Health-Proofing Masterplan Designs: A Guide

A guide to reviewing masterplan designs from a healthy urban planning, public health and health impact assessment perspective [v1.1]

CASE STUDY 1: MIDDLEPORT
These case studies link to the publication Health-proofing Masterplan Designs: A Guide

See also the Middleport Regeneration Masterplan Options Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

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Front Cover: Old Pottery, Middleport, Stoke-on-Trent. Image courtesy of the Centre for Health Impact Assessment.
Middleport Masterplan Options Health Impact Assessment Analysis and Recommendations to Middleport Masterplanners
10 June 2009

Introduction
The aim of this paper is to present the discussion and emerging findings from a health impact assessment of the Three Draft Middleport Masterplan Options so that they can inform the development of the final Preferred Option.

A workshop was held on the Tuesday 5th May, between 9.15am and 12.30pm, at the North Staffordshire Medical Institute. It involved 10 participants from Stoke on Trent Primary Care Trust (PCT).

The workshop had two objectives:

a) to make PCT public health staff aware of the Middleport masterplanning process and the emerging draft plans; and

b) to discuss the three draft masterplan options for Middleport within the context of healthy urban planning, health promotion and public health strategy for Stoke-on-Trent and develop recommendations for what elements of the three options should be part of the Preferred Option.

Participants
The participants were:

Stoke-on-Trent PCT
Giri Rajaratnam, Director of Public Health
Zafar Iqbal, Deputy Director of Public Health
Judy Kurth, LSP Strategic Coordinator, WHO Healthy City Partnership
Nigel Bennett, Head of Public Head Governance and Delivery
Chris Leese, Professional Manager Lifestyle Support Programme
Toyin Amusan, Locum Consultant in Public Health
Mary Synnott, Associate Specialist/Screening Coordinator
Paul Trinder, Senior Public Health Information Specialist
Maureen Wiskin, Head of Health Improvement
Debra Richardson, Principal Health Improvement Specialist Tobacco & Obesity

Centre for HIA, Institute of Occupational Medicine (Facilitators)
Dr Salim Vohra, Director salim.vohra@iom-world.org
Judith Ball, Visiting Research Associate
Gifty Amo-Danso, HIA Research Assistant
Healthy Urban Planning Principles used to Guide the Analysis of Potential Health Impacts

Healthy Lifestyles
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote healthy exercise?
Low density housing, distant amenities, unsafe neighbourhoods

Social Cohesion
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote social cohesion?
Large/high traffic roads, large commercial schemes

Housing Quality
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote social cohesion?
Overcrowding, poor location/design/orientation, tall buildings

Access to Work
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote access to employment opportunities?
Inaccessible locations for commercial/industrial premises

Accessibility
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote access accessibility?
Public transport, accessibility of health/social care/other public services, access to business services e.g. banking/utilities

Local low-input food production
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote local food production with low input food production?
Allotments, community gardening, growing vegetable patches

Safety
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote safety and the feeling of safety in the community?

Equity
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote equity and the development of social capital?
Air quality and aesthetics
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote good air quality, protection from excessive noise and an attractive environment for living and working?

Water and sanitation quality
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote improved water and sanitation quality?

Quality of land and mineral resources
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote the conservation and quality of land and mineral resources?

Climate Stability
Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote climate stability (and reduce the potential impacts of climate change)?

Analysis of the Middleport Masterplan Vision and Objectives

• It was felt that the masterplan vision is in fact a vision for a healthy city – however the word ‘health’ is not included, and lay people may not make the connection between the vision (as it is written) and health.
• There was discussion about whether or not health objectives could or should be made more explicit in the vision and objectives of the master plan.
• A first suggestion was incorporating the word ‘healthy’ into the Vision. However, it was judged that adding ‘healthy’ does not necessarily change anything because people can have a very narrow view of what ‘health’ means i.e. that it is about health care, hospitals and GPs.
• A second suggestion was to change objective 4 to: “addressing the health and wellbeing needs of the community”.
• A third suggestion was to use wording so that it is clear that the Master Plan is about how people live their lives – not just roads and land use etc.
• There was discussion on the fact that regeneration will only work if the changes genuinely meet the needs of the community. Imposing solutions on the community will not work. Hence good community consultation and engagement is important.
• There was discussion about how health promoting principles could be built into the masterplanning process - in particular, how do you modify market realities? e.g.
new shops are good in theory, but how do you make sure that the new shop is not a takeaway selling unhealthy food?

