

Action plan table

Rec No.	Issue	Recommendation	Management comments	Priority	Officer responsible	Due date
1.	<p>Manual / procedure notes There is currently no procedural guidance or manual capturing the expected processes and controls to be applied in the handling of major planning applications across the Council's service.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged to be a regulated area and subject to relevant legislation / frameworks / policies, how the key processes must be applied in practice and evidenced should be clearly captured to ensure consistency in approach and a clear audit trail for each and every application processed.</p> <p>The role of the officer, the planning admin team and the manager/approver should be clearly reflected in the guidance to ensure roles and responsibilities are</p>	<p>To ensure consistency and assurance that controls will be applied as expected, procedural notes or a manual should be developed. This should set out the expected approach to consultation, in accordance with regulations and the Statement of Community Involvement, whilst allowing for professional judgement to be applied – for example, specifying the considerations that should inform the location of the site notice(s) and the selection of neighbouring properties for consultation, and how this must be evidenced.</p> <p>The period of consultation, in particular, must be clearly confirmed to officers and applied in practice. An urgent review of compliance is required, to assess any impact of the incorrect interpretation of the consultation period.</p> <p>The role of the reviewing officer should also be clearly captured to ensure that a robust review process is in place and consistently applied, ensuring the basis for the</p>	<p>Additional support will be commissioned on the development of the Development Management (DM) Procedure Manual</p> <p>The Manual will include consultation procedures not just major but minor, and other applications; site notice protocols. Uniform upgrades to also be considered to enable focus on optimising admin. processes</p> <p>Government's 21 days consultation target is well established. However, this review will align NNC SCI with this timescale.</p> <p>Clear guidelines and processes will be developed. This will inform the final set of reports and the procedures in the DM manual</p> <p>The role of the reviewing officer will be included in the DM Manual work programme</p>	High	Head of Planning and Enforcement	End of June 2024

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	<p>clearly and consistently understood and applied in practice.</p> <p>Interviewees consistently stated that the consultation period is 21 days but the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2022) states 24 days. It is noted that a previous, outdated version from 2013 appears to have been 21 days.</p> <p>There is a risk that without clear processes, expected controls may not be consistently understood and applied – and/or insufficient evidence is retained to demonstrate compliance.</p>	<p>recommended outcome is suitably informed and accurate.</p>	<p>The review process will be comprehensive including reviewing best practice in other Local Planning Authorities, as well as engaging with the Planning Advisory Service</p>			
2.	<p>Records of site notices</p> <p>The only evidence retained of the site notices in the two cases reviewed were single photographs which lacked context or mapping of specific location.</p> <p>There is a risk that there is a lack of evidence of the location of site notices to defend any challenges presented and to ensure that the reviewing officer is</p>	<p>The location of the site notices should be clearly recorded on files and in the officer's report. This should be reviewed as part of the sign off process, to ensure consultation was appropriate and compliant.</p>	<p>Site notice photos close up and wider context stored with the case file (internet and DM system), Case officer signs and dates the site location sheet marking position(s) of the posting.</p>	High	Head of Planning and Enforcement	June 2024

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	satisfied with the consultation conducted.					
3.	<p>Planning system</p> <p>The records published on the Council's website link all applications for either of the Weetabix factory sites to a single property address. It is acknowledged that this is an unusual situation in that there are two sites with the same address but if the applicant is selecting a single address and not entering the UPRN on the application, these are being matched to the same site. It also appears that the Uniform system mapping tool is linking all properties to the same site.</p> <p>There is a risk that this could lead to a lack of clarity on the location of the proposed developments and blurs the applications for the two separate premises.</p> <p>To improve workflow DM Performance Management needs upgrading</p>	<p>The planning portal should be reviewed to enforce use of UPRNs rather than single addresses from the point of application.</p> <p>Management should obtain a system audit log for Uniform to confirm if/when an amendment was made to the map linked to the Weetabix factory address, and explore the reason for this.</p> <p>Officers should be reminded of the need to verify the accuracy of all records in the validation stage, including confirming correct location and cross referencing to the submission, including site drawings. This should be reflected in procedures, see Rec 1.</p>	<p>Northings and Eastings are identified on planning forms within the planning portal if the postcode is not accessible. This substantially reduces the risk of errors. This element of the review will be included as part of the wider work in developing the DM Manual to ensure relevant officers in Administration are liaising with the planning officer</p> <p>Officers will look to optimise the use of its current IT systems for all elements for admin validation workflow.</p>	High	Head of Planning and Enforcement	June 2024