
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

Title: PLANNING SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

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Purpose

To update and inform the Committee on the statistical performance of the CNPA planning service to Quarter 2 of 2022/23 for CNPA statistics, enforcement activity, and wider planning service improvement work.

Recommendation

That the Committee:

- i. Note the internal planning service monitoring results outlined in this report.**

Background

1. The CNPA Planning Service and Management Team biannual performance reports to examine planning service performance and implement improvements and changes to the service. Officers take performance updates to the Planning Committee for information and as a way of supplementing annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) reports and the Scottish Government's feedback on PPF reports. The Planning Committee's last planning service performance update was in May 2022.

Planning Service Performance Update to Quarter 2 2022/23

Determination timescales and processing agreements

2. The CNPA's use of processing agreements continues to be a good way to provide certainty for applicants and for CNPA staff. The use of processing agreements is reflected in the official statistics produced by the Scottish Government, which exclude timescales for applications with processing agreements. Figures 1 and 2 show the official statistics for applications that did not have processing agreements as well as the timescales for applications with processing agreements.
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Figure 1

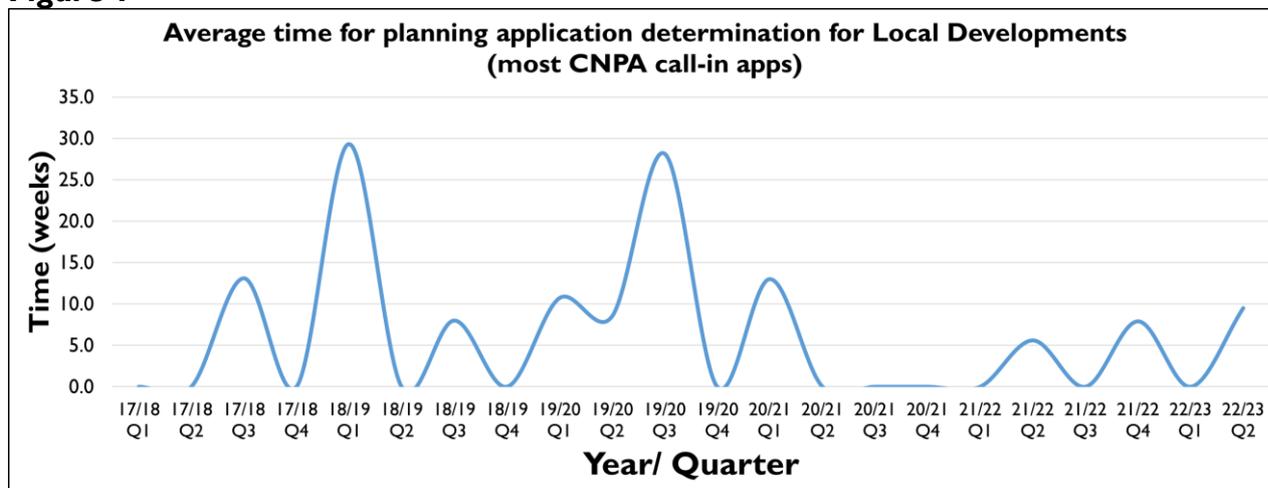
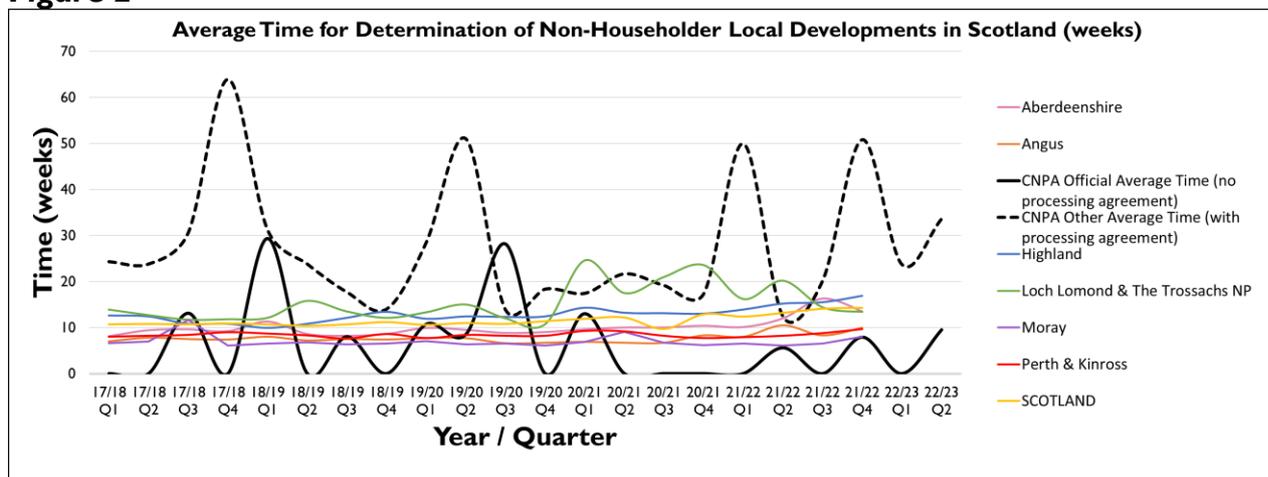
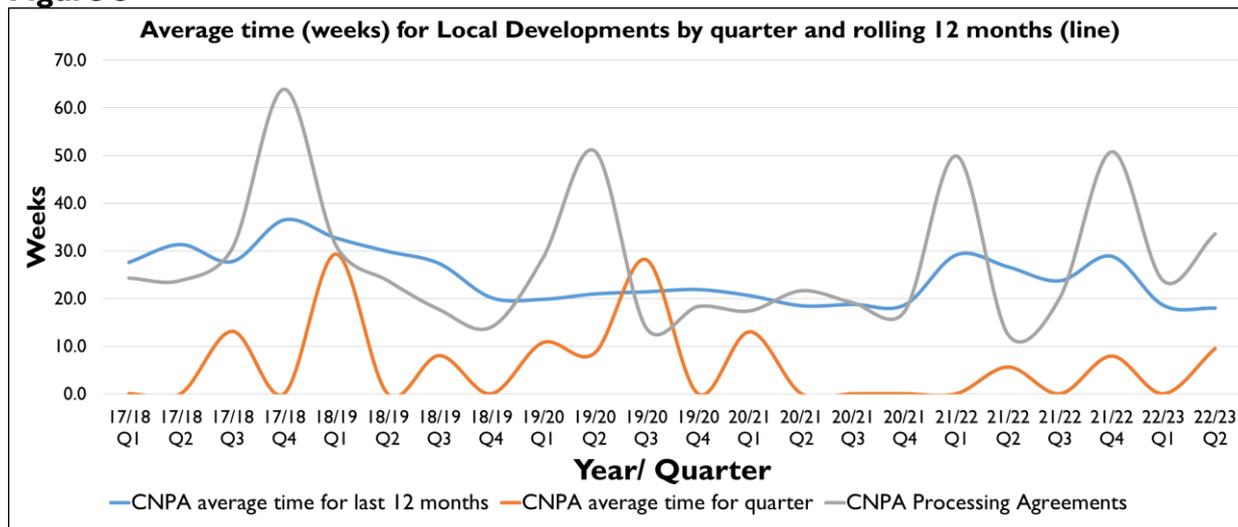


