

Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning & Sustainability's Report to Council, July 2014

Working towards a Sustainable York

Tackling Carbon Emissions & addressing Climate Change

The three recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are a stark reminder of the serious medium to long term threats human kind faces if we continue along a carbon based path.

The first report on the Physical Science Basis reaffirms that Human influence is clear and is extremely likely to be the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century. Using new climate models and climate change simulations, it makes clear that continued emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) will cause further warming and changes in every aspect of the climate system, and that most aspects of climate change will persist for many centuries even if emissions of CO₂ are stopped. Limiting climate change will require substantial and sustained reductions of greenhouse gas emissions.

The second report on the Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability that climate-related risks are evolving over time. The continuing uncertainty about the severity and timing of climate-change impacts and limits to the effectiveness of adaptation, adds to the challenges of decision making and risk management. It sets out the key risks across sectors and regions over time:

- i. Death, injury, ill-health or disrupted livelihoods in low-lying coastal zones and small islands due to storm surges, coastal flooding, and sea-level rise;
- ii. Severe ill-health and disrupted livelihoods for large urban populations due to inland flooding in some regions;
- iii. Extreme weather events breaking down infrastructure networks and critical services (electricity, water supply, and health and emergency services);
- iv. Mortality and morbidity during periods of extreme heat, particularly for vulnerable urban populations and those outdoor workers in urban or rural areas;

v. Food insecurity and the breakdown of food systems linked to warming, drought, flooding, and precipitation variability and extremes, particularly for poorer populations in urban and rural settings;

vi. Loss of rural livelihoods and income due to insufficient access to drinking and irrigation water and reduced agricultural productivity, particularly in semi-arid regions;

vii. Loss of marine and coastal ecosystems, biodiversity, and the ecosystem goods, functions, and services they provide for coastal livelihoods, especially fishing communities in the tropics and the Arctic;

viii. Loss of terrestrial and inland water ecosystems, biodiversity, and the ecosystem goods, functions, and services they provide for livelihoods.

These challenges are massive, and whilst the older ones amongst us may not live to see the worst effects our children and grand-children almost certainly will, and it is vital that we don't shy away from making the decisions now that will help to avoid and mitigate the worst potential consequences.

So a lot of back room work has been going on to ensure we are playing our part in reducing damaging greenhouse gas emissions as part of meeting the Council's ambition to be a leading environmentally friendly city.

This covers work from developing a knowledge and evidence base for setting the right local plan policies and being able to facilitate more sustainably designed development, to tackling our own internal carbon and energy / water use reductions, working with Transport operators on vehicle emissions (closely linked with our work on improving air quality – see later section), on to energy switching and other measures to help York residents and Businesses to help both save money and reduce their carbon footprints.

Achievements and initiatives include

- Completed an updated Renewable Energy Study highlighting potential opportunities across the city.
- Secured £10k of funding to create a Heat Map for York which has now been completed and identifies possible district heat network opportunities to now explore;

- Secured funding through Leeds City Region's (LCR's) £225k strategic heat programme to carry out initial feasibility studies on 7 possible low carbon district heat networks in York. One project will now go through to full energy master planning to explore detailed financial and technical feasibility. This work is likely to be funded by the LCR or Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and ~£40k.
- Joined Association for Public Service Excellence's (APSE's) Local Energy Collaboration which aims to look at the municipalisation on local energy generation.
- Drafted a Sustainable Energy Road Map for the city to help accelerate renewable energy generation and prioritising solar photovoltaic's (PV) across the council's estate
- Continued to improve the energy efficiency of councils buildings through the Salix / CYC invest to save programme. We have installed various measures that over their lifetime save over £1million in energy costs.
- Recent Cabinet approval for a new transformational carbon and energy programme which will reduce carbon emissions, energy expenditure and accelerate renewable energy generation on the council's estate. It will create a new carbon and energy management plan and a new water management plan and will fund energy audits and renewable energy feasibility studies. Similar programmes save councils substantial money and carbon/ energy.
- Exploring possible development of solar energy schemes on some of CYCs estate and hope to develop a viable project by May 2015 (subject to planning, grid connection, and procurement and legal processes)
- Delivered 2 assisted collective energy switches. The first was funded as part of the £280,000 DECC funded pilot. This helped 328 residents in York consider switching tariffs. Those that switched on average were set to save just over £150. The second switch helped over 700 people consider switching. Just under 250 people switched and are now set to save on average just under £170 on their energy bills. The next switch opens early August – October.
- Secured £10k to deliver a new Home Energy Programme that includes a coordinator to help residents take practical steps to save

energy and carbon in their homes and consider saving money by switching energy suppliers. It also has fuel poverty objectives.

- Continue to progress the procurement of a LCR green deal provider - Officers from City of York Council are offering significant support to the LCR procurement team. There are currently two bidders still involved, British Gas and the Consortium (Keep Moat, Wilmot and Dixon and Scottish and Southern). Officers are intending to bring forward a paper shortly seeking Cabinet approval on taking the York aspects forward.
- LCR Green Deal Communities bid was successful and included funding to launch the LCR green deal programme (post award of the contract). It included funding for incentives and demonstration homes. DECC awarded £4.95m worth of funding following a submission of a bid by officers from Leeds City Council on behalf of all the LCR councils.
- York were unable to take part in phase 1 of the bid as it required the council to have a fully procured provider in place which was able to complete the full green deal process, who is most of the funding.
- York will take part in phase 2 and we have already started the process of trying to identify a potential “Demonstration Home” in the private sector to ensure that we can maximise the award of the contract with a demonstrable project. The householder will be able to draw down on £15k worth of measures but as a result will need to enable access to their home for a minimum of 5 days per year for a five year period.
- Plus there are a 1000 vouchers worth £750 available to residents across LCR which will be promoted once the Green Deal procurement is completed and the call off contract signed with the successful bidder
- Continued to support the Local Plan’s development and have drafted a climate change chapter in the Local Plan to encourage renewable energy generation and sustainable design and construction for all new developments in the city
- Provided sustainability guidance to all strategic development sites as per the Local Plan
- Continue to give sustainable design and construction advice through the development management process
- Commenced refreshing the Climate Change Action Plan

- Are exploring the One Planet Living principles as part of a new sustainable city York programme.
- Working on a scheme to convert many of the old 35 watt low pressure sodium lanterns (orange light) streetlights to white LED lighting. This could deliver significant carbon, energy and cost savings.

