



PLANNING (CONTROL) DIVISION

APPLICANTS/AGENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Are you a professional agent (eg architect, chartered surveyor) who submits applications for planning permission on behalf of clients?

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Are you a professional agent (eg architect...	
Yes	48
No	31

2. If you answered Yes to question 1, have you received a copy of this questionnaire previously?

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	32
If you answered Yes to question 1, have yo...	
Yes	16
No	32

3. If you answered Yes to question 1, how many applications do you submit to Babergh over the course of an average year?

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	36
If you answered Yes to question 1, how man...	
Less than 5	19
Between 6 and 10	11
Between 11 and 20	7
Over 20	7

4. **Were you aware at the time you submitted this application that planning application forms could be obtained via the Internet?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Were you aware at the time you submitted t...	
Yes	34
No	45

5. **Would you prefer to download forms from the Internet rather than asking us to supply paper copies?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	3
Would you prefer to download forms from th...	
Yes	41
No	36

6. **If we were able to provide facilities for you to submit applications to us electronically on line, would you welcome this?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
If we were able to provide facilities for ...	
Yes	42
No	37

7. **When you submitted the application were you aware of our practice of allowing applicants and others to address the meeting of Development Committee at which their application is decided?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	-
When you submitted the application were yo...	
Yes	48
No	32

8. **Were you aware of the name of the officer dealing with your application and of how you might contact him/her?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	-
Were you aware of the name of the officer ...	
Yes	72
No	8

9. **Did the officer dealing with your application contact you (or your agent) at any time either to seek clarification or to seek changes or to keep you posted as to progress?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	2
Did the officer dealing with your applicat...	
Yes	44
No	34

10. **Did you feel that you were kept adequately informed by us over the progress of your application?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Did you feel that you were kept adequately...	
Yes	50
No	29

11. **Did you contact the office before you submitted the application to discuss your proposal informally?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Did you contact the office before you subm...	
Yes	49
No	30

12. **Were you aware that you could do so and that this practice is encouraged?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	2
Were you aware that you could do so and th...	
Yes	63
No	15

13. **Before you submitted your application did you feel you understood the process through which an application passes?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Before you submitted your application did ...	
Yes	65
No	14

14. **Do you feel you understand that process now?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	4
Do you feel you understand that process now?	
Yes	66
No	10

15. **Is your understanding of the planning process different now to what it was before you submitted the application?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Is your understanding of the planning proc...	
Not at all	55
A little	18
Quite a bit	2
A lot	4

16. **Was your application granted permission or refused?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	1
Was your application granted permission or...	
Permission granted	71
Permission refused	8

17. **If your application was granted permission were conditions imposed upon the approval?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	9
If your application was granted permission...	
Yes	56
No	15

18. **Do you feel that you are clear as to what these conditions mean?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	21
Do you feel that you are clear as to what ...	
Yes	54
No	5

19. **If your application was refused permission do you feel that you understand the reasons for refusal?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	68
If your application was refused permission...	
Yes	10
No	2

20. **If your application was refused permission do you feel that you understand the right you have to appeal against that refusal?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	66
If your application was refused permission...	
Yes	14
No	-

21. **Do you think your application was decided quickly enough?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	2
Do you think your application was decided ...	
Yes	61
No	17

22. **In general, would you rather we negotiated with you as an applicant to arrive at the best solution or that we made a quick decision, even if this was a refusal?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	6
In general, would you rather we negotiated...	
Yes	70
No	4

23. **Would you be interested in forming a User Group to explore ways to improve the service we provide?**

Absolute Respondents	
Base	80
Missing	
No reply	2
Would you be interested in forming a User ...	
Yes	27
No	51

24. **Are there any other comments you would like to make on your experience in making the application?**

- I found officers VERY slow to respond in the pre-application process (ie. 6 week turnaround response to letters and NO response to repeated phone calls). I also found advice on the application to be inconsistent until a more senior planner was brought in.
- On the whole you are doing better than most.
- Always very useful to discuss with planning officer issues that are driving consultation process. Not all issues/comments can be foreseen and this is invaluable. Sometimes more than the statutory 8 weeks is required
- Pre-application meetings by client were had and proposals agreed but were rescinded with the refusal. Client was not happy.
- Please could all Planning Authorities be as helpful as Babergh.
- Unable to talk to the planning officer despite numerous attempts to make contact by telephone
- Once again Babergh must be congratulated on their professional approach to planning - it is refreshing to work with your team.

- I found it very useful to know of the case handler and that it is much more less stressful by dealing with the application, a one to one basis is a better way to deal with things and not being passed around various other staff. Overall a good experience.
- We phoned 3 times to chase up the decision which we should have been notified by 22nd January 04. A letter dated 22/01/04 finally arrived 9th February 04, 2 weeks later. We were told that once domestic garden was approved we could put up a fence but this information was incorrect as has been nearly all info. given to us over the phone
- Please make it possible to complete application forms in 'Word' format to avoid printing off and filling in by hand. Thank you.
- Item 22 - I had written and visited BDC to explain the urgency of this application (roof was leaking). This was not acknowledged and indeed, the application for listed building consent took 7 weeks. I also asked for a copy of the forms I sent in - the colour used could not be copied by me. No action was taken on advice from my local Councillor, we took no action to replace tiles with slates without formal approval.
- Standard conditions are often applied when they do not relate satisfactorily to the particular case.
- Mr Price is an excellent and experienced officer. He deals with a difficult process in an extremely professional manner. He should be "cherished"
- None. Every question was very clear.
- After many years of making planning applications my judgement on this particular one was that it was somewhat routine and uncontroversial and did not warrant pre-consultation with the Planning Officer. However it is acknowledged that in more difficult applications, early access to a Planning Officer can be of benefit to both parties and the availability of this facility is welcomed. With this particular application, the time taken to process it and issue the Planning Permission was commendable.
- The letter granting approval was dated 17 Feb 04. It arrived 1 March. A letter seeking clarification from the planning office required a response within 14 days of the date of the letter. It took 10 days to arrive. The forms that we were sent were not all necessary and were particularly hard to follow. The Parish Council inspection (Boxford) was speedy and efficient
- I feel very grieved that I had to pay £110 to put a satellite dish up on my own property, when all over Ipswich and Felixstowe people can put up the same size dish without being penalized because one neighbour objected
- In general, and particularly where Listed Buildings are concerned, I find it very helpful to arrange an on-site meeting with Planner and Client before pencil is put to paper (or computer buttons pressed!)
- We still don't know who to speak to regarding the conditions imposed.
- It appears that, like all Local Authorities, you focus on the 8 week date and not getting on with making a decision even if it could be made in 5 weeks!
- Internet access to current planning applications and progress would be helpful
- The officer was helpful and informative. This made things clear and we were able to agree issues with minimum delay. Meeting was very useful.

- Was disappointed that from the date of recommendation to actually receiving the formal paperwork, nobody could advise what stage we were or where the paperwork was in the system - it took nearly 2 weeks to receive the paperwork
- Mrs Bacon could not have been more helpful or responsive to the situation in which my clients have found themselves.
- Having dealt with different Councils, Babergh is definitely the most difficult to deal with. Not having a full time tree officer doesn't help nor does applications in triplicate. Can anything be done to ease and speed the process