

Planning Committee

30th April 2015

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL

Development Management Performance Update Report

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Members of the Planning Committee of the latest performance and outcomes regarding development management matters and in particular to: -

- i) The performance figures for applications determined between 1st January and 31st March 2015.
- ii) The decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate on appeals made to the Secretary of State between 1st January and 31st March 2015.
- iii) A progress report of enforcement proceedings.
- iv) An update of Planning Applications 'called-in' by Councillors

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee notes the report

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report

4. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Within council policy. All planning applications and enforcement proceedings relate to local and national planning policy and guidance.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The briefing of members as to the outcome of individual appeals made by the Planning Inspectorate will enable members to keep abreast of planning issues as may be raised within individual cases. Appeal decisions are material considerations and should be considered in the determination of subsequent applications where relevant.

6. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

None arising from the report. The Development Management service is accredited by an Equality Impact Assessment.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The impact of decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate on the environment is included in decision letters and all planning applications are required to consider environmental issues where material to the proposed development.

8. WARD(S) AFFECTED

All.

9. **CONSULTEES**

Officers in Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

10. **CONTACT OFFICER**

David Elsworthy - Extension: 4722

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

All published.

David Elsworthy, Head of Planning and Building Control

PLANNING COMMITTEE

30th April 2015

Development Management Performance Update Report

i) Speed of planning applications determined between 1st January 31st March 2015

(2013/14 equivalent figures in brackets)

Application type	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Out Turn for 2014- 15
	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	to date
a) Major applications Within 13 weeks (Gov't target = 60%)	75%	100%	78.5%	100%	92.22%
National Average (Qrt 3, 2014) = 77%)	(46.67%)	(81.25%)	(63.64%)	(80%)	(67.65%)
b) Minor applications Within 8 weeks (Gov't target = 65%)	88.29%	76.27%	92.3%	75.6%	88.40%
National Average (Qrt 3, 2014) = 70%)	(60%)	(62.07%)	(68.06%)	(75%)	(65.56%)
c) Other applications Within 8 weeks (Gov't target = 80%)	86.73%	89.79%	86.3%	87.03%	88.26%
National Average (Qrt 3, 2014) = 82%)	(75.58%)	(58.33%)	(72.57%)	(86.71%)	(72.68%)

12.1 At 92.22% the number of major applications determined in 13 weeks for the year significantly exceeds both the government's national target (60%) and average performance for planning authorities (77% in the 3rd quarter 2014). This performance is therefore excellent and welcomed particularly given the governments introduction of a league table to assess poorly performing authorities' which has seen the threshold raised for major applications from 30% to 40% as part of the governments assessment as to whether a local planning authority should be placed in special measures. This also includes 83% of 'County Matters' determined within 13 weeks as part of the overall major application performance, which is a separate performance measure (same target) introduced last year by government.

- 12.2 88.4% of applications were determined in 8 weeks in 2014/15 in the 'minor' category which significantly exceeds the government set target of 65% and the national average of 77% (in the 3rd quarter 2014). At 88.26% performance for the 'others' category this represents a major improvement compared to performance last year and has exceeded the government set target of 80% and the national average of 82% (in the 3rd quarter 2014).
- 12.3 Overall the performance for 2014/15 represents an excellent set of outcomes which I hope will be sustained particularly as the service is working collaboratively with applicants and their agents in order to achieve quality decisions and outputs using the extension of time facility that was introduced last year by government.
- 12.4 The continued high level of performance and further customer service development will rely heavily on the retention of staff and the continued use of the existing development management governance arrangements. It will also be influenced by the proportion of new to older applications being determined and the number of applications received. 1223 planning applications were received in 2014/15 (which no longer include certificates of lawful use) compared to 1135 applications received in 2013/14 (increase of 7.2%); 1235 planning applications in 2012/13; 1143 applications in 2011/12 and 1136 in 2010/11.
- 12.5 This increase needs to be considered against the fact that 151 Prior Approval (permitted development) applications were also received in 2014/15 compared with 121 received in 2013/14 and which are not included in the planning application figures. This represents an increase of 18.5% from last year and 41% from 2012/13). This reflects the government's changes in legislation by the introduction of more permitted development (subject to prior approval applications) and removing the need to submit a planning application. The majority of prior notifications are for large rear extensions to houses which attract no planning fee but officers still need to administer, check, notify neighbours and determine accordingly. This takes up a considerable amount of officer's time which is compounded if an appeal is received against a decision made.

ii) Decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate between 1st January and 31st March 2014

12.6 Details of previous decisions can be found in the performance reports of 5th February 2015, 13th November 2014 and 20th August 2014.

