

# Surge in household permissions

Latest planning performance by English districts and London boroughs. New figures show number of planning permissions for homes rose 6 per cent on a year earlier

## OVERVIEW

The government's figures show that as well as rising numbers of planning permissions for homes, the number of permissions granted overall between October and December 2015 was up four per cent on the same period a year ago, with councils granting 92,000 decisions.

Between October to December 2015, district level planning authorities in England:

- ⊙ received 111,000 applications for planning permission, almost unchanged from 110,900 in the corresponding quarter of 2014;
- ⊙ granted 92,400 decisions, up four per cent from the same quarter in 2014; this is equivalent to 87 per cent of decisions, unchanged from the same quarter of 2014;
- ⊙ decided 81 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks or the agreed time, up from 78 per cent a year earlier; and
- ⊙ granted 12,000 residential applications, up 6 per cent on a year earlier.

In the year ending December 2015, district level planning authorities:

- ⊙ granted 369,700 decisions, up four per cent from the figure for the year ending December 2014;
- ⊙ 46,800 of the granted decisions were for resi-

dential developments: 6,000 for major developments and 40,900 for minors.

10,100 applications for prior approval for permitted development rights were received during October to December 2015, up 16 per cent from the same quarter of 2014;

8,300 of those applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process, up 21 per cent on a year earlier; Prior approval:

The number of applications received for prior approval was 36,400 in 2014/15 and 32,000 in the first three quarters of 2015/16, up from 15,700 in 2013/14 and 7,300 in 2012/13.

## Applications

During October to December 2015, authorities undertaking district level planning in England received 111,000 applications for planning permission, almost unchanged from 110,900 in the corresponding quarter in 2014.

In the year ending December 2015, authorities received 475,600 planning applications, an increase of one per cent compared to the year ending December 2014.

## Planning decisions

Authorities reported 106,000 decisions on plan-

ning applications in October to December 2015, an increase of four per cent on 101,700 decisions in the same quarter of the previous year. In the year ending December 2015, authorities decided 421,800 planning applications, an increase of three per cent compared to the year ending December 2014.

Over the 12 months to December 2015, 369,700 applications were granted, up four per cent from the year to December 2014. Authorities granted 88 per cent of all decisions in the year to December 2015, unchanged from the year to December 2014.

## Speed of decisions

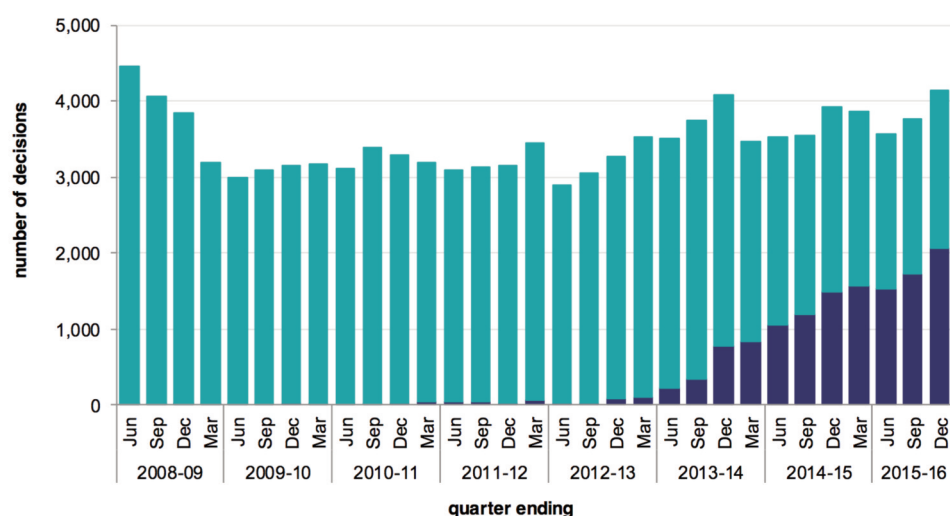
In October to December 2015, 81 per cent of major applications were decided within 13 weeks or within the agreed time for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs), Extensions of Time (EoTs) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), compared with 78 per cent in the December quarter 2014. In the December quarter 2015, 75 per cent of minor applications and 85 per cent of other applications were decided within 8 weeks or the agreed time.

