



BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL DIVISION

THIRD PARTIES' QUESTIONNAIRE

A total of 73 questionnaires have been received to date (1 May 2003).

1. How did you get to know about the application?

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Base | 73 |
| | 100% |
| Newspaper | 8 |
| | 11% |
| Babergh Web site | 4 |
| | 5% |
| Our letter | 39 |
| | 53% |
| Parish Council | 15 |
| | 21% |
| Word of Mouth | 18 |
| | 25% |
| Other | 9 |
| | 12% |

Please specify:

- Sudbury Society Planning Group examine applications every fortnight at Sudbury Town Hall
- Planning Notice at site
- Applicant & BDC
- Inspected application outside my house
- Even our Parish Council heard from paper!
- Notice outside property
- Told by neighbour
- Notice attached to the property
- By letter from Babergh
- Information from person directly affected
- Applicant showed us plans
- Notice on telegraph pole

2. Did you inspect the application before commenting?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 72 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 59 |
| | 82% |
| No | 13 |
| | 18% |

3. Where did you do this?

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Base | 62 |
| | 100% |
| The Planning Office | 20 |
| | 32% |
| via Parish Clerk | 24 |
| | 39% |
| via the Applicant | 2 |
| | 3% |
| Sudbury Town Hall | 3 |
| | 5% |
| Other | 13 |
| | 21% |

Please specify:

- Parish Council Meeting
- I was sent a copy
- Inspected application outside my house
- We were sent details
- N/A
- Village meeting
- Looked at property
- It was enclosed with your letter
- In the Church
- As my property borders the proposed site, I am able to inspect it personally
- Council Offices
- At Council meeting
- Literature received on my behalf by other objector as away a lot of Jan/Feb/March
- On site
- On site

4. Did you approach the officer dealing with the application for any information or guidance?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 70 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 23 |
| | 33% |
| No | 47 |
| | 67% |

5. How easy was it to find his or her name and contact number?

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Base | 41 |
| | 100% |
| Very easy | 27 |
| | 66% |
| Easy | 10 |
| | 24% |
| Moderately easy | 4 |
| | 10% |
| Hard | - |
| | - |

6. How easy was it to contact him/her?

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Base | 32 |
| | 100% |
| Very easy | 14 |
| | 44% |
| Easy | 10 |
| | 31% |
| Moderately easy | 5 |
| | 16% |
| Hard | 3 |
| | 9% |

7. How helpful did you find him/her?

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Base | 31 |
| | 100% |
| Very Helpful | 18 |
| | 58% |
| Helpful | 8 |
| | 26% |
| Moderately helpful | 4 |
| | 13% |
| Unhelpful | 1 |
| | 3% |

8. Were you aware that we allow applicants and objectors to address the meeting of Development Committee at which their application is decided?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 72 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 50 |
| | 69% |
| No | 22 |
| | 31% |

9. Did you know about our leaflet "Have Your Say"?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 72 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 36 |
| | 50% |
| No | 36 |
| | 50% |

10. Was the decision made by the Council on the application conveyed to you?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 72 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 69 |
| | 96% |
| No | 3 |
| | 4% |

11. Was the application you were interested in approved or refused?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 69 |
| | 100% |
| Approved | 38 |
| | 55% |
| Refused | 31 |
| | 45% |

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

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 38 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 23 |
| | 61% |
| No | 15 |
| | 39% |

13. Do you feel you adequately understand the process that planning applications go through?

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 72 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 48 |
| | 67% |
| No | 24 |
| | 33% |

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

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base | 67 |
| | 100% |
| Yes | 21 |
| | 31% |
| No | 46 |
| | 69% |

15. Are there any other comments you would like to make on your experience with us?

- If I had answered Yes to Q14 there is no way for your department to contact me. Suggest adding box for name and address. John Hughes, 13 Beatty Road, Sudbury. 01787 378342
- Members of the public generally have little idea about the criteria used to reach a decision on a particular application. D S Burnett, 157 Melford Road, Sudbury, CO10 1JU
- Inconsistencies in decisions on boundary fences and hedges cause problems
- Comments made as representative of Dedham Vale Society. Q5-7 - I do contact Development Officers fairly regularly although not in this case. They are helpful but often very hard to reach by telephone.
- As Bentley Parish Tree Warden and as a member of the public, I have always found BDC Officers most helpful. It is most helpful for Tree Wardens to be made aware of planning applications.
- I have completed the form but it doesn't seem very relevant to a Parish Council - Clerk, Assington PC
- As the decision was made by you I and others signed a petition regarding a taxi company running a business from private house. I live opposite the house and Friday to Sunday night his cars are starting all night, plus you can hear his car phone very clearly.
- The Council should let people know the date of the development committee at which the application will be discussed.
- Whilst I appreciate that planning offices are extremely busy and have a better understanding of the overall problems involved, their interpretation of LPA LPD is somewhat puzzling at times. However, I have found over the last 13 months that the Second Chamber of the planning committee is an adequate second opinion that listens to and acts in an independent manner. It is well managed and so far I have no complaints, however this may be influenced by the fact that they have found in my favour on four occasions.
- Re: Q.14 - Not at our age
- I do feel that Babergh is up to date in allowing applicants etc to address meetings of the Development Committee. It does enable them to feel that they have some say in their "fate". Questions 5 - 7 were not answered as the site meeting answered them.
- I am very pleased that the young people concerned have received permission.
- Planning officers attending planning meetings failed to answer all questions put to them. If they cannot, or will not, assist village meetings why bother to attend? Why are amended plans not submitted to Parish Councils? Shouldn't local people have the same rights on an amendment as they have on any other planning application (except in Babergh!)
- I hope my replies will be of some use to you but must stress that this form has been completed from memory because I have already destroyed my original files and notes. I do not wish to be unhelpful but cannot see where the answer to the questions can be of assistance to you in the future.
- The planning staff are busy and the pressure can be tangible but the process works well and is transparent in most areas. I would like to understand the detailed procedure letter.

