

Policy D8: Healthy Communities

Introduction

- 2.249 The NPPF is clear that planning policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs for the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, access to healthier food, and allotments, and layouts that encourage walking and cycling. The NPPF adds that planning policies should take account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community. Box 8 defines a healthy community.
- 2.250 In addition, the Hampshire Public Health Strategy¹⁰⁷, prepared by Hampshire County Council, sets out how good urban design, planning, and transport can help to encourage a more active lifestyle, increase positive social interactions and improve health.

Box 8: What is a healthy community?

A healthy community is a good place to grow up and grow old in. It is one which supports healthy behaviours and supports reductions in health inequalities. It should enhance the physical and mental health of the community and where appropriate, encourage:

- Active healthy lifestyles that are made easy through the pattern of development, good urban design, good access to local services and facilities, green open space and safe places for active play and food growing, and is accessible by walking and cycling and public transport.
- The creation of healthy living environments for people of all ages which support social interaction. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop. As well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory and mobility impairments.

¹⁰⁷ Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023 – 2026, Hampshire County Council:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/publichealthstrategy>

POLICY D8: HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- 1. The Council and its partners will work together to facilitate and promote healthy living to improve the wellbeing of local residents.**
- 2. Planning permission will be granted for proposals which contribute to and promote a healthy lifestyle including:**
 - a) well-designed buildings and spaces (see Policy D9);**
 - b) the provision of high quality and accessible new open space and green infrastructure and the improvement of existing provision. This includes sports pitches, play areas and allotments (see Policy A4 and LE1-LE4) as well as natural greenspace and woodland (see Policy D4, D6 and LE7);**
 - c) the creation of environments conducive to cycling and walking including walkable neighbourhoods accessible to public transport and community facilities (see Policies D12 and DE3) as well as supporting the co-location of facilities in close proximity to where people live and work (Policies D1, D2 and C6);**
 - d) the promotion of active travel through the creation of well-designed cycle and pedestrian routes and the use of Travel Plans (see Policy D12);**
 - e) the promotion of development that is accessible and functional for all sections of the community of all ages and abilities, including addressing the needs of the Borough's ageing population to ensure older people have increased access to support, care, companionship and appropriate accommodation (see Policy DE2 and H3).**
- 3. Proposals will need to ensure that existing health, education and community facilities are protected in accordance with Policy C6 and that new facilities accord with Policy C6.**
- 4. Planning permission will be granted for good quality and energy-efficient housing ensuring there is a mix of tenure and types to meet the needs of the local community in accordance with Policies H1-H7 and DE1-DE2.**
- 5. Planning permission will be granted for new employment opportunities, recognising the clear links between income and health (see Policy E1).**
- 6. Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which contribute to poor health in accordance with other relevant policies in the Local Plan including issues relating to:**

- a) **air quality;**
- b) **contaminated and unstable land;**
- c) **noise;**
- d) **light;**
- e) **residential amenity;**
- f) **crime and disorder;**
- g) **flood risk;**
- h) **healthy food choices.**

7. Proposals for the following types of development will be required to incorporate a Health Assessment as part any planning application:

- a) **residential developments of 50 dwellings or more; and**
- b) **other types of development of 1,000 square metres or more.**

EXPLANATION OF POLICY D8

2.251 Health is fundamental to the quality of our lives and all development should include measures to protect people's health and take opportunities to enhance it. The pandemic strongly highlighted the fundamental requirement of having the necessary health facilities and professionals in the local community as well as the importance for individuals to have a healthy lifestyle to combat disease and maintain good physical and mental health. This is underpinned by a good quality environment.

2.252 As evidenced in HCC's Public Health Strategy¹⁰⁸, Healthy Weight Strategy¹⁰⁹, the Gosport Profile and included in the Hot Food Takeaway and Fast Food Outlet Background Paper¹¹⁰, the Borough has a number of significant health issues including:

- There are areas suffering from health and disability deprivation with 16 lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) within the 20% most deprived areas in the country in relation to health indicators (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025).
- The Borough is the third most deprived in Hampshire as a whole after Southampton and Portsmouth (2025).
- Employment, income and education deprivation can have a significant impact on a person's health. There are numerous areas in Gosport where people experience this form of deprivation.

¹⁰⁸ Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023 – 2026, Hampshire County Council:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/publichealthstrategy>

¹⁰⁹ Hampshire Healthy Weight Strategy 2022-2026, Hampshire County Council:
www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth

¹¹⁰ www.gosport.gov.uk/gosportprofile and www.gosport.gov.uk/GBLP2042

- The average life expectancy for males and females is below the national average.
- Gosport has one of the highest proportions of adults with excessive weight (overweight and obesity) in the country (4th highest)¹¹¹.
- In Gosport, 74.6% of adults are classified as overweight (including obesity), of which 33.1% are classified as obese¹¹².
- It has higher than the national average rates of under 75 mortality rate from all cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

2.253 The built and natural environment are key determinants of health and wellbeing. Good planning can have a very positive role in assisting to reduce some of these health issues and it is acknowledged that poor planning can help exacerbate underlying health problems in local communities. It is recognised that planning is only one part of the solution and there are other factors that can play an equal or much larger role in reducing health problems.

