

APPENDIX 1

Reform of planning committees: technical consultation

The purpose of this paper is to set out the Council's responses to the questions posed within the 'Reform of planning committees: technical consultation', published by The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) in May 2025.

Proposed Responses to the Consultation

Question 1 – Do you have any comments on the draft regulations

Proposed Gedling Borough Council Response:

The comments made by the Council on the initial consultation document are still pertinent and questions remain about whether the thresholds for applications to be referred to committee in tiers A and B remain too high. The result of this would mean the number of applications to be determined by Elected Members will be low and give the impression that democracy is being eroded.

Furthermore, whilst the threshold of 13 Members on a Planning Committee is broadly supported. It is felt that dependent on the outcome of LGR and size of authorities going forward, Committees of just 13 Members may not be large enough to allow for the various interested elected Members to be adequately represented.

Question 2:

Do you agree with our proposed approach to phased reserved matters applications? If not, do you think we should return to the original position of reserved matters on phased development being delegated in all circumstances or should we instead consider delegating certain types of phased reserved matters applications?

Proposed Gedling Borough Council Response:

Not all reserved matters applications should be dealt with under delegated powers. Phasing could be an important test but it is felt that the number of dwellings to be erected is a more important determining factor. Where this threshold lies is more difficult to articulate, whether it be 150 dwellings or developments of 5 hectares or more, which is the threshold for requiring a Screening Opinion under the EIA Reg's, or whether it should be higher, say 300. However, referral of some reserved matters applications for consideration under tier 2 should be allowed as reserved matters applications will obviously include greater detail which may cause greater interest in terms of scheme design (which may be subject to local sensitivity) and the impact upon residential amenity etc.

Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft guidance?

Proposed Gedling borough Council Response:

The draft guidance on the test for whether or not applications under tier b should be referred to planning committee is welcome e.g. the proposal raises:

- one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area
- one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material consideration

However, it is felt that the agreement of two people, in this case 'nominated officer and nominated member' is too broad for a scheme of delegation of tier B applications. Greater scrutiny by Members in the form of a sub-committee, or similar, which Gedling Borough Council currently have with a Planning Delegation Panel, would allow greater transparency of the process and say for Members on the means by which applications are determined.

It is appreciated that the 'nominated officer' should have 'extensive professional planning experience'; however, they should also be a Member of the RTPI too.

Similarly, the 'nominated member' should have undertaken appropriate training in advance of taking up the post.