



PLANNING CONTROL – BEST VALUE QUESTIONNAIRE

ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND RESPONSES

Number of returned Questionnaires	535
Number of Questionnaires sent out	956
Response Rate	56%

YOUR EXPERIENCE

1. When you made your most recent application, in what capacity were you acting?

Base	517 100%
As a private individual	425 82%
As part of your own business	47 9%
On behalf of your employer	27 5%
As an agent acting on behalf of another party	12 2%
Other	6 1%

Please write in

- Suffolk County Council Education Dept
- H RUFFELL & CO / HWA FUFFELL
- Ok - no problems
- I didn't reply last time as my comments would inevitably be negative. I realize the office is very busy. Thanks.
- Also as a private individual
- The person who drew up our plans submitted the application.
- Michael Howard Homes
- Church
- Church

- Application made by agent acting on our behalf
- For my disabled daughter
- Did not find Linda Bacon very helpful
- Agent made application on my behalf
- Application made on our behalf by builder
- Design Department
- Application made by Ross Powlesland Architects
- Mr T Wright (Architect) acting on my behalf (Agent)

2. What type of application were you submitting?

Base	515
Householder	349 68%
Business or Industry Development (including Minerals and Waste Developments)	38 7%
Residential Development	73 14%
Listed Building or Conservation Area Consent	79 15%
Other	43 8%

Please write in

- Development Of Annexe 2. Building A Summerhouse
- Adding Larger Porch To House
- Agricultural
- Agricultural To Domestic
- Agriculture Storage
- App. Your planning consent as owner of private dwelling
- Carport
- Change Of Use
- Change Of Use - Agricultural To Residential Garden Use
- Change Of Use - Part A1 To Part A3
- Change Of Use Agricultural Land
- Change Of Use From Business To Residential
- Changes To Shop Layout
- Church
- Consent for felling a tree
- Conservatory Construction
- Construction Of Own House
- Construction Of Vehicular Entrance For 3 Neighbours
- Consultancy
- Cutting Back Of Overgrown Fir Trees
- Cutting Back Overgrown Fir Trees
- Dual Agricultural And Aircraft Storage Building
- Equine Stables
- Extension
- Extension To Existing Property
- Extension To Our Home
- Further development in adjacent building
- Ground Floor Extension
- Lifting Restriction
- Machinery Storage Shed
- Outling Planning For Domestic Use
- Permission To Build A Cottage In Empty Paddock At Erwarton
- Permission To Cut Back Trees, If Necessary
- Permission To Fell A Preserved Tree
- Portacabin At Church
- Pruning trees subject to preservation order
- Removing/Replacing Trees In Conservation Area
- Renewal Of Temp Building
- Retail
- Retirement Bungalow In Our Garden
- School Extension
- Side Garage & Extension Above (2 Bed/Ensuite)
- Stable Block
- Stable Block
- Temp Building Renewal
- TPO Process
- Tree Conservation Consent
- Tree Felling
- Tree Felling
- Tree Lopping
- Tree Surgery

- Trees
- Trees Cut Down

- TRIM LISTED OAK TREE
- USP Class Change A1 To A3

3. Have you applied to Babergh District Council Planning (Control) Division for planning consent previous to your most recent application?

Base	507	%
Yes	213	42%
No	288	57%
Do not recall	6	1%

4. Please indicate how many times you have applied to Babergh District Council Planning (Control) Division for planning consent:

	Base	1- 5	6 – 10	11 – 20	21 – 50	51+	It does not apply	Total %
Base	399	277	31	12	3	10	66	100%
In the last six months	113	88 78%	3 3%	2 2%		1 1%	19 17%	100%
In the last year	94	68 72%	8 9%		1 1%	2 2%	15 16%	100%
In the last two years	85	52 61%	10 12%	3 4%	1 1%	3 4%	16 19%	100%
In the last three years	107	69 64%	10 9%	7 7%	1 1%	4 4%	16 15%	100%

5. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your experience of the Council's handling of your planning application(s) in the last year:

	Base	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	It does not apply	Total %
Base	2476	360	1105	393	195	204	219	
I was given the advice and help I needed to submit my application correctly	499	85 17%	224 45%	75 15%	29 6%	27 5%	59 12%	100%
The Council kept me informed about the progress of my application	496	47 9%	186 38%	93 19%	85 17%	59 12%	26 5%	100%
The Council dealt promptly with my queries	496	69 14%	208 42%	90 18%	42 8%	47 9%	40 8%	100%
I understand the reasons for the decision made on my application(s)	493	77 16%	258 52%	53 11%	23 5%	33 7%	49 10%	100%
I felt that I was treated fairly and that my point of view was listened to	492	82 17%	229 47%	82 17%	16 3%	38 8%	45 9%	100%

6. Setting aside whether any individual application was successful or not, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the Council in processing your application?

