

Further Information for Developers on Health Impact Assessment July 2022

Health Impact Assessments (HIA) for major developments.

1. Value of undertaking HIAs

Local authorities are responsible for improving and protecting the health of their population under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). Havering council recognise that the planning system plays an important role in facilitating social interaction, creating healthy, inclusive communities as outlined in key documents including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); the London Plan (2016); National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The council also recognises that Health Impact Assessments have a range of benefits which include systematic identification and consideration of the health impacts (harms and benefits) of projects prior to decision making, maximising health benefits whilst minimising the health risks of developments as well as facilitating action on the social determinants of health.

In recognition of the value of HIA in shaping a healthy environment the Local Plan includes Policy 12 on Healthy Communities, outlining the ambition of the council to support development that foster healthy lifestyles, contribute to the creation of healthier communities and helps reduce health inequalities. All major development proposals, consisting of 10 or more units of dwelling, are therefore required to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to demonstrate that consideration has been given to health and wellbeing.

2. Major Development Size

A major development scheme is that which consists of 10 or more units of dwelling.

3. Benefits of HIAs in general

HIAs can have a number of benefits, including:

- Systematic identification and consideration of the health impacts (harms and benefits) of a project before decisions are made
- Enable decisions based on health and equity – rather than purely economic considerations
- Achieve better collaboration between local planning and public health teams
- Maximise health benefits whilst minimising the health risks of a project
- Facilitate action on the social determinants of health

4. Benefits of HIAs for developers

HIAs have a wide range of application beyond planning and urban development including in the health and social care sector. Within the urban development industry HIA can provide a range of benefits which may include:

- Generate an increased market response that may exceeds developer expectations for projects with health and wellbeing at their core
- Increased driving market forces towards health-promoting places due to rising consciousness around the link between health and the environment
- Good urban design with more greening, which support mental wellbeing, are more appealing to buyers and renters.

- Positive image and promotion of Developers who take account of the impact of development on the health and wellbeing of the community.

5. Evidence that HIAs of developments improve health outcomes

While there is limited process and outcome evaluation of HIAs in urban development contexts, existing literature and anecdotal feedback from practitioners in local government suggest that HIAs have led to improved quality of developments. Work is underway including through Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, (OHID) to help demonstrate HIA benefits through case studies.

6. Scale of HIAs

There are two main types of HIA. The type of HIA required will depend on the size of the development. Specific template has been produced to use according to the type of development as set out below.

Type of Development	Type of HIA	Template to use
10 to 99 units (1,000 to 9,999sqm)	Rapid	Having HIA Template for Major development (50 to 99 units)
100 units and above	Comprehensive	Developers to undertake full HIA

7. Timing of HIA

8. It is important for health considerations to be embedded into the early design stage of the development project by the planning applicant than wait until the HIA is carried out. The HIA should be seen as a process to inform the project and conducted at the earliest possible opportunity, in the pre- submission stage to ensure any negative health impacts have been prevented or minimised and positive health benefits optimised. Modifications may be reassessed for their health impact and thus the HIA should be reviewed throughout the application process.

9. HIA guidance and examples of good quality HIA

Guidance on undertaking HIA including details of the wider health determinants and population groups to consider is contained within the HIA templates. The templates are available on the Havering council website alongside these FAQs.

Further guidance and examples of HIAs can be found from the following:

- a) Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU)

Via link: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/>

Email: WHIASU.PublicHealthWales@wales.nhs.uk

- b) NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU).

Via link: <https://www.healthyurbandevelopment.nhs.uk/>

10. Support or planning applicants or external providers to determine the scope and to complete the assessment

Guidance on undertaking HIA including details on wider health determinants and population groups to consider are contained within the HIA templates (and on the planning portal).

Developers are also advised to seek advice during the pre-application process, applications for this are made via the Havering Council Planning Teams via the Councils website.

11. Sources of guidance and/or good examples how to develop healthy environments

There are several useful documents that summarise the evidence base on how the built and natural environments influence health as well as identifying the planning interventions (relevant both to planning policy and development projects) that support action on the wider determinants of health and wellbeing including:

- PHE's Spatial Planning for health evidence review
- Building for a Healthy Life development benchmark
- NHS London HUDU Rapid HIA Tool
- Sport England Active Design guidance
- Livewell Development Accreditation

12. Integration of HIA with other impact assessments

Yes. When a development is subject to an environmental impact assessment, it can be appropriate to integrate an HIA. Office of Health Improvement and Disparity (OHID) has published a briefing on Health in EIA in 2017. Further technical guidance can be accessed through the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). Majority of developments are unlikely to be subject to an EIA.

13. Whether HIAs and other assessment processes delay the need to 'Build, Build, Build'

The Office of Health Improvement and Disparity recognises that HIA is one of many assessments that may be required in the planning process, and may incur additional consultancy/ time costs, and acknowledges the case for simplifying and reducing duplication, as the Planning White Paper proposes. But OHID encourages HIAs to be undertaken early in the process to help shape policy development and designs rather than just as another assessment. When undertaken at the most impactful stages of the process and integrated with other assessment if appropriate, HIAs can add value and help expedite decision-making on applications because much of the health impacts will have already been addressed earlier on.

14. Where an application has been submitted without an HIA and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) considers the development would have a significant adverse impact on people's health and wellbeing locally, could the application be refused due to absence of a HIA?

Yes, because the local plan has a specific HIA policy, Policy 12, which clearly sets out and provides clarity to planning applicants as to when an HIA is required. However, the council would like to minimise the likelihood of this happening and recommend planning applicant to contact the planning team in the pre-application

stage for discussion. For further information on the local plan please see link https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20034/planning/183/planning_policy/2