Overall approach (Point 1 of Policy D8)

- 2.254 Gosport Borough Council works with partner organisations such as the NHS, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board, Hampshire County Council, local schools, and community and voluntary groups to deliver action at a local level to improve health outcomes for people living in the Borough. Organisations in Gosport have a strong culture of working together and this has been built upon in developing a collaborative approach to improve health and wellbeing for local people.
- 2.255 The Council set up the Gosport Health and Wellbeing Partnership (GHWBP)¹¹³ to provide a strategic overview and support the delivery of priority actions for a range of organisations and local delivery groups with an interest and influence in the health and wellbeing of the local population. It facilitates the co-ordination of activities and the sharing of information.
- 2.256 The Partnership priorities are shaped by local health evidence set out within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)¹¹⁴ and the Health Profile for Gosport¹¹⁵. HCC's Public Health Department has a responsibility for public health services and to implement a Health and Wellbeing Board who agree ways to improve local health and wellbeing and consequently the GHWBP will prioritise its activity to support and implement the aims of the Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire¹¹⁶ by:

¹¹¹ Public Health England, 2022/23

¹¹² Public Health England, 2022/23

¹¹³ Further information available online: www.gosport.gov.uk/healthandwellbeing

¹¹⁴ www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/jsna

¹¹⁵ [https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-](https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132696/pat/6/par/E12000008/ati/201/are/E07000088/cid/4)

[profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132696/pat/6/par/E12000008/ati/201/are/E07000088/cid/4](https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132696/pat/6/par/E12000008/ati/201/are/E07000088/cid/4)

¹¹⁶

<https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s31129/hampshire%20joint%20health%20and%20wellbeing%20strategy.pdf>

- Supporting people in Gosport to live active, independent lives and building resilience to manage their own health and wellbeing.
- To address the wider determinants of health such as housing, education, employment, the physical environment, and community safety to help reduce the gap between those with the best and worst health and wellbeing outcomes, to enable people access to increased opportunities and a better quality of life.

- 2.257 Where relevant and appropriate the Council will consider opportunities for GHWP initiatives and other health-related initiatives to link with planning proposals. These primarily relate to improving the quality of the environment to promote physical exercise and support mental wellbeing across all age groups.
- 2.258 The Council has worked with HCC to prepare a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which consider barriers and opportunities for improving walking and cycling in a local area, and in particular, what key routes need to be improved. The Gosport LCWIP and the Council's own living list of cycling and pedestrian improvements are available online and are applicable when determining planning applications¹¹⁷. Further details are set out in Policy D12.

Links with specific policies in the Local Plan (Points 2-6 of Policy D8)

- 2.259 It is clear that the design of buildings and spaces, and routes within and between them are vitally important to encourage positive physical and mental health benefits, as well as to prevent accidents and encourage active lifestyles. More detailed requirements are set out in each of the cross-referenced policies as well as guidance set out in the Government's National Design Guide¹¹⁸ which identifies many of the health issues covered in Policy D8. In addition, the Healthy Streets approach should be considered in the design and enhancement of development (see Policy D9).

Assessing the health impacts of development and incorporating additional benefits (Point 7 of Policy D8)

- 2.260 The Council will require applications for major development to include a health assessment as part of the planning application, either submitted as a stand-alone assessment or an explicit part of a supporting document such as a Planning Statement or Design and Access Statement.
- 2.261 The health assessment aims to encourage developers to fully consider how proposals can maximise the opportunities for improving health and wellbeing as part of the development and to avoid and/or mitigate any potential negative health impacts. The assessment should include those

¹¹⁷ Gosport LCWIP: www.hants.gov.uk/transport/strategies/transportstrategies Gosport Borough Council Living List: www.gosport.gov.uk/GBLP2042

¹¹⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide

issues covered in Points 1-6 of Policy D8, where relevant. Considering these issues at a design and planning stage can secure significant physical and mental health benefits for the users of the development and ensure such considerations are inherent to the scheme rather than an after-thought.

- 2.262 The Council consider that the use of a health assessment provides a tool to add value to proposals and identify opportunities that could otherwise be missed. The Council considers that the tool should be used by developers to question whether more can be achieved as part of a development to facilitate a healthy lifestyle, avoid compounding existing problems or prevent a development having negative impacts on the health of local residents.

Policy D9: Design

Design: enhancing a sense of place

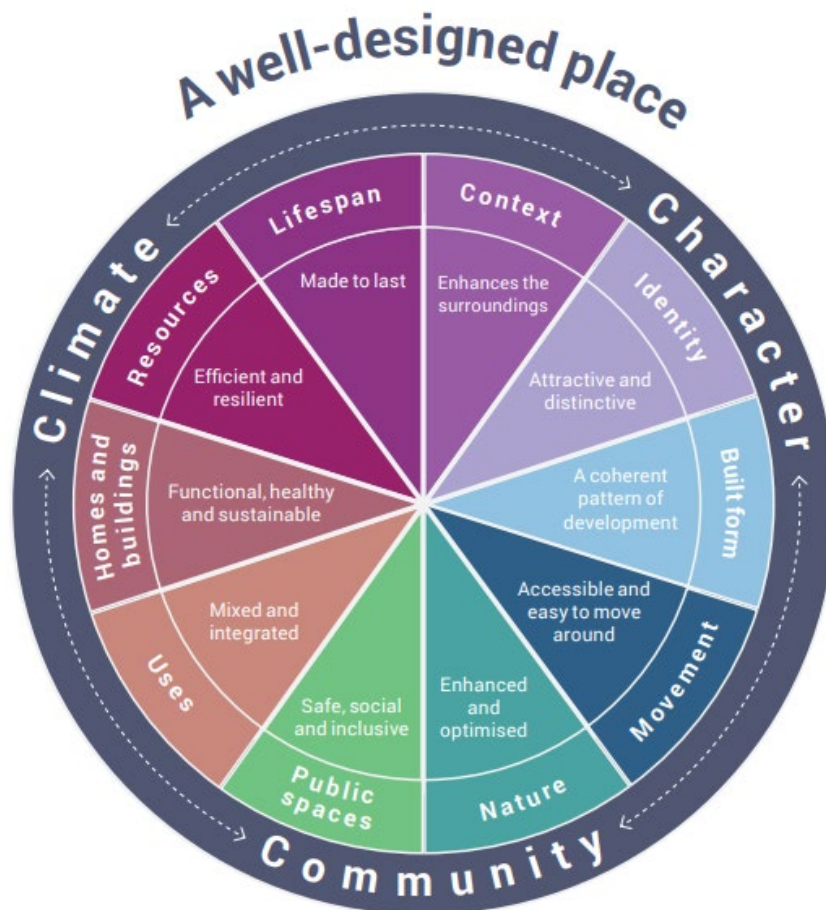
- 2.263 Gosport has a strong design heritage as demonstrated through its many Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Character, listed buildings and other features of national heritage significance. The Council wishes to build on this legacy by supporting new developments of high design quality which respond to and promote the Borough's unique 'sense of place'.
- 2.264 The Government has placed an increased emphasis on the need for high quality design. The NPPF considers that high quality buildings and places are fundamental to planning and development and the delivery of better places to live and work. The value of high quality design is reinforced through the National Design Guide (2021)¹¹⁹, which considers the fundamental principles of good design to be that it is: fit for purpose, durable, and brings delight. The National Design Guide considers that the components of good design are greater than just the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings, but through making the right choices at all levels, which includes the layout, form, scale and landscaping of development. Well-designed places should appeal to all our senses in the way they look, feel, sound and even smell, affecting its enduring distinctiveness, attractiveness and beauty.
- 2.265 The Council has produced a list of documents which must be submitted with all planning applications¹²⁰. This includes the national list of mandatory requirements, which can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance, as well as a Local List of requirements. It is a statutory requirement for major developments, listed building consent, and certain developments in conservation areas to include a Design and Access Statement with development proposals. In preparing a Design and Access Statement developers should have regard to the principles set out in the NPPF, PPG, the National Design Guide (NDG) and local design guidance.

¹¹⁹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide

¹²⁰ www.gosport.gov.uk/article/1237/List-of-documents-required-by-GBC-LPA

- 2.266 Design and Access Statements should provide a site analysis describing the concepts behind the proposal, how it has evolved, and how the proposal relates to its surroundings in both design and access terms. Consideration of how development achieves the ten characteristics of a well-designed place as described in the NDG (see Figure 1) should also be addressed.
- 2.267 By virtue of their size, major development sites will have a large impact upon the Borough and its residents. The Council will work with developers and stakeholders of major development sites to devise positive design principles to guide development either by agreeing design principles as part of an approved masterplan or development brief; or through the development of a design code¹²¹.

Figure 1: The ten characteristics of well-designed places



¹²¹ Further guidance on design codes can be found within the National Model Design Code.