



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Review and Evaluation of the Development Control Monitoring Process

The Wales Planning Policy Development Programme



The Wales Planning Policy Development Programme

This research project has been commissioned and undertaken as part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Wales Planning Policy Development Programme. The programme, originally established in 2000 under the title the Wales Planning Research Programme, is intended to meet the need for evidence based land use planning policy development within the context of the Welsh Assembly Government's principles and priorities.

The Assembly Government's Planning Division is responsible for administering the Wales Planning Policy Development Programme and ensuring that any research or policy implementation work meets the needs of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Review and Evaluation of the Development Control Monitoring Process

Research is carried out predominantly by external commission, although some projects are undertaken collaboratively with other organisations

Key Objectives

- To focus on distinctive Welsh issues
- To support the development of planning policy
- To provide management information for land use planning policy development
- To develop best practice guidance.

In 2005 a quinquennial review of the research programme was carried out. This identified a number of recommendations including the renaming of the programme to enable not only the funding of planning research but the implementation of policy developed from it.

Further information on the Wales Planning Policy Development Programme can be accessed at:
www.wales.gov.uk/planning

Enquires on the programme should be addressed to
Jonathan Fudge,
Senior Planning Manager,
Planning Policy Branch,
Planning Division,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ.

Telephone: 029 2082 6961

Fax: 029 2082 5622

E-mail: Planning.Division@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly
Government

**Review and Evaluation
of the Development
Control Statistics
Monitoring Process**

Final Report

Welsh Assembly
Government

**Review and Evaluation
of the Development
Control Statistics
Monitoring Process**

Final Report

May 2008

Ove Arup & Partners Ltd
13 Fitzroy Street,
London W1T 4BQ
Tel +44 (0)20 7636 1531 7755 2451
www.arup.com

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party

Job number 122639/00

Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	i
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose and scope of the Review	1
1.2 Context	1
1.3 Overview of the approach	1
1.4 Report structure	2
1.5 Acknowledgements	2
2 Methodology	3
2.1 Overview	3
2.2 Stage 1: Trawl for requirements in WAG	3
2.3 Stage 2: Local authority survey	3
2.4 Stage 3: Stakeholder discussions	3
2.5 Stage 4: Assessment and recommendations	4
3 The Government perspective	6
3.1 Introduction	6
3.2 One Wales	6
3.3 Planning: delivering for Wales	6
3.4 Best value and statutory performance indicators	7
3.5 Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs)	8
3.6 The Development Control Quarterly Survey	9
3.7 Discussions with WAG planning policy staff	9
3.8 Comparative policy approaches elsewhere in Great Britain	13
4 The local authority perspective	15
4.1 Local authority survey	15
4.2 Stakeholder seminars and case study visits	18
4.3 The Forms and Guidance	20
4.4 Performance Management Process and the Generation of Returns	20
4.5 Information Currently Recorded by the Planning Officers' Society for Wales	21
5 Evaluation of Options and Recommendations	22
5.1 Introduction	22
5.2 Principles for Change	22
5.3 Assessment Matrix	22
6 Conclusions and Implementation	32
6.1 Suggested Changes to the Return and Guidance	32
6.2 Implementation Roll-out	32

6.3	A data working group	32
6.4	Electronic Returns	32
6.5	Grossing up for non-responders	33
6.6	Role for the LGDU	33
6.7	Publication and Analysis	33

A1 Current DCQS Return and Guidance

A2 Example WAG Statistical Release

A3 Annotated Local Authority Survey Return

A4 Local Authorities Making a Survey Return

A5 Seminar Attendees

A6 Proposed Development Control Quarterly and Annual Survey Returns and Guidance

Executive Summary

This study reviews the current Development Control Quarterly Survey. It assesses the content and use of the present survey, looks at government and local authority data needs, and proposes a way forward. We have sought to define a set of statistics that gives a more comprehensive view of authorities' workload and performance, but without measuring every aspect of their planning duties. We have also sought a set of measures that shows the key outputs of the planning system, particularly those to do with housing and climate change.

After taking account of the views of government and local authorities we recommend that -

- The quarterly survey continues subject to relatively minor modifications which do not impose a disproportionate burden on local authorities
- Some new data should only be collected annually
- New integrated guidance is prepared to accompany the revised DCQS
- A WAG/local authority/software provider data working group is established to oversee and steer requirements and collection, in the first instance piloting the new return and establishing data quality checks
- Electronic submission is introduced, with returns to LGDU for processing, and
- Future publication of the outcome data by WAG is accompanied by a commentary that considers the latest figures against long term trends.

The changes to the DCQS we recommend are the collection of the following quarterly sets of data -

- Applications with an environmental statement (that is, with a sixteen-week target)
- Applications accompanied by a planning obligation
- Applications that have exceeded the eight, thirteen and sixteen-week targets
- Applications for development in a flood plain
- Permissions for new and existing gypsy/travellers' sites, and
- A suite of indicators on enforcement.

We also recommend collection of the following annual sets of data -

- Committee decisions against officer recommendations
- Case load per case officer
- Mineral applications by energy/non-energy and surface/extractive operations
- Renewable energy applications by energy source and capacity
- Outcome data on dwellings and floorspace by use
- Net change of playing fields and open space, and
- Permissions on brown and green-field sites.

As now, all data would be collected on the basis of the number of applications, showing the number permitted and those refused. Additional information, for instance on the level of flood risk, nature of minerals applications, and energy sources, would also form part of the return.

We recommend abandoning collecting of data on departures.

Finally, we suggest that WAG should consider the best means of securing better information on authorities' planning fee income.

Suggested new quarterly and annual returns and accompanying guidance are included in appendix A6.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope of the Review

The brief for this study said:

“In 2002 Planning Policy Wales was published and the Assembly Government has since launched .. the Planning: delivering for Wales programme. New policy and Technical Advice Notes have been issued by Planning Division and the Assembly Government has further developed its strategic corporate policies. The interest, therefore, in capturing and monitoring additional information to support and evidence these policy changes has increased.

Development Control statistics are also collected as part of the National Performance Indicators for Wales. The purpose of the Development Control Quarterly Returns process is to collect statistics to monitor local planning authorities development control performance.

The National Assembly for Wales ... is looking to review the current development control quarterly returns process and provide advice about future collection of development control statistics.”

In scope, the review should encompass:

- A review of the current returns form and statistics collected
- A review of the changing planning policy context to identify where there is a need to collect new data
- Consideration of what statistics may be appropriate for inclusion on a revised proforma
- Consultation with stakeholders to consider feasibility and cost
- Advice on the future administration of the process, and
- Advice on the revision of statistics required to monitor both development control performance and the number of specific types of applications being decided.

1.2 Context

The Development Control Quarterly Survey (form and accompanying guidance notes in appendix A1) is the main source of data for WAG on the volume and composition of planning applications, and the speed of local authority determination.

The planning policy landscape is evolving to include a number of emerging areas such as the importance attached to renewable energy, waste management, housing supply and the sustainability of development, and WAG need an evidence base for new policy. Local authorities are increasingly using data to measure performance improvement and the outcomes of the planning service.

Any data collection review raises questions of quality, analysis, adequacy of scope, and electronic collection.

1.3 Overview of the approach

Our approach has been guided by a number of over-arching requirements:

- A requirement to be ‘fit for purpose’ and to meet the requirements of the brief, through the gathering and assessment of sufficient evidence and experience to allow a thorough and robust quality review.

- The need to engage with WAG planning policy makers to ensure that the review met their data collection concerns.
- The need to engage with Local Authorities as key stakeholders and suppliers and users of the data to gain operational insights.
- A need to ensure assessment accords with the Eurostat 'quality attributes' insofar as is practicable and meaningful. The quality attributes include relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, comparability, coherence and completeness.
- The need to ensure that the changes taking place in technology relevant to the brief are fully exploited and the relevant synergies developed.

1.4 Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

Section 2 – outlines the study methodology.

Section 3 – provides the WAG perspective on data collection on planning matters

Section 4 – gives the local authority view of planning statistics

Section 5 – considers the full range of data changes suggested to us during the review, and

Section 6 – contains our conclusions and related implementation issues.

There are five appendices.

1.5 Acknowledgements

This report was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in February 2007 from Arup. The study team comprised: Christopher Tunnell, Kieron Hyams and Matthew Wright (Arup); and Chris Morrey and Richard Neville-Carlé (independent consultants).

The team were supported by a WAG-nominated Steering Group, which comprised: Richard Spear, Jonathan Fudge and Jeff Phillips (WAG), Ralph Bourke (POSW Caerphilly) and Robin Davies (Local Government Data Unit).

We are grateful to a number of policy makers within WAG for their helpful advice and support in initial stages of the study, and for the co-operation of local authorities that provided survey returns, attended the study seminars, and were the subject of case studies (Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Monmouthshire, Snowdonia National Park, and Wrexham).

2 Methodology

2.1 Overview

The methodology adopted for the review comprised of four key stages:

Stage 1 – Trawl for requirements in WAG

Stage 2 – Local Authority Survey

Stage 3 – Stakeholder discussions

Stage 4 – Assessment and recommendations

A mixed methodology of questionnaire surveys, face-to-face interviews and stakeholder seminars were undertaken to address quantitative and qualitative issues. 90% of local authorities contributed to this report's findings, as well as key stakeholders in WAG and among software providers.

2.2 Stage 1: Trawl for requirements in WAG

WAG planning policy staff set out their ongoing and predicted data requirements. Data requirements were generally gathered through face-to-face interviews. These formed the basis of a local authority survey which reflected the current and possible data.

2.3 Stage 2: Local authority survey

A local authority questionnaire survey addressed a wide range of data collection issues, including:

- What is the time/cost burden of collecting the current data?
- How useful is the data to the local authority?
- What improvements or changes would they like to see?
- How does the authority ensure that the correct validation date is entered onto the system?
- What scope is there to add in data that is already recorded by the authority but not currently part of the return?
- What areas would they like to see recorded?
- What would the impact of any changes mean for the authority?
- What would be the implication of changes to the local authority and how could it be achieved and at what cost, etc?

The survey was sent to each of the 22 Unitary Authorities and 3 National Parks in Wales. The response rate was 76%. Throughout the survey period a response facility was set up to offer assistance and support to those making a return, to ensure the maximum number of quality returns.

2.4 Stage 3: Stakeholder discussions

To supplement the survey we adopted a two-stage approach to stakeholder engagement. The objective of this stage was to develop a deeper understanding of the mechanics of the returns process, IT issues and other issues, such as staff resourcing.

2.4.1 Local authority case studies

We conducted six case studies which took the form of face-to-face interviews with local authority staff, predominantly development control and database managers. The sample was selected on the basis of authority type, location, scale of caseload, and back end computer systems (to ensure a range of systems were represented).

The discussions allowed the more detailed exploration of a number of topics, including;

- Staff resources allocated to the recording and return of statistical information
- Capital and revenue costs associated with data recording and monitoring
- Systems and processes in place for recording, checking and validating data
- Current use made of recorded data
- Potential usefulness of possible data
- Scale and nature of back office systems and e-planning capability

2.4.2 Seminars

Two seminar based focus groups were held in Swansea (south Wales) and St Asaph (north Wales). Each of the Unitary Authorities and National Parks was invited to attend either of the two seminars. In addition, planning policy officers from WAG, members of the Review Steering Group and software providers were invited.

The seminars provided attendees with an overview of the review programme, the approach taken to data collection, and a summary of emerging findings based on the data collected up to that period. The seminars facilitated debate among the stakeholders in relation to a number of key issues, including:

- Overall impressions and the resonance of findings to date
- Specific data collection issues relating to;
 - Enforcement
 - Application complexity (for instance, Environmental, Retail, and Transport Impact Assessments, and planning obligations)
 - Appeals information
 - Planning application fee income
- Priority actions
- Which areas are most important for addition or removal
- Should 'outcome' data be recorded
- Implementation and practical issues
- Technical issues (including, systems, support, and collection)
- Time and cost implications

2.5 Stage 4: Assessment and recommendations

The information gathering stages were primarily focused on identifying data requirements and information on the likely use and impact of implementing those requirements. These were then assessed and, drawing upon the findings of the survey and the stakeholder discussions, a final set of recommendations devised, drawing upon a 'suite' of potential changes seen as complementary and striking a balance between meeting the initial requirements, adding value to local authority

performance monitoring and management, and balancing the likely burden with overall value to government and authorities.

3 The Government perspective

3.1 Introduction

This section of the study looks at the WAG perspective of data collection and the uses that could be made of it. We draw upon other relevant data collection exercises conducted in both England and Scotland.

The review took place at a point of significant change in WAG's approach to monitoring the planning system and its outcomes. In parallel with this review, WAG published 'One Wales' in June 2007, the political commitment of the newly elected Welsh Assembly Government. WAG is also intending to consider the scope for greater use of statistical and other evidence in assessing the efficiency of existing policy and the development of new policy.

3.2 One Wales

The National Assembly leaders of Labour and Plaid Cymru published 'One Wales, a progressive agenda for the government of Wales' in June 2007.

It sets out a wide ranging programme for improving the lives of the Welsh people and making Wales a better place to live and work in. Its canvas is very broad, encompassing all facets of the Welsh Assembly Government's powers and mentioning the role of the planning system explicitly. Among specific references that have spatial dimensions are:

- Delivery of services in the context of the Wales Spatial Plan
- Enabling economic development and investment through the country, and particularly the Heads of the Valleys and Mon a Menai
- Increasing the number of affordable homes across Wales over the next four years
- Changing details of the planning system in respect of affordable housing, language impact assessments, and rural dwellings
- Improving regional and national transport
- Lifting health standards, particularly through health impact assessments
- Reforming education and personal services, and
- Tackling climate change, including sustainable energy production and consumption.

The timing of this review offers the opportunity to assess whether statistical data collected from local authorities can assist in the development and subsequent monitoring of policy that achieves the ends set out in 'One Wales'.

3.3 Planning: delivering for Wales

In planning, WAG is working closely with many stakeholders, including local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate, to ensure that the planning system will:

- Be open, fair and transparent
- Inspire public and business confidence
- Deliver improved quality and speed
- Integrate with other plans, processes and actions

- Meet the Welsh Assembly objectives set in the Plan for Wales

P:dW is designed to ensure that WAG and local authorities continue to build on achieved success and raise standards across Wales.

In 2006 Carwyn Jones, Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside, made a statement reporting on the progress of P:dW. It referred to progress on plan making by local authorities, national policy making by WAG, and initiatives such as extra resources of delivery. There was no specific mention of development control, or of the performance of authorities in delivering this function.

3.4 Best value and statutory performance indicators

Best Value legislation applies to Welsh planning authorities. The high level objective is to improve local authority services.

