
Development Management Panel

**Report of the meetings held on 19th May, 16th June
and 21st July 2014**

Matters for Information

**1. WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 2014**

As a consultee, the Panel has considered the content of an updated supplementary planning document (SPD) relating to 'Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire'. The new SPD will ultimately consist of two parts. The first part will replace that adopted in 2006 and better reflect the National Planning Policy Framework (NDDF) and recent Planning Practice Guidance on renewable and low carbon energy. It will also acknowledge the development of a methodical approach to landscape sensitivity, seek to overcome inconsistencies in the previous SPD and recognise the need for guidance on the siting and design of small turbines. Part 2 will respond to concerns in respect of cumulative impacts of wind turbine development. Both the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance have confirmed that cumulative landscape and visual impact needs to be addressed as part of a Planning Authority's renewables strategy.

Having recognised that the updated SPD will provide more robust evidence and stronger support for the Council's position on wind energy development at public inquiries and during the development management process and having expressed satisfaction with responses made to representations received from a local Action Group, the Panel recommended that the Cabinet adopt the SPD as Council policy.

**2. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT: 1ST
JANUARY TO 31ST MARCH 2014**

The Panel has undertaken its regular review of the activities and performance of the Development Management Service over the period 1st January to 31st March 2014 in comparison with the preceding quarter and the corresponding period in 2013.

Referring to the percentage of applications determined and although these were marginally below the figures achieved in 2013, the Panel paid tribute to the Development Management Team for achieving a result close to the targets to which they would normally aspire when

fully resourced. The Panel also was pleased to note that the Service had met the annual revised budget for fee income.

3. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE – STAFF TURNOVER ISSUES

At the meeting of the Council in February, the Panel reported on impending vacancies in the Development Management Service and the impact less dedicated Officer time would have on preparatory work for Panel meetings (Item No 13 refers). At that time, the Council was advised of the action which had been taken to ensure continued delivery of the Service in the period pending appointment to the four posts due to become vacant before March 2014.

As part of the arrangements made, the Panel agreed to extend its Scheme of Delegation for a temporary period until 31st July 2014 to enable Development Management Officers to determine, within prescribed criteria, certain types of applications (such as householder developments, change of use, advertisements and listed building consents) in circumstances where the decision was in accordance with any objections or letters of support received.

Since then, some 130 applications have been determined by Development Management Officers without any subsequent concerns. As this arrangement has proved successful, as the Head of Development intends to review the Panel's scheme of delegation at the end of the year and given the post of Planning Service Manager (Development Management) remains vacant for the time being, the Panel considers that it would be reasonable and expedient to extend the temporary period of operation of the amended scheme until 31st December 2014.

As before, the Chairman and the Executive Councillor for Planning and Housing Strategy will continue to keep the situation under review.

4. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Panel has determined twenty seven development applications over three meetings of which nineteen were approved, five refused and three deferred, principally for further information on issues which had arisen at the meeting. Several significant applications were determined by the Panel over these meetings and these included –

- Erection of 14 new flats on Pathfinder House car park;
- Residential development of 120 dwellings at Station Road Warboys with affordable housing, open space, public rights of way and wheeled bins provided via a Section 106 contribution;
- the principles of development for Phase 2 – Loves Farm as part of the proposed St Neots Eastern Expansion and issues proposed to be included as part of a Section 106 Agreement; and
- approval of an outline application for development of the former RAF base at Brampton which will provide 402 dwellings, a

community building, retail and business space and necessary highway improvements. A series of proposed obligations designed to make the development acceptable in planning terms will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.

It also has been agreed to waive an existing S106 Agreement at Ullswater and Handcrofts Land, Huntingdon to allow an undertaking to be put in place with Administrators which will enable remedial works to proceed to tidy up the site which had been left unfinished due to the bankruptcy of the original developer. The Panel was pleased to be able to congratulate Officers on finding a satisfactory solution to the difficult and long outstanding problem which now has been resolved at this location.

Mrs B E Boddington
Chairman