

Planning permission refused: How long should a planning appeal take?

The Planning Inspectorate is the Government body who you can appeal to if your planning application has been refused or if you don't like the planning conditions you are expected to comply with. The Planning Inspectorate will appoint an independent Planning Inspector who can either agree with the local authority or make a different decision, and overturn the decision on appeal, thereby granting you a planning permission. This process can therefore be quite useful if you cannot agree an alternative way to get a planning permission with the local planning authority. To add more certainty the Planning Inspectorate has target times for determining your appeal.

Keeping to this time limit has been a bit of a problem however, with the actual time taken to get a decision often taking much longer. For the simplest form of appeal, by written representations, just over 40% of appeals were determined in the target 12 weeks in 2015.

Delays can also be political due to certain types of planning application being 'called-in' by the Government for a Planning Inspector to determine. This is especially true for renewable energy projects, with member's reporting that the Planning Inspectorate has taken over a year to determine some applications for solar farms.

The Planning Inspectorate this week apologised for missing targets in its [annual report](#) and said, with changes put into place last year and fewer planning appeals expected, it hoped to get closer to delivering more appeals by its actual target dates.

For a farmer or grower looking to appeal it may still be use to note the actual average time taken for an appeal in 2015 as well as the target time so you can plan ahead.

Type of appeal	2015 target for determining appeal	2015 Average time taken
By written representation	14 weeks	17.8 weeks
By hearing	14 weeks	21.9 weeks
By inquiry	22 weeks	33.9 weeks

Source: [The Planning Inspectorate Annual Report and Accounts 2015/16](#)

Figures are for 'Section 78 Appeals' the most common way to appeal after having a refusal of a planning application.