



WNDC Board Report

Report by Director of Planning Services

Paper Reference: 2011-03-08-01

Agenda Item: 8

17 May 2011

Subject: Planning Services Review April 2010 to March 2011

Advice: That the Board:

1. **Endorse** planning performance for the period April 2010 to March 2011.

1. Performance

1.1 Table 1 details the number of applications that have been submitted for formal determination by the Corporation as Local Planning Authority. It is worth noting the high number of submissions for discharge of planning conditions as this is an indicator of development actually taking place on the ground as such submissions are normally associated with the implementation of planning permissions.

Table 1: All Received 01/04/2010 - 31/03/2011

	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	2		4	1	43
December	10	7	2		3		22
January	8	19	2		7		36
February	8	24	3	1			36
March	2	21	3	1			27
Total	131	282	29	6	66	3	490

1.2 Table 2 details all formal planning submissions determined by the Corporation.

This includes planning permission for over 2400 dwellings across the Urban Development Area as a whole securing in excess of £20,426,541.00 through S106 agreements.

1.3 The planning permissions granted also include a number of notable non-residential schemes. These are: the new marina at Becketts Park, Northampton; the redevelopment and conversion of the listed buildings at the former St Edmunds Hospital site on Wellingborough Road, Northampton to a mixed use including retirement village, retail and financial and professional services; the BMW distribution facility at Zone C- Plot 2 Pineham, Northampton and the mixed use scheme for Moat Lane Towcester for new build and change of use for shop, cafe,

drinking, workshop uses: offices, council building; hotel; dwellings; new public realm works and decked car park.

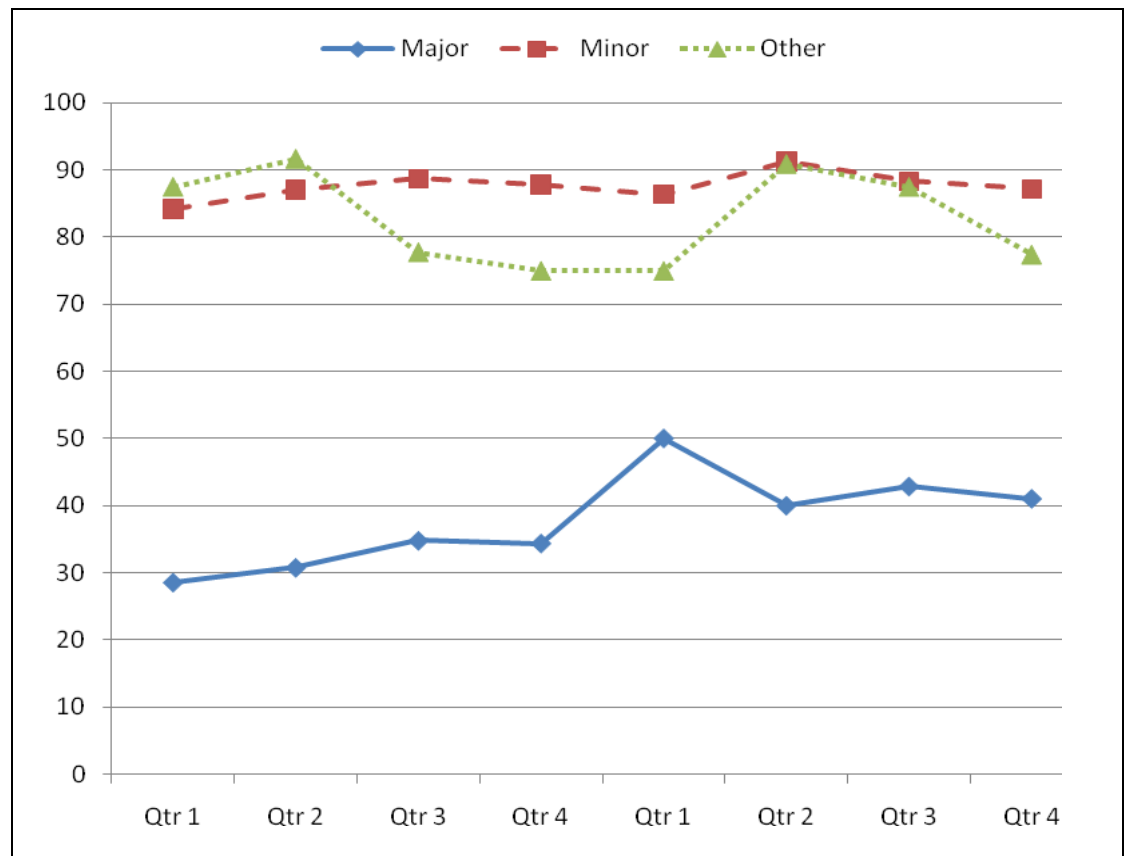
Table 2 : All Determined 01/04/2010 - 31/03/2011

