

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) - 4 th July 2017		
COUNCILLOR	PORTFOLIO	DATE
Daren Veidman	Cabinet Member Planning and Building Control	4 July 2017

1. Local Planning

The Sefton Local Plan

- 1.1 The Inspector's report into the Local Plan examination was received by the Council on 17th March 2017. This enabled the Local Plan to be adopted on 20th April 2017 and its policies supersede those in the UDP which was revoked.
- 1.2 Permission is being sought to proceed with a legal challenge to the Local Plan was received on 30th May 2017. It relates to policy NH4 'The Sefton Coast' in the Local Plan, and relates to the Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA) which is shown on Policies Map. The boundary of the CCMA was amended during the course of the examination in the Formby area to follow the line of the Local Geological Site rather than the Green Belt boundary, and was published for comments as part of the Modifications to the Local Plan in summer 2016.
- 1.3 Counsel's advice is being sought and updates will be provided once it is known if the challenge can proceed and what the likely timescales for this are. However, it should be noted that the challenge does not affect the rest of the Local Plan.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 1.4 Although it had been hoped to have the CIL draft charging schedule approved by Council in July, this has not proved possible for a number of reasons, including the fact that we have been waiting to see the Inspector's report into the Chester and Cheshire West Inspector's report following their CIL examination. This was delayed due to the purdah periods for the mayoral election and the general election. This will help us take into account any changes that will help reduce our CIL examination and ensure that the document we submit addresses any issues likely to be raised.
- 1.5 CIL has also been delayed to ensure sufficient evidence is available to support the levy rates at the examination. The emerging evidence was showing that viability of development has come under pressure recently primarily due to an increase in build costs.

Our viability consultants are undertaking further work, particularly in respect of recent home sales. This will ensure the CIL rates in Sefton are set at a rate that secures a suitable rate that will help support local services and infrastructure. The Draft CIL is expected to be approved for publication in September.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 1.6 Consultation took place on 5 SPDs, 2 Information notes and a Scoping Paper on the external sale of goods from March – May 2017. The responses are now being assessed prior to the final documents being recommended for approval by Cabinet in July.
- 1.7 We are also preparing a programme for reviewing and updating the remaining Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes (SPGs) and SPDs to reflect the fact that the Local Plan has been adopted.

Other planning policy work

- 1.8 Work on the Liverpool City Region-wide Strategic and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA) has slipped, primarily due to the inability to approve a draft document for technical engagement during the recent purdah period. Discussions have begun about follow up work that may be required to take this forward, although this will be influenced by the requirements of the Liverpool City Region mayor.
- 1.9 The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and housing trajectory were approved by the Cabinet Member: Planning and Building Control in May.
- 1.10 We have been advised that the 4 Neighbourhood Plans being prepared by five Town and Parish Councils will be submitted for examination in the near future. This will impose new challenges on the team as we organise examinations for each.
- 1.11 Members of the Local Plans team continue to provide policy advice on all relevant planning applications and pre-application inquiries, and the two planning officers are also processing their own caseload of applications.

2. Heritage and Conservation

Heritage at Risk Sites

- 2.1 We are continuing to work towards the removal of the 6 Heritage at Risk Areas from the National Register. This includes a number of different work areas including raising their profile, regeneration funding bids, working with the local community, Conservation Area Appraisals and taking enforcement and other legal action in relation to a number of derelict sites and listed buildings in these Areas including the major Lord Street Verandah project.

