Mental Health and Wellbeing Assessment for Major Infrastructure Schemes Scoping Report

Executive Summary

1. The Phase 2a Hybrid Bill Select Committee on 13 June 2018 requested that Government produce a scoping report within a four week period to consider what types of things could be done to better understand the relationship between mental health and wellbeing and major infrastructure projects.

2. This scoping report highlights the various steps in the development of the Phase 2a scheme, including the consultation and engagement undertaken by HS2 Ltd, along with a summary of the health assessment adopted for the scheme.

3. The report covers the issues which people in information events or during petitioning have highlighted as causing them stress or affecting their wellbeing (e.g. the amount of time it takes to develop such schemes, the various steps they need to follow during their development and the uncertainty over the level of impact and cost to them).

4. The report then goes on to summarise the range of measures HS2 Ltd has in place to address mental health and wellbeing issues, including its community engagement strategy, property compensation schemes and the Community Environment Fund and Business and Local Economy Fund.

5. The report then summarises the discussions held with other Government departments and the assessment undertaken for other infrastructure types.

6. The report concludes with three suggested actions:
   a. Department for Transport officials to continue to explore the issue of mental health and wellbeing for infrastructure schemes and consider whether the current approach, i.e. by assessing the effects in environmental impact assessments, is adequate. A progress update on this will be provided to the committee when it reconvenes in the new year;
   b. HS2 Ltd to conduct a qualitative assessment of consultation responses to identify stress and anxiety impacts for Phase 2b of HS2 and identify possible further steps for community engagement and mitigation; and
   c. HS2 Ltd to undertake a lessons learned exercise to examine whether further improvements could be made to consultation and engagement for future schemes to avoid or reduce mental health impacts.
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Issue

7. The Phase 2a Hybrid Bill Select Committee on 13 June 2018 requested that Government produce a scoping report within a four week period to consider what types of things could be done to better understand the relationship between mental health and wellbeing and major infrastructure projects.

8. In light of these values and the request from the Select Committee, this report covers the following areas:
   - the development of Phase 2a;
   - the potential causes of mental health impacts in the development of major infrastructure schemes;
   - the measures in place to address these impacts for Phase 2a;
   - the views of officials in other Government Departments; and
   - Actions identified to address Mental Health Impact issues
Development of Phase 2a

9. There have been many steps in the development of HS2 Phase 2a, from the Government announcing its intent to produce a Y-shaped network in January 2012 through to Bill deposit in July 2017.

10. Annex A provides a summary of this development and of the assessment undertaken for the scheme, including:

- The key milestones
- The appraisal of sustainability process and health assessment
- The Phase 2 consultation events in 2013-4
- The Autumn 2016 consultations
- The Post Bill deposit information events in August 2017
- The Main Environmental Statement and Equality Impact Assessment Report Consultations in 2017
- The Environmental Statement and Health Impact Assessment
- The Environmental Statement and Community Assessment
- The Equality Impact Assessment
Possible causes or triggers for stress and anxiety or impacts to wellbeing resulting from the process of developing major infrastructure schemes

11. The Phase 2a Environmental Statement reports on the assessment and mitigation of health effects undertaken for the Phase 2a scheme. Major infrastructure schemes can introduce significant impacts and effects on communities and individuals during construction and operation but can also have an impact during their development. Taking account of comments made by the public during consultation events, from petitioners and officials in the Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd, we have identified the following issues which may be relevant for consideration in future schemes.

The amount of time required to develop the Phase 2a scheme

12. The Government announced its initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2 in January 2013 and deposited the Phase 2a Hybrid Bill in July 2017. Petitioners have highlighted the length of time that the Phase 2a scheme has been in development and therefore the length of time that it has been of concern to them.

The process of developing the Phase 2a scheme

13. As with the majority of major infrastructure schemes, Phase 2a of HS2 has had many stages in its development. Petitioners have highlighted that having to keep track and respond to the various stages of development has been stressful. For example, the steps taken in developing Phase 2a include:

- the consultation on the initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2 in January 2013
- David Higgins’ reports in 2014
- Preferred line of route for Phase 2a November 2015
- Formal Environmental Statement and EQIA consultations in July 2017
- Additional Provision for the Phase 2a Bill
- Along with any community and individual engagement and/or discussions over property compensation people and communities may have had

14. Petitioners have raised concerns about the amount of time and resources needed to respond and engage with HS2 Ltd (e.g. on consultations, engagement, petitioning, reading ES material etc).

Ongoing development of Phase 2a has led to the identification of new or different physical impacts

15. As the design of Phase 2a has progressed, surveys and detailed assessment has been undertaken which has enabled more accurate reporting of the physical impacts and effects of the scheme and allowed HS2 Ltd to identify mitigation and design amendments. This is inevitable as the initial stages of development focus on the route of the railway itself, with mitigation and construction logistics, such as the routes to be used by construction lorries, being developed right up until the
Bill and ES are finalised. For example, the introduction of borrow pits and construction routes into the design of Phase 2a to reduce traffic impacts, and environmental mitigation such as replacement habitat creation or screening. However, the introduction of these elements at a late stage can come as a surprise to those affected even with effective engagement in place.

**Refinements to infrastructure schemes**

16. Refinements to infrastructure schemes during their development can introduce new or different impacts and affect new people. For example, the introduction of the Infrastructure Maintenance Base–Rail (IMBR) near Stone in the Phase 2a scheme following a consultation on the proposal as one of the design refinements. This may be stressful to people who had originally thought they were not affected by the scheme and who feel they need to develop alternatives to recommend to HS2 Ltd. Conversely people and communities who would be no longer be affected as a result of the refinements should have reduced stress and anxiety.

**Cumulative impacts of HS2**

17. Some individuals or communities may be affected by multiple phases of development. For example, some petitioners to the Phase 2a Bill have been affected by the Phase One scheme and its additional provisions (APs), then the Phase 2a route, the introduction of borrow pits, construction routes and environmental mitigation into the Phase 2a scheme and then utilities works in the Phase 2a AP. The cumulative effect of having to respond to these developments and the length of time over which individuals have had to consider these issues can be stressful.

