

Health Impact Assessment on the proposed M1 widening project

Report for Sheffield's Public Health Partnership Board

9 October 2006

Summary

This reports follows on from a report to Sheffield First for Health and Well-being in May 2006 and updates the partnership on progress.

What does the HIA cover?

The scheme developed by the Highways Agency aims to:

1. Widen the M1 from Junction 30 (Chesterfield) to junction 42 (Leeds), mostly from three lanes in each direction to four; and
2. Manage the demand for the extra road space with these measures being assessed for effect on air quality and traffic movements.

HIA aim

To investigate the negative and positive impacts of the M1 road widening project on health and thereby ensure that those responsible for planning decisions can make informed choices to benefit health and mitigate potential negative impacts.

HIA process

The HIA will be participatory by seeking to engage relevant stakeholders including members of the public in the process. The HIA will be undertaken in the following stages:

1. Literature Review – finding relevant data on the health impacts of road developments on health
2. Community Profile – developing a data set for the affected population which will enable the health impact to be quantified
3. Key Stakeholder Interviews – engaging key stakeholders in the process and understanding their areas of concern
4. Policy Appraisal – reviewing relevant policy to enable the HIA to make recommendations on future policy options

Integration with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The HIA will be integrated into the statutory EIA. This appears to be the first time that an HIA and EIA have been integrated to such an extent on a development of such a scale. Integration adds considerable value in terms of sharing information and ensuring that the scope of the EIA covers issues of relevance to human health.

Expected outputs

The HIA will develop and rank recommendations to minimise negative effects on health and maximise benefits. These will be disseminated to all stakeholders.

Timescale

The M1 work is to be commenced in 2010/2011. From 2010 until 2015 the M1 will have road works. The Health Impact Assessment will need to be completed by end 2007 to inform a possible Public Enquiry in 2008/2009.

How it is being coordinated?

The HIA is being led by the Director of Public Health from Rotherham and (John Radford) and Frances Cuning from Sheffield PCT who chair a steering group consisting of high level officers from relevant stakeholders. Rotherham PCT's HIA Officer (Natalie Pugh) provides management support to the whole HIA. A working group is responsible for undertaking the work set by the steering group. The HIA is largely unfunded with most work being undertaken locally 'in kind', although small amounts of money have been provided by the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency.

What has happened so far?

Literature review

The focus of the literature review to date has been around air quality. Further dimensions of the literature review are yet to be undertaken. A list of these areas has been sent to local academic public health departments as possible dissertation topics for Masters level students. However the timescale for this is problematic and there are issues of quality control. Other options for undertaking the literature review are being explored.

Community profiling

Support is being provided from Yorkshire and Humber Public Health Observatory to take this forward. The profile will be in two parts. A first part will collate data that are already available for the geographical areas being engaged by the Stakeholder Involvement group. These data will be presented to local communities as the basis for discussion on local views on possible health impacts. The second part will take modelled data from the Environmental Impact Assessment, specifically on air quality, and apply this to local health data to produce an assessment of health impacts. Local Authority air quality officers have been engaged in this process.

Stakeholder involvement

Some key stakeholders have been contacted and interviewed (e.g. Local Authorities, police, ambulance, No Widening M1 Group, Local Medical Committees, Government Office) and their views are being put into themes. Effects on air quality and the economy appear to be the two key themes that are emerging. Based on existing health and socio-economic profiles and proximity to the M1 and its major feeder roads, the group is beginning to identify communities that might be affected by the development. These

communities will be approached and their views on the health impacts of the development sought.

Policy appraisal

This group will undertake most of its work in the latter stages of the project. It will look at the policy context within which the development is taking place and will make recommendations as to how these policies might be used to improve health.

The Sheffield Public Health Partnership Board is asked to:

1. Note the progress being made with this HIA
2. Ensure the work is coordinated with other HIAs
3. Advise on the best way of engaging communities that might be affected in Sheffield

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