The statutory performance indicators for Wales (WPIs) cover the whole range of local authority services. The highest set of indicators is 'national strategic indicators'. Among them for 2007/08, there is no indicator directly related to the delivery of the planning service.

There are subsidiary core sets of indicators relating to all authority services which the authorities can use and publish as they see fit.

The core indicators for planning services in 2007/08 are shown in the box below:

Core indicators for planning services in 2007/08

PLA/004

- a) The percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 13 weeks
- b) The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks
- c) The percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks
- d) The percentage of all other planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks

PLA/002

The percentage of applications for development determined during the year that were approved

PLA/003

a) The number of appeals that were determined during the year, in relation to:

- i) Planning application decisions
- ii) Enforcement notices

b) The percentage of these determined appeals that upheld the authority's decision, in relation to:

- i) Planning application decisions
- ii) Enforcement notices

PLA/005

The percentage of enforcement cases resolved during the year within 12 weeks of receipt

PLA/006

The number of new affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all new housing units provided during the year

PLA/007

The number of new housing units provided during the year on previously developed land as a percentage of all new housing units provided during the year

(The indicators for planning are not numbered consecutively because of changes in the suite of indicators over time.)

These indicators measure a wide range of functions from system performance (for instance, the time taken to determine applications) to assessment of the quality of

outcomes (such as the success rate of the authority on appeal and the delivery of affordable housing). There is an expectation that the performance information required by these indicators will be used by authorities to improve their service delivery.

3.4.1 Authorities' performance improvement

Although information is collected about authorities' speed for handling planning applications, the measures of the improvement of services expected under Best Value is widely interpreted by authorities to encompass factors other than speed.

Many authorities regard it as a key factor in delivering predictability of timing to ensure that applicants provide all the necessary information to determine the applications and in a manner that assists the deliberations of the authorities. Authorities therefore invest time before the applications are made to enable validation to take place and, depending on the definition of the start time by the authorities, this may take up some of the time allocated to deliberation. Although the speed (or predictability) of the planning services is part of a quality service, many authorities put equal or greater emphasis on the quality of the outputs from the system, in terms of the development that takes place and its design and location.

3.5 Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs)

The Local Development Plan (LDP) Manual (WAG June 2006) provides a detailed guide to the structure and content of Welsh LDPs, and on developing monitoring targets and indicators to provide baseline data to assess LDP performance. It seeks to align content of AMRs with the WPIs. It says that indicators should focus on LDP outputs and should "*measure quantifiable physical activities that are directly related to the implementation of planning policies*" (p108). However, there are clear overlaps between the subject areas that such indicators might cover and the types of data that might be recorded for development control.

Although it exhorts local autonomy in developing indicators, the Guide outlines a number of 'core output indicators' that are 'essential for assessing implementation of national policy'. They are:

Core indicators for LDP monitoring

Indicators Prescribed in Regulation 37

- the housing land supply taken from the current Housing Land Availability Study (TAN 1);
- the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA's area (TAN 2).

Other Output Indicators for LDPs

- net employment land supply/development (ha/sq m.);
- amount of development, including housing, permitted on allocated sites in the development plan as a % of development plan allocations and as % of total development permitted (ha and units);
- average density of housing development permitted on allocated development plan sites;
- amount of new development (ha) permitted on previously developed land (brownfield redevelopment and conversions) expressed as a percentage of all development permitted;
- amount of major retail, office and leisure development (sq m) permitted in town centres expressed as a percentage of all major development permitted (TAN 4);
- amount of development (by TAN 15 paragraph 5.1 development category) permitted in C1 and

C2 floodplain areas not meeting all TAN 15 tests (paragraph 6.2 i-v);

- amount of greenfield and open space lost to development (ha) which is not allocated in the development plan;
- amount of waste management capacity permitted expressed as a percentage of the total capacity required, as identified within the Regional Waste Plan (TAN 21);
- the extent of primary land-won aggregates permitted in accordance with the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates expressed as a percentage of the total capacity required as identified in the Regional Technical Statement (MTAN);
- the capacity of Renewable Energy developments (MW) installed inside Strategic Search Areas by type (TAN 8).

A number of proposals assessed within this review are similar to some of these core indicators, which have been formally adopted by the WAG as part of the LDP monitoring process.

3.6 The Development Control Quarterly Survey

The current DCQS return and guidance are at appendix A1. It is run by WAG Planning Division. The return gives a high level view of the volume of planning applications being handled by each local planning authority, the speed of their determination and general information about the nature of the development in those applications. There is no information on enforcement or fees, or on the outputs of the proposed development in terms of, for instance, the number of dwellings or floorspace.

Following the receipt of the returns, a simple statistical analysis is undertaken. This is published on the WAG web site, with no commentary on the figures presented. A copy of the most recent statistical release is at appendix A2.

3.7 Discussions with WAG planning policy staff

From our discussions, we conclude that relatively little use is currently made of the data collected in the Development Control Quarterly Survey of local authorities. It is not published in a complete or raw form. Local authorities are therefore unable to analyse it for benchmarking or other purposes.

The data collected is at present a very good complement to the close working relations between WAG and individual LPAs. However, within WAG, the data is not used extensively but the prevailing opinion was that this was a potentially wasted opportunity. Against the background of an emerging desire to strengthen the evidence base for policy making, WAG would welcome further data that would prove helpful in monitoring existing policy and deciding on the scope and shape of new policy if local authorities had systems in place to collect it.

The 'wish list' is set out in the following paragraphs.

3.7.1 Performance monitoring and local authority fee income

In terms of LPA performance monitoring, WAG was keen to not produce a performance 'league table', recognising that quality and consistency were important work elements that could be overlooked when assessing performance by statistics alone. However, in order to help make the case for increased resources for LPAs through incremental increases in planning application fees, WAG needed to demonstrate that applicants were receiving an increased level of performance and a better service overall. Appropriate data collection was vital in this regard.

3.7.2 Departures and call-ins

Measuring the number of departures was not the policy imperative it once was, as a measure of the quality of plans. Collecting departure data would pose a definitional issue, since data would need to be based on 'significant' departures from the development plan. Any definition would be inevitably problematic, given the range of experiences and contexts in Wales, but would have to focus on shopping thresholds, proposed use, scale or size or development and would also have to consider single dwellings in the countryside.

Decisions that go against officer recommendations are a measure of the functioning of each authority. There is nothing wrong with such events and indeed it could be said to show that the democratic process is functioning properly. However, recurrent instances could show a breakdown in relations between officers and members.

For obvious reasons, all call-in cases were known to WAG.

3.7.3 Enforcement

As the planning system becomes more complex and as current thinking is to explore ways of removing less important elements of the planning system outside of formal (permissive) control, enforcement is becoming increasingly important. This is reinforced by the increase in the level of correspondence that WAG receives regarding neighbour disputes and reports of enforcement breaches.

Current resourcing levels in LPAs means that enforcement is typically poorly resourced in terms of the manpower available compared to the budgetary requirements of providing a proactive monitoring and enforcement function, being seen as a comparatively neglected or under-resourced function.

WAG is currently carrying out a review of enforcement, and will assess their policy stance following its conclusion, most probably in the form of a TAN. Some enforcement data is collected in the WPIs. However, the current DCQS does not record any information in relation to enforcement and there is no clear statistical picture of the scale, action taken or outcomes from enforcement. This is a significant gap.

3.7.4 Gypsy and traveller sites

Policy on gypsy and traveller development is currently subject to consultation as part of a draft circular by WAG. To monitor this emerging policy, data is needed to enable analysis of these types of decision compared with other types of development. Further, under the Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) there is a more basic need to know the number, nature and outcome of such applications. However, quarterly data recording might be more frequent than necessary, although annual data recording might in turn not be frequent enough.

Related to this, but much wider in scope, is the possibility of ethnic monitoring through planning datasets covering mainstream applications, enforcement action and retrospective applications so that analysis would be possible of adverse impacts on any group making an application. It would require information of this sort to be collected with applications.

3.7.5 Health

Health is an emerging policy area and one that is increasingly involving planners and planning skills, for example through the use of e.g. Health Impact Assessments (HIAs). These are not legal requirements, but One Wales makes them mandatory for applications for open cast coalmining. There is no measure or means currently in place to assess the accuracy or effectiveness of HIAs. The review of the DCQS should consider the best way forward.

3.7.6 Housing

Making sufficient provision for projected future housing needs continues to be a dominant, high-profile topic in Wales, through the 'One Wales' agenda and within planning policy, principally TAN 1 (2006) and TAN 2 (2006). Affordable housing is a priority for WAG, and accordingly TAN1 requires estimates of affordable housing units over a 5-year period. LPAs produce Housing Land Availability Studies which plan for predicted demand over the next 5 years and which are updated annually, including affordable units completed on each site.

Current data monitoring is focused on housing forecasts. There is a gap in information about housing that is being delivered by the planning system (as opposed to being built). In reality this would require monitoring the number of houses granted planning permission, which might also be augmented by gathering information on the size and tenure – including affordability. Any such collection should not duplicate data collected for the AMR.

3.7.7 Minerals

MTAN 1 (Aggregates) and draft MTAN2 (Coal) make a clear distinction between energy and non-energy minerals (i.e. coal and all others). Further, the Mining Waste Directive is coming into force in May 2008, and WAG will need to consider issues around mineral tipping as well as energy aggregate extraction. There is therefore a possible need for data on the energy/non-energy split (which might also indicate underground and surface workings) so that WAG can better monitor the Waste Management Plans of all mineral tipping sites.

3.7.8 Planning obligations (section 106 agreements)

No data analysis is possible of the volume of planning obligations and the nature of the development to which they relate, or the effect that planning obligations have on LPA development control performance. Given their significance in local economic and specific planning department performance terms, this could be a major omission that should be rectified.

3.7.9 Pre-application discussions

Pre-application discussions between prospective applicants and LPAs are considered best practice by WAG, but no data is currently recorded regarding the scale or take-up of these. Moreover, authorities may charge for this service. However, there is no evidence on which to judge the validity of complaints to WAG about the quality or availability (including wait) of pre-application discussions. There would be definitional issues to resolve to record statistics on this subject: many applications are preceded by a high level general query (such as to the extent of permitted development) which would be unlikely to attract a fee or to be recorded.

3.7.10 Climate change

Tackling climate change is a high Ministerial and administrative priority. The application of the Code for Sustainable Homes and wide adoption of the 'Merton' Rule about renewable energy in new development are signs of a change in the approach of developers and authorities. To drive UK towards its international commitments, government needs a set of measures of progress made so far, as one of the weapons in its armoury. Some development (such as renewable energy and development on the flood plain) are proxies for the success of policy on both mitigation and adaptation.

3.7.11 Renewable energy

This is currently one of the most high profile areas in which WAG are working. Renewable energy and the policy shift towards sustainable development to tackle

climate change are likely to remain a high priority for the foreseeable future. So there is a need for data to monitor progress against TAN 8 and on which to base emerging policy.

The prime data requirements are concerned with monitoring the effectiveness of the policy (the uptake of renewables within TAN 8 SSA's) rather than individual authorities' performance. However, an authority-specific basis would produce a more detailed picture.

Details would be needed on generating capacity and energy source. In terms of the latter, 'onshore wind, water, biomass, PV, and other' would be an ideal split, with 'onshore wind and other' as a bare minimum. Application numbers would permit an analysis on a similar energy source basis, to see if or how the consents vary by energy source and by authority. But the degree to which renewable energy is an ancillary use to other development or is permitted development would distort the data set to some degree.

3.7.12 Flooding

The key issue that needs monitoring is development on the flood plain, particularly in relation to predicted changes in river levels as a result of climate change. The review might investigate whether local authorities might collect relevant information, what that information might be and how frequently the information should be returned to WAG.

3.7.13 Rural Issues

No data is currently recorded that provides a split of development statistics for rural areas, or by any type of landscape classification. Further, no data is collected in terms of agricultural development, some of which sits outside planning control, and the remainder of which tends to be focused on farm diversification activities. We have considered this possible addition to the quarterly returns.

3.7.14 Previously developed (brownfield) land

Housing Land Availability Studies undertaken by LPAs record the housing development on green- and brown-field sites, but this is not extended to other types of development. Under TAN 1 definitional issues are more established and expected to become less of a factor. Whilst such aggregated data might be better recorded through an AMR-type monitoring exercise, the study should explore current practice and resource implications.

3.7.15 Sport, recreation and tourism

In terms of sport and recreation, playing fields and open space levels/uses have risen up Ministers' agenda. Consideration needs to be given to what information might be required (for instance, number of applications, site area or net change) and how this information would be used.

For tourism, consultation has closed on the revised TAN13 which covers tourism development. Responses have indicated strong interest in this area, but have not focused on data collection issues. Current data collection for tourism is undertaken and published by Visit Wales and focuses on visitor numbers, spend, origin etc rather than relevant application numbers, decisions. For the purposes for monitoring a Welsh Tourist Strategy, the Visit Wales data is more relevant.

3.7.16 Telecommunications

Telecommunications equipment development takes place after a full planning application or a prior approval notification where the nature of the development makes the development permitted under the GPDO. No specific data is recorded by LPAs about such development. Existing data is based upon information

provided by the Mobile Operators Association (MOA) and is drawn from the roll-out plans submitted by individual network operators. LPAs use of this information to assess future development varies.

The question is whether to collect further information, if the DCQS is the best method, and what analysis would be undertaken of any data collected.

3.7.17 Trees and Hedgerows

High Hedges are a high policy interest area. Apart from appeals information from PINS, little is known about this area, and no baseline data exists. The same is true of trees (Tree Preservation Orders and applications to lop/fell etc). WAG feel that there is a need for a policy update in this area, although a one-off or ad hoc survey may be more suitable than ongoing data collection.

3.7.18 Waste

In line with WAG's "Wise About Waste" policy, waste planning and monitoring is becoming increasingly important. Welsh authorities currently co-ordinate to produce three regional Waste Strategies (North, South East, and South West). Full data on implementation of the Strategies is published annually by Environment Agency Wales.

If further data were collected through the DCQS, it should be more than the number of applications, and cover as well the nature of the applications, the relevant throughput (tonnage) involved, and whether there facilities were 'open' disposal (i.e. landfill) or 'inside' disposal (i.e. incineration).

Conditions imposed on planning permissions require the recycling of demolition waste and there are currently proposals for site-specific Waste Management Plans where there is demolition involved in a development which has an overall cost in excess of £250,000. It might therefore be necessary to monitor policy through the number of applications involving demolition.