**Analysis of the Housing Design**

- A comment was made that the design seems to be very traditional, and that new designs have been used elsewhere that encourage social interaction in shared spaces e.g. BBQ area. It was suggested that the developers explore such options and gain feedback from communities about them. For example the urban design work of Red or Dead led by Wayne Hemingway and other developments in Stoke, e.g. City Waterside, where building design and outdoor street furniture and trees and shrubbery have been used to create more inviting homes and outdoor public spaces.

**Analysis of Social Capital and Community Cohesion Issues**

- It was noted that social regeneration and community development is vital in this area alongside the physical environment regeneration.
- There was discussion about what is happening to bring the local community together. What forums or processes exist for people to come together and influence the future of this area (‘their own village’)? Parish council plays this role in other areas.
- It was also commented on that there would need to be community process that encouraged and developed local groups alongside the provision of any new community facilities so that local people could take ownership of these facilities and feel empowered to undertake community-based activities and events.
- One further comment was that as Stoke is characterised by villages, was it possible to build on this rather than fight against it? It was suggested that the recreation of a village identity could underlie the masterplan options.

**Analysis of Mental Wellbeing Issues**

- The process of change itself can have major impacts on wellbeing, particularly for older people, those being relocated, or those unsure of what is going to happen to their homes and their neighbourhood. Disruption, uncertainty, stress, sense of powerlessness need to be mitigated during the planning and construction process through good community engagement and involvement processes.
Analysis of Public Health Input & Partnership

- Comments were made that the PCT involvement in planning processes needs to be ongoing e.g. attend masterplan design meetings and build on public health input to date.
- It was also commented that while RENEW will have a high priority on social cohesion and economic development, the PCT may be in the best position to identify the biggest health needs or themes in the area and ensure that they are recognised in the final preferred masterplan option (e.g. it could be open space, or walk-ability). It was suggested that identifying the top few health priorities and pushing these may be the best approach.
- Use the local university’s ‘walkability index’ to see how the walkable the three masterplans are.
- It was suggested that the PCT link with Area Implementation Team (AIT) and/or neighbourhood renewal workers to coordinate work in Middleport, particularly in relation to investments/health promotion initiatives e.g. community what money might come from that – now called ‘supplementary gain’ - whereby communities can gain funding from private developers for public services (e.g. libraries, schools, health care facilities) that will be impacted by development.

Analysis of the Three Masterplan Options

Overall, three key themes emerged:

- A walkable community - walkable access to green space and other amenities;
- A socially rich and cohesive community – building on the creation of a community centre in a community that is currently fragmented by industry through a range of linked public and voluntary sector activities, events and funding to encourage local groups to form; and
- A physically active community – maximising the opportunities for active transport and outdoor act particularly through the three major greenspaces in the area.

Other comments

- It shouldn’t be assumed that the community values bottle kilns – many people want to look to the future, not the past. What has cultural significance to the community NOW?
- Burslem town centre does not draw shoppers from beyond the local area currently, so plan should not assume that this will be a major hub in future.
Likely affected groups

- Existing residents
- New residents
- Businesses – industry and retail (new and existing)
- Extra care residents

