



Planning Services Service Delivery Plan 2025 to 2026

Overview of the service

Activities of the Planning service generally stem from legislative requirements, however close working with other internal departments is essential to providing a comprehensive service to our customers. We also work closely with a number of external clients such as the Local Highways Authority, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as well as town and parish councils.

It is important that the Planning service maintains a strong customer focus to the varied range and number of customers that the service has to manage. The range of customers accessing our service includes: applicants, architects/agents, developers, neighbours and community groups as well as internal and external colleagues and consultees.

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with adopted local and national planning policies. The Planning service operates in the public interest and its main purpose is to facilitate sustainable development throughout the District. Place making is an important objective for the team, alongside the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment. Close working with internal and external bodies forms an important part of the planning process to ensure the service functions in an efficient and transparent manner.

Planning enforcement will work inline with the adopted Local Planning Enforcement Plan and will respond to queries in a proportionate manner.

Please note that the Strategic Planning Service Delivery Plan is to be incorporated with this Planning Service Delivery Plan. For this year it is added as Appendix 1

Cost of service

The Planning service generates an income for the Council with planning application fees being set by national government and pre-application fees being set by the local planning authority.

The budgeted income for 2025 to 2026 from planning applications and pre-application advice is £1,156,015 and £82,711 respectively.

Appendix 1 – Planning Services

The level of income received to date from 1 April 2024 to 31 January 2025 for planning applications is £619,333 and pre-application advice is £99,581. The net expenditure for the Planning services is £477,811.

In the year of 2024 to 2025 (01 April 2024 to 31 January 2025) the Planning service dealt with a total of 1223 valid applications, the breakdown of which is:

- majors - 24
- minors - 185
- others (includes householders, listed buildings, adverts, conditions, amendments, certificate of lawfulness, prior notifications) – 702
- trees - 312

Staffing Information

The Planning service includes a number of functions. The team consists of a total of 28.2 full time equivalent (FTE) staff members. The team is broken into a number of different sections that all fall under the remit of the Planning Manager (Now Strategic & Development Management Manager). The Planning team consists of Planning Team Leaders, Major Project Officers, Senior Planning Officers, Planning Officers and a Planning Assistant.

The team also incorporates other staff and statutory functions, including Conservation Officer, Tree Officer, Enforcement Officers and the Planning Technical Support Team. The structure of the team is outlined below with a summary of each function and staffing levels.

FTE	Role title
1.0	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
2.0	Planning Team Leaders
2.0	Major Projects Planning Officer
1.0	Office Team Leader
1.0	Enforcement Team Leader
1.0	Tree Officer
1.0	Conservation Officer
9.0	Career Grade Planning Officers/Senior Planning Officers
1.0	Planning Assistant
1.6	Enforcement Officers
1.0	Senior Planning Technical Support Officer
6.6	Planning Technical Support Officers

Forward planning for Councillors

Proposed item	Proposed date of decision	Committee
Planning Committee	First Wednesday of every month	Planning
Member training	TBC 2025	Planning
Half year report 2025 to 2026	November 2025	Operational Services
End of year report 2024 to 2025	March 2026	Operational Services
Service Delivery Plan 2025 to 2026	March 2026	Operational Services

Planning Services Service Delivery Plan 2025 to 2026

This Service Delivery Plan describes what the Planning service will be doing to deliver continuous improvement (service objectives). Each performance measure relates to the Council's strategic outcomes and Corporate Plan 2023 to 2024.

Council's strategic outcome: Maintain sound finances. Improve systems and practices.

Planning services' strategic objective: Deliver statutory functions within specified timescales and within budget.

Link to Corporate Plan: Sound financial management. Cleaner Green East Cambridgeshire. Sustainable Communities.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
Major applications to be determined within agreed timescales	90%, annually	89%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers
Minor applications to be determined within agreed timescales	80%, annually	84%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers
Householder applications to be determined within agreed timescales	90%, annually	95%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers
All other applications to be determined within agreed timescales	90%, annually	90%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers
Tree Preservation Order, Trees in Conservation Areas or compliance with tree condition applications to be determined within agreed timescales	100%, annually	99.3%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers
Discharge of condition applications determined within agreed timescales	75%, annually	75%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
All applications determined within 26 weeks unless otherwise agreed extension	100%, annually	99.4%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers
Applications validated within 5 working days	85%, annually	90%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Development Management Officers

Council's strategic outcome: Safe, vibrant and inclusive communities. Community sustainability.

