

EMBARGO: until 12th Mar 2007

Annual barometer of public attitudes to development released

The second annual survey of public attitude to property development in the UK carried out by The Saint Consulting Group has been released.

In the only survey of its kind, the Saint UK Index[®] questioned 1,000 people throughout the UK in January/February 2007. An overall summary of their responses is that:

- NIMBYism is alive and well – 83% want no more development in their local area
- The development industry fails to motivate its supporters – only 7% have ever actively supported a planning application whereas 16% have actively opposed one

The survey is a wealth of information. It records attitudes to different types of development, provides a breakdown by country/region, shows people's attitude to the planning system and tackles public opinion on topical issues like out of town retail, green belt development and zero carbon homes.

The results also provide a NIMBY Hate List and a NIMBY Approval Rating, which show which type of development is the most popular and unpopular.

“The first Saint UK Index[®] established a benchmark of public attitude. Our second survey delivers even more insight.

“Those engaged in development, across all property sectors, need to stop moaning about how councils refuse their applications. They need to understand public opinion and then react to it by changing the way they operate. Councillors are not recruited from Mars; they simply reflect the wider public attitude,” said Nick Keable, Managing Director of Saint Consulting UK.

Other interesting findings were:

- Councils are perceived as failing on planning – 62% believe their council is doing a fair/poor job on planning and 58% believe that councils and developers are too close
- Advice for May council candidates – 70% see council candidates' attitudes to development as important to how they cast their vote
- Residential confusion – Private housing is by far the most actively campaigned against form of development whilst concurrently being the most actively supported as well

Nick Keable added:

“The development industry needs to identify its supporters and motivate them to stand up and be counted in order to combat Council NIMBYism”.

Note to Editors:

Nick Keable is available for interviews at MIPIM in Cannes, 13-16 March, and in London during 19-23 March. Contact Paul Mindus at Saint Consulting (mindus@tscg.co.uk or 07990 56 8667) or contact Nick Keable direct (keable@tscg.co.uk or 07710 062494).

The Saint Consulting Group began operations in 1983 and today is the global leader in land use political consultancy. Saint has 12 offices around the US and international offices in London and Toronto. As experts in land use politics, Saint Consulting provide political campaign expertise to win complex or controversial planning decisions. Among the property sectors that use its services are: aggregates, food retail, shopping centres, hospitals, landfill, mixed-use developers, housing, and utilities.

The Saint UK Index[®] research quantifies and tracks the politics of land use, spotlighting who actively opposes and supports real estate projects and why. It was first conducted in the US in autumn 2005 and in the UK in March 2006.