



Sandra Carey
Scottish Executive
Planning Division
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

04 July 2007

Dear Ms Carey,

Statutory Guidance on Planning and Sustainable Development Consultation

Sustrans welcomes the commitment to promote sustainable transport as part of the statutory guidance on planning and sustainable development. Our aim as an organisation is to help to create environments where people can choose to travel in ways which benefit the environment and their health. The planning process has a key role to play in creating sustainable environments that encourage active travel. Sustrans has recently produced an information sheet outlining research in this field, and some practical examples. It can be accessed at:

Creating the Environment for Active Travel

The consultation document highlights the fact that a sustainable society is a healthy society. For the 59% of men and 72% of women in Scotland who are not active enough for good health, an increase in physical activity can be brought about by creating environments where there are more opportunities to walk and cycle for short journeys. With this in mind we would welcome the introduction of statutory health impact assessments along with strategic environmental assessments for any new development in Scotland.

Sustainable transport also has significant benefits in our fight against climate change, with 14% of national carbon emissions coming from transport, it is now the fastest growing source of carbon in the UK. A planning policy that encourages the use of public and sustainable transport has a key role to play in reducing carbon emissions and mitigating climate change.

There is however only passing reference in the consultation document to the importance of ensuring any new development has an integrated mix of land use, allowing people to walk and cycle between their homes and everyday destinations such as school, the shops, local facilities and places of work. As stated in the consultation document, planning policy has significant implications for creating a just society, in this case opening up opportunities for local employment to those who can't afford private transport.

The efficient use of land through higher density development is also a concept that we support due to the increased viability of public transport provision that this brings.

We fully also agree with the importance of green space and green networks in any new development and the safeguarding of existing green space when identifying future development sites. These green spaces provide attractive and health enhancing links between urban areas and create an environment that encourages people to walk and cycle. The health benefits of spending time in green spaces are well documented, not only in terms of opportunities to be physically active but also as a means of stress relief and reduced risk of mental illness.

The development of new path networks provides an ideal environment to encourage active travel, provided that they are attractive, well maintained and accessible to all. The responsibility of ongoing maintenance of walking and cycling routes should be taken in to consideration when assessing development plans. The National Cycle Network is a valuable local and national resource, with 75% of the UK population living within 2 miles of the network, there would be a significant benefit in ensuring new paths link into the network where ever possible allowing people to travel further on safe and traffic free routes.

The publication of travel plans for new developments is a much welcomed initiative. There are however some doubts as to the commitment of developers to reach the targets laid out in these plans. There seems to be little 'policing' of these targets by local planning offices, leading to inactivity once the plan is written. Schemes piloted in England have addressed this by holding a cash bond from the developers until the travel plan targets have been met, with the money only then being released, this is an initiative that we would welcome in Scotland.

Finally we fully support the aim of the National Transport Strategy to better integrate land use planning and transport to help to create a more sustainable Scotland.

If you require clarification of any of the above comments, or if I can provide anymore information, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Frances Bain

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RESPONDEE INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the details below and attach it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately:

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Consultation title: **STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION**

1. Are you responding as: (please tick one box)

- (a) an individual (go to 2a/b)
(b) **on behalf of** a group or organisation (go to 3)

2a. **INDIVIDUALS:** Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in SE library and/or on SE website)?

- Yes (go to 2b below)
No, not at all

2b. **Where *confidentiality is not requested***, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (**please tick one** of the following boxes)

- Yes, make my response, name and address all available
Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address
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4. We will share your response internally with other SE policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future for consultation or research purposes?

- Yes No