- A few people in the Hartest area are considering the possibility of preparing a village design statement, if the community were to feel that this would be a helpful exercise. Some weeks ago I called at your offices to seek advice and was met by an utterly unhelpful receptionist who was unwilling to allow me to speak to anyone then, and more importantly, to arrange a future date. I was not in a mood to push the matter at that point, but I can assure you that I was deeply unimpressed. This experience contrasts powerfully with Mid Suffolk DC, where at an earlier date, I had called in at their offices at Needham Market while passing. An extremely helpful, knowledgeable and cheerful planning officer spent half an hour with me and I don't even live in his patch! You in Babergh need to buck up.
- I had no need to approach an officer over last application on which I have made comments - my local knowledge meant that I was kept informed. I have approached officers many times over the past nearly 30 years over various planning applications in my capacity both as a private individual and as a parish councillor and chairman of the parish council. In general, officers have been easy to contact and helpful. I would say however that standards of local knowledge have deteriorated over the years, which makes the contribution of parish councils in particular even more relevant than before. I am not sure how much planning officers would agree.
- Happy with everything!
- It should be understood that as Chairman of a Parish Meeting I have no authority to comment on Planning Applications on behalf of the Parish Meeting. Only a full meeting can take such action, and it is only rarely that this would be appropriate.
- As an objector to the Planning Application Mr Cobbold was not only unhelpful but obstructive in his comments. Mr Collins has been excellent in all respects. In presentation to the Planning Committee they appeared on the 2 occasions, I was present; not only ill informed but of poor calibre and lacking interest in cases they were not supporting personally and had made up their minds prior to any discussions or debate.
- Re: Questions 5, 6, 7 - I have had cause to contact BDC planning officer on previous applications by my neighbour and found him (Mr Pateman-Gee) easy to contact and very pleasant and helpful
- Planning ref B/02/01959/FUL - not enough thought and consideration is given to the implications and health for residents in the properties directly surrounding Acton church. Especially as two other applicants for masts in residential areas were refused in the Acton area. Does this make sense?
- It would be helpful to be made aware of the amendments to an application and if the conditions imposed on acceptance, because the Parish Council is not always informed and the only other way to find out is by contacting the planning officer concerned which is rather a waste of their time.
- Although my appeal against this planning permission was rejected, I understood the counter arguments. However, I feel the council failed to appreciate the damage to the environment. I can confirm I was treated in a courteous and informed manner by your staff
- I rely on Babergh planning to come up with the right solution
- This is my 23rd year living in Glemsford at the present address. Since moving here with my parents in 1980 we had a number of notifications from your Council to say there had been applications for different building projects, the last one being starter homes being proposed. Each time the proposal was refused, thankfully for me. But I fail to understand why the council should even consider allowing any future building work next to what is basically a residential area. I appreciate the fact your department contacted me as to the outcome of the application. Thanks very much. (Mr M Pursey, 3 Lodge Farm Rd, Glemsford)

- It is interesting that Q12 only refers to Refusal. It is often much more difficult to understand why applications are approved - in the case with which this questionnaire was enclosed for example (B/03/0004/FUL)
- There has been a habit of allowing last minute alterations or additions to plans to be submitted to Babergh without due consultation being allowed for at Parish Council level - the time factor does not always allow for this. This should cease to be the case (if it is still so).
- We did ask for the date of the meeting of the Development Committee at which this application was decided - however this was not sent to us.
- More notice should be taken of local comments
- The application was for building on next door's land. Parish Council members and my wife attended and spoke for 2 minutes. The application was approved without comment or hesitation. So much for "having your say". Only lip service is paid to it. A further application amending the building to much larger one with windows directly overlooking our property was immediately approved despite a number of objections. Builders know how to "work" the system and get away with it!
- As this application applies to an area of historical importance - ie Constable Country - the Council should be aware of the area and any application to change use and the skyline would be a sensitive issue and I don't think you have probably bound to it. Ref B/03/0004/FUL Vale Farm, East Bergholt
- I am sure that you went through proper processes on occasion, application B/03/0004/FUL and followed relevant guidance, but the result is obviously wrong. It will be interesting to see whether the many lawyers in East Bergholt find a way of reversing the decision and correcting the outrages committed by the new resident of Vale Farm (barbed wire etc) which have so far been out of control.

1 May 2003

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