These figures show increases, compared with 71 per cent and 83 per cent a year earlier respectively. The percentage of decisions made in time varied widely between local planning authorities, ranging from 11 to 100 per cent for major developments, 22 to 100 per cent for minor developments and 30 to 100 per cent for other developments. These figures include applications involving PPAs, EoTs and EIAs made for minor developments and some 'other' developments that were collected for the first time for the June quarter 2014, and so are not directly comparable with figures before then.

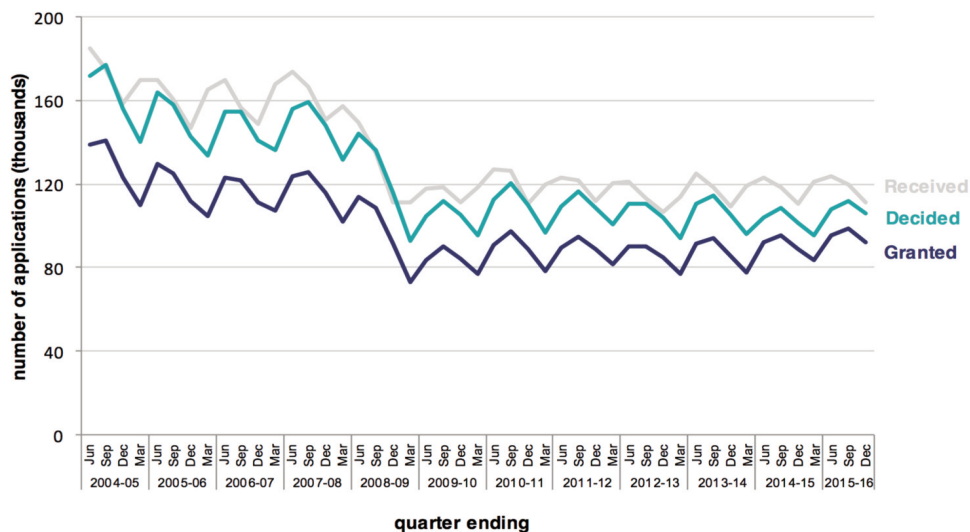
## Performance Agreements

In December quarter 2015, 86 per cent of major development decisions involving performance agreements were made on time. In comparison, only 77 per cent of major decisions not involving performance agreements were made within the statutory time limit of 13 weeks.

**Figure 2: Use of performance agreements with applications for major developments England, quarter ending June 2008 to quarter ending December 2015**



