

Notes from North York Moors National Park Authority Parish Planning Training Event

The Old Vicarage, Helmsley
25th September 2024

This Parish Training Event was held to provide an outline of how the NYMNP as a Planning Authority deals with planning issues, how their treatment fits into the wider national planning framework and changes that have taken place at a national and local level in planning regulation since the last training event held just over a year ago.

There are 105 Parishes contained across the NYM National Park, I. On the basis of the invites sent out there could have been up to 200+ attendees but there were only around 16 representatives from Parish and Town Councils. There were also six representatives from the NYMNP Planning department.

The full slide decks will be distributed to attendees shortly and I will forward these to all councillors.

There were 5 main topics presented:

Chris France, Director of Planning gave the introduction and then gave a presentation on changes in planning rules since the last training session and in particular since the new Government took office. A key point in this was that planning applications must now be determined in accordance with the Local Development Plan AND National Development Management Policies (NDMP). The latter are applied across all planning authorities and relieve them of the need to address issues covered in the National Policies within their local plans. Specifically, the change is that now, if there is any conflict between the two the NDMP takes precedence. This is not quite active yet but is scheduled to come into force shortly.

Other changes were addressed on the slides. An interesting fact given was that North Yorkshire has, as a result of the recent Government policy change on housing, to increase its projected housebuilding numbers by 200% and this is outside the National Parks

Chris France then gave a presentation on how Planning decisions are made by the NYMNP. This presentation was jointly given by Mark Hill, Head of Development Management. The key point from this was that planning is based on case law and judgement by the planners including their interpretation of legislative requirements. This is why there is an appeals process. 1 in 3 of planning appeals overturns the original decision. The most important criteria that any application is judged against is the National Park's Local Development Plan. The slides cover what is done with comments, support and objections and what can and can't be taken into consideration.

This led on to Mark Hill giving a presentation on Material Planning Considerations. This was detailed and identified the acceptable and unacceptable factors that can be taken into consideration and how there is different weighting to these. It is not a simple democratic process in terms of sheer numbers of factors, it is a weighted decision where the greatest weight is given to the Local Development Plan.

Next, Paul Fellows, Head of Strategic Policy presented on updates to permitted development changes. Please refer to the slide pack for this. Paul is the man responsible for the development of the NPA Local Development Plan!!

Finally, Mark Hill; gave a presentation on Enforcement. Again, please refer to the slides. Interesting they only address around 30% of notifications of planning breaches. Their action is based on a

decision tree (see slide) based on the level of impact of the breach and the likely cost of enforcement. They have increased their activity in this area. Interestingly, it is not illegal not to build in accordance with a planning consent or not to apply for planning consent when an application should have been made. It is only illegal once a notice has been served by the Planning Authority.

At the end there were some questions from the floor about specific issues affecting some of the delegates and the usual thanks and appreciation was given.

A most useful session!!

Andy Harrison
September 2024.