Tackling Transport Emissions & Improving Air Quality

The Sustainability agenda is also about removing risks to public health, and air pollution, primarily transport related, is one of the biggest ones. The recent Public Health England report estimated that 82 people die prematurely each year in York as a result of micro-particulates (PM2.5) alone. However York primarily fails current legislative standards in terms of Nitrogen Dioxide levels.

There was a modest reduction in average Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) concentrations across the city centre between January 2010 and December 2013. This suggests that air quality may be starting to improve. However, it is too soon to determine if this is the start of a long term downward trend or the result of changes in weather patterns, economic activity and / or changes in traffic conditions. It is a positive position from which to commence the delivery of our new 3rd Air Quality Action Plan, but significant air quality challenges remain, especially within the Air Quality Management Areas.

The council is helping to reduce emissions from all sources as part of our Low Emission Strategy. Measures include:

Electric Vehicle Charging (*Completed*)

York has delivered a comprehensive rapid charging network (but more points are being delivered)

Electric buses (*First phase delivered*)

7 currently on the road (Poppleton P&R, university) (funded by grants) and 8 more on the way. UK's 1st double decker electro refit project will also deliver an electric tour bus!

Taxi incentive scheme (*Being delivered*)

14 electric / electric hybrid taxis ordered (13 on the road)

Alternative fuels and freight (*Being delivered*)

A site has been identified in the local plan process for a compressed natural gas (CNG) / biomethane refuelling facility linked to a freight transshipment centre. This would not only reduce emissions, but free up the city centre from congestion and noisy, polluting vehicles, as well as creating green jobs.

Encouraging better driving (*Being delivered*)

The Council's Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) and its fleet team are working together with the Eco Stars scheme to give free advice and reward those who reduce transport emissions. The Eco Stars membership targets exceeded: 43 members and 2823 vehicles.

Reducing travel

The council fleet is leading by example and saw our overall business travel mileage reduce by over two hundred thousand miles, reducing our travel related carbon emissions by 53 tonnes last year. We won the Energy Saving Trust's 'Fleet Hero' award for reducing annual business travel mileage by 20%, CO2 emissions by 23% and number of vehicles used by 21%.

Infrastructure for charging electric vehicles is now in place at Hazel Court and Nunnery Lane where most of our current pool cars are based. This infrastructure will allow us to support a move to even more sustainable staff travel in the near future.

A dedicated Travel Management Unit has been approved that will support business travel activity across the council for staff and clients. This will help us to embed the three core principles of our travel hierarchy across all council services. These principles being:

- i. Reduced Cost
- ii. Reduced Risk
- iii. Reduced Environmental impact

Workshop activity generating income from public and private sector organisations continues to develop, and is earning us an excellent reputation amongst private sector organisations based on great value for money and high levels of customer satisfaction.

York's third Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP3)

A report on the proposed third AQAP will be coming forward shortly and will show how we can deliver the Low Emission Strategy (LES).

Proposals for consultation may include:

- A *Clean Air Zone (CAZ)* where bus emissions could be regulated based on the frequency of which they enter the inner ring road. This most frequent and hence the most polluting services could be required to meet a higher emission standard. This could ensure that by 2018 over 80% of bus movements in York will be made by ultra low emission buses.
- An anti engine idling policy to reduce emissions and costs of idling vehicles
- Minimising emissions from development through planning policy

A big worry on the horizon, following the Government losing a case in the European court over its failure to address air pollution issues in the UK, is that Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have recently written to all local authorities warning them of possible fines being passed on to those with elevated NO₂ concentrations to pay all or part of the infraction fine, using a discretionary power in Part 2 of the Localism Act. That really would be outrageous, given the general absence of any statutory duties and limited local authority powers and funding to address air quality due to UK government neglect and inaction in this area. The potential size and on-going nature of the EU fines is a potential major concern.

Planning for York's future

Delivering the Local Plan

The Local Plan is a primary means by which we can physically help to deliver a sustainable future for the City, through both a robust sustainable planning policy framework, and appropriate allocations of land for future development for business, housing, and community facilities and uses, not to mention getting a fully defined and adopted green belt for the first time.

Following the visioning exercise a Local Plan Preferred Options document was prepared which was subject to an extensive 8 week city wide consultation. Consultation ended on 31 July 2013. Responses were received from 4945 respondents, including residents, interest groups, Parish Councils, prescribed bodies/statutory consultees, developers, agents and land owners. In addition to individual responses 21 petitions were submitted during the consultation period, containing a total of 9,022 signatures. The majority of concerns/objections from respondents relate to:

- the overall level of development proposed for York, particularly related to the proposal for 22,000 homes (frequently related to loss of Green Belt and traffic, infrastructure or flooding concerns);
- specific housing sites (particularly strategic housing sites);
- sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople; and
- wind turbines (concerns both about particular areas of search and the overall amount included in the plan).

Developers have also pushed for lower densities and business for additional commercial sites on the south side of the city and reassurance that we can deliver the ambitious plan targets for both employment and housing with the necessary infrastructure to support it.

All of the responses received to the Local Plan Preferred Options consultation have been published on the council's website. To comply with data protection, a costly and time consuming exercise was

undertaken to remove all personal details from responses received from individuals. As a key part of processing the responses, officers have summarised the comments received by section and policy. These summaries can be accessed on the Council's website and can be used to interpret the full responses. A summary of the petitions received has also been produced.

Officers have also been collating a range of information submitted on sites which includes new sites submitted, evidence on sites previously rejected and further evidence submitted on sites included in the Preferred Options. This information has been used to inform work on taking forward development sites and inform work with colleagues across City and Environmental Services on transport and infrastructure delivery.

Before making any final recommendations on sites to include and making other changes to the draft Local Plan following last summer's consultation, a further sites consultation has been undertaken to understand views on this additional information and associated work. A 6 week period of consultation on the City of York Local Plan Further Sites began on 4th June and will end on 16th July 2014. The purpose of the consultation is to find out views on the potential new sites and boundary changes on some of the sites originally identified in the Preferred Options Local Plan. This relates to all types of potential sites including those for housing, employment, open space and Gypsy and Travellers. At the examination stage we will need to demonstrate that we have considered reasonable alternatives. This consultation will be critical in showing this to the Inspector.

The comments received as part of this consultation will help inform future recommendations on the portfolio of sites for inclusion in the Submission Local Plan. Officers are also considering the issues raised by respondents to the Preferred Options consultation against each policy area and analysing these in light of National Policy and evidence base work. Issues will also be assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment to prepare recommendations on the Submission Draft Plan for Members to consider. The Submission

Draft Plan will then be subject to another round of public consultation later in the year before it is submitted to the Secretary of State to be examined by an independent inspector.

The importance of us successfully completing this process cannot be understated. A recent National Housing Federation ratio put the ratio of house prices in York at 10.4 times average income, highlighting why it's so necessary to get our plan for increasing the housing supply into place, to give relief from the pressure of rising prices exacerbating the problem.

That does mean some "Greenfield" land allocations. In a recent Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyor's debate, it was pointed out that the National Land Use database work identified that brownfield land capacity (over 50% of which is in London, and 20% not in urban areas) would deliver only 1 million of the estimated 3.3 million homes required nationally over the next 15 years, and the picture in York is no different. So the myths that have been pedalled by some of the opposition that we can solve our housing needs by solely building on brownfield sites are simply that – a myth. The challenge is how we can deliver an adequate housing and employment supply whilst maintaining all that's important for the city and its villages in terms of their history, character and environment. So protecting key views and settings, protecting existing green spaces and sites of natural interest, extending the green wedges further out, not allowing anything less than the best design and avoiding overdevelopment in sensitive locations, are all key to us achieving the right results for York.

Getting the plan adopted at the earliest possible date is also crucially important for avoiding unplanned or inappropriate development that would undermine those ambitions, witness last week's appeal decision in Worcester, where the Secretary of State approved over a thousand homes on appeal because the local Council could not demonstrate a 5 year housing supply, ruling that it could not rely on "saved" policies from its 2006 district local plan. With around half of the local planning authorities in the country, including York, without a 5 year housing sites supply in place, this is a big threat, and a warning to us all. York cannot

afford the opposition's deliberate attempts to derail the Local Plan process succeeding.

Supporting Good Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development

We have an excellent team of specialists supporting through their advice in support of the planning service at both pre-application and application stages, as well as to the development of policies within the Local Plan

Specific projects that they've been progressing include:

- Review and implement improvements to City Walls Management: *Lease with Friends of York Walls (FoYW) concluded; Walmgate Bar design work in progress; SMC May 2014; commence work onsite summer 2014*
- Arup Archaeological Review: *Now complete and focus now on taking forward recommendations*
- Heritage Management Strategy: *Recent meeting with English Heritage (EH -June 2014). Agreed to take this forward as a short roadmap type document & take to Cabinet. This document will then give an overarching support for project bids to EH to enable these to come forward. Structure is largely set out in Arup Review recommendations*
- Review and implement improvements to Historic Environment Record (HER): *Event records on York Map; Will flow from Heritage Strategy projects*
- Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal is complete: *Develop a programme of other Conservation area appraisals to be undertaken. Staff time resource, budget uncertainty and other priorities have put this on hold for now, but will flow from Heritage Management Strategy.*
- Monitor heritage at risk: *Currently monitored with English Heritage*
- Continue stewardship management actions: *Ongoing. All capital works are complete.*
- Continue production of local site management plans: *Ongoing*

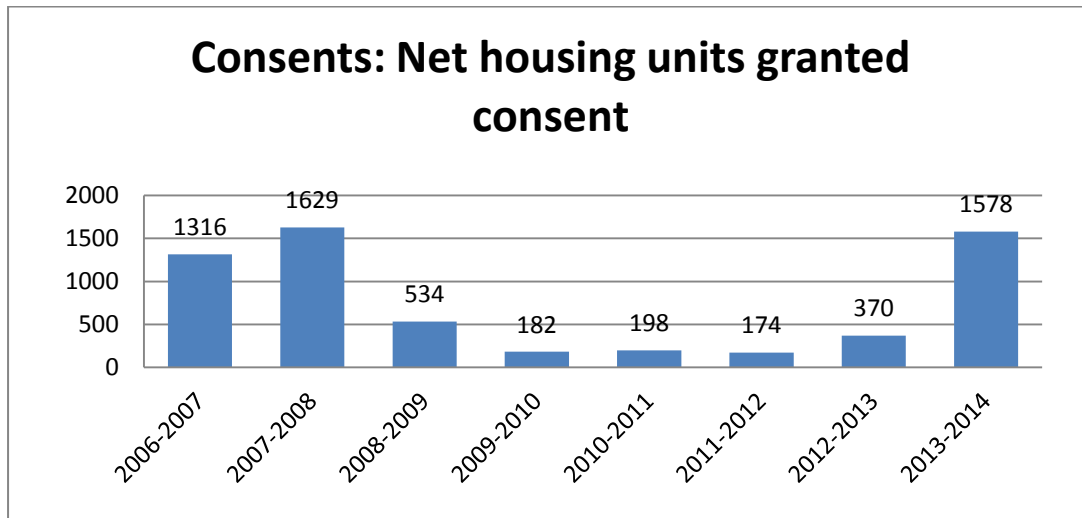
- Maximise renewable energy opportunities across the city through an adopted environmental strategy. *As touched on earlier in this report.*
- Updating the Open Space and Green Infrastructure report: *The additional work has highlighted the need for some more detailed work in regard to the major sites if we are to achieve our long standing ambition to ensure new development builds on York's existing green assets and achieves high environmental standards on these new sites, and a Delivery and Innovation Fund (DIF) bid is being consider to ensure this happens.*
- Complete Trees and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) & Develop tree strategy: *On hold due to prioritising local plan work – site allocations, assessments and policy*
- Develop Bio Diversity Action Plan and implement: *Decision to take forward the Bio Diversity Action Plan and Stewardship Management. Reviewing consultation feedback. External consultant to complete for final local plan submission.*
- Continue to deliver the City's Climate Change Action Plan and EU's Covenant of Mayors - Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP): *as covered earlier*
- Characterisation Project: *English Heritage funded research recently complete.*
- Reinvigorate York: *Officer support and/or lead given to work streams within this programme such as Wayfinding Project; Streetscape Guidance Manual; Kings Square; Exhibition Square.*

