



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

to
**COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES GROUP
3 APRIL 2020**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE LOCAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
VALIDATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS (LOCAL LIST)**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To adopt the revised local information requirements for the validation of planning applications list (local list), following the competition of the six-week consultation on the draft document and the associated revisions.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Maldon District Council Planning Validation Requirements List – Update January 2020 (**APPENDIX 2**) be adopted, subject to the end of the consultation period (3 April 2020 at 5pm) and subject to no further consultations being received.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 On 20 February 2020 the Strategy and Resources Committee agreed to a formal consultation period of six weeks on revised local information requirements for the validation of planning applications (local list). The relevant report can be found at **APPENDIX 1**.
- 3.2 A six-week consultation on the proposed revised list (**APPENDIX 2**) is currently underway and ends on 3 April 2020 at 5pm. To date the following consultation responses have been received:

Consultation Response	Outcome
The consultation does not include details of the Bio-Diversity check list and notes.	The Bio-Diversity check list is still in draft format/being commissioned and is therefore, not available for public viewing. However, the consultation is based on the principle of the validation check list and is not a consultation on the Bio-Diversity check list document.

- 3.3 The consultation responses received to date have been considered and as a result the following further amendments have been made to the Local List:
- The Biodiversity Check List requirement has been updated to reflect that the document is currently in draft format and will not be a requirement until it has been published. Therefore, the wording on the local list has been updated to reflect this. The local list has been worded in a way that when the biodiversity check list is adopted it will form a validation requirement and must be submitted.
 - Additional formatting has taken place to ensure that the document is neat and clear to read.
- 3.4 The requirements, layout and wording of the updated Local List are considered to be in accordance with Government guidance and are not considered to be onerous upon the applicant, whilst enabling the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to understand where the site is, what the development proposal is and what the main impacts of the scheme will be, as well as, where necessary, the mitigation of these impacts. It is also considered that the proposed revised Local List will improve our customer's experience, by allowing Applicants and Agents a greater understanding of what is required to validate an application.
- 3.5 Further to the above, the inclusion of the biodiversity check list will provide a clearer, and more transparent process for both the Applicant / Agent. The correct application of the checklist will help the Applicant and the LPA comply with national biodiversity policy and legislation; thereby reducing the likelihood of delays resulting from the submission of inadequate information or the need for a condition to be imposed when planning permission is granted.
- 3.6 The Council seeks to provide a high standard of service to its customers. It is considered that the proposed revised list will improve our customer's experience by providing clearer guidance as to what information is required which will streamline the process and make it more cost effective.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 A regular review of the local list is an important process in ensuring a high level of customer service as well as assisting the timely processing of applications. By updating the Local List it is considered that the validation process should become clearer and more streamlined for both the Applicant / Agent.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The review and updating of the local list is directly in accordance with Government guidance and it is also linked to three strategic themes in the following way:
- Place – An updated Validation / Local List will aid the efficiency of the validation of applications, helping towards the Council achieve its aims of sustainable growth and infrastructure.

- Community – An updated Validation / Local List with clearer guidance as to what is expected from applicants when submitting an application will create more effective engagement with the community.
- Prosperity – An updated Validation / Local List will result in a more efficient delivery of employment sites as it will be clearer what is expected to be submitted with an application.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The ability to ensure that the information required to be submitted as part of a planning application is clear and it also helps to ensure planning decisions are taken in a timely, open and transparent way.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities**– None Identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Failure to determine planning applications within the statutory timescales could result in the Council being placed in ‘Special measures’ and also an increase in planning appeals with a subsequent impact on staff resources.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The proposed changes will not result in any requirement for further financial resources.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The proposed changes will not result in any requirement for further human resources.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Failure to determine applications within the statutory period could result in an increase in unauthorised developments and delays in investigating breaches in planning control could lead to adverse impacts on the environment resulting in long term harm which might be difficult to mitigate.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – A more streamlined process will provide a more transparent and streamlined process for the community, resulting in greater trust between the community and LPA and improved satisfaction amongst the community.

Background Papers: None.

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