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# THE ROLE OF HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENTS IN LAND USE PLANNING

**22ND JUNE 2005**  
**IMPERIAL COLLEGE, LONDON**

## Introduction

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is increasingly being used to assist planners and politicians with their decision-making on a range of planning applications for urban regeneration, waste management facilities, large residential developments as well as more conventional polluting industry. However, many of the approaches to HIA that have evolved in recent years sit uncomfortably within the planning system.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the provision of health services is not the main determinant of public health and that a range of socio-economic factors such as employment, education, housing and the environment are of greater importance. HIA is designed to check whether a proposal might inadvertently damage people's health or reinforce social inequalities.

Sustainability lies at the heart of the new planning system, which itself is based on the principles of putting people at the centre and using scientific knowledge. Greater public consultation is required than previously and therefore local health concerns are likely to figure more prominently in the planning process in the future. Local planning authorities are also being encouraged to consult with Primary Care Trusts over certain applications, but there is evidence that they are not in the position to respond appropriately. This will be explored in the conference.

Guidelines for HIA have been produced, drawing on the experience of environmental impact assessment (EIA), but are more relevant to policy assessment than to specific planning applications.

There are significant differences between HIA and EIA; not least that EIA is often mandatory while HIA is not a statutory requirement. Health impacts within EIA are generally assessed in the context of environmental quality standards (EQS) rather than looking at the medical evidence such as dose-response relationships. That is, it is implicitly assumed that if an EQS is achieved then there will be no health impact. Where socio-economic factors are included in an EIA the analysis is not extended to the positive health impact of, for example, job creation or regeneration.

The practitioners of HIA tend to be drawn from the social sciences and often find it difficult to work within the science-based approach of the planning system. Significant weight has been given in some HIAs to public views, which run counter to widely accepted scientific or medical views.

For private developers to voluntarily commission an HIA they need to see a clear benefit. It must assist the process rather than be seen as giving unnecessary prominence to marginal issues. It must also be well defined at the project onset so that the developer can understand the financial commitment being made. One of the benefits for HIA to developers is that it is often able to counter any negative effects with the positive effects for the community. Thus a major incentive for developers is that HIA can be used to promote a proposal's benefits.

The conference aims to bring together all the professionals working in this emerging field, that is those working in public health, urban

regeneration, land use planning, land development and pollution control, to share experiences and discuss the issues, and move towards a consensus on the way forward.

## Venue

Imperial College London is central London's leading academic conference centre. The Charing Cross Campus is situated in Hammersmith, and is only a 3 minute walk from Baron's Court tube station. The college offers a hotel booking service that has specially negotiated rates on local accommodation. Please visit their website for further details [www.imperial.ac.uk/conferences](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/conferences).

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# Programme

9.30 - 10.00

## Registration

10.00 - 10.15

## HIA and Planning: The Issues

Claire Holman, Peter Brett Associates

10.15 - 10.40

## An Overview of HIA: National Drivers, Local Application

Debbie Abrahams, IMPACT, Liverpool University

- Background to the policy context for HIA
- Application of HIA to the Local Development Framework in Liverpool

10.40 - 11.05

## Spatial Planning and Health Improvement: What Place for HIA?

Ben Cave, Ben Cave Associates

- How can the health sector play a more strategic role in land use decisions?
- The current policy context requires us to look at social, economic and environmental issues ... how do we take advantage of this opportunity?
- What does *health* bring to urban and rural planning?

11.05 - 11.15

## Discussion

11.15 - 11.35

## Refreshments

11.35 - 12.00

## The Role of Quantification in HIA

Prof Mark McCarthy, UCL

- Development of HIA quantification from EIA in relation to an exposed population
- Development of a computer model, and its use to quantify health impacts of waste incineration and a new transport service
- Future steps for quantification of health impacts of broader planning such as regeneration and land use

12.00 - 12.25

## The Role of Standards and Dose-Response Relationships in Land Use Planning

Alison Searle, Institute of Occupational Medicine

- Environmental quality standards allow an initial judgement about whether a proposed development is likely to give rise to unacceptable impacts on health
- The results of epidemiological studies suggest small adverse effects may be possible even where standards are met and there are many substances for which no environmental quality standards exist
- The use of dose-response information combined with modelling of predicted exposures allows a quantitative assessment of effects associated with changes in environmental quality

12.25 - 12.45

## Discussion

12.45 - 13.45

## Lunch

13.45 - 14.10

## Capacity for HIA

Anna Boltong, London Health Observatory

- Who is being trained in HIA?
- Do they go on to conduct HIA?
- Who is available to be commissioned to conduct HIA?

14.10 - 14.35

## HIA Case Study – The London Olympics Bid

Andrew Buroni, Environmental Resources Management

- The description of the existing community in the Lea valley, in terms that define its susceptibility to changes in health
- Engagement with stakeholders
- Risks and benefits, as assessed against the 'no games scenario'

14.35 - 14.50

## Discussion

14.50 - 15.10

## Refreshments

15.10 - 15.35

## HIA for Regional Spatial Strategies

Speaker tbc

15.35 - 16.00

## Health Impacts and Planning – A Wider View

Alan-Weban Smith, Independent Consultant

- Planning is about promoting a positive agenda, not just minimising adverse effects of development.
- Some of the health impacts of development will be direct and relatively straight-forward to measure (eg traffic generation and air quality). However, land-use planning also influences economic and social polarisation, and the indirect and longer-term effects of this on health and well-being are likely to be much more important.
- The relationship between health and land-use planning is a two-way street: public health professional need to reflect on the fact that health decisions ranging from the spatial pattern of primary and intermediate care to the location of major hospitals are sometimes taken with very little regard to the wider economic, social or environmental effects

16.00 - 16.15

## Discussion

16.15 - 16.30

## Closing Comments - Chair

**Please note: we are able to support anyone with special needs attending this event.**

# Booking Form

## Delegate Details

I would like to register to attend the conference **The Role of Health Impact Assessments in Land Use Planning** being held on the 22nd June 2005 at The Imperial College, London.

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Address for Correspondence \_\_\_\_\_

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I am content for my email to be included on CIWEM's email list and I am happy to receive CIWEM's free monthly email update e-news

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| <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIO-ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER        |

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## Terms and Conditions

A charge of £40 (+VAT) will be levied for cancellations made up to 20 days prior to the event. Cancellations after this period will be liable for payment of the full fee. Payments should be received 30 days of receipt of invoice.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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## Enquiries and booking forms directed to:

**AE Technology Transfer, Richmond House,  
16 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds LS2 9HN**

Tel: 0113 2424200 Fax: 0113 2442166

Email: franceseldon@aquaviro.co.uk

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