

CONSULTATIONS

HISTORIC SCOTLAND'S SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR – ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT (SE 20/09/06)

The Environmental Assessment of this draft policy has been published for consultation. Deadline for responses: 25/10/06

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/consultations.htm>

STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON REVIEW OF ROS (SUPPORT FOR WAVE AND TIDAL POWER) 2006 (SE 20/09/06)

The SE has been examining whether the powers available under the Renewables Obligation (Scotland) (ROS) might be used to provide more direct support to emerging technologies. The SE published a preliminary consultation paper, in May this year, proposing amendments to the ROS aimed at providing additional support for output from wave or tidal generating stations. This statutory consultation sets out SE's detailed proposals for change. It is accompanied by a draft Order containing the provisions which will enable this support mechanism to work. Deadline for responses: 12/12/06

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/ros-consultation>

FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS

PROPOSALS FOR A COASTAL AND MARINE NATIONAL PARK (SE AUTUMN 2006)

This consultation will invite views on proposals for Scotland's first Coastal and Marine National Park.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations/Forthcoming/Q/rowId/6#conRow6>

PUBLICATIONS

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTLAND: MONITORING REPORT 06 (SE 13/09/06)

The Monitoring Report will inform the preparation of the second National Planning Framework which the Executive intends to publish in 2008. It draws on the latest available data from a wide range of sources to highlight trends and policy developments which have a bearing on Scotland's long-term development.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/11154149/0>

SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY SPP4: PLANNING FOR MINERALS (SE 01/09/06)

Replaces NPPG 4 and provides the policy framework that planning authorities should use when preparing their development plans and in determining planning applications.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/08/30152427/0>

PLANNING SURVEY SCOTLAND 2005: SURVEY OF PLANNING WEBSITES IN SCOTLAND (SE 30/08/06)

Survey of planning websites in Scotland.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/08/30094301/0>

THE PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE DESIGN (THEY INCLUDE YOU) (CABE 21/09/06)

This guide to the principles of inclusive design marks the extension of CABE's role in this important area.

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=1499>

HOW PLACES WORK: TEACHER'S GUIDE (CABE 13/09/06)

How places work offers thousands of school children the opportunity to discover the excitement of new buildings and spaces for themselves, guided by some of the UK's most knowledgeable and passionate advocates for good design. This guide offers teachers advice and ideas for making visits stimulating and informative.

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=1486>

WHERE WILL I LIVE?: A GEOGRAPHY TEACHER'S GUIDE TO EXPLORING THE KEY CONCEPT OF PLACE (CABE 06/09/06)

This guide reports lessons learned from when CABE and the Geographical Association brought together 25 geography and citizenship teachers from two regions to explore the question: where will I live? The innovative and creative lesson ideas help students to consider the forces that make their built environment the way it is, and what can be done to make it better.

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=1467>

NEWS RELEASES

A+DS TO SUPPORT NHS SCOTLAND IN DELIVERING BETTER HEALTHCARE FACILITIES (A+DS 01/09/06)

Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS) has teamed up with the Scottish Executive Health Department to drive forward the design agenda with NHS Scotland. The three year Framework Agreement will allow a dedicated stream of work on healthcare facilities, thereby raising the level of ambition and design quality throughout NHS Scotland.

http://www.ads.org.uk/nhs_agreement.html

RECENT PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

S2W-28103 FERGUS EWING (05/09/06) To ask the Scottish Executive, following the publication of Choosing our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy in December 2005, which states that complex funding streams caused problems for those seeking to promote local environmental regeneration projects, when it will bring forward proposals to simplify the range and scope of these streams and on what date any new funding will be available.

S2W-28105 MURDO FRASER (05/09/06) To ask the Scottish Executive what percentage of all planning inquiries dealt with by the Scottish Executive Inquiry Reporters Unit resulted in appeals being upheld in each year since 1999.

S2W-28106 MURDO FRASER (05/09/06) To ask the Scottish Executive what percentage of planning inquiries in respect of wind farm proposals dealt with by the Scottish Executive Inquiry Reporters Unit resulted in approval of wind farms in each year since 1999.

S2W-28350 SARAH BOYACK (14/09/06) To ask the Scottish Executive whether it will commission research into on-site compliance with energy standards in building regulations. R

RECENT PARLIAMENTARY ANSWERS

- Q** **S2W-27644 - CAROLYN LECKIE (01/08/06)** To ask the Scottish Executive what action it has taken to ensure that new-build schools and hospitals do not suffer problems with excessive heat, in light of recent reports of staff at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh fainting as a result of high temperatures.
- A** **ANSWERED BY ANDY KERR (28/08/06)** The Scottish Executive has taken no specific action to ensure that new-build schools and hospitals do not suffer problems with excessive heat as issues such as the output specifications and operational management for such contracts are, in the case of schools, a matter for individual local authorities and, in the case of hospitals, a matter for individual NHS Scotland bodies.
All building procurements are expected to meet the requirements of statutory standards and the operational guidance available in relation to environmental control.
- Q** **S2W-27662 - TRICIA MARWICK (03/08/06)** To ask the Scottish Executive how many housing repair grants were awarded in each local authority area in 2004-05 and, of these, how many included some element for lead pipe replacement.
- A** **ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (30 AUGUST 2006)** The number of grants awarded to the private sector for lead repairs in 2004-05 are shown in a table that can be viewed at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/webapp/wa.result>
- Q** **S2W-27676 - MURRAY TOSH (03/08/06)** To ask the Scottish Executive when it expects to issue revised guidance to local authorities on local housing strategies and whether the revised guidance will ensure that housing needs assessments are conducted sufficiently rigorously to meet the requirements of local development planning and to form the basis of housing resource allocation by ministers.
- A** **ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (29/08/06)** I have asked Angiolina Foster, Chief Executive of Communities Scotland, to reply. Her response is as follows:
A number of changes will affect how local authorities prepare their Local Housing Strategies. These include legislative changes arising from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, proposals to create a national Strategic Housing Investment Framework, and on-going work to ensure that assessments of future housing need are more consistent and more strongly linked to assessments of overall housing supply requirements for development planning purposes.
These changes will necessitate revisions to the current guidance on the preparation of Local Housing Strategies. Local authorities are expected to update their current Local Housing Strategies by early 2009. We propose therefore to issue a series of revisions to the guidance to reflect these changes in sufficient time for local authorities to prepare both for the implementation of the Strategic Housing Investment Framework and for their Local Housing Strategies to be completed by the deadline.
Local housing needs assessments are complex exercises that must be prepared using robust methodology that takes account of both local and national requirements. We will shortly be piloting an exercise which aims to gather needs assessment information in a standard way. When the exercise is rolled out across Scotland at the end of the year, it will help us to gain a better understanding of the relationship between local and nationally undertaken needs assessments. More consistent and reliable local needs assessments will enhance their value as a contributory element of soundly based development plans and in informing resource allocation.
- Q** **S2W-27698 - BRIAN ADAM (04/08/06)** To ask the Scottish Executive whether it is aware of any difficulties experienced by the voluntary sector in relation to trustee indemnity insurance.
- A** **ANSWERED BY JOHANN LAMONT (28/08/06)** The Scottish Executive is aware of the concerns of the voluntary sector about the restrictions on the provision of trustee indemnity insurance from charity funds under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. We are looking

into this issue and considering the options available to us to address it. If it is felt that these restrictions are problematic then we will take measures to resolve the issue.

Q S2W-27736 - MURRAY TOSH (09/08/06) To ask the Scottish Executive, with reference to the speech by Malcolm Chisholm MSP to Homes for Scotland on 19 May 2006, what mechanisms it is putting in place to monitor the full impact of PAN 74 and assess whether it is delivering an adequate land supply for affordable housing development.

A ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (04/09/06) We are expanding the range of statistics that are collected by the Scottish Executive Development Department to monitor the impact of PAN 74. In particular, we have begun work to introduce a new data collection from 2007-08 to gauge the contribution of planning agreements to the supply of affordable housing. In the shorter term, the current research into allocation of land for affordable housing through the planning system will provide some information on the early impact of the PAN. The Affordable Housing Working Group which I am chairing is also assessing the effectiveness of the current framework of national policy and advice on affordable housing.

Q S2W-27737 - MURRAY TOSH (09/08/06) To ask the Scottish Executive, with reference to the speech by Malcolm Chisholm MSP to Homes for Scotland on 19 May 2006, what steps it is taking to ensure that local authorities' development plans contain adequate allocations of land for house building, reasonable estimates of the potential contribution of windfall sites and a more flexible approach to development planning, so that each local authority area has an adequate effective land supply.

A ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (04/09/06) An adequate supply of land depends upon up to date and relevant development plans. One of the foundations of our current proposals to modernise the planning system is that development plans must be reviewed every five years. In doing so, planning authorities should find it easier to meet the requirements currently set out in SPP 3, such as ensuring an effective supply of land is maintained at all times to meet housing requirements for at least the forthcoming five years.

I recognise that these significant changes will take time to have their full impact, which is why we are also exploring how to make progress without recourse to legislation. The Affordable Housing Working Group that I am chairing is looking precisely at these issues.

Q S2W-27738 - MURRAY TOSH (09/08/06) To ask the Scottish Executive, with reference to the speech by Malcolm Chisholm MSP to the Chartered Institute of Housing Conference on 7 March 2006, which local authorities it considers have shown an insufficient commitment to the identification of a genuine long-term effective land supply that will provide an opportunity for the development of the range of housing types in suitable locations as well as greater certainty for both developers and local communities; what guidance it proposes to issue to improve the regular auditing of effective land supply, and what steps it proposes to ensure that local authorities respond appropriately to the minister's injunctions to create "a step change in the whole approach to the supply of land for housing".

A ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (06/09/06) My remarks to the conference on 7 March 2006 were intended to urge local authorities collectively to show much greater commitment through their development plans to the identification of a genuine long-term effective land supply. I expect this to be achieved by a combination of local authorities making more effective use of existing planning processes (the type of issue that is being explored by the Affordable Housing Working Group) and by the Executive progressing measures to support the supply of affordable housing and land for housing more generally.

The provisions in the current Planning Bill are designed to speed up the preparation of development plans, which in turn will be a mechanism to increase the amount of land available for housing development. We have commissioned research to consider the effectiveness of measures to allocate land for affordable housing, and in particular the potential role of a separate use class for affordable housing. We are also working hard to improve access by affordable housing providers to surplus public sector land.

Housing land audits are used to quantify current housing land supply, and to assess which sites are “effective”. SPP 3 emphasises that audits should normally be updated on a yearly basis and PAN 38 provides further advice. However, I understand that across Scotland there may be variations in approach to the audit process. We are considering commissioning a short research project to identify good practice to help establish more consistency.

Taken together, these measures should help to deliver the “step change” in our approach to land supply about which I spoke on 7 March 2006.

Q S2W-27739 - MURRAY TOSH (09/08/06) To ask the Scottish Executive, with reference to the speech by Malcolm Chisholm MSP to the Chartered Institute of Housing Conference on 7 March 2006, when it will publish research into potential planning mechanisms such as a use class for affordable housing to secure an adequate supply in the long term of affordable housing and when it expects to be able to report real progress in making better use of surplus land within the public sector estate for affordable housing.

A ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (04/09/06) The research into allocation of land for affordable housing through the planning system, which is to include consideration of the potential introduction of a use class for affordable housing, is expected to conclude in September and will inform the progress of the Planning Bill. As with all research commissioned by the Scottish Executive, subject to the report being of an appropriate standard, we would intend to publish in due course after the report has been finalised. Real progress has already been made on making better use of surplus public sector land for affordable housing. Our agreement with Forestry Commission Scotland is already assisting the provision of affordable housing in rural areas, with five sites sold in Inchree, Fort Augustus, Glenmore, Ratagan and Bunessan. A further five sales are currently progressing at Salen, Succoth, Dalavich, Strontian and Kilmun. Furthermore, the Executive has made a commitment that surplus sites on the Scottish Ministers’ crofting estate will be made available for affordable housing wherever possible. The response to question S2W-23170 in March 2006 set out the full range of on-going action which the Executive is taking to identify further surplus public sector land for affordable housing.

Q S2W-27740 - MURRAY TOSH (09/08/06) To ask the Scottish Executive what the membership and remit will be of its Affordable Housing Working Group and whether it will identify all research sponsored by or for the working group and the anticipated timescales for reporting.

A ANSWERED BY MALCOLM CHISHOLM (29/08/06) The remit of the Affordable Housing Working Group is “To establish means of securing the more effective supply of affordable housing in areas of greatest need”. The group has met on one occasion and was attended by representatives from four local authorities, Homes for Scotland, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, COSLA and Scottish Water. There will be a further meeting of the group in October at which the work programme will be discussed, although at this stage it is not envisaged that the group will prepare or present a formal report. The work of the group will be informed by research already commissioned by the Executive on the allocation of land for affordable housing through the planning system. The completed research is expected to be available prior to the October meeting of the working group.

Q S2W-27758 - ALASDAIR MORGAN (09/08/06) To ask the Scottish Executive, for each project which has been considered for the award of a grant under the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme, who the applicant was, how much grant was awarded, on what date the award was confirmed and what objective assessment processes were used to determine whether or not the application would succeed.

A ANSWERED BY RHONA BRANKIN (05/09/06) We introduced the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme in June 2003, and details of the payments made (and those to be claimed once the work has been satisfactorily completed), up to and including Friday 18 August 2006, have been published on the webpages of Forestry Commission Scotland and can be viewed at

www.forestry.gov.uk/sfgsgrantdetails. The information about grants has been provided in different views and in a separate file to enable further analysis.

For each component of grant in any scheme, details are provided: a reference number, name of the scheme, Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy area, applicant's name and (where appropriate) organisation, recipient of grant, local authority area, Ordnance Survey grid reference, date approved, objective type (purpose for which the grant was given), payment date, amount paid, and any outstanding grant. The scheme closed at the end of the August.

The criteria, against which all applications have been judged, are given in the guidance for applicants published on the webpages (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6T6CBC) together with the rules (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6J6MGE) used to determine in which year grants would be paid.

Information in the Bulletin is extracted from a number of websites; such as the Scottish Executive (SE); the Scottish Parliament (SP); Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS); Historic Scotland (HS); Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH); Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO); English Heritage (EH); Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE); Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG); Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS); Department of Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); National Assembly for Wales (NAW); Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS); Scottish Building Standards Agency (SBSA). For further information, links are provided to the relevant documents. If you have any questions or comments on the above, or would like to submit information to be included, please get in touch with Fiona Binning: fbinning@befs.org.uk, 0131 556 5353.