
Development Management Panel

**Report of the meetings held on 20th May and
17th June 2013**

Matters for Information

1. REVIEW OF PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE PROCEDURES

The Local Government Act 2003 enabled local Planning Authorities to charge for pre-application advice provided any income received did not exceed the cost of providing the service. In common with neighbouring authorities in Cambridgeshire, the Panel approved the introduction of procedures to provide pre-application advice in April 2011. As it was timely to review these procedures after two years of operation, Panel has been advised that during this period up to 800 enquiries had been received of which 43% incurred a fee resulting in income of some £37,000 per year.

Having being briefed on the feedback received on the procedures at a Developer and Agents Forum, been assured that the procedures generally were working well and advised of some changes which would be made to the charges imposed for written advice and when dealing with major applications, the Panel has approved revised procedures for pre-application advice for implementation with effect from 3rd June 2013.

In future, Planning Services will also consider attending a greater number of office-based and site meetings when requested although charges for these also would have to allow for travelling time.

2. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT: 1ST JANUARY – 31ST MARCH 2013

The Panel has undertaken its regular review of the performance of the Development Management Service between 1st January – 31st March 2013 in comparison with the corresponding period in 2012.

Although the service had met the targets established for the determination of major and minor applications, the target of 80% for the determination of all 'other applications' has not been met in the quarter to the end of March 2013 (a figure of 76% had been achieved in this period).

The Panel noted that it was the intention to recruit two new temporary posts of Assistant Development Management Officer to assist in responding to 'other applications'. A significant increase in income

from planning fees over the quarter as a result of the submission of applications for major housing development, including St. Neots East, has given the service the opportunity to advertise for the two posts.

3. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Panel has approved fifteen applications over two meetings. Of these, twelve have been approved, two refused and one deferred at the request of the applicants to allow further information to be provided to the Development Management Service.

As an illustration of the way in which the Panel considers each application on its merits and following an expression of support from local people, approval has been given (subject to conditions which include measures to safeguard users of a nearby gliding club) for the installation of four wind turbines and on site equipment and infrastructure for generating renewable energy at St Mary's Road, Ramsey. After representations from the Ward and Parish Councillors including several from neighbouring authorities and an Action Group, the Panel has indicated that it would have refused for various reasons, the most significant of which related to the impact of the development on heritage assets, landscape character and amenity and residential amenity, an application for six wind turbines on a site south west of RAF Molesworth in the parish of Bythorn and Keyston. The application will now be determined by a Planning Inspector following a Public Inquiry likely to be timetabled for December.

The Panel also has indicated that it would have refused an application for a foodstore and 14 apartments on a site at Stukeley Road, Huntingdon as the applicant had failed to provide an adequate and robust sequential assessment and demonstrate that the proposal could not be located within Huntingdon Town Centre contrary to various national and local planning policies. As the applicant has submitted an appeal against non determination, this application also will be determined by an Inspector following a hearing on a future date.

D B Dew
Chairman