
Development Management Panel

**Report of the meetings held on 17th December 2012
and 21st January 2013**

Matters for Information

**14. LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENT –
DRAFT REVISION TO WIND POWER SPD**

As part of a consultation exercise due to close in January 2013, the views of the Panel have been requested on the content of a Draft update to the existing SPD on Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Turbine Development. Whilst aware that the subject of wind turbine development had evoked varied emotions amongst Members in the past, the Panel accepted that the Council's current SPD needs to be updated in order to take account of the National Planning Policy Framework and the evolving assessment of landscape sensitivity to such forms of development.

Arising from their discussion, it was understood that the new draft guidance would refer specifically to key landscape designations and that a companion document might be produced, at some time in the future, to offer appropriate guidance on the development of large scale solar farms.

Having indicated their support for the work being undertaken to update the 2006 wind power SPD and their willingness to apply the adopted new SPD when determining any future applications, Panel Members concluded that, given their disparate views on wind farm development, it would be appropriate if they responded individually, as Councillors, rather than as a Panel, to the consultation exercise.

**15. USE OF CONSULTANTS WHEN DEALING WITH APPLICATIONS
WHERE AGRICULTURE IS A FACTOR**

Arising from a study undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) and following a recommendation by the Cabinet, the Head of Planning & Housing Strategy has reviewed the procedure for dealing with development applications which involve agriculture.

In the interests of consistency of approach and advice, the Local Planning Authority previously had only used the services of one agricultural consultant to provide expert specialist advice on applications. Given recent experience, however, the Panel has accepted that there may be occasions when the services of other

specialist agricultural consultants would be beneficial to the consideration and determination of such applications particularly when farming practices or the needs of an enterprise are somewhat unusual.

Having considered a proposed approach to dealing with this type of application, the Panel has authorised the Head of Planning & Housing Strategy and/or the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) to decide, in future, whether agricultural or specialist consultant advice is required to assist in the determination of applications where agriculture is a factor.

In these circumstances, the Panel has agreed that all such applications be subject to a desk top assessment by the appropriate consultant and additional site visits only undertaken: if requested, and paid for, by the applicant; or requested by the Head of Planning & Housing Strategy and/or the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) and paid for by the Council.

16. REVOCATION OF THE EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN 2008 AND 'SAVED' POLICIES FROM THE STRUCTURE PLAN 2003

The Panel has been informed of the consequences of the Regional Strategy for the East of England (Revocation) Order 2012 which came into force on 3rd January 2013. The Order has revoked the East of England Plan 2008, the revision to the Plan relating to Accommodation for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England (the Regional Spatial Strategy), the Regional Economic Strategy 2008 and all Directions preserving policies in the Structure Plan in the East of England including the remaining policies in the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 2003. In practice, as neither the East of England Plan or the Structure Plan were now part of the Development Plan reference to them would no longer appear in reports to the Panel.

17. RESIDENTIAL WHEELED BINS – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATED POWERS IN RESPECT OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Developer Contributions SPD 2011 requires new housing development to make a contribution towards the provision of residential wheeled bins. For larger developments, the provision of a wheeled bin will be covered as part of a Section 106 Agreement. Applications for new housing received after January without the need for other obligations will now be required to complete a unilateral undertaking to secure the wheeled bin contribution. As there may be occasions when an application, acceptable in all other respects, could be referred to Members for determination only because the obligation to provide a wheeled bin has not been met, the Panel has authorised the Head of Planning & Housing Strategy or, in his absence, the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) to refuse an application for development in these circumstances given the Panel's view that Members should remain involved in the determination, predominantly, of major and significant applications.

18. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS

Over two meetings, the Panel has determined twenty applications, of which eighteen were approved and two refused. Amongst the applications considered were three of wider significance to the District. Subject to completion of a Section 106 Agreement, approval has been given to a revised scheme for a new foodstore, petrol filling station, retail and residential units and car parking on land between St John's Street and George Street, Huntingdon and to the use of land for 10 gypsy pitches for residential purposes at Brington Road, Catworth. The Panel also has advised the Planning Inspectorate that they would have been minded to refuse an application for three wind turbines and associated development on land north west of Church Farm, Rectory Lane, Southoe.

D B Dew
Chairman