

West Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2040

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

October 2021

**Heidi McDougall BSc (Hons) MBA
Corporate Director of Place and Community**

Directorate of Place and Community
West Lancashire Borough Council
52 Derby St, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 2DF

Health Impact Assessment: Local Plan 2023 - 2040 – Issues and Options

Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) are intended to help make decisions by predicting the health consequences of a proposal being implemented. A HIA should, ideally, also seek to make recommendations on how positive impacts of health can be enhanced, and negative impacts minimised. It should consider the distribution of health impacts and whether those impacts may be more greatly felt by certain population groups.

The majority of proposed plans and policies will have an impact on health to some extent. Local plans and policies can have significant negative impacts on health if they are not appropriately considered. Conversely, some policies also have the potential to deliver significant positive impacts on health. Consequently, the Council wishes to ensure that health impacts are appropriately considered at each stage of the Local Plan's preparation.

In preparing a Local Plan, the Council must undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the governing SEA Directive states this should include human health effects [of the policies]. SEA requirements are included as part of the Council's Sustainability Appraisal (SA), which is structured along the lines of social, economic and environmental sustainability outcomes with an understanding that all of these are wider health determinants.

The general theme of 'health impacts' has therefore been considered within the Sustainability Appraisal, most notably within topic area 1 – Population (, Health) and Social Inclusion. The SA has assessed all the policy options presented at this 'Issues and Options' stage of the Local Plan, and, in doing so, health has been considered centrally in the assessment of the options.

However, the importance of health is acutely recognised and so, in addition to the SA, a 'light touch' HIA been prepared for this first stage of the Local Plan's preparation. It should be stressed here that it is difficult to undertake a detailed Health Impact Assessment of the policy options, as they are currently only loose suggestions of what a policy could entail. Whilst the Council's preferred policy approach is indicated, to solely assess the preferred approach would risk seeming to pre-determine the outcome of public consultation or serve to preclude / exclude all or parts of the other options. Therefore, without a 'concrete' policy, containing sufficient details of the direction and intent of each policy, it is very difficult to assess the health impacts of the individual policy options through a specific HIA at this 'Issues & Options' stage of the Local Plan.

Instead, this HIA Framework is designed very broadly, to indicate the positive and negative impacts that could be expected through the 'principal intent' of each policy. Essentially, whilst the detail of the policy approaches is still to be decided, and in some cases policy approaches may even be abandoned, the general principle of requiring a policy to control X or Y can be assessed in relation to its potential impacts on health.

The framework used in this HIA is based on that contained in Table 1 (Framework) of the document 'Health Impact Assessment Tools' published by the Department of Health (2010). The document is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216008/dh_120106.pdf.

The document is listed in Public Health England's resource pack for useful links for HIAs (PHE HIA Event pack) and so is taken to be an appropriate framework to base a broad HIA upon.

Alternative HIA approaches, such as the 'HUDU', have not been considered appropriate at this time, as they are dependent on a specific 'proposal' to assess health impacts against.

This HIA assesses each group of proposed policies in the new Local Plan against four questions, namely:

- Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?
- Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?
- Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?
- Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?

For each question, potential positive and negative health impacts are considered.

The groups of proposed policies are:

- Strategic Policies
- Housing and Community
- Economy and Employment
- Environment and Health
- Transport and Infrastructure
- Other Policies

Strategic Policies

- ST01 - Sustainable Development
- *ST02a - Housing requirements**
- *ST02b - Employment land requirements**
- *ST02c - Spatial Distribution**
- ST03 - Climate change and environmental sustainability
- ST04 - Settlement boundaries
- *ST05 - Strategic sites**

*A policy need has been identified but evidence is still pending in relation to policy approaches / options.