3.7.19 Water

While there are a number of planning policy issues (including water management and provision, sewerage and sewage treatment) that require monitoring, the DCQS is not thought to be the most appropriate way to do so. Much new infrastructure is statutory undertakers' permitted development and is received by LPAs as Prior Approval Notifications.

3.8 Comparative policy approaches elsewhere in Great Britain

3.8.1 PS1 and PS2 (England)

The planning statistics (PS) forms in England operated by Communities and Local Government (CLG) cover similar areas as the WAG DCQS. However, the PS1 and PS2 returns do collect more information in terms of:

- Delegated decisions
- Decisions taking between 8 and 13 weeks
- Development involved listed building consent
- Enforcement notices and actions
- Development by LPAs

A review of the PS1 and PS2 returns has just been completed, and CLG has changed the forms to identify applications

- Subject to planning performance agreements

-
- Taking longer timescales for determination
 - Splitting major applications into two categories
 - For gypsy and traveller pitches, and
 - Lawful development certificates.

In addition, CLG also collects information in regard to planning application fee income (via the FEE1 and FEE2 returns), and also specifically in relation to 'County matter' applications (via the CPS1 return).

3.8.2 Statement of Planning Applications Determined (Scotland)

Again, the development control return undertaken by the Scottish Executive is fundamentally similar in nature to the WAG return. The main differences are:

- More data collected about determination timescales
- A different split to the traditional major, minor, other that just looks as development type and not scale.
- Inclusion of hazardous substance applications, listed building applications, and telecommunications development
- Questions on local plan coverage (population covered by up to date plans)
- Enforcement notices and actions
- Farm and forestry development (prior notifications and determinations)

4 The local authority perspective

4.1 Local authority survey

The survey was sent to each of the 22 Unitary Authorities and 3 National Parks in Wales (Local Planning Authorities – LPAs). A response rate of 76% was achieved. Throughout the survey period a response facility was set up to offer assistance and support to those making a return, to ensure the maximum number of quality returns.

4.1.1 Findings

An annotated copy of the survey with aggregated findings for quantitative questions can be found in appendix A3. A list of all the respondents is in appendix A4.

Use, accessibility and administration

- All respondents said that they used the data published by WAG for their own purposes; principally for reporting to Heads of Service, Joint Planning Committee Members, planning officers and staff and for the purpose of internal performance management; and it is much less used for publicity purposes.
- All the published material was looked at by the majority of authorities: but individual authorities' own data reports were the most searched for data type, followed by data reports for other authorities.
- Access to the published data was well understood among authorities; all knew where to find it, and 74% (14 LPAs) were aware of the publication timescale.
- A small majority said no changes needed to be made to the data provided in the development control publications/tables; a clearer majority were content with the existing presentation; and 95% of authorities (18 LPAs) said that a quarterly return was the appropriate frequency, with no clear view on an alternative frequency among those that wanted to see change.
- 79% of authorities (15 LPAs) hold all the required application and monitoring data within a single database / analysis system; however, only 41% of authorities' (8 LPAs) return information was automatically produced by a back office system, with a further 47% (9 LPAs) doing part of it automatically and part manually.
- Authorities used a variety of software providers for their automated systems. 84% (16 LPAs) had agreements that meant that changes to government requirements were provided at no extra cost; views were split on whether it was desirable to integrate authorities' systems with those of WAG; and one third of authorities had had problems submitting their quarterly returns in the last year, with software problems the predominant cause.

Scope of the return

- Authorities saw value in reporting information about
 - Enforcement cases (see below)
 - Appeals, and
 - determinations made under delegated powers
- Views were more balanced on the value of reporting
 - applications accompanied by an environmental statement with a 16-week deadline;
 - those for which a section 106 agreement had to be negotiated

- cases that had exceeded the 8- and 13-week targets, and
- decisions that were not in line with officer recommendations
- The majority of authorities saw little value in
 - redefining the major application category, including nationally significant infrastructure projects;
 - reporting on achievement of negotiated determination deadlines;
 - identifying the nature of assessments accompanying applications;
 - splitting 'carried forward' cases into major, minor and other; or by type of land use, or
 - identifying the land uses of cases decided under delegated powers, or those that had been withdrawn

Planning fees

- The majority of authorities thought that reporting information about total fees received would be valuable
- Authorities did not see value in
 - providing information about fees received by land use type
 - realigning the returns to fee categories
 - realigning the returns to the Use Classes Order or
 - adding a mixed use category

Types of application

- The majority of authorities thought that it would be valuable to report information about
 - prior approval notifications
 - applications for development falling within a flood plain
 - applications finally disposed of
 - lawful development certificates
 - hedgerow removal notices, and
 - online applications
- Views were more balanced on the value of reporting
 - approval or variation of conditions
 - separately identifying agricultural applications
 - notifications for telecommunications masts under 15 metres in height
 - applications to fell trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders
 - invalid applications (as judged initially, due to insufficient information)
 - listed building prosecutions, and
 - neglected land and property (s215) wasteland notices
- The majority of authorities thought that it would not be valuable to report information about
 - Summary data for outline/full/reserved matters application types

- applications determined under Acts other than planning legislation
- minerals applications by energy/non-energy workings or by surface/extractive operations
- renewable energy applications, split by energy source
- waste disposal applications by internal (incineration) or external (landfill) applications
- applications submitted in Welsh
- combining 'dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other' into only 'major/minor/other' applications
- listed building consent applications and applications submitted alongside an application for listed building consent
- resubmitted, 'free go' applications
- high hedgerow disputes, or
- permissions for gypsy and traveller caravan sites, and for development on existing sites

Enforcement

- The majority of authorities thought that it would be valuable to report information about
 - complaints received
 - complaints where further formal action was taken, and
 - express consent to display advertisements
- Views were balanced on reporting applications for retrospective permission (including whether application was granted or refused)
- The majority of authorities thought that it would not be valuable to report information about where LPA made use of s70 powers to decline to determine applications

Departure decisions, referred and called-in applications

- Views were balanced on reporting referred decisions, departure decisions by category (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other), and called-in applications (by Secretary of State)

“Outcome” data

- The majority of authorities thought that it would be valuable to report information about the 'quantity' (potential development output) of permissions granted, for example, the number of dwellings consented
- Views were balanced on reporting
 - Housing development consented by type, intended tenure, including use as a second home
 - 'Quantity' (potential development output) of permissions granted, i.e. floorspace by use type
 - 'Quantity' (potential development output) applied for as well as 'quantity' permitted to take account of modifications
 - 'Quantity' (potential development output) of permissions within brownfield and green belt sites/areas, and

- 'Quantity' of waste processing capacity delivered
- The majority of authorities thought that it would not be valuable to report information about
 - 'Quantity' (potential development output) refused, as well as 'quantity' granted
 - 'Quantity' of energy generating capacity delivered by renewable sources, by source, or
 - Split out change of use applications, asking for net change in use by use type

Role of forms

- Views were balanced whether the DCQS should continue to focus exclusively on 'process' and performance data or be broadened to cover output data too

4.2 Stakeholder seminars and case study visits

A full list of attendees of the seminars is in appendix A5.

4.2.1 Current form and data collection

Authorities said that the current return did not reflect the full workload for LPAs. Among other things, it did not take account of preliminary enquiries and pre-application discussions are excluded, as are applications regarding listed buildings, or tree felling. In addition, the current return did not reflect that applications can be complex and that considerable time is needed to determine them – for instance, large mixed development applications.

The return was too much geared to quantity aspects and speed of determination rather than on quality of performance, but it was recognised that this could be difficult to measure via a simple statistical return. A general principle offered was that a "better" decision is made by negotiating with applicants to get an approval rather than refusing applications under the 8-week target constraint. There was a general feeling that applications are now much more complex than they used to be and that targets will not be met.

Authorities have limited influence on the time taken on these consultations with statutory undertakers regarding, for example, environmental statements. There can be internal delays within authorities, for instance, from council highway officers, which affect the time it takes to determine applications. Increasing numbers of third party representations on applications makes applications difficult to handle.

There was general agreement that collection of enforcement information would be useful. However, complaints need to be properly defined regarding whether they are complaints on a development control issue or on more general issues, or whether such complaints are sufficiently important to justify action by authorities.

There was also general agreement that the "major" category should be adjusted to take account of very large applications. This would require raising the 10 dwelling and 1,000 m² site floorspace thresholds.

Mixed views were expressed regarding collecting fees and costs information with authorities collecting data differently. It was also unclear what the data would be used for.

In terms of monitoring of development to completion, it was unclear what could or should be recorded. Definitions of completions vary but it was agreed that building control provided the most accurate and consistent information and that it would not be appropriate to duplicate such data.

There was a strong feeling that data should be collected with authorities' own use in mind. Data considered more useful at the local level included a record of the number of permitted development requests, both informally and formally, the number and duration of pre-application discussions, the amount of time taken to decide planning conditions, the frequency of planning committee meeting and the number of decisions verses the number of delegated decisions, the number and duration of post application discussions and the number of invalid applications submitted. Local authority officers identified these indicators as having a direct impact upon the speed of the decision making process. However, it was recognised however that these elements could not realistically be incorporated into the quarterly return due to difficulties in quantifying these elements.

Overall, authorities were in favour of expanding the current return to reflect more of the full development control workload. Statistics on average number of cases per officer could provide some indication of work pressure. However, it was crucial that any data changes should be relevant and useful to authorities as well as WAG. If data were viewed as of limited use, they should not be collected however easy they were to collect.

It was considered that the current guidance notes accompanying the current return should be reviewed and clarified to ensure that there is a consistent understanding of requirements across all LPAs. There was a consensus that the "other" category needs to be fully defined in the guidance notes.

LPAs were concerned that not all the data they provided in the quarterly returns was published by WAG and queried whether the non-published data were used internally by WAG. They asked whether all the data provided should be published.

4.2.2 Future data collection

Workshop members were invited to provide their views on their priority areas for data inclusion and whether there might be candidates for removal of data currently collected.

Departure applications received and permitted are collected and data are published by WAG each quarter. There were clear inconsistencies between LPAs in reporting this information, arising from differences in definition of what constitutes a departure.

Enforcement data are currently collected by most LPAs. Such data are important and should be included on the quarterly return but there were warnings that LPAs might record such data differently, so comparability could be a problem. Pre-application discussions and enquiries are important elements of LPAs workload but, again, comparability between LPAs regarding volumes of such pre-application discussions/enquiries could also be a problem.

Minerals applications could be added to major and minor categories rather than as a separate category.

Output data was considered to be more useful to WAG than to authorities. It was not clear how this information could be effectively captured through the quarterly returns. LPAs thought that collecting "outcome" data might be better captured when 1APP is rolled-out in Wales. If such output data was to be included in the quarterly return then the measure of outcome should focus on the number of consents granted rather than the number of housing completions on the ground, based on the premise that permissions are sometimes not carried through, therefore representing a loss in terms of actual planning input. Furthermore, permissions are not completed immediately but within the three year expiry period, meaning quarterly figures would not match planning input for that period.

The collection of prior-approval application data was seen as unnecessary, with WOPS already collecting this data. The recording of deferred application data was also seen as unnecessary, with infrequent submissions not needing to be recorded on a quarterly basis but instead being provided to WAG on request.

Because any additional data to be recorded on the current quarterly return are not generally covered in existing software maintenance contracts, LPAs thought that WAG should consider subsidising or paying for all these additional system costs. Software providers indicated that it could take at least 6 months to implement any new quarterly return outputs. Indeed, any additional fields in 1APP would incur additional charges by software providers.

The overall view from this session was that LPAs were in favour of expanding the current return to reflect more of the full workload LPAs face regarding development control.

4.3 The Forms and Guidance

Authorities generally felt comfortable with the current return. Having been running over a sustained period of time, it was felt that there was an acceptance of its value, and a good understanding of the data requirements. However, those responsible for making the return did highlight the need to generally improve the guidance notes, but few specific areas were highlighted. Particular points of note included:

- Definition and handling of mixed use applications – in particular how they should be coded, and where on the form they should appear
- Suggested checking/cross-checking that could be done to increase confidence in data, and
- Clarification of coding definition for departures decisions.

All authorities stressed the importance of good coding by support staff at the registration and validation stage. In essence, the quality of the returns and the data contains therein is seen as a direct function of the quality of coding that takes place by support staff that enter information about incoming applications onto the IT system during registration and validation.

To try and ensure consistency, efficiency and completeness, authorities use a variety of locally-designed 'check lists'. A similar approach might add value to the guidance.

Finally, authorities noted that, while the current return is generated by IT, the return is completed by hand due to the lack of an electronic version of the survey form or the means to submit returns online. Comparisons were made to the survey work carried out by the Local Government Data Unit (LGDU) which uses an Excel-based template for the reporting of PIs across several departments.

4.4 Performance Management Process and the Generation of Returns

In meeting with a range of staff within local authorities it was possible to get a comprehensive feel for the use of data by authorities. All case study authorities make both day-to-day and more periodic use of development control data. In addition, authorities collect a number of other data items. These range from authority-wide service performance indicators through to reports about individual officer or team caseloads. There tended to be two main reasons for the collection of additional data – either for performance assessment or for workload monitoring and management.

The data that authorities needed and used for assessing their performance tended to be almost identical to the data requested by WAG and authorities felt that there was generally a good match between what WAG requests and what is useful to the authority. Further, performance indicators (PI) such as those used in compiling the Wales national Performance Indicators were seen as an integral tool for the authority for both assessing performance in absolute terms and for benchmarking with neighbouring authorities or with authorities exhibiting similar characteristics. Several authorities noted that such PI collection would continue even if the Welsh Assembly ceased to require the development control data currently requested.

Data for monitoring and managing workload covered a number of areas similar to those assessed by this review – and included areas such as enforcement complaints, pre-application discussions, case officer workloads and validation levels. There did however appear to be quite wide variation in terms of the data collected, the definitions used for collection and the use/frequency of reporting for such data.

In terms of generating returns, in all case study authorities the process was largely automated and was integral to the authority IT systems. Further, in each authority there was a single member of staff that took responsibility for generating and submitting the returns, subject to an approval and/or checking process.

The main means of producing a return was through a pre-configured database query linked to a report macro which gathered and computed the required figures (based on user-defined start- and end-dates) and laid them out in the same fashion as the current return design. This was then either sent off to WAG, or transposed by hand onto the current return form and then sent off to WAG.

In the case of several IT systems, the query/report macros appeared to be based on the English returns. Indeed, some authorities could also generate such returns for their own data.

4.5 Information Currently Recorded by the Planning Officers' Society for Wales

The issue of development control data, and the need to collect sufficient robust data to enable monitoring and benchmarking of work volume and performance, led the Planning Officers' Society for Wales (POSW) to devise a statistical return for its members. This return has been running and evolving for some time now, and has a 100% response rate.

