



National Planning Framework 4 Early Engagement – Policies

HEALTH

Scottish Planning Policy (2014):

The vision looks to progressively narrowing disparities in well-being. SPP's Principal Policy on Sustainability confirms that "improving health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation" should be one of the guiding principles that guides planning policies and decisions. Other references to health to reflect the contribution the policy statement on architecture and planning system can make to promoting healthy lifestyles primarily through placemaking and green infrastructure (including indoor and outdoor sports, play and recreation facilities) where there is a strong focus. The transport hierarchy promotes active and sustainable travel first.

The town centre first principle is also applied to healthcare facilities although flexibility of application is recognised for the importance of locating such facilities close to the communities that they are intended to serve.

Paragraph 67 confirms that where a town centre strategy indicates that further provision of particular activities, such as betting offices and high interest money lending premises, would undermine the character and amenity of centres or well-being of communities, plans should include policies to prevent such over-provision and clustering.

SPP acknowledges the risk to coastal and island areas from more extreme weather events and sea level rise and related flooding as a result of climate change and presents the approach of avoiding development in areas at risk. More broadly it notes risk from flooding from all sources and seeks to prevent development which would have a significant chance of being affected by flooding or would increase flood risk elsewhere.

SPP addresses the approach to sites handling hazardous substances and major-accident hazard sites.

SPP addresses the provision of housing for people with specialist needs, supporting independent living as well as accommodation with carers or support on-site.

SPP promotes the care and protection of the historic environment and culture-led regeneration which contribute to well-being and quality of life.

Proposals for energy infrastructure and mineral extraction should be considered for their impact on noise.

SPP supports infrastructure to manage waste to protect the environment and public health.

What has changed since 2014?

- The Scottish Government's policies continue to place a high priority on improving public health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities. The Programme for Government¹ highlights low emission zones as a means to transform places into healthier places to live, work and visit. Physical Activity, mental wellbeing and sustainable healthy food remain priorities.
- The Scottish Government and COSLA agreed six Public Health Priorities in June 2018. These are intended to support national and local partners across Scotland work together to improve healthy life expectancy and reduce health inequalities in our communities. The priorities are :
 - a Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities;
 - a Scotland where we flourish in our early years;
 - a Scotland where we have good mental wellbeing;
 - a Scotland where we reduce the use of and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs;
 - a Scotland where we have a sustainable, inclusive economy with equality of outcomes for all; and
 - a Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active.
- The establishment of Public Health Scotland on 1 April 2020 will provide leadership to enable and support local and national bodies working together to improve health and wellbeing in communities.
- Improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland and improving equality and eliminating discrimination are two of the six outcomes included in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 that NPF 4 must contribute towards.
- The 2019 Act also introduces a requirement for consideration to be given, before planning permission for a national development or a major development is granted, to the likely health effects of the proposed development. Ministers have committed to undertaking an assessment of the likely health effects of national developments as part of the preparation of NPF4.
- Local development plans must now also take account of the health needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those health needs.
- Roll-out of the Place Standard Tool². This helps communities identify aspects of a place that need to be developed to improve health, wellbeing and quality of life.

¹ [Protecting Scotland's Future: the Government's Programme for Scotland 2019-2020](#)

² [Place Standard Tool](#)

- Publication of the Active Scotland Delivery Plan³ in 2018, with an outcome to support wellbeing and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport. This includes an action to support and promote the design of places and spaces to encourage and facilitate physical activity through approaches to neighbourhood design, opportunities for active travel, and use of the Place Standard.
- *Becoming a Good Food Nation*⁴ Sets the Government's food and drink policy to 2025 which looks to good food and drink being a key part of Scottish life and its attractiveness to visitors. The vision goes beyond just the quality of food and promotes local, fresh and healthy food assisting in the decline of dietary related diseases.
- *A Healthier Future*⁵ and subsequent work aimed at changing the *Out of Home eating environment*⁶ note the potential role of the planning system in managing the number of outlets selling unhealthy food and the obesity epidemic in Scotland
- *Relationship between the food environment and the Planning System*⁷ research report notes the lack of interaction between planning policy in Scotland and diet and the potential for a relationship between planning policy and diet based on understanding the local evidence base. Ministers are committed to exploring this further through the preparation of NPF4.
- The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport committed in November 2018 to consider hot food vans in the review of NPF and SPP.
- Research commissioned by the Scottish Government into the prevalence of CO² from disused mineral mines and the implications for residential buildings⁸ included the following recommendations for the planning system:
 - use and enforcement of model planning conditions and/or changes to Scottish Planning and Building Standards and guidance to ensure adequate risk assessment of mine gas and design, construction and verification of gas protection measures.
 - consideration of mine gas issues and constraints at local development planning stage, especially related to large-scale developments and cumulative effects.
 - further consideration of the implementation of mandatory mitigation measures in former coal/oil shale mining areas.
- The Infrastructure Investment Plan and Review of the National Transport Strategy 2 include health outcomes as part of their overarching aims.
- The World Health Organisation has revised its European guidelines for noise, noting health effects from exposure.

³ [Active Scotland Delivery Plan](#)

⁴ [Becoming a Good Food Nation](#)

⁵ [A Healthier Future: Scotland's diet and healthy weight delivery plan](#)

⁶ [Recommendations for an out of home strategy for Scotland](#)

⁷ [Relationship between the food environment and the planning system: research summary](#)

⁸ [Prevalence of CO₂ from disused mineral mines and the implications for residential buildings](#)

Proposed key objective of NPF4: To ensure that planning policies and decisions take account of the health needs of local communities and have regard to the need to improve the diet, health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland.

Issues to consider:

- There are a number of strands to health and well-being that can be particularly influenced by the planning system:
 - physical activity;
 - food, diet and obesity;
 - mental wellbeing;
 - environmental and industrial hazards.Are there other aspects of health that are capable of being influenced by the planning system?
- How can NPF4 best complement existing national and local health strategies and the public health priorities?
- How can NPF 4 best ensure that policies on health and wellbeing contribute to the outcomes of improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland and improving equality and eliminating discrimination? What are the principles which might best inform the policy approach?
- How can NPF 4 policies on topics such as placemaking, active travel, housing, green infrastructure, town centres and air quality effectively deliver health policy objectives?
- What guidance do planning authorities need so that they can meet the new health provisions in the 2019 Planning Act when preparing development plans?
- How can new development be provided in a manner which ensures sufficient health care services such as doctors surgeries are available for existing and new communities.
- Are policies needed to ensure that particular types of development do not undermine the health and well-being of communities, including the prevention of over-provision and clustering of certain food outlets? Can the planning system address hot food vans which sell predominately unhealthy food?
- How best can planning policy engage with the promotion of healthy diets?
- How should the planning system ensure that health issues around mine gases in areas affected by former underground mine workings are taken into account and addressed through both development planning and development management?
- Do our policies sufficiently support the promotion of mental wellbeing or is further action required?

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