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, would it cause ill-health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</i></p>	<p>These strategic policies would help to positively and pro-actively plan to ensure that development is located in the most sustainable settlements, close to social and health services and outdoor leisure facilities, promoting physical and mental health and social inclusion.</p>	<p>It is more likely that the absence of these strategies would have a detrimental impact on the health of West Lancashire's residents. The Council would be less able to manage development in a way that can protect physical and mental health and facilitate improvements.</p>
<p>Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</p> <p><i>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, good employment opportunities, green space or climate change?</i></p>	<p>These strategic policies would help to guide appropriate development, ensuring it considers environmental living conditions (climate change, biodiversity), provides appropriate levels of housing and employment opportunities, and would help ensure supporting infrastructure (transport, leisure, services).</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</i></p>	<p>These strategic policies would, both directly and indirectly, support the ability of individuals to improve their own health and wellbeing. Many of the details will, however, be provided through the individual policies.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p><i>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?</i></p>	<p>This will be subject to the housing and employment numbers (not yet decided at this stage of preparing the Local Plan), but any increase in identified need / provision may result in an increase in demand for health and social care services.</p>	<p>The Council will need to work with health and social care service providers to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place to respond to any increased demand arising from new housing and employment in the Borough.</p>

Housing and Community

- HC01a – Where housing can be located
- HC01b – Using land efficiently – brownfield development and density
- HC01c – Dwelling sizes
- HC01d – Affordable housing
- HC01e – Housing for older people
- HC01f – Custom and self-build housing
- HC01g – Accommodation for students
- HC01h – Caravan and houseboat dwellers
- HC01i – Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People
- HC01j – Temporary agricultural workers dwellings
- HC02 – Place-making
- HC03 – Heritage
- HC04 – Community Facilities

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, would it cause ill-health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</i></p>	<p>All of the policies governing housing will help ensure that there is an appropriate provision, and choice, of new housing in appropriate locations. Housing is a major contributor to health, mental health and wellbeing, and can support social inclusion, independence and participation for all groups – including those with protected characteristics.</p>	<p>It is more likely that the absence of these policies would have a detrimental impact on the health of West Lancashire's residents. The Council would be less able to manage development in a way that can protect physical and mental health and facilitate improvements.</p>

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
	Place making policy should ensure that developments are appropriately designed, and this can include considerations for health and mobility – including conditions such as dementia.	
<p>Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</p> <p><i>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, good employment opportunities, green space or climate change?</i></p>	All of the policies governing housing and communities will impact environmental living conditions, with the aim of improving housing and design of developments and ensuring community facilities are appropriately protected and supported.	As above
<p>Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</i></p>	These policy areas would support the ability of individuals to improve their own health and wellbeing. For example, a policy supporting good design could help improve accessibility promoting physical activity. Having a suitable home is an important factor in one's health.	As above
<p>Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p><i>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?</i></p>	This will be subject to the housing and employment numbers, but any increase in identified need / provision may result in an increase in demand for health and social care services.	The Council will need to work with health and social care services to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place to respond to any increased demand arising from new housing and employment in the Borough.

Economy and Employment

- EE01 – Employment Areas
- EE02 – Rural economy
- EE03 – Town Centres
- EE04a – Education / Edge Hill University
- EE04b – Education / Skills and training

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, would it cause ill-health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</i></p>	<p>These policy areas have the potential to improve health by improving employment and education opportunities. Having a suitable job can be a determinant of one's health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>It could be argued that attracting more employment to the Borough could lead to some forms of pollution. However, such effects would be controlled by conditions and other policies (e.g. on air quality).</p> <p>It is more likely that the absence of these policies would have a detrimental impact on the health of West Lancashire's residents. The Council would be less able to manage development in a way that can protect physical and mental health and facilitate improvements.</p>
<p>Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</p> <p><i>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, good employment opportunities, green space or climate change?</i></p>	<p>These policy areas have the potential to improve health by improving education and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</i></p>	<p>These policy areas have the potential to improve health and wellbeing by improving education and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>It is more likely that the absence of policies such as these would have a detrimental impact on the health of West Lancashire's residents. The Council would be less able to manage development in a way that can protect physical and mental health and facilitate improvements.</p>
<p>Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p><i>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?</i></p>	<p>This is unlikely as a direct consequence of these policies.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Environment and Health

- EH01 – Preserving and enhancing the Borough's nature
- EC02 – Landscape and land resources
- EH03 – Flood risk and water resources
- EH04 – Contamination and pollution
- EH05 – Air quality
- EH06 – Green infrastructure and open spaces (4 approaches)
- EH07 – Healthy eating and drinking