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



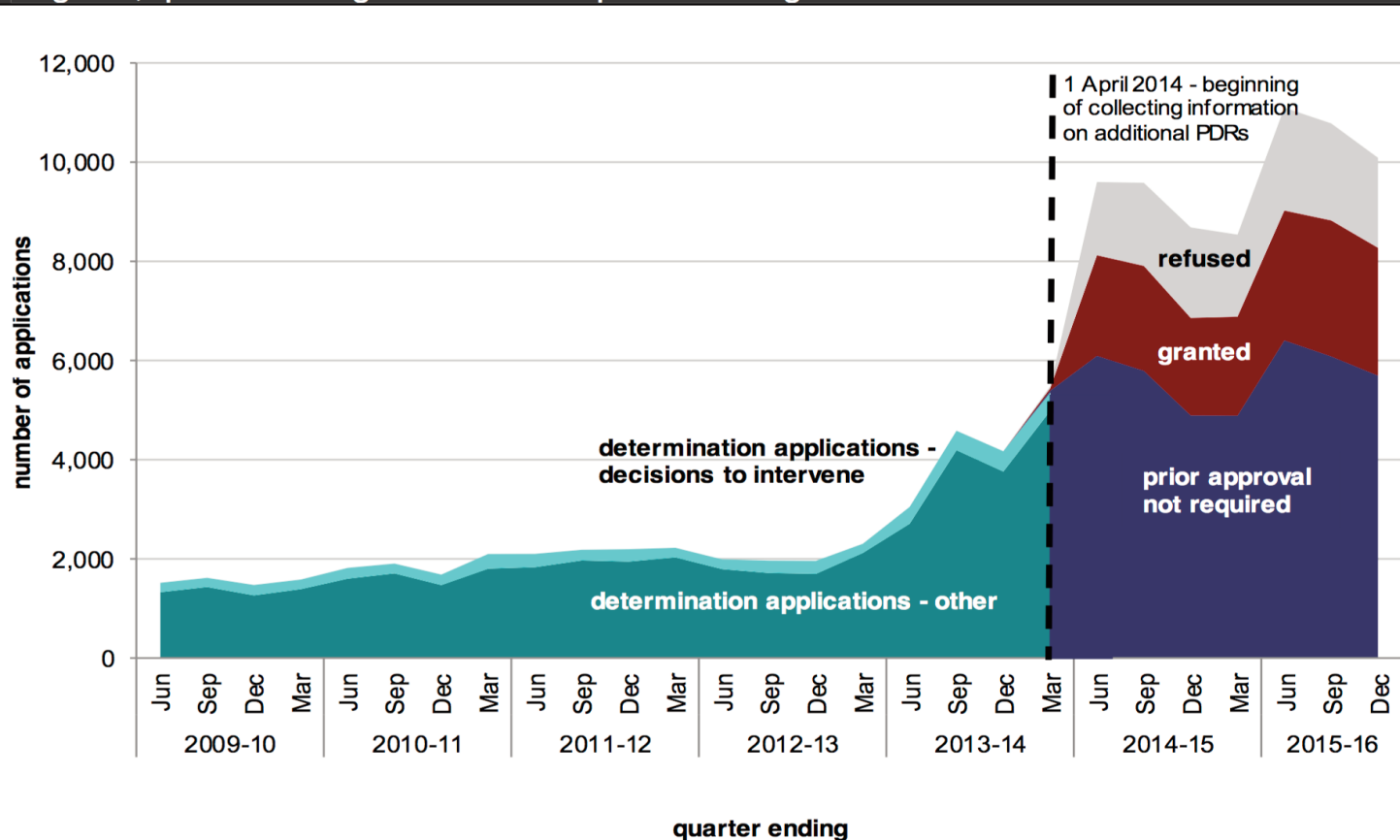
**Applications for residential developments  
Residential decisions**

The figures collected by the department are numbers of planning applications submitted to local planning authorities rather than the number of units included in each application, such as the number of homes in the case of housing developments.

The department supplements this information by obtaining statistics on housing approvals from a contractor. The latest figures show that approval for 253,000 homes was given in the year to 31 December 2015, compared to 245,000 homes approved in the year to 30 September 2015. The number of homes granted permission during the year to 31 December 2015 was five per cent higher than in the year to 31 December 2014. These figures are provided to give contextual information, and have not been designated as National

Planning decisions by development type, speed of decision and local planning authority: OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2015, Table 131 can be found with all tables and figures here: <https://goo.gl/Ujx8d1> Source: DCLG/ONS

**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 December 2015**



>>> Statistics.

There were 16,100 decisions on applications for residential developments, an increase of six per cent compared with December quarter 2014. Of these, 12,000 residential applications were granted, up six per cent from the December quarter 2014. The number of major residential decisions increased by six per cent from October to December 2014 to October to December 2015 - to 2,000 - while the number of minor residential decisions also increased by six per cent, to 14,100. Authorities granted 80 per cent of major residential applications, up from 79 per cent in the December quarter 2014, deciding 76 per cent of them within 13 weeks or the agreed time. Authorities granted 74 per cent of decisions on minor residential applications, deciding 71 per cent of them within 8 weeks or the agreed time.

In the year ending December 2015, authorities granted 6,000 major and 40,900 minor residential applications, with 79 and 74 per cent of applications being granted respectively.

**Householder developments**

Householder developments are those developments to a house which require planning permission such as extensions, loft conversions and conservatories (more details are in the Definitions section). The number of decisions on householder developments increased by six per cent from 47,400 decisions in the December quarter 2014 to 50,400 decisions in the corresponding quarter in 2015, when they accounted for 48 per cent of all decisions. Authorities granted 89 per cent of these applications and decided 87 per cent within 8 weeks or the agreed time.

