



REPORT TO: Planning Committee

02 December 2019

LEAD OFFICER: Joint Director of Planning & Economic Development

Enforcement Report

Purpose

1. To inform Members about planning enforcement cases as at 02 December 2019
Summaries of recent enforcement notices are also reported, for information.

Executive Summary

2. There are currently at the end of October 2019, 84 active cases (Target is maximum 150 open cases, Stretch target 100 open cases).
3. Details of all enforcement investigations are sent electronically to members on a weekly basis identifying opened and closed cases in their respective areas along with case reference numbers, location, case officer and nature of problem reported.
4. Statistical data is contained in Appendices 1, and 2 to this report.

Updates to significant cases

5. Updates are as follows:

(a) Cottenham - Smithy Fen:

Work continues at Setchel Drove, following the placement of a number of static caravans on four plots in breach of the current planning consent and High Court Injunction applicable to each plot. Formal letters have been issued to those reported owners and occupants on Setchel Drove, covering the breaches of planning control and breach of the High Court Injunction - Copies of the Injunction and Housing leaflets, covering those that may be threatened with homelessness or eviction has been issued – Given the complexity and number of departments within the organisation that may be involved in any future action the Councils Tasking & Coordination group are facilitating a joint approach with Planning, Environmental Health, Housing, Benefits & Council Tax, and Legal.

Following a full survey of the site , Including Needs assessments preparation was made for the issue of twenty two (22) Breach of Condition Notices covering five plots in Water Lane, one plot in Orchard Drive, four plots in Pine

Lane, three plots in Park Lane, and nine plots in Setchel Drove, who have been found to breach their planning permission.

A compliance inspection carried out after the 31 July 2017 confirmed that 54% of the plots previously identified as being in breach of their planning permission in relation to planning conditions are now complying with them. Work is currently underway to identify the persons continuing to breach planning and to instigate prosecution proceedings against them. Investigation now complete and prosecution files relating to ten (10) plots, which are still in breach of the notice have been submitted to the council's legal team for summons. Cambridge Magistrates Court are now currently processing the application for Summons. All cases have now been heard and where breaches were identified Cambridge Magistrates levied fines totalling £72,566.57p – A further inspection and survey of the site has now been carried out on the 26th June 2018 which revealed that 12 plots are currently in breach of planning control. Further prosecutions will now be considered /carried out in addition to two further breaches of Condition Notices issued and one prosecution in the High Court for breaching the current site Injunction. A further application to the High Court for an Injunction is to be made at the earliest opportunity. Barrister identified; detailed chronology compiled next steps agreed - Work in progress 04 November 2019 further site visit and aerial photographs.

(b) Whaddon – 9A Bridge Street

Without planning permission, the erection of a six-metre-high pole for CCTV equipment. Enforcement Notice SCD-ENF-094/17/A was issued with a compliance date of 25th November 2017 to remove the pole and CCTV equipment. The notice has not been complied with and a file was submitted to the Councils Legal office to issue a Summons. The date of the summons was set for 10am 15th March 2018 however the accused did not attend, and the Court issued a Warrant for his arrest. Case continues - No further information at this time – Legal office have liaised with the Court and have been informed that the Arrest Warrant is live and waiting to be executed by Police. Referred to Legal as Police have no current knowledge of the Warrant – No further details are available at this time. Councils Legal and Planning department to review next steps including Injunctive action to remove unauthorised Pole and CCTV camera. Report to be submitted to Planning Committee seeking approval for direct action – Costings now obtained, and it is proposed to take direct action for the removal of the unauthorised pole and cctv equipment.

(c) 19 Bandon Road Girton

Not built in accordance with approved drawings relating to visibility splays Breach of Condition Notice issued 22 February 2018 with 28-day compliance period. Despite compliance discussions with the builder works still not carried out. Prosecution file has been raised, waiting issue of summons, still with legal Legal case officer now allocated waiting for further information as to timing

(d) Burwash Manor Farm

Without planning permission, the erection of children's play equipment within land designated as Green Belt. A retrospective planning application, reference S/3494/18/FL had been refused. The size, scale and height of the development is contrary to paragraph 144 of the National Planning Policy Framework

(NPPF) 2019. The enforcement notice issued requires the owners to cease the use of the play equipment specifically the adventure tower and remove the play equipment from the land. The compliance period is one (1) month from the date it takes effect on the 21 May 2019 – A Planning Appeal has been submitted to the Inspectorate on the 20th May 2019 – Date to be advised

(e) **Cottage Nursery, Cardinals Green, Horseheath**

Without planning permission (Advert Consent) displaying advertising signs measuring 6ft x 4ft for Cardinal Barns Kitchen and Blooms @ the Barn. On the junction of Howards Lane and the A1307 and a further smaller sign at the entrance to the nursery advertising Caravan Site which is approximately 1 metre square. Although the owner of Cottage Nursery was informed of the breach and asked to remove them by the 14 March 2019. The owner of the site failed to remove the signs and when interviewed under caution stated that “Do what you want I am not going to remove them” As a result of a criminal offence being committed by displaying unauthorised signs a prosecution file has been raised.

Investigation summary

- 6 Enforcement Investigations for October 2019 reflect a decrease in the number of cases investigated when compared to the same period in 2018. Sixty-two (62) cases in total for the October period versus Seventy-nine (79) cases in 2018.

The year to date comparison 2019 versus 2018 revealed a reduction of 54 cases less for the same period.

A review of the eighty-one (81) cases closed in October 2019 revealed that 35 cases were found not to be in breach of planning control or were permitted development, 17 cases complied, and 10 cases were not expedient to enforce. The remaining 19 cases were as a result of awaiting further instruction, retrospective planning applications submitted, Express Consent Granted, referred to County Council or Environmental Health.

It should be noted that whilst investigations carried out so far this year are less than 2018, they exceed the 2017 results for the same period – Plus 25 cases.

Effect on Strategic Aims

- 7.. South Cambridgeshire District Council delivers value for money by engaging with residents, parishes and businesses. By providing an effective Enforcement service, the Council continues to provide its residents with an excellent quality of life.

Background Papers:

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- **Appendices 1 and 2**

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