

FOI REVIEW – DECISION NOTICE

1. Review of the request of Stuart Hardwicke Carruthers (FOI 19-276)

1.1 On 30 May 2019, South Norfolk Council received a Freedom of Information request from Stuart Hardwicke Carruthers, requesting the following information:

“Please provide details (if held) of the number of planning permissions granted for residential development for land outside of development boundaries identified in the local plan in the district for the last six years (by year)”

2. Consideration

2.1 The request was acknowledged and then sent to the Development Management team. The Development Management team reviewed the request and duly responded.

2.2 On 25 June 2019 the Senior Governance Officer, Emma Goddard, emailed the requester to inform him that after some investigation a refusal notice under section 12 Freedom of Information Act 2000 was issued. The notice identified that the cost of the work would exceed the:

“(A)ppropriate’ limit stated in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 as we do not hold information which would allow us to easily identify the types of applications referred to. It would need to be a manual process which given the scale of the request would take over 18 hours to undertake.”

3 Findings

3.1 On 8 July 2019, Emma Pheby, Information Governance Manager, as part of this internal review, requested the data as at 1.1, from the Development Management Service. She spoke with several members of the Development Management Service, including those officers who report on the Local Plan.

3.2 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk provides details of the numbers of planning permissions granted inside/outside Development Boundaries.

3.3 The 2015/16 AMR report is published here at page 212):

[https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Annual Monitoring Report 2015-2016.pdf](https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Annual%20Monitoring%20Report%202015-2016.pdf)

3.4 The 2016/17 AMR report is published here:

[https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/joint core strategy annual monitoring report 2016 to 2017.pdf](https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/joint%20core%20strategy%20annual%20monitoring%20report%202016%20to%202017.pdf)

3.5 The 2017/18 AMR report is not yet published.

3.6 Whilst 3.3 and 3.4 provide some of the data requested at 2.2, this is aggregated into a larger grouping which does not separate out residential land nor data pertaining just to the district of South Norfolk Council, as the Local Plan is for the wider area of South Norfolk, Broadland and Norwich.

3.7 The Residential Land Availability report provides 'information on the availability of residential land in South Norfolk.. as well as monitoring the level of new planning permissions granted.' The reports for 2017/18 and 2016/17 are published here: <https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/monitoring-local-plan>

3.8 The Residential Land Availability report for 2018/19 is pending and will be published shortly.

3.9 The Residential Land Availability reports for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are attached. These are broken down into three separate spreadsheets.

4. Decision

4.1 The Council's original decision is partially upheld, as detailed below.

4.2 A manual process would need to be undertaken to identify the data exactly requested as set out at 1.1. This would therefore fall above the 18-hour threshold set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

4.3 Whilst upholding the decision the information detailed at 3.3 – 3.9 should assist the requester, by providing some of the requested information.

4.4 The reports detailed at 3.5 and 3.8 are intended for future publication and therefore fall under the exemption of the Freedom of Information Act section 22. This will be released once the data has been collated and reviewed within the Council to ensure data accuracy. It is reasonable to withhold this from disclosure in line with section 22 (c) FOIA, until publication.

Dated 17 July 2019



Emma Pheby, Information Governance Manager