

EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION Planning Committee

Neil Cameron KC (Chair)
Valerie Owen OBE (Vice Chair)
Cllr Lee Croxton
Fred Maroudas
Rev Penny Marsh
Cllr David Mote

A meeting of the above Committee will be held on Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 7:00pm at The Observatory and via Microsoft Teams.



PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

Wednesday 31st January 2024

- 1. Apologies for Absence
- 2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interest from Members

- 3. Urgent Items
- 4. Record of Meeting

To approve the record of the meeting held on 13th December 2023

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5. Planning Enforcement Plan

Recommendation - For approval

- 1. That the annexed document (subject to any minor amendments agreed by the Director of Planning & Place) is approved for publication on the EDC's website.
- 2. That authority is delegated to the Director of Planning & Place to provide further updates to the document to reflect any changes to legislation.
- 6. **Design Quality Paper**

Recommendation

- 1. Note progress on the identified actions; and
- 2. Propose any further actions for officers to explore / implement.
- 7. Planning Activity Report Q3 October December 2023/2024

For Noting

8. Delegated Items Report

For Noting



EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

<u>SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AS AN ACCURATE RECORD AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE</u> <u>COMMITTEE</u>

Date: Wednesday 13th December 2023

Time: 18:14 - 19:20

PRESENT: Neil Cameron KC (Chair)

Valerie Owen OBE (Vice-Chair)

Rev. Penny Marsh Councillor David Mote Councillor Lee Croxton

The Chair opened the meeting and noted that the video would be published on the EDC's website after the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence received from Fred Maroudas

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest

3. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no Urgent Items.

4. **RECORD OF MEETING**

The minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on 26th July 2023 were approved.

5. **RECORD OF THANKS**

Chair would like to record thanks to Chris Hall, Independent Member of the EDC Planning Committee of 8 years and to Councillor Jordan Meade, KCC representative.

6. **EDC/23/0114** – Alkerden (Parcel 5B), Eastern Quarry, Watling Street, Swanscombe, Kent

The application seeks permission of reserved matters for 162 dwellings, comprising 32 x 1- and 2-bedroom apartments and 130 x two, three and four bedroom houses. The application is located in Whitecliffe, formally known as Eastern Quarry. The Case Officer presented the scheme to the Committee, including a masterplan of Whitecliffe, which forms a strategic development site within the EDC area, comprising three villages; Castle Hill, Alkerden and Ashmere, all separated by areas of open space.

The site is located in the North of Alkerden Village, within a walkable distance to the Alkerden Market Centre. This phase follows on from Chartway's first development which comprised custom build dwellings at Alkerden Gateway. The application embeds principals of sustainability in creating walkable neighbourhoods and a Fastrack corridor, running through the centre providing efficient public transport.

The Chair invited the applicant's team to speak in support of their proposal, Julian Moat of Chartway, addressed to the Committee the proposal and Olivia Pfeil of BPTW, discussed through the architecture. The Chair invited members of the Committee to ask their questions.

Cllr Mote began by complimenting the proposal and asked about the sustainability aspect, and regarding EV Charging. The applicant responded and confirmed the EV charging point would be connected into the house and they have looked to incorporate sustainability through the scheme design process. Heating is provided via air source heat pumps and electric heating to the flats. Cllr Mote also asked whether the build type was Timber Frame, to which the applicant confirmed the houses would be and stated that this increases the thermal levels.

Cllr Croxton asked a question on transport links for residents. The applicant cited the site layout and connections to the wider area which in combination provide good pedestrian and cycle permeability. Cllr Mote asked a follow up question with regards to the residential aspect and where the bins are stored. The applicant answered that for houses the dustbins are stored in the garden, effectively a large storage area which can be accessed through pathways and side gates. Bin Stores for the flats are located either within the building or attached to it, which will be separated into general and recycling refuse.

Penny Marsh asked for clarification on whether the vehicular access along the western edge will be to the properties only or provide a through route. This was confirmed as a through route but predominantly for residents, however, it does allow for access through to the Major Urban Park.

Valerie Owen asked a question regarding the housing tenures and whether the scheme would provide for a mixed and balanced community considering the location of the affordable homes. Valerie Owen also enquired about the landscaping and lighting in the large parking courts serving the flats. The applicant answered by advising that the scheme is tenure blind with the affordable housing being in accordance with the s106. In order to provide the higher density development, rear parking courts are needed and the design team have worked to try and alleviate any concerns. Feedback has been received from officers and that a condition requiring further details on the lighting of the parking courts

has been discussed. The Case Officer stated that throughout the course of the application, the landscaping has been looked into detail and improved.

A further parking question was raised regarding how residents access the parking courts. The Committee were advised that the parking would be secure with residents accessing via a rear gate or the main front entrance.

An unresolved issue with highways and the safety of two buses passing was raised. The applicant advised that the points have been addressed with highways officers at KCC and is confident it can be satisfactorily resolved and the recommended condition met. Neil Cameron asked the Case Officer regarding this condition and wanted to confirm the Officer was satisfied that meeting the condition would not disrupt the landscaping scheme. The Case Officer addressed the Committee with plans regarding the road layout and advised that landscaping wouldn't be disrupted in the location in question.

Neil Cameron commented that he thought it was a well-thought-out scheme, in terms of the detail, the architectural form and materials. However, seeks for reassurance on the landscaping points raised, being met, particularly on the parking arrangements. Cllr Mote agreed on the parking court issue, and the need to make sure they are safely designed with appropriate lighting. However, he was pleased with the amount of social housing properties at 25% and impressed with the materials used.

Cllr Croxton was pleased with the village feel of the scheme and with the Fastrack bus route running through is particularly important. Valerie Owen commended certain points on the scheme including the building for healthy life assessment, provision of air source heat pumps, solar panels, and agreed with the 25% affordable housing, along with other Committee Members.

Neil Cameron proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendation, subject to the supplementary report, in particular a supplementary detail of conditions.

Members voted unanimously in favour, which completed consideration of this item and moved to the next agenda item.

7. EDC Validation Checklist Update

Michael Jessop introduced the report explaining that it is seeking approval for updates to the EDC Validation Checklist, which is in place for development management purposes which sets out the information needed for planning applications. The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) requires the EDC to publish the document and to keep it updated, EDC Officer's reviewed the Validation Checklist earlier in the year, the changes proposed were mainly presentational changes and no substantial new content being incorporated.

The checklist was sent out for a public consultation, feedback was received mainly from statutory consultee's, comments received were incorporated into the document.

The recommendation is for approval, a revised recommendation set out in the supplementary report and some legislative references which were in the original document, to make them current, to publish the report online and to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Place to make any future and factual changes prior to the next formal review.

Neil Cameron invited Committee Members to ask questions on this agenda item, Valerie Owen began with a query on not receiving a consultation response from neither Gravesham nor Dartford Council, as much of the validation relates to policies. Michael Jessop clarified the consistency across the documents which each Council produces, and that the local plan references are there to reinforce the requirements.

After a general discussion between Committee members, the Chair proposed to accept the recommendation and thanks the Officer's for contributing to the review of the Checklist.

- Planning Activity Report Q2 July September 2023/2024
 Noted
- Delegated Items Report Noted

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Mr Mark Pullin – EDC Director of Planning & Place Mr Michael Jessop – EDC Head of Development Management Mrs Che Eade – EDC Senior Planning Officer Ms Julia Johnson – EDC Planning Committee Secretary

Planning Committee



Title of paper	Planning Enforcement Plan					
Presented by	Michael Jessop, Head of Development Management					
Status	For approval					
Recommendation	That the annexed document (subject to any minor amendments agreed by the Director of Planning & Place) is approved for publication on the EDC's website.					
	 That authority is delegated to the Director of Planning & Place to provide further updates to the document to reflect any changes to legislation. 					

Purpose of Paper	
This report seeks approval of the Planning Enforcement Plan.	
Annex	
Annex 1 – Draft Planning Enforcement Plan dated January 2024	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The planning powers that were transferred from the local authorities to EDC in 2015 included those relating to planning enforcement. In the early years of the EDC the number of cases being reported was very low and much of the work related to proactive compliance monitoring. Whilst the number of live cases is significantly lower than most local planning authorities, we have seen an increase over the last couple of years as more residents move into the area. We expect this trend to increase.
- 1.2 EDC has drafted a Planning Enforcement Plan in order to provide greater transparency of the EDC's approach to investigating alleged cases of unauthorised development and taking action where appropriate.

2. Policy Background

2.1 This Plan directly responds to the NPPF (para. 59) which states:-

Effective enforcement is important to maintain public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. They should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where appropriate.

Planning Committee

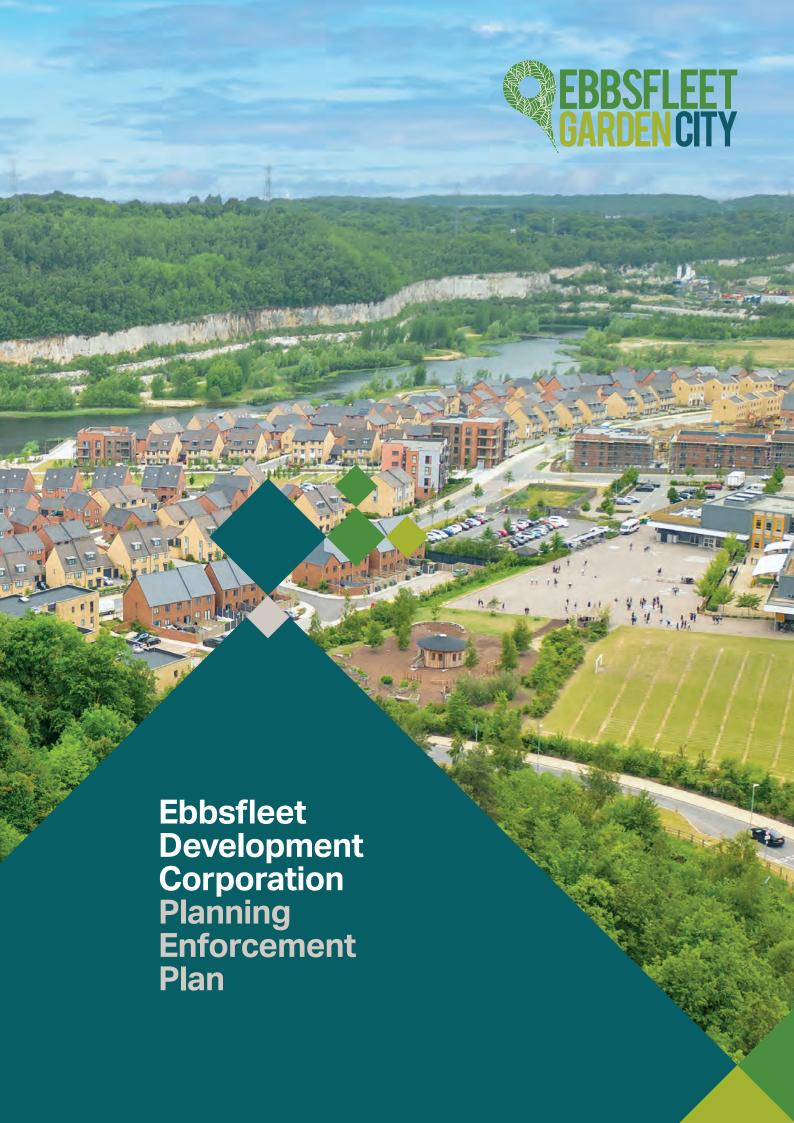


3. Planning Enforcement Plan

- 3.1 The draft Plan is attached in Annex 1. The document provides information on what is and what is not considered a breach of planning control, how a breach can be reported and how cases will be prioritised. The Plan also includes information on the different routes that are available to EDC in pursuing enforcement cases.
- 3.2 We have considered the content of similar documents published by Dartford Borough Council and Gravesham Borough Council in the drafting of the Plan.
- 3.3 The quarterly Planning Activity Reports will contain information on planning enforcement activity that has been carried out.

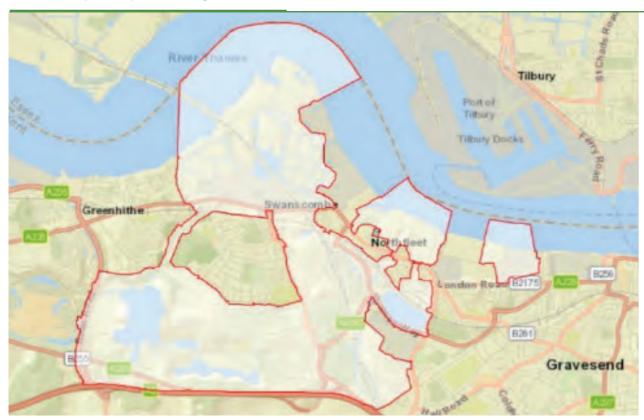
4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that the annexed document (Annex 1) is approved for publication on the EDC's website and for use when conducting planning enforcement work.
- 4.2 The Plan has been drafted based on current legislation and guidance but provisions in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act may result in changes, for example the period in which the development is immune from action. It is therefore also recommended that authority is delegated to the Director of Planning & Place to provide further updates to reflect any changes to legislation.









Introduction

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) oversees and facilitates the creation of a 21st century Garden City in North Kent. The Corporation is responsible for determining planning applications, giving pre application advice and carrying out planning enforcement in the urban development area.

Through its planning powers the Corporation seeks to ensure that the character, amenity and the environment are not adversely affected by new development, improving the infrastructure and enabling development to be brought forward in a way that is both sustainable and for the benefit of the public.

Effective operation of the planning system depends on our ability to ensure that development is carried out in accordance with planning permissions and to enforce against development carried out without permission. Effective planning enforcement is vital to make sure residents continue to maintain confidence in the planning system.

Not all development needs planning permission.

Planning legislation allows certain works and changes of use to take place without requiring planning permission.

This is known as permitted development (PD). However, within the Ebbsfleet Urban Development Area, some permitted development rights have been removed by conditions imposed on existing planning permissions for the major development sites, such that planning permission is required for works that might otherwise be PD. These PD rights were removed in order to retain planning control to ensure incremental changes to new buildings do not cause harm to the character of the area or amenity of surrounding residents.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation has prepared and published Resident Guides for the major development sites to provide useful information about those sites and to advise when planning permission is required for specific home improvements.

A free pre-planning application advice service is offered by the team to provide informal advice on proposed developments. This can reduce the likelihood of an application being refused and is intended to help make the planning application process easier.

Government advice and legislation

This Plan responds to the government guidance on planning enforcement in the National Planning Policy Framework which states:



Effective enforcement is important to maintain public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. They should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where appropriate.