**External factors or developments other than HS2**

18. Some communities or individuals may be facing impacts or challenges in addition to those arising from HS2. For example, there may be local housing developments or job losses that may impact upon communities or individuals which may compound stress.

**Precautionary approach in the Environmental Statement**

19. When there is insufficient survey data, the ES sometimes has to assume an impact or effect is present and identify appropriate mitigation (e.g. replacement ponds for protected species such as Great Crested Newts). In some cases, HS2 Ltd may be able to reduce the amount or extent of this mitigation once further survey data is obtained and if the impact is found to be lower than originally assumed. Some individuals may find the additional mitigation built into the scheme in this way stressful.

**Fear of the unknown**

20. Communities or individuals may know that they will be affected by a proposed scheme (through consultations at early stages of development) but not have the full information on exactly how and when they will be affected until the final ES has been completed. For example, the exact impact on their property or holding from land take or construction traffic. This uncertainty could cause stress and
anxiety especially when combined with the possibility that conflicting information from third parties may be in the public domain.

Conflicting information from third parties
21. Groups or organisations affected by proposed infrastructure schemes may produce conflicting information causing anxiety in communities and individuals. This could include certain interest groups focussing solely on one individual impact of the scheme and not appreciating the need to balance competing objectives. Avoiding and mitigating environmental impacts can sometimes require trade-offs and balancing priorities which, taken in isolation, can cause stress or anxiety. Other organisations may use incorrect data (e.g. exaggerate noise impacts, number of demolitions etc) which can cause stress.

Mistrust of Government and / or HS2 Ltd officials
22. Individuals or communities may feel that they can’t trust officials or the information provided at consultation events and in HS2 Ltd documentation. They may feel that the impacts of the proposed scheme are underestimated or benefits overestimated. Some people affected by the route may also feel the scheme is going to happen no matter what they do and therefore not want to involve themselves in the process.

23. At early stages of development it is often required to make assumptions and model potential benefits rather than being able to be specific. For example, HS2 will create benefits from released capacity on the conventional rail network and the creation of new commuter and freight journeys. However, the exact timetable for future rail services can only be determined closer to the opening of HS2 following discussions with Network Rail and Train Operators.

Individuals’ concerns that they may lose money as a result of the scheme
24. Some people are worried that they will lose money as a result of the proposed scheme and that preparing advice and petitioning will be costly. Homeowners may have concerns their house will lose value or become unsellable, businesses may lose their customer base or have higher costs. People may have concerns over needing to relocate or not being able to pass their property or business on to their children.

Understanding of compensation that may be available
25. The compensation available to those affected by the scheme will evolve over time and there will be different compensation available to people depending on how they are affected by the scheme. Some people may find these different options and their applicability hard to understand or confusing and this could contribute to any stress experienced.

Methods of engagement / informing people or answering their questions
26. Individuals or businesses affected by the proposed scheme may prefer to engage in a particular way; written correspondence, telephone calls, emails, face to face, maps, visuals etc. The method of communication and engagement may be particularly important when dealing with vulnerable people or when introducing new impacts or route refinements to communities who previously thought they weren’t affected.
Individuals or organisations not understanding the requirements of developing a major infrastructure scheme

27. People affected by HS2 may not understand or fully appreciate all the factors that need to be taken into account when developing an infrastructure scheme. For example, the need for the Phase 2a route to avoid protected areas such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), especially when the proposed route may affect communities instead. The Phase 2a route chosen to avoid the Pasturefields Salt Marsh is one such example. Similarly, those affected by the scheme may not appreciate the requirement for and proposed placement of environmental mitigation identified in the ES.

Concerns that the complaints process takes too long or is ineffective

28. Some petitioners have suggested that the process for raising and resolving complaints is ineffective and takes too long, thereby increasing or prolonging stress and anxiety.

Petitioners may find the petitioning process itself stressful

29. Some petitioners may find the process of petitioning stressful. For example, the requirement to draft a petition, travelling to London and giving evidence in front of the Committee and on camera may prove stressful.
Measures HS2 Ltd have in place to address stress and anxiety and wellbeing for those affected by the scheme.

30. The Environmental Statement and Equality Impact Assessment Report set out the key ways in which HS2 Ltd have assessed health impacts and have sought to avoid, reduce or mitigate these impacts during the construction and operation of the Phase 2a scheme.

31. In addition to these measures, there are three main areas in which HS2 Ltd work to address mental health issues:

- HS2 Ltd’s approach to engagement;
- Development of compensation schemes; and
- Community Environment Fund and Business and Local Economy Fund projects improving community health and wellbeing

**HS2 Ltd’s Community Engagement Strategy**

32. HS2 Ltd published its community engagement strategy in September 2017 which sets out its approach to community engagement and the 10 key commitments that they use as the measure of success. The aspiration is for HS2 Ltd to be a good neighbour every single day, by respecting the people and communities it impacts and being sensitive to their needs.

33. The strategy sets out HS2 Ltd’s interpretation of community as any person, people, business or organisation who:

- will be affected by the new railway or its construction;
- has a special interest in HS2, such as environmental or technical stakeholders;
- is elected to represent the communities in which the new railway will operate; and
- is responsible for holding HS2 Ltd to account.

34. The four means of engagement undertaken by HS2 Ltd are:

- **Informing** – through clear, timely and tailored communications
- **Involving** - create opportunities for local communities to get involved throughout the design and delivery of the project;
- **Consulting** – formal, written public consultations including plans for review and seeking views from interested parties to inform development and delivery; and

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• **Responding** - provide free and accessible options for communities to contact us to seek information and raise their concerns. We will respond to their requests and comments in a timely and comprehensive way.

35. HS2 Ltd has a community engagement team and each community is represented by an engagement manager. The engagement managers work with teams throughout HS2 Ltd to ensure communities perspectives are considered and reflected.

36. HS2 Ltd also applies existing best practice and guidance from other programmes and taps into the skills and experience of local authorities, the independent Design Panel, Residents’ Commissioner and Construction Commissioner to deliver outstanding community engagement.