Data is collected under four main categories: contact details (also including baseline data such as population and area), development control (15 indicators), enforcement (6 indicators), and quality in customer service (11 indicators). The inclusion of a wide range of quality, volume and speed indicators mirrors the balanced approach taken by WAG in not favouring speed of decision-making over the quality of decisions made.

The data is presented in the form of both copies of individual returns by authorities and a collated matrix of data, ordered alphabetically by authority name. Data is presented side-by-side for comparison, but without adopting a 'league table' approach.

5 Evaluation of Options and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the suggested changes to the development control return based on the information gathered throughout the review. These suggestions have assessed in the context of an over-arching set of principles and then in detail.

5.2 Principles for Change

The recommendations made by this review have drawn upon the following guiding principles for change.

- **Presumption against change** – the principle has been that the burden of data collection should not be added to unless the value of the statistics produced is positive, and meets the other principles set out below.
- **Data should be necessary** – that is to say that data should be collected for a specific purpose and be of value to both WAG and local authorities. Overall, data should not just be ‘good to know’. The aim should not be to capture and monitor the ‘whole’ of the application workload of the planning service for the sake of it: extensions to collection should have a specific purpose. The data set should complement the significant work already undertaken by authorities in monitoring and managing performance. It should also take account of the information currently collected by POSW.
- **Resource implications are important.** This applies to both authorities and WAG. The data collection requirements should take into account the overall burden of additional data collection, including the existing activity, not just any marginal change.
- **Ensure definitional clarity.** Any new data needs to be capable of unequivocal definition so that the new series are on a consistent and accurate basis.
- **Data should be included in the DCQS only where it is the most appropriate way for such data to be collected.** This related to both the method of returning data (such as whether data is better monitored through the development control return, or through a separate survey, or through AMRs) and the frequency of returning data (that is, is quarterly the most appropriate interval for the data in question).
- **Any changes to data gathering should not damage the time-series.**
- Finally, **changes should be considered in light of other policy.** In keeping with current and emerging policy priorities, data gathering should both drive forward new WAG policy and enable monitoring of the effectiveness of existing policy. Furthermore, they should assist local authorities in their input to the local government settlement.

5.3 Assessment Matrix

The views of WAG on specific planning issues that might be the subject of future statistics are set out in section 3.7. The views of local authorities on future data collection are in sections 4.1 and 4.2.

Proposal	Commentary
General Alterations	
Quarterly submission of returns	Quarterly submission is the status quo, so there are no resource implications. There is no desire to move to lower frequency in general, which would entail considerable loss of value of the statistics. However, some new data may be collected less frequently. No change
Longer term integration of back-office systems to enable WAG to directly extract data	This may be a long term objective which would speed up data collection and make analysis more flexible. However, it would require significant resource (IT and personnel training) investment by WAG and authorities. It is not a high priority at present. A simpler, electronic method of data collection is proposed later in the report. No change
Process data	
Larger/Complex Applications	
1. Redefine 'major' category with a new (higher) threshold	This change would interrupt the time series and make it out of kilter with the rest of Great Britain. It would obscure some knowledge of authorities' performance, because applications that fell outside the higher definition would fall into other application categories for performance purposes and affect them. No change
2. Split 'major' category, separating out the much larger applications into a 'major major'-type category	This would create another break in the time series and would only relate to a very small number of applications. No change
3. No. of "nationally significant infrastructure project" applications	Nationally significant infrastructure projects would not fall to local authorities to determine, though they would have a role in consultation on them. Legislation is currently before Parliament to give effect to the Government's proposals on national significant infrastructure projects. They would be handled by a national body which had records of its work. Until such time as this legislation is on the statute book, a decision would be premature. No change
4. Separate information requested for applications with an ES, taking account of the 16-week target timescale	The different procedural requirements for and likely workload for authorities of such applications is not properly represented in the current set of performance information collected. This would fill a current gap in performance information for authorities and WAG. There are no perceived definitional issues. Add 13-16 week time category; collected quarterly
5. No. of applications determined within a previously negotiated timescale	The Welsh Assembly Government is not encouraging authorities to enter into delivery agreements with applicants on delivery of determinations as a route to application performance management. Even if they were, the data would not reflect consistent timescales, because each case would, by definition, be different. No change

Proposal	Commentary
6. No. and type of 'assessments' received, i.e. such as flood risk, land contamination, transport impact, health impact, biodiversity, design, access, protected species etc.	The variety and number of assessments required is not consistent for all applications, and a simple return would not reliably indicate the workload implications for authorities, nor assist WAG in its policy making unless it were unduly complex. No change
7. No. of applications requiring completion of a section 106 planning obligation (agreement and unilateral undertaking)	Planning obligations can create a significant workload for authorities but they contribute many of the considerable benefits that derive from the planning system. They are required to be shown in the planning register. While each obligation is different, further data would go some way towards showing the burden on authorities and the impact this may be having on their performance and staffing needs. Both authorities and WAG would benefit from this intelligence. Add new section 106 category; collected quarterly
8. No. of applications requiring completion of a s106 agreement and unilateral undertakings determined within the target timescale	See arguments for 7 above. Although it would double the amount of data collected, we recommend inclusion. Add data on achievement of deadlines for all categories of application; collected quarterly
Appeals	
9. Appeals information (as currently provided by PINS) such as appeal numbers, type, result etc.	Appeals volume and performance are recorded by PINS and in the POSW return. Neither WAG nor authorities would derive a benefit from collecting the information through the DCQS, which would also need to be reconciled. No change
Determination of Applications	
10. Expansion of the determination timescales recorded to explore the time taken for those applications taking more than 8 or 13 weeks to determine	This new series would provide performance information on the complete set of development control decisions, filling the current gap created when cases go over the time limits. Both WAG and authorities would have a better picture of overall performance. There do not appear to be definitional issues. Add new >8, >13 and >16 week (see 4 above) categories; collected quarterly
11. Split 'carried forward' information into major/minor/other application types	This would assist in understanding the composition of the 'backlog' of cases in each authority. But the review identified little concern with backlog, which would be of greater significance in a stricter performance management regime, and such data would add little value for authorities or WAG. No change
12. Split 'carried forward' information into each individual type (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	This would assist in understanding the composition of the 'backlog' of cases in each authority. But see 11 above. No change

Proposal	Commentary
13. Number of decisions made using delegated powers	Policy on the use of delegation is the subject of reform proposals, with the suggestion that local member review bodies might review appeals against applications refused by officers. Until such time as the policy is settled, a change in data collection in this area would be premature. No change
14. Number of decisions made using delegated powers, split into each individual type (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	The same arguments apply as for 13 above. No change
15. No. of decisions by planning committee against officer recommendations	While decisions which do not follow officer recommendations are a rare event, and they protect the democratic nature of the decision making process, repeated cases that go against officer recommendations could be a measure of quality that is valuable to authorities themselves and to WAG. Given the infrequency of the events, annual collection would be sufficiently frequent. There appear to be no definitional issues. Add committee decisions against officer recommendation category; annual collection
16. Split 'withdrawn' applications into each individual type (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	There are definitional issues about what constitutes a withdrawn application and there is little evidence of a causal relationship between authority behaviour and applicants' skill in making applications. Thus the value of the information to WAG and authorities would be small. No change
17. Cases per case officer	This measure of productivity and quality of decision making was proposed in the stakeholder seminars. It has the support of WAG. Guidance will be needed on the definition to be used. Add cases per case officer; annual collection
Planning Application Fees	
18. Total planning application fees received	The extent to which fees are an adequate mechanism for financing the planning service is a priority question for WAG and local authorities. However, there is a question about whether the DCQS is the proper means for collection, or whether a financial return – or an amendment to an existing one – would be a better alternative. WAG to consider best collection means for fee income data
19. Total planning application fees for each category (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	Even though fee income is a priority for better intelligence, collecting data about each class of application would descend into too great detail and begin to raise definitional issues (particularly about mixed use developments). No change
Application Categories	
20. Realign the form categories to reflect planning application fee categories	The proposal would disrupt the time series and would lose detail of the nature of development. No change

Proposal	Commentary
21. Realign the form categories to reflect Use Classes Order	The proposal would require significant modification to authority systems with little added value for WAG or the authorities. No change
22. Add a 'mixed use' category to the form within major/minor/other application types	Labelling a group of applications as mixed use would disrupt the time series and would not assist in understanding the workload or performance issues created by them. It could create definitional issues. No change
Specialist Applications/Application Types	
23. No. of prior approval applications by type (e.g. demolition, telecommunications)	Although collection of prior approval information would add to WAG and authorities' understanding of the workload, there remain definitional issues that could undermine the accuracy, and hence value, of the data. See also 33. No change
24. No. of approval of condition(s) applications	Because the volume of applications for approval is not an accurate guide to the workload involved in handling them, the collection of this data would not add to WAG or authorities' understanding of their performance or resourcing. No change
25. No. of variation of condition(s) applications	The same arguments apply as for 24 above. No change
26. Separate agricultural applications to form a new category (i.e. (agric dwellings, agric offices, agric industry, agric retail, all other agric)	The agricultural or other use of dwellings in the countryside is a key consideration in maintaining the rural landscape, which are interests of both WAG and authorities. Collecting data on agricultural applications would, however, need to be broken down between different uses to identify this separately from, say, diversification applications. Some development is outside the planning system by virtue of the agricultural exemption. There would be consequential definitional issues. This would create a burden which, on balance, we conclude against. No change
27. Summary data for outline/full/reserved matters application types	Understanding the breakdown of authorities' workload in relation to different types of application could assist WAG and authorities. But it is not a sure guide to the actual volume of the task in hand at any time. No change
28. No. of applications determined by other Acts (e.g. Electricity, Gas, and Pipeline Acts)	More detailed information on the provision of infrastructure would assist WAG in understanding the contribution of small scale development to the larger Welsh picture. However, application numbers alone would not necessarily show the extra capacity that the development provided. And the measurement of capacity would vary with the nature of the development. No change
29. Split minerals applications into energy/non-energy workings and by surface/extractive operations	Because of geology, there is a differential burden of minerals applications among authorities. Further data on relative workloads would assist WAG and authorities in better understanding the constraint that this imposes. Add minerals by energy/non-energy workings and by surface/extractive operations; collected annually

Proposal	Commentary
30. Information on renewable energy applications, split by energy source	This proposal would not capture data on micro generation where it was permitted or incidental to another use. However, it would help WAG and authorities in monitoring implementation of climate change policy, which is a high governmental priority. It would be appropriate to identify some (but not all) energy sources. There do not appear to be definitional issues. Add renewable energy applications, split by energy source (biomass, hydro/tide/wave, on-shore wind, off-shore wind, other); collected annually (see also 63)
31. Split waste disposal applications into internal (incineration) and external (landfill) applications	The number of such applications is small, and implementation of regional waste plans is monitored through AMRs. No change
32. No. of applications submitted using the Welsh language	Particularly because of the use of agents (even for householder applications), there is no direct correlation between applications in Welsh and the use of Welsh. No change
33. No. of notifications for telecommunications masts under 15 metres in height	Notification of such development is only good practice and would not therefore provide a comprehensive data set. See also 23. No change
34. Combine categories (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other) into only major/minor/other applications	The proposal would interrupt the time series. And it would cause the loss of information about the volume of activity in key policy areas. WAG and authorities would be losers. No change
35. No. of applications to fell trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders	Although significant in landscape and amenity terms, and often a highly charged local issue, applications to fell trees subject to TPOs do not represent a significant volume of authority workload. Furthermore, lopping and pruning can also have significant amenity implications. This change could only be justified if every aspect of the planning service were to be measured. No change
36. Applications for Listed Building Consent, and the No. of applications submitted alongside an application for Listed Building Consent	The review has not revealed concern among authorities or in WAG about the workload consequences of heritage applications. No change
37. No. of applications for development falling within a flood plain	Both WAG and authorities are concerned about the difficulties that authorities encounter reconciling the delivery of adequate new development and avoiding the consequences of flooding. The TAN 15 classification would show the performance of authorities in delivering without permitting development in areas of high flood risk, consistent with their topography. Add applications by Zones A, B, C, C(1) and C(2) (from TAN 15); collected quarterly; a pair of vertical columns across all development types

Proposal	Commentary
38. No. of applications finally disposed of	There is no evidence that there is a large or challenging workload for authorities from this function. No change
39. No. of invalid applications (as judged initially, due to insufficient information)	The workload created by invalid applications varies between authorities depending on a number of factors including the availability and take up of pre-application discussions, the use of agents, and other pre-application advice. These definitional issues would undermine the value of any data collected. No change
40. No. of resubmitted ('free go') applications	Manipulation of other data on fees and applications could be used a proxy to derive similar information. No change
41. No. of Lawful Development Certificates	The review has not revealed concern among authorities or in WAG about the workload consequences of LDCs. The workload arising from each LDC is different, which would undermine the value of any data collected. No change
42. No. of hedgerow removal notices	There is no evidence that there is a large or challenging workload for authorities from this function. This change could only be justified if every aspect of the planning service were to be measured. No change
43. No. of online applications received	Given that all authorities can receive applications on line, this information would not record authority performance because applicants select the means of submission. No change
44. No. of listed building prosecutions	Heritage issues are not high profile concerns of authorities or WAG and, although we recommend information is collected about other aspects of enforcement, there is no need for coverage of more minor aspects of the function. No change
45. No. of high hedgerow disputes (that is, Leylandii)	There is no evidence that there is a large or challenging workload for authorities from this function. This change could only be justified if every aspect of the planning service were to be measured. No change
46. No. of neglected land and property (section 215) wasteland notices	The review has not revealed concern among authorities or in WAG about the workload consequences of such notices. The workload arising out of each notice is different, which would undermine the value of any data collected. No change
47. No. of permissions for gypsy and traveller sites, and for development on existing sites	The equal treatment of travellers in the planning system remains a high political and administrative priority. Both authorities and WAG would be able to monitor claims of inequality more effectively with a comprehensive data set. There are no foreseen definitional issues. Add permissions for traveller caravan sites, and for development on existing sites; collected quarterly