Development Management and Performance

Housing Approvals and Affordable Housing

The net number of new dwellings approved in 2013/14 was 1578 (including a substantial number of Student cluster flats and office to residential conversions), up from 370 in the previous year. This is the highest figure since 2007/2008 and the second highest since at least 2004/05. This included the approval of 171 affordable homes and contributions in lieu of on site provision of £466,273. This reflects the efforts we've been making to address York's housing and affordable homes shortage, including relieving the buy to let pressure on ordinary

family housing by getting more purpose student accommodation provided both on and off campus.



Note: Reserved Matters applications are excluded from these figures. During 2013-14 Reserved Matters consent was also granted for Germany Beck (655 homes).

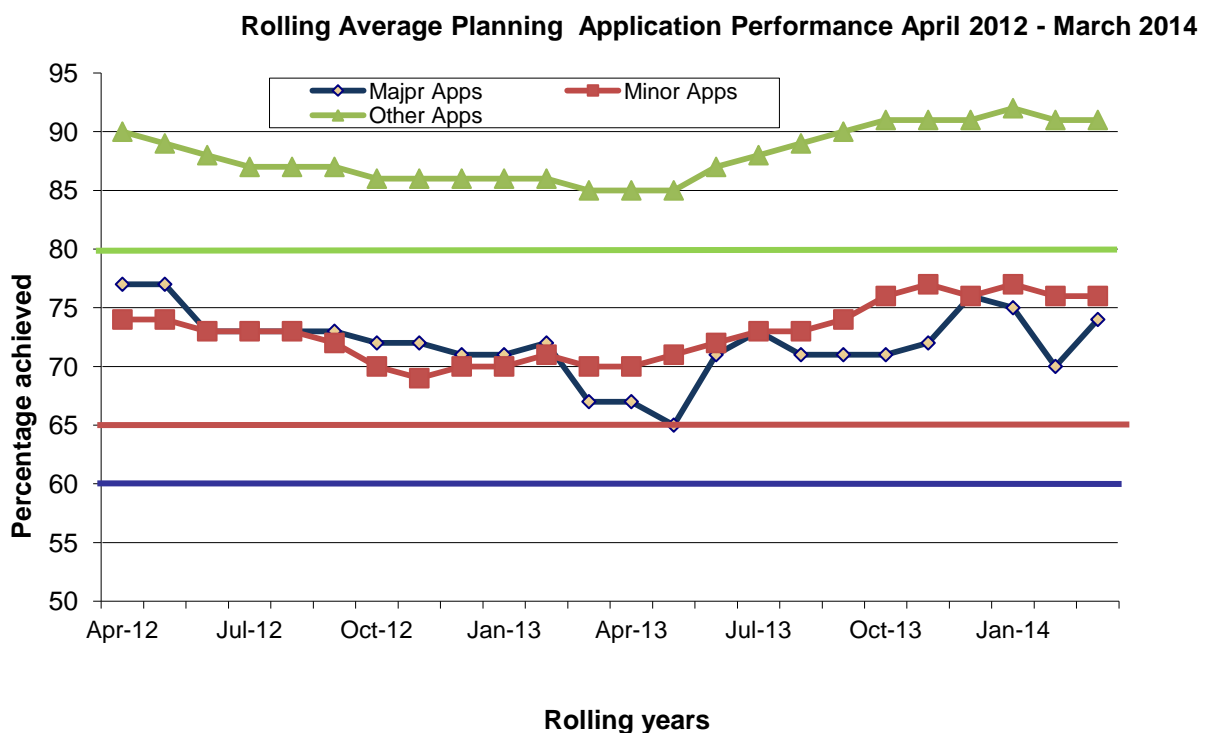
This is now working through to real homes on the ground too. The four quarters of 2013/14 showed a progressive increase in the total number of sites and units that are under construction and a generally increasing number of larger sites being built out. Additionally, the final quarter of the year saw a relatively high number of sites with 10 or more units being under construction.

Since February 2013, the Council has accepted an off-site financial contribution in lieu of on site affordable housing on sites of less than 15 homes in rural areas. It was thought the benefit of reduced bureaucracy and a simplified process of negotiation that commuted payments would bring outweighed the potential loss of on-site affordable housing. Since implementation of this interim policy, 6 applications (three for 3 new dwellings, one for 2 dwellings and two for 4 dwellings) have secured £115,669 in commuted payments. One other rural site for 28 apartments for older people has secured £350,604. Under the previous regime for the 2013/13, a greater number of large developments came forward (two for 9 dwellings, one for 11 dwellings (Fox and Hounds site superseded by the older people's accommodation), one for 2 and one for 4). This is believed to have been prompted by the policy change that reduced the target for affordable housing on rural sites from 50% to 10-

20%. None of the smaller submissions would have required on site contributions under the old policy. These applications generated a requirement for 4 homes on site and £185,129 in contributions.