	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
January	15	31	2			48
February	9	33	2			44
March	27	58	3			88
Total	158	273	28	2	2	463

1.4 Table 3 and the related graph detail the national Best Value Performance Indicators that have to be submitted to CLG on a quarterly basis. For 'minor' types of application performance has consistently exceeded the national performance indicators(NPI) For 'others' this has averaged 82% over the 12 months from April 2010 to March 2011 which again has exceeded the NPI. Finally for 'majors' an average figure of 43% over the same period has been achieved. Whilst this is below the NPI recommended figure of 60% it represents a notable increase on the previous year where the average was 32%. However it remains challenging to determine this type of application within shorter timescales because of the complex nature of the considerations that need to be taken into account in the determination of such applications, many of which require the negotiation and entering into of Section 106 agreements.

Table 3

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)	41% (7)	60%
Minor (Within 8 Weeks)	84% (16)	87% (18)	89% (21)	88% (10)	86% (19)	91% (23)	88% (11)	87% (15)	65%
Others (Within 8 Weeks)	88% (7)	92% (4)	74% (3)	75% (4)	75% (3)	91% (7)	87.5% (11)	77% (3)	80%



1.5 The last 12 months has also seen the review of the Corporation's Planning Obligation Strategy (POS) which sets out the Corporation's approach to Section 106 Planning Agreements, in particular the methodology determining the financial contributions to be secured as part of the agreements. The Review has been necessary to respond to the significant downturn in the economy generally and in particular the development industry. It is now complete subject to the Board agreeing to the final report.

2. Phase One Transition of Planning Powers

- 2.1 The Phase 1 transition of planning powers was successfully completed on the 31st March 2011. This saw the return of certain planning powers back to Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council and South Northants District Council and all planning powers back to Northamptonshire County Council. The revised planning application thresholds have been set out in The West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (Planning Functions) (Amendment) Order 2011 which came into force on the 1st April 2011.
- 2.2 The revisions to the Order see in the main the handing back to the Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) those planning powers to determine the smaller scale applications leaving WNDC with the responsibility to determine the larger scale, more strategic applications, for example, developments in excess of 200 dwellings going forward whereas the figure previously was 50.
- 2.3 Table 4 sets out the quantum of applications that have been returned to the LPA's as a consequence of the implementation of Phase 1.

Table 4

Transferred to	Determined Applications	Live Applications	Applications / undischarged conditions	Archive Boxes
NBC	710	6	14 apps/ 32 conds	68
DDC	18	0		3
SNC	3	0		1
NCC	7	0	1 app/ 6 conds	2
TOTAL	738	6	15 apps/ 38 conds	74

2.4 The Board need to note that the Government when announcing the outcome of the quinquennial review in additon to referring to a Phase 1 return of certain planning powers stated that this should be followed by the return of the remaining planning powers within a reletively short timescale . Officer discussions are ongoing with the three LPA’s at the present time and it is expected that an announcement regarding the precise timing of this will be made during the summer or early autumn at the latest.

2.5 Going forward WNDP as a LPA still have a statutory duty to determine any planning applications that are submitted to it and indeed those which it has retained and remain extant. There is every indication that a number of applications are expected to be submitted in the near future and over the summer which will be of a strategic nature delivering in particular housing growth and employment opportunities in Northampton and in Daventry, town centre regeneration. The total number of applications that may come forward beyound what are already with us could be up to 40 with some significant sites outside the five key sites such as Monkmore, Churchfields, Upton Park, Dalington Grange, and Collingtree.