Proposal	Commentary
Enforcement Activity	
48. No. of enforcement complaints received	Following a major review by WAG of the enforcement function, and the concern of authorities that this is a relatively under-resourced function, there appears a useful data set that needs to be established. Guidance would be needed on the meaning of 'complaint'. Add enforcement complaints received; collected quarterly
49. No. of enforcement complaints where further formal action was taken	See reasoning above. Add enforcement complaints where further formal action was taken; collected quarterly
50. No. of applications where LPA made use of section 70A powers to decline to determine applications	See reasoning above. Add applications where LPA made use of section 70A powers to decline to determine applications; collected quarterly
51. No. of applications for express consent to display advertisements	See reasoning above. Add applications for express consent to display advertisements; collected quarterly
52. No. of applications for retrospective permission (including whether application was granted or refused)	See reasoning above. In addition, local authorities have argued that the ability to make a retrospective application brings the system into disrepute and statistics on the degree to which they exercise their powers of refusal would assist in policy clarification. Add applications for retrospective permission; collected quarterly
53. No. of enforcement actions taken against applications refused retrospective permission	See reasoning above. Add enforcement actions taken against applications refused retrospective permission; collected quarterly
Departure Decisions and Referred/Called-in applications	
54. No. of referred decisions	Authorities do not have a consistent definition of 'departures' and so a data set would be inconsistent and of no value to WAG or authorities. Departures are no longer thought to be a measure of an out of date plan. Delete from existing return
55. No. of departure decisions by category (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	See reasoning above. Delete from existing return
56. No. of applications called-in by the Secretary of State	Call in cases are relatively rare and both the authority concerned and the Secretary of State are aware of them. A data set would add nothing. No change

Proposal	Commentary
Outcome data	
57. Number of dwellings consented	The review has found divergent views on the collection of output information. On the one hand, it is collected through a number of other mechanisms (in planning and outside it); on the other, and particularly in WAG’s view, it is a source of valuable implementation data. Data on authorities’ propensity to permit and refuse new dwellings is key to the delivery of challenging housing targets. And it is vital to understand where those applications are in the delivery process. Add number of dwellings consented/refused by outline/full/reserved; collected annually
58. Housing development consented by type, intended tenure, including use as a second home	It is not always clear from all applications the type and tenure of dwellings. An incomplete and inconsistent data set would have little value. No change
59. Quantity (potential development output) of permissions granted, i.e. floorspace by use type	In parallel with delivery of housing, monitoring other uses has a value, particularly to WAG. Guidance would be needed on consistent definitions. Add floorspace consented/refused by use type (dwellings, offices, industry, retail/distribution, waste disposal, other); collected annually
60. Quantity (potential development output) applied for and quantity permitted to take account of modifications	Data collected would be of little overall value, given the number and extent of modifications. No change
61. Quantity (potential development output) refused, as well as quantity granted	See 57 and 59 above, which incorporates this requirement. No change
62. Quantity (potential development output) of permissions within brown- and green-field sites/areas	The distinction between green- and brown-field development continues to be a political and administrative priority. Add site area of permissions on brown- and green-field sites (using PPW definition); collected annually
63. Quantity of energy generating capacity delivered by renewable sources, by source	Monitoring implementation of climate change policy, which remains a high governmental priority. This proposal would not capture data on micro generation where it was permitted or incidental to another use. Earlier proposals on the number of applications (see 30) would not indicate delivery of capacity. So this proposal would have value for WAG and authorities. It would be appropriate to identify the same energy sources as earlier. Add renewable energy capacity, split by energy source (bio mass, hydro/tide/wave, on-shore wind, off-shore wind, other); collected annually

Proposal	Commentary
64. Quantity of waste processing capacity delivered	Meeting waste targets is a high policy priority for WAG and authorities. Monitoring the ongoing contribution in capacity terms is therefore of great value. However, it is currently done through the monitoring of the three regional Waste Strategies, and collected and published by EAW. A new data series would duplicate this. No change
65. Quantity of playing fields and open space delivered	Concern about the loss of playing fields and open space remains a Ministerial priority. Any measurement needs to record the net change so that loss or gain is clearly identified. This raises definitional issues. Despite these, we recommend inclusion. Add net change in playing fields and open space, measured in hectares; collected annually
66. Split out change of use applications, to show net change by use type	This would be a complex task of little marginal value to WAG or authorities. No change

In relation to each data set, as it is currently, information would be collected on the basis of the number of applications, showing the number permitted and those refused. Additional information, for instance on the level of flood risk, nature of minerals applications, and energy sources, would also form part of the return.

The DCQS return would continue to be completed for the quarterly requirements at the end of each quarter as at present. The annual requirements would be a supplementary return made at the year ending 31 March.

6 Conclusions and Implementation

6.1 Suggested Changes to the Return and Guidance

The suggested changes to the return are a full package of options and reforms to data collection. However, they could be interpreted as a set of possible interventions for WAG to consider. A suggested revised quarterly return is contained within appendix A6.

The survey highlighted a significant discontent with the guidance notes, but did not produce a large number of specific suggested changes. One issue is that the return form and the guidance are two separate documents although, where the form is used to transpose what is produced by the authority IT system onto paper, the guidance notes are rarely referred to.

The review finds that the guidance is not fundamentally at fault. However, we would suggest that any new version of the form includes revised guidance. Suggested revised guidance notes are part of the return at appendix A6.

6.2 Implementation Roll-out

This report sets out a list of recommendations for changes to the data collected on the quarterly Welsh development control return. WAG will need to consider which of the recommendations they wish to take forward and then enter into formal consultations with LPAs on changes to the data currently collected. These consultations should firm-up estimates of the costs to LPAs of making these changes. For implementation, LPAs will be largely dependent upon software providers to make the changes. It will be vital that WAG involve software providers at the earliest stage regarding implementation. It may be the case that LPAs have contracts with their software which cover system changes to quarterly data currently recorded in their database systems – either free or at modest charge. But these contract arrangements may well not extend to automatic population of new outputs on a revised quarterly return, and WAG need to take account of this.

It will be important for WAG to liaise with both LPAs and software providers regarding timing of implementation, particularly in view of other burdens, such as the roll-out of 1APP. Indications from software providers that it would take at least six months to fully implement final recommendations, and WAG need to avoid optimism bias in determining the programme.

6.3 A data working group

We recommend that a group of WAG officials, relevant local authority and software provider representatives be convened. Such a group would need to meet infrequently, but could provide a forum for discussing the consistency and quality of returns, ensure that WAG was both informed of current and emerging issues related to returns, and provide an opportunity to steer consideration of any potential future data capture. As a first step, we suggest that the group should pilot (and revise as necessary) the new form and guidance prior to formal launch.

6.4 Electronic Returns

The current DCQS returns are submitted by LPAs to WAG on paper. Electronic returns would be more efficient by eliminating the need for WAG to key the data into its database, avoid errors in keying-in data and generally speed the process.

With only 25 LPAs in Wales to input data, there is no need for a complicated system which might require special software and user training. A national form

could be set up in Excel which LPAs would complete and submit by email. LPAs would fill in cell entries manually or, ideally, generated automatically through system adjustments by LPAs software providers.

In order to ensure the accuracy of the data, local authorities would need to establish a mechanism for checking the returns before submission. Given the move towards the automatic production of the data, we suggest that the data working group might consider the best way to ensure a common standard for authorities.

6.5 Grossing up for non-responders

For publication purposes, national totals or percentages should include estimates for non-responding LPAs, in order to preserve the integrity of national time series. If there are only 1 or 2 non-responders, national totals would be seriously underestimated without grossing for non-response: national performance percentages would also be affected but to a lesser extent. These estimates should be based on the latest change in return figures for responding LPAs and applying these scaling factors to the last quarter when current non-responders last provided returns. Consideration could also be given as to whether these grossing routines should be stratified according to whether LPAs could be classified as urban/rural to improve the potential accuracy of grossing for non-response. Grossed estimates for individual non-responding LPAs should not be published.

6.6 Role for the LGDU

It is recommended that the most efficient way to operate a new electronic system of submitting returns using Excel would be direct to the Local Government Data Unit – Wales. The LGDU has a proven track record of developing Excel-based systems for processing statistical returns from Welsh LPAs in other areas. The LGDU has the technical expertise to carry out the grossing up for non-responding LPAs. Each quarter, the latest data would need to be ‘stitched’ into WAG’s database holding all the historic development control data, for analytical and publication purposes.

6.7 Publication and Analysis

The exact format of publication will need to reflect final decisions on the planning data to be collected. In addition, new questions arise given that some data will only be collected annually.

However, we note that only tables are currently published. We recommend that a ‘Statistical Release’ is issued which provides a short commentary highlighting the main trends and results compared with long term trends.

WAG should also consider whether the statistics published should become part of National Statistics. If so, WAG would commit themselves to further Quality Reviews of the DCQS at 5 yearly intervals. The data working group would have an important input to such reviews.

A1 Current DCQS Return and Guidance



DEVELOPMENT CONTROL QUARTERLY SURVEY

Planning Authority

Period Beginning

Ending

	Received	Decided	Withdrawn/Transferred	Carried Forward
ALL APPLICATIONS	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Applications		Decision Speed		Departures	
	Granted	Refused	Under 8 weeks	Over 13 weeks	Received	Permitted
MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS of which:						
Dwellings						
Offices						
Industry						
Retail / Distribution						
Waste Disposal						
Other						
MINOR DEVELOPMENTS of which:						
Dwellings						
Offices						
Industry						
Retail / Distribution						
Waste Disposal						
Other						
MINERALS						
GENERAL REGULATIONS						
HOUSEHOLDER						
ADVERTISEMENTS						
ALL OTHERS						

FORM COMPLETED BY
(Block Capitals)

TELEPHONE

Code () •

Ext ()

This form should be returned to:
Planning Division (P2b), The National Assembly for Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ.

Telephone enquiries should be directed to (029) 2082 3029



COMPLETING THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL QUARTERLY SURVEY FORM

APPLICATIONS TO BE INCLUDED

Applications for the purpose of the survey are defined as:

- Applications for a grant of planning permission in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988, and Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995;
- Applications for temporary permissions and for the renewal of previous planning permissions, and for the variation or discharge of conditions attached to previous planning permissions;
- Applications for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992;
- Land Compensation Act 1961 cases, i.e. for certification of appropriate alternative development;
- Applications arising from notifications under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 where the Council has determined that prior approval is required;
- Applications submitted as a result of Article 4 and Article 7 Directions;
- Applications for reserved matters.

APPLICATIONS NOT INCLUDED

The following should not be included in the survey return:-

- Deemed permissions given by a Government Department;
- Section 7(1) agreements under New Towns Act 1965;
- Notifications of Crown Development under Welsh Office Circular 37/84, or consultations by Electricity Suppliers for overhead electric lines and power stations under Welsh Office Circular 20/90;
- Notifications under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995;
- Applications for listed building consent and conservation area consent;
- Applications for hazardous substances consent;
- Revisions and modifications to existing planning permissions, except where a new application is involved.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Applications received are those accepted for the determination of planning permission between the end of the period of the previous quarterly survey and the end of the period for the current quarterly survey. For the purposes of this survey guidance on deciding which applications have been accepted for determination is given in the Good Practice Note (Wales) 1/96.

APPLICATIONS DECIDED

Applications determined are those decided between the end of the period of the previous quarterly survey and the end of the current quarterly survey. For the purposes of this survey guidance on deciding which applications have been determined, and the definitions which apply to the determination period is given in the Good Practice Note (Wales) 1/96.

APPLICATIONS WITHDRAWN OR TRANSFERRED

Applications withdrawn or transferred are those removed from the determination process of the planning authority and applications declined to be determined under Section 70A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 between the end of the period of the previous quarterly survey and the end of the current quarterly survey. The definition can only apply to applications that have been received in the terms set out above under "Applications Received".

APPLICATIONS CARRIED FORWARD

Applications carried forward from one survey period to the next comprise all those applications received within but not determined by the end of the current quarterly survey together with any undetermined applications carried down from previous periods. Care should be taken to ensure that the applications carried forward from a previous survey are consistent with the entries for 'All Applications' in the following survey.

APPLICATIONS GRANTED

Applications that have been permitted or approved with or without amendment and with or without conditions, and for which a decision notice has been signed and despatched are entered in this category.

APPLICATIONS REFUSED

Valid applications that have been entered into the Planning Register and subsequently refused or otherwise not granted fall into this category.

DECISIONS UNDER EIGHT WEEKS

Determination will be considered as having taken less than eight weeks when a decision notice has been issued on or before the 56th day following receipt of a valid planning application.

DECISIONS OVER 13 WEEKS

Determination will be considered as having taken more than thirteen weeks when a decision notice has been issued after the 91st day following receipt of a valid planning application.

DEPARTURES RECEIVED

Departures comprise all valid planning applications that do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the application site is situated. All such applications received within the period covered by the survey are included in this category provided that the applications are valid.

DEPARTURES PERMITTED

Permitted departures are those where determination is in favour of permitting development for an application which has previously been defined as a departure and for which a decision notice has been issued.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

A Major Development is one where:

- the number of dwellings to be constructed is 10 or more, or the site area is 0.5 hectares or more;
- commercial or industrial floorspace is 1,000 square metres or more, or the site area is 1 hectare or more.

MINOR DEVELOPMENT

A Minor Development is one where the development:

- does not meet the criteria for Major Development;
- is not of a type defined as Householder Development.

MINERALS

A mineral application is one which seeks to use land for the extraction of raw materials from the ground either through mining, open cast recovery or drilling operations. It also includes applications which seek to use land exclusively for the storage of minerals in the open. It excludes all hazardous substance applications and all applications for using land to store surface spoil which remains after minerals have been extracted.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

All planning applications made by the planning authority for the development of land owned by the planning authority, or of land owned by an interested planning authority, or of land jointly owned by an interested planning authority and any other person within the scope of Regulations 3 and 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

HOUSEHOLDER DEVELOPMENTS

Householder developments affect the curtilage of residential property. They do not alter the number of dwellings. They are not permitted developments. Examples include:

- Domestic extensions and alterations;
- Complete renovation of an old property;
- Boundary Walls and Fences;
- Loft and dormer conversion;
- Domestic and lock up Garages, Car Ports and Porches;
- Creation and widening of vehicular access.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Applications for permission to display advertisements on business premises, the forecourts of business premises, or elsewhere within the curtilage of business premises, or on land elsewhere to direct members of the public to business premises are collectively described by this category.

SITE AREA

The site area is directly involved in some aspect of the development and is normally outlined on the plan included in the application form. Development split into 2 parts by a highway is considered as one site.

FLOORSPACE

The floorspace of a building is the sum of the floor areas within the building measured externally to the external wall faces at each level. Basement car parks, covered rooftop car parks, rooftop plant rooms, and caretakers' flats should be included.

PRINCIPAL USE

The overall use category for Major and Minor Developments is defined by the principal use of the floor or ground space within the development according to the discrete area of the application and not that of the complex of which it may be a part. Categories of development and principal use should be guided where appropriate by the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) Regulations 1993.

