



Planning and Regeneration including Building
 Consultancy
AGENTS & DEVELOPERS WORKING GROUP
Wednesday, 30th September 2015
14:00hrs – 16:00 hrs (Room 134 – Borough Of Poole)

Attendees:

Borough of Poole:
 Stephen Thorne (ST) – Head of Planning & Regeneration inc Building Consultancy
 Richard Genge (RTG) – Planning and Regeneration Manager - *chair*
 Sue Ludwig (SPL) – Business Manager
 Darryl Howells (DH) – Senior Planning Officer
 Clare Taylor (CPT) – Business Support and PA to Stephen Thorne *minutes*

Agents and Developers:
 Phil Easton (PE) – Western Design Architects
 Paul Spong (PS) - Savills
 Peter Tanner (PT) – Tanner and Tilley Planning Consultants
 Peter Traves (PT) – Evans and Traves
 Martin Hanham (MH) – Martin Hanham
 Graham Thorne (GT) - Thornes Chartered Surveyors & Estate Agents
 John Souter (JS) – Lionel Gregory
 May Palmer (MP) – Harry J Palmer
 Keith Harrison (KH) – Harrison Property Group
 Paul Bloomfield (PB) – Holton Homes

Apologies:

Agents and Developers:
 None.

Borough of Poole:
 Steve Dring (SD) – Senior Planning Officer
 Andy Holmes (AMH) – Building Regulations Manager
 Bill Gordon (BG) – Senior Planning Officer

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION BY / OWNER
1.	<p><u>Around the table introductions</u></p> <p>ST opened the meeting and requested around the table introductions.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the Last Meeting held 27th May 2015</u></p> <p>The minutes of the last regular A&D Working Group meeting were discussed, unanimously agreed to be adopted.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Pre-Application</u></p> <p>DH/RTG gave an overview of the letter, which had been sent to all Agents and Developers prior to this meeting. The letter was sent following the recent PAS Resource Review, which identified cost savings and improvement of the service within Planning and Regeneration including Building Consultancy.</p>	

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	<p>The options identified in the review included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement of the Community – advice on fees and ensuring these are set correctly. 2. Planning Performance Agreements. 3. Review of Conditions we impose in order to identify savings. <p>DH advised that he had been asked to carry out further investigations in order to identify customer service improvements and cost savings. It was noted that there are three areas to be considered; principal, design and layout.</p> <p>It was generally felt that Agents and Developers usually know, in principle, whether a planning application is going in the right direction, especially straight forward applications.</p> <p>It was suggested that an early rate fee in order to raise questions in advance, e.g. £50 per hour or perhaps a fixed rate fee of £250. Where deadlines are tight and information is required for the client, a meeting by appointment to discuss the site would be useful. ST advised that details of fees can be found in the letter circulated by DH.</p> <p>The quality of pre-app advice was discussed and it was felt that, over the last month, the advice given by a Planning Officer had sometimes been incorrect, this could have been due to the Officer being inexperienced. Timescale of applications was also discussed and ST advised that, at times, the paperwork could be waiting in the tray for a second signature.</p> <p>DH raised the matter of red line plans, which could lead to a full conversation being required.</p> <p>ST advised that there are no objections with having an informal meeting to discuss the site. However, it should be noted that this would be a basic meeting, a watered down version of a pre-app. It would not include any elements of point of fact, e.g. TPO's or List Buildings, where information needs to be collated from other Units such as Transportation. Furthermore, it would be the view of one Officer, not the Council, an informal opinion.</p> <p>BoP is working to improving the end to end business correspondence and these improvements can be achieved if covered by fees. ST advised that, even with the cuts/savings of the Council, BoP are still delivering a good service to Agents and Developers.</p>	

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	<p>It was noted that a planning application could be submitted with an issue on it and the whole application has to be re-submitted. It would be best to iron out the issues by way of an informal meeting to prevent having to re-submit.</p> <p>The costs involved with having to re-submit an application can high being in mind that the application will be re-advertised. It was felt that applications are being refused over minor issues, which could be avoided at an early stage.</p> <p>ST raised the matter of internal targets for the Officer in respect of going out on site and turnaround times, which sometimes relies very heavily on information from other sources such as Highways or Natural England and their turnaround times may not suit ours.</p> <p>ST advised that, in some cases, planning applications are put in to see what issues would arise then, after refusal, re-submit the application, as this could be a “free go”.</p> <p>Any pre-apps not processed in agreed time are refunded, which is not an ideal situation.</p> <p>ST advised that, in the PAS Resource Review, it was felt that the Duty Officer role should be abolished, ST was against this course of action but would be reviewing their role and availability.</p> <p>ST asked DH if there was a deadline on the letter. DH advised that the letter was for an around the table discussion.</p> <p>ST advised the meeting that BoP will try to accommodate the needs of the Agents and Developers Working Group and to achieve this, we will need written confirmation on the course of action to be taken going forward.</p> <p>The suggestion of an informal meeting onsite was taken into consideration. This will enable any site issues to be raised at an early stage.</p> <p>ST advised that, at an onsite concept meeting, there would be no plans. However, it was felt that plans would be needed at this stage. It was suggested that an onsite meeting would attract a higher fee than normal. DH advised that Planning Officers were not keen to meeting Agents onsite, at least without prior knowledge of the proposals.</p> <p>ST added that Conditions would need to be put in place with regards informal/concept meetings.</p>	

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	<p>With all of the above in mind, it was felt that this would reduce the planning application process time. ST agreed and advised that Planning Officers are managing their workload with better time management.</p> <p>SPL added that BoP are working towards making the process, from first meeting straight through to planning application, a seamless process.</p> <p>The use of the same Planning Officer throughout the process was also discussed and it was agreed that this is a good idea.</p> <p>ST advised that we will send an email to encourage any comments on the new fees.</p> <p>With budget cuts and reduction in staff, ST advised that the timing and value for money has not been ideal, BoP is not as timely as it could be.</p> <p>PS raised the issue of being able to establish a sense of viability at an early stage in the application, obtaining feedback on viability has been a problem. ST advised that a District Valuer would advise. Unfortunately, BoP do not have the skillset in-house to advise on viability.</p> <p>ST suggested having a template of certain elements. However, it was noted that applications are variable from small bungalows through to larger developments, this may not be feasible, there are too many levels of complications.</p> <p>Affordable Housing was discussed, it was generally felt that this was at risk of failure.</p> <p>The uncertainty of CIL rates and what the costs will be was discussed. ST advised that these are published, however, we are indexing them, which needs to be subscribed to.</p>	
	<p>ST advised that we will investigate updating the CIL rates on a monthly basis on the first of each month. However, it was noted that the rates could change at the point of planning permission being granted. SPL will investigate further, however, she advised that BoP pay a licence fee to have this facility and could cause issues.</p> <p><u>Action: SPL will investigate BCIS Indexing Rates and advise further on updating on the first of each month.</u></p>	

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION BY / OWNER
4.	<p><u>Planning Performance Agreements (PPA's)</u></p> <p>DH gave an overview of Planning Performance Agreements (PPA's) and advised that he had carried out research to evaluate how successful these are. The findings was that one was successful, whilst one wasn't where an applicant had failed.</p> <p>In the recent PAS Resource Review, PPA's had been viewed as the way forward.</p> <p>It was noted that PPA's include pre-apps.</p> <p>ST enquired if there is a PPA Template, RTG responded to say yes.</p> <p>If timeframes under a PPA are not met then penalties will be enforced, this works for both parties. ST raised the issue with the Power Station, which is an example of timeframes not being met but not by BoP.</p> <p>ST outlined the benefits of having PPA's in place, they set out timescales, especially when working with other Units, they will be under the same PPA, not just Planning.</p> <p>Overall it was felt that the introduction of PPA's could complicate the process even further and these should would be unlikely to be taken up by the development industry.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Discharge of Conditions</u></p> <p>It was felt that the Discharge of Conditions are frustrating, the need for these and why.</p> <p>It was noted that materials are requested by BoP, whilst other authorities accept a photo. BoP also ask for 1 – 20 joinery details, sections through joinery, which refers to listed building only.</p> <p>ST advised that we have to be vigilant due to legalities.</p>	
	<p>The matter of whether conditions are necessary was discussed. ST advised that we are aware that discharge of conditions are not always timely.</p> <p>RTG advised that we will reinforce the need to discharge the conditions swiftly, but due to changes in legislation we will be altering the process inline with the Planning Portal and that this will in the future require different forms being completed.</p>	
6.	<p><u>CPD Breakfast Seminar (held 24/09/15)</u></p> <p>ST advised regarding the recent CPD Breakfast Seminar, which was held 24th September 2015 at Upton House. The event was a huge success and up to capacity. This items was continued in item 7 below.</p>	

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION BY / OWNER
7.	<p><u>Building Regulations Update</u></p> <p>ST gave an overview of the latest Building Regulations Update, which come into force on 1st October 2015. The new regulations were outlined to Agents and Developers in the CPD Breakfast Seminar held 24th September 2015 at Upton House.</p> <p>The Housing Standards Review Code for Sustainable Homes and affect on new planning standards in particular Parts M Categories 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p>ST advised that the amendment or discharge of conditions law has changed and no enforcement action will be taken on this condition, application to discharge.</p> <p>Please contact ST on any items requiring signoff.</p> <p>ST will distribute the LABC presentation from the CPD Breakfast Seminar, once this is available.</p> <p>The following matters were also discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Housing for Access. • Disabled Access. • Levels 1, 2 and 3. • Core Strategy Refresh. • Local Plan. • Statutory Duty to Cooperate. • Building Consultancy being more proactive, as they are a business. <p>RTG circulated the “Advice Note for Applicants Addressing Poole’s Climate Change Policies including Energy & Resources Statement” Addendum dated 1st October 2015, which was then noted by all.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. ST – outlined in full the Combined Authority Debate, which came out of the Transformation Challenge Award. ST explained the history. b. ST advised regarding the Single Unitary Council, a combined authority of East Dorset, Borough of Poole and Bournemouth Council, which it is anticipated will lead to cost reductions. The timescale was discussed and the Council are aiming for 2019, prior to the 2020 Elections. c. ST advised regarding Neighbour Notification letters, which are being abolished in favour of Site Notices. ST also advised that BoP will be utilising QR codes on barcodes for Site Notices for smart phones to enable the public to access via the website. d. ST advised regarding the Statement of Community Involvement, which will be going to Council. 	

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	<p>e. ST outlined the Core Strategy Review, there are five options, two of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Height/Density in the Poole Town Centre. ii. Green Belt. <p>The Local Plan process is in place to evaluate the Green Belt and whether it is functioning efficiently. It was noted that this has been in place since 1996, which is a long time ago.</p> <p>ST advised that the SHMA had been signed off a few weeks ago, however, this is not quite ready for release. There is an increase in housing need from 500k to 700k. If we can achieve, then fine. However, if we are unable to achieve this figure, the strategic duty to cooperate comes in effect. Although we have a strategic duty to cooperate, we do not have a duty to agree.</p> <p>ST explained in full the new technical team in place for the Places & Prosperity Group, Chief Executive Group, Growth Board and how this fits in with LNP/LEP and the issues and options associated with planning.</p> <p>f. ST mentioned the Power Station Site and the fact that this will be 0% CIL and 0% affordable housing.</p> <p>g. PT (Tanner & Tilley) – advised that he will be leaving Tanner & Tilley to join Renaissance Retirement Limited as their Planning Director. However, PT would like to remain a member of the Agents and Developers Working Group. ST advised that this is acceptable.</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting finished at 16:00hrs.</p>	
	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting:- The Agents and Developers Working Group Meeting - Thursday, 17th December 2015 14:00hrs – 16:30hrs – Council Chamber – Civic Centre</u></p>	