

Report of: Director of Planning and Strategic Transport Author: Pete Smith	Title: Planning Performance and Weekly Planning Decisions
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1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report provides details the Council's overall development management performance (over a rolling 12 month period) with monthly statistics which highlight the following performance measures:

- Refusal and approval rates
- Speed of determination (majors, minors and others)
- Number of applications on hand (at time of reporting)
- Appeals considered by Planning Inspectorate and the % ALLOWED.

1.2 This report also provides a list of cases determined (since the last Planning Committee) providing details of the site and description of development (by Ward), whether the case was determined by officers under delegated powers or by Planning Committee/Sub Committee and the outcome (refusal/approval)

Development Management Performance

1.3 Development Management Performance (over a 12 month rolling period) is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

1.4 The local planning authority is monitored by Central Government in respect of the speed of determination and the quality of decision making (which can be reflected in its appeal performance). There is a firm expectation that applications for "non-major" development ("minor" and "other" development) should be determined within 8 weeks of validation whereas applications for "major" development should be determined within 13 weeks. There is scope to determine beyond these published time scales (with the formal agreement of the applicant) through use of "Planning Performance Agreements" or "Extension of Time" arrangements although these are only utilised if delays in the processing of the application have been delayed for good reason.

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that decisions on planning applications should be made as quickly as possible. Moreover, the NPPF advises that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and should use the full range of planning tools available to secure

developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Critically, it advises that decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. The approval/refusal rate is therefore an important comparative data set.

- 1.6 The NPPF also promotes the use of pre application engagement as a mechanism to resolve a number of issues prior to planning application submission. It sees pre application processes as assisting local planning authorities to issue timely decisions and improve the quality of proposed development and planning application submissions, whilst helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays or costs.

Planning Decisions

- 1.7 Attached as Appendix 2 is the list of delegated and Planning Committee decisions taken between 27th May 2019 and 7th June 2019.
- 1.8 During this period the service issued 157 decisions (ranging from applications for full planning permission, applications to discharge or vary planning conditions, applications for tree works, applications for prior approval and applications for Certificates of Lawful Development). 12 applications were withdrawn by the applications (which also appear in the list).
- 1.9 Out of the 145 decisions made, 10 were refused planning permission (7.0%) and 3 planning conditions were part discharged. Therefore the approval rate was around 93%.
- 1.10 Cases determined by Planning Committee are included in this list and it is worth noting that a large number of applications seek to discharge planning conditions (previously attached to planning permissions). This highlights the importance of planning conditions discharge, to ensure that issues around design quality and sustainability (including mitigation of flood risk) is managed at detailed stage. It is also significant that a large number of applications determined related to works to protected trees and trees within conservation areas – which provides clear indication as to the importance of managing protected trees within the borough and the associated workload.
- 1.11 Members might also wish to interrogate the following case more closely
 - 4A Sylvan Hill (LBC Ref 19/01477/FUL) which proposed a 3 storey building to be used as 8 residential units which was refused planning permission under delegated authority. The reasons for refusal focussed on the loss of an existing family unit and the poor mix of accommodation (no family nits proposed), the failure of the scheme to reflect the character and appearance of the conservation area (inappropriate scale and mass) and the impact of the development on immediate neighbours. The applicant has recently appealed against this decision,

although the Planning Inspectorate has yet to confirm an appeal start date.

- Land at Hollymeoak Road (LBC Ref 19/01753/FUL) which proposed the erection of a 4 bedroom bungalow which was refused planning permission under delegated powers. The reasons for refusal focussed on harm to the Green Belt as a consequence of inappropriate development in the Green Belt, detrimental impact on ecological interests and poor/inadequate pedestrian and vehicular access onto the site.