

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Strategic Planning Committee** held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, on **Monday, 4 October 2021 at 10.30am**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Stuart Bird, Councillor Chris Blundell, Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Jenny Ceresa, Councillor Tony Cooper, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Kay Yule

Other Members present:

Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Russ Rainger

Officers present: Sarah Carter (Democratic Services Officer), Karen Cook (Democratic Services Manager), Bethany Rance (Graduate Planner, Energy Projects), Philip Ridley (Head of Planning and Coastal Management), Desi Reed (Planning Policy and Delivery Manager), Grahame Stuteley (Senior Energy Projects Officer), Anthony Taylor (Senior Planner), Ben Woolnough (Planning Development Manager)

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Daly, Hedgley, McCallum and Newton.

Councillor Fisher attended the meeting as a substitute for Councillor Daly.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman Councillor Paul Ashdown chaired the meeting.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3 Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying

Councillor Ashdown declared that he had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/21/1001/FUL - Land to the North and South of New Road, Parham. He had made no response.

Councillor Beavan declared that he had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/21/1001/FUL - Land to the North and South of New Road, Parham. He had made no response.

Councillor Bird declared that he had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/21/1001/FUL - Land to the North and South of New Road, Parham. He had made no response.

Councillor Deacon declared that he had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/21/1001/FUL - Land to the North and South of New Road, Parham. He had made no response.

Councillor Pitchers declared that he had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/21/1001/FUL - Land to the North and South of New Road, Parham. He had made no response.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 DC/21/1001/FUL - Land to the north and south of New Road, East of Silverlace Green, Parham

The Committee considered report ES/0903 which gave details of the planning application for the construction and operation of a solar farm together with associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure on land to the north and south of New Road, East of Silverlace Green, Parham. The proposed solar farm consisted of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels which would cover six fields with a total land area of 73.95 hectares currently in agricultural use. The propose solar farm would generate up to 49.9MW of electricity which equated to the power consumption of approximately 16,581 homes and would result in a saving of approximately 11,210 tonnes of CO2 per annum.

The Senior Energy Projects Officer advised that the application was before Committee because of the scale of the development proposed, the strategic nature of the proposal and the importance of low carbon and renewable energy for East Suffolk. There had been significant public interest in the site which bordered Framlingham and Wickham Market and included the parishes of Parham, Great Glemham and Marlesford. His presentation covered:

- Site location plan, including district ward and parish boundaries.
- The proposal and development zones.
- Baseline environment, landscape designs and public rights of way.
- Visual context from four different viewpoints including photomontage of baseline, year 1 and year 15.
- Artist's impressions of the solar panels, inverters and transformers.
- Location of DNO and Customer substation buildings on-site, security fencing and CCTV

cameras.

- The cable connection route.

The Senior Energy Projects Officer explained in detail the material planning considerations including the landscape visual impact, biodiversity, ecology, heritage and conservation, archaeology, surface water drainage and flood risk, highways/access/traffic generation, and noise and residential amenity. He highlighted the need case and principle of development and the fact that the UK Government had made a legally binding target of net zero by 2050 within the Climate Change Act 2008. The principle of low carbon and renewable energy development was well established within both National and Local Planning Policy and Guidance. Applications for renewable energy schemes within East Suffolk should be supported in line with Local Plan policy requirements for low carbon and renewable energy projects. Appropriate weight had therefore been given to the positive contribution that the development would make and approval was therefore being recommended.

The Chairman invited questions.

Members sought clarification of the route of the cable from the site to the main grid, if the land would be used for grazing once developed, any increase in biodiversity and views of the panels from nearby villages. The Senior Energy Projects Officer displayed slide 13 of the presentation which gave an indication of the cable route and he confirmed the gap between the panels and the perimeter fence would allow livestock to graze. There would be no lighting at night. There would be some partial views of the panels once installed but the opinion of the Landscape Officer was that there would be no visual impact after 7-10 years.

The Chairman invited public speakers to address the Committee.

