

This Action Plan has been published in response to ‘Recommendation 2’ of the Northern Ireland Audit Office Report ‘*A Strategic Review of the Planning Appeals Commission*’. As outlined in our published response to the report, the reporting period assessed by the NIAO covered a particular period in time and we have moved on since. The “backlogs and long delays” referred to in the report no longer exist. Against that background and building upon actions taken to date, the Commission will endeavour to adhere to the recommendations insofar as we can. The subject Recommendation advocated more certainty and confidence around the timescales for delivery of Commission caseloads. It recommended that the Commission should develop and publish detailed plans to clear the long-standing cases in each workstream. These plans should include timelines for clearing backlogs and regular monitoring by NICTS. For the purposes of this plan, the definition of ‘a longstanding case’ is those cases received by the Commission in the penultimate business year.

In respect of the Hear and Decide workstream there is one longstanding case:

Appeal Reference	Date Appeal Received	Development – Described as per the appeal form	Site Location	Action Plan
2024/A0133	12/03/2025	Redevelopment of the site for a community pharmacy at ground floor and 5no. apartments on the upper floors and all associated parking, access, landscaping and other site works	570-578 Shore Road, Whiteabbey, BT37 0SL	This case was heard in July 2025. Due to personal circumstances arising (beyond anyone’s control), a decision cannot be issued yet. The Commission has offered the appellant the opportunity to have the case reheard to expedite matters. However, the appellant has not sought to pursue this option. The Commission will review the position with the appellant in December 2026 if the situation remains the same.

In respect of the Hear and Report workstream there are nine longstanding cases (eight of which comprise the one project, namely the Dalradian goldmine proposal). That is presently the subject of an ongoing Public Inquiry. The remaining case cannot be progressed further due to circumstances beyond the Commission's control, explained below.

PAC ref	Date of initial contact	Proposal	Location	Actions
2021/C005 2021/C006 2021/C007 2021/WHR01 2021/WHR02 2021/DR001	22/09/2021	Conjoined inquiry in respect of applications related to the underground valuable minerals mining and exploration, surface level development including processing and other associated	Greencastle, County Tyrone	The Inquiry was originally scheduled to open in September 2024 but was postponed due to the withdrawal and resubmission of two Directions in relation to the Impoundment and Abstraction applications by the referring authority. The Inquiry opened in January 2025. It was then adjourned while the Department for Infrastructure carried out a transboundary consultation. The

Action Plan 14/09/26

		development and ancillary works.		Inquiry reconvened in April 2026, and the hearing sessions are on-going. The expected date for the completion of the Commission's report will be announced at the end of the hearing sessions, in November 2026.
2024/WHR01 2024/WHR02	05/09/2024	As above		The Inquiry opened January 2025 and was adjourned while the Department for Infrastructure carried out a transboundary consultation. It reconvened in April 2026, and the hearing sessions are on-going. The expected date for the completion of the Commission's report will be announced at the end of the hearing sessions, in November 2026.
2022/C001	14/04/2021	Appeal against determination under Regulation 34(1) of the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017, that an EIA is required in relation to an alleged breach of planning control on lands at Craigall Quarry, 84 Cullyrammer Road, Kilrea	Craigall Quarry, 84 Cullyrammer Road, Kilrea, BT51 5YF	The Commission issued a decision on the legal grounds of this appeal in August 2024. That decision was challenged in the High Court by a third party. The Commission's decision was upheld by the High Court on 13 th May 2025. That decision was subsequently challenged in the Court of Appeal (CoA). However, the CoA also upheld the Commission's decision in December 2025. The linked EIA hearing was then scheduled for April 2026, but had to be postponed due to a challenge to the CoA decision to the Supreme Court. The Commission awaits the outcome of any proceedings before the Supreme Court. Once a judgment is delivered, the Commission will assign a Commissioner to take the case forward within three weeks of the date of that judgment.