

# Planning Newsletter for Agents

7 August 2020

Dear Agents,

I am writing this newsletter having just read through the “Planning for the Future” White Paper, as released by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 6 August 2020. My team and I will of course be responding to these proposals for the reform of the planning system during the consultation period, which is due to run until 29 October 2020. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this please do not hesitate to contact me via the details at the end of this letter.

The White Paper refers to economic and social recovery following the outbreak of COVID-19. The message continues to be delivered by Hambleton District Council (HDC) that it is still business as usual and this is certainly the case for the Planning Service as we prepare for an exciting and productive autumn. I would like to take this opportunity to let you know what developments you can expect in the forthcoming months.

## Local Plan

Central Government recognises in the White Paper that, in bringing forward reform to improve the operation, this does not cause delays to development. The Planning Service is committed to pursuing the adoption of the emerging Local Plan whilst ensuring the process can be carried out in a way that is safe for everyone as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

There has been a slight amendment to the Hambleton Local Plan programme as we work with the Planning Inspectors and secure appropriate venues that can accommodate everyone who would like to attend the Examination Hearings in Public. It is hoped that by October and November there may be greater scope for indoor public meetings. However, with social distancing restrictions it has been prudent for the council to assess alternative, larger venues to the Civic Centre facilities. This is to avoid some sessions having to be run more than once which would not be ideal and would inevitably incur additional costs.

Provisional dates have therefore been booked for room hire in The Forum and The Golden Lion Hotel in the centre of Northallerton. We are currently checking capacity figures to take account of social distancing and assessing diagrams to illustrate how rooms such as the Main Hall at the Forum and the Mowbray and Yorkshire Suites at The Golden Lion Hotel would be set up. We are also identifying what procedures each venue would have in place for managing these events, such as restricting the gathering of people in small places and investigating how attendees would access rooms safely. In addition to this there is the technology to consider in terms of confirming plans for streaming/recording sessions for observers and involving people via phone or video calls if they cannot, or do not wish to, attend in person.

The new draft timetable for the Hambleton Local Plan Examination is therefore as follows:

1 September 2020	The Draft Matters, Issues and Questions, Draft Hearing Programme and Draft Guidance Notes will be issued by the Planning Inspectors to HDC
4 September 2020	The Confirmed Matters, Issues and Questions, Hearing Programme and Guidance Notes will be issued by the Planning Inspectors to HDC
11 September 2020	Deadline for Representor Comments on Matters, Issues and Questions

14 September 2020	Deadline for Confirming Attendance at the Examination in Public Hearings
2 October 2020	Deadline for Submitting Statements
20 - 23 October 2020	Hearing Week 1
3 - 6 November 2020	Hearing Week 2
10 - 13 November 2020	Hearing Week 3
17 - 20 November 2020	Hearing Week 4 (if required)

## Decision Making

Central Government makes it clear in the White Paper that decision-making should be faster and more certain, within firm deadlines. The document focuses on making sure the system has the right people and skills. I have been clear that all the staff in my service have been great in delivering their work during the COVID-19 pandemic and I am about to add to the team to address the economic recovery.

The arrival of Kate Williams as our new Senior Planner on 1 September 2020 is fast approaching and I am delighted to inform you that we have also secured support from Mark Simmonds Planning Services from 7 September 2020. Mark and Angela Simmonds have great planning experience and some of you may well already know them as they have recently also handled a number of planning applications for Harrogate Borough Council. I have previously worked with Mark for two years at Breckland District Council where I found him to be a responsive and outward looking officer who regularly received positive feedback from Agents. He will be supporting the team by picking up planning and enforcement cases. Angela is also a qualified solicitor with excellent knowledge. She will be handling planning applications and helping us to advance our Section 106 Agreement system. I am sure you will find them both to be very approachable and I look forward to their contribution to the service.

## Next Newsletter

We are always trying to improve the planning system here in Hambleton. My next newsletter is due to be circulated on 21 August 2020 but if you wish to discuss any planning matter with me in the meantime then please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on 01609 767115 or by email at [jon.berry@hambleton.gov.uk](mailto:jon.berry@hambleton.gov.uk)

**Jon Berry**  
Chief Planning Officer



Civic Centre, Stone Cross, Rotary Way, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 2UU

01609 779977

[hambleton.gov.uk](http://hambleton.gov.uk)