Planning services' strategic objective: Take a proactive approach to enhancing and improving the places in which people live: balancing economic, environmental and social needs.

Link to Corporate Plan: Cleaner Green East Cambridgeshire. Sustainable communities.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
Continue to work on the Cambridgeshire Local Heritage Project (CLHP), within the next year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete data for candidate list entries continue vetting process via county assessment panel commence rolling consultation programme with owners and parishes for adoption of new entries on a parish-by-parish basis 	As identified, annually	Total eligible entries = 693 Total locally listed = 398 Total parishes adopted = 26 (out of 35)	Conservation Officer Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
Project manage major applications as a team (approx. 50+ dwellings and commercially important schemes) through action tracker management and other project management tools Build collective understanding of major projects and business focus for customers Manage expectations of stakeholders and build in resilience across the team for complex project management Seek consistency across outcomes	Meet bi-weekly, annually	Major projects meeting has been set up to discuss and agree options on major planning applications. Reduced outstanding major applications to 24 cases.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Development Management Officers as needed

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
Contribute to the implementation of the Council's Climate and Environment Action Plan	As identified, annually	New performance measure.	Cross-Council activity Planning Team Leader
To reduce the amount of paper used by the Department in relation to its day-to-day work	10%, annually	Reduction of 19%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
Work with those communities wishing to undertake Neighbourhood Planning, ensure ECDC meets its statutory requirements (timing and demand uncertain, due to lead being parish councils)	As identified through the neighbourhood plan process and individual timetables.	To meet statutory timetables and to work with communities to assist with delivery.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
Publication of an Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) and Five Year Land Supply Report covering period to 31 March 2024, which reports on the performance of the previous year in terms of planning matters	To publish the report by 31 Dec 2025	To publish the report on time and meeting the Councils statutory requirements.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers

Council's strategic outcome: A clean, green and attractive place.

Planning services' strategic objective: Improve the quality of the built and natural environment throughout the district.

Link to Corporate Plan: Cleaner Green East Cambridgeshire.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
Monitor 20% of approved tree works	20%, annually	74 application sites reviewed/visited = 20.33% of total applications determined.	Trees Officer Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
80% of enforcement complaints to have preliminary investigation completed within 10 working days of receipt	80%, annually	100%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Enforcement Team Leader All Planning Enforcement Officers
80% of enforcement complaints to have complainant contact within 15 working days to advise of findings	80%, annually	99%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Enforcement Team Leader All Planning Enforcement Officers

Council’s strategic outcome: Be an excellent employer.

Planning services’ strategic objective: Improve staff motivation, participation and involvement in service provision and encourage staff development.

Link to Corporate Plan: Sound Financial Management.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
<p>20hrs average of CPD per person to be identified and to be provided annually (pro-rata for part time positions); following attendance of courses/seminars staff to feedback and discuss with the team and the next team meeting.</p>	As identified, annually	542.5 hours completed by 18 members of staff resulting in 30 hrs/person average.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
<p>Regularly review high level corporate risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new legislation, impacting on work in progress. • new legislation, resulting in a resource pressure to implement. • status of policies within the Local Plan, • adaptation to climate change • exposure to potential judicial review – the decision making process has not been carried out lawfully, which could lead to a financial risk on the Authority and judicial review by aggrieved party 	As required, annually	No judicial reviews.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager

Council’s strategic outcome: Customers are at the heart of everything we do.

Planning services’ strategic objective: Provide excellent customer services at all times and to improve communication with all customers.

Link to Corporate Plan: Sound Financial Management. Sustainable Communities.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2024 to 2025	Owner and co-owners
Parish councils to be invited to Planning and related subject training session(s)	As required, annually	Next training and update session due to take place mid 2025.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
Implementation of further electronic working processes and procedures as per the outcome of the Planning Review and Government funded Digital Planning project	As identified, annually	Two datasets have now been published and the TPO dataset is close to completion. The focus is now on Neighbourhood Plans and allocated sites. We are on track to start recording all Solar Farms mid 2025.	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Office Team Leader Senior Technical Support Officer

Appendix 1 – Planning Services