

Committee: Planning Committee

Date: 14 January 2026

Title: Quality and Speed of Major and Non-Major Applications

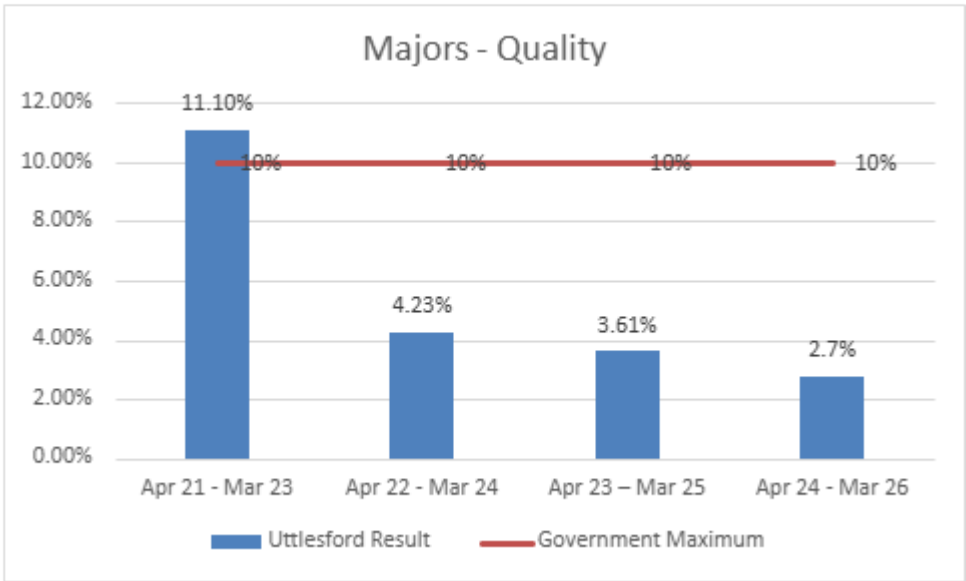
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Item: 3

Purpose

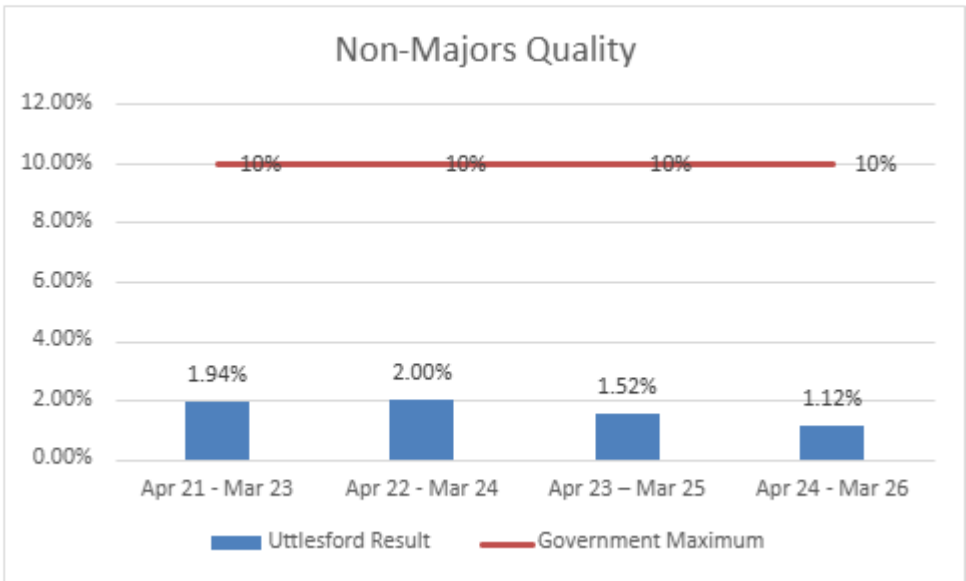
1. To report to Planning Committee the applications that have been considered at Planning Committee which contribute to the data considered by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as to whether the Local Planning Authority (LPA) falls within the criteria to be designated.
2. There are four criteria where a LPA may be designated - Quality Major; Speed Major; Quality Non-Major and Speed Non-Major.
3. On the 6th June 2025 the council received a letter confirming that the 'Special Measures' had been removed with immediate effect. The council is no longer designated. This report gives an overview of all four areas where the LPA could fall within the criteria to be designated.
4. 'Quality' of Major and Non-Major applications covers a two-year period plus nine months to allow for appeal decisions. Whilst 'Speed' of Major and Non-Major now covers a period from 1st October through to 30th September. This came into effect in 2024 and the first period to be monitored will be 01/10/2024 – 30/09/2025.
5. The Planning Advisory Service provided each Local Authority with a 'Crystal Ball' (basically a spreadsheet) where the data can be added each month/quarter to monitor whether there is any risk of designation.
6. Below shows the four potential designation areas as graphs, quality of major covering from April 2017 through to March 2025; quality of non-major covers a period of April 2021 through to March 2025. Whilst the speed graphs for both major and non-major covers from when the new criteria was announced to cover one year from October 2024.