**Prior approvals for permitted developments**

Following the creation in May 2013 of some additional permitted development right categories (see the Definitions section) 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 seventh quarter for which they have been collected (October to December 2015) show that of the 10,100 applications reported in the October to December quarter of 2015, prior approval was not required for 5,700 applications, and that permission was granted for 2,600 applications and refused for 1,800. This means that 8,300 applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process: either because prior approval was not required, or because permission was granted. This resulted in an overall acceptance rate of 82 per cent. 67 per cent of applications (6,800) related to larger householder extensions, with 8 per cent

relating to agricultural to residential changes and 8 per cent relating to office to residential changes.

The total number of applications reported during October to December 2015 was 10,100, sixteen per cent greater than in October to December 2014. Within this total, the number of granted applications increased by 31 per cent, the number of refusals decreased by one per cent and the number of cases where prior approval was not required increased by sixteen per cent. Taking i) granted applications and ii) those for which prior approval was not required together, 8,300 applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process, up 21 per cent on a year earlier

Within the overall increase of sixteen per cent in the reported number of applications between October to December 2014 and October to December 2015:

- ⊙ Larger householder extensions increased by 16 per cent
- ⊙ office to residential changes dropped by 21 per cent
- ⊙ agricultural to residential changes dropped by 20 per cent; and
- ⊙ there was a 138 per cent increase in the 'All others' category, partly due to the creation of several new categories with effect from 15 April 2015, including storage and distribution centres to residential, and amusement arcades/centres and casinos to residential.

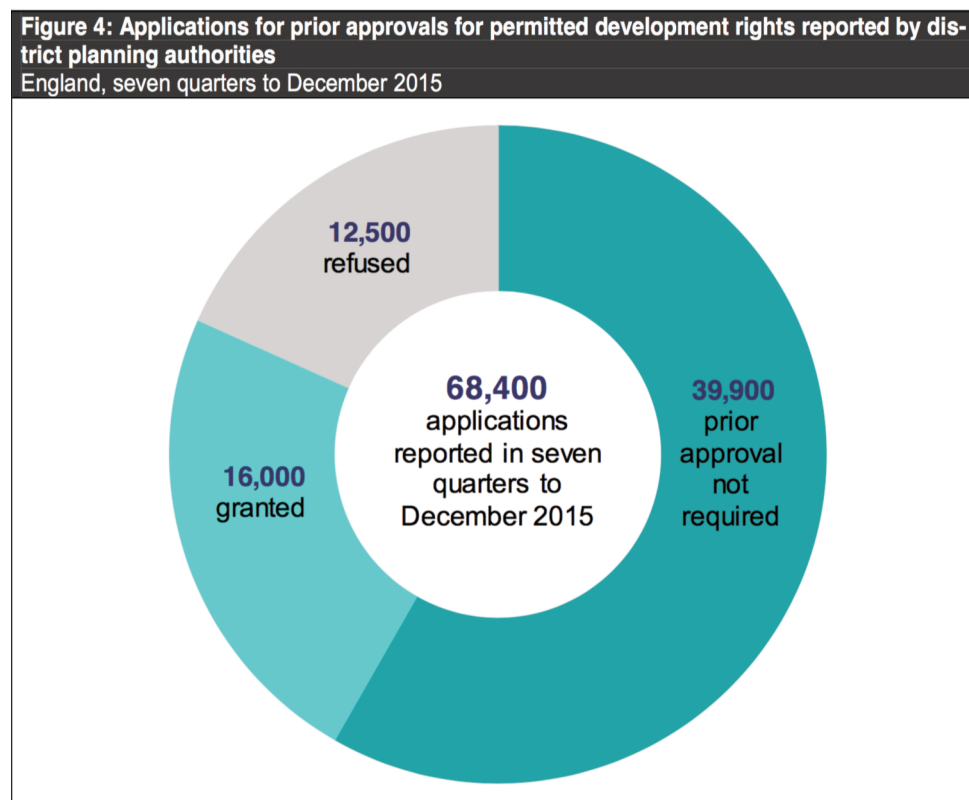
The overall acceptance rate for the seven quarters ending December 2015 was 82 per cent. The

rate initially dropped from 85 per cent in the first quarter to 79 per cent in the third quarter, then increased to 81 per cent in the fourth and fifth quarters, and has stabilised at 82 per cent in the latest two quarters. Overall during the seven quarters ending December 2015, district planning authorities reported 68,400 applications for prior approvals for permitted developments. For 39,900 (58 per cent) of them prior approval was not required, 16,000 (23 per cent) were granted and 12,500 (18 per cent) were refused (Figure 4).

