

APPENDIX 2

Summary of Development Control User Satisfaction Survey

Date of Survey: 1st April 2000 to 31st March 2001

All Results

1. I was given the advice I needed to submit my application correctly?

• Strongly agree/agree	62%
• Neither	10%
• Strongly disagree/disagree	9%
• Not apply or no response	19%

2. The Council kept me informed about the progress of my application?

• Strongly agree/agree	48%
• Neither	17%
• Strongly disagree/disagree	28%
• Not apply or no response	7%

3. The Council dealt promptly with my queries?

• Strongly agree/agree	62%
• Neither	15%
• Strongly disagree/disagree	12%
• Not apply or no response	11%

4. The Council dealt helpfully with my queries?

• Strongly agree/agree	67%
• Neither	11%
• Strongly disagree/disagree	9%
• Not apply or no response	13%

5. I understand the reasons given for the decision on my application?

• Strongly agree/agree	73%
• Neither	7%
• Strongly disagree/disagree	11%
• Not apply or no response	9%

6. I feel that I was treated fairly and that my viewpoint was listened to?

• Strongly agree/agree	64%
• Neither	10%
• Strongly disagree/disagree	11%
• Not apply or no response	15%

7. How satisfied were you with the service provided in processing the application?

• Very satisfied/fairly satisfied	76%
• Neither	12%
• Very dissatisfied/fairly dissatisfied	11%
• Not response	1%

APPENDIX 3

BUILDING CONTROL COMPLETION NOTICE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

292 SENT OUT - 129 RETURNED = 44.18%

Q.1 I am aware of the times staff are available

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21.7%	61.24%	13.95%	2.32%	0.77%

Q.2 An appropriate member of staff has always been available to speak to me.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33.07%	59.84%	4.72%	1.57%	0.78%

Q.3 Times of inspection were convenient for me

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.62%	52.34%	7.03%	0%	0%

Q.4 The number of visits to site was appropriate to the building works.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.31%	50.38%	7.75%	0.77%	0.77%

Q.5 The timing of those visits was appropriate to the stage of construction

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
42.63%	48.88%	6.2%	2.32%	0%

Q.6 The Building Control Officer was able to resolve problems on site

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
42.4%	46.4%	10.4%	0.8%	0%

Q.7 The Building Control Officer was helpful and polite

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
60.46%	35.65%	3.87%	0%	0%

Q.8 Rochford provides a good Building Control Service

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44.18%	47.28%	6.97%	0.77%	0.77%

BUILDING CONTROL DECISION NOTICE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
SENT OUT 136 - 59 RETURNED = 43.38%

Q.1 I am aware of acknowledgement within 48 hours and checking within 15 days				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.56%	54.38%	14.03%	7.01%	0%
Q.2 I was able to discuss proposals before depositing the application				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31.48%	50%	16.66%	1.85%	0%
Q.3 An appropriate member of staff has always been available to speak to me				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.93%	53.44%	6.89%	1.72%	0%
Q.4 I received an acknowledgement within 48 hours				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27.11%	54.24%	13.55%	5.08%	0%
Q.5 I received a first substantive response to the plans within 15 working days				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.59%	57.62%	3.38%	3.38%	0%
Q.6 I was given assistance during the period when the plans were being considered				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50.87%	38.59%	10.52%	0%	0%
Q.7 Amendments to and comments on the plans were constructive				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51.72%	44.82%	3.44%	0%	0%
Q.8 The Building Control Officer was helpful and polite				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
59.32%	35.50%	5.08%	0%	0%

Q.9 I understand the reasons for the decision				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
42.1%	56.14%	1.76%	0%	0%
Q.10 Rochford provides a good Building Control service				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48.27%	48.27%	3.44%	0%	0%
Q. Would you consider private building control services rather than local authority?				
Yes 2%			No 98%	

