

People, Place and Planning – A consultation on the future of the Scottish planning system

A note by Musselburgh Conservation Society outlining in our view what must be in any future planning framework and what's missing from current proposals:

What's a must?

1. Commitment to Local Place Plans
2. Linking community planning and spatial planning
3. The change from MIRs to Draft Plans
4. Getting kids and young people involved
5. Discouraging repeat applications
6. Better explanation by reporters of how community views have been considered
7. Increase fees to cover costs and charge for appeals and reviews
8. More refusals to be considered through the review process (I think housing threshold should be at least 100 dwellings)
9. Emphasis on delivery once land allocated/planning permission granted including consideration of a land tax and more CPO powers for councils
10. An infrastructure first approach and all proposals which would make it work
11. A 'let the planners plan' approach - return power from developers to communities and local councils

What's missing?

1. A requirement for local planning authorities to have a qualified Chief Planning Officer operating at a senior management level
2. Full commitment and any proposals to raise the status of planning in local authorities
3. Recognition that councils will need more money to run the planning service over and above what additional fees might bring in
4. Clarification on how housing need identified through NTS and regional assessment will be translated into allocations to local authorities
5. A more robust commitment to local democracy, e.g. by removing the right of appeal where a decision is unanimous, in line with the officer recommendation and fully supported by the community
6. A strengthened protection for Grade A agricultural land since current arrangement does not appear to be working.
7. Clear indication that the infrastructure levy should be a levy on land owners as a means to capture enhanced land values created by the community through the grant of planning consent and that the levy would be used to help fund various infrastructure needs, notably those generated by development.