USE CATEGORIES

The use categories included in the survey form under the headings of Dwellings, Offices, Industry, Retail, Distribution and Other follow from definitions in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order) 1987 (as amended). Waste Disposal is as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) Regulations 1993 Schedule 1 Category of Development 11(a), and the Mineral category is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 1 (as amended).



PLANNING APPLICATIONS TIMING FROM RECEIPT TO DETERMINATION

- (a) The formalities of making an application for planning permission are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988 and in the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- (b) Written notification of the planning authority's decision on a planning application is required to be given within a period of 8 weeks or such longer period as may be agreed in writing with the applicant.
- (c) Measurement of the time taken to determine a planning application will begin at the point when a valid application and the full accompanying fee are received and not necessarily when the application is registered where these two events are not coincident.
- (d) The time period for decision on an application cannot be suspended, nor entry into the Planning Register be altered or delayed in order to compensate for any delay caused by negotiations, amendments, or consultations for a valid application that should be or has been entered into the Planning Register.
- (e) Negotiations, amendments or consultations shall not cause any application to be automatically refused or applicants to be asked to withdraw and resubmit an application.
- (f) The date upon which the determination period for a valid application will be considered to have ended will be either when:
 - (i) the notice of decision is issued; or
 - (ii) a direction relating to the application is issued by the Secretary of State under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), or Article 14 of the Town and Country (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- (g) For applications notified to a local planning authority, determination will be considered to have ended upon the date of the despatch of the resolution of the Council to the notifying body.

January 1996



PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECORDING DEPARTURES

- (a) For the purposes of this Good Practice Note, the definition of a departure application which has been adopted is the one contained in the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation) Directions 1992. These Directions are attached at Annex 3 to the Welsh Office Circular 39/92 (Department of the Environment Circular 19/92) dated 13 July 1992. Administrative guidance on various aspects of the 1992 Directions is provided in Annex 2 of that Circular.
- (b) For the purposes of recording departure applications for the Development Control Quarterly Survey :
- (i) all applications which come within the adopted definition of departure applications should be entered on the survey form as having been received;
 - (ii) all applications which come within the adopted definition of departure applications which have been granted planning permission by the local planning authority pursuant to paragraph 2(2) of the 1992 Directions should be entered on the survey form as having been permitted.
- (c) For the purposes of recording departure applications for the Development Control Quarterly Survey the definition of the major category is taken from Paragraph 3(a) of the 1992 Directions. Thus the major category covers development which consists of or includes the provision of :
- (i) more than 150 houses or flats; or
 - (ii) more than 10,000 square metres of retail floorspace.
- (d) For other departure applications the category is defined according to the characteristics described in Procedure Note PN(W) 1/96 under the paragraphs headed 'Minor Developments', 'Minerals', and 'General Regulations'.

January 1996

A2 Example WAG statistical release

TABLE 1

<i>April to June 2007</i>		PLANNING AUTHORITIES IN WALES	
SPEED OF DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS			
Planning Authority		Percentage decided within 8 weeks of receipt	
Wrexham		80	
Conwy		74	
Isle of Anglesey		73	
Rhondda Cynon Taf		71	
Caerphilly		70	
Blaenau Gwent		69	
Gwynedd		69	
Bridgend		68	
Neath Port Talbot		67	
Newport		67	
Denbighshire		67	
Flintshire		66	
Vale of Glamorgan		64	
Powys		64	
Pembrokeshire		63	
Swansea		61	
Carmarthenshire		61	
Merthyr Tydfil		60	
Cardiff		57	
Torfaen		53	
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park		42	
Snowdonia National Park		41	
Ceredigion		33	
Monmouthshire		32	
Brecon Beacons National Park		22	
WALES AVERAGE		62	

Source: Survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities August 2007.

NOTES:-

1. ** = No data available
2. All figures are rounded

TABLE 2

<i>April to June 2006 to April to June 2007</i>	PLANNING AUTHORITIES IN WALES				
PERCENTAGE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS DETERMINED WITHIN EIGHT WEEKS OF RECEIPT					
Planning Authority	Apr - Jun 2006	Jul - Sept 2006	Oct - Dec 2006	Jan - Mar 2007	April - Jun 2007
Wrexham	75	77	76	76	80
Conwy	69	74	79	73	74
Isle of Anglesey	74	70	73	66	73
Rhondda Cynon Taf	65	67	69	66	71
Caerphilly	63	52	53	53	70
Blaenau Gwent	66	58	70	72	69
Gwynedd	75	69	67	68	69
Bridgend	63	69	59	70	68
Neath Port Talbot	54	57	56	58	67
Newport	48	42	37	39	67
Denbighshire	68	70	67	74	67
Flintshire	44	68	60	60	66
Vale of Glamorgan	48	55	62	47	64
Powys	47	38	40	51	64
Pembrokeshire	59	54	54	58	63
Swansea	56	48	54	57	61
Carmarthenshire	65	61	63	66	61
Merthyr Tydfil	79	70	57	75	60
Cardiff	67	69	62	68	57
Torfaen	45	65	65	53	53
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	42	48	20	48	42
Snowdonia National Park	40	54	36	36	41
Ceredigion	33	30	28	24	33
Monmouthshire	**	**	**	**	32
Brecon Beacons National Park	47	18	42	31	22
WALES AVERAGE	60	59	58	59	62

Source: Survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities August 2007.

NOTES:-

1. ** = No data available.
2. All figures are rounded.

TABLE 3

<i>April to June 2007</i>		PLANNING AUTHORITIES IN WALES		
PLANNING APPLICATIONS WORKLOAD				
Planning Authority	Received Within Quarter	Decided	Withdrawn and Transferred	Carried Forward
Blaenau Gwent	194	197	2	180
Bridgend	396	419	8	165
Caerphilly	406	406	8	423
Cardiff	785	807	54	787
Carmarthenshire	719	669	25	862
Ceredigion	288	331	41	753
Conwy	333	323	36	306
Denbighshire	316	284	19	313
Flintshire	450	402	48	498
Gwynedd	386	467	71	733
Isle of Anglesey	301	326	10	336
Merthyr Tydfil	181	151	25	183
Monmouthshire	398	325	18	473
Neath Port Talbot	456	423	10	487
Newport	405	296	0	**
Pembrokeshire	402	380	22	736
Powys	514	478	32	4
Rhondda Cynon Taf	612	530	23	614
Swansea	803	656	26	1088
Torfaen	180	179	7	287
Vale of Glamorgan	414	432	19	293
Wrexham	344	367	6	339
Brecon Beacons National Park	156	83	2	276
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	160	170	8	200
Snowdonia National Park	123	116	4	**
TOTALS	9722	9217	524	10340

Source: Survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities August 2007.

NOTES:-

1. ** = No data available

TABLE 4

April to June 2007		PLANNING AUTHORITIES IN WALES			
SPEED OF DETERMINING MINOR & HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATIONS					
Planning Authority	Minor Applications		Householder Applications		
	Percent decided in under 8 weeks	Percent decided in over 13 weeks	Percent decided in under 8 weeks	Percent decided in over 13 weeks	
Blaenau Gwent	54	21	79	5	
Bridgend	47	21	79	4	
Caerphilly	53	26	84	8	
Cardiff	46	24	64	8	
Carmarthenshire	53	28	77	13	
Ceredigion	23	64	49	33	
Conwy	63	22	92	4	
Denbighshire	48	22	86	2	
Flintshire	48	34	86	5	
Gwynedd	61	21	83	10	
Isle of Anglesey	63	21	89	6	
Merthyr Tydfil	52	31	72	6	
Monmouthshire	14	53	46	20	
Neath Port Talbot	51	18	83	4	
Newport	37	38	52	75	
Pembrokeshire	51	37	84	10	
Powys	55	29	80	6	
Rhondda Cynon Taf	55	36	84	7	
Swansea	40	37	72	12	
Torfaen	32	43	62	13	
Vale of Glamorgan	49	23	70	22	
Wrexham	69	12	92	2	
Brecon Beacons National Park	0	52	31	13	
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	37	23	42	15	
Snowdonia National Park	39	48	47	13	
AVERAGE	49	30	74	12	

Source: Survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities August 2007.

NOTES:-

1. ** = No data available
2. All figures are rounded.
3. MINOR DEVELOPMENTS have fewer than 10 dwellings or a site area less than 0.5 hectares (1.235 acres) where the number of dwellings is not given. In other cases, a minor development is one with a floorspace of less than 1,000 square metres (10,764 sq. ft.) or, if the floorspace is not given, an area less than one hectare (2.471 acres).
4. HOUSEHOLDER DEVELOPMENTS are developments within the curtilage of residential property which do not result in any change in the number of dwellings.

TABLE 5

<i>April to June 2007</i>	PLANNING AUTHORITIES IN WALES
NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS DETERMINED (RANKED BY VOLUME)	
Planning Authority	Applications determined during quarter
Cardiff	807
Carmarthenshire	669
Swansea	656
Rhondda Cynon Taf	530
Powys	478
Gwynedd	467
Vale of Glamorgan	432
Neath Port Talbot	423
Bridgend	419
Caerphilly	406
Flintshire	402
Pembrokeshire	380
Wrexham	367
Ceredigion	331
Isle of Anglesey	326
Monmouthshire	325
Conwy	323
Newport	296
Denbighshire	284
Blaenau Gwent	197
Torfaen	179
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	170
Merthyr Tydfil	151
Snowdonia National Park	116
Brecon Beacons National Park	83
TOTAL	9217

Source: Survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities August 2007.

NOTES:-

1. ** = No data available

TABLE 6

<i>April to June 2007</i>		PLANNING AUTHORITIES IN WALES	
DEPARTURE APPLICATIONS WORKLOAD			
Planning Authority	Received during quarter	Permitted during quarter	
Blaenau Gwent	0	0	
Bridgend	4	4	
Caerphilly	0	0	
Cardiff	0	0	
Carmarthenshire	0	0	
Ceredigion	11	0	
Conwy	1	1	
Denbighshire	4	1	
Flintshire	0	0	
Gwynedd	1	0	
Isle of Anglesey	15	6	
Merthyr Tydfil	0	0	
Monmouthshire	0	0	
Neath Port Talbot	2	3	
Newport	2	0	
Pembrokeshire	4	5	
Powys	29	5	
Rhondda Cynon Taf	4	3	
Swansea	23	0	
Torfaen	0	0	
Vale of Glamorgan	28	6	
Wrexham	1	0	
Brecon Beacons National Park	0	0	
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	1	1	
Snowdonia National Park	0	0	
TOTALS	130	35	

Source: Survey of Welsh Local Planning Authorities August 2007.

NOTES:-

1. ** = No data available
2. Departure applications are those for developments which are not in line with the current development plans.
3. The definition of a departure application which has been adopted is the one contained in the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation) Directions 1992 (Welsh Office Circular 39/92).



REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT CONTROL QUARTERLY SURVEY LOCAL AUTHORITY RETURNS: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. CONTACT DETAILS

Local Authority Name			
Contact Name and Title			
Address:	Telephone		
	Extension		
	Fax		
	Email		

This questionnaire is intended to help the team of consultants in assessing the effectiveness of the Development Control Quarterly Survey returns. **ALL RESPONSES WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL.**

Please send an email to kieron.hyams@arup.com immediately to acknowledge receipt of this questionnaire and to provide contact details.

If you have any queries about completion please call **020 7755 3952**. Please complete and return this form to Arup **no later than the 25th May 2007**.

Completed questionnaires should be sent to:
Kieron Hyams, Survey Manager, Arup, 13 Fitzroy Street, London. W1T 4BQ.

Many thanks in advance for your efforts and co-operation.

2. USE OF DATA BY LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES

	YES	NO
2.1 Do you make use of the data collected and published by WAG for your own (LPA) purposes?	100%	0%
2.2 If YES to 2.1, what use do you make of development control data? (please tick all those that apply)		
Reporting to Head of Service/Directorate	84%	
Reporting to Planning Committee/Members	74%	
Reporting to Planning Officers/Staff	84%	
Internal performance management	95%	
Publicity of authority performance/external use	32%	
Comparison/benchmarking with other authorities	79%	
Other: (please specify)	5%	

2.3 If NO to 2.1, why not?

2.4	Do you know where to find published development control data?	YES 100%	NO 0%
2.5	Are you aware of the publication timescale for development control data?	YES 74%	NO 26%
2.5	Do you make use of development control data publications/tables?	YES 95%	NO 5%
2.6	What type of data reporting do you look for? (tick all those that apply)		
	Individual authority information (your authority)		95%
	Individual authority information (other authorities)		79%
	Aggregated (overall national) information		63%
	Aggregated (quartile levels) information		68%
2.7	Are there any changes to the development control publications/tables that you would like to see in terms of:		
	Data provided?	YES 44%	NO 56%
	Method of presentation?	YES 33%	NO 67%
	Please describe below the changes you would like to see:		

3. FREQUENCY OF DATA SUBMISSION

3.1	Do you think that it is appropriate to report development control type data on a quarterly basis?	YES 95%	NO 5%
3.2	If NO to 3.1, what would be the most appropriate reporting frequency? (please tick one)		
	Monthly		33%
	Six-monthly		33%
	Annually		0%
	Other: (please specify)		33%

4. METHOD OF DATA SUBMISSION

4.1	Do you currently hold all application and monitoring data within a single database/analysis system?	YES 79%	NO 21%	
4.2	Is the basic return information automatically produced by your back office system?	YES 41%	PART 47%	NO 12%
4.3	If you didn't answer YES to 4.2 (i.e. not completely automated), please supply details below of what has to be calculated manually:			

- 4.4 What level of checking do you do on your development control returns prior to submission? (tick all those that apply)
- None 32%
 - Random sample of applications 32%
 - Full – all applications 0%
 - Major applications only 0%
 - Categories where overall performance is 'borderline' 0%
 - Other (please specify): 37%

- 4.5 Under what circumstances would you do a manual check?

