

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

Healthy Environment Supplementary
Planning Document

November 2023



Introduction

1. It is the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to undertake an Equality Impact Analysis at the time of formulating a decision, drafting a report, designing or amending a policy. This will ensure that the Council is considering and taking positive action where possible to promote access to services for all their communities, including their wider communities. The Equality Impact Assessment Screening Assessment will assess whether there is any impact upon any of the groups with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act, which are listed in the table below. If an adverse impact upon any of these groups is identified then a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be required.
2. The Healthy Environments SPD explains the importance of how the built environment can benefit people's physical and mental wellbeing. It explains how the design of buildings and new developments can improve health outcomes for residents by encouraging healthier lifestyles. The SPD is divided into the following chapters.

Introduction

3. This chapter sets out the purpose of the document. It provides an overview of the health situation within East Suffolk and summarises the main issues facing residents in different parts of the District. There is a more detailed explanation of healthy environments, and the text links the SPD to key policies in the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans. The chapter concludes by providing information about health impact assessments, which analyse the impact of a development on health of the local population, particularly those from disadvantaged groups.

Green Infrastructure

4. This chapter explains the importance of green infrastructure to fostering good physical and mental health. It describes the different types of green infrastructure that can be provided through new development, as well as how to assess the need for different types of green infrastructure. There is also design guidance about different types of green infrastructure.

Active Travel

5. This chapter defines different types of active travel and explains its importance in promoting good physical and mental health. It provides guidance about how to encourage different types of active travel, in particular cycling trip. This chapter explains the necessary standards and specifications for infrastructure, such as footpaths and cycle lanes, which is needed to promote active travel. It also provides guidance about how this infrastructure can be delivered.

Healthy Homes, Schools and Workplaces

6. This chapter explains how quality of the built environment can influence health, with particular emphasis on homes, schools and workplaces. The text explains environmental quality and residential amenity. The chapter provides extensive guidance about design can positively impact on health, particularly with reference to new homes.

Healthy Centres and Community Facilities

7. This chapter explains the link between town centres, community facilities and people's health. The text defines a hierarchy of town centres in the former Suffolk Coastal and Waveney areas. It provides guidance about how well-designed town centres and community facilities can encourage healthier lifestyles.

Lifetime Neighbourhoods

8. This chapter draws together guidance in each of the previous ones to help design lifetime neighbourhoods. These are neighbourhoods that are designed to be inclusive of people of all ages and those with different needs. It explains that the key aims of lifetime neighbourhoods are independence and inclusivity. This involves designing for all levels of ability, including those with dementia. This chapter includes an essential element matrix, which explains each of the ten principles of lifetime neighbourhoods and how they can be achieved.

Appendix 1 – Glossary

9. Includes definitions of key terms and expressions used throughout the document.

Appendix 2 - Healthy Environments Master Checklist

10. This combines the Building for a Healthy Life (BfHL) assessment criteria and the 'design prompts' contained at the end of each chapter in the Healthy Environments SPD. Lifetime neighbourhood status can only be granted to major developments that achieve a high level of quality across all categories and no 'red – stop and think again' when assessed against BfHL criteria.

Appendix 3 – The Health Protocol

11. This document covers the former Waveney area only. It sets thresholds for engagement between East Suffolk Council and healthcare providers. It is intended to establish changes and improvements to healthcare infrastructure as a result of new development, as well as advising on how development can avoid impacting negatively on people's health.

Appendix 4 – Key External Guidance:

12. This table contains external guidance that is referred to in the SPD.

The Equality Act, 2010

13. The Equality Act 2010 lists nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. East Suffolk Council has added a tenth characteristic, socio-economic deprivation, in addition to the nine protected characteristics listed in the legislation. This reflects that pockets of deprivation that exist across East Suffolk.

Screening of impact on different groups

	Groups	Likely Impact (positive/negative/no impact)	Reason for your decision
a	Age (Includes safeguarding issues)	Positive	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore benefit those from different age groups.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different age groups.</p>
b	Disability	Positive	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality</p>

			<p>developments that benefit the physical and mental health of all residents. This includes providing disabled access and ensuring access to facilities and increased mobility. It will therefore benefit this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those with a disability.</p>
C	Gender reassignment	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who have undergone gender reassignment.</p>
D	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the</p>

			<p>physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are married or in a civil partnership.</p>
E	Pregnancy and maternity	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.</p>
F	Race	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as</p>

			<p>encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different racial backgrounds.</p>
G	Religion or Belief	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different religions or beliefs.</p>
H	Sex	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It</p>

			<p>will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate in terms of sexual identity.</p>
I	Sexual orientation	No impact.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of all ages, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. It will therefore not impact upon this group.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate in terms of sexual orientation.</p>
J	Socio-economic deprivation	Positive.	<p>The Healthy Environments SPD includes guidance to help developers create high quality developments that benefit the physical and mental health of people of levels of income, as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles. This includes the provision exercise equipment and access to green</p>

			<p>space. It will therefore benefit those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation.</p> <p>Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council’s customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation.</p>
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Consultation and Engagement

14. There was an initial process of consultation, which guided the preparation of the Healthy Environments Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The consultation ran from 26th September to 7th November 2022 and the following groups were contacted:

- Developers, planning agents, architects, and land agents
- Town and Parish Councils
- Suffolk County Council – Highways, Public Health, Planning Strategy
- Infrastructure providers – e.g. Network Rail, Environment Agency etc.
- Housing Associations
- Relevant national, regional and county level organisations – Sport England, Historic England, Sustrans, Suffolk Mind, Home Builders Federation, etc.
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- The NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board
- The NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board

15. The organisations listed above were contacted by email or post. The consultation was advertised on the Council’s website as well as on social media posts. A questionnaire was published on the Council’s website, which included background information about the SPD, as well as a series of questions to be completed. Hard copies were available on request by contacting the planning policy and delivery team. Comments received have been taken into account in the preparation of the draft SPD.

16. A formal public consultation will take place from 15th November 2023 to 10th January 2024 on the Draft Healthy Environments SPD. This consultation will last a total of eight weeks. An extra two weeks have been added to the duration of the consultation to take account of the latter part of the consultation overlapping with the Christmas holidays. The purpose of this consultation is to enable respondents to comment on the draft Healthy Environments SPD. The document will be made available online on the Council's website to enable people to comment. Consultation letters and emails will be sent to consultees on the Council's planning policy mailing list. A press release will be released covering the consultation. The planning policy mailing list includes Town and Parish Councils, Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Councillors, neighbouring district Councils including the Broads Authority, developers, agents, landowners, business associations, civic societies, infrastructure providers, and members of the public.
17. Copies of consultation documents will be available online, and hard copies made available for inspection in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres.
18. Anyone who is unable to view the consultation documents online, in libraries or in the Customer Service Centres can contact the Planning Policy and Delivery Team, and the publicity material provides contact details and an offer of assistance.

Presentation in Different Languages

19. As part of an eight-week period of formal consultation, the document will be published on the Council's website, with hard copies available on request for those unable to access it online. The document may be requested in a different language. When such requests are received the Customer Services Team will be involved with ensuring this request is actioned.

Proposed Changes

20. The Council will analyse responses received during the public consultation and will make any appropriate changes as a result of comments received.

Conclusion

21. This EQIA screening exercise shows that the Healthy Environments SPD will not negatively impact upon any protected group or those experiencing socio-economic deprivation. Therefore, a full EQIA assessment is not considered necessary.