37. The strategy sets out the HS2 Ltd values of:

- **Leadership** – being transparent in and understanding the impact of decision-making. Being open and accountable and showing HS2 Ltd understand the needs and views of local communities. Being collaborative and consistent in HS2 Ltd’s engagement and communications.

- **Respect** – HS2 Ltd will listen, build trust, minimise surprises and anticipate concerns and address them up front. It will create a sense of community ownership and awareness of feelings and opinions. We will respond to our communities and stakeholders in a timely and accessible manner.

- **Integrity** – HS2 Ltd will be open and honest when sharing information. If HS2 Ltd are not able to make a requested change it will explain why. HS2 Ltd will deliver on its promises and do so collaboratively. HS2 Ltd will report on its discussions and consultations fairly.

- **Safety** - HS2 Ltd will be inclusive in all our engagement activities. HS2 Ltd will create safe environments and prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of communities and its workforce. HS2 Ltd will identify impacts and feed them back into the business.

38. Through the residents charter HS2 Ltd has identified 10 community commitments which will be used as the measure of success in how it delivers HS2:2

1) Continue to build respectful, long-term relationships with communities, and actively encourage our workforce to listen to local concerns and be considerate and accountable for their actions at all times.

2) Work with communities to develop local two-way engagement and communication programmes, and ensure these are accessible and tailored to local needs.

3) Make sure communities are made aware in advance of any activities taking place in their area.

4) Operate a Freephone Community Helpline 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

5) Make health and safety a priority for communities and our workforce.

6) Respect the wellbeing of communities, minimising disruption to their lives with local mitigation plans and activities, ensuring we meet the standards set out in the Code of Construction Practice.

7) Leave a positive and sustainable legacy for the communities in which we operate.

8) Respond to questions and complaints quickly and efficiently, with an acknowledgement within 2 working days, and responding within a maximum of 20 working days if we cannot answer the query straight away.

9) Promote awareness of all our property schemes so that anyone who may be eligible has all the information they need and is aware of the support available to them.

10) Display the Residents’ Commissioner’s and Construction Commissioner’s contact details on all relevant materials, along with the HS2 Helpline information and complaints procedure.

39. HS2 Ltd has a dedicated page on the HS2 Ltd website setting out the complaints process and contact details including email address, 24/7 helpline and freepost address³. 

40. Following the launch of HS2’s national community engagement strategy in 2017, HS2 Ltd’s focus has been to demonstrate what the strategy means for communities at a local level by working with them to develop tailored local engagement plans. HS2 Ltd has launched 10 Commonplace digital engagement platforms offering localised information sites for Phase One. By June 2018 over 25,000 people had visited the combined sites and over 1200 people are subscribed to regular updates, meaning they will automatically receive alerts for construction works in their area. In addition during 2017 across all three phases HS2 Ltd held 195 events, at which it spoke to over 33,000 people. There has been an incremental increase in enquiries to the Helpdesk, with nearly 27,000 contacts via telephone and email reflecting HS2’s growing impact in line with increasing construction works in Phase One and the huge programme of land surveys and assessments in Phases 2a and 2b.

Residents Commissioner

41. The Independent Residents’ Commissioner holds HS2 Ltd accountable to the commitments made in the Residents’ Charter. The Commissioner oversees and monitors HS2 Ltd’s commitments, produces a periodic report and meets regularly with the HS2 Ltd Chairman about emerging trends and concerns.⁴ HS2 Ltd

³ [https://www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain/](https://www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain/)

⁴ Published at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner](www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner)
produce responses to these reports and the recommendations made by the commissioner.

**Construction Commissioner**

42. The Independent Construction Commissioner’s role has been developed to mediate and monitor the way in which HS2 Ltd manages and responds to construction complaints. The Construction Commissioner will mediate any unresolved construction related disputes between HS2 Ltd and individuals or bodies, and provide advice to members of the public about how to make a complaint about construction.

43. The Construction Commissioner regularly meets with the HS2 Ltd Chief Executive Officer to raise any concerns or emerging trends across the project and produces reports and recommendations which HS2 Ltd respond to.\(^5\)

**Bynoe Review**

44. The Bynoe Review of April 2016 reviewed HS2 Ltd’s complaints handling and community engagement in accordance with a recommendation of the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman. It made thirteen recommendations and one suggestion: five in relation to the need to have a Community Engagement Strategy; four pertaining to the complaints process; two in relation to the Helpdesk; one pertaining to updating the Residents’ Charter; and one for the Residents’ Commissioner and Independent Complaints Commissioner to meet. The suggestion was to establish a best practice advisory panel comprising practitioners who have dealt with comparable community engagement challenges to that of HS2.

45. In March 2018, HS2 completed its formal response to the Bynoe Review. Since the report was published HS2 has made comprehensive changes to the way community engagement and complaints handling are managed. HS2 Ltd undertook an extensive review into the HS2 complaints service, as a result of which its complaints procedure has been updated and published on the new HS2 website. Under the new procedure, HS2 Ltd will assist every complainant at every stage ensuring it treats each as an individual and adapt to their needs as well as offering a dedicated single point of contact to provide support and continuity.

**Safeguarding**

46. Safeguarding is an established part of the planning process, designed to ensure that land which has been identified for major infrastructure projects is protected from conflicting developments. In November 2015, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that safeguarding directions had been issued for the Fradley to Crewe section of the Phase Two of HS2 route. These safeguarding directions have since been updated and will be continually updated as the project evolves to reflect the safeguarded area.

**Property Compensation Schemes**

47. Communities and businesses located near the HS2 route have access to the range of statutory and non-statutory property schemes. The schemes available

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are determined generally based on the distance of the property from the line of route as follows:

- **Safeguarded area and extended homeowner protection zone (usually 60m from line of route in rural areas)** – enables statutory blight claims, the express purchase, extended homeowner protection zone and rent back schemes
- **Rural Support Zone (120m from line of route)** – enables cash offer or voluntary purchase, need to sell and rent back schemes
- **Homeowner Payment Zone (up to 300m from line of route)** – homeowner payments (after Royal Assent of the Bill), need to sell and rent back schemes
- **Beyond 300m from line of route** – need to sell and rent back schemes

48. Maps showing where the boundaries lie for the various HS2 property schemes for Phase 2a are published on the HS2 website.