Base	509	%
% Satisfied	70%	
Please tick		
Very satisfied	184	36%
Fairly satisfied	175	34%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	70	14%
Fairly dissatisfied	42	8%
Very dissatisfied	38	7%

7. Was your most recent application:

Base	496	%
Granted permission/consent	445	90%
Refused permission/consent	51	10%

8. For each of the following elements of the planning service provided by Babergh District Council please indicated whether you think the service has got better or worse over the last three years, or has it stayed the same?

	Base	Better	Stayed the same	Worse	It does not apply	Total %
Base	1163	94	438	129	502	
The advice and help provided to submit my application	296	28 9%	117 40%	20 7%	131 44%	100%
The information provided about the progress of my application	289	20 7%	109 38%	39 13%	121 42%	100%
The promptness with which queries about my application were dealt with	289	27 9%	94 33%	47 16%	121 42%	100%
The clarity of the reasons for each decision given	289	19 7%	118 41%	23 8%	129 45%	100%
The fairness with which my application was dealt with and viewpoint listened to	292	30 10%	108 37%	27 9%	127 43%	100%

ABOUT YOURSELF

9. Are you male or female?

Base	506	%
Male	357	71%
Female	149	29%

10. What was your age on your last birthday?

Age	No.
21	1
25	1
27	1
29	6
31	12
33	3
35	13
37	12
39	14
41	18
43	19
45	10
47	15
49	12
51	11
53	10
55	9
57	13
59	14
61	7
63	6
65	11
67	4
69	9
71	2
73	2
75	3
77	2
79	1
83	1
85	1
91	1

Age	No.
24	1
26	2
28	3
30	6
32	11
34	11
36	15
38	13
40	9
42	13
44	12
46	17
48	8
50	6
52	14
54	20
56	7
58	14
60	10
62	11
64	7
66	4
68	1
70	4
72	2
74	10
76	2
78	2
80	3
84	1
87	1

11. Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?

Base	499	%
Employee in full time job (30 hours per week)	218	44%
Employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	39	8%
Self employed or part-time	135	27%
On a government supported training programme	1	
Full time education	0	
Unemployed and available for work	2	
Permanently sick/disabled	6	1%
Wholly retired from work	70	14%
Looking after the home	28	6%

Doing something else (please write in)

- Full time carer for sick relative
- Semi-retired
- Semi-retired
- Nothing to do with planning!
- This was a JOINT application (Mr & Mrs) - one at work, one looking after the home!
- Looking after home
- Wholly retired and looking after the home
- Housewife
- County Councillor
- Managing Director of own company
- Trying to restore the area around a Grade II listed house (now 10 flats) to its former glory
- Working abroad
- Own Practice

12. Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? (long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time)

Base	487	%
Yes	57	12%
No	430	88%

13. Does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way?

Base	132	%
Yes	46	35%
No	86	65%

14. To which of these groups do you consider you belong to:

Base	497	%
a. White		
British	452	91%
Irish	6	1%
Any other White background		
English	28	6%
Spanish	1	
Dutch	1	
Italian	1	
Scottish	2	
b. Black or Black British		
Caribbean	1	
African	0	
c. Mixed		
White and Black Caribbean	1	
White and Black African	0	
White and Asian	1	

d. Asian or Asian British		
Indian	2	
Pakistani	1	
Bangladeshi	0	
e. Chinese		
Chinese	0	