Key principles of our planning enforcement service

Our approach to enforcement is based on the following key principles:

- Our enforcement action will be remedial rather than punitive
- We will investigate all reports about breaches of planning control*, and aim to visit the site concerned within the timescales set out in this document
- We will give priority to the most serious enquiries based on the degree of harm caused by the development within the subject of the enquiry, based on the 3 categories set out in this document
- We will explore solutions to remove harm caused by unauthorised development
- We will keep the identity of enquirers confidential
- Breaches are considered on individual facts and circumstances, but all are considered in proportion, consistently

(*we do not investigate anonymous enquiries)

What is a breach of planning control?

Examples include the unauthorised erection of a building, the unauthorised extension to a building, a material change of use of land or the display of unauthorised advertisements.

Other breaches of planning control may consist of the following:

- Unauthorised works to listed buildings
- Unauthorised works to trees subject to a Tree
 Preservation Order (TPO) or in a Conservation Area
- · Unauthorised demolition within conservation areas
- Breaches of conditions attached to planning permissions

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- Carrying out development not in accordance with the approved plans of planning permissions
- Untidy land where it affects the amenity of the area
- Unauthorised engineering operations (e.g. raising of land levels)
- Failure to comply with a legal planning agreement
- Deliberate concealment of unauthorised building works or changes of use
- Installation of advertisements without advertisement consent
- Carrying out changes to a home outside of permitted development

It is important to note that it is not always an offence to carry out works without consent. Some development may well be unauthorised but it will not be unlawful unless a formal enforcement notice has first been issued and the owner or occupier has failed to comply with the terms of that notice. Where certain development is unauthorised, we must consider the expediency of taking formal action.

Matters that are not breaches of planning control

- Internal works to a non-listed building unless this results in additional dwellings being created
- Loss of value to a neighbouring property
- Obstruction of a highway or public right of way
- Parking of commercial vehicles on the highway, in visitor parking bays or on grass verges in the absence of restrictive planning conditions
- Parking caravans on residential driveways or within the curtilage of domestic properties (as long as they are incidental to the enjoyment of the property)
- Running a business from home where the residential use remains the primary use and there is no adverse impact on residential amenity

- Land ownership disputes or trespass issues which are civil matters
- Covenants imposed on property deeds which are civil matters
- Any works, including advertisements, that are deemed to be permitted development under planning law, regulations and orders
- Dangerous structures; these enquiries are directed to the Building Control department at the applicable local council

Enforcement action is discretionary

We have a duty to investigate alleged breaches of planning control, however taking formal enforcement action is discretionary. This means that we assess each case based on its own facts and circumstances. Therefore, we only take formal enforcement action where it is expedient and proportionately in the public interest.

It is important to note that a breach of planning control in itself is not sufficient reason to take enforcement action. We therefore use the test of expediency to assess whether the unauthorised activities or development are causing unacceptable harm to the environment or amenity of the area having regard to the applicable Local Plan policies, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and all other material planning considerations.

We may take the view that it is not in the public interest or expedient to take formal action in relation to minor or technical breaches where the harm is not significant.

Government guidance advises that enforcement action should be a last resort. We are expected to give those responsible for a breach of planning control the opportunity to put matters right or to seek to regularise the breach before we serve a formal notice.

We must ensure that the serving of a formal notice is proportionate to the scale and impact of the breach of planning control. This means that we might not take formal enforcement action in all cases where there has been a breach of planning control identified.

How to report an alleged breach of planning control

In order to effectively deal with these enquiries it is important that we are provided with as much information as possible. Below is a list of the type of information that would assist us:

- An accurate description of the location or address for the particular site
- A detailed description or photos of the activities taking place that are cause for concern
- Names, addresses and phone numbers of those persons responsible for the alleged breach or the owners of land (if known)
- Timescale of when the alleged breach took place
- Any other information or evidence that might assist
- The name and email address of the enquirer

Enquirers can be made about alleged breaches of planning control via:

- Email EDCplanning@ebbsfleetdc.org.uk
- Telephone 0303 444 8832
- A personal visit to our office is acceptable providing the enquirer is willing to provide their contact details and has made an appointment prior to arrival.

Complaints will be logged and investigated to ascertain if there has been a breach of planning control, however a complaint will be not considered if they are:

- Anonymous (however, anonymous complaints may be directed through your local councillor)
- Motivated by planning harm (neighbour dispute)
- Otherwise inappropriate

The source of any enquiries and the details of those who submit information is kept confidential in line with General Data Protection Regulations. Anonymous enquiries will not be investigated unless they relate to a matter of public safety.

How do we prioritise your enquiry?

In order to make the best use of our resources it is important to prioritise the enquiries received in accordance with the seriousness of the alleged breach. We will do this initially when we receive the enquiry. We have set out examples of categories and the timescale for when we will begin our investigation.

In general we visit each enquiry site and the majority of our site visits are made without prior warning so that the sites can be seen in the condition described by the enquirer. In some cases, however it may be more appropriate to write to any parties involved in the first instance so as to gain further information.

We may use a variety of other methods to determine whether or not a breach of planning control has taken place, including obtaining information from witnesses to an alleged breach and consultation with Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council and the Environment Agency, for example. We may also seek clarification from case law or obtain legal advice where the subject of an investigation is complicated or contentious. Individual cases may be reprioritised as the investigation progresses and as new evidence comes to light.

Examples of categories and the timescale for investigation

Category A

- Unauthorised demolition or partial demolition of a building which it is essential to retain (e.g. a listed building or building within a conservation area)
- Development that potentially is a serious risk to public safety or severe harm to ecology
- Unauthorised works to trees covered by a Tree
 Preservation Order or in a conservation area

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 An investigation will begin within one working day of receiving the enquiry, with an initial site visit as soon as possible

Category B

- Any unauthorised development or activity which causes clear, immediate and continuous harm to the locality and adjoining residents and is a source of significant public concern
- Breach of condition which results in serious harm to adjoining residents
- Unauthorised development in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Green Belt, conservation area or where an Article 4 Direction has been issued
- An investigation will begin within five working days of receiving the enquiry, including initial site visit

Category C

- Unauthorised development which has reasonable prospects of receiving planning permission if an application were to be submitted
- Minor breaches (e.g. erection of fences, breaches of conditions, air-conditioning units, businesses operated from home)
- Unauthorised advertisements such as fly posting
- An investigation will begin within 10 working days of receiving the enquiry, including initial site visit

What are the possible outcomes of our investigation?

Deciding not to take action

Following a site inspection we may find that there is no breach of planning control. This may be because the unauthorised use has ceased, the development does not require planning permission or already has permission.

The development may be lawful and immune from enforcement action - This is when the unauthorised development or change of use has occurred over a long period of time without being brought to our attention. There are certain time limits involved in relation to operational development and changes of use. At the time of publishing this Plan these timescales are:

- 4 years where the breach consists of unauthorised building, mining, engineering or other operations
- 4 years for a change of use of any building to use as a single dwelling house
- 10 years in any other case including changes of use of land and breaches of planning conditions

There may be a breach of planning control which may not be necessary to pursue - just because a breach may exist does not automatically mean that formal action should be taken. Enforcement powers are discretionary and minor technical breaches may not be considered expedient to pursue as they may be too minor to warrant the time and expense to do so.

Negotiations may take place to find a solution - In accordance with government guidance the first priority is to try and resolve any breaches of planning control through negotiation. Only when these negotiations fail to secure a solution should formal action be considered. We will not allow negotiations to become drawn out where there is a need to make the development acceptable or where there is a requirement for a particular use to cease.

We may invite a retrospective planning application - where a planning application is received for development that has already taken place. We will assess the merits of the application on the same basis as if the development had not yet started. This includes the possibility of the application being determined by our Planning Committee.

Taking formal enforcement action

We have a range of formal powers under planning legislation that we can use to remedy breaches of planning control. These are listed and described below:

Enforcement Notice

An Enforcement Notice is the usual method that we use to require the removal of unauthorised development. We will specify in the notice the breach of planning control and what steps are required to remedy it together with a timescale for compliance.

There is a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against such notices. As an enforcement notice can be overturned on appeal, on the grounds that planning permission should be granted for the development, we will not normally take enforcement action against a development where there is a reasonable prospect that we would unconditionally grant permission if an application had been made.

Failure to comply may result in prosecution and a fine.

Breach of Condition Notice

A Breach of Condition Notice can be used where conditions imposed on a planning permission has not been complied with. They are not suitable for all planning conditions. There is no formal right of appeal. Failure to comply may result in prosecution and a fine.

Listed Building Enforcement Notice

This form of action is very similar to Planning
Enforcement Notices. The Notice will specify the
unauthorised works to a listed building and the
requirements necessary to remedy the harm. They can
be served on their own, e.g. where unauthorised works
to a listed building required only listed building consent

and not planning permission, or in conjunction with a Planning Enforcement Notice. Failure to comply may result in prosecution and a fine.

Section 215 Notice

A Section 215 Notice is used in relation to land or buildings where their condition adversely affects the amenity of the area. We will set out the steps to be taken and the time period for compliance in the notice. Works that can be required include planting, clearance, tidying, enclosure, demolition, re-building, external repairs and repainting but cannot include works which would themselves require planning permission. Failure to comply may result in prosecution and a fine.

Stop Notice

A Stop Notice requires development to stop by a specified date. There is no right of appeal. Stop Notices can only be used in conjunction with an Enforcement Notice. We only use these in the most serious cases where the breach of planning control is causing severe and immediate significant harm. Before serving a notice we will consider the likely consequences of requiring the activity to stop. We will review whether there are alternative actions that will achieve the desired outcome. Although there is no right of appeal there are circumstances where we may be liable to pay compensation, notably if the associated enforcement notice is quashed, varied or withdrawn or the stop notice itself is withdrawn. Failure to comply may result in prosecution and a fine.

Injunction

Where a breach of planning control is causing, or is likely to cause, significant harm, we may apply to the Courts for an injunction compelling the breach to stop. In order to grant an injunction the Court needs to be satisfied that it is just and convenient as well as proportionate to do so in light of the Article 8 right to a private life contained within the European Convention on Human Rights. At the hearing, the Judge will invariably weigh up the public interest of granting an injunction in terms of upholding the integrity of the planning system and abating the material harm, as against the private interests of the landowner/occupier to use his land as he/she/they see fit.





Direct Action

Where we have issued a statutory notice and those responsible for the breach have failed to comply, as a last resort, we have powers to carry out the works specified in the notice. This is referred to as direct action. Direct action is a useful tool that can resolve many different breaches of planning control, and is generally most effective when used to remove unauthorised building operations. We also have powers to recover any expenses incurred as a result of direct action. Unpaid expenses can be pursued either in the County Court or registered as a land charge payable when the land is sold.

Prosecution

We will consider a prosecution in the Courts against any person who has failed to comply with the requirement(s) of the notices we serve where the date for compliance has passed and the requirements have not been complied with. Before commencing any legal proceedings, we need to be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to offer a realistic prospect of conviction and that the legal proceedings are in the public interest.

Planning Contravention Notice

A planning contravention notice may be issued when it appears to the local planning authority that a breach of control may have occurred, and we want to find out more information before deciding what enforcement action to take. It allows us to require any information we want for enforcement purposes about any operations being carried out and can be used to invite its recipient to respond constructively to the local planning authority about how any suspected breach of planning control may be satisfactorily remedied.

A Planning Contravention Notice must be responded to within 21 days of service.

Section 330 Notice

To enable other powers to be exercised, they may serve a notice under Section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act requiring information as to interests in land, including ownership and occupation details.

There is no right of appeal against a section 330 notice and failure to respond is an offence.

Enforcement powers that remain with the Local Authorities

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation is not the local authority for the area and so we do not have the full range of powers as a local council has. The following enforcement powers and processes remain at the time of publishing this plan with the applicable borough council (namely Dartford Borough Council or Gravesham Borough Council).

- Planning enforcement order
- Determine applications for certificates of lawfulness (existing or proposed use)
- Temporary stop notices

Proactive compliance

As well as investigating breaches of planning control we also provide a proactive approach to ensure compliance with planning permissions and other consents. It is the responsibility of individual developers to comply with the conditions imposed on any planning permission or consent or with any terms identified in legal agreements or complying with Community Infrastructure Levy. The failure to comply can affect the quality of the environment and undermine the amenity of neighbours.

Our commitment to residents

We will keep relevant parties informed at each stage of our investigation. If we believe a person or party is responsible for an alleged breach of planning control we will contact them. We will explain what the allegation is and give the customer opportunity to explain their side of the case.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we are not obliged to provide details of the source of any enquiry although any person or party will be entitled to know the name of the District or County Councillor who lodges an enquiry on his/her own behalf or on behalf of someone else.

Where the enquiry is found to be without substance we will advise the enquirer and our file on the matter will be closed.

If there is found to be a breach of planning control, we will advise the landowner/developer of the details of the breach and how it can be rectified. We will seek cooperation to correct the breach, either by removing or modifying the unauthorised development or by ceasing the unauthorised work. A reasonable time period will be allowed for this.

In some circumstances we may invite the person or party responsible to submit a planning application, although no assurance can be given as to a successful outcome to any planning application. However, if refused, there is a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

We will try to minimise possible impacts on any business which may be subject of enforcement action, but this does not necessarily mean that the enforcement action will be delayed or stopped.

Enforcement Notices will contain the precise details of the breach, the reasons for the action, the steps required to overcome the breach and the time period for compliance.







Contact Us

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation
E: edcplanning@ebbsfleetdc.org.uk
The Observatory, Castle Hill Drive,
Ebbsfleet Valley, Kent, DA10 1EE
T: 0303 444 2586



Title of paper	Post planning permission design management in Ebbsfleet
Presented by	Simon Harrison, Head of Design

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

This report provides an update to Planning Committee on progress made in addressing the design management issues being experienced after planning permissions have been granted within Ebbsfleet.

Annexes

Annex 1 : Summary of design assessments of major scheme planning permissions 2016-2023

Annex 2: November 2023 Ebbsfleet Delivery Dashboard

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Over the past five years we have seen a steady improvement in design quality at planning application stage, as demonstrated by the longitudinal analysis of design assessment tools in Annex 1. The advice, decisions and associated messaging of the Planning Committee, combined with the introduction of EDC's design guidance, the Ebbsfleet Design Forum and design assessment tools at application stage have all contributed to a clear step change in quality between earlier phases of development in Castle Hill and Ebbsfleet Green, and the current projects being built out across Alkerden, Ashmere and Northfleet.
- 1.2. This increased focus on design quality has been recognised by applicants in their use of higher quality design practices, which has also contributed to the quality of planning applications within Ebbsfleet. However, a number of issues have emerged in recent years in regards to the management and delivery of design quality after planning permissions have been granted, during the detailed design, procurement and construction stages.
- 1.3. A design management paper was presented to Planning Committee in September 2023 outlining these issues and identifying a number of actions to address them, which were to be implemented during the remainder of the 2023/24 financial year.
- 1.4. The Ebbsfleet Planning Dashboard was updated to record this risk, and a RAG 'red' status was given to the risk to reflect the significance and immediacy of the



- risk. The dashboard was shared which EDC's Board at November's Board meeting.
- 1.5. Board requested that this issue be given further consideration and a paper be brought back to the Planning Committee to report on progress in implementing the actions, and to consider any further actions required to mitigate the risk further. This paper thus provides an update on the actions already undertaken in the past 6 months, and the remaining / ongoing actions proposed.
- 1.6. The tables on the following pages set out the proposed actions and progress made to date.



1. Detailed design / construction package stages (RIBA Stage 4)

Issue	Action	Progress to date (Jan 24)	
Replacement of high-quality architectural design practices post planning approval with technical teams.	Review the feasibility of introducing a mechanism such as LLDC's 'Design Monitoring' S106 requirement which seeks the retention of the original design team that submits the reserved matters application, for the preparation of subsequent associated conditions discharge packages.	Review completed, which concluded that this would be legally challenging to implement, and face significant challenge from applicants.	
	2. Update the validation checklist to require definition of key design principles that will deliver the design narrative and develop detailed guidance on the design details that are most commonly compromised during the detailed design stages, to either enable the securing of a clear commitment to the detailing within the reserved matters application, or allow stronger management of details at condition stage.	Completed. Revised validation checklist agreed by Planning Committee in December 2023.	
	Promote the benefits of retaining the original design practice for conditions discharge packages to applicants during the pre-app and application stages.	Explicit guidance being drafted on the discharging conditions, and the associated requirements of applicants to manage design quality post planning approval. To be completed in February 2024.	



	4. Continue to review Planning Conditions packages comprehensively to ensure full compliance and alignment with original application drawings.	Ongoing implementation.
Substitution of high quality materials with poorer quality equivalents.	5. Support applicants through actively identifying appropriate bricks / suppliers and share appropriate products with applicants, including sharing those bricks that have now been used elsewhere in Ebbsfleet.	Ongoing implementation.
	Develop database of materials used in Ebbsfleet that are supported.	Materials database being developed.
Inflation and value engineering.	7. Proactively seek attendance at project value- engineering meetings, and provide pro-active support and advice.	Ongoing implementation through advocacy during pre-app / application meetings.
Construction stage (RIBA Stage 5)	
	Encourage the original architectural practice to be retained to provide design management	Ongoing implementation through advocacy during pre-app / application meetings.



Degradation of design quality during construction	services during construction and associated quality assurance.	
	9. Update planning validation checklist to clearly define our information requirements, particularly in relation to architectural and landscape detailing and specification, to enable tighter policing of quality post-planning permission.	Completed. Revised validation checklist agreed by Planning Committee in December 2023.
	10. Develop a 'Site Management Schedule' for each scheme granted planning permission, identifying the key architectural / landscape elements that require monitoring during construction. This can be issued to both the applicant, and the Enforcement Officer, to provide clarity to both on areas of focus for policing of the construction of the scheme.	Pilot project being implemented using Alkerden 5B as a test project (Westerhill Homes- approved in December 2023) to test and develop the approach.
	11. Implement programme of post-completion landscape audits to ensure landscape is planted in the correct location, and to the correct size and species/ planting density as per the planning permissions.	In development / ongoing implementation We have now implemented a number of systems to formalise the co-ordination of post completion landscape audits, and to seek remedial works within the initial 5 year period (post completion).
		Most completed schemes have now been audited prior to winter 23/24, and any



required remedial works will be pursued during 2024.
EDC is also developing a new online green infrastructure tool that will allow residents to identify missing / dying trees, which EDC can seek to be replaced within the first five years post completion. This could minimise resourcing needs for landscape audits to be undertaken annually, through the promotion of resident-led stewardship.



2. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 2.1 The identified actions have considered the different decision points after the approval of a reserved matters application to try and make the interventions as meaningful as possible. Collectively the actions should assist in tackling the issues currently being experienced however we also need to be aware of potential limitations in this area. For example, if a breach of planning permission occurs then is it expedient to take planning enforcement action?
- 2.2 It is inevitable that developers will from time to time need to consider changes in aspects of a scheme (for example materials) but it is important to ensure design quality is not eroded through these changes.
- 2.3 We will continue to implement the action plan and provide a report back to Planning Committee after 6 months in order to give sufficient time for the actions to have effect.

Recommendation: Planning Committee is asked to:-

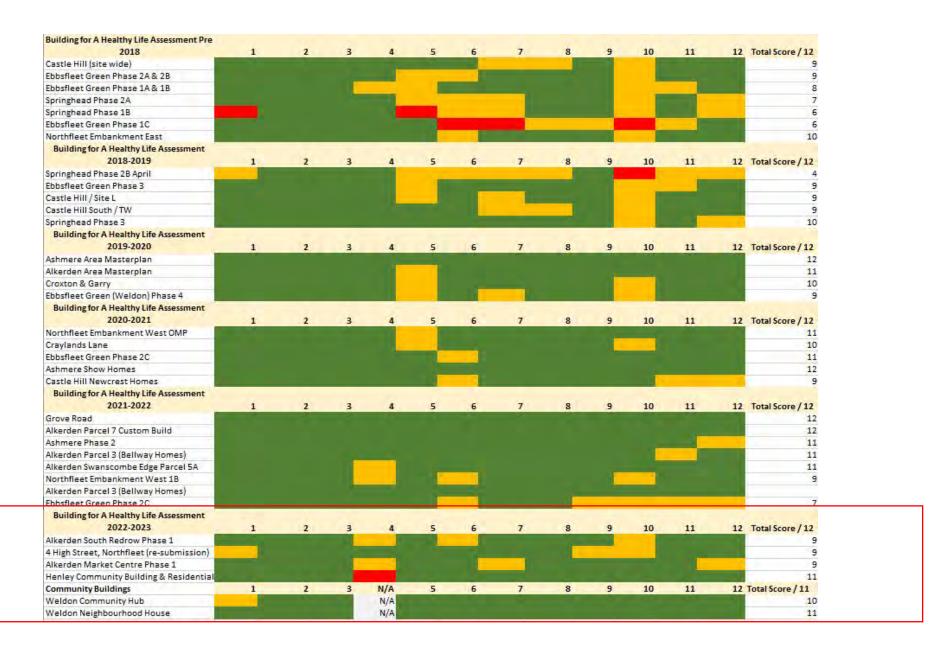
- 1) Note progress on the identified actions; and
- 2) Propose any further actions for officers to explore / implement.

Annex 1:

Summary of planning application design performance 22/23

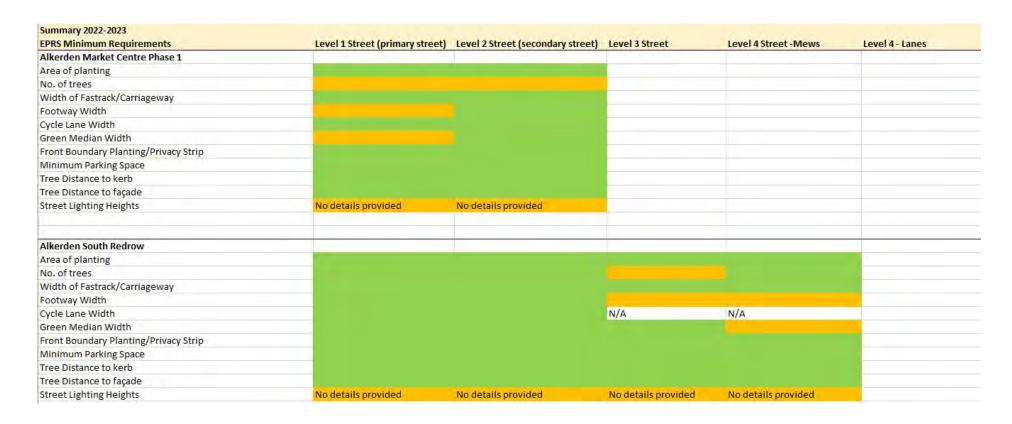
Masterplanning // Building for Healthy Life assessments of Ebbsfleet planning applications 2016-2013

Longitudinal analysis of the Building for Healthy life design tool assessments undertaken for Ebbsfleet planning applications, grouped into financial years.



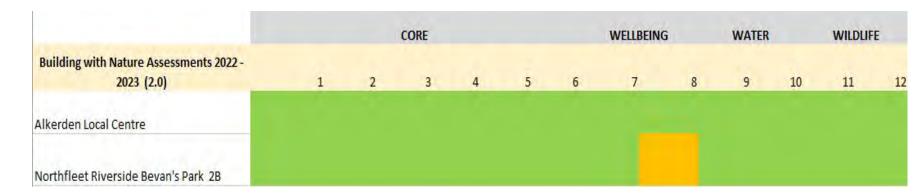
Street Design // Ebbsfleet Public Realm Evaluation

- A street evaluation assessment is undertaken to ensure new streets are designed in accordance with Ebbsfleet Public Realm Strategy requirements.
- All of the streetscape design reports follow a consistent format, that notes the proposed dimensions next to the requirements set out in the Public Realm Strategy.
- All of the reports are presented in a table, which clearly highlights whether requirements have been met or not through colour coding as red, amber or green. This is a very clear way of presenting the information and allows the team to identify the key strengths and weaknesses of each the scheme.



Park Design // 'Building with Nature' assessments of Ebbsfleet planning applications 22-23

- Building with Nature (BwN) is an assessment tool that has been developed to improve the quality of green infrastructure within new developments.
 We use the tool at Ebbsfleet to assess Ebbsfleet's Parks and Open Spaces.
- Similar to a Building for a Healthy Life Assessment, there are 12 standards which are scored using red, amber or green colour coding, A score of 12/12 greens enables a scheme to be put forward for a Building with Nature award.
- BwN expects all of the standards to be treated as a collective, considering the interactions and interdependencies between themes, hence the 12/12 requirement to be met.
- Two Building with Nature reports were completed this year. Alkerden Local Centre scored 12/12 greens across all of the standards. Northfleet Riverside Bevan's Park scored 11/12 greens, with criteria 8 (Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places) scoring an amber, due to an absence of lighting for the sports pitch, reducing the provision of out of hours use.



Accessible Homes // M4 Part 2 compliance of Ebbsfleet planning applications (grouped per annum)

The M4 part 2 criteria is an optional standard within Part M of the Building Regulations, and establishes a range of standards for dwellings to allow them to be visitable by persons within a wheelchair, and capable of being adapted to fully support a wheelchair-bound resident in the future.

								ffordable	Housing			Market H	lousing	
2016		No. Homes M	142	M43	M4	12%	M42 Apart	tments	M42 Ho	mes	M42 Apa	rtments	M42 H	omes
Springhead Park 1A	Countryside	298	94		0	32%	27	29%	0		48	51%	19	20%
Springhead Park 1B	Countryside	80	0		0	0%								
Castle Hill Phase 2	Clarion	125	115		0	92%	65	57%	50	43%	0		0	
Castle Hill Phase 3A	David Wilson	154	0		0	0%	0		0		0		0	
Castle Hill Phase 3A	Clarion	42	42		0	100%	36	86%	6	14%	0		0	
Castle Hill Phase 3B	Barrett	112	0		0	0%	0		0		0		0	
Castle Hill Local Centre	Newcrest	56	46		0	82%	46	100%	0	0%	0		0	
Castle Hill PAP2	Taylor Wimpey	138	0		0	0%	0		0		0		0	
Castle Hill LDO B	Taylor Wimpey	69	0		0	0%	0		0		0		0	
Castle Hill Site I	Clarion	68	55		0	81%	37	67%	18	33%	0		0	
Castle Hill Site L	Clarion	27	18		0	67%	15	83%	3	17%	0		0	
Springhead Park Phase 2A	Countryside	123	31		0	25%	10	32%	21	68%	0		0	
· -		1292	401			31%	236		98		48		19	
2017														
Castle Hill South -Parcel B	Taylor Wimpey	133	25		0	19%	25	100%	0	0%	0		0	
Castle Hill South - Parcel C	Taylor Wimpey	199	63		0	32%	63	100%	0	0%	0		0	
Castle Hill South -GHJK	Clarion	163	50		0	31%	28	56%	22	44%	0		0	
Springhead Park Phase 2B	Countryside	126	0		0	0%					0		0	
Ebbsfleet Green Phase 3 Redrow	Redrow	205	41		0	20%	33	80%	8	20%	0		0	
		826	179		0	22%	149		30					
2018														
Springhead Park Phase 3	Countryside	172	6		0	3%	6	100%	0		0		0	
Cable Wharf	Keepmoat	598	205		9	34%	185	90%	20	10%	0		0	
Craylands Lane	Bellway	100	79		0	79%	34	43%	45	57%	0		0	
Ebbsfleet Green Phase 4	Redrow	133	46		5	35%	0	0%	16	35%	30	65%	0	0%
		1003	336	1	14	33%	225		81		30		0	
2019														
Ashmere Phase 1	Countryside	281	272		0	97%	56	21%	15	6%	119	44%	82	30%
Ebbsfleet Green Phase 2C	Redrow	126	121		5	96%	47	39%	0	0%	74	61%		
Croxton and Garry	Bellway	232	181		3	78%	56	31%	14	8%	92	51%	19	10%
Castle Hill Local Centre	Newcrest	4	4		0	100%	0	0%	0	0%			4	100%
		643	578		8	90%	159		29		285		105	
2021														
Ashmere Phase 2	Countryside	235	220		0	94%	26	12%	33	15%	51	23%	110	50%
Alkerden Parcel 3	Bellway	138	138		0	100%	34	25%	0	0%	104	75%	0	
Alkerden Parcel 5A	Bellway	182	62		0	34%	40	65%	0	0%	22	35%	0	
Alkerden Parcel 7	Westerhill	67	21		2	31%	11	52%	10	48%	0		0	
Northfleet West 1B	Bellway	121	59		0	49%	28	47%	10	17%	0		21	36%
		743	500		2	67%	139		53		177		131	
2022														
Alkerden South Phase 1	Redrow	227	132		0	58%	69	52%	27	20%	36	27%	0	
Alkerden market Centre Phase 1	Henley	83	83		0	100%	83		0		0		0	
Henley Building	Keepmoat	4	0		0	0%	0		0		0		0	
High Street	Private	7	0		0	0%	0		0		0		0	
		321	215			67%	152	47%	27	8%	36	11%	0	0
Ebbsfleet area-wide Totals		5471	2209			40%	1060	19%	318	6%	576	11%	255	5%

ANNEX A EBBSFLEET DELIVERY DASHBOARD – 29 NOVEMBER 2023



Consented and Completed A	Affordable Homes Per Site
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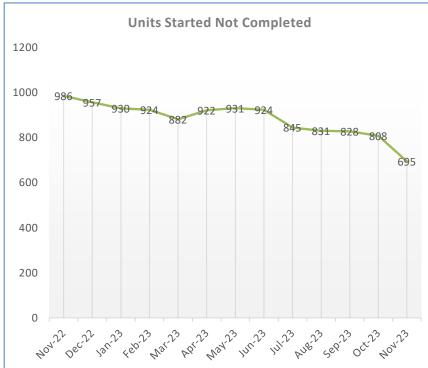
Location	Total No. of Consented Affordable Homes Per Site	Current No. of Completed Affordable Homes Per Site	Total % of Affordable Homes Per Site	Current % of Affordable Delivered Per Site		
Ebbsfleet Green (Weldon)	241	154	38%	63.5%		
Castle Hill - Whitecliffe	1 425		1 475 475		26%	100%
Alkerden	330	0	28%	0%		
Ashmere 130		46	25%	35%		
Springhead Park	288	288	27%	100%		
Ebbsfleet Cross (Craylands Lane)	30	30	30%	100%		
Ebbsfleet Cross (Croxton)	/()		/() 54		33%	76%
Cable Wharf	224	159	32%	71%		
Totals	1738	1155				

Detailed Planning Consent 5,603 Housing Completions 3,883 Affordable Homes

EDC 2023/24 Business Plan Target

1155

Completions – 580



r	Top Risks to Delivery							
	Risk	RAG Status	Current position					
	Supply Chains for Materials & Build Costs	Amber						
	Submission of Valid Applications and Revised Plans	Amber	1					
	Supply of Labour on Site	Green						
	Maintain Design Quality during implementation	Red						
	Interest Rate/Mortgage Products	Red						
	Delays in consultation responses	Amber						

HOUSING STARTS AND COMPLETIONS			
		COMPLETIO	
YEAR	STARTS	NS	
2014-2020	2290	1719	
2020-2021	282	347	
2021-2022	657	533	
2022-2023	817	619	
2023-2024	185	367	

Completed Homes Per Site		
Location	No. of Homes	
Ebbsfleet Green (Weldon)	783	
Castle Hill	1492	
Springhead Park	799	
Craylands Lane	100	
Croxton	85	
Cable Wharf	306	
Ashmere (Western Cross)	211	
Alkerden Village	67	
Northfleet (Lawn Road)	7	
Harbour Village (Northfleet West)	33	

Community Space, Schools, Retail & Employment Space Completed

Type of Space	Project	
Primary Schools	Hope Community School (2FE) Cherry Orchard (2FE) Ebbsfleet Green (2FE)	
Pub/restaurants & Hotels	The Spring River PH Marstons Hotel - 104 Bed	
Retail Units	Co-Op (Weldon) Co-Op (Castle Hill) Pharmacy (Castle Hill) Estate Agent (Castle Hill) Café' (Castle Hill)	
Community Space	Eastgate Centre Castle Hill Community Centre	
Ebbsfleet Green (Weldon)	Redrow Regional Office Building	
Northfleet Embankment East Employment	Berkeley Modular Housing Factory	

Agenda Item: 07

PLANNING ACTIVITY REPORT - Q3 2023/24

1. Background

- 1.1 The Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, as a Local Planning Authority, has a requirement to collect and submit data to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on the time taken to determine planning applications and the quality of decisions.
- 1.2 The approach to planning performance is published by the government in a document entitled 'Improving Planning Performance Criteria for designation'. This document covers performance in relation to both speed and quality of decisions and was most recently updated in October 2022.
- 1.3 The performance thresholds for the reporting period are:
 - o Speed Major Developments: to determine 60% of applications within 13 weeks.
 - Speed Non-Major Developments: to determine 70% of applications within 8 weeks.
 - o Quality Major Developments: to have no more than 10% of appeals overturned.
 - Quality Non-Major Developments: to have no more than 10% of appeals overturned.
- 1.4 It should be noted that the quality of decision making in relation to appeals is calculated on the basis of the number of schemes overturned in the context of the overall number of decisions made by an authority during the assessment period.
- 1.5 This paper provides EDC Planning Committee with the statistics for Q3 of 2023/24.

2. Statistics

- 2.1 Annex A contains a series of charts showing data concerning the determination of planning applications.
- 2.2 Figure 1 shows the number of applications received and determined for the year by quarter. During the period 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023 the Corporation received 23 planning applications which fall within the statutory returns. During this same period the Corporation determined 14 such planning applications.
- 2.3 Applications can be subject to a bespoke determination timescale which is agreed between the applicant and the local planning authority. These can be in the form of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) or a Planning Extension Agreement (PEA). Of the decisions this guarter 5 were subject to either a PPA or PEA.
- 2.4 Figures 2 & 3 show performance against the targets for major and non-major applications set out in paragraph 1.3. The overall performance for the period 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023 is:
 - 'Major application' within time or within time agreed is 100%.
 - 'Non-major applications' within time or within time agreed is 100%.

The overall current annual performance is:

- o 'Major application' within time or within time agreed is 100%.
- o 'Non-major applications' within time or within time agreed is 100%.
- 2.5 The EDC received no planning appeal decisions during the quarter.

3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1 This report is submitted for information and enables EDC planning committee to monitor the work of the planning team.
- 3.2 It should be noted that the activity outlined in these performance statistics relates to only those applications which are covered under the statutory reporting process. EDC considers a substantial number of other applications including pre-application enquiries, condition discharge applications and non-material amendment applications which do not get captured in these numbers.
- 3.3 The overall activity for the quarter including those applications not formally reported shows 32 being received and 50 being determined.
- 3.4 In relation to enforcement action, during the quarter no enforcement related notices were served.

4. Financial and legal implications

- 4.1 Planning income for 01 October 2023 31 December 2023 was £26,878. Annex B (Figure 1) shows the planning application fees received. The most significant application fee received relates to the Northfleet Embankment East planning application for employment floorspace (£22,638). The quarterly breakdown is given as follows:
 - o Apr Jun 2023 = £153,483
 - o Jul Sept 2023 = £5,928
 - o Oct Dec 2023 = £26,878
- 4.2 Planning fees increased from 6th December 2023 following amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations. The impact of this will be captured in upcoming quarters to be reported in due course.
- 4.3 If the Local Planning Authority is designated as non-performing then applicants would have the choice of submitting applications to the Planning Inspectorate, which would include the fee. This would not only take control away from the Corporation but would reduce income.
- 4.4 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

5. Recommendations

5.1 This report is submitted for information to assist the committee in monitoring Development Management activity and therefore there are no recommendations for the committee to consider.