Section 106 contributions towards infrastructure collected £344,000 in 2011/12, £508,000 in 2012/13 and £18,282,00 (£707,000 excluding the Monks Cross Stadium contribution) in 2013/14. 2013/14 saw a marked increase in development activity, with higher caseloads in the Planning, Building Control, and Land Charges services. The Council processed almost 2000 planning applications (up from less than 1800 in 2012/13) and (excluding applications for tree works) and around 600 enforcement cases in as well as 50 Planning and Enforcement appeals, and provided written advice for almost 500 formal development enquiries. In addition the Service received over 270 written pre-application enquiries and 361 requests to approve details required by conditions. 2178 formal submissions were also received under the Building Regulations.

In terms of Development Management performance, speed of determination remains well above the national performance targets (denoted by the horizontal coloured lines)



The graph shows that in the last 12 months, 74% of Major applications were dealt with in time (the national target is 60% in 13 weeks), as were 76.5% of Minor applications (target 65% in 8 weeks) and 91% of Other applications (target 80% in 8 weeks)

Appeals performance was significantly improved in the last 12 months, as the impact of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on older decisions worked through the system and decision-making was adjusted to take it into account. 27% of planning application appeals were allowed (i.e. Council decision overturned), compared to 42% in the preceding 12 month period. The figure of 27% compares favourably with the national average of around 33% of appeals allowed. It is noted that appeal Inspectors are attaching much less weight to the Council's Development Control Local Plan policies, particularly where they are deemed to be not fully in accordance with the NPPF, given the emphasis placed within it that :-

“where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:

- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be Restricted”*

The NPPF also states *“It is highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place”*.

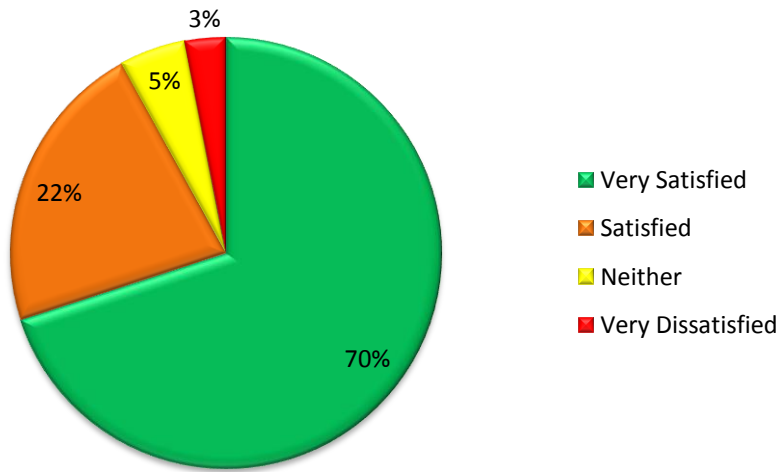
This again highlights the pressing need for a Local Plan to be approved for the City to ensure we are more able to make local decisions that will stick under the new planning framework.

Customer Satisfaction

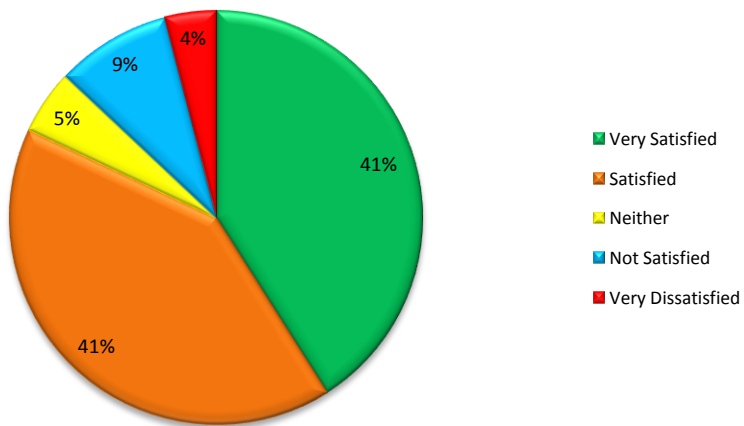
Since the new satisfaction survey of applicants and enquirers was introduced in September 2013, a significant recent improvement in the percentage of enquirers very satisfied by the advice service is noted.

