

## *Statistical Release*

14 December 2007

### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS – Quarter 3 2007 July to September 2007**

Due to seasonal variation, quarterly figures are compared with the corresponding quarter in the previous year in this statistical release.

#### **DISTRICT PLANNING AUTHORITIES**

##### **Planning applications**

In the third quarter of 2007, district planning authorities in England received 166,000 applications for planning permission (**Table 1**); an increase of 6 per cent compared with the corresponding quarter in 2006. All regions saw an increase in the number of applications received when compared with the same quarter a year ago. The largest increases were in London (11per cent), East Midlands, the South East and Yorkshire and the Humber (all 6 per cent).

##### **Planning decisions**

District planning authorities determined 159,000 planning applications in the third quarter of 2007; 3 per cent higher than the same quarter last year. The largest increase in the number of planning applications determined when compared with the same quarter last year was in London (8 per cent). Other increases were in the South East (4 per cent), the South West, East of England and Yorkshire and the Humber (all 2 per cent). However, two regions saw a decrease in the number of planning applications determined. These were the North East (-3 per cent) and National Parks (-1 per cent) (**Table 2**).

Householder decisions increased by 1 per cent from 79,600 to 80,400 and accounted for 51 per cent of all decisions. Decisions on dwelling applications, for both major and minor

developments decreased from 20,400 to 20,200 and accounted for 13 per cent of the total (Table 3).

### **Applications granted**

82 per cent of all decisions in the third quarter of 2007 were granted; this remains unchanged when compared with the same period in 2006 (Table 1). Approval rates across the regions ranged from 75 per cent in London to 90 per cent in the North East (Table 2).

### **Speed of decision**

In July to September 2007 district authorities, on average, determined 71 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks, 77 per cent of minor applications within 8 weeks, and 87 per cent of other applications within 8 weeks. **This represents no change in determining major and other applications and a 2 percentage point improvement in determining minor applications when compared with the corresponding quarter a year ago.**

Also, in July to September 2007, 266 authorities (72 per cent of all authorities) made at least 60 per cent of their decisions on major applications within the 13 week period; 313 authorities (85 per cent) made at least 65 per cent of their decisions on minor applications within the statutory 8 week period; and 314 authorities (86 per cent) made at least 80 per cent of their decisions on other applications within the statutory 8 week period. **The number of authorities meeting the performance target in July to September 2007 compared with performance in the same quarter a year ago represents a 2 percentage point decrease on major applications and an improvement of 2 percentage points on minor applications and 1 percentage point on other applications.**

In the year-ending September 2007, the proportion of authorities meeting the target on majors is 85 per cent (313 authorities); this is an 8 percentage point increase compared with the year-ending September 2006 figure. For minors, the actual performance is 93 per cent (340 authorities) whilst for others 91 per cent (335 authorities). This represents an improvement of 5 and 1 percentage points respectively.

**Table 7** shows the number of planning decisions on major, minor and other applications and the timescale by which they were decided in the year and quarter ending September 2007 by individual planning authority.

**Table 8** shows the number of major and minor decisions on residential planning applications and the speed of decision in the year and quarter ending September 2007 for each district planning authority. In July to September 2007, district authorities granted 65 per cent of major residential decisions and determined 66 per cent of them within 13 weeks. Also 63 per cent of minor residential application decisions were granted and 71 per cent determined within 8 weeks.

#### **Enforcement action by district planning authorities**

**Table 4** shows statistics of formal enforcement action taken by responding authorities in each year since 1997/98. In July to September 2007, district planning authorities issued 1,412 Enforcement Notices and served 1,132 Planning Contravention Notices, 251 Breach of Condition Notices, 57 Stop Notices and 109 Temporary Stop Notices. The High/County Court granted 16 Enforcement Injunctions.

#### **Regulation 3 and 4 consents**

**Table 5** shows the number of Regulation 3 and 4 Consents granted since 1997/98. Under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, SI 1992/1492, a local planning authority makes an application to itself for permission to develop land within its area, and determines that application. In the third quarter of 2007, 1,043 Regulation 3 consents and 59 Regulation 4 consents were granted. Regulation 4 is concerned with planning permission for development of land in which the local planning authority has an interest but which it does not itself propose to carry out.

### **Applications for determination**

In July to September 2007, district planning authorities received 1,414 applications for determination on whether local authority approval is required for certain works (**Table 6**). Local authorities decided to intervene in 211 cases (15 per cent).

### **Departure applications**

District planning authorities also provided information on the number of applications decided which were advertised as departures from the development plan in force, and the number of departure applications which were granted.

Of the planning decisions made by local planning authorities, 607 (less than 0.5 per cent) were advertised as departures from the development plan. Dwellings accounted for 40 per cent of departure decisions. An average of 51 per cent of departure applications were granted, compared with 82 per cent of planning applications overall.

### **Applications decided under delegated powers**

The final column in **Table 7** shows the percentage of applications decided by planning officers under a scheme of delegation and without referral to committee or councillors on such decisions. 362 authorities (out of 367) provided information on delegated decisions in this quarter. On average, authorities delegated 89 per cent of decisions to planning officers.

## **COUNTY MATTERS**

'County matters' planning applications are predominantly concerned with minerals extraction and waste disposal developments. They are decided by county-level planning authorities - that is, county councils, metropolitan districts, unitary authorities, London boroughs, national park authorities and urban development corporations. However, because of the nature of county matters applications, the large majority are handled by the county councils.

County planning authorities receive around two thousand 'county matters' applications each year. This compares with 650,000 planning applications received by district planning authorities. Quarterly figures for 'county matters' decisions are likely to be much more variable than those for districts because of the smaller numbers of such decisions.

### **Planning applications and decisions**

In the third quarter of 2007, county planning authorities received 376 planning applications, a decrease of 5 per cent compared with the same quarter last year. County councils accounted for 89 per cent of total applications, unitary authorities for 6 per cent and metropolitan districts for 4 per cent (**Table 9**). The highest numbers of applications were received in Leicestershire (37 applications) and Lancashire (27 applications). Others were Cumbria (22 applications), Staffordshire (20 applications) and Shropshire and Nottinghamshire (both 19 applications) (**Table 12**).

County planning authorities determined 323 planning applications in the quarter ending September 2007; a decrease of 1 per cent compared with the same quarter last year. Of these, 93 per cent were granted (**Table 9**). Cumbria and Norfolk determined the highest number of planning applications (both 25 applications) whilst Hampshire determined 20 applications (**Table 12**). Waste developments accounted for 68 per cent of the total decisions and minerals developments 27 per cent (**Table 10**).

**Table 12** shows the number of permissions granted by authorities under Regulations 3 and 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. The highest numbers of Regulation 3 consents were granted by Kent (81) and Suffolk (67).

In order to better reflect the workload of authorities, information on the total number of decisions on applications for consent, agreement or approval of details or schemes required by conditions, as defined by Article 21 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995 have been collected from April 2000 and is also published in this table.

In July to September 2007, the highest number of decisions under Article 21 was reported by Dorset (62). The number of determinations under the review of mineral planning permissions (ROMPs) was also collated; however only 20 were determined.

### **Speed of decision**

In the third quarter of 2007, 21 per cent of all decisions on 'county matters' applications were made within 8 weeks; this remains unchanged when compared with the corresponding quarter of 2006. County planning authorities also determined 64 per cent of applications within 13 weeks; 2 percentage points higher than in the corresponding quarter of 2006 (**Table 11**).

## **Enforcement action**

In July to September 2007, county planning authorities issued 21 Enforcement Notices and served 3 Stop Notices. 7 Temporary Stop Notices, 35 Planning Contravention Notices and 12 Breach of Condition Notices were also served (**Table 13**).

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **District Planning Authorities**

1. The term 'district planning authorities' describes the group of authorities with a responsibility for deciding planning applications at 'district level'. These planning authorities include: metropolitan and non-metropolitan districts, unitary authorities, London boroughs, national park authorities and urban development corporations.
2. Statistics of planning applications received and decided by district planning authorities have been collated, on a quarterly basis, since April 1979 on the PS1 and PS2 General Development Control statistical returns.
3. Since then, data collection has been extended to cover other types of application requiring permission from local authorities, including listed building consents, conservation area consents and consent to display advertisements. This reflects the wider range of planning casework handled by district planning authorities. From April 1997, data have also been collected on the receipt of Environmental Statements with planning applications, the use of delegated powers, and on applications which the authority decided to advertise as departures from the Development Plan.
4. This quarterly bulletin is a web-only publication.

### **'County matters'**

5. 'County matters' planning applications are predominantly concerned with minerals extraction and waste disposal developments, as set out in Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and in the Town and Country Planning (Prescription of County Matters) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1033).
6. Since April 1997 data have been collected on receipt of Environmental Statements with 'county matters' planning applications. From April 2000, information has also been collected on the total number of (i) decisions on applications for consent, agreement or approval of details or schemes required by conditions, as defined by

Article 21 of the GDPO 1995, and (ii) determinations of new conditions under the review, or periodic review, of mineral planning permissions (ROMPs).

### **Responding Authorities for July to September 2007**

7. Of the 367 district planning authorities, 361 (98 per cent) provided figures in time for this publication.
8. Of the 161 county planning authorities, 159 (99 per cent) provided figures in time for this publication.

### **Data presentation**

9. All figures included in the commentary have been calculated using unrounded data. As a result, there may be some apparent discrepancy with figures shown in the tables.
10. The statistics shown in Tables 1 to 3 include estimates for non-responding authorities. These and the other tables are based on information provided to the Department for Communities and Local Government by 26 November 2007.
11. Any queries regarding figures in this release should be addressed to: Development Control Statistics Branch, Housing Markets & Planning Analysis Division, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2/A4, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU. Tel. 020-7944 5502, Fax 020-7944 3309.
12. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.

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