The Tables that follow build on the strengths and weaknesses identified by BDP and look at them in relation to the potential positive and potential negative health and wellbeing impacts that may emerge for each of the Options.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Option One</strong></th>
<th><strong>Potential positive health and wellbeing impacts are linked to:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Potential negative health and wellbeing impacts are linked to:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between housing, green space and commercial areas.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Placement of commercial areas reduces access to Grange Park. Separation of housing from Grange Park is not ideal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Industry backing Grange park means no natural surveillance outside of working hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New small areas of green space amongst existing housing Portvale/Woolrich/Morton.</td>
<td></td>
<td>New housing in Burslem has no easy access to greenspace (but do have the benefit of proximity to Burslem town centre).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added shops &amp; ‘hub’ at the corner of Newport and Furlong would be good for easy and walkable access to shops. Will this work as the ‘heart’ of the community?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The community is currently fragmented by placement of industry – no obvious centre or heart. It’s not clear how Option One will improve this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of new ‘extra care’ housing</td>
<td>Proximity to the health centre, shops, green space and community facilities is good.</td>
<td>Grouped together - doesn’t allow good integration with wider community. May create a ‘ghetto’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and connectivity</td>
<td></td>
<td>No walk/cycle path through Grange Park. Not clear if there are good public transport (bus) linkages from new and existing housing areas to Burslem Town Centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and amenities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where will young people gather? No children’s play area in Grange Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option Two</td>
<td>Potential positive health and wellbeing impacts are linked to:</td>
<td>Potential negative health and wellbeing impacts are linked to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between housing, green space and commercial areas.</td>
<td>Placement of commercial areas reduces access to Grange park. No real connectivity with green space.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social capital and community cohesion</td>
<td>The community is broken up by industry. There is no feel of a neighbourhood ‘centre’. Church could be better integrated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and connectivity</td>
<td>No walk/cycle path through Grange Park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and amenities</td>
<td>Provision for health centre and community facilities. This seems quite small</td>
<td>Very little key worker housing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Option Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Potential positive health and wellbeing impacts are linked to:</th>
<th>Potential negative health and wellbeing impacts are linked to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between housing, green space and commercial areas.</td>
<td>Grange Park bordered by housing allows better access to green space, and better natural surveillance – may improve safety of park.</td>
<td>Placement of extra care housing near industry and away from health centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middleport Park housing is close to the A500.</td>
<td>Access to greenspace difficult for the majority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social capital and community cohesion</td>
<td>Residential seems to be built around industry – separates the community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and connectivity</td>
<td>Lots of heavy traffic through residential areas to employment sites</td>
<td>Road through Grange Park may invite 'boy racers'; divides up green space and maybe a barrier to the use of the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and amenities</td>
<td>Retail amenities on the edge of area.</td>
<td>Community/cultural space seems very limited.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map of the Middleport Area, boundary identified by thick white line [Source: Google Maps]
HEALTH-PROOFING MASTERPLAN DESIGNS: A GUIDE - CASE STUDY 1: MIDDLEPORT

Middleport Masterplan Option 1

Key

Key Sites
1 Bournes Bank
2 Woods Pottery
3 Slater Street
4 Former Co-op Bakery
5 Furlong Industrial Area
6 Shirley Street

Middleport Town Centre
Burslem
Steellite
Newcastle Street
Middleport Burleigh Pottery
Furlong Mills
Newport Lane
Trent & Mersey Canal
Grange Park
Middleport Park

Key

Housing
New Housing-led Development
Existing Housing
Home Zones/Shared Surfaces

Extra Care Housing
New Extra Care Housing Development

Employment
New/Improved Employment
Existing Employment

Community Infrastructure
New Health Centre
New Community Facilities
New/Improved/Retained Uses
Existing Retail Uses

Open Space
Improved Open Space
Burslem Port Alignment
New Children’s Play Facilities
Stage Bank
Nature Reserve

Features/Landmarks
Bottle Kilns/Overas/Chimneys
Other Heritage Asset

Urban Design Strategy
Improved Public Realm
Nodes/Regional Points
Landmarks
Strategic Vistas
Memory Footage
Improved Pedestrian/Cycle Crossing
Middleport Masterplan Option 3

Key Sites
1. Bournes Bank
2. Woods Pottery
3. Slater Street
4. Former Co-op Bakery
5. Furlong Industrial Area
6. Shirley Street
Questions

- What is Park and Ride for? Where does it go to and from?
- What are the current and future plans for public transport in the area?
- Is there a mix of affordable and key worker housing planned for the areas of new housing development?
- Is there a mix of housing types i.e. detached, semi-detached, flats, bungalows as well as terraced housing?
- Is improvement of pedestrian crossings planned more generally long the whole length of Newcastle Street alongside the improvement in public realm?
- Are there any other formal or informal places of worship in the area aside from St John’s Church?
- Are opportunities for allotments/communal gardening planned in?
- How will car parking be handled?
- How was the location of the health centre arrived at?
- What kind of employment sites are we talking about? Do they include office type developments?
- What is the reasoning behind improving the housing stock near Middleport/Burleigh Pottery?
- How are people using Grange Park (and the other parks) currently?
- Where will businesses be moved if existing employment sites are converted into residential developments?
- What is the grey shaded area in Option 1, is this a home zone area (See below)?
Recommendations: General Principles

There are a lot of good features already built into one or all of the three options. This section provides general principles and specific recommendations/suggestions to further enhance the design and its potential for positive health and wellbeing impacts.