15. Is there anything else you wish to add?

- As a carer I would like to comment on the closure of Clench House & the uncertainty of the future of the day care. We are dependant on the respite care provided (excellent) which will cease and no extra replacement provision appears likely. The day care is even more important - I will be writing to the County Social Care Services as well.
- The planning application process can be very frustrating. Firstly the (in my view) unnecessary delays and secondly as a non-council member our opportunity to speak is limited. When the members of Council question themselves we felt they were overcooking info. Already in their possession and/pr discussing irrelevant topics. The opportunity to add info to the discussion would have saved everyone a lot of time
- More money wasted - Are Council taxes going up to pay for this?
- What on earth has question 14 got to do with Council Planning Services?
- If this was anonymous how do you know I did not return the original survey?
- I have received from you three letters with requests to complete a questionnaire. As you twice refused my application to erect a conservatory (which was overturned) I do not feel I am the right person to spend time completing this questionnaire.
- A question on views regarding cost to a householder would be helpful. You may find that ratepayers who received almost nothing for their rates find such charges deplorable.
- Judging from the Development Application lodged for Felix Cottages - Nos. 97 & 99 The Street which was almost unanimously rejected by BDC, if the developer goes to appeal then BDC's views and the planning 'system' county for nothing!
- A very difficult questionnaire to complete as I don't make planning applications - I comment on them on behalf of Suffolk County Council Education Dept.
- Information on progress was obtained by telephone and all phone calls were returned promptly, but actual issue of approval documents took longer than expected.
- I would like a brief, plain-language statement of what sorts of things Babergh will permit under listed building consent to be readily available to buyers e.g by distribution through estate agents.
- All my planning applications were dealt with by King Architects of Sudbury. I appreciate the fact that in the current housing market you are very busy with planning applications
- The officer who visited the premises before the application was submitted was overbearing and officious. My agent dealt with this person
- It would be much more helpful if the Planning Officer consulted (came and looked at) more and stopped applying a planning "clontide seigneur".
- Q14 is regrettable. I think that if more time or attention had been spent before I made my first application by Council staff then it is quite possible the first application would have been successful. I wouldn't have had to employ an architect to make the second successful. This is not a complaint
- There has been an unfortunate delay over the use of a newish product to be used on the roof.
- Mile End Bungalow, Hartest - Mr Wilsher does not live here anymore.
- Planning charges are very expensive, and difficult to understand for a householder. You have allowed only two weeks for us to complete and return the questionnaire, you don't work that fast, you should have allowed us more time.
- The only thing we were disappointed about was that the company erecting our conservatory gained all the paperwork relating to our planning application, we had to ask for a copy and we were not even told our planning permission had been granted until we phoned up Babergh to find out when we would hear. Apart from that we were both very satisfied with the way our planning application was dealt with.

- Application for TPO related work: process is unnecessarily long and duplicated, 2 months + several telephone calls. Met PTO officer on site: work agreed in principle. 3 weeks later: local parish member on site? Why? Person knew nothing about this, but agreed work. 3-4 weeks later, rang PTO officer who said work had to be agreed by ? Committee, and written approval sent. Range BDC for verbal approval as contractor wanting to start work. Surely the PTO officer needs authority to deal with these matters?
- I paid £120 for the planning application, and it was turned down - therefore, fill in your own questionnaire.
- Application seemed to stall due to sickness or change of staff in planning dept. This led to a delay which was frustrating - I was not informed of this at the time.
- Planning decisions appear to be extremely subjective, with little influence able to be exerted by either applicant, or parish council or neighbours, who in my case loved my ORIGINAL proposal. We eventually agreed to a naff compromise, which I consider very sad. I am still waiting for Building Regs, months after plans were passed!
- The planning department is understaffed, and through no fault of the officers, took too long to process an application.
- Our re-application: Planning officer advised on changes to be acceptable were made. I chased the progress to be informed - advised it would go to committee and the date of this. Refusal notice arrived BEFORE that date. This application is not unlike others in the area.
- The advice given made no difference to the application, changes to the draft design so more pleasing views, compromise to next door that would increase build cost were advised, and implemented for application to be refused.
- As a small, individual builder, I have always found the planning dept of BDC fair and efficient in dealing with the smallest of queries.
- Staff at your offices quite often find it difficult to return calls or emails within a timely manner, if at all. If you say you are going to do something by a certain date - do it! If for any reason you can't do it, ring up and explain - do not do nothing.
- Don't like filling in forms
- Mrs J Howlett completed the form
- The reasons I was turned down for planning permission were, in my view, silly. The alternatives given by the planning dept were, I felt, dangerous, and had not been thought out - I was very dissatisfied, and the decision has made me consider moving.
- Question relating to my recent planning application should be addressed to my agent
- Regarding Building Inspectors : Our work required building regs and visits from your inspectors - these have proved to be a big problem, each inspector seems to disagree with another, and have caused my builders huge problems and our job to be delayed by several weeks. Surely there must be guide lines and each inspector should keep to these, and not keep changing opinions?
- CA Watson & Son, Sudbury : My? Dealt with the whole process, so I feel I am not qualified to complete this questionnaire.
- We didn't receive anything in writing from the council, we had to keep contracting the department.
- I applied for a disabled grant, but was put on a means test and was rejected. I was dissatisfied with this decision.
- Provision of sheltered accommodation and high quality home care for the elderly should be a priority. 2. Making country roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists is needed, before car use can be reduced.
- Sorry, apparently you did not receive my first two questionnaires? This one will exceed your deadline date of Nov 7th as I only received it on Mon 17 Nov. I am a little puzzled as to how you know you have NOT received a questionnaire, as there is no provision for the client to put their name on it, therefore all returned questionnaires are ambiguous?
- It would be very helpful if the planning service could be speeded up! Curiously a notice was put up about the plans for an annex - we were then informed that permission was not required. We are still waiting to hear about summerhouse (after 7 months of application), we look forward to proceeding with this?
- Our experience of Babergh District Council's Planning Department is one of pure frustration! Putting aside the considerable time and expense they have cost us, their officers' understanding of their own planning policies appears minimal. We worked closely with our appointed planning officer leading up to our submission for full planning permission, only for everything we were told to be completely wrong. Unfortunately, this seems to be a common practice, and appears to be considered a perfectly acceptable policy by Babergh District Council.
- The reason for answers to Q5, Q8.prt2, was that none of my phone calls were returned by the planning officer concerned with my latest application. This only applies to that particular application.