**Property Advice Surgeries**

49. Where appropriate HS2 Ltd has also arranged property advice surgeries for communities to answer questions and provide advice to people who are affected by HS2 Ltd and may wish to consider applying to one of the property compensation schemes.

**Community and Environment Fund (CEF) & Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF)**

50. The objective of these funds is to add benefit, over and above committed mitigation and statutory compensation, to communities and local economies along the HS2 route demonstrably disrupted by the construction of HS2. A combined total of £40 million has been made available for Phase One of the scheme. The funding was launched at Royal Assent of the Phase One Act and opened for application in March 2017. An announcement in January 2018 confirmed that an extra £5 million would be made available for Phase 2a (West Midlands to Crewe) which will be made available following Royal Assent (confirmation) of the Phase 2a Bill.

51. The CEF is designed to help enhance community facilities, improve access to the countryside and conserve the natural environment along the line of the route. The BLEF will cover projects or programmes across several business sectors and address employment concerns in an area as opposed to individual businesses.

52. There have been a number of **Phase One projects approved which have objectives of improving community health**. These include:

*HEALTHTRAIN* - a project to empower people living in the Regent’s Park Ward of Camden to improve their long term health. The ward is characterised by health inequalities. Local people have been involved in the development of this project

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which will receive nearly £75,000 of CEF Funding to part fund a Healthy Living Coordinator for three years.

The Healthy Living Coordinator will work with residents to give them the skills, support and motivation to organise their own health programmes for themselves: boosting their health and wellbeing by improving mobility, activity and fitness levels, organising training and activities that raise awareness of or address mental health issues. The project will also link up with local health professionals to take referrals for those who need to become more active, lose weight or meet other people, as well as make referrals for people who require medical health and advice.

**Active in Euston** - The project aims to operate a broad range of sport and exercise, healthy living and well-being activities for children and young people aged 8-18 who live in and around the Regent's Park estate in Camden. The project will ensure that children and young people take part in regular exercise, take part in team-games and be given advice and support to improve their physical and mental health. It will run for three years.

The £74,985 project will deliver weekly football sessions for boys and young men, weekly female-only sports sessions, offering sports such as netball, badminton and dance, and weekly drop in sessions to help promote healthy lifestyle, such as cookery workshops. There will also be workshops to provide advice on healthy eating and lifestyle choices, and the advice to young people about how to join youth action programmes and employability workshops that are run by the organisation. Young people will also have the opportunity to participate in alcohol and drug awareness, mental health and relationship workshops and discussions, both youth worker and peer led, to provide an all-round health and wellbeing offering.

**Greengage** – a £73,591 environmental project in Camden aiming to increase the local community’s environmental awareness and support over 4000 local residents to become involved in making real change where they live. The scheme will see a team of 20 volunteers recruit and train local people to organise community events and clean ups, help develop a local nature park, promote wildlife habitats and address specific environmental issues that emerge throughout the construction of HS2.

The project will create a ‘green refuge’ for those experiencing noise related stress by planting trees, shrubs and plants to reduce traffic and act as a living screen around Greenhaven Nature Park to lessen noise and absorb pollution. Wooden amphitheatre seating and a pergola structure will also be erected to create an outdoor classroom for visiting school children, for schools that have limited external space to be able to deliver outdoor learning. Raised beds accessible to the elderly and those with disabilities will also be created.

**Phase 2a Road Safety Fund**

53. This £6.5m fund will support road safety schemes in highway authority areas on the Phase 2a route that will bring benefits for communities. It will be for highway authorities to decide what their local road safety priorities are and how they wish to spend the money available. The aim is to leave a legacy of road safety.
improvements. This is an extension of the fund established for the Phase One route. It is in addition to the highway changes already agreed with Staffordshire County Council which we’ve committed to deliver and which the Promoter estimates to have a value of around £7.61m.

Other Measures HS2 Ltd has put in place to address stress, anxiety and depression for those affected by the scheme

54. Annex B provides information on the other measures HS2 Ltd has in place which may impact upon mental health. These include:

- The Phase 2a Draft Code of Construction Practice
- The Phase 2a Farmers and Growers Guide
- The HS2 Environmental Roundtable
- Community Update Newsletters & Regional Factsheets
- Information Papers
- The protection of people’s data
- Vulnerable people strategy
Engagement with Other Government Departments

55. Officials at other Government Departments were consulted during the preparation of this report to understand whether there were case studies or methodologies used to assess mental health for other infrastructure schemes that could be used to inform this report. These discussions were informal and represented initial views of officials and should be read in that context. Given the time available for this report we have not sought formal responses from other Departments.

56. Annex C contains a full description of the discussions with other Government departments which is summarised below.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

57. BEIS Officials provided the links to the health impact assessment undertaken for the Hinkley Point C (HPC) Development Consent Order from 2011, a private development application for a new nuclear power station, which contains:

- additional consideration for impacts from radiation exposure
- contributions made to improve energy efficiency
- modelling to estimate which wards in the area may have higher rates of health conditions
- details of a £20million fund to support local initiatives

58. BEIS Officials also pointed to the 2010 Appraisal of Sustainability (AoS) for the revised draft Nuclear National Policy Statement (NPS). Under the theme of ‘human health and well-being’ a specific AoS objective was taken into account as part of the appraisal ‘to avoid adverse impacts on mental health’.

59. The 2017 Scoping Report as part of the development of an AoS in relation to a new nuclear NPS is currently under development by the Government. The report proposes a high level sustainability objectives ‘to protect and enhance the physical and mental health of the population’.

60. Also within the energy policy area we have located Public Health England advice on possible impacts from shale gas extraction published in 2014. This makes reference to the importance of health impact assessment and capturing psychological and social impacts but doesn’t go into any detail of how to do this.

HM Treasury (HMT) and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA)

61. Officials from HMT and the IPA highlighted some ongoing research being undertaken for the Thames Tideway Tunnel on Health and Safety of their employees. They also referred to the difficulties in assessing subjective feelings, establishing direct causation of stress and anxiety and the potential liability and impact on future infrastructure schemes which would need careful consideration.

Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC)

62. Officials at DHSC suggested there is no formula or standard set of indicators used to measure localised effects on mental health by major schemes. As schemes differ, this would be difficult to standardise. They pointed to the advice on mental health effects they provide to MHCLG and Local Authorities to ensure
that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in planning decision making.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
63. Officials at MHCLG pointed to the existing National Planning Policy Framework which includes sections on promoting healthy communities and on the health and wellbeing guidance document mentioned in the paragraphs above.
Actions identified to address Mental Health and Wellbeing Impact issues

Consideration of mental health and wellbeing assessment
64. Department for Transport officials will continue to explore the issue of mental health and wellbeing for infrastructure schemes and consider whether the current approach, i.e. by assessing the effects in environmental impact assessments, is adequate. A progress update on this will be provided to the committee when it reconvenes in the new year.

Additional assessment of mental health impacts of consultation responses and identifying mitigation for Phase 2b
65. HS2 Ltd will conduct a qualitative assessment of the written responses collected during the community consultation exercise undertaken for Phase 2b in 2016-17 to identify stress and anxiety impacts of Phase 2b of HS2. HS2 Ltd will examine these responses for a series of search terms to identify any evidence of stress and anxiety associated with the Proposed Scheme and provide an indication of the issues most likely to give rise to these feelings. HS2 Ltd will also consider holding a similar exercise for the consultation on the Phase 2b working draft ES. Following this process, further measures for Phase 2b will be discussed, and are likely to focus on existing systems in place for community liaison and mitigation. HS2 Ltd will then consider whether any actions from this process could apply to the Phase 2a Scheme.

Undertake a lessons learned exercise looking at mental health issues for the development of the Phase 2 / 2a scheme.
66. Building on the suite of work undertaken by HS2 Ltd on engagement and consultation along with the recommendations of the residents and construction commissioners, HS2 Ltd will undertake a lessons learned exercise examining whether further improvements could be made to consultation and engagement for future schemes to avoid or reduce mental health impacts.
67. This will seek to address the issues raised in paragraphs 12-29 above and include consideration of whether there needs to be more advice or clarity at consultation events and during engagement on:
   - The forward process and key milestones likely in the development of the infrastructure scheme
   - That the design of the scheme will evolve and more key features will be added into the design as it develops
   - How alternatives are appraised and costs and benefits assessed along with the Department for Transports WebTag system.
   - That there will be further consultation and opportunities to feed in concerns throughout the process leading up to final design development.
• Give more information on the requirements to meet environmental standards for schemes and set out how scheme promoters need to balance objectives and priorities
• Set out the limitations of environmental assessment at a given stage of development and that it may change as further surveys are completed
• Examining the process of preparing the Hybrid Bill and communicating that there will be differences between the draft Environmental Statement (ES) and the main ES.
• Flag where there may be areas of cumulative impacts from other schemes
• Asking for information on other schemes or issues that may be affecting a communities mental health
• Give some examples or case studies on similar infrastructure schemes with visualisations so people can understand better potential benefits and outcomes of schemes and to show how engagement can refine schemes and resolve conflicts
• Information correcting inaccurate or misleading claims from opposition groups or answering specific points from interest groups
• Information on local health care provision and support groups (e.g. Mind7) for people who may need help
• Consider inviting representatives from mental health support organisations or charities to attend consultation events
• Further briefing material or sessions for MPs or local authority councillors to ensure they can provide advice to people who may not wish to engage with scheme promoters.
• Information on the complaints process and data on the number of resolved complaints to show the organisation listens and responds
• Assistance for Local Authorities and other organisations in the development of projects seeking to improve community health. This would include reviewing the criteria for compensatory funds (such as CEF and BLEF) to ensure projects seeking to improve community health could bid for such funds.
• How statutory and non-statutory compensation schemes work and how they are communicated to the public and incorporated into engagement.
• Consider whether further steps may be taken to make the petitioning process simpler and less daunting for those petitioning the Bill.

Summary of the Development of Phase 2a and the Assessment of Health Impacts

Development of Phase 2a

68. In January 2012, the Government announced its intention to develop a Y shaped high speed rail network. In January 2013, the Government announced its initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2 between the West Midlands, Leeds and Manchester. Following some minor amendments, the proposed route was consulted on for seven months during 2013-4.

69. Sir David Higgins, in his reports HS2 Plus and Rebalancing Britain, both published in 2014, recommended accelerating the delivery of the Phase Two section of the route from the West Midlands to Crewe to deliver some of the benefits that HS2 will bring to the North sooner. In November 2015, the Government, having considered a number of options for accelerating part of the route, announced its intention to bring forward the route to Crewe, and set out the preferred line of route for Phase 2a.

70. A draft version of the HS2 Phase 2a environmental statement was consulted on from September to November 2016. On 17 July 2017, the government introduced the High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill into Parliament along with the Phase 2a Environmental Statement.

The Appraisal of Sustainability (AoS) process and Health Assessment

71. The AoS process for Phase 2 of HS2 followed and built on the approach used for Phase One, which was developed in consultation with specific statutory agencies and government departments following further consultation. The AoS process incorporated a range of sustainability appraisal and assessment techniques and included separate analyses of potential impacts on health and well-being, and on equality.

72. Consideration of potential health and well-being impacts involved making a qualitative assessment of the potential health effects and vulnerabilities along the route of the proposed scheme. The approach followed guidance and methods set out by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence and the World Health Organisation as internationally recognised standards.

73. The analysis used local authority and county health profiles and multiple deprivation health data along the route. Against this baseline, the health appraisal took AoS conclusions on the potential impacts of noise, visual impact, air quality and employment to identify where these could have secondary implications for health. Potential impacts were validated through recourse to publicly available data (where available) on the health impacts of other rail projects including HS1.

74. A separate equality analysis was also undertaken to indicate the extent to which groups vulnerable to discrimination and social exclusion may be differentially affected by the proposed scheme. It identified the equality groups (people with
protected characteristics) considered and indicated the potential for adverse and beneficial effects, either from the scheme as a whole or at specific locations.

