

# Planning and Building Control

June Update during Covid –19



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“ Welcome to the third newsletter from the Planning and Building Control teams updating you on the current work of these teams. I have received some good feedback regarding these newsletters and we will continue to produce these on a regular basis from now on. Since the last newsletter we have now held three virtual Planning Committees plus a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee which have gone extremely well and it has been good to watch these “live” on the YouTube channel. As we move to the next stage of the CV19 emergency the teams will continue to provide an excellent service, adapting as necessary, but as always we welcome any feedback.”

*Cllr David Ritchie*

*Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal*

“ As Cllr Ritchie says this is our third newsletter and I hope you find it informative. Since the last newsletter we have been considering future working arrangements for council staff but it is clear that for the foreseeable future we will be working away from the office. We have all embraced the challenge and for the most part it has been a success. I never thought I would be a regular user of Skype, MS Teams, Zoom etc but that is the way it has to be to ensure our work programme can be delivered and it is the future. The teams have been brilliant and not only have they been doing great work they have all been looking after each other and I could not imagine that before this emergency I would be doing a team quiz on a Friday night, on zoom, with 15 colleagues and a glass of wine in hand. It was great fun but I confess I did not win as am not an expert on recent pop music nor American tv programmes!! We have also been challenged to a quiz match against West Suffolk Council planners. Bring it on!!

This period of working at home has also enabled colleagues to undertake additional training and CPD activities. Many webinars are available which many have joined but also we host internal sessions on Skype which have been well attended. The recent topics have been Biodiversity Net Gain and Housing with one of these having 45 attendees. We will have to look at how we could possibly roll these out in the future for those that receive this newsletter. It has also been interesting watching the recording of the Planning Committee meetings on YouTube to see how you present yourself and what lessons can be learnt. They have been managed brilliantly by our Democratic Services colleagues and ensure that the work of the Committee can be undertaken. Hopefully they can be part of the future as it is likely more people can be involved and to help be part of their communities future and that will always lead to better decisions. I hope you find the newsletter informative and as always, I would welcome further feedback. Thanks for reading, take care and when the time is right I look forward to meeting up once again.”

*Philip Ridley BSc( Hons) MRTPI*

*Head of Planning and Coastal Management*

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### Planning Policy and Delivery

#### Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Update

As reported in May's Newsletter, the consultation on proposed Main Modifications to the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan began on 1<sup>st</sup> May and is running until **5pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July**.

The Local Plan is currently undergoing examination by an independent Planning Inspector following its submission to the Secretary of State in March 2019. As part of the examination, public hearing sessions were held in August and September 2019. Following these sessions, the Inspector wrote to the Council advising that Main Modifications are needed to the Local Plan for it to be 'sound'. The Main Modifications are intended to address issues of legal compliance and/or soundness within the document.

Alongside the Main Modifications, a series of Additional Modifications have also been proposed by the Council. The additional changes are generally factual or typographical changes, and proposed modifications to the policies maps are also published for consultation. These modifications have been made to take account of Main or Additional Modifications, to make factual corrections or for presentational reasons. The Council welcomes any comments on the Additional Modifications and the modifications to the policies maps.

In response to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Council set out measures from the start of the consultation to enable safe participation and to ensure that those who wish to engage in the consultation are not disadvantaged. This includes holding the consultation for an extended period of ten weeks and measures relating to the provision of hard copies of the documents. The Council would normally make hard copies of consultation documents available to view in libraries and Council offices, for those who are unable to view them online, however this has not been possible for this consultation. The Council is therefore posting hard copies on request, free of charge to those who do not have access to the documents online. Although restrictions are gradually being eased by Government, the arrangements put in place for this consultation remain in place and the Council will continue to provide assistance where appropriate, including offering to post hard copies of documents, to enable people to fully engage in the consultation. The Council is continuing to keep these measures under review and will communicate any changes.

To find out more, view the consultation documents and submit your comments, go to [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination). Comments must be received by **5pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July**.

If you have any questions, would like to request a hard copy or would like any assistance, please contact the Planning Policy and Delivery Team on [planningpolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) or 01394 444557. Please note if contacting us by phone, we are currently operating under a voicemail service. Please leave a message including your contact details and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

#### CIL and Section 106

Following discussions with central government, and the subsequent issuing of interim instructions for councils to take a pragmatic approach with the collection of CIL, the Infrastructure Team have updated their Covid-19 guidance on their [Coronavirus: Actions for CIL webpage](#)

Those developers requesting deferral of CIL will now need to meet the small and medium sized developers criteria set by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and provide evidence to support their request for deferral. Where Covid-19 restrictions are being eased by the Government (as is currently the case) and development can re-commence, it is expected that time limits will be placed on the deferral process and no new requests will be considered. Currently existing deferred instalments can be reviewed on request, but with the continued easing of lockdown measures, any further deferral will likely be time limited. Where deferred instalments are missed, routine enforcement measures will resume and surcharges for late payment and statutory Late Payment Interest will apply. It should be noted that should development be halted as a result of newly applied lockdown measures, the situation will once lead to an invite for requests for deferral of instalments.

#### CIL Reminders

1. Please can agents make sure we are provided with email and phone contact details for CIL Liable clients.
2. For CIL liable uses/development, we would like to remind all agents and developers that retrospective development generally results in a CIL Liability which becomes due immediately upon grant of the retrospective permission.
3. We must have a signed CIL Form 2 (Assumption of Liability) in order to apply the councils instalment policy, otherwise payment is due in full on the date of commencement.
4. Most types of CIL liable development (except extensions) require a Form 6 Commencement Notice to be submitted a minimum of 24 hours prior to the commencement date. Please wait for acknowledgement of this in case it is not valid for any reason. If you commence without a valid commencement notice you can lose the right to pay by instalments or any exemptions/relief and there's now a surcharge we must apply.

You can contact the Infrastructure Team on [CIL@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:CIL@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

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### Planning Applications and Support

We have altered the voice messages for Planning and Building Control to reflect the way we are currently working and to better suit our customers' needs. The Development Management Team are committed to working with applications and our communities in maintaining a high quality planning service. All our team, whilst remote working, are open for business and remain contactable via phone and email. Case officers details are on all consultation and acknowledgement letters and should remain the first point of contact for all queries on live planning applications.

We are also maintaining a duty officer system for general planning queries which can be reached at: [dutyofficer@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:dutyofficer@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

If anyone has any queries or comments please do not hesitate to contact Liz Beighton, Planning Manager (Development Management) on either 01394 444778 or 07775 406370 or email: [lizbeighton@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:lizbeighton@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

### Coastal Management

With summer season approaching we urge the public to take care if visiting our coastline.

We have the fastest eroding coastline in Western Europe and have experienced fatalities from cliff slips.

It is not safe to sunbathe at the toe of cliffs. The soft sandy cliffs often found in our region, erode at the base creating an overhang at the top which is extremely vulnerable to slipping and can deposit several tons of material in seconds. It is therefore also not safe to climb cliffs or walk along the top close to the edge.

Please also pay attention to beach signage, cordoned off areas and hazard fencing as it is placed there for your safety.

Recent beach lowering across the CPE (Coastal Partnership East) frontages has resulted in various WW2 items being exposed on our beaches, again we urge people to take care and not to climb or play on these items.

It is sensible to keep dogs on leads near hazards, be vigilant against them digesting harmful materials and observe the dogs on beach restrictions.

Don't forget to check the tide times before you set off as passage can be challenging and dangerous on some stretches of coastline during high tides.

Please respect [#beachsafety](#) along with current Covid-19 social distancing guidelines so we can all enjoy our beautiful beaches.





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### Design and Conservation

#### Quality of Place Awards 2020 (please see attached poster)

We're looking to celebrate good design in East Suffolk! Nominations for this year's Quality of Place Awards are now being accepted.

The Quality of Place Awards were introduced in Suffolk Coastal District Council 2010 to recognise and encourage an interest in the quality of the built and natural environment of our district and to promote an awareness of the need for high standards in all forms of design, including planning, architecture, sustainable development and landscaping and community involvement. From 2019, with the formation of the new East Suffolk Council, the Quality of Place Awards have been extended across the whole East Suffolk Council Area.

To be eligible for an award, the project must:

- be within the East Suffolk Council area
  - have been completed within the last two years for Design, Building Conservation and Community categories
  - have been completed within the last five years for the Nature and Landscape category
  - have all necessary planning permission/listed building consent/building regulations approval etc
- All schemes are judged on the following criteria:

- Quality of design and detailing
- Quality of workmanship
- Quality of materials
- Sustainability

The Categories include : **Design, Building Conservation, Nature and Landscape, Community.**

Follow this link for more information:

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/quality-of-place-awards/2020-quality-of-place-awards/>



2019 Landscape Winner: Sutton Hoo



2019 Conservation Winner: Sibton Abbey



2019 Joint Design Winner: The Listening Station, Reydon



2019 Design Joint Winner:  
71 Kirkley Run, Lowestoft



2019 Community Winner:  
Kelsale Signpost restoration

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### Energy Projects

EDF Energy submitted their application for a new nuclear power station at Sizewell, Sizewell C on the 27th May. The Planning Inspectorate will take 28 days from this date to determine if the application can be accepted for examination. Documents supporting the application will be available once the application has been submitted.

The Planning Inspectorate have issued a procedural decision and put a questionnaire online asking for representations on how hearings might be held during the current Covid-19 pandemic.

See [www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk) for more details on the East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two project pages.

### Building Control

The Building Control Team continue to evolve and improve our service offer to all of our clients and colleagues during this unprecedented period, the Building Control surveyors have been undertaking site inspections for the past two weeks successfully and safely. Each inspection is risk assessed and personal contact is made by each surveyor to each client on site to ensure safety remains the priority.

Feedback from our clients and the surveyors themselves has been positive and has demonstrated how together we can get through this without having to compromise our commitment to providing the highest level of Building Control service alongside our ambition to ensure regulatory compliance in the most reasoned and practical manner.



**Mark Harvey, Building Control Partnership Manager**  
enjoying some site video time with “pocket Jamie”

The Building Control surveyors remain fully operational and contactable via mobile or email to assist our highly valued Builders, Developers, Architects, Agents and the public. Our personal approach to our clients from day one of lockdown has seen us receive tender opportunities from growing numbers of new clients across East Suffolk and beyond which is a real positive and something to build the rest of 2020 around.

We would like to pass on our professional and personal thanks to everybody we have encountered throughout East Suffolk for their understanding and personal acknowledgment which has been a great help when undertaking our surveying duties.

As a team we also take great pride in our trainee, Jamie Hazell. This has been an incredibly difficult time for Jamie as his progression relies on all of the surveyors taking him to site to teach him the broad range of surveying techniques, site practices and construction methods. Obviously we have been unable to attend site together in recent weeks so as a team we promptly agreed to use WhatsApp video calls to ensure Jamie missed out on nothing!

The entire surveying team literally now have Jamie in our pockets, we will make sure he succeeds!

Whilst on site many builders and homeowners have made direct comment towards our video calls to Jamie expressing real positivity to the approach we have adopted in support of him, professionally we hope to see trainees across the construction sector supported in similar ways to make sure they don't miss out.