- A polite attitude would be good. Staff should make themselves known, NOT creep about as if they have something to hide, and not appear to be 'casing' the property - common sense should be applied to their work. Officers should avail themselves of all the facts, before making statements or demands.
- Since I retired in 1994 my income has gone up by 24.2%, and my council tax risen by an unnecessary 121.5%. This is disgusting - more bureaucracy with needless paper-pushing contributing to these unnecessary increases . . . More people needed to push more paper = Services the same as in 1994! Therefore, it is with mixed feelings that I fill in your form : in being helpful by filling it in, am I contributing to unnecessary expenditure? I have a horrible feeling that I am. Perhaps the most constructive thing I can do is to start a revolution?
- There were too many departments dealing with the same thing (over four), repeated letters with the same text, which needed dealing with separately to each department - no internal communication?
- The timing of the process could be better illustrated ie: 4 weeks to submission, 4 weeks to permission etc.
- For listed building consent, why is it necessary to complete the application form in triplicate? One letter + the copies would be a little more helpful. 2. Having submitted a previous application for listed building consent, you already held on your file 3 or 4 copies of a location plan. Why did I have to send a further 4 copies of a location plan, with a next application for listed building consent?
- The council took our money, and then posted a notice outside our house, knowing that our application would be turned down. We have appealed against the decision, but have not had a reply. The council have been unhelpful with all of our questions, I hope other people have more luck with their process.
- I thought the whole process complicated, and full of 'red-tape'. I spoke to several members of staff of whom, one was extremely helpful, and another bordering on 'rude'. A simple application was made extremely difficult!
- It is premature for me to formally comment as negotiations are still sensitive. I shall be pleased to respond once complete.
- Babergh DC does a good job.
- Our planning application was actually submitted by an architect, therefore it was quite difficult to answer some of your questions. We did however call in at your offices in Hadleigh, some months before we proceeded to get plans drawn up, and received very helpful, constructive advice and information to take away with us to read.
- The building inspector did his job in a very excellent manner.
- Staff very helpful when making a visit, or answering calls when progress chasing.
- This application was made on my behalf by Anglia Windows of Norwich
- Out of all the local authorities we have to deal with, Babergh has the most professional approach. Well done!
- It would have been useful to have been informed when a neighbour objected in writing to my application - otherwise, very satisfied with BDC service.
- The time span of 8 weeks to obtain planning decisions is too long. The law needs changing regarding third parties applying for planning on property / land that they do not own.
- I found planning officer Mr Michael Collins, to be extremely courteous and helpful.
- We believe more attention should have been taken when we were asked to apply for planning permission, as we also had to complete a flood risk assessment that was a farce, as other properties around us already have extensions. If we had not managed to compile the risk assessment, we would have had to pay a lot of money to have this complete for us.
- Joint application : male and female! 77yrs
- I think my application was turned down for insufficient reasons, as other people in nearby properties have been granted permission for exactly the same extension as I required. PLEASE make sure head of planning is informed of these comments, so that he/she can teach their staff to do better!
- Q6. Three of my surrounding neighbours received a letter of receipt for letters of objections (not sent). This action could have caused ill feelings between myself and my neighbours. May I suggest that you look at this practice very much closer?
- The recent planning application that I applied for was dealt with quicker than I expected, which I found to be very helpful.
- During the time we were applying for planning permission, and the period leading up to it, the council did not keep us informed, they misinformed us, and did not provide a good service. I had to phone on several times to request information that I had already asked for, and then I had to phone to find out if we had been given planning permission or not. I am not impressed.
- Dr Mr Watson, Please find enclosed yr questionnaire re planning application for a ash tree to be pruned. Eastwood Services, Ipswich, carried out the work for me, and they applied for planning permission on my behalf. This was carried out on 14.10.03. Yrs S R A Lott

- Advice is given, but is totally unreliable when making preliminary enquiries wasting both time and money. There is no consistency of approach within the department - three different planning officers - three different opinions / decisions, explanations of decisions almost non-existent, and of no use to the applicant. The system is not transparent, appears completely unfair - planners are a law unto themselves, and we actually had our application approved!!!
- Our whole experience with Babergh Planning Department regarding our planning application was disgusting! Very prolonged - kept in the dark! No one had the decency to keep us informed. We are pleased we don't have to go through the whole experience again.
- The system stopped when planning officer was on leave - or was that an excuse? The delaying answer was totally illogical - white PVC Conservatory on brown woodwork? Babergh - 'it will stand out'. In fact we are next to a white PVC framed bungalow, two neighbours have white PVC Conservatories! What difference does it make if I am white / black / green and fit?? To a planning application?
- Babergh were helpful and pretty efficient - English Heritage were dilatory and contradictory, and difficult to deal with (II* listed building).
- If you can't cope - get more staff!
- I believe the period of time from submission to receipt of notification could be reduced.
- No one informed us that they were going to inspect our property - we were not told who was visiting, or why? Or when? We just received an invoice to state that an inspection had occurred. A little more communication would have helped.
- Although my application was rejected, I respect that my contact at the council was merely 'doing her job' and, in my opinion, professionally. I would also add that my appeal (on which I had partial success) was handled with striking professionalism by the appeal chairman. I commented to my wife (prior to the appeal decision) that whatever the outcome, I felt that the overall process had treated us fairly.
- I have always found Babergh DC planning department to be polite and helpful - one of the better planning departments to deal with.
- Time, money and agro could be avoided if INITIALLY the head planner would point out what would NOT be accepted in a planning application.
- I felt it a bit excessive to have to ask permission to prune a very ancient plum tree and to take down an overgrown laurel
- Planning consent for a conservatory in my view and on this application was unnecessary. Too costly - value for money - I think not. Should not have to pay for schematics of street on top of planning application cost - I viewed this as a Council money-spinner
- Appears to take a long time in the scheme of events, as then delays occur while awaiting for building regs (application etc.) Before building can commence. The whole process makes planning and synchronising very difficult
- All in all I was happy with the service provided although 6 months was how long I waited for my application to go through. I thought this was too long as a self build I lost all the good weather and am now relying on good weekends now.
- I do not consider BDC Planning Committee acted correctly or efficiently at the initial meeting. This was by their own admission; thus compelling me to spend a great deal of money, I consider unnecessarily, on employing the services of an Agent. Money I could ill afford. Whereas if the first decision had been adhered to, none of what followed would have been necessary
- As we are unable to photocopy plans and had to purchase plans from the Council it added to the cost when you are already charging fees for the work!
- I found the staff very helpful in dealing with all aspects of my planning application. Gary Starling was particularly helpful in responding to requests to visit the property (as building work progressed) sometimes at very short notice. Thank you
- Need more on-going information as planning consent is awaited e.g. Times of meetings and what is required of individuals
- I was impressed by the way your visiting officers laid down the procedure for my contracted builder to follow. Thanks
- It was only by chance I managed to speak personally with your planning officer. He was very helpful and explained the procedures to me. I understand it is not usual for the officer to speak to the applicant. I think this should be standard practice
- I found your staff extremely helpful both before and during the processing of the planning application
- My correspondence invariably ended up being received by someone other than the person it was intended for, despite being marked for their attention. It always ended up in a random place and had to be searched for which on occasions took a couple of days
- When I made my first application, 4 years ago, the woman who dealt with the application was officious and difficult throughout, despite my efforts to avoid conflict and comply with planning regulations. Although application was eventually approved without amendment it was not without considerable

unpleasantness both by letter and telephone from the planning officer. Latest application very much less painful. Officer very helpful. In phone calls to the Planning Office whilst in general staff are helpful, the overall feeling is that the officers are defensive and looking for problems where they need not exist.

