

## 4.0 When is a Health Impact Assessment required?

- 4.1 HIAs are an effective method of ensuring that new developments have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of new and existing communities. It is recognised that HIAs are most effective for large scale developments when developing new neighbourhoods and, therefore, across the Greater Cambridge Area, a Full HIA is required as part of planning applications for developments of 100 or more dwellings, or 5,000m<sup>2</sup> or more floorspace.
- 4.2 For consistency in decision making, “floorspace” is recognised as gross internal floor area of all types of developments, including commercial, residential and mixed-use developments.
- 4.3 The Councils recognise that the health and wellbeing impacts of development can be greater in smaller settlements, particularly where access to infrastructure, community and healthcare facilities, and public transport services can often be limited. Therefore, in South Cambridgeshire, an HIA will be required, either in the form of an extended screening or rapid Health Impact Assessment, to be submitted as part of planning applications for developments between 20 to 100 dwellings or 1,000m<sup>2</sup> to 5,000m<sup>2</sup>. This would not be the case for smaller development within the urban area of Cambridge and the lower threshold is not applied to the City.
- 4.4 The above policy thresholds align with extant policy requirements and are in line with the requirements of the NPPF to ‘achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places’, in particular paragraph 96 of the NPPF. HIAs are promoted by Public Health England as a method of ensuring that positive health outcomes can be delivered through development.
- 4.5 In alignment with adopted national policy that promotes healthy and inclusive placemaking, HIAs may also need to be submitted for development proposals in Greater Cambridge with potentially significant health and wellbeing impacts, even if the above thresholds are not exceeded. Examples of applicable development include:
- Development proposals that include potentially hazardous uses or installations; or
  - Developments in areas with limited infrastructure or facilities; or
  - Developments in areas that have a higher proportion of protected characteristic groups.

- 4.6 Please note, the above list is not exhaustive, and applicants are strongly advised to engage in pre-application discussions with the LPA to help determine the need and/or scope of an HIA for a particular development proposal.
- 4.7 Only in exceptional circumstances where a developer can demonstrate that these HIA approaches would not be proportionate to a particular development context (even where the stated development thresholds are surpassed), **and** this is accepted by the LPA, will an alternative approach to policy requirements be considered acceptable.
- 4.8 The need for an HIA should be considered during the Screening stage of the HIA process – this includes deciding whether a development project is unlikely to benefit from further HIA work. Section 5.0 of this SPD provides guidance on the general stages of the HIA process, including deciding the appropriate type of HIA for the project after the need for an HIA has been determined.

### **Environmental Impact Assessments**

- 4.9 Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a statutory requirement for certain types or sizes of developments if they are determined to result in significant effects following an EIA screening exercise. Amendments to [The Town and Country Planning \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) Regulations 2017](#) have resulted in a development's "risks to human health" to be a possible aspect of an EIA's scope.
- 4.10 For projects that require an EIA, applicants are advised to engage in pre-application discussions with the LPA to determine whether health could be included as a chapter of the Environmental Statement or whether an independent HIA report would be needed as part of a planning application.