App No.	Address	Proposal	Decision	Officer Rec	Comments
24 13/0678/FL	Crown Wharf shopping Centre	Refusal to vary planning condition restricting sale of food to cafes only	Allowed	Refuse	New condition imposed allowing 100sqm of food retailing in unit 10A (will allow 99p store to trade). Would not impact on the viability of the primary shopping centre (PSA) as impact would be small and given the ongoing Primark and planned St Matthews / Old Square public and Private sector investment. Other suitable sites are not

					presently available in the PSA.
25. 13/1438/FL	Birway Garage, Willenhall	Residential development; 5 x 2 and 5 x 3 bedroom houses and 18, 2 bed apartments.	Allowed	Refuse	Would only have an unacceptable impact on available employment land as is not of a size, location or quality. Design will address adjacent employment uses and fear of crime / ASB.
26. 14/0754/FL	2 Martingale Close	First floor extension, single storey side extension, extensions to outbuildings and boundary wall	Allowed	Approve	The proposed extensions would not appear detrimental to the character and appearance of the area or the amenity of neighbours. Full costs awarded against the council
27. 14/0830/FL	26 Greenslade Road	Roof alterations and loft conversion	Allowed	Refuse	Would not result in significant overlooking due to the size of the rear garden, existing planting and that the garden is already overlooked from Norman Road. The increase in height would be modest and not detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.
28. 14/1178/FL	88 Lichfield Road, Sandhill	Extension over garage	Dismissed	Refuse	The proposed large arched window to the front elevation and a proposed side parapet along the flank would be disproportionate in scale and not in keeping with the existing house.
29. 14/1024/FL	119 Pool Hayes Lane	Retention of use as a Beauty salon.	Allowed	Approve	Change of use from doctors surgery to the current use would be likely to reduce parking and associated traffic issues and not increase it when assessed against the council's adopted parking standards. Full costs awarded against the council
30. 14/1308/FL	6 Ashtree Road	Two bedroom house and single bedroom flat	Dismissed	Refuse	Proposal would cause unacceptable level of harm to the living conditions of of neighbours in terms of noise and disturbance with insufficient amenity area.
31 14/1353/FL	115 Abbotts Street	5 outbuildings, shed, kennel, aviary, decking and	Allowed	Refuse	Retrospective application for domestic purposes only. The buildings are considered acceptable in design and are close to meeting permitted

32. 14/0980/FL	94 Westbrook Avenue	New three bedroom dwelling	Dismissed	Refuse	development requirements. They would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbours as they are single storey with low roof profiles. Noise and disturbance would be controlled by other legislation The proposed dwelling would result in the loss of a significant landscaped side garden which is a defining feature of the area. Together with the bulk of the gable wall and its prominent relationship with the road junction, the shape of the plot and a proposed new driveway and parking area serving No. 94, the proposed dwelling would
33. 14/1014/FL	1 Woodside Close	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 14 two bedroom apartments, substation, access and parking	Allowed	Approve	have a harmful effect on the character of the area. The proposal would be of a high design standard and would complement and optimise the potential of the site whilst responding to the special local character of the area. There is sufficient space to service the substation on foot or would be similar to the existing substation if heavy HGV lifting gear was required as cars park on the road. The proposed car parking is likely to mean that little offsite parking would be generated but any that is would not affect the free flow of traffic. Partial Costs awarded against the Council based on density again being raised as a reason for refusal
34. 14/0918/FL	15 Lucknow Road Willenhall	Proposed new dwelling	Dismissed	Refuse	The proposed dwelling would be set back on the plot to retain off street parking which would increase its prominence and its gable wall would appear incongruous, contrived and out of keeping in the area and detrimental to visual amenity.
35. 14/0678/FL	26 Carlton Avenue	First floor extension and alterations.	Dismissed	Refuse	The proposed extension would in fill the remaining space at first floor above a single storey rear addition and entirely enclose the outlook

36.	17 Widney	First floor	Allowed	Refuse	from the rear of its neighbour with a brick wall. It would result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of No. 24 The proposed extension
14/1599/FL	Avenue, Aldridge	side extension			would not cause a terracing effect due to the different designs and the retention of the properties different identities plus the extension would be set back from the front wall appearing subservient to the main house.
37. 14/0653/FL	19 Greenslade Road	First floor side and loft extension	Dismissed	Refuse	Proposed dormer windows would result in a cluttered and unbalanced rear elevation due to their size, design and siting. Consequently they would be harmful to the design of the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area.
Target = 30%			18 appeals not decided in accordance with Councils decision = 48.6%	appeal not decided with officer recomme ndation = 40.5%	Total number of qualifying appeals = 37 (Appeals against non determination, conservation / listed building consent, adverts and those withdrawn are not included).