Figure 2



4. Members should be aware that the comparison with other planning authorities is a guide but not representative comparison. The CNPA’s statistics are based on the small numbers of the applications that are called in and determined via by the CNPA Planning Committee in any quarter, whereas the statistics for local authorities are based on the tens or even hundreds of applications that are mainly determined by officers under delegated powers.
5. The internal audit of the planning service that reported during 2015/16 recommended that the CNPA use a rolling annual average indicator for service performance monitoring. Figure 3 shows the CNPA’s quarterly average against a rolling annual average figure. In simple terms, if the average time for a quarter is lower than the rolling average figure, then performance should be improving, but given the small number of applications that are being recorded in this way, the data is easily misunderstood.

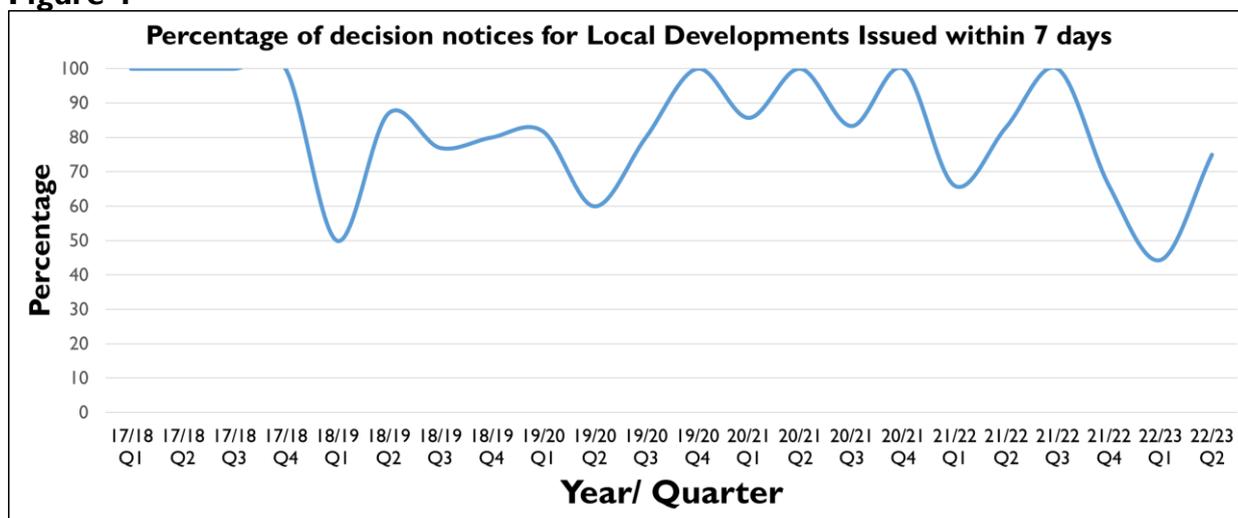
Figure 3



Issuing decision notices

- Due to the low number of applications decided by the CNPA delays outwith the Authority’s control can impact the timescales for issuing decision notices. Two such examples for the period covering Q1 (one of two decision notices issued) and Q2 (one of four decisions notices issued) where a late payment of fees by an applicant resulted in a short delay to decision notice issuing.

Figure 4



Planning Enforcement Activity

- The CNPA has identified a higher number of breaches of planning consent on developments that have been implemented over the past 6 months than over the previous years. From liaison with other planning authorities, this appears to be the case across many parts of Scotland as some development restarted following Covid restrictions.
- Members will be aware that the CNPA has served Breach of Condition notices in Aviemore and Grantown-on-Spey and is investigating formal action on other sites as well as further formal action on outstanding cases. Because some cases may lead to

legal action and potential prosecution, they are not cases that can be discussed in public until they have been resolved or formal action has been completed.

Planning Service Improvements 2022-23

9. In the Planning Performance Framework 2021/22 the CNPA set out eight Planning Service Improvements for 2022/23 that were based on the operational capacity of the planning team at that point in time. Work is underway on each item but staff capacity in the planning team and across the CNPA can influence our ability to complete items.

2022/23 Planning Service Improvements		Status
1	Continue our monitoring of hill tracks development and increase awareness of policy amongst estates and land managers - Our monitoring and enforcement of unauthorised hill tracks has increased in recent years. During 2022/23 we will continue work on completing a monitoring project using aerial photography.	Work ongoing
2	Adopt the next National Park Partnership Plan (2022-2027) which will act as the National Parks Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).	Complete
3	Adopt the final two pieces of Supplementary Guidance; Developer Contributions and Housing, to support the delivery of the LDP Polices.	Partially Complete
4	Support Highland Council implement Short Term Let Area in Badenoch and Strathspey and prepare CNPA planning guidance on Short-Term Letting.	Work ongoing
5	Finalise the plan for the CNPA Design Awards; begin the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Design Awards, through an engagement and awareness campaign beginning toward the end of 2022. The Design Awards will be scheduled to be conducted in the Summer/ Autumn of 2023.	Work Ongoing
6	Continue to review the effectiveness of the delivery of the Action Programme and DPS to ensure they are accessible and comprehensive in their reporting of the LDP.	Work ongoing
7	Deliver specialist training to committee members on landscape in relation to wind farm developments– _and with continued reviews to monitor gaps in members knowledge to deliver suitable additional training as required.	Work ongoing
8	Review the format and content of the Planning Service Performance Updates reported to the Planning Committee; Improve the clarity and data representation in a more engaging and meaningful manner.	Work ongoing

Next Report

10. The next planning service monitoring report will be in June 2023.

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