75. It identified equality impacts resulting from a greater sensitivity to impacts such as changes in access, noise, property demolition, isolation and severance, employment and job displacement. The equality analysis drew on the wider findings of the AoS in order to determine where equality impacts might occur. This included impacts relating to changes in access to affordable housing, access to community and healthcare facilities, access to faith-related facilities, access to public transport, play space provision, noise impacts on learning, isolation and marginalisation, unemployment, and shortage of accessible housing.

76. The findings of the health assessment were set out in the sustainability statement published in July 2013\(^8\) and the equality assessment in the associated appendix \(^9\).

77. In November 2015, a further sustainability statement was published alongside the Government’s announcement to bring forward the route to Crewe and set out the preferred line of route for Phase 2a.\(^10\)

78. Consultation response analysis was undertaken for the consultations on the route and the AoS and the scheme was refined in light of those comments. This also fed into the later development of the Phase 2a Environmental Statement.

**Phase Two Consultation Events 2013-4**

79. As part of Phase Two consultation, HS2 Ltd held a series of 36 public information events near the whole Phase Two route between October 2013 and January 2014. These events provided an opportunity for local people to review the consultation information, understand more about the implications for their local area and to speak directly with staff about the proposed scheme. Shortly before the events programme began, information about the consultation was sent to those living within 1 km of the proposed route.

80. Local authorities and libraries along the line of route, as well as other organisations and statutory bodies, received paper copies of consultation documents for public display. Adverts were placed in local newspapers and online throughout the consultation period.

81. The information events had a range of experts giving information to those attending and included:

- Engineering experts advising on aspects of the route
- Environmental experts giving advice on environmental issues

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• Noise experts with sound demonstration equipment answering questions about noise impacts
• Property experts giving advice on compensation schemes
• Policy experts advising on the case for HS2

Autumn 2016 Consultation
82. Three reports were formally consulted on in 2016:
• Phase 2a Working Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report
• Phase 2a Design Refinement Consultation Report
• Phase 2a working draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Report

83. Engagement was undertaken in advance of and during the course of, the formal consultation period. Letters were sent by email to a range of stakeholders including: local authorities, business and representative bodies, non-governmental organisations, statutory agencies, parish councils and other community organisations. Prior to the launch, reports and publicity posters for the consultation events were sent to public libraries and parish councils with a request that they be made available/displayed at community locations. Posters were also sent to other community venues, such as Citizen Advice Bureaux and medical surgeries, amongst other amenities.

84. A letter and a leaflet promoting the consultation events were sent to residents and other occupiers within 1km of the proposed line of route and in areas of the design changes proposed in the Design Refinement Consultation, as well as to key local stakeholders. Briefings were offered to local authority elected members. These took place between 20 and 28 September 2016. HS2 Ltd also engaged with parish councils during the consultation period.

85. Seven consultation events were held during September and October 2016 to provide direct engagement with stakeholders along the route. HS2 Ltd staff and consultants attended to provide advice and answer questions. The events were attended by just over 1,900 people in total.

86. There was consultation response analysis undertaken for these consultations and summary reports produced. HS2 Ltd produced response reports covering the issues raised and fed these into the development of the, environmental assessment and equality assessment accordingly.

Environmental Statement (ES) Consultation
87. The public consultation for the Phase 2a ES ran from 17 July to 30 September 2017 in accordance with the terms of the House of Commons Standing Orders. A series of information events were held along the line of route during the consultation period to provide information and answer questions of those people who may be reflected. An independent assessor (Golder Associates) was appointed to prepare a summary of issues raised in comments on the consultation, to be submitted to Parliament in advance of the Second Reading of the Phase 2a Bill. HS2 Ltd has analysed those consultation responses which has helped with the further development of the scheme design and HS2 Ltd’s engagement.
Environmental Statement and Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

88. The health assessment methodology in the ES has been developed in accordance with the amended EIA Directive 2014 (2014/52/EU) regarding the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. This requires that EIA should 'identify, describe and assess’ the effects of a project on ‘population and human health’.

89. The EIA Scope and Methodology Report (SMR)\(^\text{11}\) described the health assessment process undertaken for Phase 2a including baseline data gathering and community profiling, stakeholder engagement, assessment and the mitigation of potential negative health effects.

90. When considering the health effects of development projects, health is viewed in a broad sense, encompassing physical and mental wellbeing/quality of life, as determined by a wide range of environmental, social and economic determinants.

91. This broader understanding of health is captured in the World Health Organization (WHO) definition: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity”.

92. Health effects are assessed at community level, through the consideration of exposure to the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Scheme and evaluation of the potential for these impacts to affect health. In addition, the assessment highlights potential impacts on specific groups of receptors such as users of facilities that may be impacted by the Proposed Scheme, or vulnerable groups within the community.

93. The objectives of the assessment are to:

- describe how the Proposed Scheme has the potential to impact (directly and indirectly) on the factors that influence health and wellbeing (termed ‘health determinants’);
- identify the likely extent and intensity of exposure to impacts on health determinants;
- qualitatively or quantitatively assess the potential community health effects arising from these impacts;
- identify those sections of the population likely to be most affected, either positively or negatively, by impacts on health determinants; and
- identify measures to enhance the positive and mitigate the negative effects on community health and wellbeing.

94. The Phase 2a ES sets out that the health status of a population is governed, in part, by a wide range of environmental, social and economic determinants. The Proposed Scheme will impact on a number of health determinants, which in turn will affect health and wellbeing. Health effects have been assessed at local:

(community area) or route-wide level, depending on the nature of the health determinant.

95. The health effects resulting from impacts on the following determinants have been assessed at local (community area) level. These effects which are reported in the Volume 2: Community area reports relate to:

- neighbourhood quality;
- access to services, health and social care;
- access to green space, recreation and physical activity;
- (places of) education; and
- social capital.

96. The health effects resulting from impacts on the determinants listed below have been assessed at a route-wide level, because of their diffuse geographical nature or, in some cases, because it is only meaningful to report the health effects for a large population. These effects which are reported in Volume 3: Route-wide effects are:

- employment and income;
- housing;
- transport (traveller stress and road safety); and
- sound, noise and vibration (railway noise).

