourage bad neighbours (All groups) RS1 Protection of character of the environment RS5 Consideration of environment and character of the area.	Safety issues with unofficial traveller sites (Travellers)
Access to and quality of services	RS4 Provision of suitable amenity RS5 Help with demand on agricultural businesses.	

4. Recommendations from previous Health Impact Assessments

Recommendations were made following the first rHIA in April 2011, and the second rHIA in November 2011. These are summarised in the table below;

Table 2: Rapid Health Impact Assessment Recommendations

April 2011	November 2011
To maximise opportunities for employment and training.	Incorporation of more official and legal sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people.
To develop alternative forms of transport to minimise the increase in traffic.	Investigation into the feasibility of specifying buffer zones between neighbouring uses.
To ensure that the loss of agricultural land is kept to a minimum and is protected from inappropriate use.	Sustainable waste collections and recycling with Communal Community Collection Centres.
To improve public transport services.	Further investigation into mining/slag heaps and their impact on health.
To ensure the development of high quality housing.	Implications of fracking and the Development Management Policies to be considered.
To maximise the opportunities for physical activity and sport in ways that enhance the environment.	Support for renewable energy – consider ways of delivering improvements to those who can't afford e.g. solar/wind energy.
To make full use of existing plans and arrangements.	

5. Summary of amendments in relation to the previous recommendations and potential health impacts

The amendments to the policies on the whole demonstrate a potential to positively impact the health of those living and working in West Lancashire. There are several amendments which demonstrate a positive change based on, or linked to, the recommendations made in the April and November rHIA's. These are detailed in the table below.

Table 3: Recommendations from previous rHIA's and amendments to the policies

Recommendation	Change to policy	Policy
To develop alternative forms of transport to minimise the increase in traffic.	Recognition that transport policies have an important role in sustainable development and health.	IF2
To ensure that the loss of agricultural land is kept to a minimum and is protected from inappropriate use.	Help with demand on agricultural business. Provision of accommodation for temporary workers.	RS5 RS5
To ensure the development of high quality housing.	Affordable housing to make up at least 50% of housing on any site. Encouragement of housing for the elderly.	RS1 RS1
To maximise the opportunities for physical activity and sport in ways that enhance the environment.	Resisting developments that don't provide sufficient open space and recreation facilities as well as other community benefits. Protection of biodiversity over the development of recreation in sensitive areas.	EN3 EN2
Incorporation of more official and legal sites for Gypsy's, Travellers and Travelling Show people.	Specifying the number of sites for Gypsy, traveller and travelling show people.	RS4
Sustainable waste collections and recycling with Communal Community Collection Centres.	Consideration around environmental impacts e.g. recycling.	EN3
Support for renewable energy – consider ways of delivering improvements to those who can't afford e.g. collar/wind energy.	Assessing the impact of wind/turbines.	EN1

The evidence base in support of these additions is included in the previous rHIA reports, which can be viewed at the links provided on page 3. Other additions are welcomed in relation to their potential positive impact on health such as; supporting and protecting allotments, addition of cycling and pedestrian routes, improvements to reduce congestion and provision of suitable amenity. A brief appraisal of the evidence on the potential health impacts of each of these is provided below.

Supporting and protecting allotments

The potential contribution of allotment gardening to a healthy and active lifestyle is increasingly recognised. The activity of local food growing has a number of other health, community and sustainability dimensions. There is an increasing body of evidence that growing some of your own food, particularly in a community setting, has the potential to achieve significant personal and community benefits. There are 3 particular associations;

- Community food growing and health – Community food growing is a health promotion activity which provides a range of health, wellbeing and social inclusion benefit.
- Community food growing and social inclusion and community cohesion - Community food growing makes a positive contribution to personal development, social inclusion, alleviating poverty and social inequalities.
- Community food growing and sustainability - The development of community food growing on local sites reduces carbon demand by reducing food transport miles. With planned design and management of sites, it supports biodiversity.

Addition of cycling and pedestrian routes and Improvements to reduce congestion

The health benefits of physical activity, including active travel programmes, such as walking and cycling are significant and well evidenced. Increasing active travel will not only generate clear benefits for individuals but also for businesses, communities, the environment and the wider economy. The Governments Responsibility Deal includes a pledge to promote and support more active travel. This is in recognition of the fact that walking and cycling are simple, low cost and effective ways for people to build physical activity into their routines and to achieve health recommendations for physical activity.

Congestion can have a negative effect on health in a number of ways including; family impacts of time spent travelling, the stress of commuting, accident rates, fuel consumption and air pollution. Less congestion would help to mitigate some of these effects and encourage cleaner air and healthier communities. Cycling has the potential to reduce many short car journeys. It can decrease congestion and produce liveable streets and more active communities. It can cut emissions and improve local air quality therefore positively contributing to the climate change agenda.

Sustrans, a charity organisation which works to support active travel and the use of public transport have produced a range of summary documents about the health benefits of active travel. There are potential benefits in relation to;

- The contribution to preventing obesity
- Creating safe spaces for children to play
- Tackling health inequalities by helping people in the most inactive communities to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives through walking and cycling
- The potential to support increasing physical activity in women
- The role in healthy aging.

Provision of suitable amenity

An essential part of any community is the provision of, and fair access to, a wide range of services. Services should be accessible for all sections of the community and be a focal point of neighbourhoods. A range of amenities have the potential to influence the wider determinants of health. These include;

- Health services
- Education Establishments
- Leisure and Recreation facilities
- Retail

Health, well-being and the environment are interdependent. Well planned towns are made up of identifiable neighbourhoods, where health services, housing and community resources are integrated and served by sustainable transport, and the potential of green space is maximised in order to promote a positive impact on health.

6. Summary and recommendations

The process of undertaking these rHIA's set out to determine some of the key aspects of the Local Plan that may have an impact upon the health of the West Lancashire population. The opportunity to undertake a number of rHIA's with local stakeholders was welcomed as Health Impact Assessment is an important process in any proposed policy or planned intervention to assess the positive and negative health impacts for local people and make recommendations to mitigate the negative effects.

Overall the policies within the Local Plan predominantly have a positive impact on health. Should they be amended, further Health Impact Assessment may be required.

Many of the recommendations within the policies with a potential to positively impact health have links to existing programmes of work, for example, community food growing in West Lancashire and the development of cycle networks in Sefton. In implementing the Local Plan consideration should be given to how to enhance existing provision.

For further information on the rHIA Report contact Amy Witherup at amy.witherup@centrallancashire.nhs.uk

For further information on the Local Plan contact Peter Richards at peter.richards@westlancs.gov.uk

7. Bibliography

<http://www.centrallancashire.nhs.uk/Library/Documents/target-wellbeing/TargCentralLancs.pdf> (accessed 08/06/12)

<http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari/documents/allotmentsforhealthreport.pdf> (accessed 08/06/12)

<http://responsibilitydeal.dh.gov.uk/2012/02/08/p3-factsheet/>(accessed 08/06/12)

www.sustrans.org.uk(accessed 08/06/12)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/businessandpartners/benefits-of-cycling-summary.pdf>(accessed 08/06/12)

http://www.transportation.org/sites/planning/docs/nchrp22_4.pdf(accessed 08/06/12)