

Healthy Workplace Features

Overview

The purpose of this Appendix is to signpost to, and further communicate the relevance of mitigation measures outlined in the Travel Plan and other technical disciplines to contribute to health and wellbeing improvements within the workplace and surrounding local communities.

When assessing and mitigating potential health pathways associated with a development project, it is useful to consider three broad domains of public health, namely: health protection; health promotion; and health care. The relevance of these three domains are outlined in more detail below.

Health Protection

As detailed in **Chapter 24: Human Health** of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), all of the potential material effects on human health associated with the construction and operation of the proposed project are already addressed through the individual EIA technical disciplines to objective thresholds set to be protective of the environment and health, and include a series of embedded and further topic specific mitigation to minimise disruption and impact on the environment and health. On this basis, no further health assessment or mitigation is required to minimise potential health effects.

Health Promotion

Education, Employment and Income

Key features of the proposed project with the potential to benefit health are largely associated with increased opportunities for income and employment during both construction and operation.

The proposed project, includes a series of mitigation and support initiatives intended to maximise the uptake of socio-economic health benefits locally through a dedicated Local Employment Scheme document, which includes:

- the creation of a Local Employment Partnership, to address barriers to employment uptake, create employment and training opportunities to those out of work, and aid in unlocking the wealth of talent available locally;
- advertisement of initial employment opportunities locally;
- provision of apprenticeship and work placement opportunities to students within the local area;
- where possible, use locally available labour for specialist skills and trades and make purchases from local businesses providing goods and services; and
- the inclusion of socio-economic Key Performance Indicators (KPI) against which local employment, skills and training progress can be monitored, and refined where appropriate.

The proposed measures outlined above thereby support the uptake of long-term socio-economic health and wellbeing opportunities locally, and contribute towards reducing associated transport impacts, while further improving the viability of active transport as a modal choice.

Healthy Workforce

It is recognised that promoting a healthy workforce can lead to higher productivity, a more engaged workforce, higher staff retention and lower levels of absenteeism by preventing or delaying the onset of poor health (Ref. 24.4). Investing in the promotion of healthy behaviours is therefore not only

beneficial to individual health and wellbeing, but has wider benefits to business and supports the delivery of local health promotion and care priorities and objectives.

As summarised below, there are a number of committed features intended to encourage healthy behaviours within the workforce, including on-site infrastructure, off-site infrastructure and staff initiatives.

On-site Infrastructure

Care has been taken to ensure that the design of the proposed project includes facilities to encourage the workforce to engage in modes of active transport and therefore benefit from associated physical activity. On-site facilities include:

- the provision of lockers, shower and changing facilities; and
- adequate provision of secure covered cycle spaces.

The proposed project will also supply spaces and facilities designed to provide adequate shelter and shading (e.g. picnic area). Such spaces are important to employee wellbeing as they present an opportunity for socialising and relaxing within the working environment.

In addition, the proposed project will include high level landscaping to offset the loss of farmland and associated field edge vegetation through the development of a series of biodiverse and ecologically rich zones. Landscaping will incorporate a number of diverted footpaths along with new footpath links to ensure connectivity through the site and into surrounding areas. As a result, the landscaped areas will provide leisure opportunities for the workforce during breaks.

Off-site Infrastructure

To encourage the uptake of walking and cycling by employees, the proposed project has committed to improving off-site infrastructure to ensure that travel is as safe as possible. This includes the provision of suitable pedestrian and cycling infrastructure between the Main SFRI site, the surrounding villages and the southern residential areas of Northampton.

Table 1 provides a summary of relevant committed off-site infrastructure improvements.

Table 1: Committed Off-site Infrastructure Improvements

Scheme	Proposed Improvement Summary
Towcester Road Footway/Cycleway Improvements	<p>Towcester Road will provide the main link for pedestrians and cyclists accessing the site from the southern residential areas of Northampton.</p> <p>The existing footway along Towcester Road will be widened to accommodate a suitable footway/cycleway. The proposed footway/cycleway will measure 3m in width. The works will make up part of a new north-south pedestrian/cycle link between the neighbouring communities of Milton Malsor and Blisworth.</p>
Pedestrian Crossing points at Towcester Road/Rectory Lane Priority Junction	<p>A 2m wide footway will be provided on the nearside corner of the Towcester Road/Rectory Lane Priority junction.</p> <p>In addition, a dropped kerb crossing point with tactile paving will be provided on Towcester Road immediately south of the junction with Rectory Lane and on Rectory Lane immediately east of the junction with Towcester Road.</p>
Barn Lane Pedestrian Link	<p>A pedestrian route within the site will provide a link to an existing Public Rights of Way which emerges onto Barn Lane and links to a footway on the eastern side of the carriageway.</p> <p>The footway is to be widened from 1m to approximately 2m to accommodate pedestrian movements.</p>

Staff Initiatives

A large element of encouraging the workforce to engage in modes of active transport will include raising awareness and communicating the health benefits of physical activity. During staff inductions, each employee will be provided with a “Sustainable Travel Pack” which will include recommended walking and cycle routes, and will provide details of national awareness events which the proposed project will be taking part in such as the “Cycle to Work Week”, “Walk to Work Day” and “Green Transport Week”. Sustainable Travel Packs will also be available in staff rooms and communal areas, and similar information will be promoted on noticeboards throughout the site.

The proposed project has committed to exploring the “Cycle 2 Work” scheme and in addition will liaise with local cycle, outdoors and adventure retailers about the possibility of discounts on kit such as bikes, walking boots and accessories to encourage employees to engage in active transport, whether it be on the daily commute or during leisure time.

Health Care

The proposed project seeks to maximise the uptake of employment locally, and does not include any additional residential development that might increase local resident population or affect demand of local provision of health care. It will however create a significant increase in staff presence within the local area which presents a greater occupational health requirement to manage, and an opportunity to complement local public health care initiatives and campaigns.

During construction, appropriate occupational health care provision will be in place to identify and manage occupational hazards to staff, and to support their welfare. Once operational, communal areas and noticeboards will advertise local and regional health promotion campaigns which aim to

maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of the workforce through raising awareness of both work and lifestyle related health issues. In addition, the use of tool box talks and presentations will ensure that the full extent of the workforce are aware of health promotion campaigns and provided with the relevant information make positive health changes.

Health promotion campaigns broadly fall under the following headings, and are discussed below.

- Occupational Health Promotion: Designed to reduce the risk of workers contracting occupational disease such as dermatitis, asthma, noise induced hearing loss and injuries associated with manual handling.
- General Health Campaigns: The general health campaigns are aimed at improving workers general health through advice on smoking, diet, alcohol, and stress with the potential for life long health benefits.
- Targeted Health Education: Targeted health campaigns will be launched should an adverse health trend be identified from the data collected by the occupational health service provider relating to accident frequency rates and statistics from the lifestyle screening campaign.

To maximise effectiveness, it is intended that occupational health service provider will also link in with the health promotion campaigns offered through the Northamptonshire County Council Public Health Team, therefore reinforcing key health messages by aligning with:

- safety campaigns and messages;
- national campaigns; and
- responding to trends and emerging issues.

References

- Ref Northamptonshire County Council, "About healthy workplaces," n.d.. [Online]. Available:
24.4 <https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/health/healthy-workplaces/Pages/about-healthy-workplaces.aspx>. [Accessed 22 February 2018].