

# Public attitude to development not helping economic growth in UK

THE UK is a nation of NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard), according to a survey on attitudes to development in Britain.

This holds true even in the midst of economic recession and with the promise of new jobs that such projects can bring, reported the latest UK Saint Index, an annual survey on public attitudes to property development. The UK Saint Index questioned 1,000 people throughout the UK in January and February 2009.

“The UK is by far the most opposed to development based on our regular surveys across the US, Canada and the UK, and curiously the British public is far less inclined to help developers in the throes of economic recession,” Mike Saint, chairman of Saint Consulting, said.

“While there are differences in culture, land values and economic cycles, the issues remain the same: a growing tide of NIMBYism is frustrating all manner of property development and thus hurting economic growth.”

General opposition to development may have reached a plateau at 85% of the population, but Britain’s hardcore contingent of active NIMBYs (those who have actually objected to a development project in the last year) has increased from 13% in 2007 to 21% of the population. Meanwhile, active support for development continues to plateau at 6%.

Despite economic hard times, 51% of the public believed that planning gain

packages should not be reduced to help improve project viability.

As far as approval goes, schools at 43%, are the most popular development, with wind farms in second place with 23% support. Then come private housing (19%), new roads (17%) and convenience food (12%). People are now less opposed (but still negative) towards supermarkets but more opposed to power stations and quarries.

Private residential projects are most actively opposed (51% compared to 40% last year) for consistent reasons — traffic 25%, protection of green space/environment 23%, protecting

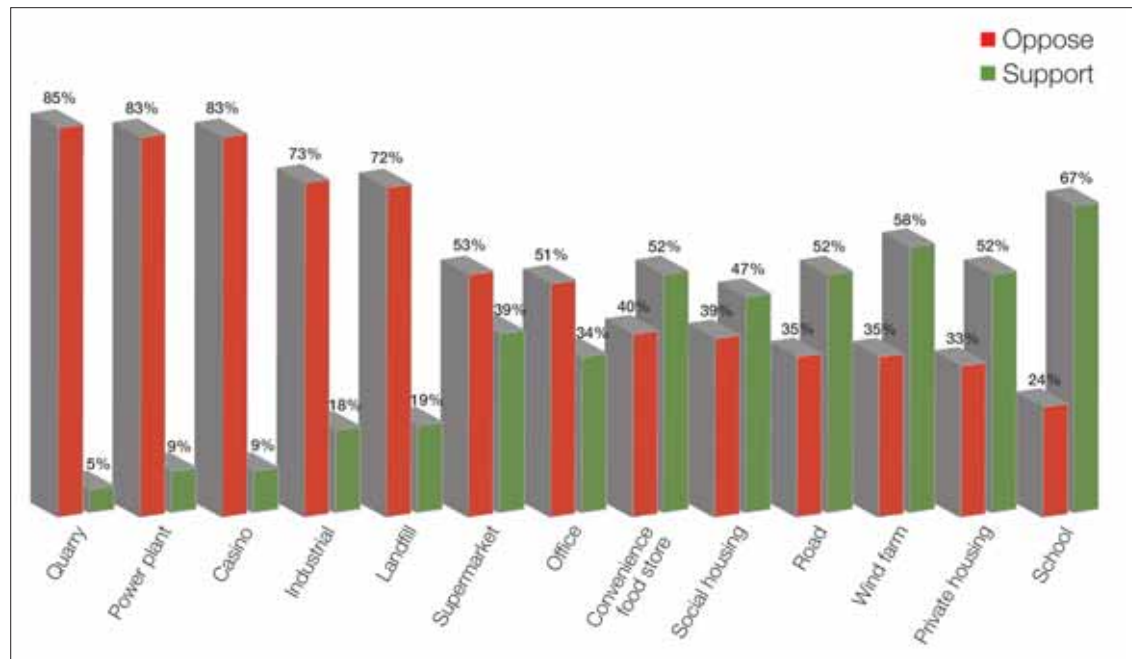
community character 21%, proximity to one’s home 17% and protecting one’s property value 5%.

Government housing targets continue to take a pounding, with 74% now believing that three million homes by 2020 is unrealistic, and eco-towns are seen as the most ineffective way to tackle the housing crisis.

Heathrow is the least favourite location for further airport development.



Saint Consulting’s Mike Saint: “growing tide of NIMBYism is frustrating property development”



The NIMBY Hate List

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