

## Building Permits Summary

NNR's report 'Building Permits' is the fourth and last in a series of four reports on simplification of regulations at local authority level and addresses the local authorities' turnaround times for issuing a building permit, the fees they charge for the permit, and whether they offer any service guarantees. Summaries in English of all four reports are available on NNR's website [www.nnr.se/inenglish/publications.html](http://www.nnr.se/inenglish/publications.html)

NNR's study reveals substantial differences between local authorities in terms of turnaround times for building permits, which can vary by up to nine weeks for the same type of matter.

Just under half of the local authorities that responded to the question on service guarantees for building permits indicated that they had such a system in place. Most of the guarantees, however, were more in the form of guidelines and levels of ambition than explicit promises and undertakings vis-a-vis businesses. There were also significant differences (maximum eight weeks) in how long the guarantees "promise" a building permit matter will take.

The fees for building permits and building registrations vary substantially between local authorities, with the most expensive charging a building permit fee nine times higher than the cheapest.

One third of the local authorities that took part in the study indicated that they did not consider they would be able to give decisions on building permits within ten weeks, as required by the new Planning and Building Act.

Further to the results of the study, NNR makes the following recommendations for 2012:

### **All local authorities shall have a service guarantee for building permits.**

The service guarantee should contain an undertaking, on the part of the local authority, to reach a decision on a building permit within a specified time of a complete application being submitted and to reduce or refund the building permit fee if it does not meet the terms of the guarantee. The guarantee should also contain undertakings that businesses will be provided with clear information on what a building permit application should contain, how and when a decision is made, and who they can contact with any questions or complaints.

### **The local authorities should take a maximum of three weeks to reach a decision on a building permit that follows the detailed development plan.**

The faster a building permit is issued, the sooner the business can start operations. It is already possible for some local authorities to reach a decision on a building permit that follows the detailed development plan within three weeks of a complete application being submitted. The local authorities should consider categorising different types of building permit matters and setting a ceiling for turnaround times accordingly.

**There should be a clear link between the building permit fees the local authority charges and the work it carries out in return vis-a-vis the individual business.**

It must be clear when and for what businesses are paying a fee. It should also be clearer than seems to be the case at present how the local authority decides to set the level of and calculate the building permit fee on the basis of the work required/cost vis-a-vis the individual business.

**The local authorities must provide resources to enable building permit decisions to be given within the ten-week period prescribed by the new Planning and Building Act.**

Several local authorities presently consider they will not be able to give a building permit decision within ten weeks given current resources.

**The local authorities should assess on an ongoing basis the effect that their application of rules has on businesses.**