- 12.6 The above outcomes show that 48.6% (18 out of 37) of all the appeal decisions were determined differently to the councils' decisions between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015. Although only 37 appeal decisions have been received during the year this represents a very disappointing performance outcome which exceeds our challenging locally set target of 30% and the national outcome figure of 37.6% for all appeal types in 3rd quarter 2014.
- 12.7 Of particular concern is that in the last quarter 3 of these decisions have also resulted in costs being awarded against the council (partially in the case of Woodside Close). In all three cases this has resulted where officers have advised against refusing the applications but the committee have determined differently to the recommendation. Negotiations are ongoing via legal services in all three cases to ensure that costs remain proportionate and appropriate to the costs incurred prior to the claims being settled. It should also be noted that in terms of officer's recommendation appeal decisions would be at 40.5% which would be slightly above national average.
- 12.8 The ability of the council to defend a high percentage of its decisions is particularly important as a qualitative performance measure because a local planning authority should be able to defend a high proportion of its planning decisions. This measure featured as a Best Value Performance Indicator until 2007/8 when it was dropped by the Government. However given the importance attached to this measure in the past

and given that we have many years experience of collating this information it has been continued as a local performance measure. The government has also included this performance measure for major applications (based on 80%) as part of its assessment of poorly performing planning authorities included in the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013. In this respect 4 appeals related to major applications in 2014/15 of which 3 were determined differently to the council's decision (75%).

iii) Progress on Enforcement Proceedings

12.9 Members will see from the attached table at Appendix A that progress is being made on some cases since the last update report. Inevitably some delay is experienced on some cases due to the nature of the work and legal and other complexities. However, a significant effort is being made to increase enforcement performance in Development Management with all officers now responsible for enforcement as part of their general casework.

iv) Called in Applications

12.10 Planning Committee requested information regarding the number of applications that have been called in and agreed that this should appear in this performance report as a regular item. The table below shows that a further 5 applications have been called in as part of a total of 20 for the financial year. For details of applications previously called in please refer to the previous performance reports of the 20th August, 13th November 2014 and 5th February 2015.

Date of Planning Committee	Called in by Councillor	The Electoral Ward that the planning application was within	Planning Application number	Called in using
5/3/15	Councillor Sohal	Paddock	15/0010/FL	Proforma
5/3/15	Councillor Jones	Pleck	15/0166/FL	Proforma
5/3/15	Councillor Russell	St Matthews	14/1895/FL	Proforma
5/3/15	Councillor Barker	Short Heath	15/0008/FL	Proforma
5/3/15	Councillor Rattigan	Rushall Shelfield	14/1858/FL	Proforma

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 30th April 2015 : Progress of formal enforcement actions.

Case Number & Case Officer(s)	Address	Date of committee authorisation for Enforcement Action	Type of action and date of issue	Current position
1 AT	Site of Mellish Road Church, Lichfield Road, Walsall	Latest resolution 10/3/2011	Section 215 Notice – issued 18/4/2011	The demolition has taken place. Awaiting the submission of a planning application for a mixed use development expected n the coming months.
2 KP	17 Newport Street, Walsall	26/10/2004	Listed Building Enforcement Notice and Prosecution	Continued non-compliance with Listed Building Enforcement Notices for installation of second floor windows and painting exterior of building. Also other external alterations including first floor windows continue to be an offence. Case has been reviewed. Consolidated report being prepared with intention to report to committee in the near future.
3 DM	74, 75, 76, Stafford Street, Willenhall (Dainty's)	Latest resolution 21/10/2010	Section 215 Notices Issued on 4 th July 2012	Section 215 notice required the repair of numbers 74 and 75. The notice took effect on 6 th August. The first compliance period expired on 6 th September; the second compliance period expired on 6th December 2012. Requirements of the first two parts of the notice were not met. Prosecution was progressed with each Defendant being fined. A planning application for the conversion of the building to one retail unit and five flats has been approved. Following the planning consent the applicants have established that the quality of the existing building may not be suitable for refurbishment/redevelopment. A current planning application is being considered for redevelopment of the site to ten 1 bedroomed flats.
4 DM	The Bell Inn, Market Place Willenhall	Latest resolution 29/4/2010	Section 215 Notice -not issued, owing to sale to new	Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative grant scheme commenced in May 2011. Some work carried out to building and preparation of schedules of repair for grant aid application was

			owners	taking place. Planning and listed building applications were approved in April 2013, for external refurbishment works, (including shop-front, gates and staircase); and residential use of first floor. Works underway liaising with Conservation Officers
5 PH	Land at Canalside Close, Walsall	9/1/2007	Enforcement Notice – 5/11/2007	Erection of boundary wall, building and gates. Appeal partially upheld on 15/8/08. Planning permission granted subject to conditions for a change of use to motor vehicle salvage and breakers yard including alterations to the boundary wall by September 2012 subject to time limit actions. Actions not complied with. Discussions about new tenant and advice sought from officers in regard to a new planning application to address the issues.
6 PH	80 Noose Lane, Willenhall	28/10/2008	Enforcement Notice	Planning Contravention Notice issued 7/1/2011 to clarify fluctuating vehicle repair/sales/recovery and later partially completed by occupier during Pace interview. Use appears to be mainly vehicle storage but also includes change of use of neighbouring garden also in the same ownership for storage of vehicles. Additional kerb side fencing has been erected over the 1.0m PD allowance taking the fence to over 2.0m in height.
				9-3-2015 Update – Although the stored vehicles are to the rear of the properties, they are visible from neighbouring properties and unsightly. Officers will therefore be pursuing enforcement action through a s215 notice and separate action to restore the garden to the neighbouring property.
				Following further investigations vehicle repairs are now infrequent and car storage predominately non-commercial. However storage of vehicles has spilled over onto rear of adjacent property, issue will be pursued. New issue has arisen regarding storage of reclamation items.

7 DM	The Manse, 100 and 101 Union Street, Willenhall	31/3/2009	Section 215 Notices	Initially, the owner for 101 Union St was contacted, prompting Officers to write to the owner requesting a timetable for resolving the breaches. Owners intended to carry out works to the building to improve its appearance. Scaffolding was erected and works were carried out to re-slate the damaged areas of roof, and add boarding to some windows. The Manse is currently on offer for sale. Officers are seeking to enter pre-application discussions with the new owners. The sale is connected to the restoration of the Church next door and its
	40.11 ab 000001	Fundananalutan	December	sale will assist with the restoration of the Church.
8 HS	19 High Street, Walsall Wood – (formerly G D Memorials)	Further resolution 17/2/2011	Prosecution	Planning application for retention of building at a lower height with external cladding was approved by 18 th September 2014 planning committee. Land owners carried out works to address the enforcement notice. Planning Officers visited on the 18/03/15, confirming compliance with the planning approval. No further action intended. RESOLVED
9 TP	Sites of former Junction Works and Railway Tavern Public House	2/02/2012	Enforcement Notices, 21/9/2012 -in respect of former Railway Tavern 23/10/2012	At Junction Works: Change of use to waste transfer and crushing/processing rubble to make secondary aggregates. Compliance due – (i) cease importing materials 05/09/13, (ii) cease all operations and clear the site 05/02/14. Appeal dismissed on the 5 th August and notice was upheld. Prosecution of owners being pursued.
				At Railway Tavern: Change of use to storage of skips, containers, wastes, machinery, and the parking of vehicles. Compliance due 05/11/2013. Appeal dismissed on the 5 th August and notice was upheld. Both cases presented at Walsall Magistrates' Court on Monday 1 December 2014. Tenant AB Waste Management Ltd pleaded guilty to all five summonses laid

				against them. Magistrates Court fined AB Waste a total of £52365.00 including costs on the 16/3/15. Owners of sites Serve Firm Ltd and St Francis Properties LLP entered not guilty pleas. The case against them has been
10 BT	65 Bloxwich Road South, Willenhall	20/9/12	Re –issue separate s.215 notice to changed owner.	adjourned for a trial to take place on the 8 th June 2015. Unsightly void property. Legal services were instructed to commence prosecution in regard to non-compliance with S215 Notice, subject to viability against both 63 and 65
				The amenity issues at no 65 have been resolved. No.63 is secure and does not warrant any further action at this time. Officer will however continue to monitor.
11 KP	Land rear of Tempus Drive, Walsall	2/5/2013	Enforcement Notice	Change of use to deposition of waste material. Enforcement Notice issued. Appeal lodged but subsequently withdrawn. Enforcement notice compliance period expired April 2014. New EIA Screening Opinion issued 11/12/14 confirming Environmental Statement not required. A new planning application has been submitted and is currently under consideration. The previous application has been withdrawn.
12 PH	12-14 Lower Lichfield Street, Willenhall	2/5/2013	Prosecution in respect of S215 Notice.	Unsightly void properties. Letter received in July 2013 sets out intention to paint, replace glass and repair the roof within a month. No works carried out. Difficulty demonstrating legal owner of the land, legal advice to be sought on likelihood of securing a prosecution or whether direction action would be the only way to bring improvements.
13 SC/TP	3 Walsall Road	September 2013	Enforcement notice	Unauthorised change of use, signage, fencing and building works. Authorisation to prosecute was approved by September planning committee. Planning applications for the retention of the works have now been refused. Site meeting with conservation officer has taken place and the agent now suggests a further revised application may be submitted. More unauthorised works