Heritage Trails

- 2.2 The trails project has now been completed and trails for the Heritage at risk areas relating to Parks and Gardens, Waterloo and Lord Street Conservation Area have now been published following successful press release and launch and have been distributed accordingly. a distribution list is currently being formulated. They will also be marketed through the Visit Southport website and at the forthcoming Open Golf.
- 2.3 The aims of the project have been met in that all the information provided has been provided by the local community and the costs have been met by Historic England. The trails will raise the Heritage profile of these areas and thus attract more cultural visitors, for day trips and longer stays. It will build up the capacity and commitment of local communities to champion the conservation and enhancement of their own local historic environment and boost civic pride. The identified outputs are:
- Community groups are better able to deliver other such activities in the future
 - Communities feel greater sense of ownership of the heritage trails in their areas
 - Individual volunteers have a better understanding and ability in photographing historic places
 - Younger people are engaged in looking at, and recording their historic environment
 - The wider community are more interested in and therefore care more for the historic environment
 - The local visitor economy is boosted.

Development Management

- 2.4 In terms of the general day to day responsibilities, allied to the increased development pressure which the wider Service is facing, the Conservation officers have formulated 77 detailed consultation responses from February to April on planning applications and pre-applications relating to a number of Listed Buildings and developments within a number of our Conservation Areas. We have also provided expert advice at Public Hearings and also continued on site monitoring and enforcement action.

3. Development Management

3.1 The performance for 2016-17 was well above the government targets. However, the pressure on this part of the Service is increasing due to more complex proposals following the receipt of the Inspector's report into the Local Plan.

3.2 From 1st March to 31st May we have approved 186 units of residential accommodation, comprising 27 applications.

The following 12 major developments were considered and approved by the service/Planning Committee.

Address	Proposal
45 Ormskirk Road, Aintree Liverpool L9 5AF	Outline planning application with details of access and layout for the erection of A1 (Retail) or A2 (Financial & Professional Services) or A3 (Restaurant & Cafes) units with associated parking following the demolition of existing buildings
Units 1, 2 And 3, 215-217 Knowsley Road, Bootle L20 4NR	Change of use from car sales and repairs (Sui Generis) to a children's indoor soft play area (D2) with associated parking
Marble Place, Southport PR8 1DF	Erection of a 96 bedroomed hotel and replacement retail unit on the ground floor after partial demolition and remodelling of the existing shopping centre
Brooklands Farm, Brewery Lane, Melling L31 1EZ	Erection of 11 detached two storey dwellinghouses after demolition of existing buildings
101 Liverpool Road, Lydiate Liverpool L31 2LX	Outline Planning Application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping and scale) for the demolition of an existing dormer bungalow and the erection of 12 no. flats with associated car parking
27 Brook Road, Maghull Liverpool L31 3EG	Construction of a residential block containing 12 self-contained apartments
Parkhaven Trust, Liverpool Road South Maghull L31 8BR	Construction of a residential development comprising 57 dwellings, new highway access from Green Lane and relocation of existing growing plots
Site Of 43 And 45 Leyland Road, Southport	Erection of 14 self-contained flats
Parkhaven Trust Liverpool Road South, Maghull	Outline planning application for the erection of a 45 bedroom nursing home after demolition of existing building
Land Adjacent To 5 And Opposite 10-34 George Drive And 19-22 Elizabeth Avenue Birkdale Southport	Erection of 10 dwellings and eight self-contained apartments with associated car parking and landscaping
Glenn Buildings And 10 Moor Lane, Moor Lane, Crosby Liverpool L23 2UN	Refurbishment of the Glenn Buildings (south) including insertion of new shop fronts and alterations to the rear, with A1-A5 uses permitted at ground floor and D1, D2 or B1a uses permitted at first floor. Demolition of DIY store at 10 Moor Lane and replacement with new A1-A5 retail units and all associated works
Atlantic House, Derby Road, Bootle L20 8LP	Approval of Reserved Matters for Phase 2 two-storey extension to the premises in respect of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission reference DC/2014/01552 granted 24 October 2014

3.3 We have received a total of 501 applications in this time scale, including 71 pre application inquiries.

3.4 The capacity of the Service is stretched by the increased pressure relating to the processing of these applications. It is a team effort across the Service to process, assess and determine applications expediently and in line with Government targets.