- I felt the planning officer dealing with my application (Jean Claude Viney) was extremely helpful over two problems I had and liaised very professionally with both myself and my architect within a reasonable timescale
- I do not understand the relevance of Q 9-14 in this context. This survey seems pointless and a waste of Council Tax revenue. Surely normal feedback from applicants when applications are ongoing and current would suffice?
- When we submitted our application 5 years ago the problems we had were not down to BDC but our architect. We have always found BDC to be very helpful and courteous
- I do not see the relevance of my age or my state of health
- We would like to have been told that this application had been sent to the Parish Council for consideration
- Members need to listen more to professional expertise of planners
- Question 14 is very unnecessary and close to being insulting. What has race or colour got to do with planning???
- I understand that the apparent tardiness in dealing with my tree felling application was due to staff shortages/holidays
- Decision of 16 September does not give the answer. No mention of Bentley Tree Wardens report or authorisation to handle storm damage. No point in answering further questions until TPO sorted out. I am totally puzzled as to why no one at BDC can handle my enquiry under a TPO for 10 trees. Does anybody read this? If so please call us on 01473 310735
- How much does this survey cost?? It should be scrapped to save Council Tax. Every little helps!
- Greater pre-application discussions would greatly benefit application process
- We were very surprised and disgusted at the increased charges we had to pay for a three to five minute inspection on our simple project. The Council Tax is the same the more we pay the less we get. What happened to the recycle bags & bins + The state of our footpaths
- It seems strange that if as has been done in Labort Drive, Acton No planning has been done and yet no issue has been made of various conservatories being built in last 3 months. Why apply and spend the planning fee???
- Our only complaint would be that we were told we needed Listed Building Permission to change the colour of our house and then having filled in all the forms etc. Were told we actually didn't
- I do not feel that our application was given any thought at all. No-one bothered to visit or enquire why we were applying for an illuminated sign. I will be re-applying as the situation at the top of our drive is very dangerous
- All dissatisfaction due to one person! Application for garden shed made in May 03. In mid July phoned about progress. Ms Bacon said she could not make up her mind. 2 days later got refusal letter. I telephoned and over the next month I wrote to Ms Bacon and left many messages on her answerphone but got NO replies. Finally Ms Bacon was on holiday and I was put in touch with somebody else (sorry haven't got a name) who returned my call within ONE HOUR and answered all my questions in 5 MINUTES enabling me to make a successful reapplication. The best improvement to your service would be to fire Ms Bacon!!
- The Planning permission was horribly delayed due to an officer turning up on site, finding no-one and proceeded to do nothing. The month delay basically (through knock-on) the job was finished in September rather than July
- Time taken to review application - too long. Letter from Richard Watson re Planning Delivery Grant dated 18 March 2003 was I consider, one of the worst moves the Planning Department ever made!
- Hoping to build cottage/small house in paddock. This would have given us near neighbours and also help with security and safety etc. We are a small Hamlet we need more people. In Harkstead cottages are being built next to the church. Why could we not build in Erwarton???
- Having discussed my plans with a Planning Officer I commissioned an architect to draw up plans for an extension to the front of my property which I have since been told would not have been granted. I have received permission to extend to the rear of my listed property.
- I am fearful that the planning authorities are gradually becoming less vigilant regarding the observance of planning regs and take no action even when they are aware they have been breached. The enforcement department appears to have become obsolete
- I have returned the form uncompleted. I made an application over 20 years ago. The forms seems to be unnecessarily long. Make them shorter.