Quality of Major Decisions



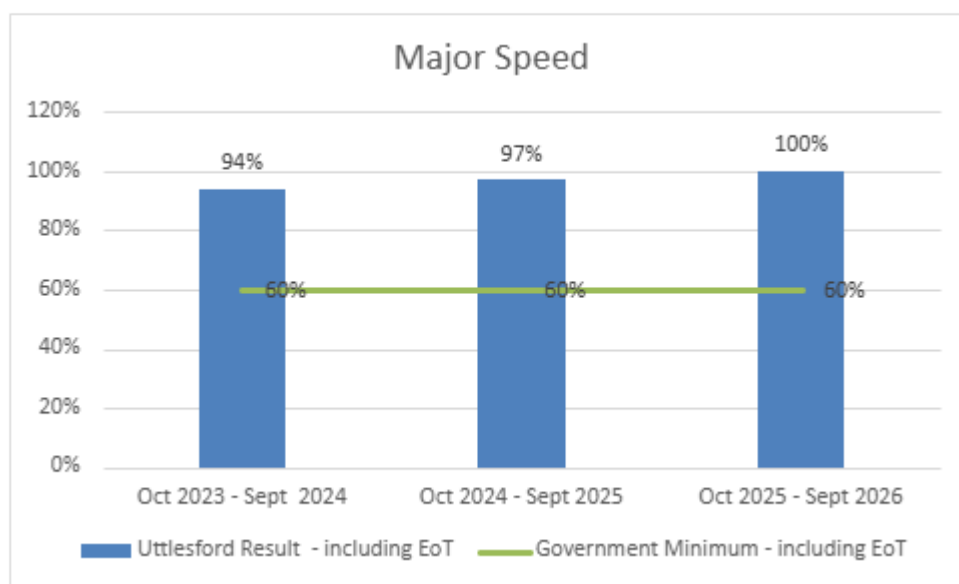
To 23/12/2025

Quality of Non-Major Decisions

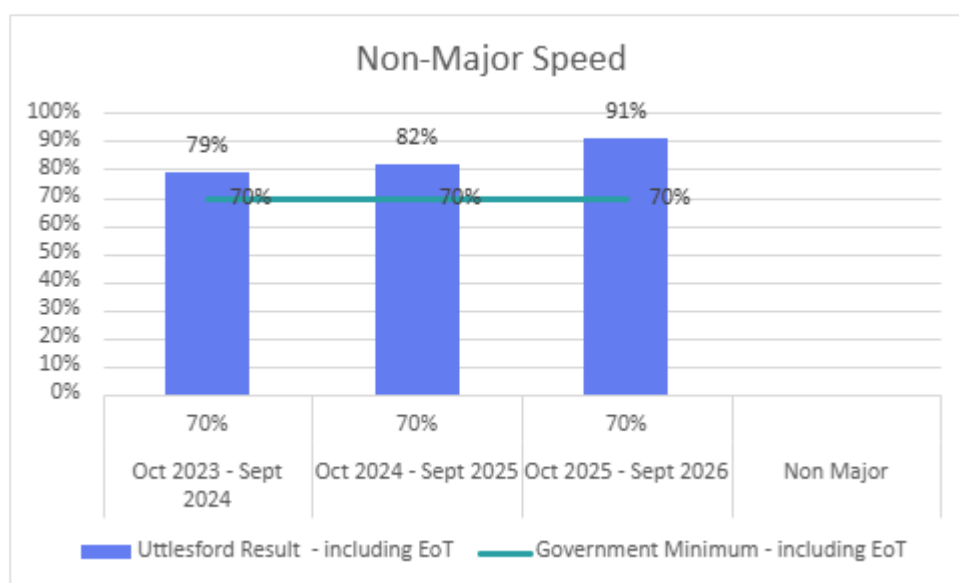


To 23/12/2025

Speed of Major Decisions – to 23rd December 2025



Speed of Non-Major Decisions - to 23rd December 2025



7 Cost of Major appeals per year*

Year	Legal including Awards of Costs	Consultants
2017 - 2018	£102,660	£33,697
2018 - 2019	£ 21,325	£10,241
2019 - 2020	£182,013	£78,776

2020 - 2021	£144,117	£70,481
2021 - 2022	£129,453	£152,057
2022 - 2023	£306,407.36	£169,873.42
2023 - 2024	£84,854.48	£40,800.78
2024 – 2025	[£55,200.00 all recovered] = £0	[£25,947.00 + £19,800.00 recovered] = £6,147
2025 - 2026	-	-

**Not including the Stansted Airport Inquiry.*

Please note that Inquiry/Hearing costs may not arise in the same financial year as the application decision.

8. Pending Major Planning Appeals

8.1

Reference	Address	Type of Appeal	Dates of Hearing/Inquiry – if known
UTT/24/0543/OP	Land North Of Bedwell Road And East Of Old Mead Road Ugley And Henham	Public Inquiry	Appeal Lodged Public Inquiry opens 2.12.25

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that the Committee notes this report for information.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Planning Committee
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health & Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None

Workforce/Workplace	None
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Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
2	1	2	Performance Improvement Action Plan in place

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact - action may be necessary

3 = Significant risk or impact - action required

3= Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project