2013

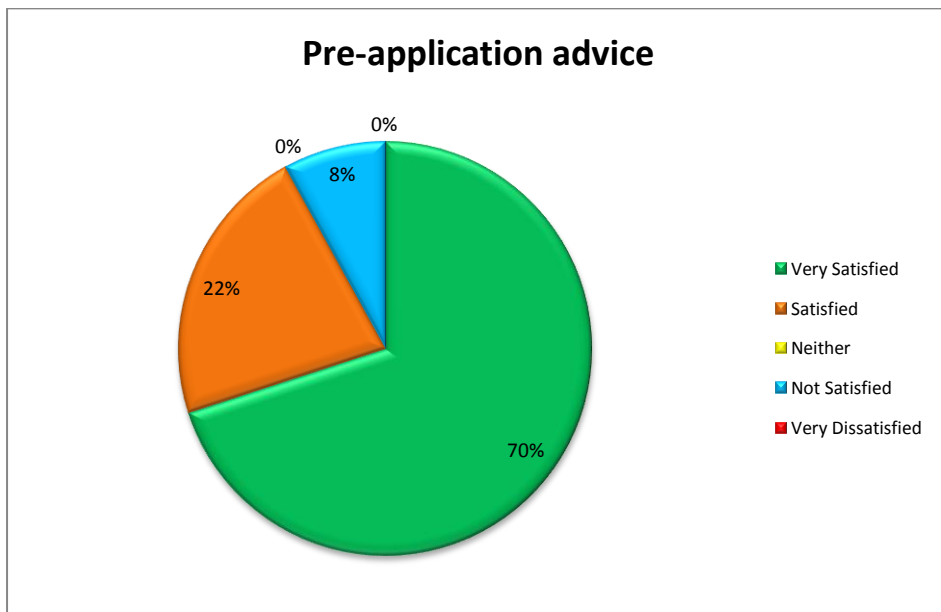
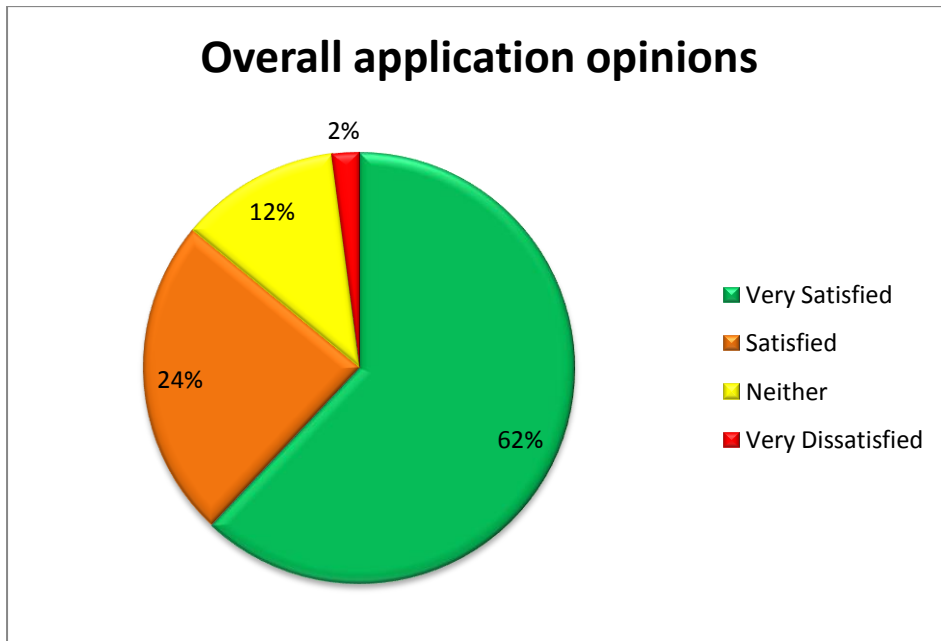
Overall application opinions



Pre-application advice



2014



Major Development Sites

Since the national economic downturn the Authority has continued to engage with developers in York including on approved but stalled sites, and how we could facilitate bringing them forward without too significant weakening of overall planning aims in terms of mixed and balanced communities, sustainability and quality in design.

We have agreed changes of use (employment to residential), changes in types and size, layout, design, as well as reductions in affordable housing numbers and Section 106 financial contributions. These revisions to approved and comprehensively consulted approvals illustrate the determination of the Council to support the delivery of good quality new development in the city. Specifically on some of the more significant sites:-

Former Terry's Site

Henry Boot and David Wilson Homes were announced as new owners in April 2013. Revisions and an ambitious timetable for Phase 1 of the originally approved masterplan (residential on the northern part of the site), plus changes to the affordable housing requirements followed. The planning application for the first phase (85 new homes and a local convenience store) on the northern half of the site was approved by CYC Planning Committee in December 2013. Work has begun on site, and the first homes are expected to go on sale later this year. The detailed application for Phase 2 of the housing site is expected to be submitted shortly.

Nestle South

Following feedback that the commercial/ employment element of this mixed use scheme was not receiving a great deal of interest, we have considered where revisions can be made, especially in terms of increasing the commercially more appetising residential offer on site. Agents for Nestle have remarketed the site and we are now working with interested parties in order to bring a viable scheme forward.

Hungate

Following extensive negotiations and discussions on viability of the site revisions to the mix of uses and layout/ design in the approved Masterplan. Phase 2 of the development (195 new apartments, including 31 affordable) was approved by Planning Committee in January 2014.

The Hiscox Insurance application building was approved in December 2013, with work set to commence this Summer, together with

improvements to the local streetscape at Peasholme Green/ Aldwark /St Saviour's Place junction.

Germany Beck

Officers worked collaboratively with Persimmon and their design team in 2012/ 2013 in order to agree a high quality housing scheme, with reserved matters approval for 655 homes being granted in May 2013. In May this year the High Court turned down a renewed application by Fulford Parish Council for a judicial review of the City Council's decision to approve the reserved matters application, and challenges to English Heritage's decision not to designate the site as a battlefield have so far been unsuccessful. Discussions are now continuing with the discharge of appropriate planning conditions, and a community liaison forum will be established to provide the vehicle for dialogue between the developer and the community during the construction phase.

British Sugar

We are working productively with ABF/ Rapleys in order to produce spatial concept options for consultation, with the next consultation phase scheduled for July. The Heads of Terms and contract for the former Manor School sale have been completed, and supporting studies for a site remediation strategy and traffic modelling are progressing well.

A planning application for around 1000 homes and a community hub is anticipated in September this year.

York Central

We are working with Network Rail on a masterplan led study for the site, looking particularly at early deliverable parcels for development of new housing and offices. Work is ongoing in terms of funding options and the evolving conversation with the Government Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS), as well as the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) and BIS local based funding.

Work to establish a preferred A59 access is complete. Negotiations on land transactions and project delivery/ funding with Network Rail are progressing, and the National Railway Museum is also commencing master planning work for their assets within the site.

In December 2013 the Council's Cabinet approved £10M of funding from the Economic Infrastructure Fund for a new road bridge and access into York Central from Holgate Road. This will begin to de-risk the site and provide real opportunities for development and further investment in the next few years.

£500K from the fund will cover immediate costs, including transport, legal and consultancy fees, with details of how the remaining £9.5M will be spent emerging early next year.

A land swap will result in a council-owned site next to Holgate being sold to Network Rail, which will in turn sell land next to the carriage works to the authority for the bridge and access routes from the A59. Work on the first new homes could start in 2015, with the final phase of the overall scheme beginning in 2019.

