

Planning Applications Committee



04 February 2026

Title	THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT - PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee
Report author	Julie Williams, Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Secure Reading's economic & cultural success
Recommendations	<p>The Committee is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the report.

1. Purpose of report

1.1. To advise Committee on the work and performance of the Planning Development Management and Building Control team for the first three quarters of 2025/2026 (April to December) with comparison to the previous year.

2. Planning Development Management team

Decisions Issued

2.1 Table 1 provides a comparison of the decisions issued for all 2024/25 and quarters 1 to 3 for 2025/2026. It is notable that while Major applications are reduced there are more Minor and Other applications, which includes householder applications. Meeting performance targets consistently in the Major category, where there are fewer applications, is difficult. However is made up for by the excellent performance within the statutory timeframe or within an agreed extended timeframe for Minors and Other applications. In Q3 the proportion of granted decisions was high at 74% meaning officers worked with applicants to get the majority of applications approved.

Table 1: Decisions Issued 2024/2025 and Q1, Q2 & Q3 2025/2026

Application categories	Target	Overall 24/25	Q1 25/26 Apr-Jun	Q2 25/26 Jul-Sept	Q3 25/26 Oct-Dec
Major	60%	17/20 85%	2/3 66%	1/1 100%	2/4 50%
Minor	70%	132/153 86%	40/43 93%	27/32 84%	48/53 91%
Others (incl. householders)	70%	349/395 88%	102/117 87%	75/87 86%	122/135 90%
Overall Totals		498/568 88%	144/163 88%	103/130 79%	172/192 90%

Fee Income

2.2 Table 1b provides fee income from dealing with different types of applications, providing pre-application advice and responding to requests for information, such as planning histories and site background checks. The table compares last year's total income results with income so far this year. The lull in the submission of Major applications continues with a significant impact on fee income mitigated by the increase in the minor and other application fees plus pre-app fees.

Table 1b: Fee income for Q1 & Q2 2024/25 and 2025/2026

Fee Income	All year 24/25 £	Q1 25/26 £	Q2 25/26 £	Q3 25/26 £
Major Applications	473,726	25,474	192,685	16,113
Minor Applications	381,587	121,256	99,061	111,626
Other/Householders	112,174	46,993	46,865	55,123
Pre-App	122,282	53,587	62,067	101,074
Miscellaneous	14,162	3,923	5,112	14,356
Totals	£1,103,931	£251,233	£284,405	£298,292

3. Building Control

3.1 Recruiting to permanent positions for experienced Building Control inspectors remains challenging and we rely on two agency Building Inspectors (1 x level2 and 1 x Level 3 registered) for site visits plus one (Level 2 registered) helping on Plan Checking. The Team Leader is working this year to gain his level 3 registration while the assistant and two trainee Building Inspectors are working towards their own registrations building up our in house team expertise.

3.2 Table 2 shows performance for the team and the types of applications (fee and non-fee earning) dealt with for 2024/2025 and then Q1, Q2 and Q3 for this year. Fee income is improving with our team picking up more new work but also cases passed on from Approved Inspectors or through enforcement and retrospective applications (known as Regularisations). The team have developed better systems and procedures to work more efficiently with online applications and payments.

Table 2: Building Control work performance.

Case work	Total 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26
Fee earning				
Building notices	176	36	45	25
Regularisations	82	15	23	38
Full Plans	184	56	27	37
Demolition notices	10	0	4	4
Partnerships	33	1	4	4
Fee Income	£241,547	£65,820	£76,022	£81,144

Non-Fee earning	Total 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26
Dangerous structures attended	18	5	20	16
AI Initial Notices	431	115	100	82
Unauthorised work checks	86	10	15	23

4. Contribution to strategic aims

4.1 The processing of planning applications and associated work (trees, conservations areas and listed buildings) and building control activities contribute to creating a healthy environment with thriving communities and helps the economy within the Borough, identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan.

5. Community engagement

5.1 Statutory consultation takes place on most planning applications and appeals. The Council's website also allows the public to view information submitted and comments on planning applications and eventually the decision reached. There is also information on policy matters and the and this can influence the speed with which applications and appeals are decided. Information on development management performance is publicly available.

6. Equality impact assessment

6.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.2 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered that the development management performance set out in this report has no adverse impacts.

7. Environmental and climate implications

7.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). The Planning & Building Control and Planning Policy Services play a key part in mitigating impacts and adapting building techniques using adopted policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly, making efficient use of land, using sustainable materials and building methods.

8. Legal implications

8.1 The collection and monitoring of performance indicators is a statutory requirement. In addition, some of the work targets referred to in this report are mandatory requirements such as the determination of planning applications and building regulations applications.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 The report includes information on fee income in the planning and building teams.