



Service Plan 2007/08 (Stage 1)

Service Plan for: Planning & Sustainability

Directorate: City Strategy

Service Plan Holder: Mike Slater

Workplans: Design, Conservation & Sustainable Development,
Development Control
Building Control
Local Land Charges

Director: Bill Woolley

EMAP : City Strategy – Ann Reid

1. Service description & objectives

The Planning and Sustainable Development Service

Planning Services cover 4 key functions:

- Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development
- Development Control Building Control
Local Land Charges

Our staff have skills and experience in planning (development control), building regulations, archaeology, architecture, urban design, conservation, planning, landscape architecture, sustainability, arboriculture, environmental science, countryside management & community planning.

We also have a large database which stores information on the environmental resources for the city, covering such issues as sites & monuments record, an archaeological database and Listed Buildings & Tree Preservation Order Registers, and a biodiversity audit & action plan.

Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development

This service provides specialist consultancy services to serve departmental, corporate and the wider public's needs. In particular we cover:

- Ensuring proper consideration of issues affecting the 34 Conservation Areas, 1800 listed buildings within the City, the City Walls and 7 Areas of Archaeological Importance.
- Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, the protection of trees covered by more than 650 Tree Preservation Orders, and all issues relating to sustainability & community planning.

Development Control

This service deals with planning applications and enforcement. The service is a statutory function in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and related legislation. The determination of planning applications is undertaken through 2 Area Sub-Committees and a Main Committee, plus through delegated powers to Officers.

We process around 2,800 planning applications and associated permissions (inc: Tree Preservation Order applications, telecoms masts) and 700 enforcement cases. Last year we also dealt with over 40 Planning and Enforcement appeals and provided written advice for nearly 1,100 development enquiries.

Building Control

This service administers the Building Regulations to new buildings, alterations and extensions. This covers aspects such as structure, energy conservation, access facilities for the disabled, dangerous structures, demolition control, input to public entertainment licensing, and street naming and numbering.

Last year we received 2698 applications. 2024 of which are fee based. This covers the full costs of the service. Income potential is being expanded with a series of Partnership arrangements with local private companies within the construction sector.

Local Land Charges

This service provides Planning, Highways and Environmental information in connection with land and property transactions. We also provide details of charges registered against the property, as defined by the Local Land Charges Act 1975. Such charges include Conservation Areas, Smoke Control Zones, Listed Buildings, Tree Preservation Orders, Enforcement Notices and Conditional Planning Consents. Last year we processed 6719 Searches all of which are fee based covering the full costs of the service. Property searches fees are statutory and are set by the Department of Constitutional Affairs, whilst other searches

fees are discretionary and are set by City of York Council.

The service is currently connected to NLIS as a level 2e authority meaning that we can receive and return searches electronically.

Service objectives

- SO1:** to improve and protect the environment of the City of York area.
- SO2:** to provide effective stewardship of the City's historic and natural environment alongside the complimentary objective of economic growth within the City.
- SO3:** to influence development schemes, whether public or private, to ensure the highest quality of design and appearance which enhances the unique character and future well being of York.
- SO4:** to provide significant contribution towards a Local Agenda 21, through which all sections of the community can begin to work towards achieving sustainable development.
- SO5:** to secure further funding for the natural and historic built environment.
- SO6:** to meet Government targets for speed of determination of applications without compromising the quality of new development.
- SO7:** to ensure that new buildings are both internally and externally accessible to disabled people.
- SO8:** to make advice understandable to minority groups and communities.
- SO9:** to deliver continuous improvement whilst meeting Central Governments Modernisation Agenda for Local Land Charges.
- SO10:** to provide efficient and effective services which are recognised by our customers as being excellent

2. Significant drivers for change and improvement

Driver	Affect on service delivery
<p>Many LA's are now meeting and exceeding Development Control performance targets. The Planning Delivery Grant for 2007 is expected to reward the highest performers. As many LA's improve performance there is a possibility that national targets may be raised by DCLG?</p>	<p>Although performance on major applications well above "target" (over 20% above) performance on "minor" and "other" applications needs to be improved. This would improve CPA rating and customer satisfaction.</p>
<p>Building Control workload is increasing as a result in changes and amendments to the legislation.</p>	<p>The additional workload would not allow the current level of service (or improvement) to be maintained without additional resources. Performance is already being effected. A review of Building Control staffing resources will be required to assess the ability to cope with additional workload due to changes in legislation.</p>

October 2006 Consultation paper from Dept for Constitutional Affairs proposes a new fee regime for Local Land Charges in 2007	Uncertain at this time. Will need to review service provision as new fee regime may significantly change CYC workload and balance between standard and personal searches
Need to review the extent of “proactive” work of the Design/Conservation and Sustainable development team and to consider possible ways to increase urban design capacity.	Resources may have to be transferred from another service in the group.
CPA “culture” block has performance indicator (BV 219) which considers the number of Conservation Areas which have had an appraisal / management plan	Additional resource required to undertake this work
Corporate Strategy IS2 - Improvement statement - transport	Gives focus and direction to a priority within the corporate strategy.
Corporate Strategy IS5 –Improvement statement – affordable housing	Gives focus and direction to a priority within the corporate strategy
Impact of the implementation of the Home Information Packs (HIP) in 2007	Uncertain at this time
National review of Heritage protection measures.	<i>Possibly new responsibility for Local Authorities in relation to Heritage protection measures- and consents/ approvals - implementation 2007-10?</i>
Implications of Implementation of Easy@york initiative, with Planning + Building Control in first phase.	<i>Actions programmed for implementation in 2006/7</i>

3. Priority improvement for 2007/08 & beyond

Performance improvement	Reason why improvement is required
Need to improve the % of “minor” and “other” applications determined within 8 weeks period, aim to exceed national target for each BVPI’s 109a/b/c by at least 5% points.	Possible greater reward through PDG. Takes account of fluctuations in performance associated with workload pressures and changing staffing levels. Important also to for customer satisfaction and CPA rating.
Improve the management and monitoring of responses to correspondence, complaints and Ombudsman enquiries / cases	Performance below CYC targets and Ombudsman target times for response
BC4 – Building regulations applicants advised of decision within the statutory time limit.	Performance target not met
Requirement to continuously improve the e-planning service	New target set by Department of Communities and Local Government
BC3 – Building regulations applicants advised of defects within 15 working days	Performance target not met
Implementation of the HANER project (Historic and Natural Environment records)	Important project which will improve: customer, stakeholder and officer access to information
<u>To increase the number of Conservation Areas in the city which have had “appraisals” and management plans.</u>	BVPI 219 performance indicator impacts on the “culture” block of CPA

Other comments to note

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4. New or changed actions for 2007/08 and beyond

Action	Service plan outcome	New? / Change?	Links to note	Comments
Review of Building Control staffing resources will be required to assess the ability to cope with additional workload due to changes in legislation.	Review will address problems associated with increasing workload and declining service performance. Will have financial and service delivery implications	New	will have implications for 2007/8 budget	
Review of land charges services following anticipated changes to national fee regime in 2007	Uncertain at this time. Will need to review service provision as new fee regime may significantly change CYC workload and balance between standard and personal searches	New	Likely to have implications for 2007/8 budget	
Introduction of York design award	Will help to promote high quality development and design in the city	New First awards likely to be presented May 2007 thane either every two years or possibly on annual basis		Awards partnership scheme with external funding
Introduction of charges for Development Enquiries (Development Control)	Provide new income for the service	New Introduction April /may 2007+ review after 6 months	2007/8 budget proposal	discretionary service with no fee at present for around 1,100 enquiries which require substantial staff time to deal with
Greater community consultation on planning issues as set out in Statement of Community Involvement (Nov 2006),	Workload / capacity issues for community planning officers given number of major development schemes being developed or implemented during this period	Change Additional work identified in the SCI	May have implications for 2007/8 budget. Budget pressure to reduce spending in this service area.	

Respond to provisions of white Paper (Nov 2006) "Stronger and Prosperous Communities"	Likely to introduce anew performance framework. Also may require greater community involvement / influence in relation to the planning system.	New		
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