Environmental Statement and Community Assessment

97. The Phase 2a ES community assessment addresses the likely effects on residential properties (and their occupants), community facilities, including recreational facilities, open space and promoted Priority Rights of Way (PRoW) (and their users) and communities as a whole.

98. Effects may result from:

- a loss or gain as a result of the land required for the construction or operation of the Proposed Scheme;
- isolation as a consequence of barriers (physical, psychological and social) that communities would face resulting from construction or operation of the Proposed Scheme
- in-combination effects relating to a change in the amenity value of community resources, as a consequence of a combination of factors (noise and vibration, HGV traffic, air quality and visual impacts); and
- the temporary presence of construction workers and their demands on community facilities.

99. There are no industry-wide accepted methods for assessing community effects. The method that has been developed for predicting and assessing effects draws on existing guidance, analysis and methods established for other large infrastructure projects, including Phase One of HS2. The assessment also draws on other topics for the assessment of in-combination effects. This takes into
account the significant residual effects reported by other topics (e.g. sound, noise and vibration, air quality, landscape and visual and traffic and transport) and professional judgement about the sensitivity of the resource and receptors.

**Planning Data / Committed Development Report**

100. Volume 5 of the Phase 2a ES contains a planning data / committed development report which lists the unimplemented major committed development (approved consents, allocations and minerals safeguarding areas (MSA) in adopted development plans) identified up to 31 December 2016 where the potential for environmental effects may occur. Committed development identified in this way is considered within the environmental assessment where material to the environmental impact of the Proposed Scheme. This report may assist in assessing whether cumulative impacts of development may compound stress and anxiety caused by development schemes.

**The Phase 2a Equality Impact Assessment**

101. As a public body, HS2 Ltd is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. The PSED requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people during the design stage, construction and operation of the railway.

102. Consideration of equality issues has been, and will continue to be, an integral part of the planning, design, construction and operation of Phase 2a. The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Report published in July 2017 describes the current understanding of the equality issues that will or may arise from construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme and the measures to be applied in future to reduce or offset them. The report is produced in accordance with the methodology set out in the EQIA Scope and Methodology Report, published in September 2016.

103. Consultation on the EQIA Report took place between July and September 2017. A summary of the consultation responses and a report from HS2 Ltd responding to the issues raised were published in May 2018.

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Other Measures HS2 Ltd has put in place to address stress, anxiety and depression for those affected by the scheme

Draft Code of Construction Practice
104. The Phase 2a Draft Code of Construction Practice forms part of the Secretary of State’s Environmental Minimum Requirements for the construction of the railway from London to the West Midlands. It sets out the standards and responsibilities to protect communities and the environment and the mechanisms to engage with the local community and their representatives throughout the construction period.

105. The code includes the requirement for local, site-specific measures to limit disturbance from construction activities, as far as reasonably practicable. It covers areas such as hours of work, pollution, security, traffic and transport, noise and vibration, cultural heritage, ecology, landscape, air quality, water resources, flood risk, ground settlement, land quality, waste and agriculture, forestry and soil.

106. The measures set out in the code should offer comfort to those individuals concerned about aspects of the construction of the Phase 2a scheme.

Farmers and Growers Guide
107. The Phase 2a Guide for Farmers and Growers was published in August 2017 and built upon the Phase One Guide originally published in May 2016. The Phase 2a guide sets out HS2 Ltd’s proposed approach to handling agricultural property matters. It provides a single source of information for all those affected by either Phase One or Phase 2a.

108. The guide contains a number of policies which should help in reducing stress and anxiety to farmers and growers affected along the line of Phase 2a. This includes an objective of good communication and regular engagement with farmers and growers from HS2 Ltd to give:

- information about the Phase 2a programme and the proposed detailed design;
- consideration of the impact on the holding and whether any of the farmer’s existing or future proposals can be allowed for in the programme of works;
- relocation or re-provision of farm buildings and other facilities affected by HS2 (may be subject to planning);
- detailed proposals for temporary and permanent accommodation works;
- land restoration and aftercare; and
- the impact on additional activities, such as fishing and sporting rights, and how best to protect them.
- HS2 Ltd will also appoint an agricultural liaison officer experienced in agricultural matters who will be contactable by telephone 24 hours a day,
seven days a week, during the construction of the Phase 2a works on agricultural land. The guide also sets out the template for the individual farm plans produced for those affected by the scheme.

**HS2 Environmental Roundtable**

109. The Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd organise regular roundtable meetings to discuss high level principles, such as engagement and decision making processes, environmental sustainability and how HS2 fits into wider strategy. The discussions take place between ministers and senior officials and the minutes of these meetings are published. Stakeholders invited to the meeting include representatives from the Local Government Association, who are able to raise issues involving health appraisal and community health associated with HS2, and the National Farmers Union and Central Association of Agricultural Valuers who are able to raise concerns on behalf of their members over the development of HS2.

**Community Update Newsletters and Regional Factsheets**

110. HS2 Ltd also produced a series of community update letters and regional factsheets giving people further information about the scheme.

**Information Papers**

111. HS2 Ltd has created a large series of information papers designed to provide accurate concise information on a range of topics including:

- the Hybrid Bill
- Phase 2a operations
- Construction
- Environment
- Property and Compensation
- Route development
- Consultation and Engagement

**Protection of People's Data**

112. HS2 Ltd has a policy of protecting privacy and complying with relevant data protection and privacy legislation. If HS2 Ltd asks for personal information, it will:

- let the person know why it needs it;
- only ask for what it needs and not collect excessive or irrelevant information;
- make sure nobody has access to it who should not;
- not share it with other organisations unless it has told the person in advance or unless it is obliged to do so by law;
- only keep it for as long as it needs to; and

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- not make it available, or sell it, for commercial use, such as marketing.

113. In dealing with personal information, HS2 Ltd will:
- value the personal information entrusted to it and make sure it respects that trust;
- abide by the law when it comes to handling personal information;
- consider the privacy risks when it is planning to use or hold personal information in new ways, such as introducing new systems; and
- provide training to staff who handle personal information and respond appropriately if personal information is not used or protected properly.