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 36,400 applications in 2014/15 and 32,000 in the first three quarters of 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 65 per cent increase in the number of dwellings added to the net housing supply through change of use between 2013/14 and 2014/15, as reported in the Net supply of housing in England: 2014 to 2015.



# CLIPBOARD

## Government consults on new London-only PD proposals

The government has begun consulting on three complementary ways to encourage more housing in London by allowing additional storeys on buildings.

The proposals are: a London-wide permitted development right, with a prior approval, for up to two additional storeys, up to the roofline of an adjoining building; specific planning policies in the London Plan to support upward extensions for new homes and boroughs making local development orders to grant planning permission to extend upwards for all or part of their area, or for particular types of buildings.

## New mayor needs to work with house builders, they say

The new Mayor will need to work with house builders and develop realistic, workable plans if campaign promises are to be delivered, say the Home Builders' Federation.

House builders have challenged candidates standing in the Mayoral elections to adopt 'tangible, workable and realistic' policies to deliver the increases in housing supply needed to maintain London's position as "the world's capital city".

Whilst welcoming the broad and vocal commitments from the candidates to build more homes, the industry now wants to see politicians adopt proposals, published in a 'Blueprint for building the homes London needs'.

The Home Builders Federation's (HBF) 10-point 'blueprint', *Capitalising on Growth*, encourages the next Mayor to develop a 'credible plan' that builds on the significant increases in housing supply in London over the last two years to further close the gap between supply and demand.

HBF's Blueprint includes recommendations that the next Mayor of London:

- Ensures sites are viable and deliverable by requiring realistic levels of affordable housing and wider regulatory 'asks'
- Supports the delivery of specialist private rented housing and makes better use of, and improves, London's existing estates



Nicholas Grimshaw's 1980s high-tech former Financial Times printing works in London's Docklands has been listed at Grade II\*

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport followed advice from Historic England to list the 14,000m<sup>2</sup> building. Now used as a major internet switching centre, is an innovative High Tech building and an integral part of the British newspaper industry's architectural legacy, according to the adviser. The decision to grant statutory heritage protection followed an application for a certificate of immunity for listing by the building's owner, data firm Global Switch.

During the building's operation as a printworks, a frameless 96m-long glazed screen allowed views of the vast printing presses from the East India Dock Road. Emily Gee, head of listing at Historic England said: 'At East India Dock House, the dynamic and exciting 'shop window' put the captivating production process on display for passers-by. At night this became almost an illuminated billboard and a prestigious asset for the newspaper. The building's change of use illustrates the flexibility of High Tech industrial architecture which the listing also recognises. "The former FT printworks is a High-Tech masterpiece – an innovative and pioneering example of industrial design", according to the 20th Century Society.

- Works with authorities in the wider South East such that a strategic approach to delivering homes that can support London's growth
- Acts as a hub to coordinate efforts by all the public bodies with land holdings in London such that more land actually comes forward
- Backs powers to turn more underused commercial spaces into homes for Londoners
- Takes a proportionate to investor buyers to ensure that the up-front finance comes forward to support the delivery of developments.

(SHLAA) and is undertaken in partnership with local planning authorities in London. Through the Call for Sites, private, public and voluntary sector bodies and individuals may submit potential housing sites for consideration as part of the SHLAA.

Site assessments in the London SHLAA are only undertaken on large sites (over 0.25 hectares), with housing delivery on smaller sites estimated using average annual trends in housing completions.

To be assessed in the SHLAA, sites will need to be over this size threshold. However, sites under 0.25 hectares in size may still be submitted as part of the Call for Sites. These smaller sites will be passed on to the Council to inform Local Plan preparation and site allocations and may be used by the GLA for research purposes.

Further details along with information on how to submit a site for consideration can be found on the GLA's website. The deadline is 30 June 2016. >>>

## Mayor of London – Call for Sites

The Mayor of London commenced a 'Call for Sites' on the 14 March 2016, as the first stage in the housing capacity study to inform the next London Plan. This study is known as the London Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment