

Planning Performance 2024

February 2024

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FOREWORD

As we reflect on the progress of planning and housing in 2024, this report highlights the strides made in ensuring a more efficient and effective planning system for our Island. Over the past year, we have worked to refine processes, enhance customer service, and drive improvements that will benefit both applicants and the wider community.

Key to this success has been the introduction of Planning Processing Agreements for larger applications, providing certainty for applicants and officers alike. This initiative has created clearer timescales for decisions, enhancing the planning process for significant projects.



Equally important has been the strengthening of our pre-application advice service. By engaging applicants early in the process, we have been able to address potential challenges upfront, reducing delays and ensuring smoother application outcomes.

The performance data for 2024 reflects our ongoing commitment to timely, consistent, and reliable decision-making. Determination rates have remained stable, with improvements in processing times throughout the year. Approval rates have consistently stayed above 80%, demonstrating a steady confidence in our planning system, while appeals and reviews have reinforced the effectiveness of our approach.

One of the most notable achievements has been the significant reduction in the number of pending planning applications. From February 2024 to July 2024, the backlog decreased by 28%, providing a more responsive system that delivers decisions promptly. Moreover, the introduction of reforms has seen applications determined faster, with our performance reaching 85% of applications decided within target by September 2024.

While the volume of applications slightly decreased in 2024, we have nonetheless increased our output, with 1,233 determinations delivered—a 6% increase over the previous year. This success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the planning team, who have worked tirelessly to improve efficiency without compromising on quality or accuracy.

Looking forward, the work accomplished in 2024 lays a strong foundation for the year ahead. The planning service will continue to evolve, focusing on maintaining efficiency, improving consistency, and supporting a growing housing supply to meet the diverse needs of Islanders. By building on the insights and successes of the past year, we are poised to deliver even greater outcomes in 2025, ensuring that our planning system remains fit for the future.

Deputy Steve Luce
Minister for the Environment

INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of planning and housing data collected throughout the past 12 months and serves as both a summary of progress achieved and a foundation for future improvements as we move into 2025.

Purpose of the Report

This report brings together data on planning applications, performance against targets, as well as appeal and review decisions. It highlights key trends, demonstrating the department's ability to process applications efficiently, maintain decision-making consistency, and support housing development.

Structure of the Report

The report follows the lifecycle of a planning application and is organised as follows:

- **Planning Service Improvements** – Provides a summary of improvements made during 2024
- **Applications Validated** – Tracks the volume of applications received and processed, showing trends in incoming volume.
- **Applications Determined** – Focuses on decisions made, whether approved, refused, or withdrawn, and reflects performance in managing workloads.
- **Determinations in Target** – Evaluates performance against statutory deadlines, with an internal target of 85% of applications determined on time.
- **Applications Approved/Refused** – Reviews decision consistency across changing volumes of applications across the year against a target of 85% approved.
- **2024 Appeal Outcomes** – Analyses appeal results to assess procedural fairness and robustness.
- **2024 Review Outcomes** – Summarises reviews conducted and their outcomes, ensuring accountability.
- **Housing Numbers Data** – Provides the key housing statistics for 2024, including building commencements, and net and gross housing unit figures.
- **Decision-Making and Outcomes** – Outlines some key performance indicators, which gives insights into the decision making process and outcomes of applications.

Key Findings

Performance data shows that determination rates remained stable, with improvements in timeliness across quarters. Approval rates were consistently around 80%, demonstrating reliability in decision-making, while determination made within the target time frames trended upwards throughout the year. Appeals and reviews reinforced confidence in processes, with most cases dismissed or upheld.

Looking Forward

Reflecting on 2024, this report highlights steady performance, improvements in processing times, and growth in housing supply. As we move into 2025, the focus remains on sustaining efficiency, enhancing consistency, and supporting diverse housing needs. Insights gained this year will help shape future strategies, ensuring the planning service continues to deliver effectively for Islanders.

PLANNING SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

We've been continuing to improve our planning services this year and implementing key improvements set out in the [Minister's Focus report](#) in June 2024.

Duty planning and building officers are now available daily for in-person advice at the new Government building, Union Street. This service provides guidance to householders and small businesses, improving accessibility and customer support. In 2024, a total of 665 people visited the duty officer service for both planning and building advice, demonstrating strong engagement and demand for in-person support.

By introducing regular case review meetings in 2024, we've improved the speed of determinations for minor applications in particular, and we hit a determination target of 83% on average, the highest rate in 8 years since 2017.

The Development Industry Partnership Board was established and met three times in 2024 and serves as a forum for industry representatives to engage with planners, provide feedback, and recommend service improvements to the Minister for the Environment. The Board meetings foster open and constructive discussions, with a focus on practical solutions that benefit Jersey's development landscape. The board will be publishing their first annual report in Q1 2025.

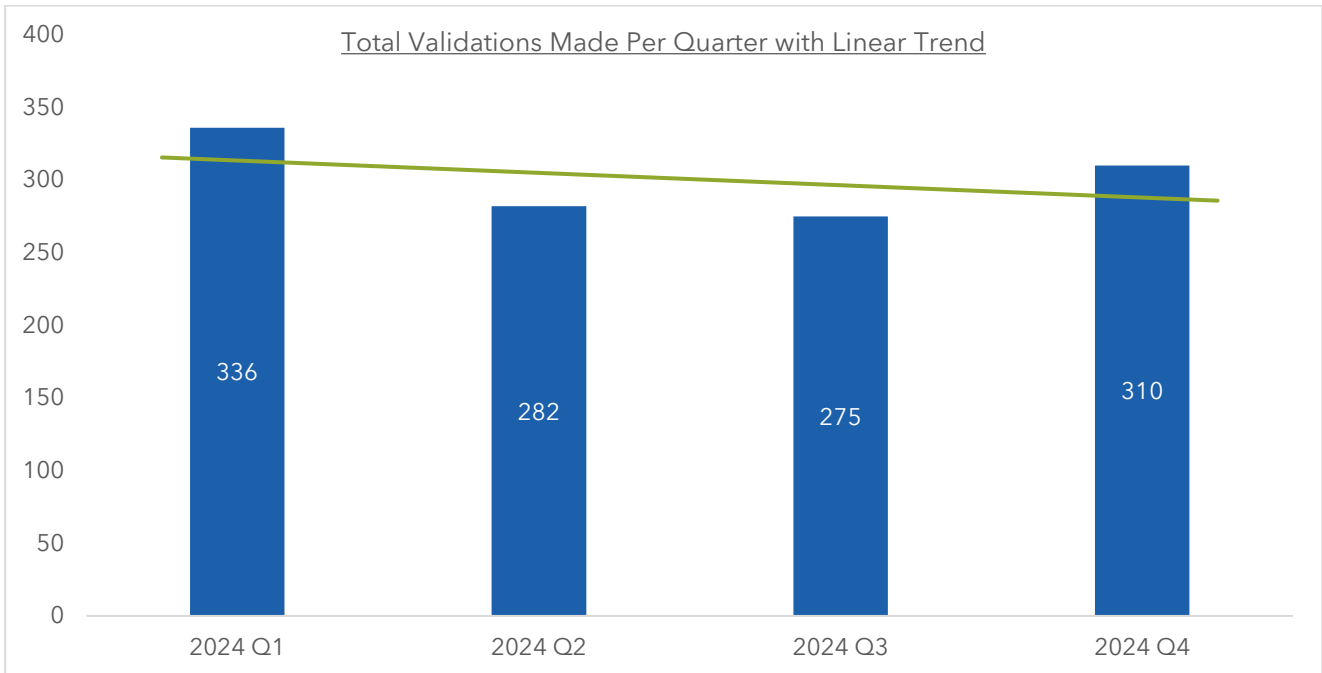
We held seven online industry forums in 2024, focusing on topics of interest such as Ecology, Carbon Neutral Roadmap, and the redevelopment of glasshouse sites, for example. Each forum has the opportunity for a Questions and Answers session with the Head of Development and Land. These forums have been well attended by between 60-80 attendees.

In 2024 we focused on improving our pre-application advice service, with the introduction of planning processing agreements (how many). We've had 252 requests for written pre-application advice for larger schemes and 71% are returned within 6 weeks. We've taken on board feedback about how we can improve our pre-application service and we'll be focusing on changes in 2025 to be more responsive and helpful to applicant and industry.

Optimising Planning Committee meetings has been a key focus, and we've seen a reduction in applications held awaiting Committee meetings in 2024. Planning Committee meetings have also moved into the new Government building at Union Street since January 2025. We'll be working on improving the layout of the room and the process of Planning Committee throughout the new year.

We are continuing our digital transformation journey with the RIDA system build and are close to a switch over of systems which will boost efficiency in processing times.

APPLICATIONS VALIDATED



This section presents data on the total number of applications validated in 2024, broken down by quarter with a linear trend.

The total number of validated applications for 2024 was 1,203, comprising 326 major applications and 877 minor applications. This represents a decrease of 4.5% compared to the 2023 total of 1,260.

Validations were distributed between Major and Minor Applications across the quarters as follows:

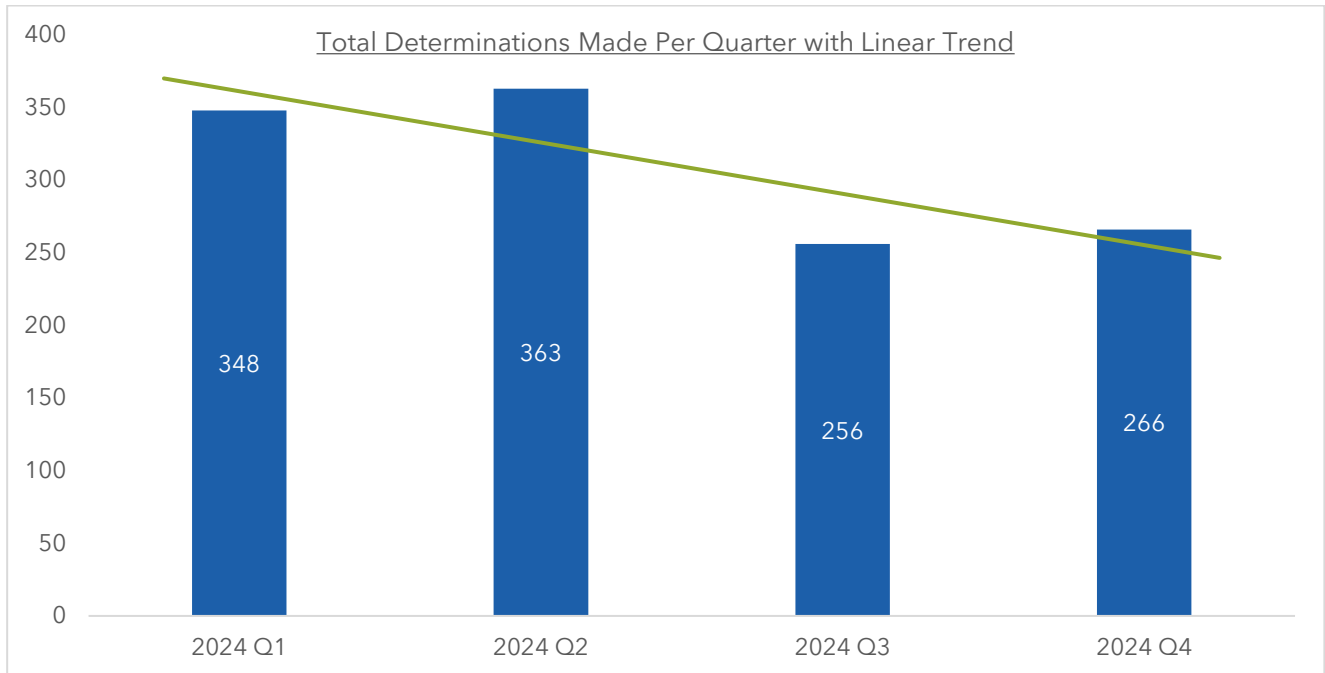
- Q1: 102 Major, 234 Minor
- Q2: 76 Major, 206 Minor
- Q3: 80 Major, 195 Minor
- Q4: 68 Major, 242 Minor

The highest number of validations occurred in Q1 with 336, while Q3 recorded the lowest with 275. This represents a percentage shift of 18% between the highest and lowest quarters.

Quarterly averages show consistent performance, with approximately 301 applications validated per quarter. The breakdown reveals that while major applications averaged 82 per quarter, minor applications averaged 219, demonstrating a stable flow of validations despite the year-on-year reduction.

Trends across the quarters highlight seasonal variations, with Q1 and Q4 showing higher minor validations, reflecting planning cycles aligned with calendar and development schedules.

APPLICATIONS DETERMINED



The total number of applications determined in 2024 was 1,233, representing an increase of 6% compared to the 2023 total of 1,164. The figures in this section exclude withdrawn applications. This approach ensures that the data reflects only cases where a formal decision has been made, providing a clearer view of determination outcomes.

Determinations were distributed between Major and Minor Applications across the quarters as follows:

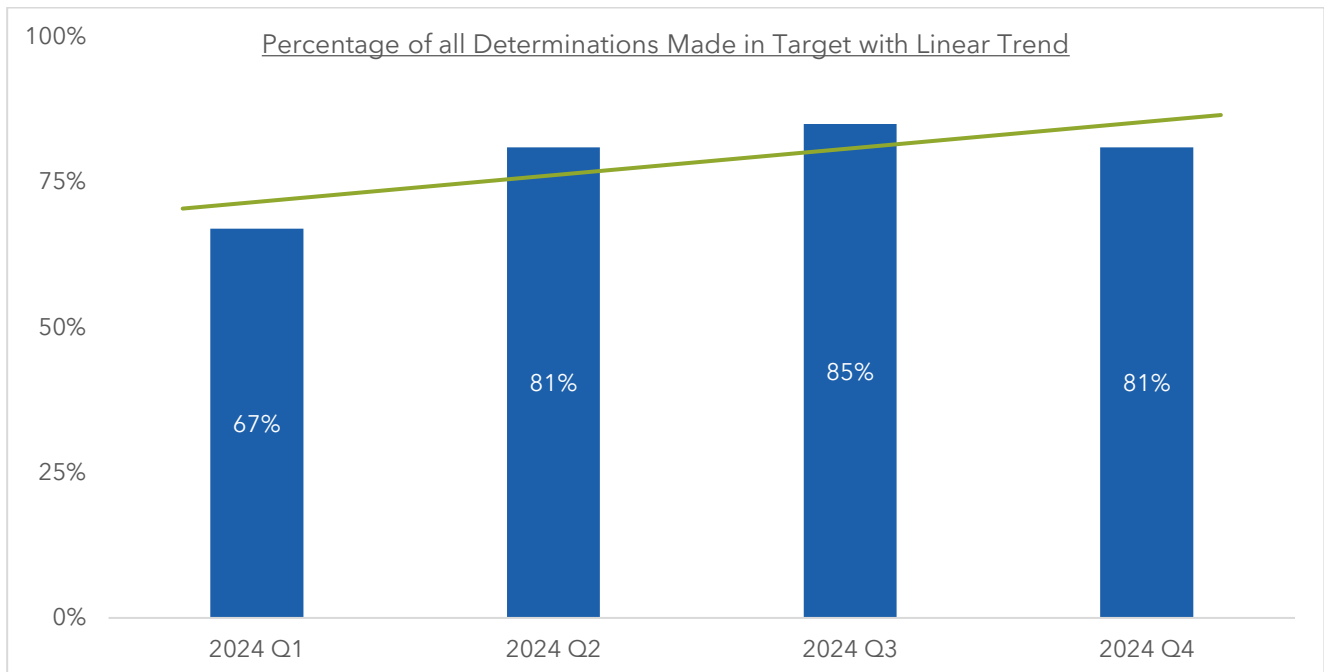
- Q1: 112 Major, 236 Minor
- Q2: 111 Major, 252 Minor
- Q3: 65 Major, 191 Minor
- Q4: 82 Major, 184 Minor

The highest number of determinations occurred in Q2 with 363, while Q3 recorded the lowest with 256. This represents a percentage shift of 29% between the highest and lowest quarters.

On average, approximately 308 applications were determined per quarter, reflecting stable performance despite fluctuations in incoming applications and seasonal variations. The quarterly breakdown shows that determinations remained closely aligned with validation figures, ensuring a balanced approach to managing workloads.

This stability suggests that the department has maintained effective processes for handling applications throughout the year, keeping determination rates consistent.

DETERMINATIONS IN TARGET



The analysis of applications determined in 2024, focuses on determinations with timeframes - 8 weeks for minor applications and 13 weeks for major applications, or where an extension was agreed. In addition to these requirements, the department has set an internal target to determine 85% of all applications within these timeframes.

Across the year, the total number of applications determined in target was distributed as follows:

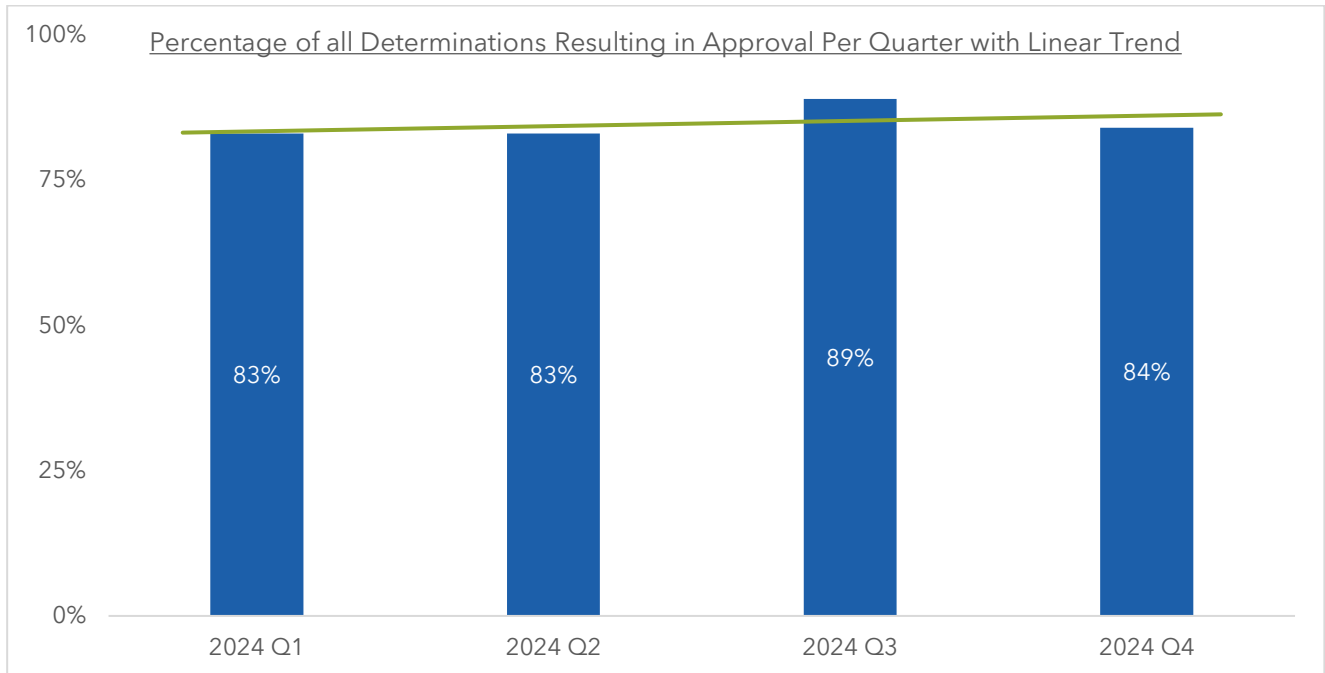
- Q1: **241 in target** – 70 Major (29%), 171 Minor (71%); **119 out of target** – 49 Major (41%), 70 Minor (59%)
- Q2: **309 in target** – 90 Major (16%), 219 Minor (84%); **72 out of target** – 31 Major (43%), 41 Minor (57%)
- Q3: **227 in target** – 53 Major (23%), 174 Minor (77%); **41 out of target** – 17 Major (41%), 24 Minor (59%)
- Q4: **230 in target** – 53 Major (23%), 177 Minor (77%); **54 out of target** – 36 Major (67%), 18 Minor (33%)

Performance varied across the year, with the percentage of applications determined within target peaking at 85% in Q3 after a low of 67% in Q1.

While Q1 saw lower performance, the department demonstrated steady improvement from Q2 onward, maintaining figures above 81% and aligning closely with the internal target of 85% for the remainder of the year.

This consistency reflects effective resource management and process optimisation, ensuring timely decision-making despite fluctuations in application volumes and complexity.

APPLICATIONS APPROVED/ REFUSED



Data on approval and refusal rates for applications determined in 2024 offer insights into decision-making trends and consistency, regardless of fluctuations in application volumes. The figures in this section focus solely on approvals and refusals, excluding withdrawn applications. This approach ensures that the data reflects only cases where a formal decision has been made, providing a clearer view of determination outcomes.

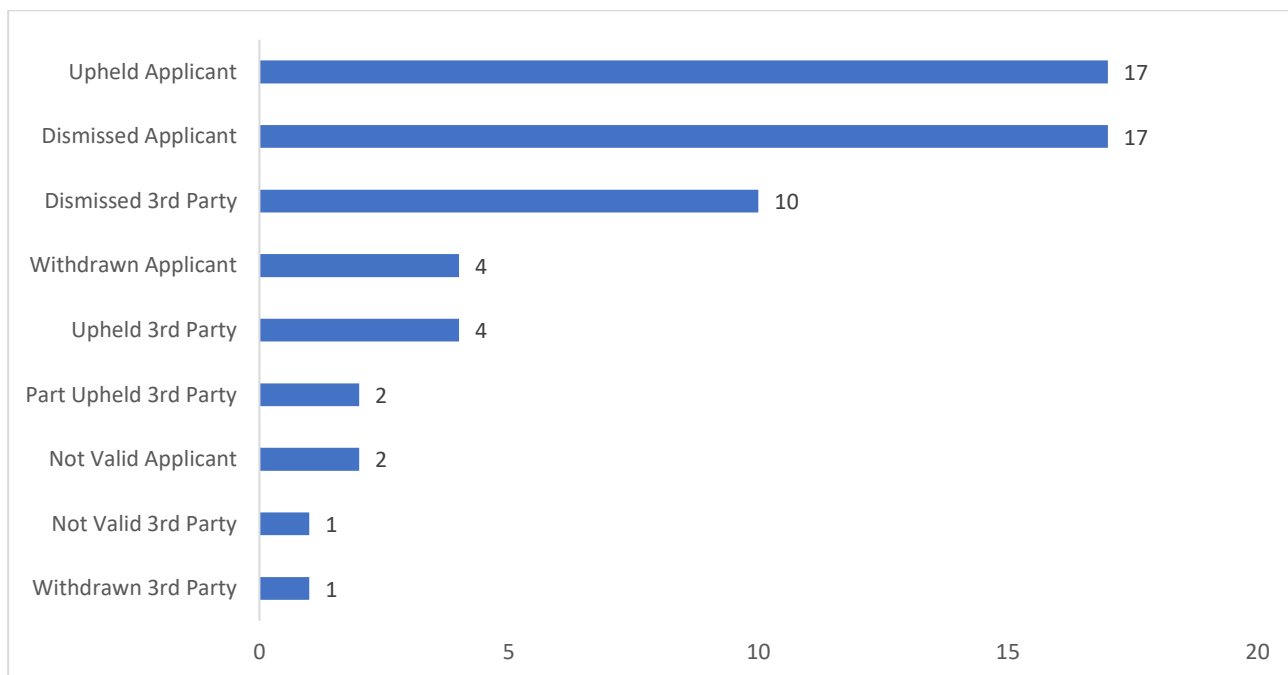
The data is broken down as follows:

- Q1: 289 approved - 87 Major (30%), 202 Minor (70%), 59 refused - 25 Major (42%), 34 Minor (58%)
- Q2: 301 approved - 83 Major (28%), 218 Minor (72%), 62 refused - 28 Major (45%), 34 Minor (55%)
- Q3: 229 approved - 56 Major (24%), 173 Minor (76%), 27 refused - 9 Major (33%), 18 Minor (67%)
- Q4: 224 approved - 66 Major (29%), 158 Minor (71%), 42 refused - 16 Major (38%), 26 Minor (62%)

Approval rates remained stable throughout the year, with percentages averaging 85%. The highest approval rate was recorded in Q3 at 89%, while the lowest occurred in both Q2 and Q4 at 83%.

These figures highlight the department's ability to maintain consistency in decision-making despite variations in workload and application complexity.

2024 APPEAL OUTCOMES



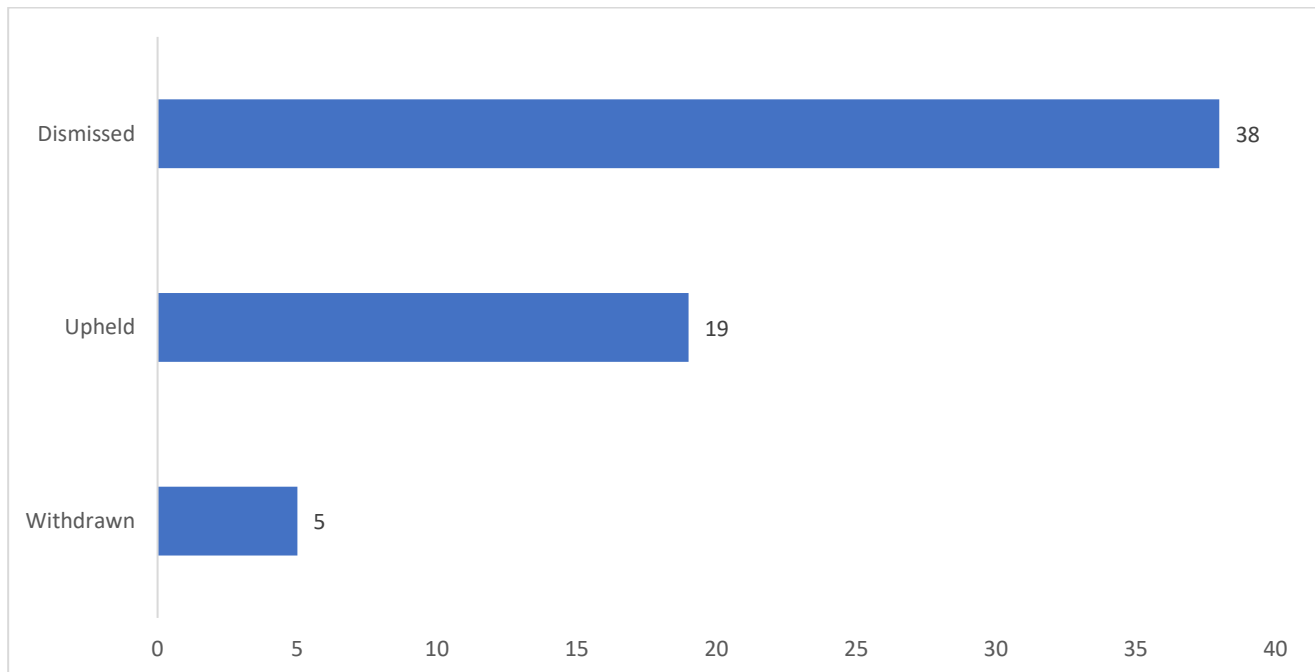
A total of 58 appeals were determined in 2024 (32 Major, 26 Minor). Each case providing an applicant both procedural fairness and an independent assessment of their application. Outcomes include:

- **Dismissed Appeals:** Approximately half of appeals were dismissed during the course of the year (14 Major, 13 Minor). In these cases, the quality and rationale of the original decision was endorsed by the independent Inspectors. All 27 dismissed appeals were subsequently endorsed by the Minister and given full effect.
- **Upheld Appeals:** It is acknowledged that a significant number of appeals were also upheld this year (13 Major, 8 Minor). In these cases, independent Inspectors found that there were reasons to grant planning permission or in the case of third party appeals reason not to support the permission granted. Whilst each appeal is considered on its own merits, the planning applications team does review these decisions carefully to see where learning can be taken. The Minister applied full effect to 20 upheld appeals, with only 1 minor appeal being the exception.
- **Partially Upheld Appeals:** Two appeals were partially upheld (1 Major, 1 Minor). This is an indication of the fine balance that is often struck when determining planning applications and appeals. Both were given full effect by the Minister.
- **Withdrawn Appeals:** Five appeals were withdrawn (2 Major, 3 Minor), highlighting instances where appellants chose not to proceed after filing.
- **Invalid Appeals:** Three appeals were deemed invalid (2 Major, 1 Minor), reinforcing the importance of compliance with procedural standards.

These figures reflect a balanced appeals process, with a near-even split between dismissed and upheld cases. This demonstrates both confidence in original decisions and the importance of an independent appeals process, from which learning and understanding can be taken for all parties. The Minister's consistent application of full effect further underscores fairness and transparency in the appeals

system, as well as a willingness to apply significant weight to the independent advice of the Planning Inspectors.

2024 REVIEW OUTCOMES



Reviews are heard by the Planning Committee following a delegated refusal by the department and provide an opportunity for an applicant to request a reconsideration of the decision which has been taken at officer level. 62 reviews were conducted in 2024 (27 Major, 35 Minor). Outcomes include:

- The majority of reviews were dismissed by the Planning Committee (16 Major, 22 Minor), indicating the broad confidence of the Planning Committee in officer decision making.
- A smaller number of reviews, presented to the Planning Committee, were upheld (10 Major, 9 Minor). These cases demonstrate the willingness of the Planning Committee to carefully reconsider proposals and to exercise its independent judgement.
- Five cases were withdrawn (1 Major, 4 Minor), reflecting situations where applicants or third parties chose not to proceed following further consideration.

These figures highlight a system that is both responsive and robust, with the majority of decisions upheld while still accommodating cases where an alternative conclusion was reached. The data supports the view that the review process is functioning effectively, ensuring accountability and fairness within the planning system.

2024 HOUSING DATA

This section provides insights into housing data for 2024, focusing on newly completed dwellings and permissions granted for new housing developments.

New Housing Units Completed

In 2024, a total of **871 new dwellings** received completion certificates issued under the Building Byelaws. These figures reflect the final stage of the development process, indicating units that have been approved, constructed, and deemed compliant with building standards.

Planning Permissions for New Housing Units

The net increase in new dwelling units granted planning permission in 2024 was **307**, contributing to the pipeline of potential housing delivery, building on previous years' delivery of 615 units in 2023 and 289 units in 2022.

Notable permissions granted in 2024 include 37 new affordable homes in St John, 42 new affordable homes in St Peter, 56 homes at Hotel Savoy and 53 new homes on the Romerils site at Dumaresq Street.

Qualifications in housing data for planning permissions

While this report highlights housing completions and planning permissions granted for 2024, it should be noted that information on housing units under development or existing housing stock (e.g., specific developments like the St Helier Waterfront) is not currently held by the department.

There are a number of applications where the approved development has resulted in the loss of small sub-standard units of accommodation, typically lodging house or staff accommodation for example. In such instances, these will usually appear as a net reduction in the overall number of new housing units, in reality the approved scheme will result in a much-improved standard of accommodation.

Replacement dwellings will not increase the net housing figures, as there is no gain in overall housing numbers. Revised plans applications only record the proposed change from the original application. If the original application was for 10 dwellings, and the revision adds one unit, then the application will only count as one additional unit, not 11 as the proposed description may describe.

In some instances, an application may be applied for in two stages – outline and reserved matters stage. Approval at the outline stage will confirm the principle of development is acceptable, the reserved matters application, providing the full detail of the scheme, following a later stage. In such instances, any new housing units will be recorded at the outline stage, and not double-counted at the reserved matters stage.

New tourism or self-catering units of accommodation are not recorded in the figures for new housing units. There are examples of approved applications for housing units changing to tourism / self-catering use (which will be recorded as a net loss), as well as examples of applications for tourism/ self-catering units changing to housing units (which will be recorded as a net gain).

DECISION-MAKING AND APPLICATION OUTCOMES

This section provides an overview of key performance indicators (KPIs) that assess procedural fairness, transparency, and consistency in decision-making. These indicators help demonstrate how applications progress through the planning system, how decisions are reviewed, and how applicants engage with the process after an initial decision.

The data in this section highlights:

- The role of the Planning Committee in determining applications and review requests
- The proportion of applications determined following a Public Inquiry
- The effectiveness of the 'free go' process, which allows applicants to resubmit applications after refusal or withdrawal, without an additional fee.

By examining these factors, this section provides insight into how planning decisions are made, challenged, and reconsidered, ensuring that the process remains robust, consistent, and fair.

Applications Referred to the Planning Committee

This measures the number of live applications referred to the Planning Committee and the proportion that were decided against the planning officer's recommendation.

- Total applications appearing on agendas in 2024: 71
- Applications with officer recommendation to approve: 55
- Committee overturns: 13 (18%)
- Applications withdrawn after appearing on an agenda: 3

The data shows that the majority of applications were determined in accordance with the officer recommendation, with a relatively small proportion overturned and withdrawals remaining low.

Reviews

This tracks the number of decisions referred to the Planning Committee following a request for a review of a decision made under delegated powers, and the proportion that were subsequently overturned.

- Total requests for review appearing on agendas: 62
- Applications upheld with original refusal recommendation: 39 (63%)
- Committee overturns (approved): 19 (31%)
- The majority of original decisions, which were subjected to review, were upheld. However, nearly a third of cases resulted in an overturned decision, demonstrating the important role of the Committee in reassessing applications and providing an additional layer of scrutiny in the planning process.

Planning Applications Determined by Public Inquiry

No planning applications were determined following a Public Inquiry in 2024.

Applications Resubmitted Without Fee After Refusal or Withdrawal

When a planning application is refused or withdrawn, an applicant can resubmit an application without an application fee, provided this takes place within 6 months and is for substantially the same proposal. In 2024, 66 applications were resubmitted under this provision and of these:

- 49 (74%) were then approved
- 14 (21%) were refused again
- 3 (5%) were withdrawn

This represents 27% of all applications that were either refused (190 cases) or withdrawn (59 cases) in 2024. The high approval rate of resubmitted applications indicates that applicants are making effective use of the opportunity to address concerns that are raised in their original applications and to then re-submit a scheme which can be supported.