

## *Statistical Release*

28 September 2007

### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS – Quarter 2 2007**

**April to June 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 second quarter of 2007, district planning authorities in England received 174 thousand applications for planning permission (**Table 1**); an increase of 2 per cent compared with the corresponding quarter in 2006. The largest increase in the number of planning applications received was in London (9 per cent). Other increases were in the East of England (5 per cent), the South East (3 per cent) and in the North West (1 per cent). There was a decrease of -2 per cent in the number of planning applications received both in the North East and in Yorkshire and the Humber. Other decreases were in East Midlands, West Midlands and the South West (all -1 per cent).

##### **Planning decisions**

District planning authorities decided 156 thousand planning applications in the second quarter of 2007; 1 per cent higher than the same quarter last year. The number of planning applications determined in London increased by 8 per cent and in Yorkshire and the Humber by 3 per cent when compared with the same quarter last year. However, there were decreases in a number of regions; the largest decrease was in the North East (4 per cent). Other decreases were in East Midlands and the South West (both -2 per cent) and in the East of England (-1 per cent) (**Table 2**).

Householder decisions decreased by 0.4 per cent from 81,500 to 81,200 and accounted for 52 per cent of all decisions. Decisions on dwelling applications, for both major and minor developments decreased from 20,100 to 19,500 and accounted for 13 per cent of the total (**Table 3**).

### **Applications granted**

83 per cent of all decisions in the second quarter of 2007 were granted; an increase of 1 per cent when compared with the same period in 2006 (**Table 1**). Approval rates across the regions ranged from 77 per cent in London to 91 per cent in the North East (**Table 2**).

### **Speed of decision**

In April to June 2007 district authorities, on average, determined 71 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks, 78 per cent of minor applications within 8 weeks, and 88 per cent of other applications within 8 weeks. **This represents no improvement 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 April to June 2007, 283 authorities (77 per cent of all authorities) made at least 60 per cent of their decisions on major applications within the 13 week period; 335 authorities (91 per cent) made at least 65 per cent of their decisions on minor applications within the statutory 8 week period; and 331 authorities (90 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 April to June 2007 compared with performance in the same quarter a year ago represents no improvement on major applications, a 4 percentage point improvement on minor applications and a decrease of 2 percentage points on other applications.**

In the year-ending June 2007, the proportion of authorities meeting the target on majors is 84 per cent (309 authorities); this is a 7 percentage point increase compared with the year-ending June 2006 figure. For minors, the actual performance is 91 per cent (336 authorities); no improvement on the previous year whilst for others, actual performance is now 91 per cent (336 authorities); a decrease of 3 percentage points.

**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 June 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 June 2007 for each district planning authority. In April to June 2007, district authorities granted 67 per cent of major residential decisions and determined 68 per cent of them within 13 weeks. Also 64 per cent of minor residential application decisions were granted and 72 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 April to June 2007, district planning authorities issued 1,337 Enforcement Notices and served 1,170 Planning Contravention Notices, 311 Breach of Condition Notices, 30 Stop Notices and 91 Temporary Stop Notices. The High/County Court granted 9 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 second quarter of 2007, 1,029 Regulation 3 consents and 58 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 April to June 2007, district planning authorities received 1,639 applications for determination on whether local authority approval is required for certain works (**Table 6**). Local authorities decided to intervene in 247 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, 594 (less than 0.5 per cent) were advertised as departures from the development plan. Dwellings accounted for 39 per cent of

departure decisions. An average of 57 per cent of departure applications were granted, compared with 83 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 368) provided information on delegated decisions in this quarter. On average, authorities delegated 91 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 thousand 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 second quarter of 2007, county planning authorities received 461 planning applications, an increase of 0.2 per cent compared with the same quarter last year. County councils accounted for 88 per cent of total applications, unitary authorities for 4 per cent and metropolitan districts for 6 per cent (**Table 9**). The highest numbers of applications were received in Staffordshire and Norfolk (both 24 applications), Hampshire (23 applications), Shropshire (20 applications) and Essex (19 applications) (**Table 12**).

County planning authorities determined 393 planning applications in the quarter a decrease of 4 per cent compared with the same quarter last year. Of these, 93 per cent were granted (**Table 9**). Shropshire determined the highest number of planning applications (25 applications) whilst Nottinghamshire determined 24 applications (**Table 12**). Waste developments accounted for 73 per cent of the total decisions and minerals developments 21 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 (62) and North Yorkshire (58).

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 April to June 2007, the highest number of decisions under Article 21 was reported by Cambridgeshire (35). The number of determinations under the review of mineral planning permissions (ROMPs) was also collated; however only 2 were determined.

### **Speed of decision**

In the Second quarter of 2007, 23 per cent of all decisions on 'county matters' applications were made within 8 weeks; a 3 percentage point decrease when compared with the corresponding quarter of 2006. County planning authorities also determined 65 per cent of applications within 13 weeks; 5 percentage point lower than in the corresponding quarter of 2006 (**Table 11**).

### **Enforcement action**

In April to June 2007, county planning authorities issued 17 Enforcement Notices and served 11 Stop Notices. 7 Temporary Stop Notices, 36 Planning Contravention Notices and 13 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 April to June 2007**

7. Of the 368 district planning authorities, 367 (99.7 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 11 September 2007.

11. In Table 2, where data are presented by 'type of authority', figures for unitary authorities are included in the category 'non-metropolitan districts'. Figures for unitary authorities are shown in Tables 7 and 8 within the former county structure. In Tables 9 to 13 (relating to 'county matters'), figures are shown separately for the category 'unitary authorities'.
12. Changes have been made to the following tables that accompany this Release:
  - Table 3: Planning decisions of district planning authorities by speed of decision and type of development – **the percentage of total decisions will be presented as major within 13 weeks, minor within 8 weeks and other within 8 weeks;**
  - Table 7: Planning decisions by development type and speed of decisions – **authorities are shown in their respective Government Office region; and**
  - Table 8: Planning decisions by development type and speed of decision – **authorities are shown in their respective Government Office region.**
13. 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, 3/A1, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU. Tel. 020-7944 5502, Fax 020-7944 3309.
14. 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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