- Make parks as attractive, safe and accessible as possible, to encourage physical activity e.g. have Grange Park designed and co-managed by Council and local residents groups; develop lots of activities for residents of all ages (e.g. play equipment, seating and tables); landscaping; good lighting; easy access paths and access points; and keep it well maintained.
- Make better use of canal towpath and other parks as physical activity, key walking and cycling routes
- Have more foot/cycle shortcuts – especially to parks.
- Ensure no fast food in any new retail spaces that are developed.
- Locate new industrial sites towards Steelite rather than adjacent to Grange Park and cluster employments sites together so that they do not fragment the community too much. Office type developments are more suited to be adjacent to residential development.
- Incorporate through roads and/or wide or footpaths and cycleways through the employments sites (both new and existing) to create access points/crossings for residents to the canal and Grange Park.
- Support the greening/public realm and environmental improvements e.g. plant trees along the roads, improved street furniture, removal of non-essential signs.
- Ensure good legibility and signage so that people can easily access the canal and Grange Park as well as the other parks in the area.
- If possible, Extra Care Housing should be integrated into the wider community and remain close to health centre, shops and facilities.
- Support the creation of Home Zone areas throughout the development and additional safe crossing points across Middleport.
- Improved lighting across the whole development and particularly along the towpath and Grange Park.
- Grange park should have more footpaths and cycleways across it east-west connecting the two communities on either side of the park.
- Rebranding of Burslem Town centre recognising that most people are likely to go into Hanley to do their main shopping.
Specific Recommendations on the Masterplan Vision, Objectives and 3 Masterplan Options

These recommendations recognise the constraints and complexity of developing a masterplan that includes new and existing homes as well as new and existing employment sites.

Recommended amendments to the Vision and Objectives to include health and wellbeing

The words in bold have been added, and words that we suggest should be deleted have a line through them.

We considered adding the phrase ‘healthy and sustainable’ in the Vision but as people may link this to health care we have overall decided that it works better in the Objectives section.

Objectives
1. Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods
2. Achieving a Better Housing Choice
3. Strengthening Employment and Training Opportunities
4. Addressing the Health and Wellbeing Needs of the Community Needs
5. Delivering Improved Access
6. Creating a Good Quality Environment
7. Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets
8. Community Enhancement
Recommended and suggested elements that should considered in the development of the Preferred Option

Options 2 and 3 have better layout of housing to the south allowing houses that overlook and skirt Grange Park. In Option 1 the employment sites restrict park access to residents to the south and the placement of employment sites seems to surround the housing on the west side.

In addition, in Options 1 & 2 the improved housing to the north adjacent to the Steelite site is bound on two sides by the employment site and by Newcastle Street to the north creating an ‘island’ housing that is not well linked to the rest of housing in Middleport or to the other housing to the north. Option 3 is better as it creates a single block of employment uses adjacent to the Steelite site.

The location of the Extra Care Housing Development in Option 1 has better views and access to shops and services than that for Option 3. It would be better if the extra care housing was pepper-potted throughout the area if this was feasible. This would create a better mix across the whole Middleport area.
The employment site, or a significant proportion of it, adjacent to Duncalf Street could instead be used for new housing that would bridge the east and west blocks of housing and create a flow of housing that would mirror the integration of the communities on both sides of Furlong Mills. The same goes for the employment site to the northwest of St Johns Church.

Option 2 shows the best location for the community facilities – a central location near the proposed health centre as well as local shops and other amenities. The size of the community facility seems small. This could be an important hub for a range of community activities e.g. mother and toddler group, over 55’s lunch club, access courses, Saturday clubs for kids, etc.
The improved pedestrian and cycle crossing at the centre of Furlong Mills in Option 3 and the increased connecting east and west that this creates is very good.

The extensive Home Zones of areas of existing housing in Option 3 is very good and should be carried through to the new housing developments where possible.

There are potential positives and potential negatives for health and wellbeing with the proposed through road through Grange park. It would increase accessibility by road
for pedestrians, cyclists, buses as well as motor vehicles both to the park and through the Middleport area east-west as well as north-south. This could reduce traffic going through the residential areas from Furlong Mills and the other employment sites around it. There would need to be safe crossing points along the whole length and especially at junctions for pedestrians and cyclists that link up to footpaths and cycleways through Grange Park. There would also need to be landscape features and some form of ornamental fencing that can act as a barrier to stop young children running across the road. This fencing may also make the areas feel safer. It could also naturally create separate spaces for different kinds of play and recreational activities. It may also be worthwhile having some stopover points for people in cars so they could come by car and use Grange Park.

The road could be a low speed and or priority route for pedestrians, cyclists and buses.
There should be more play and seating areas within Grange Park with potentially a central place/focal point where people can sit and look around at the surrounding area with a café (with toilets) for example.

Option 1 creates additional greenspaces and play areas adjacent to Middleport/Burleigh Pottery which would provide important spaces for children’s play and adult relaxation.
FINAL PREFERRED OPTION