



# WNDC Board Report

## Report by Director of Planning Services

Paper Reference: 2011-01-08-01

Agenda Item: 8

1 February 2011

**Subject:** Planning Services Overview

**Advice:** That the Board:

1. **Note** current position regarding Business Plan projects
2. **Note** the planning performance and workload information.

**Summary:**

- Progress has been achieved with regard to meeting the Business Plan Key objectives where this has been within the control of WNDC
- Overall performance is considered acceptable.

## 1. Review of Business Plan Projects

1.1 Set out below is a commentary on the Business Plan projects detailing their background and current progress.

### **Avon/Nunn Mills and Ransome Road**

1.2 In a planning context this development site is subject to two outline planning applications. One, although very old, is on the records and given the changed circumstances is likely to now come forward as a new outline application, which relates to the Avon Nunn Mills site to the south of Bedford Road and north of the railway line in Northampton. The proposal is likely to be a mixed use development incorporating residential, commercial, community facilities, primary school, local leisure and retail centre with access arrangements from Bedford Road and New Southbridge Road. The second application relates to Land off Ransome Road, Northampton and the applicant is the Homes and Community Agency but additionally Network Rail. The proposal is for residential development, community facilities, access improvements and retention of operational railway line.

1.3 The Business Plan Key Objectives in terms of the submission of a planning application for Nunn Mills include the submission of revised and updated documents during Q3 (Oct – Dec 2010). This will not be met. There are a number of matters that need addressing and resolving over and above purely planning considerations. These include land ownership, delivery of a Compulsory Purchase Order for the land required for the link road from the Ransome Road site to the Avon/Nunn Mills site and the completion of the master-planning of the area (Strategic Development Framework). If progress is made on the aforementioned matters revised submissions to progress the application may be made in Q2 2011/12.

1.4 The Business Plan Key Objective for the Ransome Road application is that the application be reported to the Northampton UDA Planning Committee during Q2 (July-Sept 2010). The application was reported to this Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2010 where the Committee resolved to be minded to grant outline planning permission. Negotiations continue with a view to resolving the outstanding matters. The S106 agreement is being drafted and due to be ready for completion early 2011.

### **Dallington Grange**

- 1.5 Dallington Heath is a longstanding potential growth location within Northampton. The site has been identified in the development plan for housing development for over 30 years. An outline planning application for development comprising up to 3,500 dwellings, a local centre of up to 4.15 hectares, an employment area up to 10 hectares, two primary schools, secondary school and re-use and redevelopment of Grange Farm for café/restaurant/public house or hotel and creation of habitat, open space and landscaped areas.
- 1.6 This application was submitted in January 2007. The impetus to progress the application by the developer reduced significantly off when the economic downturn commenced but there are now regular meetings being held again and willingness to progress matters.
- 1.7 The Business Plan Key Objective to resubmit revised and updated documents in Q2 (July-Sept 2010) has not been met because the developer is awaiting the outcome of ongoing discussions on the viability of the scheme and insufficient progress has been made with the two landowners, the Althorpe Estate and Northampton Borough Council.
- 1.8 The second Key Objective is to report the application for consideration to the Northampton UDA Planning Committee in Q4 (Jan-March 2011). This objective may still be met although any Committee report may be an update report only as it is not anticipated the application will be in a position to receive a formal resolution at this time.

### **Upton Lodge and Upton Park**

- 1.9 The Sandy Lane Relief Road, completed in October 2009, has opened up the Upton Lodge area for development, including plans for over 2000 new homes and significant commercial development.
- 1.10 The outline plans application for residential development up to 1784 dwellings, community and education facilities including a new primary school, employment, park and ride facility and part of a country park at Upton Lodge has already been approved by Committee, resolving to grant outline consent subject to certain highway matters being resolved and a S106 being entered into. (November 2008)

- 1.11 The Business Plan Key Objective is for the completion of the S106 agreement within Q2 (July-Sept 2010). This has not been met. This has been due to the difficulties in finding a way forward to resolving the strategic road concerns in conjunction with the local road network. This now has a basis via an “Access Management Strategy” to move forward with specific obligations in S106 legal agreement to deliver key infrastructure. This approach is supported by the HA and NCC. The S106 could be completed in early Q4.
- 1.12 Upton Park is a proposal for circa. 1000 dwellings by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to the south of the Upton Lodge scheme. There is no planning application currently with the Corporation for this development despite the HCA indicating it would be submitted by the middle of last year. The HCA have clearly not been able to keep to this timetable and have indicated that they are now looking to submit it before summer 2011. This has been due to the current Public Sector spending review. As a consequence Business Plan Key Objectives for this scheme to have the application submitted in Q1 (April-June 2010) and consideration by Committee in Q4 (Jan-March 2011) have not been achievable. Once the application is submitted the key objective for a committee date will be set.

#### **Towcester Urban Extension**

- 1.13 The current outline planning application is for mixed-use neighbourhood comprising 3000 dwellings, employment land, a local centre, a neighbourhood centre, mixed use area to accommodate Class C1 Hotel with conference and leisure facilities, new primary and secondary schools, and the provision of a new southern by-pass to Towcester connecting the A5T via a new roundabout. This represents a major urban extension on the south side of Towcester.
- 1.14 The Business Plan Key Objectives for this scheme were a re-assessment and reconsultation of the application in Q2 (July-Sept 2010) and reconsideration by the Committee in Q3 (Oct-Dec 2010). These objectives have not been met. This has been due to the current economic climate and the time being taken to resolve the viability position which has progressed significantly over recent months. At this moment in time it is anticipated that the re-submission would take place in Q4 and go before

Committee in Q2 – 2011/12. But there are significant strategic highway matters to be resolved, which is ongoing.

### **Moat Lane Towcester**

- 1.15 The regeneration of Moat Lane will help invigorate Towcester town centre. The outline planning application for the regeneration of Moat Lane/Northampton Road area including new build and change of use for shop, café, drinking, workshop uses, offices, council buildings, hotel, dwellings, new public realm and decked car park is a key milestone in the delivery of the scheme.
- 1.16 The application was submitted in June 2010, consultation was undertaken in July/August and it was then determined by Committee in September where it was resolved to be minded to grant outline planning permission. The Business Plan Key Objectives are for the application to be submitted in Q1 (April-June 2010), consultations undertaken in Q2 (July-August 2010) and for it to be considered by Committee in Q2/Q3 (July-Dec 2010). All these objectives were met.
- 1.17 The progression of the application was dealt with as a high priority to ensure that the S106 agreement was signed before the public inquiry into the Compulsory Purchase Order, which took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2011. This target was met with the S106 signed on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011 and the outline planning permission issued on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011.
- 1.18 Following the appointment of a development partner, it is expected that SNC will submit detailed reserved matters in the latter part of 2011, with work expected to commence on site in 2012.

## **2. Overall Planning Workload/Performance**

- 2.1 The planning service deals with a number of submissions which require formal consideration and determination. Planning applications only form part of the picture albeit the most public. Other submissions relate to the discharge of planning conditions, consultations on planning applications from Northampton Borough Council, Daventry District Council and South Northamptonshire District Council, amendments to approved schemes, requests for screening and scoping opinions

under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and engaging in pre-application discussions.

2.2 Table 1 below shows the number of items received this financial year to date requiring formal determination with the exception of pre application enquiries and Table 2 shows the actual number of formal determinations.

**Table 1: All Received 01/04/2010 - 31/12/2010**

	Planning Applications	Discharge of Conditions	Non Material Amendments	Other Authority Consultations	Pre Application Advice	Screening / Scoping Opinion	Total
April	10	24	2	1	5		42
May	11	16		1	10		38
June	14	31	3	1	6		55
July	11	29	5		7	1	53
August	14	16	4		9	1	44
September	16	57	1		12		86
October	12	17	2	1	3		35
November	15	21	1		4	1	43
December	10	7	2		3		22
						<b>Total</b>	<b>418</b>

**Table 2 : All Determined 01/04/2010 - 31/10/2010**

	Planning Applications	Discharge of Conditions	Non Material Amendments	Other Authority Consultations	Screening / Scoping Opinion	Total
April	11	5	1			17
May	14	6		1		21
June	13	12	1			26
July	13	15	4		1	33
August	11	25	6		1	43
September	12	15	1	1		29
October	10	35	2			47
November	9	34	4			47
December	14	4	2			20
					<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>

2.3 In terms of planning performance against national indicators Table 3 and the accompanying graphs detail very good performance in relation to the determination

of 'minor' and 'other' applications with the national targets being 65% and 80% respectively. Whilst performance has slightly dipped since the last report to Board in December it still remains well above 80%.

2.4 Performance in relation to 'major' applications whilst not exceeding the national target of 60% is considered acceptable having regard to the complex nature of the type of 'major' applications the Corporation deal with. Since the last Board report in December performance has actually increased from 40 to 43%.

**Table 3 Performance Summary**

BVPI Summary	2009-2010				2010-2011				National PI
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3*	Q4	
Major (Within 13 to 16 Weeks)	29% (2)	31% (2)	35% (4)	34% (3)	50% (5)	40% (1)	43% (3)		60%
Minor (Within 8 Weeks)	84% (16)	87% (18)	89% (21)	88% (10)	86% (19)	91% (23)	88% (11)		65%
Others (Within 8 Weeks)	88% (7)	92% (4)	74% (3)	75% (4)	75% (3)	91% (7)	91% (11)		80%

\* Figures not yet submitted to CLG