- 4.6 Please indicate the computer system used by your authority in storing development control base data: (please tick one)

Accolaid	11%	Northgate	22%
Assist	0%	Ocella	0%
Atrium	0%	Plantech	0%
CAPS/ESRI	6%	Resolution	0%
Datawright	6%	Rol	0%
Exegesis	11%	Silverbear	0%
Flare	6%	Software AG	0%
Hedra	0%	Swift LG	17%
Innogistics	6%	SX3	0%
Intergraph	0%	Team Knowledge	0%
Lalpac	0%	Valid Information Systems	0%
MIS	6%	Vega	0%
MVM	11%	Other: (please specify)	0%

- | | | | |
|-----|--|------------|------------|
| 4.7 | Does your computer system provider listed in 4.6 provide system updates to take account of changes required by government (such as alterations to statistical returns) within your current agreement (i.e. at no additional cost)? | YES | NO |
| | | 84% | 16% |
| 4.8 | Should a longer-term aim for WAG be the integration of back-office systems to enable WAG to hold LPA data? (i.e. no Quarterly Survey submission would be necessary) | YES | NO |
| | | 44% | 56% |
| 4.9 | Have you experienced problems in making your Development Control Quarterly Survey returns in the last year? | YES | NO |
| | | 32% | 68% |

- 4.10 If YES to 4.9, what sort of problems? (please tick all those appropriate)
- | | |
|--|-----|
| Staff shortages | 5% |
| Higher work pressures/priorities | 5% |
| Problems of staff ownership (interest in task) | 5% |
| Difficulties in coding/checking classification of applications | 0% |
| Difficulties in interpreting form instructions/guidance | 5% |
| Timescale tight relative to required work inputs | 0% |
| Computer hardware problems | 0% |
| Computer software problems | 16% |
| Other: (please specify) | 0% |

- 4.11 Do you have any suggestions to improve the quality and clarity of the guidance notes accompanying the return?

5. ENFORCEMENT

- 5.1 What data does your Authority currently record in relation to enforcement information? (i.e. numbers and/or types of complaints, notices, actions etc. *If a statistical report is produced, please append a recent copy.*) **Please also state which piece(s) of enforcement information currently recorded are the most useful to you.**

5.2	Do you think that the scope of the Development Control Quarterly Survey should be expanded to include enforcement data?	YES 82%	NO 18%
-----	---	-------------------	------------------

5.3 If YES to 5.2, What data do you think should be collected?

6. POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS TO DATA COLLECTION

In the table below are a number of possible areas of data collection that could be incorporated into the Development Control returns. Your opinion is sought on the practicality, value and burden of such data collection. We recognise that some elements would not be compatible with each other, but would ask you to judge each element on an individual basis. You may submit more opinions alongside this return if you wish to comment in detail on a particular aspect. The review will also take into account the cumulative effects of the introduction of any changes to data collection.

For each item in the table below, please comment on usefulness and time/cost implications even if the data is not currently recorded by your Authority.

“Outcome Data”: Part of the review process is to investigate ways of making the data collection exercise both more meaningful and more useful to both LPAs and the Welsh Assembly Government. Currently, the focus of the Development Control Quarterly Survey is on ‘process’/ performance data rather than ‘outcome’ data (output or end result data, recognising that the planning process gives an output to a decision chain and not necessarily an output on the ground). This Section looks at a number of possible ‘process’ and ‘outcome’ areas where information might be recorded. Section 7 then explores your overall feelings about ‘outcome’ data collection.

Set up time/costs:

- High: Significant time/cost (i.e. around one week or additional budget required)
- Medium: some time/cost (i.e. more than one day, additional budget possibly required)
- Low: little/negligible time/cost (i.e. around one day, or within current budget)

Ongoing time/costs:

- High: significant time/cost (i.e. more than one day per return)
- Medium: some time/cost (i.e. around one day per return)
- Low: little/negligible time/cost (i.e. around one hour per return)
- Automatic: no time/cost

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
A. “Process”-type data												
- Larger/Complex Applications												
1. Redefine ‘major’ category with a new (higher) threshold	26%	74%	5%	47%	47%	18%	53%	29%	11%	17%	33%	39%
2. Split ‘major’ category, separating out the much larger applications into a ‘major major’-type category	16%	84%	6%	41%	53%	24%	47%	29%	12%	6%	35%	47%

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
3. No. of “major infrastructure project” applications (MIPs), e.g. infrastructure of regional and/or national importance	0%	100%	0%	24%	76%	19%	50%	31%	6%	19%	38%	38%
4. Separate information requested for applications with an ES, taking account of the 16-week target timescale	47%	53%	26%	53%	21%	6%	39%	56%	0%	6%	39%	56%
5. No. of applications determined within a previously negotiated timescale	5%	95%	6%	28%	67%	41%	35%	24%	6%	29%	47%	18%
6. No. and type of ‘assessments’ received, i.e. such as flood risk, land contamination, transport impact, biodiversity, design, access, protected species etc.	11%	89%	5%	53%	42%	44%	44%	11%	17%	22%	44%	17%
7. No. of applications requiring completion of a s106 agreement and unilateral undertakings	74%	26%	37%	58%	5%	6%	56%	39%	6%	6%	50%	39%
8. No. of applications requiring completion of a s106 agreement and unilateral undertakings determined within the target timescale	26%	74%	5%	47%	47%	6%	76%	18%	6%	18%	53%	24%
- Appeals												
9. Appeals information (as currently provided by PINS) such as appeal numbers, type, result etc.	84%	16	47%	47%	5%	12%	41%	47%	6%	11%	44%	39%
- Determination of Applications												
10. Expansion of the determination timescales recorded to explore the time taken for those applications taking more than 8 or 13 weeks to determine	28%	72%	11%	61%	28%	13%	50%	38%	6%	24%	35%	35%

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
11. Split 'carried forward' information into major/minor/other application types	26%	74%	5%	26%	68%	28%	50%	22%	6%	17%	44%	33%
12. Split 'carried forward' information into each individual type (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	26%	74%	5%	32%	63%	28%	56%	17%	6%	22%	39%	33%
13. Number of decisions made using delegated powers	95%	5%	53%	42%	5%	0%	18%	82%	0%	0%	33%	67%
14. Number of decisions made using delegated powers, split into each individual type (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	26%	74%	5%	37%	58%	12%	41%	47%	0%	6%	53%	41%
15. No. of overturns by planning committee against officer recommendations	32%	68%	21%	68%	11%	11%	72%	17%	0%	6%	72%	22%
16. Split 'withdrawn' applications into each individual type (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all others)	16%	84%	0%	22%	78%	28%	39%	33%	11%	6%	39%	44%
- Planning Application Fees												
17. Total planning application fees received	89%	11%	65%	29%	6%	0%	31%	69%	0%	0%	35%	65%
18. Total planning application fees for each category (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	21%	79%	5%	32%	63%	17%	44%	39%	0%	11%	44%	44%
- Application Categories												
19. Realign the form categories to reflect planning application fee categories	0%	100%	0%	17%	83%	29%	47%	24%	0%	24%	41%	35%
20. Realign the form categories to reflect Use Classes Order	0%	100%	0%	18%	82%	330%	47%	20%	0%	19%	44%	38%
21. Add a 'mixed use' category to the form within major/minor/other application types	0%	100%	0%	44%	56%	24%	53%	24%	0%	19%	50%	31%

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
- Specialist Applications/Application Types												
22. No. of prior approval applications by type (i.e. demolition, telecommunications etc)	69%	33%	0%	78%	22%	6%	50%	44%	0%	0%	53%	47%
23. No. of approval of condition(s) applications	21%	79%	16%	58%	26%	22%	59%	28%	6%	22%	33%	39%
24. No. of variation of condition(s) applications	44%	56%	0%	63%	37%	18%	41%	41%	0%	11%	44%	44%
25. Separate out agricultural applications to form a category in addition to current ones (i.e. dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	11%	89%	0%	47%	53%	28%	61%	11%	6%	28%	28%	39%
26. Summary data for outline/full/reserved matters application types	32%	68%	5%	42%	53%	33%	44%	22%	11%	33%	22%	33%
27. No. of applications determined by other Acts (i.e larger wind farm developments)	5%	95%	0%	32%	68%	33%	33%	33%	6%	28%	44%	22%
28. Split minerals applications into energy/non-energy workings and by surface/extractive operations	0%	100%	0%	16%	84%	33%	50%	17%	6%	39%	28%	28%
29. Information on renewable energy applications, split by energy source	5%	95%	5%	37%	58%	38%	38%	25%	6%	35%	29%	29%
30. Split waste disposal applications into internal (incineration) and external (landfill) applications	0%	100%	0%	11%	89%	31%	50%	19%	6%	29%	35%	29%
31. No. of applications submitted using the Welsh language	5%	95%	0%	32%	68%	35%	41%	24%	18%	6%	47%	29%

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
32. No. of notifications for telecommunications masts under 15 metres in height	39%	61%	6%	56%	39%	0%	63%	37%	0%	63%	37%	31%
33. Combine categories (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other) into only major/minor/other applications	32%	68%	11%	39%	50%	19%	25%	56%	0%	6%	50%	44%
34. No. of applications to fell trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders	58%	42%	11%	44%	44%	6%	47%	47%	0%	12%	53%	35%
35. Applications for Listed Building Consent, and the No. of applications submitted alongside an application for Listed Building Consent	74%	26%	11%	39%	50%	12%	47%	41%	0%	12%	35%	53%
36. No. of applications for development falling within a flood plain	16%	84%	0%	61%	39%	18%	65%	18%	12%	24%	47%	18%
37. No. of applications Finally Disposed Of	26%	74%	6%	56%	38%	0%	57%	43%	0%	14%	50%	36%
38. No. of invalid applications (as judged initially, due to insufficient information)	58%	42%	0%	53%	47%	13%	53%	33%	0%	14%	50%	36%
39. No. of resubmitted ('free go') applications	37%	63%	0%	28%	72%	7%	40%	53%	6%	19%	38%	38%
40. No. of Lawful Development Certificates	79%	21%	17%	50%	33%	6%	35%	59%	0%	0%	35%	65%
41. No. of hedgerow removal notices	61%	39%	6%	59%	35%	6%	44%	50%	0%	6%	44%	50%
42. No. of online applications received	53%	47%	17%	67%	17%	6%	47%	47%	0%	12%	47%	41%
43. No. of listed building prosecutions	28%	72%	0%	61%	39%	12%	47%	41%	0%	29%	47%	24%
44. No. of high hedgerow disputes (i.e. Leylandii)	41%	59%	6%	41%	53%	27%	33%	40%	7%	13%	53%	27%
45. No. of neglected land and property (s215) wasteland notices	68%	32%	11%	56%	33%	18%	29%	53%	6%	6%	59%	29%

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
46. No. of permissions for gypsy and traveller caravan sites, and for development on existing sites	5%	95%	0%	22%	78%	31%	50%	19%	13%	13%	56%	19%
- Enforcement Activity												
47. No. of enforcement complaints received	100%	0%	61%	33%	6%	6	13%	81%	0%	6%	44%	50%
48. No. of enforcement complaints where further formal action was taken	83%	17%	38%	56%	6%	0%	27%	73%	0%	0%	50%	50%
49. No. of applications where LPA made use of s70 powers to decline to determine applications	11%	89%	0%	18%	82%	13%	40%	47%	6%	6%	63%	25%
50. No. of applications for express consent to display advertisements	95%	5%	39%	33%	28%	0%	19%	81%	0%	0%	44%	56%
51. No. of applications for retrospective permission (including whether application was granted or refused)	21%	79%	6%	50%	44%	38%	31%	31%	19%	19%	38%	25%
52. No. of enforcement actions taken against applications refused retrospective permission	26%	74%	18%	41%	41%	27%	47%	27%	13%	40%	20%	27%
- Departure Decisions and Referred/Called-in applications												
53. No. of referred decisions	53%	47%	17%	44%	39%	19%	38%	44%	6%	19%	31%	44%
54. No. of departure decisions by category (dwellings, offices, general industry, retail, all other)	47%	53%	17%	44%	39%	25%	25%	50%	6%	19%	25%	50%
55. No. of called-in applications (by Secretary of State)	53%	47%	11%	56%	33%	6%	31%	63%	0%	0%	53%	47%

Data Type and Explanation	LPA already record?		Usefulness of data collection for LPA			Estimated system set up time/costs to LPA			Estimated system ongoing collection time/costs to LPA			
	Yes	No	Essential	Useful	Limited use	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Automatic
B. "Outcome"-type data												
1. 'Quantity' (potential development output) of permissions granted, i.e. number of dwellings consented	68%	32%	32%	58%	11%	35%	35%	29%	18%	47%	18%	18%
2. Housing development consented by type, intended tenure, including use as a second home	11%	89%	11%	47%	42%	65%	18%	18%	41%	29%	18%	12%
3. 'Quantity' (potential development output) of permissions granted, i.e. floorspace by use type	21%	79%	11%	47%	42%	47%	24%	29%	29%	35%	24%	12%
4. 'Quantity' (potential development output) applied for as well as 'quantity' permitted to take account of modifications	11%	89%	6%	44%	50%	50%	19	31%	25%	38%	25%	13%
5. 'Quantity' (potential development output) refused, as well as 'quantity' granted	6%	94%	0%	35%	65%	43%	21%	36%	14%	43%	29%	14%
6. 'Quantity' (potential development output) of permissions within brownfield and green belt sites/areas	17%	83%	22%	56%	22%	44%	31%	25%	25%	38%	25%	13%
7. 'Quantity' of energy generating capacity delivered by renewable sources, by source	6%	94%	6%	44%	50%	53%	33%	13%	27%	40%	20%	13%
8. 'Quantity' of waste processing capacity delivered	11%	89%	17%	39%	44%	50%	31%	19%	25%	38%	25%	13%
9. Split out change of use applications, asking for net change in use by use type	0%	100%	0%	28%	72%	53%	33%	13%	27%	47%	13%	13%

7. ROLE OF FORMS – DATA FROM PROCESS OR MONITORING

- 7.1 Should the development control forms continue to focus exclusively on ‘process’ and performance data? YES NO
50% 50%
- 7.2 If some elements of ‘outcome’ data are to be recorded (see Section 6), should this be integrated into the current forms (as opposed to being kept separate in a new outcome-focused return)? INTEGRATED SEPARATE
50% 50%
- 7.3 What types of monitoring information would be most useful to your authority? (If not covered in Section 6)

8. RESOURCES FOR DATA SUBMISSION

8.1 Please estimate the time associated with development control returns: (please provide an average in terms of total staff hours per quarterly return. If automated please enter as zero. Please do not include ongoing time in coding/registering applications.)

Data gathering (i.e. getting numbers out of the system)

Data calculations (i.e. aggregating data)

Form completion and submission

Subsequent clarification/liaison with WAG

TOTAL

8.2 For the answer in 8.1, please estimate the approximate average proportion (%) of time inputs by differing staff roles in preparing development control returns:

Admin/technical staff

Professional staff

8.3 Please estimate the cost of the time associated with making the development control returns (as provided in 8.1). This should be the marginal time associated with the returns process, as distinct from the coding of applications on receipt, and then putting this information into the system etc which would still need to be undertaken without a requirement for a return.

£

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

A3 Annotated Local Authority Survey Return

A4 Local Authorities Making a Survey Return

Anglesey, Isle of
Blaenau Gwent
Bridgend
Caerphilly
Cardiff
Carmarthenshire
Ceredigion
Conwy
Denbighshire
Flintshire
Gwynedd
Monmouthshire
Neath Port Talbot
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
Rhondda Cynon Taff
Snowdonia National Park
Swansea
Torfaen
Vale of Glamorgan

Total Responses = 19 (76% of all authorities)

A5 Seminar Attendees

Name	Authority	Seminar
Kieron Hyams	Arup	Both
Chris Tunnell	Arup	Both
Matthew Wright	Arup	Swansea
Julie Jenkins	Bridgend	Swansea
Craig Flower	Bridgend	Swansea
Ralph Bourke	Caerphilly	Swansea
Pat Mears	Caerphilly	Swansea
Peter Detheridge	Conwy	St Asaph
Mark Dakeyne	Denbighshire	St Asaph
Glyn Jones	Flintshire	St Asaph
Dave Hudson	Flintshire	St Asaph
Mike Lock	Gwynedd	St Asaph
Chris Morrey	Independent consultant	St Asaph
Richard Townsend	Innogistics (Software)	Swansea
Dennis Clements	Northgate (Software)	Swansea
Kim Kees	Northgate (Software)	St Asaph
Huw Roberts	Rhondda Cynon Taff	Swansea
John Lock	Swansea	Swansea
Michelle Edmond	Torfaen	Swansea
Richard Lewis	Torfaen	Swansea
Marcus Goldsworthy	Vale of Glamorgan	Swansea
Jon Fudge	WAG	Both
Richard Spear	WAG	Both
Bob Newton	WAG	St Asaph
Terry Stevens	WAG	St Asaph
Mike Cuddy	WAG	Swansea
Kris Hawkins	WAG	Swansea
Jeff Phillips	WAG	Swansea

A6 Proposed Development Control Quarterly and Annual Survey Returns and Guidance

WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL SURVEYS

Guidance on completing the survey forms

This guidance is provided only for the purposes of completing the quarterly and annual surveys.

APPLICATIONS TO BE INCLUDED

Applications are defined as:

- Applications for a grant of planning permission in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Applications)
- Regulations 1988, and Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995;
- Applications for temporary permissions and for the renewal of previous planning permissions, and for the variation
- or discharge of conditions attached to previous planning permissions;
- Applications for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992;
- Land Compensation Act 1961 cases, i.e. for certification of appropriate alternative development;
- Applications arising from notifications under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 where the Council has determined that prior approval is required;
- Applications submitted as a result of Article 4 and Article 7 Directions;
- Applications for reserved matters.

APPLICATIONS NOT INCLUDED

The following should not be included in the survey return:

- Deemed permissions given by a Government Department;
- Section 7(1) agreements under New Towns Act 1965;
- Notifications of Crown Development under Welsh Office Circular 37/84, or consultations by Electricity Suppliers for overhead electric lines and power stations under Welsh Office Circular 20/90;
- Notifications under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995;
- Applications for listed building consent and conservation area consent;
- Applications for hazardous substances consent;
- Revisions and modifications to existing planning permissions, except where a new application is involved.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Applications received are those accepted for the determination of planning permission between the end of the period of the previous quarterly survey and the end of the period for the current quarterly survey. The process for making and determining an application for planning permission are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988 and in the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

APPLICATIONS DECIDED

Applications determined are those decided between the end of the period of the previous quarterly survey and the end of the current quarterly survey. For the

purposes of the surveys, a determination has been made either when a notice of decision is issued or a direction relating to the application is issued by the Secretary of State under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), or Article 14 of the Town and Country (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

APPLICATIONS WITHDRAWN OR TRANSFERRED

Applications withdrawn or transferred are those removed from the determination process of the planning authority and applications declined to be determined under Section 70A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 between the end of the period of the previous quarterly survey and the end of the current quarterly survey. The definition can only apply to applications that have been received in the terms set out above under "Applications Received".

APPLICATIONS CARRIED FORWARD

Applications carried forward from one survey period to the next comprise all those applications received within but not determined by the end of the current quarterly survey together with any undetermined applications carried down from previous periods. Care should be taken to ensure that the applications carried forward from a previous survey are consistent with the entries for 'All Applications' in the following survey.

APPLICATIONS GRANTED

Applications that have been permitted or approved with or without amendment and with or without conditions, and for which a decision notice has been signed and despatched are entered in this category.

APPLICATIONS REFUSED

These are applications that have been entered into the Planning Register and are subsequently refused or otherwise not granted planning permission.

DECISIONS UNDER EIGHT WEEKS

Measurement of the time taken to determine a planning application begins at the point when a valid application and the full accompanying fee are received and not necessarily when the application is registered where these two events are not coincident. The time period for decision on an application cannot be suspended, or entry into the Planning Register be altered or delayed to compensate for any delay caused by negotiations, amendments, or consultations for a valid application that should be or has been entered into the Planning Register. A determination has been made either when a notice of decision is issued or a direction relating to the application is issued by the Secretary of State under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), or Article 14 of the Town and Country (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

A decision is regarded as having taken less than eight weeks when determination is made on or before the 56th day following receipt of a valid planning application.

DECISIONS BETWEEN 8 AND 13 WEEKS

See the notes above on the calculation of the period of determination.

A decision is regarded as having taken between eight and thirteen weeks when a determination is made after the 56th day but on or before the 91st day following receipt of a valid planning application.

DECISIONS BETWEEN 13 AND 16 WEEKS

See the notes above on the calculation of the period of determination.

A decision is regarded as having taken between thirteen and sixteen weeks when a when determination is made after the 91st day but on or before the 112th day following receipt of a valid planning application.

DECISIONS AFTER 16 WEEKS

See the notes above on the calculation of the period of determination.

A decision is regarded as having taken more than sixteen weeks when a when determination is made after the 112th day following receipt of a valid planning application.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

A Major Development is one where:

- the number of dwellings to be constructed is 10 or more, or the site area is 0.5 hectares or more;
- commercial or industrial floorspace is 1,000 square metres or more, or the site area is 1 hectare or more.

MINOR DEVELOPMENT

A Minor Development is one where the development:

- does not meet the criteria for Major Development;
- is not of a type defined as Householder Development.

MINERALS

A mineral application is one which seeks to use land for the extraction of raw materials from the ground either through mining, open cast recovery or drilling operations. It also includes applications which seek to use land exclusively for the storage of minerals in the open. It excludes all hazardous substance applications and all applications for using land to store surface spoil which remains after minerals have been extracted.

The definitions of energy and non-energy minerals and of surface and extractive operations are aligned with those contained in MTAN1 (Aggregates) and MTAN2 (Coal) – the latter being a revised draft at present).

FLOOD RISK

For the purposes of the surveys the definition of categories of flood risk as those contained in TAN 15 (Development and flood risk).

GENERAL REGULATIONS

All planning applications made by the planning authority for the development of land owned by the planning authority, or of land owned by an interested planning authority, or of land jointly owned by an interested planning authority and any other person within the scope of Regulations 3 and 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

HOUSEHOLDER DEVELOPMENTS

Householder developments affect the curtilage of residential property. They do not alter the number of dwellings. They are not permitted developments. Examples include:

- Domestic extensions and alterations;
- Loft and dormer conversion;
- Complete renovation of an old property;
- Domestic and lock up Garages, Car Ports and Porches;
- Boundary Walls and Fences;
- Creation and widening of vehicular access.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Applications for permission to display advertisements on business premises, the forecourts of business premises, or elsewhere within the curtilage of business premises, or on land elsewhere to direct members of the public to business premises are collectively described by this category.

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

An application will be regarded as having been accompanied by a planning obligation when an agreement or unilateral undertaking under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has been made in relation to that application.

SITE AREA

The site area is directly involved in some aspect of the development and is normally outlined on the plan included in the application form. Development split into 2 parts by a highway is considered as one site.

FLOORSPACE

The floorspace of a building is the sum of the floor areas within the building measured externally to the external wall faces at each level. Basement car parks, covered rooftop car parks, rooftop plant rooms, and caretakers' flats should be included.

PRINCIPAL USE

The overall use category for Major and Minor Developments is defined by the principal use of the floor or ground space within the development according to the discrete area of the application and not that of the complex of which it may be a part. Categories of development and principal use should be guided where appropriate by the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) Regulations 1993.

USE CATEGORIES

The use categories included in the survey form under the headings of 'Dwellings', 'Offices', 'Industry', 'Retail', 'Distribution' and 'Other' follow from definitions in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order) 1987 (as amended).

'Waste Disposal' is as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) Regulations 1993 Schedule 1 Category of Development 11(a).

The 'Mineral' category is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 1 (as amended). For the purposes of the surveys, the definitions of 'energy' and 'non-energy' minerals and of 'surface' and 'extractive' operations are aligned with those contained in MTAN1 (Aggregates) and MTAN2 (Coal) – the latter being a revised draft at present.

In respect of Renewable Energy, for the purposes of the surveys:

- 'Biomass' includes boilers or heat sources fuelled by wood and other vegetable matter used as the combustible heat source;
- 'Other' includes biofuels; and
- the remaining definitions are the ordinary meanings.

COMMITTEE DECISIONS AND THOSE TAKEN CONTRARY TO OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

A determination is made by a committee of a planning authority when the application to which it refers is included in the agenda and minutes of a committee meeting,

including instances when the application is not discussed in the committee or the subject of a vote by committee members.

A decision is taken contrary to an officer recommendation when the committee decides to grant planning permission in respect of an application for which the report to committee recommends refusal or the committee decides to refuse planning permission in respect of an application for which the report to committee recommends a grant. It does not include cases where the committee decides to add to or delete from conditions recommended by officers to accompany a determination to grant planning permission.

CASELOAD PER CASE OFFICER

This is calculated as the number of applications (as defined above) received in the period divided by the number of established FTE planning professional and technical posts devoted to the decision making function for the same period, ignoring current vacancies or any short term support. In calculating the number of FTEs, any time spent by planning professional and technical staff on other activities, such as management, enforcement, appeals, and forward planning functions, should be ignored. Staff employed on development control but who are not directly involved in the decision making function, such as administrative and support staff, should not be included.

GYPSY AND TRAVELLERS' SITES

An application is for a gypsy or travellers' site or for development on existing sites if the contents of WAG circular 20/2007 (Planning for gypsy and traveller caravans sites) apply to the application.

ENFORCEMENT

'Complaint' means any approach to the local planning authority made during the relevant period about development that has occurred without the necessary planning permission, but only one complaint should be recorded for each alleged breach of planning control. 'Further formal action' means the use of the enforcement powers contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

DWELLINGS

The number of dwellings included should be that shown on the application for planning permission. Where an application for outline permission does not include the number of dwellings, that application should be ignored, but any number arising on the subsequent reserved matters application(s) should be included. Where an application for outline permission includes the number of dwellings and is or has been included in a survey, any numbers included in reserved matters pursuant to that application should be ignored.

PREVIOUSLY USED LAND

'Brownfield land' is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings) and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The curtilage of the development is included, as are defence buildings, and land used for mineral extraction and waste disposal where provision for restoration has not been made through development control procedures.

Brownfield land excludes:

- land and buildings currently in use for agricultural or forestry purposes;
- land in built-up areas which has not been developed previously, for example parks, recreation grounds and allotments, even though these areas may contain certain urban features such as paths, pavilions and other buildings;

- land where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time so that they can reasonably be considered part of the natural surroundings;
- previously developed land the nature conservation value of which could outweigh the re-use of the site; and
- previously developed land subsequently put to an amenity use.

PLAYING FIELDS AND OPEN SPACE

The playing fields and open space required to be recorded in survey is defined as for the Open Space Assessment proposed in the Draft Revised Technical Advice Note 16 'Sport, Recreation and Open Space' (2007).

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ANNUAL SURVEY

Please refer to the attached guidance on completing this form

PLANNING AUTHORITY

Form completed by Name

Telephone Email

Period Beginning Period Ending

This form should be returned to:
 (e-mail address) Planning Division (P2b), The National Assembly for Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ
 Enquires should be directed to 02920 823029 or xxxxxxx@wales.gsi.gov.uk

ALL APPLICATIONS

Decided	Decided by committee	Decided against officer recommendation

NUMBER OF CASE OFFICERS (FTE)

MINERALS APPLICATIONS

		Granted	Refused
Energy	Surface		
	Extractive		
Non-energy	Surface		
	Extractive		

RENEWABLE ENERGY

	Granted		Refused	
	Number	KwH	Number	KwH
Biomass				
Hydro/tide/wave				
On shore wind				
Off shore wind				
Solar/photovoltaic				
Other				

NUMBER OF DWELLINGS

	Granted	Refused
Outline		
Full		
Reserved matters		

FLOORSPACE AND PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND (m2)

	Granted		Refused	
	Greenfield	Brownfield	Greenfield	Brownfield
Dwellings				
Offices				
Industry				
Retail/Distribution				
Waste Disposal				
Renewable Energy				
New/existing travellers sites				
Other				
Total				

NET CHANGE IN OPEN SPACE AND PLAYING FIELDS (Hectares)

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL QUARTERLY SURVEY

Please refer to the attached guidance on completing this form

SHEET 1

PLANNING AUTHORITY

Form completed by Name

Telephone

Email

Period Beginning

Period Ending

This form should be returned to:

(e-mail address) Planning Division (P2b), The National Assembly for Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

Enquires should be directed to 02920 823029 or xxxxxx@wales.gsi.gov.uk

ALL APPLICATIONS Received

Decided

Withdrawn/Transferred

Carried Forward

SHEET 3

Applications	
Granted	Refused

Decision Speed			
Under 8 weeks	Between 8 and 13 weeks	Between 13 and 16 weeks	Over 16 weeks

Development on the flood plain				
A	B	C	C(1)	C(2)

MINERALS		
----------	--	--

With S 106				
W/out S 106				

--	--	--	--	--

GENERAL REGULATIONS		
---------------------	--	--

With S 106				
W/out S 106				

--	--	--	--	--

HOUSEHOLDER		
-------------	--	--

With S 106				
W/out S 106				

--	--	--	--	--

ADVERTISEMENTS		
----------------	--	--

With S 106				
W/out S 106				

--	--	--	--	--

ALL OTHERS		
------------	--	--

With S 106				
W/out S 106				

--	--	--	--	--

ENFORCEMENT

- Number of sites subject to complaints
- Number of sites with decisions to take further formal action
- Number of sites where determination declined under S 70A
- Number of sites with applications for express consent for advertisements
- Number of sites where action taken against refused retrospective applications
- Number of sites subject to complaints carried forward

Number of sites where a retrospective application was submitted

Granted	Refused

