

APPENDIX 1

ABSTRACT FROM RTPI CONFERENCE: BIG PLANNING. ABERDEEN 24 NOVEMBER ADDRESS BY SAM GALBRAITH MSP, MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, SPORT AND CULTURE

"So what about Structure Plans?

We have, at present, 17 Structure Plan areas in Scotland. I do not believe these reflect current geographic realities of Scotland in the 21st century and I intend to publish our own proposals on future arrangements for strategic planning.

There are, I think, 3 options: - the status quo is not one.

1. Revised current Structure Plan areas - based for example on city regions.
2. Larger scale planning areas -based for example on the Central Belt or the area of Highlands and Islands Enterprise.
3. National Planning Framework.

Sarah said that she was looking for worked up proposals. That is what I expect as well. Our proposals have to address the so-called wicked issues such as:-

1. Which areas?
2. Who should prepare and approve the plan?
3. Should the plan be statutory or non-statutory?
4. What should its content be?

Let me make it clear that I am not proposing a review of the value of strategic planning. But I am firmly committed to ensuring that we have in place robust arrangements which will guide the location of investment in new development and infrastructure, identify priority areas for physical renewal and regeneration and provide confidence that Scotland's unique natural and cultural heritage resources will not be undermined by ill considered or inappropriate development. Indeed I regard effective strategic planning as a key means of delivering sustainable development

I am not, however I looking to see further layers of planning created or additional plans produced. I am looking for a system that provides clarity of strategic direction and brings with it a commitment to act. I am not looking for these plans to gather dust on a shelf or languish on a web site. I want them to be a basis for action. The process by which they are drawn up must therefore be inclusive and realistic assumptions must be made on resources.

To take this subject forward I have asked my officials to arrange discussions/seminars/workshops with those who have an interest in future strategic planning arrangements. We will also be placing a feed back form on our website. Further details will be in the Planning Bulletin which we will issue next month. We will publish the outcome of this review and our conclusions on the way forward hopefully next summer.

But I urge those of you who are involved in preparing structure and local plans to continue with this work. Any proposals for change might well require primary legislation to implement and I can give no guarantee when that will be."