

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT CONTROL) COMMITTEE
10TH MARCH 2009

Monitoring of quality in the Development Control process:
Assessment of Added Value in connection with
determining planning applications

OPEN	
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APPENDICES:	Appendices 1 – 3 Graphs

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of where ‘Added Value’ has been achieved in the determination of planning applications.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That this Report be noted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 ‘Added value’ in respect of determining planning applications can include improved design or mitigating against any adverse affect associated with a development proposal.
- 3.2 Since 2003 where ‘added value’ has been achieved during the determination of an application this has been recorded. Until May 2006, there had been no formal monitoring of where such added value had been achieved.

- 3.3 As part of the Business Plan for 2006/7 it was recognised that there was a need to monitor 'quality' in the Development Control process. This has remained as a target within the subsequent and current Business Plans. A report was therefore taken to the Planning (Development Control) Committee in May 2006 which provided an assessment of where added value had been achieved as part of considering planning applications for period from 1st January 2004 to 31st March 2006. A further report was presented to the Planning (Development Control) Committee in August 2007 providing an assessment of where added value had been achieved in respect of the period from 1st April 2006 to 30th June 2007.
- 3.4 This report sets out where added value has been achieved over the period from 1st July 2007 to 31st December 2008.

4. PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 Whilst the adopted Local Plan policies have not changed since January 2004, the Council adopted the Design Quality Supplementary Planning Guidance in July 2004, which was produced in order to improve the overall design quality in the built environment. This guidance is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.
- 4.2 When the issue of added value was reported to Committee in May 2006, Members were advised that the figures given did not show where revised applications had been submitted following discussions with Officers to address previous objections on design, amenity or other planning related grounds. It was therefore proposed that, for future recording of added value, Officers would also record added value on applications which have been amended and re-submitted to address previous objections, as a result of advice given by an Officer. Since the meeting in May 2006 added value has been recorded on this basis.
- 4.3 The Graph attached in *Appendix 1* shows the number of applications, by category, where added value has been achieved per quarter for the period from 1st July 2007 to 31st December 2008. *Appendix 2* shows the percentage of applications, within each application type, where added value has been achieved. *Appendix 3* shows the percentage of applications, where added value has been achieved, which were determined beyond the expiry of the statutory target period. The statutory period for minor and other applications is 8 weeks and the target period for major applications is 13 weeks.

Minor/Other Applications

- 4.4 The Graph in Appendix 1 shows a fluctuation in the numbers of applications where added value was been achieved, for both minor and other applications, for the period from 1st July 2007 to 31st December 2008, albeit with a gradual decline in numbers. The number of 'other' applications where added value has been achieved has increased well above that for minor applications.

- 4.5 When added value was last reported to Committee, Members were advised that for 2006/7 there has been a reduction in the number of minor/other applications going beyond the statutory period as a result of achieving added value. This trend has continued during the period from 1st July 2007 and 31st December 2008.

Major Applications

- 4.6 As shown in Appendix 1, the number of major applications where added value has been achieved continues to be very low. This is due to the relatively low number of major applications which are received by the Local Planning Authority. The Graph in Appendix 2 shows that in percentage terms there are generally a higher proportion of major applications which benefit from added value, compared to minor and other applications. Appendix 3 shows that the percentage of major applications where added value is achieved which go over the allotted handling period is relatively low. This is a reflection of the amount of time which Officers spend on providing pre-application advice on major development schemes in accordance with the Development Team Approach and adopted procedures on dealing with major applications and Section 106 obligations.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. LEGAL & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal or policy implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This report shows that 'added value' is being achieved in the Development Control process and that the overall quality of development is being actively enhanced through negotiations with Officers.
- 8.2 It is essential that whilst meeting the statutory targets for determining applications this should not be at the expense of design quality. Officers will therefore continue to negotiate improved design in order to achieve added value, but within the statutory period for the determination of the application.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Monitoring of quality in the Development Control process: Assessment of Added Value in connection with determining planning applications – Planning (Development Control) Committee : May 2006
- Monitoring of quality in the Development Control process: Assessment of Added Value in connection with determining planning applications – Planning (Development Control) Committee : August 2007