

Headline Health Impact Assessment

September 2020

Introduction

1. This Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared by Savills in support of Bridgend College's ongoing promotion of surplus land at their Pencoed College as a site for a mixed use development. It should be read alongside the Candidate Site Assessment Stage 2 Supporting Statement.
2. It is important to note the detail provided at this stage reflects the high level masterplanning process, and the HIA will need to be advanced further to reflect detailed proposals at planning application stage.
3. This Health Impact Assessment should outline how the proposed development, on a strategic level, can deliver on positive health outcomes and is prepared in the context of Planning Policy Wales (2018) which in itself is heavily influenced by the requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
4. This note also considers the Health Impact Assessment Screening of the Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy which was published in 2019 as part of the evidence base for the Replacement Local Development Plan. It is focused around some notable key themes, with examples of how the proposed masterplan has responded to key considerations which developers would be expected to take into account in development proposals.

'Designing in health'

5. It is recognised that local planning policy has a crucial role to play in ensuring that opportunities exist for people to be able to make healthier lifestyle choices and address health inequalities – and this has never been so critical following the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, where possible, the allocation of land for new development in LDPs should, wherever feasible and appropriate, help to tackle health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyle options. Good planning means linking economic, social and environmental matters with the strategies of public agencies and service providers in the aim of creating attractive, safe and accessible places to live. This in turn improved the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
6. As such, health professionals and planners are now taking a more collaborative approach to implementing planning policies which allow health to be built into the environment at the earliest possible stage – as referred to as 'designing in health'.

The Right to a Home, Equality and Inclusion

7. It is accepted that local planning policies, and the location of new developments and facilities, should allow people to have a choice of high quality and attractive places to live, and allow them to reach the services they need and, for the services they need to reach them. The provision of new homes can contribute to the reduction of inequality in health by providing affordable, energy efficient homes, promoting walking and cycling, ensuring access to good quality open and green spaces and designing new communities to help reduce social isolation.
8. Detailed proposals will ensure that high quality housing is delivered, which plays a key role in maintaining and promoting health and wellbeing. Detailed proposals will also seek to ensure that the design of the proposed development promotes equality and social inclusion. The proposed development will meet recognised housing needs to BCBC, and include a proportion

of affordable housing which will meet specific needs for those requiring socially rented or low cost homes in the County Borough.

9. Whilst a residential-led proposal, the development will provide a 1FE primary school, in addition to range of forms of outdoor play (LEAPs, LAPs, a MUGA, and a NEAP). This will ensure that children and young people are provided not only with educational opportunities on site (in the case of primary school children), but space for sport, recreation and places where they can interact socially with their peers.
10. The approach of co-locating housing with other uses, particularly schools, is identified in Section 2.1.1 of the Health Impact Assessment Screening of the Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy as having a role in encouraging physical activity among children.

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

Active Travel

11. The proposed development could help to promote healthy lifestyles by supporting its new community to be active by ensuring interconnectivity within and between developments, prioritising the pedestrian over motorised transport, prioritising active travel structures and layouts and promoting access to community and retail facilities by walking or cycling.
12. The requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2015 also makes it a legal requirement for local authorities in Wales to map and plan for suitable routes for active travel, and to build and improve their infrastructure for walking and cycling.

Masterplan Response

13. The site is already located in a sustainable and accessible location on the eastern edge of Pencoed, well served by local bus services, within 1km from Pencoed Railway Station, and within 1km of most education, health, leisure, and retail facilities and services within Pencoed.
14. The proposals also incorporate the provision of three pedestrian access points which will further act to improve the accessibility of the site, reduce the quantum of vehicular trips required, and ultimately will have a positive impact on health of residents.

Access to open space

15. Numerous studies point to the direct benefits of well-maintained green open spaces to environmental, physical and mental health and well being. Furthermore, Planning Policy Wales provides guidance on the importance of green infrastructure, with Paragraph 3.23 stating that:
“Green infrastructure can be an effective means of enhancing health and well-being, through linking dwellings, workplaces and community facilities and providing high quality, accessible green spaces.
16. And Paragraph 4.51 stating that:
“Recreational spaces are vital for our health, well-being, amenity and can contribute to an area’s green infrastructure.”

Masterplan Response

17. Central to the masterplan for the surplus land is creating a development incorporates a large quantum of green and blue infrastructure. The draft masterplan includes the retention of existing sports field and green spaces as part of the masterplan, including the land on the western side of the A473 and the land to the southeast of the main development site.
18. Large amounts of blue infrastructure are incorporated into the scheme with streets being sufficiently wide to accommodate swales, the incorporation of feature attenuation ponds at key gateways, and the use of central rain gardens.

19. Existing woodland is to be retained with there being modest amounts of hedgerow loss (and relocation where possible) and the detailed proposals will include new landscaping. The tree belt along the eastern boundary of the site is to be retained whilst a green “spine” running north to south through the site will be located along the high pressure gas pipe and associated easement.

Low-Carbon Development

20. As set out in detail in the Energy Strategy the proposed development can incorporate various measures to reduce carbon dioxide usage, making use of the following measures:
- All buildings should be designed to meet the equivalent of PassivHaus standard or to exceed Passivhaus standard.
 - Roof-mounted solar pv should be maximised on all buildings, either for direct consumption by the building or to support a distributed network.
 - Further consideration of a distributed electricity network, including early consideration of potential supply and management arrangements.
 - Feasibility of ground-mounted solar pv on or in proximity to the site should be investigated further;
 - Engagement with local onshore wind and solar developers should be undertaken to establish whether there are opportunities for such developments to be linked in a way that supports cost effective development of low carbon communities (e.g. private wire, power purchase agreements).
 - Engagement with WPD as it relates to the network capacity constraints for connections, both offtake and generation, and engagement on EV charging infrastructure opportunities and initiatives.
21. The use of such features will result in a reduced air quality impact when compared to the use of more traditional forms of energy which in itself will have positive implications for health (as mentioned below).
22. The benefits of the incorporation of renewable energy generation measures in design is recognised in Sections 2.4.2, 2.4.3, and 2.4.4 of the Health Impact Assessment Screening of the Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy

Air, noise and Light Pollution

23. The replacement LDP will include a number of planning policies which will seek to ensure that air, noise and light pollution impacts on health and well-being are addressed as part of the planning application stage.
- Masterplan Response
24. Detailed assessments on the above will be required at planning application stage. However, it should be noted that air, noise and light pollution can begin to be addressed through promoting walking and cycling (as explained above), reducing traffic emissions and traffic speed, ensuring access to good quality open and green spaces and supporting the development of energy-efficient buildings and neighbourhoods.

Summary

25. As noted above, further assessment of health impacts will be expected to inform detailed proposals at planning application stage. However, it has been demonstrated that there are a number of meaningful opportunities at the proposed allocation site to ensure that positive health outcomes for the developments future residents and community can be achieved. This includes the promotion of active travel and provision of good quality open and green spaces being important design considerations in the masterplan, which can lead to the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices.