

McCARTHY STONE
Life, well lived

Health Impact Assessment

St Chad's Drive, Kirkby



London



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Planning Potential Limited ('Planning Potential') have prepared this Health Impact Assessment ('HIA') on behalf of McCarthy Stone Retirement Lifestyles (MCS hereafter) to assess the Health Impact associated with the proposed retirement living development at the St Chad's Drive, Kirkby.
- 1.2. This assessment has been prepared in support of the following application for:

Full planning permission for the erection of a 53 no. apartment retirement living development (Use Class C3), landscaping, car parking and all associated works.
- 1.3. This has been written in accordance with the Council's guidance and checklist. This comprises a health profile of the local population (ward and borough), assessment of impacts, conclusions and recommendations. This is consistent with the Council's validation requirements (February 2019) requiring planning applications for major developments over 50 residential units to be accompanied by a HIA.
- 1.4. The purpose of the HIA is to assess the proposed development's effects on a healthy community. Knowsley's adopted Core Strategy (2016) defines a HIA as 'A recognised method of assessing the potential health impacts, positive or negative, of a policy, programme or project. Outcomes are in the form of recommendations to minimise possible negative health impacts and enhance predicted positive impacts'. This is consistent with the Department of Health (DoH) definition which includes: "...a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, program or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population". A HIA therefore identifies the positive and negative impacts of a proposed development on human health, and identifies ways to mitigate any negative impacts, and potentially enhance positive impacts to address health inequalities.
- 1.5. Further details about the proposals are contained within the accompanying Planning & Housing Statement, however in preparing an appropriate HIA, it is important to note that McCarthy Stone is the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities. Since 2010 they have opened 483 developments and today support more than 21,000 older people. In each location, they remain as the landlord and managing agent, providing lifestyle services to their homeowners. Schemes consist of 1- and 2-bedroom apartments within a single development with accompanying communal facilities, where, where appropriate, can include, a residents lounge and house manager's office. McCarthy Stone developments help residents stay happier and healthier for longer, enabling them to maintain their independence, find a community and make new friendships within a like-minded community, with care and support on hand when required.
- 1.6. The proposals are specific in that they provide an identified need for our aging population, and in doing so, the retirement living development supports and fosters healthy and active lifestyles for people over 60 years of age, therefore fundamentally providing for, maintaining, an enhancing a healthy community.
- 1.7. The scope of this HIA includes a desktop appraisal to establish the policy context and the current health baseline from a range of publicly available on-line resources. Relevant baseline conditions have been assessed against the development proposals.
- 1.8. The assessment has been prepared using the following legislative guidance and planning policy documents;
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021);
 - Planning Practice Guidance (PPG);
 - Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016)
 - Design Quality in New Development SPD (2016)

2. Site Description

- 2.1. The site sits within the urban fabric of Kirkby town centre. Within the Council's Core Strategy, Kirkby Town Centre is noted as being in need of significant intervention and investment to serve its local catchment and compete effectively with neighbouring centres (Policy CS10)
- 2.2. The site is made up of mixture of hardstanding, currently utilised as a "Pay and Display" Car Park and an area of grass to the northeast, with mature hedgerows and trees bounding the site. The site is bound to the north by St Chad's Health Centre, a new purpose built 3 storey building and Kirkby Police, Community Fire and Ambulance Stations to the south. Beyond County Road (A5208), which forms the northeastern boundary of the site, is a dense pocket of residential properties. The southwestern boundary of the site is St Chad's Drive which will provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the site. Beyond St Chad's Drive is the remainder of Kirkby town centre.

Figure 1: Site Context



Source: BrightSpace (2023)

Figure 2: Site Photograph



Source: Planning Potential site visit (August 2023)

- 2.3. As the site is located within Kirkby town centre, it is within walking/cycling distance of an array of local amenities and services. There is excellent pedestrian connectivity in the local area, presenting the opportunity to promote walking from the development site, particularly to the wider town centre. St Chad's Drive benefits from wide, well-maintained footpaths with dropped kerbs.
- 2.4. The site also benefits from being located close to local public transport links, offering an excellent opportunity to promote sustainable travel to and from the proposed development. The nearest bus stops are positioned approximately 200m south of the site along Webster-Drive, with both a westbound and an eastbound stop available. Further services to destinations such as Huyton and Tower Hill are available from additional bus stops located 350m north of the site along Hall Lane (A506). Kirkby bus station is also situated within walking distance of the site being located 450m west (6-minutes' walk) along Cherryfield Drive, where an array of bus services are accessible.

3. Scope of the HIA

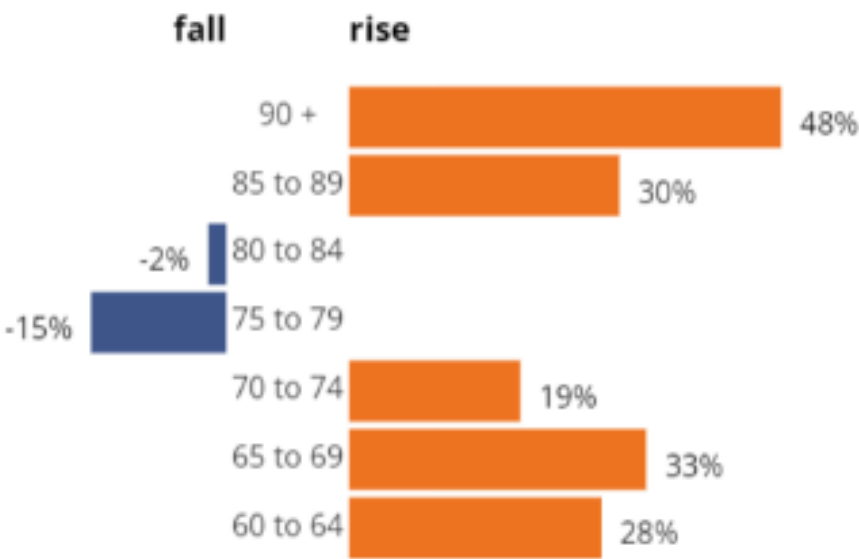
- 3.1. This HIA focusses on the impacts the proposals will have on the end occupiers of the retirement living development only, such is the focussed nature of the proposals. In demonstrating how the development will support healthy living environments, it assesses the immediate and wider area for which it is reasonable to expect the residents to benefit.

4. Health Profile of affected population

Age Profiles

- 4.1. Population data for Knowsley Council and the wider region is obtained from the ONS Census 2021¹. The data shows that the population size has increased by 5.9%, from around 145,900 in 2011 to 154,500 in 2021. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800.
- 4.2. There has been an increase of 13.8% in people aged 65 years and over between 2011 and 2021 across the Knowsley area. This correlates with the finding that there are more people than ever aged 65 years and over in England, with more than one in six (18.4%) aged over 65 years on Census Day in 2021.

Figure 4.1 Knowsley Population Change by age group, 2011-2021



Source: Office for National Statistics Census 2021

- 4.3. The above graph shows that in Knowsley, every age cohort from 60 years of age and over increased, save for two.

Health Profiles

- 4.4. The health of people in Knowsley is generally worse than the England average. Knowsley is one of the 20% most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England. At a district wide level, Knowsley has a Health Index Score (2020) of 88.0². The Health Index score has a baseline of 100, which represents England’s health in 2015. A score higher than 100 means that an area has better health for that measure than was average in 2015, lower than 100 means worse health than the 2015 average. Specific to the proposal for a retirement living development, Knowsley’s score for health relating to “access to green space” and “access to services” is better than the score for England as a whole, with the latter looking distance to GP services, distance to pharmacies, distance to sports or leisure facilities, internet access, and patients offered acceptable GP practice appointments.

Life Expectancy

- 4.5. The Local Authority Health Profile (2019) states that the life expectancy for men (76.6 years) and women (80.4 years) are both below the regional and England averages³.

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000011/>
² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/articles/howhealthhaschangedinyourlocalarea2015to2020/2022-11-09>
³ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/E08000011.html?area-name=Knowsley>

Injuries and Ill Health

- 4.6. The hospital admission rate for hip fractures, diabetes diagnosis rate and dementia diagnosis rate are below (worse) than the England average. The % of physically inactive lifestyles is also above the regional and national averages.

Earnings

- 4.7. According to 2022 data⁴, the gross weekly pay for full-time workers in Knowsley is £614. This is slightly above the North West (£602.30) but below the national average (£642).

Economic Inactivity

- 4.8. According to 2022 data⁵, 10.9% of the Knowsley population is retired. In comparison, the North West average is 12.5% and the national average 13.3%.

4.9. *Lower Layer SOA (Knowsley 015E)*

- 4.10. At the lower layer super output area that captures the application site (using 2011 census data)⁶, the most local output area had a population on 5,963, with 24% 60 years of age or older. 9.7% were widowed or a surviving partner, and the health of local population was broken down as follows:

- Very good – 42.1%
- Good – 29.2%
- Fair – 15.9%
- Bad – 9.9%
- Very bad – 2.9%

Other

- 4.11. As of 2021, Knowsley is the 11th most densely populated of the North West's 39 local authority areas, with around 13 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land⁷.

Health Impact Assessment of Knowsley Local Plan (2012)

- 4.12. At the time of publishing, the HIA found that life expectancy within the Borough is lower than the national average for both males and females. Rates of lung cancer, respiratory disease, coronary heart and cardiovascular disease are higher than national and regional levels. Recorded crimes within the Borough have significantly reduced within recent years, although perception of crime has not fallen.
- 4.13. In terms of mental health, evidence suggests that Knowsley residents have relatively low mental wellbeing and are less likely to join sports clubs, religious groups or educational groups. However, Knowsley residents report positively around local identity and belonging, and satisfaction with their local area.
- 4.14. With specific reference to housing, the HIA references the Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) checklist which recognises that access to decent and adequate housing is critically important, especially for the very young and very old in terms of health and wellbeing. It also recognised the predicted significant increase in the population aged 65 years old plus. This increase in older householders will have implications for health and support services, extra care housing, and the long-term suitability of accommodation, equity release schemes, adaptations, and other age – related care requirements.

⁴ Labour Market Profile- Knowsley <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157103/printable.aspx>

⁵ Labour Market Profile- Knowsley <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E05000885>

⁶ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E01006481>

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000011/>

5. Identification and Assessment of Health Impacts

5.1. In accordance with the Council's guidance, this section of the report will explain how the development has the potential to impact on health and wellbeing objectives.

5.2. The main benefits of the proposed development are as follows:

Social Benefits

5.3. The direct health and wellbeing impacts of retirement living developments are numerous. In addition to McCarthy Stone residents having their own private apartments, all residents have access to and benefit from communal facilities, which, where appropriate, can include, a resident's lounge, and communal courtyard & gardens. The developments help residents stay happier and healthier for longer, enabling them to maintain their independence, find a community and establish new relationships.

5.4. Retirement living developments have been linked to improved quality of life, psychological and social well-being through meeting older people's needs for comfort, support, companionship and fun. The transition to such living arrangements is also known to reduce or delay the need for primary care which can minimise the impact on health services.

Physiological Benefits

5.5. Retirement living creates a safe environment which encourages residents to circulate. All communal areas are well lit and flat, minimising the potential for slips and falls. All developments have a house manager/ caretaker onsite to respond to any concerns or queries as appropriate. Such presence also provides additional security for residents who wish to leave their apartment doors open during the day and interact with others.

5.6. Fuel poverty and an aging, unsuitable housing stock is linked to thousands of deaths each winter. McCarthy Stone retirement developments are constructed using modern methods of construction and make use of sustainable techniques and technologies to ensure all buildings are extremely efficient and well-insulated, helping to protect residents from the elements.

Meeting the Need for Specialist Housing

5.7. Millions of older people are currently unable to move from their existing homes into something better suited to their evolving needs. At present, c.7,000 new retirement housing units are delivered annually, compared with demand for 30,000. The UK is facing a housing crisis and given our ageing population, more and more older people are acutely affected. The 2021 Census data has shown that 18.6% of the UK population is now over 65, compared to 16.4% in 2011. This is a population of nearly 13 million older people that is expected to grow by a further five million in the next 20 years.

5.8. There is an acute shortage of specialist accommodation in the UK that meets the needs of our aging population. McCarthy Stone is seeking to improve the affordability, flexibility and choice of later living accommodation, recognising that there has been an inequality of provision that has led to many in the UK regarding specialist later living housing options as being unsuitable for their needs, or too expensive.

5.9. The importance role and need to provide much needed specialist accommodation for local people is set out in the accompanying Planning Statement. This confirms an identified need and projected growth in demand for high quality retirement living accommodation in Knowsley due to an aging population. The Framework confirms that a sufficient number and mix of housing is required to support strong, healthy, vibrant and healthy communities. The delivery of new developments to contribute towards raising aspirations and associated health outcomes is therefore a significant pillar of sustainability.

5.10. The re-use of brownfield land at appropriate densities in a sustainable location removes the need to build on greenfield land elsewhere. This is a significant planning benefit which can help to relieve pressure to develop on undeveloped and/ or more remarkable green belt and open spaces used, commonly used for recreation and sport, helping to improve health and social outcomes.

5.11. The highly sustainable & accessible location of the development will encourage residents to make use of the range of local facilities and amenities by foot and other modes of sustainable transport. The health outcomes of this are the propensity to increase physical activity, reduce obesity and improve air quality through the reduced need to drive.

Economic Benefits

- 5.12. A further positive impact of the application proposals is the on-going investment into the local economy represented by full and efficient use of the vacant brownfield site.
- 5.13. The redevelopment of the site will support 65 local residents who in turn will support the local economy through additional expenditure. McCarthy Stone also have a policy of local procurement where possible and practical.
- 5.14. *Environmental & Sustainability Considerations*
- 5.15. McCarthy Stone have defined four imperatives in their Sustainability Strategy: creating communities; sustainable living; developing people and; building clean and green.
- 5.16. Focussing on sustainable living and building clean and green, McCarthy Stone's objective include net zero carbon for all new building by 2030, a sustainable sourcing policy, reduced energy and carbon emission across the estate, 99% of our site waste to be diverted from landfill and continually reduce waste per home and all new sites to be Considerate Constructors.
- 5.17. At a more local level and specific to the proposals at Kirkby, the development will introduce significant streetscape benefits to St Chad's Drive through the creation of an attractive building and landscaping- in place of the underutilised brownfield site. The proposals make use of modern methods of construction (MMC) and also include a commitment to the use of PV panels and EV charging points which supports the transition to a low carbon future. The application site's sustainable location also encourages walking, with wide, well maintained, and lit pavements providing convenient access to/ from the surrounding uses and amenities which includes access to open space such as Webster Park to the south of the site. The site is also well connected to a number of public right of ways and other footpaths.
- 5.18. Perceived disadvantages of development relate to a temporary period of construction. This would include environmental factors such as noise & dust emissions and construction traffic. However, these impacts apply to all development, and McCarthy Stone are willing and supporting of the Council securing appropriate mitigation through the use planning conditions.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Council's validation checklist advises applicants to provide recommendations as well as future monitoring and management arrangements. This can be used as a means to assess developments and maximise their health benefits. These can and should include:
- Submission of a Construction Method Statement to ensure the residential amenity of existing and proposed residents and businesses is protected as much as reasonably and practically possible during the construction period.
 - As detailed in the Design and Access Statement, the scheme should follow a clear assessment of constraints and opportunities to provide a deliberate, considered and well-designed retirement living development.
 - In terms of sustainability, the materials chosen, and choice of construction methods should be considered with environmental sustainability in mind. Relevant to the McCarthy Stone proposals, this includes adopting a 'fabric first' approach, and the use of modern methods of construction (MMC) alongside other sustainable construction techniques and technologies including PV panels and EV charging points.
 - Elements such as thermal performance, water usage and natural daylight should be fully considered to ensure the project maximises opportunity for energy efficiency and design. For example, McCarthy Stone make use of mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) in the apartments to reduce reliance on the main heating system and Air Source Heat Pump Hot Water Cylinder for water heating demands and water saving sanitaryware and flow restrictors.
 - A welcome pack to residents can be used to inform and encourage them to use the various open green spaces and walking routes in the area, maximising recreation and health opportunities.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1. The assessment of the proposed development against relevant health indicators demonstrates the positive impacts and effects that the retirement living scheme will deliver in respect of health.
- 7.2. Through the redevelopment of an underutilised brownfield site, the most sustainable use of the site would be delivered; access to specialist housing in a highly, sustainable and accessible location to help promote, foster and encourage healthy lifestyles for its residents.
- 7.3. The McCarthy Stone business concept is specific in that it provides a solution to identified need for an aging population, and in doing so, the retirement living development supports and fosters healthy and active lifestyles for people over 60 years of age, therefore fundamentally providing for, maintaining, an enhancing a healthy community. Supporting the creation of healthy living environments and social interactions for an increasingly elderly population runs to the very heart of the proposals and the wider business model.