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, would it cause ill-health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</i></p>	<p>Access to nature and the outdoors helps improve both physical and mental health, as does access to green infrastructure and open space / leisure facilities. These policy areas will help support opportunities for health improvement.</p> <p>Minimising flood risk means fewer people should be affected by flooding incidents, which can often carry financial and social impacts that can affect health (e.g. higher cost, or no, buildings insurance or the need to temporarily relocate). Policies that consider contamination and pollution and serve to improve and mitigate air quality will also improve the physical health of the Borough's residents.</p>	<p>There is nothing in these policies that would be likely to have any negative health impacts. It is more likely that the absence of these policies would have a detrimental impact on the health of West Lancashire's residents. The Council would be less able to manage development in a way that can protect physical and mental health and facilitate improvements.</p>

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
	<p>The Borough has a relatively high rate of childhood obesity, and higher than average levels of diabetes, COPD and heart disease (source: West Lancashire JSNA), and a policy relating to healthy eating and drinking should help to address unhealthy eating and drinking habits.</p>	
<p>Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</p> <p><i>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, good employment opportunities, green space or climate change?</i></p>	<p>The policy areas would help improve social and environmental living conditions, by providing opportunities to improve access to green space, improve air quality, reduce flood risk and reduce obesity / increase healthy eating opportunities.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</i></p>	<p>The policy areas would help individuals improve their own health and wellbeing by improving opportunities to access the outdoors, be physically active, and choose healthy food (by reducing opportunities for unhealthy food).</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p><i>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?</i></p>	<p>Policies supporting environmental improvements and access to green infrastructure and healthier food and drink provide an opportunity to reduce demand or access to health and social care services.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Transport and Infrastructure

- TI01 – Transport network and access
- TI02 – Parking standards and electric vehicle charging points
- TI03 – Digital connectivity
- TI04 – Low carbon and renewable energy
- TI05 – Energy efficiency in new developments
- TI06 – Water efficiency in new residential developments

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, would it cause ill-health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</i></p>	<p>These policy areas promote improvements to physical and active travel, and a reduction in private car usage which can help promote improvements to physical health. The policy areas also consider digital connectivity, to improve social inclusion, and improvements to energy and water efficiencies in new buildings which can reduce occupier costs and address climate injustices. For example, climate change will mean more people will be at risk of extreme temperatures, which building design can help mitigate.</p>	<p>There is nothing in these policies that should have negative health impacts.</p> <p>It is more likely that the absence of these policies would have a detrimental impact on the health of West Lancashire's residents. The Council would be less able to manage development in a way that can protect physical and mental health and facilitate improvements.</p>
<p>Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</p>	<p>These policy areas will have the potential to deliver positive impacts in respect of improving opportunities for active travel, social inclusion, accessibility and mitigating the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p><i>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, good employment opportunities, green space or climate change?</i></p>		
<p>Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</i></p>	<p>The policy areas would help individuals improve their own health and wellbeing, for example by improving opportunities to access active travel.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p><i>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?</i></p>	<p>Unknown.</p>	<p>-</p>

Other Policies

- OT01 – Sequential tests
- OT02 – Viability
- OT03 – Developer contributions

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p>Will the proposals have a direct impact on health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p><i>For example, would it cause ill-health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</i></p>	<p>These more 'technical' policy areas alone would be unlikely to have direct impacts on health.</p> <p>Developer contributions can help provide green spaces and active travel opportunities but would be subject to the details of the policy which are currently unknown.</p>	<p>These policy areas alone would be unlikely to have direct impacts on health.</p> <p>The Council will need to work with health and social care services to ensure that infrastructure needs are identified, and this is considered in the development of a developer contributions policy / rate setting.</p>
<p>Will the proposals have an impact on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health?</p> <p><i>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, good employment opportunities, green space or climate change?</i></p>	<p>These policy areas alone would be unlikely to have direct impacts on health.</p> <p>Developer contributions can help provide green spaces and active travel opportunities but would be subject to the details of the policy which are currently unknown.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Will the proposals affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p>	<p>These policy areas alone would be unlikely to have direct impacts on health.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Question	Potential positive health impacts	Potential negative health impacts
<p><i>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</i></p>		
<p>Will there be a change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p><i>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?</i></p>	<p>These policy areas alone would be unlikely to have direct impacts on health.</p> <p>Developer contributions can help support health services, but this would be subject to the details of the policy which are currently unknown.</p>	<p>The Council will need to work with health and social care services to ensure that infrastructure needs are identified, and this is considered in the development of a developer contributions policy / rate setting.</p>