- Whilst overall satisfied with gaining Planning Consent not so happy regarding Building Reg inspector. His attitude was totally unacceptable and I am currently compiling a list of events for your office to consider. I will write in due course
- The planning department was very efficient & helpful at all times. The building control dept. Should learn from their example
- I feel i am unable to answer your questions as all the paperwork was dealt with by my agents
- This procedure is somewhat cumbersome for a small matter
- There appears to be no provision in planning regs to use disused sites which are neither open countryside or within town or village boundaries. The are left to become eyesores in otherwise lovely surroundings. Perhaps a bit of common sense could be applied as such land is just wasted in a country where building land is now encroaching on greenfield sites
- Q7. The issue is not fully resolved. Appointment for 3.12.03 made with environ.hlth. Neighbour has objected to consent that smoke from a new chimney flue may be a nuisance to them in winter winds. However on their own admission it does not affect them generally. I am therefore surprised you have delayed our pp and necessitate me to take a days annual leave to meet this appointment
- We met Linda Bacon prior to deciding upon the proposals as we did not want to waste time and have them turned down. She was very open, honest and helpful. Her personal help was excellent
- Cant see this form is of much help to you for a simple tree preservation pruning permission but here you are!!!
- No point applying again will just get turned down by neighbour. Only required small car port for disabled daughters car now she has passed her test. She will just have to get wet now
- Our application for pollarding a tree in a cons.area was submitted in april. We made numerous calls over a 5 month period chasing a response. Eventually recd letter saying as bdc had not responded in a timely manner they were unable to prevent us carrying out the work. Very disappoint to receive such a non-committed response. Hope this is not the norm.
- This is not best value, we have no choice but to use your service. Only those who received permission will be happy with your service, those who did not will not be happy. I like many questionnaires but this is a complete and utter waste of time. It is the quality of service provided given the constraints imposed by legislation that is important.
- Getting the applicants name correct would be a good start. Length of time to process application too long
- While happy with the advice received and the courteous way in which my calls were answered, i would have preferred to have been given an honest and realistic estimate of when the written response would be sent to me. In the event, i believe that this was well outside the standard timeframe expected.
- I found the council advice patchy - we put an application in and were told that we could not apply for an extension over 50% of floor area. What we were not told was that the law was due to change and it was not until the 1st Application and a talk with head of dept. (nice person) lead us to find this out. This lead to another application, double fees and a further two months delay
- Ethnic group is not relevant to the service provided by the Planning Dept. Is it???
- Found dealing with Planning acceptable. Would have liked more help in adapting house for disabled use (grants etc.)
- This form is too little too late. I had already complained in writing regarding the service I had been given prior to the decision on my application coming down. I feel so strongly I have complained to the Ombudsman and failure to reach a satisfactory conclusion I fully intend to take this matter even further and forewarn others to set everything in writing from BDC!
- I felt the planning staff were most helpful and understanding of the problems we had which had lead to planning consent being requested
- It has taken a year to get nowhere despite the doctor's letter to back me up. The inability to get requested access has harmed my health - a)pain increased b) danger of falling & exhaustion c) I am captive d) difficult in getting to specialist and health centre. I feel if someone had been to see me any my predicament you would have been more helpful.
- There is a very conservative approach to alterations and extensions allowing for little or no visible change to the front of the properties thus maintaining a very boring 1960's frontage. We had many more problems with Building Regs. Application than the actual Planning application. No-one appeared to know or understand the correct procedures
- Latest application was greeted with a puzzling query from you. (2) An application from my neighbour for planning consent for an extension - I objected yet was never advised of the final outcome by yourselves.
- I do not see the need for this form as you should already be doing everything possible to help planning applications through the system, whether or not consent is granted. Further, why do you need to know to which group a person belongs. A total waste of Ratepayers money.

- When Parish Council raised objection I was not told until I telephoned Planning Officer and asked about the delay. If I had been told at an earlier stage it would have saved a 2 wk delay. It was eventually decided no application was required. What a waste of everyones time
- I find BDC inconsistent, one Planning Officer says one thing the someone else says something different or a superior contradicts them. It does not seem possible to work WITH Planning it is always a BATTLE. The ban on extensions is most unfair. I understand not going from 2-6 bedrooms but upstairs bathroom/conservatory should be allowed plus space for larger families.
- I find planning 'law' over technical
- Very overpriced - Excessive fees
- Advice given totally unreliable when making first enquiries wasting both time & money. No consistency of approach within department - three different officers, three different opinions/decisions. Explanations of decisions almost non existent and no use to applicant. The system not transparent, appeals completely unfair - planners are law unto themselves AND WE ACTUALLY HAD OUR APPLICATION APPROVED!!!
- There appeared to be a mix up over which of our neighbours you had to write to regarding planning. This delayed everything by 2 weeks and in my opinion could have been easily avoided
- I had an agent for our planning application. The pa & bld regs approval seemed to take some time. I phoned the council around 3rd week in sept. And was informed consent had been given on 8 sept direct to our agent. He was on holiday. Council could have informed us direct
- My architect dealt with all this. I just paid the bill
- I felt Council did not keep me informed of progress and plans were refused. If I had been given info regarding their concerns I could have amended items on plans. When resubmitted I had to wait 6 weeks before they were looked at again. I find that large developers get what they want and self builders are dictated by yourselves
- I found the Building Control officers very helpful and understanding
- Having dealt with BDC for over 20 years the last two have been very disappoint following years of dealing with the officers and having had their co-operation and help
- Planning application was carried out by architect on all occasions but found BDC who visited helpful and polite
- I am unable to fully complete this questionnaire as since my application I have had NO communication or decision
- I was very satisfied with the service the Council provided which was carried out by you on my behalf as I was unable to attend to paperwork due to arthritic condition. Thank you
- Planning Dept appeared under resourced to deal with enquiries. Planning Officer very helpful but only when we had a face to face meeting. Written responses were dismissive and of no help at all (in respect of Listed Building) Planning officer passed enq. To Conservation Officer who dismissed all my proposals without visiting. All proposals were accepted one the Planning Officer visited. Lost several months in fruitless back and forth letters with no logic in the planning dept. Reasoning.
- The problem with this application is that no
- Planning Dept under resourced to deal with enquiries. Planning Officer was very helpful but only when we had face to face meeting. Written responses were dismissive and of no help. Planning Officer passed enquiries to the Conservation officer who dismissed all proposals. All proposals accepted finally.
- I am unable to complete this questionnaire as since my application I have had NO communication or decision
- The problem with this application is that nobody in BDC claimed responsibility. It took 3.5 months to process after repeated telephone calls and being transferred from one dept to another. The application was to some work on trees that were subject to a TPO You obviously had staffing difficulties which I trust have now been resolved
- An agent acted on my behalf. It would have been beneficial to have received a copy of the information he was sent. During my application laws were passed which affected the application and neither my agent or myself were made aware of the new law changes, and as I understand it, the law came into force on 12 May 2003. I found out by a telephone call my by me in July. I hope this may be of future help. The councillor dealing with my case was very helpful and thorough
- Martyn Fulcher, the Planning Officer who came to visit us was most helpful
- We have been dissatisfied in the past with the Planning dept. As they actually lost our plans etc. Planning permission and it cost several hundred pounds via a solicitor. They also contested a planning amendment granted by a Senior Planning officer who has left even though the plans are now on file.
- I have been very impressed with John Patemore Gee. He has been extremely helpful and proactive. If only local Parish Council/Committees were less destructive
- I have not answered question 8 as this is my first planning application and I have only recently moved to the area. I do not think I have the right to judge

