

Scrutiny Panel Developer Funded Highway Infrastructure

19th July 2021





As detailed in the Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure update report, the purpose of the review is as follows:

‘To review key processes, systems and approaches to working as necessary, within the Section 278/38 Development Control area in relation to both WCC, Developer & other key parties activity. This to ensure that key agreed identified areas are working effectively and delivering required outputs and outcomes in a reasonable timescale’.

The following slides provide more detail of some specific key areas and progress during the review on:

- The streetlighting process review & timescales.
- Design technical approval process.
- More information on historical performance & numbers of schemes.



Street lighting design process review & timescales

Design duration - The average duration for the completion of the streetlighting design process was 193 days (the maximum was 300).

Review of process – A thorough review of this design process has been completed by WCC & we have defined a revised period of 91 days to complete the full design process, if all timescales are met by both WCC and the developer, with 77 days allocated for WCC & 14 for the developer.

Testing period – We are going through the testing period of the new design model & the average duration for WCC to complete its elements is now 57 days. It is 117 for the developer.

Key issues – There are two in relation to the overrun of timescales, being the developer taking a significant amount of time to pay the necessary fees & delays in the developer providing the correct necessary information (via the schedule of required information (SOR)).

How are we addressing this – We will be even more proactive in ensuring the developer ‘starts’ the clock when fees are paid. We have reviewed how we provide the SOR, to ensure it is as easy as practicable for the developer to submit & are offering an early meeting to ensure the developer and their designer fully understands what information is required.

Monitoring – We are now monitoring this process monthly, to clarify performance and enable issues to be addressed in a timely fashion where practicable.



Design technical approval process

Review of process – A thorough review of this design process is well underway. This covers both the technical documents submission & the technical design and approval process in full.

Key improvements to the process include:

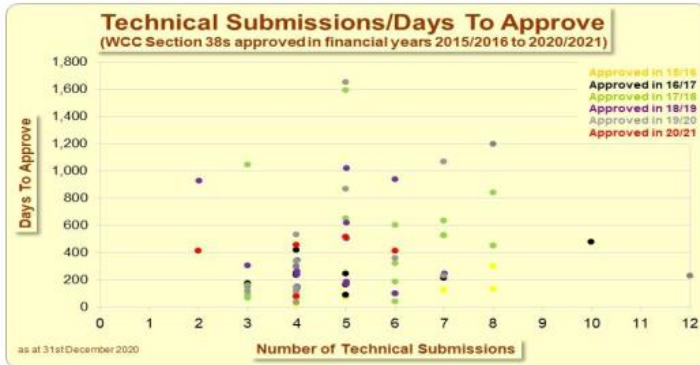
- **Offering an early review meeting to cover the developers submitted documents.**
- **More focussed key stages and milestones for each section of the approval process.**
- **Offering a further joint meeting with the developer if a third submission is required to cover key issues and comments on the design.**
- **If a fourth submission stage is reached, escalating the scheme for a joint Developer/WCC meeting where the relevant managers can look to understand and address key issues, hindering progress and if necessary ‘pause the clock’, until an agreed way forward is found.**

Next steps -

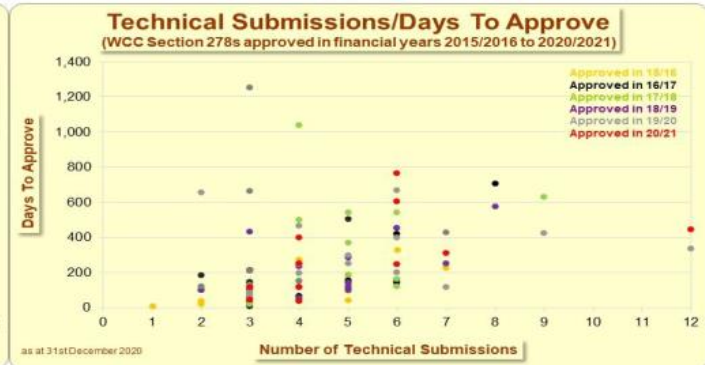
Developers working group – Liaise with the working group to check developer timescales and agree approval process.

Testing period – We will be starting the test period shortly for the technical approval process. Once this is completed, we will address any issues identified & put in place monitoring of performance against timescales for both WCC & the developer.

Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure - Days to approve graphs, with explanatory narrative & breakdown of active section 278/38 schemes by District & total numbers.



- The average number of days to approve the 5 38s approved in 2020/2021 is 374. The average for the 16 38s approved in 2018/2019 was 524; for 2018/2019's 16 38s, the average was 396 days.
- 35 (43.2%) of the 81 schemes approved from 2015/2016 onwards have needed less than 5 submissions, taking on average 251 days to approve.
- The average approval time for the 46 schemes with 5 or more submissions is 469 days.
- The scheme taking the most days to reach approval (1,650) was Taylor Wimpey's at Old Worcester Road, Hartlebury: submitted May 2014, approved after 5 submissions in May 2019.



- The 11 278s approved in 2020/2021 so far took an average of 302 days to approve. 2019/2020's 23 278s reached approval in an average of 325 days; 2018/2019's days-to-approve figure was 213.
- 55 of the 101 schemes approved from 2015/2016 onwards have involved less than 5 submissions, taking on average 191 days to approve, compared with 310 days for the 46 schemes with 5 or more submissions.
- Of 2019/2020's approved schemes, Anthony Douglas Homes's for Upper Wick Lane, Rushwick took the longest to reach approval (in December): 1,251 days and 3 submissions after its initial submission.



- 33 38s that have reached approval are designated as incomplete, no agreement having been signed. WCC is the auditor for all but three of those schemes
- Jacobs' entries to the 'incomplete' list are in respect of Persimmon Homes' Bransford Road, Elmhurst Farm at Leigh Sinton, and Bellway Homes's Lower Howsell Road scheme
- In the last five years, the scheme with the highest bond (Redrow, £1.94m, Yew Tree Farm, Droitwich) took 165 days and 5 Technical submissions to reach approval, 738 days until agreement signing.



- 12 approved 278s have no agreement signed, Jacobs being the auditor for 6 of those schemes
- The 25 schemes taking longer than a year to reach approval from 2015/2016 onwards have an average bond value of £380,735, their average number of days to approve being 573.
- Persimmon Homes' Swinesherd Way, Whittington scheme had the largest bond of any 278s approved in the period from 1st April 2015 to 30th November 2020 (£1,850,000). Reaching approval in September 2019 after 666 days and 6 technical submissions, the agreement was signed 11 days later.

DISTRICT	SECTION 278's	SECTION 38's	TOTAL
Bromsgrove	22	33	55
Malvern Hills	56	48	104
Redditch	21	23	44
Wyre Forest	32	35	67
Worcester City	33	22	55
Wychavon	68	83	151
TOTAL	232	244	476