

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL****PLANNING COMMITTEE – 26 January 2021****MONTHLY UPDATE REPORT****REPORT OF THE LEAD PLANNING MANAGER****PART A – SUMMARY REPORT****1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

1.1 A monthly update report to ensure that the Committee is kept informed on key matters including:

- Proposed training
- Any changes that impact on National Policy
- Any recent Planning Appeal Decisions
- Relevant Planning Enforcement cases on a quarterly basis
- The latest data produced by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That Committee note the content of the update report.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	No	
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	Report to Planning Committee	
KEY DECISION	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	26 January 2021	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	Any legal issues are covered in the report.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	No other significant impacts, risks or opportunities have been identified.

IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	District-wide application.
--------------------------	----	----------------------------

## **PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4. INFORMATION**

- 4.1 Future Training** – Changes to Planning Committee were approved at the 26 March 2019 meeting of the Council to reduce committee size from 49 potential members to 21 members. As part of these changes an update report will now be brought to each meeting of the Committee. The intention has been that with a reduced size of Committee additional training will be provided throughout the year, namely before Planning Committee. The sessions may well change depending on what issues are on the agenda. Due to COVID 19, these had to be suspended, however we have our first virtual training before December committee on the Planning Protocol, committee requirements and ‘making good planning decisions’. A further session on planning enforcement is being explored for early next year. If Members have any thoughts on areas for planning training, please let me know.
- 4.2 Changes in National Policy** – The government’s responses to part of this summer’s ‘Changes to the Current Planning System’ were published before Christmas, including updated guidance on how to calculate our housing need. As members may recall, the measures set out in this summer’s consultation would have led to a significant increase in South Staffordshire’s own housing need, due to an increased emphasis on affordability and settlement size in the proposed methodology. The Government has listened to the concerns raised nationally by most local authorities and some M.P.s and revisited the proposed methodology.
- 4.3** This means that our own need is currently still 254 dwellings per annum, so we still have a 5 year supply. We will have to update the number each year to reflect the latest growth levels in the household projections and the most up-to-date affordability ratios, but this at least offers some comfort that our own need will remain at around this level for the time being.
- 4.4 Planning Appeal Decisions** – every Planning Appeal decision will now be brought to the Committee for the Committee to consider. There have been 4 appeal decisions since the last Committee, a copy of the decisions are attached as Appendices 1-4. These relate to:
- 1 An appeal against a refusal to demolish an existing ground floor store and erection of first floor rear extension to existing bungalow at Somerford, Hawthorne Lane, Codsall, Staffordshire WV8 2DA. The appeal was allowed because the Inspector concluded that whilst the extension would be a greater height than the existing dwelling, the limited increase in the height of the roof would not have a significant impact on the streetscene or the general character and appearance of the area.
  - 2 An appeal against a refusal for the conversion of agricultural building to 3 dwellings at Brinsford Farm, Brinsford Lane, Slade Heath WV10 7PR. It was

refused on the basis that the Council did not consider that the proposal accorded with the limitations and restrictions contained within Classes Q(a) and Q(b) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO). The appeal was allowed and costs awarded because the Inspector concluded that in his view the proposal satisfies the requirements of the GPDO for change of use from an agricultural building to a dwelling, as set out under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q, both with regard to being permitted development and also meeting the prior approval conditions. Therefore, the appeal is allowed and prior approval is granted.

- 3 An appeal against a refusal for a new detached three bedroom dwelling house with integral garage at 16 Brantley Crescent, Bobbington, Stourbridge DY7 5DB. The appeal was dismissed because the Inspector concluded that the effect of the proposal on the oak tree on the site would be unacceptable. The development would lead to harm to the oak and so in this regard it would be contrary to policy EQ4 of the Core Strategy 2012.
  - 4 An appeal against the erection of dormer bungalow in the Green Belt at Wergs Farm House, Popes Lane, Wolverhampton, WV6 8TX. The appeal was allowed because the Inspector concluded that the proposal constitute limited infill in a village for the purposes of paragraph 145 of the Framework it would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.6 We are still awaiting the outcome of the 2 Crematoria appeal decisions. The decisions were due by 12 September 2019.
- 4.7 The Secretary of State for Transport has made an order granting development consent West Midlands Interchange (WMI). Documents can be seen here : <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/west-midlands/west-midlands-interchange/> Officers are now working with the site promoters to understand next steps.
- 4.8 **Relevant Planning Enforcement cases on a quarterly basis** – Performance is currently at 81%, above the 80% target. There has clearly been an improvement in planning enforcement performance as a result of extra staff and a targeted triage approach to dealing with new cases. We are now fully staffed after successful recruitment, and as such the temporary staff have now left the Council.
- 4.9 **The latest data produced by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government** – As members will recall, MHCLG sets designation targets that must be met regarding both quality and speed of planning decisions. The targets are broken into Major and Non major development. If the targets are not met, then unless exceptional circumstances apply, MHCLG will “designate” the relevant authority and developers have the option to avoid applying to the relevant designated Local Planning Authority and apply direct, and pay the fees, to the Planning Inspectorate. Details can be seen at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/760040/Improving\\_planning\\_performance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/760040/Improving_planning_performance.pdf)

- 4.10 We will ensure that the Committee is kept informed of performance against the relevant targets including through the MHCLG's own data.
- 4.11 For Speed – the 2020 target for major developments is that 60% of decisions must be made within the relevant time frame (or with an agreed extension of time) and for non-major it is 70%. For Quality – for 2020 the threshold is 10% for both major and non-major decisions. Current performance is well within these targets and the position as set out on MHCLG's website will be shown to the Committee at the meeting – the information can be seen on the following link tables:
- 151a – speed – major
  - 152a – quality – major
  - 153 – speed – non major
  - 154 – quality – non major

The link is here – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>

The latest position is on the MHCLG website and the key figures are below:

**Speed**

151a – majors – target 60% (or above) – result = 90.7% (data up to September 2020)

153 – others – target 70% (or above) – result = 88.5% (data up to September 2020)

**Quality**

152a – majors – target 10% (or below) – result = 6.1% (date up to March 2019)

154 – others – target 10% or below – result = 0.8% (date up to March 2019)

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

N/A

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

N/A

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Appeal Decision – Somerford, Hawthorne Lane, Codsall, WV8 2DA  
Appendix 2a and 2b – Appeal and Costs Decision – Brinsford Farm, Brinsford Lane, Slade Heath WV10 7PR

Appendix 3 – Appeal Decision – 16 Brantley Crescent, Bobbington, DY7 5DB

Appendix 4 – Appeal Decision – Wergs Farm House, Popes Lane, Wolverhampton, WV6 8TX

Report prepared by:  
Kelly Harris  
Lead Planning Manager