		20/20/40		have now taken place, Building Control are investigating potential dangerous structures. Updated site visit has taken place with a view to updating the enforcement notice which is being prepared to be served.
14 SC	11 Greenslade Road	30/08/13	Enforcement Notice	The Enforcement Notice was served to remove the house and outbuildings. The applicant appealed the notice and the Planning Inspector has allowed the appeal. RESOLVED .
15 PH	97 Lydford Road, Bloxwich	19/12/13	Enforcement Notice – 13/3/14	Appeal dismissed and works undertaken to resolve the breach. RESOLVED
16 JF	24 Larkspur Way	16/01/14	Enforcement Notice	Enforcement Notice served, with the compliance period expiring at the beginning of October. Update 28-10-14 – Officer inspection confirms requirements of Enforcement Notice not complied with – Prosecution files with Legal Services for prosecution proceedings to be prepared.
17 JF	Ravenscourt Shopping Precinct	March 2014	Section 215 Notice	Awaiting return of Section.16, this is required to establish all parties responsible for the land before serving Section 215 Notice. Notice being prepared. Update 9-3-15 – Owners of the site have been in contact with the LPA to discuss future the enforcement action and the future of the site.
18 SC	Diamond Car Wash Ward Street, Walsall	March 2014	Enforcement Notice	Planning application to retain the car wash and tyre sales was refused. Applicant appealed the decision. Planning Inspector allowed the appeal. RESOLVED
19 SC	Land Adjacent 26 Bradley Lane	June 2014	Enforcement Notice	The carrying out of engineering works to alter land levels and create access onto the highway, laying down of hard-surfacing, the erection of boundary gates and fencing, the erection of two stabling blocks and the partial construction of a storage barn. Applicant contests that the access has lawful use rights and there is a current certificate of lawfulness to be determined. Notice has been served with compliance by the 4 th June 2015, the appellant has now appealed the notice and we are awaiting

				the outcome.
JF	1 Halford Crescent	May 2014	Enforcement Notice	Enforcement Notice served 24 th October 2014 regarding the change of use from residential to car repairs, storage and valeting, plus additional fencing and hard surfacing. Compliance period ends 24 th December 2014. PACE interview conducted on 25 th Feb to establish further grounds for prosecution. Prosecution proceedings being prepared by officers.
21 JF	84 Fairburn Crescent	September 2014	Enforcement Notice	Enforcement Notice served 6 th December 2014 regarding the repair and valeting of motor vehicles, the erection gates and fencing above 1m and the laying of hard standing. Appeal dismissed 18 th March 2015. One month compliance period commences, expired on 18 th April. Site being monitored following expiry of compliance period
22 SF JF	Middlemore Lane West – Former GKN	September 2014	Enforcement Notice	Owners have removed the unauthorised embankment and are in discussions with officers for the submission of a planning application to landscape the front of the site.
23 JF	55 Shire Ridge	5-03-15	Enforcement Notice	5/3/15 Planning Committee authorised to pursue enforcement action against a business being operated from home. Retrospective planning application refused. Planning Appeal submitted against Councils refusal of application. Enforcement action held in abeyance until outcome of appeal.
24 TP	Three Crowns Public House	2 nd April 2015	Enforcement notice	The 2 nd April 2015 Planning Committee authorised the pursuance of enforcement action for unauthorised excavations at the pub site and the dumping of spoil on the adjacent SINC field. Paper work being prepared to serve the notice.
25 TP	105 Skip Lane	August 2014	Enforcement Notice	Enforcement Notice Served on 7 th January 2015 regarding the Change of Use from Agricultural to Garden Land and erection of Lighting/Camera Column. The land owner has not appealed the enforcement notice. Compliance was required by 6 th March. The land owner had suggested they would submit a lawful existing

				use. This has not been submitted, so prosecution is being
				prepared.
26 HS	72 Whitehall Road	11/12/14	Enforcement Notice	ENF14/0215- Served enforcement notice on the 3/3/15 to
				remove an unauthorised rear extension, built without the benefit
				of building regulations. The owner has carried out recent works
				before the Notice compliance date, to demolish the extension. An
				invalid Planning Application received for a replacement rear
				extension.