BUILDING CONTROL BUILDERS QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
43 SENT OUT - 24 RETURNED = 55.81%

Q.1 I am aware of the times staff are available				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33.33%	66.66%	0%	0%	0%
Q.2 An appropriate member of staff has always been available to speak to me				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
41.66%	50%	8.33%	0%	0%
Q.3 Times of inspections were convenient to me				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.83%	45.83%	4.16%	4.16%	0%
Q.4 The number of visits to site was appropriate to the building work				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
41.66%	58.33%	0%	0%	0%
Q.5 The Building Control Officer responded promptly to requests for site visits				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Q.6 The Building Control Officer was able to resolve problems on site				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.5%	54.16%	8.33%	0%	0%
Q.7 The Building Control Officer was helpful and polite				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Q.8 Rochford provides a good Building Control Service				
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.5%	58.33%	4.16%	0%	0%

APPENDIX 4

ISSUES FROM PLANNING AGENTS WORKSHOP

Building Control applications 3(vii)

- Require to be advised about whether Planning consent required.
- Agents concerned that they have to write in and confirm whether planning consent is required; questions are often simple and straightforward and could be dealt with over the phone or by email, i.e. what part of Permitted Development allowance has been used on a dwelling?

Agents concerned that link between Building Control and Development Control is often not as good as it should be?

Appointments 6(i)

- Agents wondered whether they receive different treatment? Appointments should not be required to see a Planning Officer on a simple matter.
- If agent is out on site visit they would often like to come straight into office and discuss issues arising.
- Duty Officer is not always available, but may not be the appropriate person .
- Question of writing in is a problem – Agents often want to get a reasonable response informally.

Duty Officer Advice

- Agents would like to be able to see someone in the Team area rather than a Duty Officer who may not be familiar with that part of the District.
- Despite this point, Agents considered that actually the system works reasonably well, although they took the view that the officer was not of sufficient calibre

Responses

- Sometimes written responses to preliminary enquiries take far too long and it often takes a long time to get Conditions or Legal Agreements resolved after a decision has been made.

Delegations

- Often these seem to take too long – should be possible to issue decisions in many cases in well under 8 weeks.

Weekly List

- Is very positive tool and avoids many applications being reported to the Planning Committee.

- However, Agents want to be told if Weekly list item is referred to the Planning Committee as soon as possible.

Householder Applications

- Fast track arrangements might be an option for householder applications and the Agents would like this to be considered.

Co-ordination between Agent/Applicant/Officer

- Minor revisions to applications might make a scheme acceptable but instead they are put through as a refusal - could this be avoided?
- Agents would be quite happy to negotiate situation rather than go to Committee immediately.
- Early feedback on problems is helpful to ensure these are discussed and dealt with as soon as possible.

Communication

- More formal arrangements required
- There is scope for early site visits with Members
- There is scope for Member/Agent briefings
- Agents would like early warning about a likely site visit
- Agents would like a warning if a Delegated application is heading for refusal because it might be possible to reverse the decision with some minor changes.

Number of Members on Planning Committee

- Agents of the view that a smaller Committee makes it easier to arrange site visits - Southend provide a mini-bus tour for example, before most Committees.
- Agents were generally of the view that a smaller Planning Committee would be appropriate.
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- In supporting the suggestion of a smaller Planning Committee, one Agent indicated that it would be important for the Committee to have full executive powers.

General view is that Agents are happy for it to take slightly longer to get a decision, if it is the right decision.

Agents firmly believe that applicants (agents) and objectors should have an opportunity to address the Planning Committee. One from each side would be appropriate, but if only one side wishes to speak, then no-one speaks.

Minor amendments

- Committee should delegate negotiations to the Head of Planning Services rather than refusing.

Reception

- Facilities are very poor
 - Confidentiality is also a problem.

Building Control

The view was expressed that using NHBC rather than Rochford Building Control was simpler, since drawings can be sent by email.

It was suggested that the NHBC issue conditional approvals, but it was pointed out that RDC have always done this.

Visits on Saturdays

Agents of the view that ad hoc arrangements for visits on a Saturday, say, have always operated, although such visits are a rare request.

Building Notices as opposed to full plan applications. Agents are generally sympathetic to concerns about use of the Building Notice procedure. However, it is usually the builders' choice to go on the basis of a Building Notice.

APPENDIX 5

Parish/Town Council Forum Feedback

❖ **Responses to correspondence from the Parish Council**

- Sometimes Parishes have to chase the Council for a response to letters .
- It was acknowledged that the 5 day target set by the District Council for responding to correspondence was not realistic.

❖ **Despatch of Parish List**

- Rochford sometimes does not receive the list until Thursday which is too late for next week's Wednesday meeting.
- Advised also available on website, but when is it placed there within the week?

❖ **Re-submissions**

- Revised applications - would it be possible to summarise revisions on consultation to Parish Council?

❖ **Planning Process**

- Support for integrity and probity of RDC planning process and for function remaining with Local Authorities.

❖ **IT Use**

- Varying views as to benefit of Internet or E-Government - notable percentage of Parish Councils do not have access to IT (other than personal equipment), some smaller Parish Councils have none.

❖ **Copies of Planning Applications**

- Do Parish Councils need to get copies of all planning applications? They get the Parish List. Criteria could be no application details if, say, it accords with Local Plan, DC guidelines, residential at the rear, not seen from the street. Parish Council should know of all planning applications by way of the Parish List.

APPENDIX 6

BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE

Anticipated Issues for Customer

1. Building Control – pre-application advice

- i. Clarity of advice
- ii. Quality of advice
- iii. Consistency of advice
- iv. Authoritative decision
- v. Hours of access

2. Building Control – Building notice applications

- i. Speed with which construction work can proceed
- ii. Understanding the process
- iii. Assessment of plans submitted with building notices

3. Building Control – Full plan applications

- i. Timely advice on decisions arising
- ii. Speed of decision
- iii. Constructive advice & guidance on plans
- iv. Charges for the process
- v. Access to an officer
- vi. Speed of process where fire service involved
- vii. BR approval but requirement for planning subsequently advised

4. Building Control – Site management

- i. Speed of obtaining an inspection
- ii. Availability for early morning visits
- iii. Availability for weekend inspections
- iv. Availability of constructive advice
- v. Sufficient visits to adequately supervise construction
- vi. Receipt of completion certificate

5. Building Control – General issues

- i. Understanding the processes generally
- ii. Talking to the relevant person

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SERVICE

Anticipated Issues for Customers

6. Development Control – Pre-application advice

- i. Knowing what is available
- ii. Talking to the relevant person
- iii. Clarity of advice
- iv. Quality of advice
- v. Consistency of advice
- vi. Authoritative decision

7. Development Control – Applications and Applicants

- i. Getting an acceptable decision
- ii. Access to a case officer
- iii. Knowledge of the procedure
- iv. Timescales to decisions
- v. Updates on progress of application
- vi. Integrity of the process
- vii. Lack of an authoritative view during process
- viii. Quality of advice

8. Development Control – Applications and Agents

- i. Agents expectations on LPA's communication with client
- ii. Being kept informed of progress
- iii. Timely advice of issues arising
- iv. Quality of advice
- v. Getting an acceptable decision
- vi. Access to a case officer
- vii. Consistency of advice
- viii. Integrity of the process
- ix. Timescales to decision
- x. Keeping commitments
- xi. Consistency of decision

9. Development Control – Applications and Neighbours

- i. Being kept informed during process (incl. Decision and appeal)
- ii. Access to information (times and places)
- iii. Not consulted
- iv. Understanding information
- v. Understanding material considerations
- vi. Views not given due consideration

10. Development Control – Appeals

- i. Provision of information about the case
- ii. Meeting timescales and deadlines
- iii. Continued discussions and decisions
- iv. Integrity/reasonableness of the authority

11. Development Control – General issues

- i. Reception environment
- ii. Reception contact
- iii. Communication
- iv. Opening hours
- v. Keeping commitments