

Consultation on a proposed delegation of planning decisions in South Cambridgeshire

South Cambridgeshire District Council operates an adopted scheme of delegation which sets out the range of decisions that designated officers can make on behalf of the Council. In terms of planning proposals and associated applications, the majority are delegated to designated officers without the need for referral to Planning Committee, where the decision is voted upon by elected Members.

Delegated decisions are carefully considered by the case officer who outlines their recommendations, and reasons behind the recommendations, in a balanced delegated report, which is checked by a designated officer before a decision is agreed and issued.

By operating a scheme of delegation, decisions are made in good time, in line with statutory target dates, and the Planning Committees can concentrate on the most contentious and significant proposals.

What applications are dealt with by an officer under delegated powers?

Most planning related applications are dealt with under delegated powers and it is the intention of the Council, in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness, that at least 95% of applications received are determined under this process.

Authorised officers do not always use their delegated powers; consideration is given to issues raised by local members and parish councils, in order that decisions of wider public interest are taken at the Planning Committee.

Applications will be dealt with under delegated powers unless:

- A Local Member writes, or emails a request for a particular application to be considered by Planning Committee and sound planning reasons have been provided setting out why committee consideration is necessary and the request is accepted by the Chairman of Planning Committee in consultation with designated officers. The request should be made within 28 days of the date of registration of the application, or within 14 days of receipt of any subsequent significant amendment to a current proposal.
- An application is made by an elected Member or an officer of the Council, or a household member of either of such persons, and representations objecting to the application have been received (delegation is still permitted if the application is refused);
- If approved, the matter would represent a significant departure from the approved policies of the Council (officer delegation is still permitted if the

departure from policy would not conflict substantially with the aims and objectives of the policy or the application is to be refused). For these purposes significant departures are defined as a development which requires referral to the Secretary of State;

- Any 'Major' or 'Minor' application relating to the Council's own land or development where representations have been received against the proposal;
- The application is for the demolition of a listed building or a Building of Local Interest or
- The application is one that in the opinion of officers, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, should be determined by Committee because of special planning policy considerations, the complexity of the application, the application is significant and/or strategic importance to an area beyond both specific site and parish.