

## Providing planning resilience support to

## The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Due to reduced headcounts in the planning team, The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead needed urgent planning expertise and resource to help process their householder and minor planning applications.

### What we did

Four full time members of our Capita Planning Team were commissioned over a period of 8 months by the Council, to process 120 minor applications which included a new admission and visitors centre at Windsor Castle, school extensions, housing developments, retail uses and agricultural buildings. Our team were also asked to process 115 householder applications.

#### The scope of the services provided by Capita included:

- > Reviewing the planning applications and supporting documents
- > Conducting site visits and erecting site notices within 5 days of receipt of applications
- > Reviewing national, local planning policy and neighbourhood plans
- > Being fully contactable by email and telephone by customers, members of public and political members to answer queries
- > Assessing consultee and third party representations
- > Negotiations as part of the planning application process to secure amendments and added value
- > Producing delegated and committee recommendations

We provided a blended service delivery model which involved our officers working on site as well as remotely. This involved our officers conducting site visits and attending case review meetings with Planning Managers at the council and then completing the majority of the background work remotely at our planning hub in Barnet. The remote work mainly consisted of contacting agents/applicants and uploading completed reports and recommendations into the council's back office system.

### The Outcome

- > By adding extra capacity, The Royal Borough of Windsor was able to maintain a high level of service to its customers by reducing planning application delays from backlogs.
- > Workload strains on the Council's planning teams were also reduced.
- > Due to the flexible nature of our contract, the council was able to commission additional resources to support any fluctuations in workloads and/or special expertise that they required. At the outset the council required one of our officers from Capita however by the end of the contract, four members of our team were supporting the council due to increased volumes of planning applications.