White Swan Hotel

Following positive pre-application discussions an application for 14 apartments and food retail on the ground floor was approved by CYC in December 2012. Work has begun and, when complete, will be complimented by planned improvements to re-design and re-pave the Coppergate/ Piccadilly/ Pavement junction as part of the Reinvigorate York initiative.

Castle Piccadilly

Applications for residential and ground floor retail development along Piccadilly were approved last year as well as proposals to extend part of Coppergate to facilitate a new occupier.

Discussions are also ongoing to refurbish Ryedale House, and a planning application for residential re-use and uplift in the design of the building is expected this Summer. Negotiations have included the potential for a new public foot/ cycle bridge across the Foss to the car park and Eye of York and this, together with planned improvements to the streets and junctions here as part of the Reinvigorate York initiative, will contribute significantly to the regeneration of the area.

Barbican

Negotiations and discussions are at an advanced stage with Persimmon in order to amend the existing permission for apartments. A Planning application is expected to be considered by Planning Committee in the next couple of months.

Derwenthorpe

Details for phases 3 and 4 of the development were approved in April 2013, and the development is proceeding. The scheme has and continues to achieve recognition, being a national Housing Design Awards winner in 2013, and most recently winner of The York Design Awards People's Award for Landscaping.

Flood Risk Management

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

This is currently in preparation and a draft for internal and Risk Management Authority consultation will be circulated this summer. The document is programmed to go to the September Cabinet meeting followed by a full external consultation.

The strategy will include an overarching policy framework and action plan and it will be complemented by a series of technical sections detailing the full range of flood risk issues and opportunities in the city. This approach is intended to make the strategy easy to read and understand for all audiences and for those who need to 'drill down' into more detailed or complex issues the technical sections can be considered. This also allows a simpler change control process, this is a living document and it is intended that a varied and simpler sign off process will be determined for individual technical sections.

Upgrading of Main River Defences

The cities existing defences were mainly built in the 1980's and very early '90's and there was very little comprehension of the implications of climate change at that time, and we need to take this and the post 1990s flood record into account. Following my lobbying, the Environment Agency (EA) are currently procuring an updated river model throughout

the city, this will be used to fully understand the standard of protection afforded by all of our defences.

Appraisal work of the existing defences following the modelling work is scheduled for 2015/16 and a rolling programme of defence improvement has been programmed in to follow. However, it would be likely that the defence costs could not be fully supported by Defra funding and contributions would be required. A wide ranging funding model will need to be developed to investigate wider benefits and opportunities for funding. A key issue in this regard is as to whether the Government will increase the funding for new and improved flood defences. Funding is still very constrained, and the Government grant works on an effective benefit to costs ratio of 8, which is high in comparison to other areas of Government expenditure (e.g. transport where a figure of 2-3 typically applies!).

Catchment Studies

A study has been procured to better understand the South Beck catchment in the light of increasing pressure from development in the Monks Cross area and the limited knowledge of the catchment, this has been delivered in partnership with the IDB and the EA.

We will be procuring a study for the Holgate Beck catchment to understand the drainage system and its assets and to identify current and future flood risks. This will be a key report to evidence the York Central site and linkages are being made with regeneration colleagues. The study will influence and advise future asset management approaches by the EA and drainage board.

The study will be used to identify future mitigation requirements and links are being made with EU funding to possibly take forward any resulting outputs.

Flood input into Planning

The Flood Risk Management Team has a proactive role in both strategic planning and development management to ensure that flood risk is satisfactorily addressed, significant progress has already been made in embedding flood risk management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as an integral part of the development management process.

Our Strategic Flood Risk Assessment contains policy recommendations and development management guidance to achieve this.

The team has an ongoing role in supporting the progress of the Local Plan by providing strategic advice on the proposed sites.

Sustainable Drainage Approving Body

Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 sets out a duty on Local Authorities to approve, adopt and maintain SuDS (if serving more than one property) through SuDS Approving Bodies (SAB).

The benefits of SuDS are well known in their delivery of flood risk management, water quality and place making enhancements. SuDS aim to reduce the risk of surface water flooding by mimicking natural drainage systems as closely as possible through techniques such as swales, rain gardens, ponds, green roofs and other methods to slow, attenuate and reduce the amount of surface water flow from developments. In essence SuDS techniques aim to bring water 'to the surface' which can often free up capacity in existing underground drainage systems. Applications for SuDS approval will be independent of planning applications, and sometimes planning approval may not be needed. It is anticipated that the SAB will be a technical process in the same way as building control and not subject to committee approval, though planning approval (when required) will be conditional on a SAB approval.

Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act has long been delayed in its implementation, detailed and protracted discussions have centred on the way in which it should be delivered to ensure an equitable solution for all parties (developers, homeowners, approvers and adopters). The expected October 2014 implementation has recently been revoked, Defra will be making a statement on implementation in the summer, with the approaching general election it is possible that implementation may still be some way off.

Discussions have begun internally to explore how we can deliver the approval and adoption roles. We are working as part of a wider Yorkshire consortium to develop local guidance and procedures.

Water End Flood Alleviation Scheme

The Environment Agency (EA) is currently constructing an enhanced flood alleviation scheme at Water End which will protect almost 400 properties. The council has contributed £1m to this originally £3.2m scheme.

Aside from snagging and defects correction, work is complete and the EA are currently pulling off the site. A range of maintenance and grounds keeping responsibilities will be passed back to the council.

Clementhorpe

The council provided funding for a feasibility study and contribution to works for the protection of the Clementhorpe area. The EA has completed the study and concluded that a comprehensive protection scheme for the area achieves a very low score for grant aid due to the relatively low number of properties at risk in relation to the large scale of work that would be required to protect them.

Without major contributions from elsewhere to top up the funding, only limited property level protection is affordable. However, due to the nature of the terraced housing this would not be straightforward and requires further detailed study to assess whether it could be effective. A local meeting with residents is being planned.

The Council will continue to provide a temporary barrier at the Clementhorpe/River Street junction and pumping at times of flooding to maintain access to properties while it is safe to do so.

Naburn

The Council's FRM team along with the EA, Yorkshire Water and Ouse and Derwent Internal Drainage Board continue to engage with Naburn Parish Council flood working group to determine potential ways for the community to be better protected. Approximately a dozen properties flooded in Sept 2012 and up to 50 in 2000, though many of these were gardens only. A study carried out after the 2000 event established that a comprehensive protection scheme for the village would not be cost effective based on hard defences and it is difficult to see that there would ever be a way of providing further protection to the village.

However the working group is seeking funding for a new feasibility study to review this and see if there are any other options.

Kings Staith

Hugh Bayley MP requested the formation of a steering group following petitions by local residents and businesses from the Kings Staith/Tower Place community regarding the need to dredge the River Ouse (this occurred at a similar time to the decisions to dredge the Somerset Levels), the group last met on Friday 13 June. This area is unprotected as it floods frequently and large scale defences would be needed against the rivers edge significantly severing access to and enjoyment of the riverside.

The area will be considered as part of the renewal of flood defences in the city, see below, but there will also be a consideration if wider needs and aspirations could be delivered through the provision of increased protection in this area – regenerative activity around the waterfront, river safety etc. All members of the steering group accept that full protection is very unlikely but any move towards the reduction in frequency of flooding would be very welcome.

Flood Risk Innovation

We need to look for innovations and opportunities to deliver our future flood risk service across the city given the financial challenges. The new Flood Risk Manager, Steve Wragg, is the chair and member of several national groups looking at new ways of working and R&D in Flood Risk Management. A communications plan has been developed to identify opportunities to promote and publicise our work to ensure we can maximise all potential collaborations and partnerships.

Flood Levy

We are currently reviewing what opportunities we have for obtaining flood levy monies for York schemes, and are looking at possible submissions for the Clementhorpe & Naburn schemes above, another in Carr Lane and a new Small works package – where a range of discrete properties suffer small isolated surface/ground water problems but are not hydraulically linked, but would merit linking together for a packaged delivery of Property Level Protection or resilience type works.

Smarter York

The Smarter York team continue to work closely with our Communities & Equalities team and other council departments towards increased involvement in the planning and delivery of services at a local level.

A Smarter York spring clean took place during March and April and built on the success of the previous year's spring clean.

- Week 1 – Clifton, Clifton Without and Rawcliffe
- Week 2 – Dringhouses and Woodthorpe
- Week 3- Fishergate and Fulford
- Week 4 – Various parishes in the outer areas of the city

239 volunteers took part

541 volunteer hours

7 community based groups

5 local businesses

4 schools

Community Payback – over 600 hours works

The team have been working with the two universities over the last couple of months on processes to reduce the impact on waste and street cleansing at the end of term when many students leave their accommodation, this included distributing leaflets detailing the extra collections on Saturdays and the four extra collection dates.

This work also saw close working with the landlords to ensure extra collection dates were communicated to all those involved.

Street Cleansing/Grounds Maintenance

A review of our city centre cleansing regimes is well underway with the aim of increasing cleansing by mechanical means in line with the outer areas of the city; this will lead to increased standards of cleanliness particularly around cigarette butts and stained pavements.

Public Toilets

A 15 year contract for the provision and maintenance of all our public toilets has been let and includes the refurbishment of all CYC owned facilities, the refurbishment element of the contact is well underway, with completion planned for mid December – see below, once completed the city will have a set of facilities to the most modern up to date and clean standards which we can be proud of.

- Union Terrace – Complete
- Nunnery Lane – Complete
- St Georges – Poss 5th July
- Coppergate – Payment paddle gates in but not switched on.
- Silver Street – ditto
- Acomb – work commenced.
- Tanner Row – linked to Roman Court development.
- Exhibition Square – Demolished, temp loos in place on 5th July, work will commence mid Sept, Completion mid/late December (sooner if possible).

Waste

Domestic Waste

After an incredibly busy year, that saw significant changes to the waste collection service across the city, waste services has continued to explore ways of optimising the service offer to customers.

A trial in the Clifton area, aimed at identifying barriers to recycling and ways to increase participation, was very successful from both a council and resident point of view. A highlight was the ‘no junk mail’ campaign carried out as part of the trial. This was very popular with residents and whilst paper recycling levels oddly fell by 1% during the trial period, this was off-set by an increase in other materials being recycled, most notably plastic bottles and cans (14%), glass (10%) and an overall increase in recycling levels of 6%. Overall participation across the trial area increased by 6%. A report is being prepared for Community Safety and Overview Group in September this year. We are looking at how we can roll out the lessons from this.

Another key trial has been taking place in Upper Poppleton where we have started to collect mixed plastics. Over 120 residents have contacted us indicating that they will be taking part in the trial and will require extra capacity to manage the additional recyclable material. Officers will be visiting the area during the trial to sample recycling boxes to gather more accurate data on the type of materials being presented

There has been some recent speculation about a nationwide return to weekly refuse collections, dependant on the outcome of next years general election. As well as a potentially damaging effect on our recycling rate, officers estimate that this could add in the region of £1.1m to the annual revenue budget for the service, which would mean major cuts to other services.

Commercial waste

We are continuing to work with city centre businesses, and other stakeholders, to review our commercial waste service with a view to increasing our commercial recycling offer, thus reducing the waste sent to landfill and addressing the aesthetic impact this service has on the evening economy. We will also be exploring opportunities for making operational savings and increasing revenue.

Rewiring Public Services

The place based stream of the transformation programme has commenced and will change the approach to service delivery so that residents, businesses and partners will be placed at the centre of service design and provision. Waste services is within the scope of this work and will integrate with other transformation steams to ensure the best outcomes and increased value for money, and that waste services make a full contribution to, what are, very challenging targets over the next two financial years.

Dave Merrett

Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning & Sustainability