As an objector, Mr B Pearson advised that he lived less than 200m from the north eastern boundary and was the closest resident to the proposed development. Having moved to the area for the countryside and tranquillity, he was devastated to find such a large development on an upward slope was being proposed. The 3m panels would be much higher than necessary, looking like a military parade of straight lines. The pole mounted CCTV and fencing was unnatural in the landscape and the area of development should be reduced to lessen the impact and reduce the noise. Consideration should also be given to reducing the height of the panels in line with the existing solar farm so that if it went ahead, impacts were minimal.

On behalf of the Applicant, Mr J Hartley-Bond advised that mediation had taken place to try and resolve concerns and, in his opinion, that had been undertaken satisfactorily. They had worked with local residents and would be planting more landscaping to help reduce any impact on the low number of affected residents. There had been only three objections and one supporter and 67% positive views had been expressed through the consultation undertaken. Parham Parish Council supported the proposal and Great Glemham had removed its holding objection. If approval was granted, it was hoped to have a good working relationship for the next 40 years. With the current climate and energy crises, this proposal addressed both issues. Mr Hartley-Bond asked that the Committee supported the officer's recommendation and approve the application.

Members asked questions relating to:

- The height of the panels being reduce to 1.8m from 3m.
- The cement being used for the development.
- Location of the cable connections.
- Grazing on the site.
- If the angle of the panels were variable.

Mr Hartley-Bond advised that 3m would allow optimisation of the site and therefore maximise the power produced from the site. Cement would only be used on the converters and the lampposts as the panels would be driven directly into the ground with the cables inside the solar farm being buried. The proposal would maximise the areas of green space and therefore allow grazing. The angle would not be variable as tracker panels were not deployed in the UK.

During debate, Members commented on the proposed height of the panels and a reduction would reduce the effect on the landscape. Whilst there was a need to produce renewable power in the country, the environment should be respected. Whilst supporting solar power because of the Government's target to reduce CO2 and the Council's declared statement on climate emergency, Members recognised the need to ensure minimal impact on the environment and residents.

Following a proposal for approval which was duly seconded, it was

RESOLVED

That planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects in accordance with the submitted drawings ref: SP-01 Rev 06 - Site Location Plan; SD-17 Rev 01 - Panel Arrangement; SD-16 Rev 01 - Inverter Floor Plan; SD-15 Rev 01 - Customer Substation Floor Plan; SD-08 Rev 02 - Inverter Elevations and Dimensions Plan; SD-04 Rev 02 - Security Fence and CCTV; SD-03 Rev 01 - Indicative CCTV Post; SD-02 Rev 02 - Customer Substation Elevations and Dimensions Plan; SD-01 Rev 02 - DNO Substation Elevations and Dimension Plan; SD-01 Rev 01 - DNO Substation Floor Plan; PLE-02 Rev 03 - Layout Plan External; PLE-01 Rev 10 - Layout Plan External; DZ-01 Rev 13 - Development Zone Plan, noting that the precise layout is not yet fixed and will be agreed post-development by condition, being governed by the agreed parameters within each development zone/parcel.

Reason: To secure a properly planned development based on development parcels/zones which allow for flexibility in the precise layout within the agreed parameters for each development parcel.

3. The planning permission is for a period from the date of this permission until the

date occurring 40 years after the date of commissioning of the development. Written confirmation of the date of commissioning of the development shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority no later than 1 calendar month after that event.

Reason: To ensure this permission is a temporary development on the landscape, having an operational life of 40 years.

4. If the solar farm hereby permitted ceases to operate for a continuous period of 6 months, then unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a scheme for the decommissioning and removal of the panels and any other ancillary equipment, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority within 3 months of the end of the cessation period. The scheme shall include details for the restoration of the site. The scheme shall be implemented within 12 months of the date of its agreement by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To remove the non-operational development from the landscape.

5. At the end of the operational lifespan (40 years), the solar panels and other infrastructure will be removed, and the site restored back to full agricultural use.

Reason: The decommissioning and restoration process intends to restore the land to the same quality as it was prior to the development taking place.

Archaeology Conditions

6. Part 1 - No development shall take place within the area indicated [the whole site] until a programme of archaeological work has been secured and implemented, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment;
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation;
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Part 2 - The solar farm shall not be brought into operation until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part 1 of this condition, and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive

deposition.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy SCLP11.7 of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

INFORMATIVE: The submitted scheme of archaeological investigation shall be in accordance with a brief procured beforehand by the developer from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team.

7. Part 1 – Prior to any development on site commencing, a detailed site plan including Archaeological Exclusion Zones will be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Following the approval and completion of the archaeological evaluation referred to in Condition 6, and prior to the commencement of development, a final detailed site layout plan with full details of the final locations, design and materials to be used for the panel arrays, inverters, customer switchgear, substations, CCTV cameras, fencing, foundations and cabling will be submitted for approval.

Should the archaeological evaluation identify any significant archaeological deposits, the final detailed site layout plan will define archaeological exclusion zones within which below and above ground development will be excluded or provide sufficient design mitigation including but not limited to the use of above ground cables, concrete shoes or other means to avoid any impact on archaeological deposits if required.

The final detailed site layout plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the County Council's Lead Archaeologist. Subsequently the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Part 2 - If there are archaeological areas to be preserved in situ, a management plan will be produced for any archaeological areas to be preserved in situ, setting out the methodology to secure the ongoing protection of these areas both during construction, operation and decommissioning of the solar farm.

Reason: To ensure that trial trenched evaluation is undertaken at the earliest opportunity post consent to establish the archaeological potential of the site in order that any mitigation requirements can be defined at an early stage.

INFORMATIVE: This condition is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 205 (formerly 199), any permission granted should be the subject of planning conditions to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.

Highways Conditions

8. No part of the development shall be commenced until details of the improved accesses as indicatively shown on drawing numbers B17SF_SPPSA1, B17SF_SPPSA1R, B17SF_SPPSA2, and B17SF_SPPSA2R (including the position of any gates to be erected)

have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved accesses shall be laid out and constructed in their entirety prior to any other part of the development taking place. Thereafter the access shall be retained in its approved form unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the accesses are designed and constructed to an appropriate specification and made available for use at an appropriate time in the interests of highway safety.

9. Before the development is commenced, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the interim means to prevent the discharge of surface water from the development onto the highway during the construction process. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the access is first used and shall be retained thereafter in its approved form. The longer term drainage solution will be approved and implemented in accordance with details submitted, agreed and implemented for condition 18.

Reason: To prevent hazards caused by flowing water or ice on the highway.

10. Before the development is commenced, details of the areas to be provided for the [LOADING, UNLOADING,] manoeuvring and parking of vehicles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure the provision and long-term maintenance of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles in accordance with Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2015) where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety.

11. All HGV traffic movements to and from the site over the duration of the construction period shall be subject to a Deliveries Management Plan which shall be submitted to the planning authority for approval a minimum of 28 days before any deliveries of materials commence. No HGV movements shall be permitted to and from the site other than in accordance with the routes defined in the Plan. The site operator shall maintain a register of complaints and record of actions taken to deal with such complaints at the site office as specified in the Plan throughout the period of occupation of the site.

Reason: To reduce and / or remove as far as is reasonably possible the effects of HGV traffic in sensitive areas.

12. Before the improved accesses are first used, visibility splays shall be provided as shown on Drawing Nos. B17SF_VSPSA1 and B17SF_VSPSA2 with an X dimension of 2.4m and a Y dimension of 160m and thereafter retained in the specified form, with the exception of the visibility splays for VSPSA1, that can be provided via temporary traffic signals, the details of which will have been previously approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 2 Class A of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no obstruction over 0.6

metres high shall be erected, constructed, planted or permitted to grow within the areas of the visibility splays.

Reason: To ensure vehicles exiting the drive would have sufficient visibility to enter the public highway safely, and vehicles on the public highway would have sufficient warning of a vehicle emerging to take avoiding action.'

Noise Conditions

13. Operational Noise: Prior to commencement of development, a noise assessment shall be submitted to the East Suffolk Council for approval in writing to include all proposed plant and machinery and in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019. A noise rating level (L_A,T) from the scheme of at least 5dB below the typical background sound level (L_{A90},T) should be achieved at noise sensitive receptors. Where the noise rating level cannot be achieved, the noise mitigation measures considered should be explained and the achievable noise rating level should be identified and justified. This full assessment should inform any noise mitigation that may be needed.

The assessment shall include:

- a. Details of background sound level surveys at, or representative of noise sensitive receptors. This should include capturing the typical background sound levels at the end of the night-time between 05:00 and 07:00 hours. Ideally these surveys should take place on a number of days. The assessment report should include observations and descriptions of the sound climate during these surveys;
- b. Derivation of predicted noise rating levels at noise sensitive receptors to include for any acoustic character corrections such as tonality;
- c. Initial estimate of the noise impact by comparing the predicted noise rating level with typical background sound levels at noise sensitive receptors.

Reason: Once the proposed plant has been chosen, the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment that demonstrates that the operational rating noise levels (including character corrections as per BS4142 guidance) from the proposed solar farm plant installations would not exceed typical background sound levels for the relevant times of operation at nearby residential properties. This full assessment should be used to inform any noise mitigation that may be needed.

Surface Water Drainage Conditions

14. No development shall commence until details of the strategy for the disposal of surface water on the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (LPA).

Reason: To ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into this proposal, to ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained.

15. No development shall commence until details of the implementation, maintenance and management of the strategy for the disposal of surface water on the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The strategy shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure clear arrangements are in place for ongoing operation and

maintenance of the disposal of surface water drainage.

16. Within 28 days of practical completion, a surface water drainage verification report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, detailing and verifying that the surface water drainage system has been inspected and has been built and functions in accordance with the approved designs and drawings. The report shall include details of all SuDS components and piped networks in an agreed form, for inclusion on the Lead Local Flood Authority's Flood Risk Asset Register.

Reason: To ensure that the surface water drainage system has been built in accordance with the approved drawings and is fit to be put into operation and to ensure that the Sustainable Drainage System has been implemented as permitted and that all flood risk assets and their owners are recorded onto the LLFA's statutory flood risk asset register as required under s21 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in order to enable the proper management of flood risk with the county of Suffolk
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-asset-register/>

17. No development shall commence until details of a Construction Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP) detailing how surface water and storm water will be managed on the site during construction (including demolition and site clearance operations) is submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA. The CSWMP shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan for the duration of construction.

The approved CSWMP shall include Method statements, scaled and dimensioned plans and drawings detailing surface water management proposals to include:-

- i. Temporary drainage systems;
- ii. Measures for managing pollution / water quality and protecting controlled waters and watercourses ;
- iii. Measures for managing any on or offsite flood risk associated with construction;

Reason: To ensure the development does not cause increased flood risk, or pollution of watercourses or groundwater
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/guidance-on-development-and-flood-risk/construction-surface-water-management-plan/>

INFORMATIVE: Any works to a watercourse may require consent under section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. Any discharge of surface water to a watercourse that drains into an Internal Drainage Board district catchment is subject to payment of a surface water developer contribution.

Ecological and Landscape Conditions

18. Development must be undertaken in accordance with the ecological avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures identified within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (AECOM, February 2021); the Ornithological Survey Report (AECOM, August 2021); the Bat Survey Report (AECOM, August 2021) and the Ecology Surveys Technical Note (AECOM, August 2021) as submitted with the planning

application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. Further surveys for Otter and Water Vole as set out in the Further Ecology Surveys Technical Note (AECOM, Aug 2021) must be undertaken if 'HDD methods underneath the watercourse' are required for the cabling route between the development site and point of connection.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected and enhanced as part of the development.

19. No removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs, or works to areas that may be used by breeding birds shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that nesting birds are protected.

20. No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP shall include details for the control and management of noise and dust during the construction phase, and with respect to noise shall have due consideration of the guidance within BS 5228:2009+A1:2014. The CEMP will be adhered to by the contractor throughout the construction process, as outlined in the Environmental Statement Volume II (Technical Appendices) Appendix 3B: Draft Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.

The CEMP shall include the following:

- a. Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
- b. Identification of "biodiversity protection zones";
- c. Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements);
- d. The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features;
- e. The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;
- f. Responsible persons and lines of communication;
- g. The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person;
- h. Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs;
- i. Details for the control and management of noise and dust during the construction phase;
- j. Shall have due consideration of noise guidance contained within BS 5228:2009+A1:2014.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in

writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected as part of the development. To also mitigate noise and dust impacts in particular to receptor locations during the construction phase.

21. A landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a. Description and evaluation of features to be managed;
- b. Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;
- c. Aims and objectives of management;
- d. Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;
- e. Prescriptions for management actions;
- f. Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period);
- g. Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan;
- h. Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures;
- i. Details of seed mixtures to be sown in 'cover crop' areas;
- j. Details of appropriate management of cover crops to include;
- k. Details of stocking densities (if sheep are to be used to manage grassland areas);
- l. Details of maximised grassland margins to increase likelihood of providing nesting Skylark habitat;
- m. Details of proposed planting specifications;
- n. Details of landscaping and biodiversity net gain areas;
- o. Details of who will manage and maintain these areas once operational.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the long-term ecological value of the site is maintained and enhanced and to ensure that the proposed vegetation contributes to the agricultural character of the wider area and successfully screens solar farm infrastructure in views.

22. Prior to the any construction activity (including vegetation clearance or site preparation) within 50m of the River Ore, an Ecological Mitigation Method Statement will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement will be based upon suitably up to date ecological surveys undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist. Mitigation measures described in the Statement will be implemented as approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected.

6 Energy Projects Update

Councillor Rivett, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development, gave a presentation to the Committee on Energy Projects within East Suffolk.

In summary, the presentation gave updates on the status of current and forthcoming projects and particularly highlighted Sizewell C DCO and next steps, EA1N and ES2 DCOs, Nautilus and Eurolink projects, and outlined other energy projects including Five Estuaries, North Falls and SCD1/South East Anglia Link which were all at the pre-application stage.

In addition, Councillor Rivett provided details of the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR), Draft National Policy Statements (NPS), initial observations on the Revised NPS EN-1 and EN-2 to EN-5, and ongoing consultations. With regard to next steps, he confirmed that the Council would be responding to the consultation on the Nautilus MPI and review the draft NPSs before providing a response to the consultation. The Council would continue to engage with the OTNR and provide formal comments as required.

Councillor Rivett responded to Members' questions relating to sulphur hexafluoride which was still used in the electricity industry to make switchgear safe and cool powerlines; obviously the powerlines from overhead pylons did not need cooling. It was understood that the Inspector's report on windfarms, due in the next few days would not be available; it was to be for the Secretary of State only.

It was proposed that, on behalf of the Committee, thanks be recorded to Councillor Rivett for a very informative update and also to the officers for their input and work behind the scenes.

Members noted that the presentation would be uploaded onto the website and be available to view with the Agenda papers.

7 Draft Development Briefs for Housing and Commercial Site Allocations

The Planning Policy and Delivery Manager introduced Anthony Taylor, Senior Planner, from her Team who proceeded to give the Committee a presentation that had been requested by Members at their last meeting.

The Senior Planner gave a detailed presentation outlining the what and why of Development Briefs, the process used to prepare a Development Brief, work completed so far, an example of the Residential Development Brief for Land north of Union Lane, Oulton, and plans going forward.

The Chairman expressed thanks for a very clear and good presentation and invited questions.

Comment was made that it would have been beneficial to have been aware of the content of the presentation prior to the meeting and Members sought clarification on the selection of sites for preparing Development Briefs. The Senior Planner confirmed that the sites were selected from sites adopted in the East Suffolk Local Plans, focusing on those where a planning application had not yet been submitted. The purpose of preparing the briefs was to expand upon the Local Plan policies, providing further guidance and highlighting solutions for developing sites, not to use more land. Discussions were always undertaken with the Parish Council, County Council and landowner.

The Chairman expressed thanks for a such a clear explanation of Development Briefs. Members noted that the presentation would be uploaded onto the website and be available to view with the Agenda papers.

8 Enforcement Performance Report - April to June 2021

The Committee received report ES/0906 which provided information on the performance of the Enforcement Section of the Development Management Team for the period April to June 2021.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management advised Members that it had been a busy three months and the majority of closed cases were due to no breach, compliance or use ceased and planning permission granted. There being no specific questions, it was

RESOLVED

That the Enforcement Performance Report - April to June 2021 be noted.

9 Planning Performance Report – April to June 2021

The Committee received report ES/0907 which provided an update on the planning performance of the Development Management Team in terms of timescales for determining planning applications during the period April to June 2021.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management confirmed that decisions were made in a timely manner with both major and minor applications ahead of the national target but slightly below the stretched target. Other Developments came in at 76% just slightly below the national target. There had been a large number of applications during the period and the Council was still maintaining a high approval rate across all types of applications.

The Planning Development Manager confirmed that he had been in post since June and further opportunities were being taken up to expand the team including the recruitment of a third Principal Planner. A recent report from the Government on national statistics showed a 45% increase in the number of applications in 2021 while still working with the same resources. In addition, the Planning Development Manager displayed a slide showing the number of applications received, denied and granted

during the period 2005 to 2021 and the pre-pandemic comparison showed an 18.3% increase in applications received.

There being no questions or matters raised, it was

RESOLVED

That the Planning Performance Report - April to June 2021 be received and noted.

10 Appeals Performance Report – 13 May to 21 September 2021

The Committee received report ES/0908 which provided an update on the planning performance of the Development Management Team in terms of the quality and quantity of appeal decisions received from the Planning Inspectorate following refusal of planning permission by the Council.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management advised that 17 planning appeal decisions and one enforcement appeal had been received during the period 13 May to 21 September 2021. He referred to the statistics in paragraph 2 of the report and drew particular attention to the circumstances in respect of 1 Hall Cottages, Reydon, where the Inspector had applied a Principal Residence Restriction by condition and Carlton Meres Country Park where the Inspector's view was that any harm to the environment was outweighed by the economics of the scheme.

The Planning Development Manager advised that the Council was one of the most successful authorities for defending appeals for 5+ homes, being supported by robust and up to date Local Plans and the required 5 year housing land supply.

Members expressed thanks to the officers for their work and there being no further discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That the content of the Appeals Performance Report -13 May to 21 September 2021 be noted.

11 Planning Policy and Delivery Update

The Committee received report ES/0909 which provided an update on key elements of the current work programme, including preparing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), strategies on specific topics such as cycling and walking, the delivery of infrastructure to support growth through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collection and spend, Neighbourhood Plans and housing delivery.

Updates were provided with regard to Neighbourhood Plans and the plan for Southwold which was now with the Inspector; and Supplementary Planning Documents. Some 800 responses had been received on the initial consultation on the Cycling and Walking Strategy and work was continuing on the CIL Charging

Schedule. The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management expressed thanks to Councillor Cooper for leading the CIL Working Group. There were good figures for housing delivery in the period April to June 2021 with 146 being completed which included 46 affordable homes. Whilst professional responses had been given to the Planning White Paper consultation, current indications were that there would likely be a delay on the publication of the expected Government response which had been due in the Autumn.

In response to Members' questions regarding the draft Cycling and Walking Strategy, draft Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document and draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, the Planning Policy and Delivery Manager advised that they were expecting consultation to start in early November. Consultation on the draft CIL Charging Schedule was also due to commence shortly.

In addition to those referred to in the report, the Team would also be preparing a further Supplementary Planning Document. The Planning Policy and Delivery Manager advised that it would be in relation to Local Plan policies SCDLP5.4 and WLP8.7 relating to housing in clusters in the countryside and small scale residential development in the countryside respectively. Whilst the policies were different, they did have the common intent of supporting rural sustainability. Clarification was required over the interpretation of the policies and the proposal was for a short and focussed document which would be consulted upon at the appropriate time.

As Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Bird made reference to Scrutiny's recent meeting during which they had looked at various aspects of housing. That Committee was making a recommendation to Cabinet to prepare a business case for Council houses to be increased from 50 to 100 per annum.

There being no further discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That the content of the Planning Policy and Delivery Update report be received and noted.

12 Strategic Planning Committee's Forward Work Programme

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised that, at the present time, he was not expecting any additional items to come forward for the meeting in December. He did not anticipate there would be any planning applications.

The Chairman drew attention to the two items on the Work Programme that were unallocated and shown as reports to come before the Committee on a date to be confirmed: Annual Monitoring of the work of the Planning Committees and Review of Member Training in Planning Matters. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised that the appropriate time would be at the end of the municipal year and these items could, therefore, be added to the Work Programme for March 2022.

The meeting concluded at 12.22pm.

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Chairman