

Applications received in recent years are still below the peak in 2004/05

Latest planning performance by English districts and London boroughs: Planning Applications in England: July to September 2016

OVERVIEW

Between July and September 2016 district level planning authorities in England:

- received 120,800 applications for planning permission, up one per cent on the corresponding quarter of 2015;
- granted 101,800 decisions, up three per cent from the same quarter in 2015; this is equivalent to 88 per cent of decisions, unchanged from the same quarter of 2015;
- decided 85 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks or the agreed time, up from 80 per cent a year earlier;
- granted 12,900 residential applications, up six per cent on a year earlier; and
- received 10,900 applications for prior approval for permitted development rights from July to

September 2016, up one per cent from the same quarter of 2015.

- 9,000 of these applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process, up two per cent on a year earlier. In the year ending September 2016, district level planning authorities:
- granted 381,300 decisions, up four per cent from the figure for the year ending September 2015; and
- granted 48,300 decisions on residential developments: 6,200 for major developments and 42,100 for minors, up on the year ending September 2015 by six p. cent and four per cent respectively.

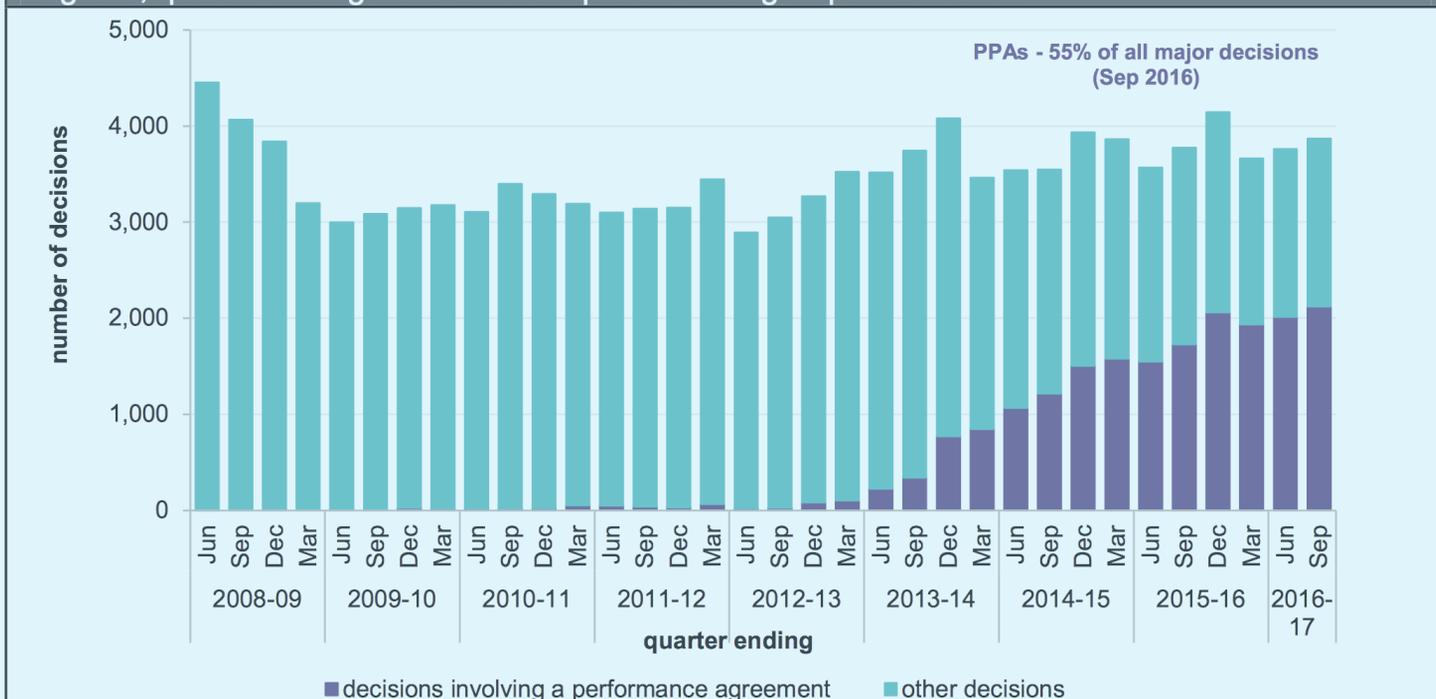
Planning applications

During July to September 2016, authorities undertaking district level planning in England received 120,800 applications for planning permission, up one per cent on the corresponding quarter in 2015. In the year ending September 2016, authorities received 483,600 planning applications, up two per cent from 475,500 in the year ending September 2015.