Annex A: Applications

Figure 1: Number of applications received and determined per quarter

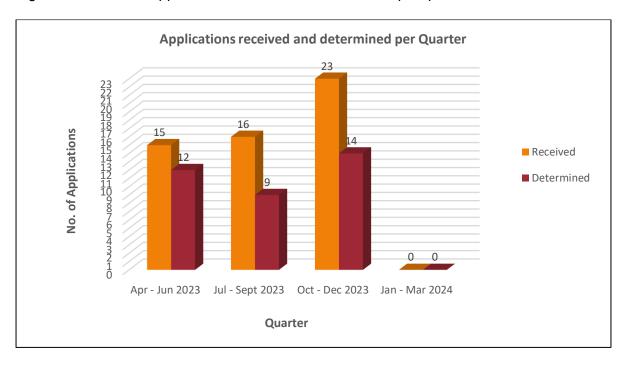


Figure 2: Percentage of Major Applications determined against the statutory performance target per quarter.

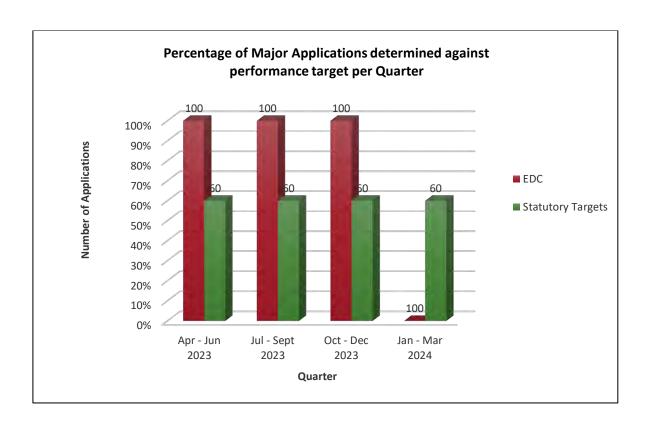
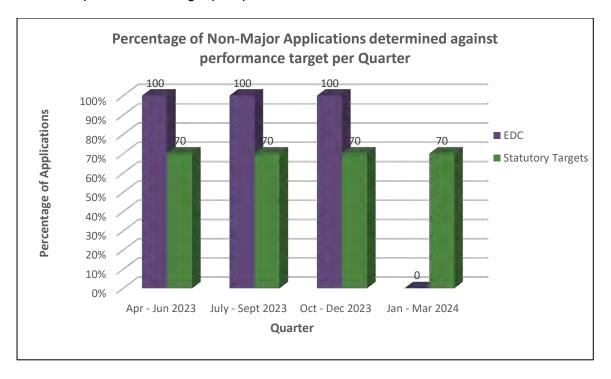
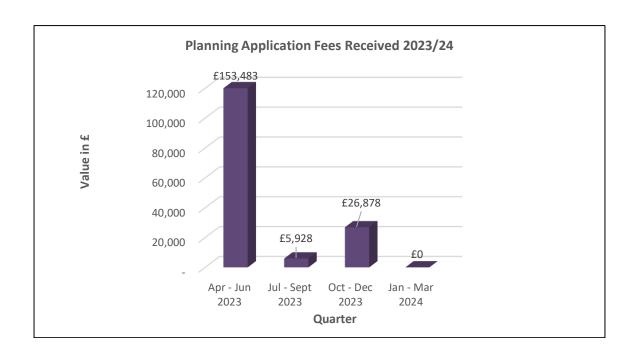


Figure 3: Percentage of Non-Major Applications determined against the statutory performance target per quarter.



Annex B: Planning Fees

Figure 1: Planning application fees received per quarter.



LIST OF APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

Period for Report: December 2023

EASTERN QUARRY:

Application Reference: EDC/23/0170 Decision Date: Thu 21 Dec 2023

Location: 46 Mercer Avenue Castle Hill Ebbsfleet Valley Kent DA10 1BR

Applicant: Mr Marks

Proposal: Application for (i) change of use of existing amenity land to residential curtilage and erection of associated boundary wall (ii) installation of air conditioning unit to rear elevation and (iii) retrospective application for front/side boundary wall, canopy over front door, installation of roller shutter doors and bi-fold doors to car port.

Ward: Ebbsfleet

Decision: Approved Subject to Conditions

Application Reference: EDC/23/0168 Decision Date: Mon 11 Dec 2023

Location: 5 Tomalin Drive Castle Hill Ebbsfleet Valley Kent DA10 1FL

Applicant: Mr Ioan Maris

Proposal: Single storey rear extension and garage conversion to provide store and garden

room.

Ward: Ebbsfleet

Decision: Approved Subject to Conditions

Application Reference: EDC/23/0040 Decision Date: Mon 04 Dec 2023

Location: Alkerden South Eastern Quarry Watling Street Swanscombe Kent

Applicant: Josephine Baker

Proposal: Partial discharge of condition 3 (noise mitigation) pursuant to reserved matters

approval EDC/21/0104.

Ward: Ebbsfleet

Decision: Condition Discharge

Application Reference: EDC/22/0130 Decision Date: Mon 18 Dec 2023

Location: Ashmere (Western Village) Phase 2 Eastern Quarry Watling Street Kent DA10

0DH

Applicant: Mr Brett Telford Countryside Clarion (Eastern Quarry) LLP

Proposal: Full discharge of condition 3a (external surface materials) and condition 6 (materials and architectural detailing) pursuant to reserved matters approval EDC/21/0079

Ward: Ebbsfleet

Decision: Condition Discharge

NORTHFLEET EMBANKMENT WEST:

Application Reference: EDC/23/0183 Decision Date: Wed 20 Dec 2023

Location: Former Northfleet Cement Works The Shore Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11

9AN

Applicant: C/O Agent – Miss Alice Maguire (Bidwells)

Proposal: Non-material amendment to planning application reference EDC/22/0117 to make

changes to the wording of condition 4 (Surface Water Drainage Scheme).

Ward: Northfleet and Springhead

Decision: Approved Subject to Conditions

SPRINGHEAD PARK:

Application Reference: EDC/23/0174 Decision Date: Tue 19 Dec 2023

Location: 2 Marlowe Close Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 8FX

Applicant: Mr Deyna Norman

Proposal: Installation of 2 rooflights to the front elevation and 2 rooflights to the rear

elevation in relation to proposed loft conversion.

Ward: Northfleet and Springhead

Decision: Approved Subject to Conditions

Application Reference: EDC/23/0173 Decision Date: Mon 18 Dec 2023

Location: 3 Bonham Way Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 8FB

Applicant: Ms Jag Kiar

Proposal: Main entrance canopy replacement

Ward: Northfleet and Springhead

Decision: Approved Subject to Conditions

EBBSFLEET GREEN:

Application Reference: EDC/23/0165 Decision Date: Mon 11 Dec 2023

Location: Former Northfleet West Sub Station Southfleet Road Swanscombe Kent DA10

0BE

Applicant: Mr Nathan Mascall

Proposal: Application for the Discharge of Condition 6 (Community Use Strategy) pursuant

to planning permission EDC/21/0089

Ward: Ebbsfleet

Decision: Condition Discharge

Application Reference: EDC/23/0162 Decision Date: Mon 04 Dec 2023

Location: Former Northfleet West Sub Station Southfleet Road Swanscombe Kent

Applicant: Redrow Homes Limted c/o WSP

Proposal: Application for the construction of an electricity substation to supply development

at Ebbsfleet Green.

Ward: Ebbsfleet

Decision: Approved Subject to Conditions