- Many thanks - the process was painless and Mr Collins was very helpful
- Martin Price dealt with the most recent application very professionally prior to his reappearance the service was poor
- Our application was dealt with through our architect so had no knowledge of the service provided
- Our application refused first time. Standard letter very strong but ambiguous - it turned out only needed to change two things to achieve granted permission but this resulted in 2 months delay on starting work. Although agree the changes improved our design we were sorry it took so long to reach a successful outcome. We would like to thank Martyn Fulcher for all his help in our application
- Was impressed by the speed the application was handled and when I telephoned twice for a progress report they were most helpful. Many thanks
- Application was made on our behalf
- Planning application has been re-submitted but the first refusal did not plainly explain why it had been refused. Time and travel had to be expended to find out what would be acceptable
- Thank you for dealing with my application promptly and efficiently.
- The planning case officer for our area (East Bergholt) is only employed part-time. On two or three occasions when I needed to speak to her about my application she was not there and I just got a message service. This was frustrating. However, on the whole, the application was dealt with efficiently and I am pleased with the service.
- Fully informative and helpful personable service from initial stage through to completion. Very impressed
- Very helpful on my application
- I still fail to understand why planning applications are decided upon peoples personal views and that one person will grant an application but another will refuse an identical application on the same development and same house plan. The only difference being one house is a semi and the other an end terrace
- I though I was the only person badly treated by BDC but having spoken to other people that is not the case. Although I will not hold my breath I do hope changes will be made to the system. You do not listen to your community. I feel this letter will be binned and not taken seriously. I have sent a copy to the Secretary of State whom I hope will ask questions of you.
- Very disappointed in length of time it took to grant planning permission. The delay seemed due to a few small technicalities and we lost our turn with the builder delaying the start by 4 months.
- I really hope I never have to apply for Planning Permission or Building Regs. Again. As at writing 25.11.03 all work long completed but inspector has only arrived 25.11.03 to advise still missing some info. Architect has supplied 3 times. Who is responsible for clarifying what is technically reqd. Who has responsibility for getting the info. Totally fed up with how it has been handled.
- Very pleased with the way the Council and their planners dealt with our application
- Amendment to window requested has delayed the progress of works by 2 weeks now going into 3
- Am very satisfied with how the application was dealt with
- Council advised me I would need PP. My conservatory company were advised I did not need PP. Work went ahead, received letter from Council. The Council were not very helpful from the start. Change in regs regarding size of house etc. Did not help
- We do not make planning applications at Cowdrey Avenue
- Last application caught up in internal reorganisation. This caused my project to be delayed.
- Disappointed by long delay in application process. Despite being 1 application we were disappointed to find that we were treated as two and charged accordingly. We felt as one application the charges should have been shared between us.
- The application applied for was by the Architect and as far as I know it was satisfactory for them
- No problems working with Babergh. Listed Building aspects discussed and advice given. Buildr good, Council good - house restored to former glory. You are very approachable & realistic with the Listed Building repairs which is most encouraging
- Feel the planning dept does not listen or consider needs and views of local communities and only have a blinkered view. They are unable to be anything other than rigid in their approach. Life is not just black or white - shades of grey are important.
- The planning dept was very helpful with my application (Mr. M Fulcher) for my extension, its a pity I can not say the same about building control as I was unable to speak to anybody to help me with my enquiries, mainly to find out why I had to pay twice for the same service as nothing was done the first time to warrant any payment.

2 September 2004

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