Planning decisions

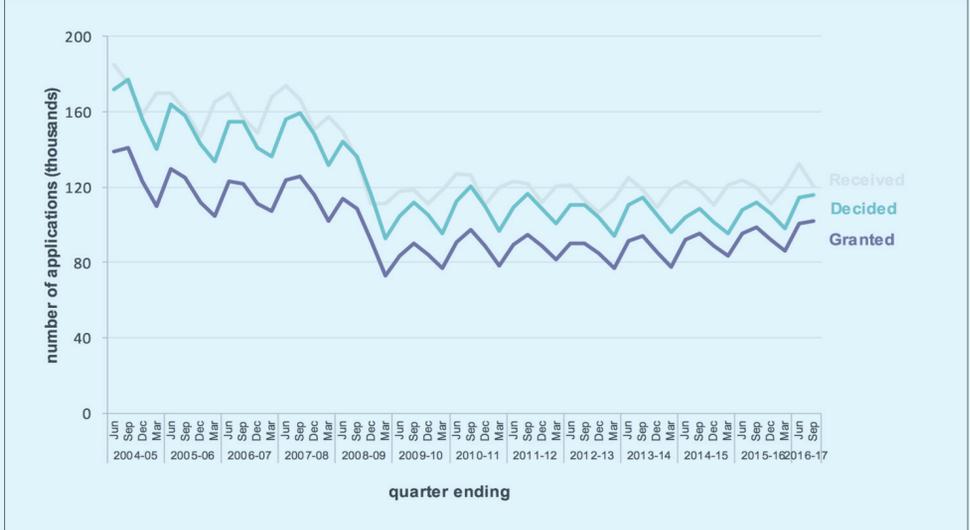
Authorities reported 115,800 decisions on planning applications in July to September 2016, an increase of three per cent on the 112,200 decisions in the same quarter of the previous year. In the year ending September 2016, authorities

Figure 2: Use of performance agreements with applications for major developments¹ England, quarter ending June 2008 to quarter ending September 2016



¹ Figures cover planning performance agreements from April 2008 and agreed extensions of time and environmental impact assessments from 1 April 2013.

Figure 1: Number of planning applications received, decided and granted by district authorities
 England, quarter ending June 2004 to quarter ending September 2016



RIGHT: Number of planning applications received, decided and granted by district level planning authorities

decided 434,600 planning applications, an increase of four per cent compared to the year ending September 2015.

Applications granted

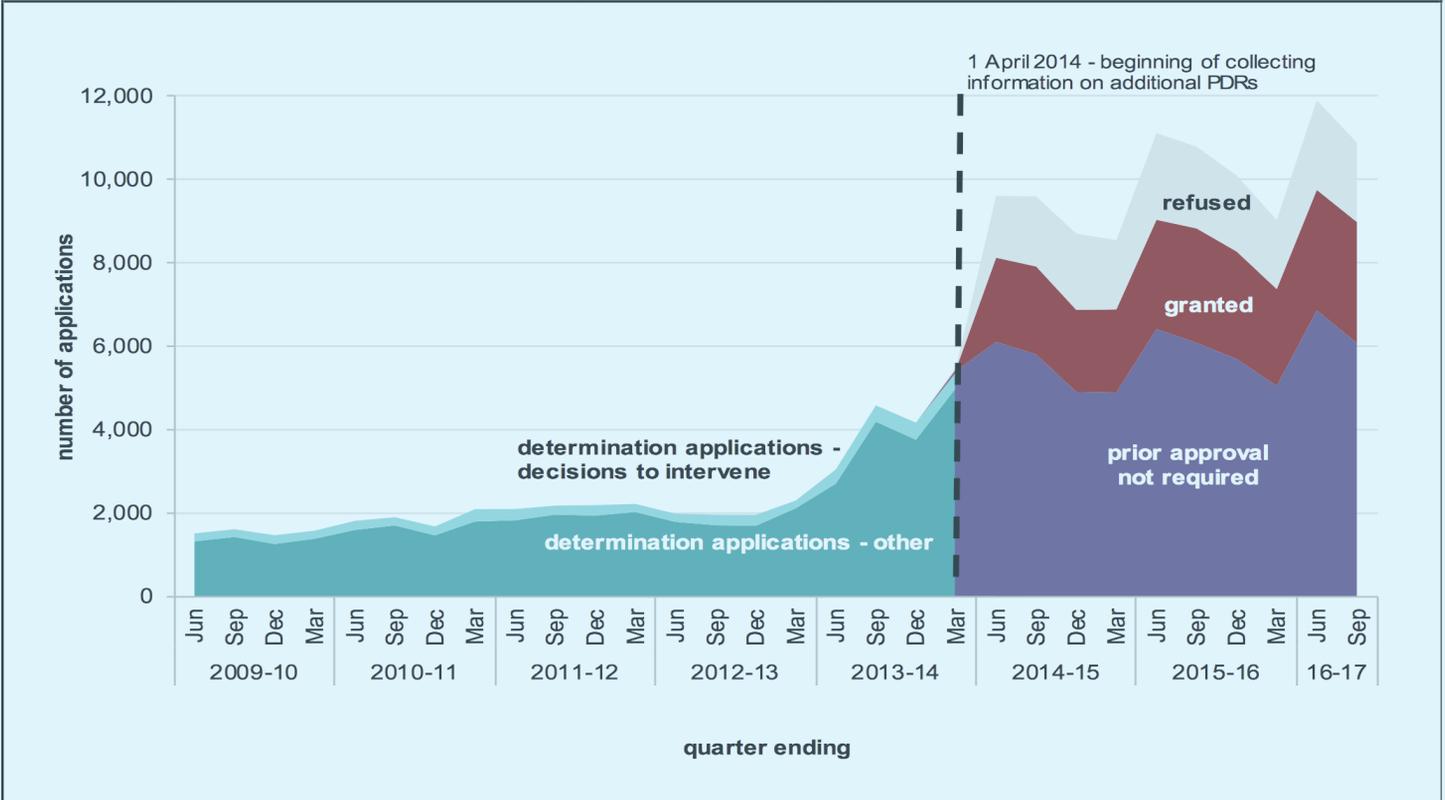
During July to September 2016, authorities granted 101,800 decisions, up three per cent from the same quarter in 2015. Authorities granted 88 per cent of all decisions, unchanged from the September quarter 2015 (Tables P120/P133). Overall, 83 per cent of major and minor decisions were granted.

The percentage of decisions granted varied widely between local planning authorities, ranging from 33 to 100 per cent for major developments, 53 to 100 per cent for minor developments and 56 to 100 per cent for other developments (Tables

Planning decisions by development type, speed of decision and local planning authority: July to September 2016 Table 131 can be found with all tables and figures here: <https://goo.gl/axtmHb> Source:

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Figure 5: Applications for determination and prior approvals for permitted development rights decided by district planning authorities
 England, quarter ending June 2009 to quarter ending September 2016



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>>> P120/P131). Over the 12 months to September 2016, 381,300 decisions were granted, up four per cent from the year to September 2015.

Speed of decisions

- In July to September 2016, 85 per cent of major applications were decided within 13 weeks or within the agreed time for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs), Extensions of Time (EoTs) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), compared with 80 per cent in the September quarter 2015.
- In the September quarter of 2016, 81 per cent of minor applications and 88 per cent of other applications were decided within eight weeks or the agreed time.
- These figures show increases, compared with 74 per cent and 84 p. cent a year earlier respectively.

The percentage of decisions made in time varied widely between local planning authorities, ranging from 25 to 100 per cent for major developments, 33 to 100 per cent for minor developments and 29 to 100 per cent for other developments. (Tables P120, P123 and P131)

Because deciding an application on time can include the use of a performance agreement, the calculation of the proportion of decisions made within the agreed time was changed to include PPAs from April 2008 for major and some 'other'

developments, and to also include agreed EoTs and EIAs from April 2013. Applications since April 2014 for minor developments and for changes of use, householder developments and advertisements can now also be recorded as having included a performance agreement.

Because the most consistent reporting of agreements is for major applications, Figure 2 and Table 2 show, from 2008, numbers of decisions on major developments made involving a performance agreement, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of all decisions on major developments.

Notwithstanding these definitional changes, there has been a marked increase in the use of agreements since early 2013, although the increases have slowed down in recent quarters. In reality, this has been driven by both the additional scope for recording them and their additional use. The proportion of major decisions subject to an agreement was 55 per cent during July to September 2016, up from nine per cent in the July to September quarter of 2014 (Table 2 and Table P131).

Householder developments

Householder developments are those developments to a house which require planning permission such as extensions, loft conversions and conservatories.

The number of decisions on householder devel-

opments increased by four per cent, from 56,200 decisions in the September quarter of 2015 to 58,200 decisions in the corresponding quarter in 2016, when they accounted for 50 per cent of all decisions. Authorities granted 90 per cent of these applications and decided 89 per cent within eight weeks or the agreed time (Table P123)..

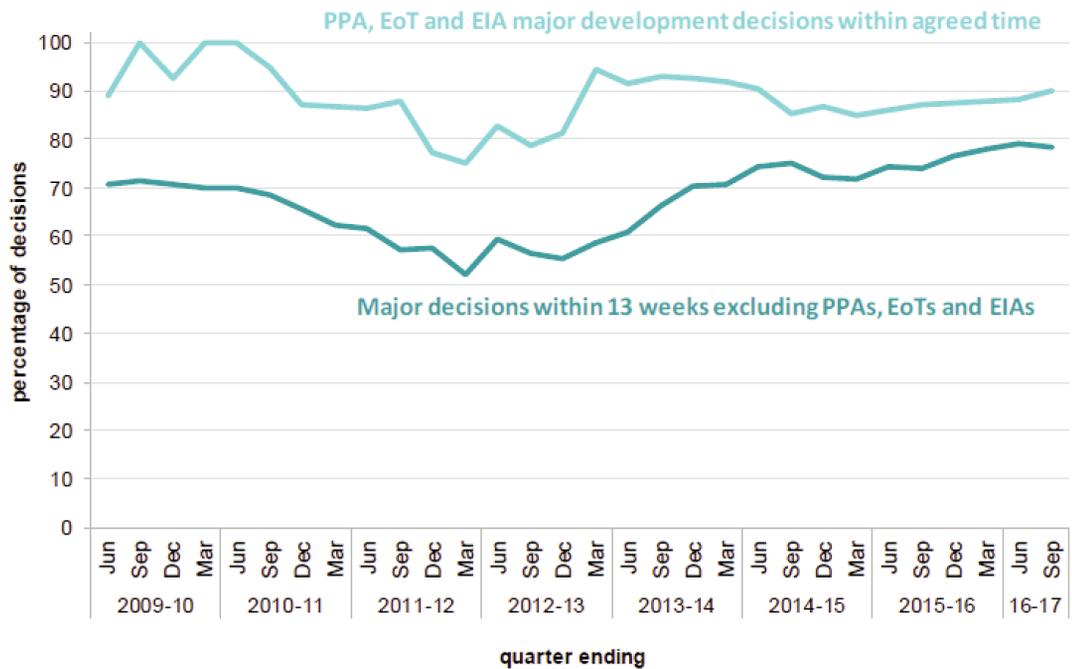
Prior approvals for permitted developments

Following the creation in May 2013 of some additional permitted development right categories and consultation with local authorities, the department increased the level of detailed information on prior approvals for permitted developments collected on the PS1 return with effect from 1 April 2014.

The results for the tenth quarter for which they have been collected (July to September 2016) are included in Tables PDR1 (local authority level figures) and PDR2 (England totals). Of the 10,900 applications reported in the July to September quarter of 2016, prior approval was not required for 6,100, and permission was granted for 2,900 and refused for 1,900. This resulted in an overall acceptance rate of 82 per cent. 71 per cent of applications (7,700) related to larger householder extensions, with seven per cent relating to office to residential changes and eight per cent relating to agricultural to residential changes.

