

Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19



In this issue:

- Planning Policy and Delivery
- Planning Applications and Support
- Building Control
- Energy Projects



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“ Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter and hope this finds you safe and well. As we move through in to 2021 we are still in lockdown and we all face many challenges before we can return to some form of “normal”. I am pleased that the planning teams have been able to continue to deliver business as usual and thank the team , and our readers , for embracing the challenges of the new ways of communicating and engaging. Hopefully as the summer approaches we can get to enjoy our beautiful East Suffolk area and meet up again. One aspect of lockdown has been the needed overnight transformation in to the use of technology for communicating. This has proved hugely beneficial but it has its challenges and for me it has enabled me to see and hear more than before and it has been great to observe Planning Committees, both live and on YouTube, Court Cases, Planning Appeal hearings and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) Examinations remotely but it doesn’t replicate “being there”. However these changes have allowed more people to be engaged, which is excellent, and so therefore in the next few months we want to hear from all participants on their thoughts about the future for ongoing engagement as this is key to ensuring the right planning and development outcomes follow. I look forward to hearing your views and discussing how we can take all this forward. In the meantime enjoy this newsletter and keep safe.”

Cllr David Ritchie

Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management for East Suffolk Council

“ Planning in 2021 is not going to be dull. The government is considering all 44000 responses to its Planning White Paper consultation and other incremental, but significant changes , are being introduced with changes to Permitted Development rights, housing numbers et al. For East Suffolk, with two very recently adopted Local Plans, we are in a good place with our strategic position clearly defined and it is good news that some of the key strategic housing sites are coming forward. I am also pleased that our Planning Appeal success rate is still excellent and we are resisting inappropriate schemes coming forward. All this doesn’t happen without the outputs and dedication of an excellent team of Planners, other specialists and a fantastic support team. We are fully staffed across the team and have welcomed some new starters in recent months to fill some vacancies and I know you will look forward to meeting them on screen and hopefully in person soon. As Cllr Ritchie has said above we are wanting to hear from you all about future communication on all aspects of the service we are providing. We are keen to listen and see what we can do to help more people to be involved in the process and help deliver the quality developments we strive to deliver whilst enabling the areas we will always cherish to be maintained and where possible enhanced. In a fantastic area like East Suffolk that challenge is huge but that is why we have a brilliant and dedicated team to grasp that opportunity. It is why I live and work in East Suffolk and it is why through good collaborative planning we can collectively deliver the aims and objectives set out in the two Local Plans”.

Philip Ridley

Head of Planning and Coastal Management

Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19



Planning Policy and Delivery

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

An initial consultation, inviting views on the scope and content of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document took place between 9th November and 21st December 2020. The Supplementary Planning Document will provide guidance on the implementation of planning policies related to affordable housing. Thank you for your comments. The Council is currently reviewing the responses that were received and will be preparing a draft Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation in due course. It is anticipated that a consultation on the draft SPD will take place in spring 2021 and that the SPD will be adopted in summer 2021. Information on the initial consultation that took place remains available to view on the Council's website [here](#).

Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

A consultation on the draft Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) took place between 7th December 2020 and 1st February 2021. The Supplementary Planning Document will provide guidance on the implementation of planning policies related to the historic environment. Thank you for your comments. We will now be considering the comments received and finalising the Historic Environment SPD for adoption in spring 2021. Information relating to the consultation that took place remains available to view on the Council's website [here](#).

Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Thank you for submitting over 288 comments to the initial public consultation (4 September 2020 – 16 October 2020). The Supplementary Planning Document will provide guidance on the implementation of planning policies relating to coastal matters. The guidance is being prepared in partnership with those responsible for planning and coastal management in Great Yarmouth Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council and the Broads Authority. The partnership is reviewing the comments and drafting the SPD. We plan to publish the draft SPD for public consultation in the summer with a view to adopting the guidance in the autumn 2021. Information relating to the consultation that took place remains available to view on the Council's website [here](#).

Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Work is underway to produce a new Sustainable Construction SPD for East Suffolk to support the implementation of planning policies through the provision of additional details and explanation that was not appropriate to include in the local plans themselves. The Sustainable Construction SPD is being produced to provide guidance primarily in relation to policies SCLP9.2 Sustainable Construction in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and WLP8.28 Sustainable Construction in the Waveney Local Plan. Once adopted, the new document will replace the existing Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (September 2013) that relates to the former Waveney local planning authority area. The first stage of consultation is due to begin in early March and the aim of the consultation will be to gather information on what you think the SPD should include and address.

Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19



Planning Policy and Delivery

Statement of Community Involvement

The consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement concluded on the 7th December 2020. In total, 267 comments were received from 97 individuals and organisations. Officers are now reviewing the responses and will, where appropriate, respond to these through amendments to the document. Adoption of the final document is currently scheduled for Spring 2021. The Statement of Community Involvement will set out how East Suffolk Council will engage and consult with the local community during the production of planning policy documents and the determination of planning applications, as well as the Council's responsibilities in the determination of planning appeals. Information relating to the consultation that took place remains available to view on the Council's website [here](#).

Cycling and Walking Strategy

Thank you for submitting over 800 comments to the initial public consultation (19 October 2020 – 7 December 2020). Officers are reviewing the comments and drafting the Strategy in collaboration with our Suffolk County Council colleagues. We plan to publish the draft Cycling and Walking Strategy for public consultation in spring/summer 2021, with a view to adopting the Strategy in the autumn 2021. Information relating to the consultation that took place remains available to view on the Council's website [here](#).

Beccles Neighbourhood Plan

Beccles Town Council have submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to East Suffolk Council and the Broads Authority ahead of it being submitted for independent examination. East Suffolk Council has publicised the Plan and invited representations, which will be forwarded to the examiner for consideration alongside the plan. The period for representations ends at 5pm on 8th February 2021. Details of the plan are available at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

Authority Monitoring Report

The 2019/20 [East Suffolk Authority Monitoring Report](#) was published in December 2020, providing information on the progress of Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans, as well as the performance of specific policies measured against a series of indicators and objectives. The report is the main mechanism for assessing the delivery of the Local Plans and the performance of policies.

The [Key Statistics](#), a 5-minute read, contains headline statistics from the Authority Monitoring Report focusing on housing, employment and retail topics and provides some additional time-series data. Interactive maps provide information on:

- the location of new homes
- progress on delivery of site allocations
- progress on neighbourhood areas and plans
- the locations of interest on the self-build and custom housebuilding register

Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19

Planning Policy and Delivery

Open Data Portal

The [East Suffolk Planning Policy Open Data portal](#) has been updated to include 2019/20 monitoring data and provides downloadable spreadsheets and GIS map files for a range of datasets reported in the Authority Monitoring Report including:

- **Housing:** new homes completed by parish; house type and number of bedrooms of new homes; affordable homes completed; statistics from the self-build and custom housebuilding register.
- **Employment:** employment, retail and leisure completions and survey data from town centres and employment sites.
- **Site Allocations:** an update on progress of the delivery of sites allocated in Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.
- **Neighbourhood Planning:** Designated Neighbourhood Areas and Made Neighbourhood Plans in East Suffolk.

Data and maps are also provided for Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Zones and the Brownfield Land Register.

Map of Planning Policies



An interactive online [map of Planning Policies](#) across East Suffolk has been published, including policies from the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (September 2020), Waveney Local Plan (March 2019) and Made (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans. This map is intended to be used as an additional resource and does not replace the definitive [Local Plan policies map](#) and [Neighbourhood Plans](#) policies maps.

Infrastructure Funding

Infrastructure Funding Statement

In December we published the 2020 Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) [East Suffolk Infrastructure Funding Statement 2019-20](#). This annual report on developer contributions helps local communities and developers see how contributions have been spent and understand what future funds will be spent on, ensuring a transparent and accountable system. In accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) any authority that receives a contribution from development through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or through section 106 planning obligations (s106) must prepare an infrastructure funding statement (IFS).

Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19



Planning Policy and Delivery

Infrastructure Funding Statement

This is the first infrastructure funding statement for East Suffolk and it was approved by Cabinet on 1 December 2020. It is likely that future editions of the IFS will be presented differently as technology to deliver digital reporting is enabled.

The IFS contains three key documents:

- The Infrastructure List (page 19) - a list of all the current planned infrastructure that could be delivered to support the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans that are made in East Suffolk.
- The CIL Report (page 6) - a report on CIL income and expenditure for the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020
- The S106 Report (page 12) - a report on s106 income and expenditure for the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

The focus of developer contributions is to deliver sustainable development and to mitigate the harm of development. The Infrastructure Delivery Frameworks, appended to the Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Local Plans, form the bedrock of the identification of infrastructure required to support planned development. They identify the first considerations of how the critical, essential and desirable infrastructure may be funded and the period in which it may be delivered. The Infrastructure List takes this information a step further and begins to express those projects which the council is looking to support delivery of in the short, medium and longer term, through the allocation of District CIL and through the collection of s106 contributions.

Neighbourhood CIL

All Town and Parish Councils that have received Neighbourhood CIL should be publishing their CIL Annual Reports on their websites by 31 December of the year in which the financial report relates. For example, for the 2019/20 financial year, your report should have been published by 31 December 2020. A copy should also be sent to the Major Sites and Infrastructure Team via email CIL@east Suffolk.gov.uk – This is a statutory requirement under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Please ensure that annual reports report on actual expenditure of Neighbourhood CIL and not accounting for future spend.

Guidance and templates can be found via the link : <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/developer-contributions/community-infrastructure-levy/parish-support/>

Community Infrastructure Levy – Charging Schedule review

Work on the preparation of the East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule is continuing. Consultation on some of the financial assumptions underpinning CIL viability work (such as legal fees, land values and construction costs) will take place with key consultees in spring 2021, with consultation on the draft CIL Charging Schedule planned for summer 2021. Independent examination of the CIL Charging Schedule is expected to take place during late summer and autumn 2021, with adoption planned for winter 2021/22. Further information will be available on the Council's website shortly. Until implementation of the new Charging Schedule, the current Suffolk Coastal and Waveney CIL Charging Schedules will remain in force.

Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19



Planning Applications and Support

Pre-application Charge Schedule

The Planning and Building Control Services have undertaken a review of the pre-application charge schedule following engagement with our agents and developers and review of other local examples. The result is a service wide guide which provides clear guidance on both the pre-application charges and response timescales but also highlights a number of other discretionary services that the planning team can assist our customers with. This will ensure a bespoke, timely service can be provided in a manner which offers value for money and offers the best joined up assistance to all our customers. We have also produced an easy to use guide for those wishing to submit ‘householder’ applications.

The final checks are being made on the document which will be live shortly and accessible via the following link of the Council’s website.

[Pre-application planning advice » East Suffolk Council](#)

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this or general queries please do not hesitate to contact Liz Beighton on liz.beighton@eastsoffolk.gov.uk or mobile: 07775 406370

Building Control

Building Control Inspections

As the country remains in a Covid lock down I would like to remind our customers on the constraints we are having to impose on our inspection service.

All site visits should be booked in the normal way 24hrs ahead, giving:-

Address of property

Inspection required

Contact number

The area officer will determine if the inspection can /needs to be made and will call the contact number given to discuss the arrangements.

Generally, our visits should be as normal as possible, but for internal inspections of occupied dwellings, currently these will only be undertaken in special circumstances. Special circumstance is where the property is sold, and completion date is nearing, or the occupier considers the property to be unsafe. In all these cases, a discussion with the area officer on how this can happen will need to be made.

Thankyou for your support at this time, hopefully soon we can all return to normal.

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Planning and Building Control

February Update during Covid –19



Energy Projects

East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two Offshore Windfarms

The Examination into both Development Consent Order applications are continuing with a number of Issue Specific Hearings scheduled during January and February 2021, ESC is participating fully in the Examination process.

On 4 January 2021 ESC's Deputy Leader, Cllr Craig Rivett, presented a report to East Suffolk Council's Cabinet on the two proposals for offshore wind farms – the report is available here: [CMIS > Meetings](#)

This report highlighted that we welcomed progress from ScottishPower Renewables in addressing a number of concerns raised by the Council about its proposals. Discussions between ScottishPower Renewables and this Council have led to an enhanced package of mitigation and compensation in relation to works being proposed. Having regard to this, the Cabinet agreed that the Council can now move towards a neutral position regarding the proposals.

Disagreements still remain with regards to operational noise at the substations site and the cumulative impacts of future energy development which have not yet been satisfactorily addressed. We are also pushing for further commitments in relation to the design of the substations and will continue to work with the Applicants to reduce the impacts of the projects. We are continuing engagement with the applicants to address areas of concerns raised within our relevant representation and local impact report, and remain fully committed to participating in the Examination process for both proposals.

Sizewell C nuclear power station

We are currently awaiting the Rule 6 letter from the Planning Inspectorate which will detail the timetable for the Examination including the dates of the Preliminary Meetings and the key issues the process will examine. A recent procedural letter on the Sizewell C DCO webpages on the Planning Inspectorate's website (<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/Eastern/The-Sizewell-C-Project/>) references the change documents submitted by the applicant, these have now been published, but the Inspectorate will not say if they have been accepted until the Preliminary Meeting. The Energy Projects team along with our many technical experts continue to review the submission and the changes submitted to inform our Local Impact Report in due course.

Other Energy Project matters

ESC continues to engage with the offshore network transmission review and seeking opportunities with Government for a coordinated and cohesive approach to energy project planning and development. Our aim is seeking to achieve the best possible outcome for East Suffolk and our residents while supporting the principle of offshore wind as a significant contributor to the reduction in carbon emissions. We welcome National Grid's recently published Network Options Appraisal for 2021 that details which projects they expect to progress in 2021, full detail are at: [download \(nationalgrideso.com\)](https://www.nationalgrideso.com)

As always our team pages are available Sizewell Nuclear Power Station and Offshore Windfarms at: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/>