3.5 The 20% proposed increase of planning fees and additional fee income through entering Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) has allowed us to recruit further staff which will be critical to maintaining a high level of performance as we are already beginning to receive complex and contentious proposals following the adoption of the Local Plan in April.

3.6 PPAs enable us to agree a defined level of service with the applicant which adds to the workload of the team. While further staff have been appointed, it will take some time for the effect of this to be felt as they will not be in post until late summer.

Enforcement update

3.7 The number and persistence of complaints on even relatively minor schemes is a major drain on limited resources and inhibits the ability of the Service to focus on more complex proposals. Notwithstanding this, no complaint has been upheld by the ombudsman during the past year.

3.8 A long standing and experienced member of the enforcement team has gone part time from 1st April and we are in the process of recruiting a new enforcement officer. This highlights the need for succession planning in order to retain expertise in this important part of our Service which has been built up over many years.

Review of the quarter from 1st March to 31st May 2017:

- New cases – 159
- Cases resolved – 68
- Formal action: 1 x enforcement notice
- 23 retrospective applications totalling £8,153.

4. Building Control

Performance targets

4.1 The Building Control Team continues to meet its statutory targets as well the performance targets it sets locally. The year-end results show that the Teams market share for 2016/17 was 75% - which remains equal to or better than that of neighbouring Authorities and is significantly above the average for English Councils, which stands at 67%.

Income and financial performance

4.2 Initial financial results for 2016/17 show a 16% increase in Building Regulation income in comparison with the previous year. This, together with a modest increase in charges for 2017/18 should ensure that the Building Control Team continues to be self-funding in providing a Building Regulation service and can part subsidise the various statutory elements of the work undertaken by the Building Control Team.

Grand National race meeting and the Open Golf Championship at Royal Birkdale

4.3 The Building Control Team administers various legislation associated with 'Safety at Sports Grounds' and annually assess' the safety all of the permanent and temporary structures at Aintree Racecourse, in preparation for the annual Grand National meeting. This involves checking plans and structural calculations, as well as making sure that all structures / buildings have suitable 'means of escape' in case of fire.

In addition, site inspections are carried out during the build-up to the event to ensure that permanent structures are adequately maintained and that temporary structures are correctly erected and are in accordance with approved plans. As part of the process, the Building Control Team liaises closely with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service to ensure that they kept abreast of the fire and evacuation strategy for all structures within the sports ground. At Aintree Racecourse, there are 5 permanent grandstands all of which have been issued with their own individual Safety Certificate and these certificates are issued by the Council's Regulatory & Licencing Committee, on the receipt of technical advice / recommendations by the Building Control Team.

This year, the Building Control Team are also faced with having to carry out a similar function at Royal Birkdale, in preparation for the 2017 Open Golf Championship

5. Technical Support

Performance

5.1 Performance against targets has increased within the last quarter:

- The validation of planning applications within 5 days has remained above target at 93% (8% above target)
- The team registered and acknowledged 95% enforcement complaints within 3 days (15% over target)
- Booking in of Building Control applications remains to 97% within 3 working days (1% above target).
- 100% of pre-application enquiries were validated within 3 working days (6% above target)
- The team achieved 98% of land charge searches within 12 working days (2% below target). The reduced level was due to high levels of staff sickness and the Christmas shutdown. Performance for February and March was at 100%.

Service Development

- 5.2 Officers have been involved in the upgrade of software systems for Land Charges. The system is now able to record VAT against each search as required by HMRC. Officers have been setting up the system and ensuring the changes are fit for purpose.
- 5.3 Business process review and setting up new procedures to deal with requests for fast track services. This includes services provided within Planning Services and those provided by the Contact Centre.
- 5.4 Monitoring work is ongoing for the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Appraisal.
- 5.5 SIMON+ has been deployed to Planning users to replace Planweb for intranet mapping functions. User Acceptance Testing, issue resolution and in-house training has been undertaken.