The total number of applications reported during July to September 2016 (10,900) was one per

Figure 3: Percentage of major development decisions made within time¹
 England, quarter ending June 2009 to quarter ending September 2016



¹ Figures cover planning performance agreements from April 2009 and agreed extensions of time and environmental impact assessments from 1 April 2013

cent greater than in July to September 2015. Within this total, the number of granted applications increased by six per cent, the number of refusals fell by three per cent and the number of cases where prior approval was not required was unchanged. Taking i) granted applications and ii) those for which prior approval was not required together, 9,000 applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process, up two per cent on a year earlier

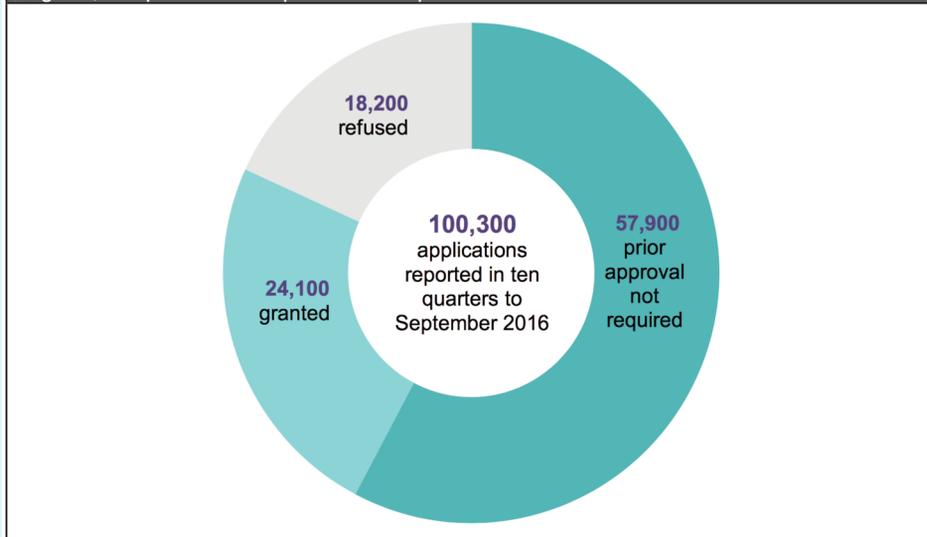
Within the overall increase of one per cent in the reported number of applications between July to September 2015 and July to September 2016:

- larger householder extensions dropped by one per cent
- office to residential changes dropped by 17 per cent
- agricultural to residential changes dropped by ten per cent; and
- there was a 45 per cent increase in the 'All others' category. These include several new categories created with effect from 15 April 2015, part-way through the April to June 2015 quarter, including storage and distribution centres to residential, and amusement arcades/centres and casinos to residential.

The overall acceptance rate for the ten quarters between the collection of detailed data started in April 2014 and the end of September 2016 was 82 per cent. The rate initially dropped from 85 per cent in the first quarter to 79 per cent in the third quarter, but has since stabilised at 82 per cent in the latest five quarters (Table PDR2).

Overall during the ten quarters ending September 2016, district planning authorities

Figure 4: Applications for prior approvals for permitted development rights reported by district planning authorities England, ten quarters from April 2014 to September 2016



reported 100,300 applications for prior approvals for permitted developments. For 57,900 (57 per cent) of them prior approval was not required, 24,100 (24 per cent) were granted and 18,200 (18 per cent) were refused (Figure 4).

To put these recent figures into context, Table P128 and Figure 5 show how the number of determination applications received remained broadly stable at around 5,000 to 8,000 per year from 2004/05 to 2012/13, but approximately doubled to 15,700 in 2013/14, following the creation of the new permitted development right categories in May 2013.

Since then, there have been 36,500 applica-

tions in 2014/15 and 41,000 in 2015/16. The quarterly pattern since April 2014 reflects a combination of both: i) the introduction of new permitted development right categories in May 2013 and April 2015; and ii) the seasonal peaks and troughs that have previously been observed for planning applications, as shown in Figure 1 (Table PDR 2 and Figure 5).

This significant increase in numbers of applications appears to be consistent with the annual increases in the number of dwellings added to the net housing supply through change of use of 65 per cent and 48 per cent during 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. ■

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