Vulnerable People Strategy

114. HS2 Ltd are developing a route-wide vulnerable people strategy. This is a process that will support vulnerable people during construction activity. The definition of vulnerable in this case is “Persons who possess one or more protected characteristics and who therefore may require a reasonable adjustment as a result of the construction and operation of HS2”. This definition is based upon the statutory concept which underpins the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

115. The strategy will set out how HS2 Ltd identify vulnerable people (e.g. through consultation on the ES and EQIA, from the HS2 Ltd helpline, engagement with the public, Local Authorities and from contractors). It will then set out how the assessment of needs will be made (e.g. information paper E23 discussing special cases, the code of construction practice, community engagement strategy and a new vulnerable people assessment panel). The vulnerable people assessment panel will assess the impacts of noise-related and other construction activity, and provide proportionate recommendations. The strategy will also cover the importance of taking early action and of referring vulnerable people to in-house experts or to an advocacy specialist support service where necessary.
Engagement with Other Government Departments

116. Officials at other Government Departments were consulted during the preparation of this report to understand whether there were case studies or methodologies used to assess mental health for other infrastructure schemes that could be used to inform this report. These discussions were informal and represented initial views of officials and should be read in that context. Given the time available for this report we have not sought formal responses from other Departments (e.g. from a government write round).

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

117. BEIS was consulted to see whether the assessment undertaken for powerstations (including new nuclear), windfarms, fracking etc used any specific methodology to assess health impacts over and above that undertaken for HS2.

118. BEIS Officials provided the links to the health impact assessment undertaken for the Hinkley Point C (HPC) Development Consent Order from 2011\textsuperscript{18}. This contains similar assessment methodology to that undertaken for the HS2 ES (e.g. consideration of noise, air quality, traffic movements, temporary workers) but with additional consideration for impacts from radiation exposure (not applicable for HS2). The report also referred to contributions made to improve energy efficiency as part of its corporate social responsibility work.

119. The health impact assessment acknowledges that little information is available on mental health in Somerset but noted that in 2008 53,800 GP patients in Somerset aged 15-64 were diagnosed with neuroses ranging from anxiety and depression to phobias and obsessive compulsive disorder. It compared these figures with national trends and concluded they were similar. It then drew on the findings of modelling based on a 1993 National Psychiatric Morbidity Survey to estimate which wards in the surrounding area were predicted to have a higher predicted rate of common mild to moderate health conditions and therefore require further information to more effectively address health concerns and risks in those wards.

120. The report goes on to detail a health action plan for the scheme, drawing on the information contained in its ES, and focussed on the welfare of the workers constructing the scheme. This includes raising awareness of local counselling services and voluntary organisations which could help to support local health care providers. It also incorporates a property compensation and noise insulation scheme.

121. The HPC scheme introduced a community impact fund of £20million with the intention of supporting local initiatives which enhance quality of life in settlements affected by the HPC project. This fund is split into 3 initiatives (a small grants programme, a community cohesion programme and a community impact mitigation fund). The first £7.2million of this fund has been allocated to projects.

122. BEIS Officials have also provided a link to the main document of the 2010 Appraisal of Sustainability (AoS) that was undertaken of the Government’s revised draft Nuclear National Policy Statement (NPS) to inform its preparation. The AoS document considered the effects of the proposed policy put forward in the NPS and alternatives, and the sites that were to be assessed for their suitability for the deployment of new nuclear power statements.

123. The AoS was carried out using a set of sustainability objectives as a way of identifying and evaluating the potential significant effects of the revised draft NPS on communities and the environment. Under the theme of ‘human health and well-being’ a specific AoS objective was taken into account as part of the appraisal ‘to avoid adverse impacts on mental health’. 

124. The main document does not identify specific mental health impacts of the options for taking forward the NPS that were considered in the AoS. However, it does note that the options considered for the NPS to include a list of specific sites for new power stations and siting criteria could help increase certainty and understanding of the likely human health and well-being affects that would occur at a strategic level. The NPS considered by the AoS was formally designated in 2011.

125. BEIS Officials have also signposted us to the 2017 Scoping Report as part of the development of an AoS in relation to a new nuclear NPS which is currently under development by the Government. The Scoping Report is an early stage in its development, and provides an opportunity for relevant stakeholders to comment on the scope of the AoS. The report proposes some high level sustainability objectives for use in the subsequent AoS that include ‘to protect and enhance the physical and mental health of the population’. The report invites responses from consultees on the sustainability objectives proposed to be taken forward through the AoS, among other matters.

126. Also within the energy policy area we have located Public Health England advice on possible impacts from shale gas extraction published in 2014. This makes reference to the importance of health impact assessment and

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capturing psychological and social impacts but doesn’t go into any detail of how to do this.

HM Treasury (HMT) and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA)
127. Officials from HMT and the IPA were not aware of any similar studies undertaken for major infrastructure schemes but highlighted some ongoing research being undertaken for the Thames Tideway Tunnel on Health and Safety of their employees which could be applicable in any larger review of health assessment.

128. They pointed to the existing appraisal system which captures health impacts from noise, light pollution, traffic impacts etc and the compensation for blight. They also referred to the difficulties in assessing subjective feelings, establishing direct causation of stress and anxiety and the potential liability and impact on future infrastructure schemes which would need careful consideration.

129. They also highlighted flagged the importance of considering existing Greenbook guidance\(^{23}\) and previous Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) and suggested checking the findings of the EQIA for the Crossrail scheme in any wider review.

Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC)
130. Officials at DHSC suggested there is no formula or standard set of indicators used to measure localised effects on mental health by major schemes. As schemes differ, this would be difficult to standardise.

131. DHSC provides advice on mental health effects to MHCLG and Local Authorities\(^{24}\) and expects mental health considerations to form part of the planning process, and suggests best practice would be to continue engaging with local communities to monitor effects.

132. The guidance referred to is for Local Planning Authorities which should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making. It refers to sections of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
133. Officials at MHCLG pointed to the existing National Planning Policy Framework which includes sections on promoting healthy communities and on the health and wellbeing guidance document mentioned in the paragraphs above.


\(^{24}\) [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing)