



National Planning Framework 4 Early Engagement – Policies

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

Scottish Planning Policy (2014):

Infrastructure Planning and Delivery

- *Delivering high-quality buildings, infrastructure and spaces in the right locations helps provide choice over where to live and style of home, choice as to how to access amenities and services and choice to live more active, engaged, independent and healthy lifestyles.*
- *By allocating sites and creating places that are attractive to growing economic sectors, and enabling the delivery of necessary infrastructure, planning can help provide the confidence required to secure private sector investment, thus supporting innovation, creating employment and benefiting related businesses.*
- *By aligning development more closely with transport and digital infrastructure, planning can improve sustainability and connectivity.*
- *SPP policy principles include making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure, supporting the delivery of infrastructure, for example transport, education, energy, digital and water and protecting, enhancing and promoting access to natural heritage, including green infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment.*
- *To achieve a sustainable pattern of development, additional policy principles include optimising the use of existing resource capacities, e.g. by co-ordinating development with infrastructure investment including transport, education facilities, water and drainage, energy, heat networks and digital infrastructure.*
- *Six qualities of successful place: includes being resource efficient, for example, denser development that shares infrastructure and amenity with adjacent sites.*
- *In preparing development plans, early discussion should take place between local authorities, developers and relevant agencies to ensure that investment in necessary new infrastructure is addressed in a timely manner.*
- *Where planning for new settlements, development plans should specify scale and location, and supporting infrastructure requirements.*

What has changed since 2014?

- The Infrastructure First approach has emerged through planning reform, and was a key recommendation of the independent planning review panel.

- As a result of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, local development plans are to contain a greater level of information regarding the infrastructure need and capacity within the district.
- In particular, local development plans will need to take account of the infrastructure of the district (including communications, transport and drainage systems, systems for the supply of water and energy, and health care and education facilities) and how that infrastructure is used.
- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 makes specific reference to consideration of the capacity of education services in the district and the need for cultural venues and facilities within the local development plan.
- The 2019 Act contains an enabling power for the introduction of an infrastructure levy which represents a different mechanism for securing contributions from development towards infrastructure delivery.
- There is now greater focus on the approach and methodology of contribution mechanisms implemented through development plans, particularly in light of the Elsie Supreme Court decision (2017). The importance of a robust evidence base when using planning obligations has come to the fore.
- Research on planning for infrastructure in 2015 showed the need for development plans to embed infrastructure requirements, and to have a stronger role in infrastructure co-ordination, including a better understanding of site delivery requirements and risk.
- To aid deliverability, the costing of development plans and viability considerations are important in assessing contributions towards infrastructure delivery.

Proposed key objective of NPF4: to promote the alignment of development and infrastructure at the local, regional and national level by identifying infrastructure capacity, need and what is required to support its delivery.

Issues to consider:

- What should be the key priorities for national policy to embed an infrastructure first approach into development plans?
- There is limited reference in the current SPP to the principle of development mitigating its impacts, including the impacts on infrastructure provision and the use of planning obligations to achieve this. What factors should be taken into account when developing a policy statement in NPF?
- What scope is there for national planning policy to address the key issue of infrastructure co-ordination through development planning and what infrastructure types should be addressed?
- The 2019 Planning Act requires local development plans to take account of education capacity in their district when developing the spatial strategy. Education provision is often a key challenge in the development process. Should a new planning policy be included to support the delivery of key infrastructure requirements (such as education) within NPF?

- What key factors should be included to future proof development plans so that they can anticipate and plan for the emergence of new infrastructure technology?

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