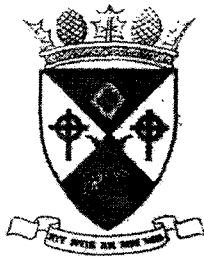


56



Currie Community Council

If replying to this letter, please write to:

Archie Clark, Millbank, 33 Lanark Road West,
Currie, Midlothian. EH14 5JX.

Home Tel. 0131 449 4703

Office Tel. 0131 225 8444

For the attention of Sandra Carey,
Scottish Executive Development Department,
Planning Division,
Victoria Quay,
EH6 6QQ.

21st June 2007

Dear Sirs

Statutory Guidance on Planning and Sustainable Development – Consultation Paper

I refer to the above and agree with the general principles outlined in para. 5 – living within environmental limits, ensuring a strong healthy and just society, achieving a sustainable economy, promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly. Several statements in the document make good sense. However, it is questionable if the proposals are sufficiently radical to deal with a problem that appears to be growing in urgency. The Planning system is too cumbersome to respond quickly and we are not convinced that the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 can deliver quickly, especially as the “etc.” is as yet undefined and likely to be challenged in the courts. By that time it may well be too late! Nor should one assume that sustainability is the province of new construction; it applies to an even greater extent to the existing built environment.

With global warming, there will be significant movement of threatened populations – and not just those within our shores. Allowance will need to be made for that.

Sustainability is of little interest to developers unless there is profit to be made. I believe we should be considering the following:

- 1) Towns should effectively be “ring fenced” from further landward development.
- 2) Over the past century, towns have spread out through the building of detached and semi-detached houses. Consider: five such houses in a row requires five times the roadway, pavement and services to a five-storey block of flats, so building “up” rather than “out” reduces the size of the infrastructure, allows it to be better maintained and is economically more efficient.
- 3) Shore development (such as is being promoted at Granton) should be curtailed with land buffers such as playing fields used to provide protection against rising water levels. There is little economic sense building in an area that we can predict will be at risk from rising tides.
- 4) Certain coastal areas will need additional protection – this should be provided in a manner that is robust enough to last for say 100 years.
- 5) As it is likely there will be a population migration to higher ground, then it is necessary to ensure that viable farmland in the countryside and in the Green Belt is not used for construction that could be erected within existing city boundaries.
- 6) There is a need to change Brownfield policies. Frequently, these were the locations of workplaces, and residences were built within walking distances. By converting such derelict sites into housing, it is inevitable that people will have to travel further to work. After two years of vacancy, these sites should be levelled and made into grassed play areas so that in course of time they could re-emerge as sites for workplaces either for new enterprises or to allow existing premises that would be forced to move to much larger new greenfield sites to continue to trade close to where their trained workforce exists. This is particularly important for the lower paid.

continued/...

Currie Community Council

Chairman: Graham Dane, 25 Thomson Road, Currie. EH14 5HT. dane@enterprise.net
Visit our website at <http://www.ma.hw.ac.uk/ccf/>

- 7) It is imperative that formerly successful business areas within communities that are likely to fall to having houses built on them - because that is what developers regard as the only way to achieve a viable return - are protected. Generous grants need to be made available that will encourage developers to build offices and workshops on those sites to discourage housebuilding. (I understand that RTPI assess the Housebuilders' landbank as far in excess of needs and that demand for new houses is slowing down.) This would have the advantage of revitalising communities that have become mere dormitories, reduce travel distances, fuel demands and pollution.
- 8) More encouragement should be given to the re-use of older buildings (e.g. converting offices into flats and *vice versa*) to reduce the amount of fuel used to manufacture components - many of which are shipped in from overseas - and to enable the construction workforce that has reduced over the years to cope with demand. In this context, I would observe that the deteriorating stonework now evident in our historic cities needs replacing but the lack of grants to extend the life of 150-year-old terraces will mean that some of these buildings will fall into a serious state of disrepair while adjacent ones survive. Sustainable buildings in places like World Heritage sites should automatically qualify for generous grants for repairs, to a governmental rolling programme.
- 9) Schemes to avoid flooding - such as channelling the Water of Leith - should be urgently reviewed with only areas that are vulnerable at present protected by retaining structures. River banks should be planted as soon as possible with trees and shrubs to mitigate flash flooding.
- 10) Contour ploughing should be encouraged near water courses to retain water.
- 11) Water in rivers should be considered as a renewable asset (as in previous centuries where for example water from a small canal from Loch Thom above Greenock powered a succession of mills before the water reached the sea) - we could use it economically in water turbines.
- 12) Power from "nodding ducks" should be encouraged as a way to reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere from coal fired stations and incidentally strengthen Britain's economy as a world leader in alternative energy devices.
- 13) The nation will be faced with huge expenditure when a replacement crossing of the Forth is built. This raises the question as to whether more industry should be relocated in Fife so that the daily migration of a large workforce to Edinburgh is reduced thus producing savings in fuel, local economic benefits, encouraging community life, reducing accidents and lessening pollution.
- 14) Sustainable development also raises the question as to whether it is sensible to allow aeroplanes, using subsidised fuel, to convey people within this island when far more goods could be carried on land by railways, taking much the same time from end to end and doing so for less cost. Aeroplanes could then be reserved for intercontinental flights and accessing remote islands.
- 15) There will be an increasing need to devolve decision-making to local levels so that needs can be better assessed than in the cumbersome centralised manner that has been emerging for some time. That will require local communities (of say 15,000 people) to be provided with executive authority and the resources to carry out tasks that do not need to be under centralised control.

In short, we should do our best to prevent urban sprawl, to strengthen the communities that have been weakened by becoming dormitories by restoring local businesses, and seize upon the economic advantages that can be exploited by additional water to power turbines and grow crops.

I trust you find these thoughts helpful.

Yours faithfully



Archibald J.C. Clark
Planning Convenor

SESusDev01/AJCC

Currie Community Council

Chairman: Graham Dane, 25 Thomson Road, Currie. EH14 5HT. dane@enterprise.net

Visit our website at <http://www.ma.hw.ac.uk/cc/>

RESPONDEE INFORMATION FORM: Consultation Paper on the Planning Performance Assessment Framework

Please complete the details below and return it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately. Thank you for your help.

Name: MR. D. J. C. CLARK FOX CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Postal Address: 33 LANARK ROAD WEST, CURRIE, MIDLOTHIAN. EH14 5JX

1. Are you responding as: (please tick one box)
- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (a) an individual | <input type="checkbox"/> | go to Q2a/b and then Q4 |
| (b) on behalf of a group or organisation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | go to Q3 and then Q4 |

INDIVIDUALS

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

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Yes (go to 2b below) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> We will treat your response as confidential |

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 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address | <input type="checkbox"/> |

ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

3. Your name and address of your organisation *will be* made available to the public (in the Scottish Executive library and/or on Scottish Executive website). Are you content for your response to be made available?

- | | |
|-----|--|
| Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> We will treat your response as confidential |

SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

4. We will share your response internally with other Scottish Executive 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 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation is an essential and important aspect of Scottish Executive working methods. Given the wide-ranging areas of work of the Scottish Executive, there are many varied types of consultation. However, in general Scottish Executive consultation exercises aim to provide opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of work to do so in ways which will inform and enhance that work.

The Scottish Executive encourages consultation that is thorough, effective and appropriate to the issue under consideration and the nature of the target audience. Consultation exercises take account of a wide range of factors and no two exercises are likely to be the same.

Typically, Scottish Executive consultations involve a written paper inviting answers to specific questions or more general views about the material presented. Written papers are distributed to organisations and individuals with an interest in the area of consultation, and they are also placed on the Scottish Executive web site enabling a wider audience to access the paper and submit their responses^[1]. Consultation exercises may involve seeking views in a number of ways, such as through public meetings, focus groups or questionnaire exercises. Copies of all the responses received to consultation exercises (except those where the individual or organisation requested confidentiality) are placed in the Scottish Executive library at Saughton House, Edinburgh (K Spur, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD, telephone 0131 244 4552).

All Scottish Executive consultation papers and related publications (e.g., analysis of response reports) can be accessed at: Scottish Executive consultations^[1]. The views and suggestions detailed in consultation responses are analysed and used as part of the decision making process. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review;
- inform the development of a particular policy;
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals;
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented.

Final decisions on the issues under consideration will also take account of a range of other factors, including other available information and research evidence.

The Scottish Executive also has an email alert system for SE consultations ([SEconsult](#)). This system allows stakeholders, individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new SE consultations (including web links). SEconsult complements, but in no way replaces, SE distribution lists. It is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all SE consultation activity and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We encourage you to register.

^[1] www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations