



Report To:	Policy Development Panel
Date:	Tuesday, 2 June 2026
Subject:	Final Report of the Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group
Purpose:	To consider the Final Report of the Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group and provide feedback prior to its consideration by the Cabinet
Key Decision:	N
Portfolio Holder:	N/A
Report Of:	The Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group
Report Author:	Marc Whelan, Strategic & Operational Property Manager
Ward(s) Affected:	(All Wards);
Exempt Report:	NO

Summary

The Derelict and Untidy Sites Policy was introduced by South Holland District Council in 2022 to address unsightly and neglected properties across the district. The policy aimed to proactively engage with landowners, provide guidance and escalate enforcement where necessary.

At the meeting of Policy Development Panel on 23 September 2025, it was agreed that the Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group would look at the policy effectiveness, duplication of existing powers, and lack of demonstrable outcomes, and explore what other opportunities were available for consideration.

Recommendations

1. That the members of the Policy Development Panel consider the Task Group's final report, suggest any relevant amendments and consider making recommendations to Cabinet.

Reasons for Recommendations

To ensure the Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group recommendations are considered.

Other Options Considered

1. Amending the current document- not recommended
2. Do nothing- not recommended

1. Background

- 1.1 That the policy had originally been introduced to provide a structured approach to addressing untidy or neglected sites across the district in the post-COVID period.
- 1.2 The policy had proven largely duplicative of existing statutory powers already available to Planning, Environmental Health, Anti-Social Behaviour, and Building Control teams. Those services routinely deployed legal mechanisms independently of the policy, which had not enhanced enforcement capability.
- 1.3 The policy did not fill a gap in service delivery or governance, nor did it introduce any new powers or frameworks beyond existing procedures. Its presence had not demonstrably improved outcomes or operational efficiency and was considered hollow in practical application.
- 1.4 From a legislative standpoint, robust powers already existed under:
 - Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- 1.5 These powers provided effective routes for intervention without the need for a supplementary policy and if the Council wished to acquire a property or site, it could develop its own business case independently of the policy.
- 1.6 A Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group was established to assess whether the policy should be retired, retained, or repurposed as an informative document.
- 1.7 The Task Group sought to seek advice from officers including Planning, Environmental Health, Anti-Social behaviour, and Building Control Teams.

2. Report

- 2.1 The Task Group explored alternative options and took on the advice and feedback from consultative bodies.
- 2.2 The Task Group identified overlaps or duplication with existing council powers, departments, or enforcement mechanisms.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 provides the overview and final report of the Derelict and Untidy Sites Task Group.

3. Conclusion

1.1 That the existing Derelict & Untidy Sites Policy should be retired and replaced with a robust guidance signpost document.

1.2 A concise 2–3-page Member and Parish Council Guidance Signpost Document would be developed, covering:

- How to identify relevant issues
- What information to gather
- Which service to contact
- Realistic expectations of timescales
- Links to public reporting methods

1.3 The guidance signpost document would be for Members and Parish Councils, not the general public.

1.4 This new guidance signpost document could enable Members and Parish Councillors to report issues regarding derelict and untidy sites to the direct department, making the process more effective and efficient. Officers would help members direct enquiries internally and provide regular updates to the Member/Parish Council who had reported the issue.

Implications

None

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None

Corporate Priorities

None

Staffing

None

Workforce Capacity Implications

Prevents duplication if the current policy is retired and the signpost document is implemented for councillors to reference against.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

None

Data Protection

None

Financial

None

Risk Management

None

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Working group have spent considerable amount of time discussing with relevant departments to arrive at this conclusion.

Reputation

None

Contracts

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None

Health and Wellbeing

None

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

None

Acronyms

None

Appendices

Appendix 1

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

APPENDICES	
<i>Appendix 1</i>	<i>Task Group Final Report – Untidy & Derelict Sites</i>

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body

Report Approval

Report author: Marc Whelan, Strategic & Operational Property Manager

Signed off by: Andy Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive

Approved for publication: Councillor Paul Barnes (Chair of the Working Group)