

SP=EED™

Scottish Planning = Effective Engagement and Delivery

A Practical Guide to Better Engagement in Planning in Scotland



Planning Aid for Scotland 2011

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Foreword

SP=EED™ was developed by Planning Aid for Scotland (PAS) between 2006 and 2008, anticipating that engagement and consultation would be central factors in Scotland's reformed planning system.

The vision of effective engagement contributing to more efficient planning processes and higher quality outcomes was central to the reform of the planning system, as set out in the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.

SP=EED™ is aimed at planning authorities, planning consultants, private and community-led developers, key agencies, community groups and members of the public, and is endorsed in the Scottish Government's *Planning Advice Note 3/2010*. PAS intends that it will be used as a framework to share and learn from experiences of delivering engagement.

With ever-increasing public desire to be involved in shaping future development, **SP=EED™** aims to provoke discussion and provide practical guidance, rather than being prescriptive. Its aim is to ensure that effective engagement will lead to confidence and trust in the integrity of the Scottish planning system.

Information about PAS's **SP=EED™** training is also included. If you would like further information about this, or have any questions or comments, please contact sp=eed@planningaidscotland.org.uk

Petra Biberbach

Chief Executive, Planning Aid for Scotland

Notes

SP=EED™ assumes that all statutory requirements for community engagement will be met by those undertaking the process.

See www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning

As used in **SP=EED™**, the term stakeholder refers to any member of the public, group or organisation, involved in any way with engagement.

As used in **SP=EED™**, the term partner refers to any member of the public, group or organisation involved in engagement at Level 3.

SP=EED™ stands for Scottish Planning = Effective Engagement and Delivery and is a practical guide to engagement in planning, devised and produced by Planning Aid for Scotland (PAS). It is targeted at all stakeholders in Scotland's planning system and is designed to help design, deliver and assess the process of engagement. By drawing on good practice and PAS's research, experience of engagement and independent expertise, **SP=EED™** sets out a framework which anyone can use.

When can SP=EED™ be used?

SP=EED™ can be used to guide the engagement process for planning authority, developer or community-led plans or proposals, or it can assist community groups and members of the public in suggesting to planning authorities or developers how they would like to be consulted.

Can SP=EED™ be used outwith planning?

While **SP=EED™** is designed specifically for engagement in planning, it is equally applicable to other development consent consultation procedures e.g. power stations (including renewable energy developments), transmission line or pipeline applications, harbour orders, transport and works orders, traffic regulation orders and private bill procedures. In future, with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 coming into force, it will equally apply to new marine planning procedures.

What is the aim of SP=EED™?

SP=EED™ aims to enhance the overall quality of engagement in Scotland, thereby contributing to a planning system where effective engagement leads to greater efficiency in the delivery of development. Both effective engagement, and public involvement in the design process, can lead to better proposals and fewer objections, meaning quicker progress through the planning process. **SP=EED™** also aims to spread and share good practice throughout the planning community in Scotland.

What is effective engagement?

There will never be a single formula for achieving effective engagement, so **SP=EED™** does not take a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it sets out 3 levels of engagement to suit different scenarios, and provides guidance on how to undertake effective engagement and consultation.

An essential aspect of effective engagement is managing public expectation. Planning can be complicated and emotive, with its legal nature adding a further layer of complexity. Timescales in delivering development can be lengthy, so meaningful engagement needs to be planned to manage and retain stakeholder involvement throughout the process, as well as setting out a realistic understanding of what can be achieved.

It is up to whoever is leading any engagement process to decide how they want to involve people. In some cases, the provision of basic information may suffice; in others, members of the public will play a key role in the design process of new proposals.

What engagement is required in planning?

The Scottish Government's aim for planning is for it to be inclusive and efficient. The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and subsequent regulations and guidance were introduced to achieve this.

In preparing Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plans, planning authorities are asked to take an innovative approach to engagement and set out a Participation Statement within their Development Plan Scheme.

Pre-application Consultation (PAC) is a mandatory aspect of national and major planning applications. One public event must be held, and advertised as per statutory requirements, and a PAC report submitted with the planning application, detailing the level of engagement that has been undertaken.

However, effective engagement is appropriate and beneficial for any development proposal, regardless of its size or whether it is led by the community or the private sector.

How does SP=EED™ relate to existing guidance?

Unlike most guidance on public engagement, SP=EED™ is designed specifically for the planning sector. It recognises the inherent complexities of undertaking engagement in planning, based on PAS's experience of helping people to engage with the planning system.

Due to the engagement requirements set out by Scotland's reformed planning system, practical guidance on effective engagement is now more important than ever. The Scottish Government's *Planning Advice Note 3/2010 Community Engagement* endorses SP=EED™ as a means of achieving meaningful engagement. It also recognises the important role of communities and community groups in the decision making process.

Why is engagement in planning important?

Planning impacts on everyone, so it follows that members of the public and community groups should be given the opportunity to be involved.

Effective engagement can lead to better development proposals, potentially taking on board points raised by members of the public. People who have been actively involved in the design process or consulted effectively early on may have less cause to object at planning application stage. This can lead to proposals moving through the planning process faster and more efficiently.

Scotland's reformed planning system aims to achieve increased engagement alongside greater quality and certainty in the delivery of development. SP=EED™ will help design, deliver and assess effective engagement to achieve this win-win outcome.

SP=EED™ is an essential resource for any organisation or person **designing, carrying out** and **assessing** an engagement process. It is also a useful reference tool for community groups in helping them decide how they would like to be consulted.

<p>Planning Authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Plan Schemes and Participation Statements • Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plans • Strategic Environmental Assessments, Open Space Strategies, etc. • Design or Development Briefs • Supplementary Guidance on engagement • Assessing Pre-application Consultation reports • Advising applicants on level of engagement to aim for
<p>Developers Planning Consultancies Housing Associations Urban Regeneration Companies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal of Application Notices • Designing Pre-application Consultation processes • Pre-application Consultation reports • Development Brief consultations • Masterplan consultations • Regeneration processes • Other development consent consultation procedures e.g. energy consents, roads consents
<p>Community Organisations Development Trusts Members of the Public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community plans • Community-led proposals • Discussing and designing approaches to engagement • Negotiating with planning authorities/developers regarding preferred engagement methods
<p>Key Agencies & Statutory Consultees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing approaches to engagement and consultation • Designing and guiding engagement/consultation processes • Training and reference guidance for staff • Disseminating good practice

SP=EED™ differs from other guidance on engagement in that it recognises that different approaches will be appropriate in different situations.

SP=EED™ therefore sets out 3 levels of engagement to aim for:

Level 1 Informing

Level 2 Consulting

Level 3 Partnership

Level 1 is the most appropriate level to aim for in certain scenarios.

Level 2 is the level of engagement practised most commonly throughout Scotland since the late 1960s, and should be achievable in many scenarios.

Level 3 is achievable in many scenarios and could be accomplished in community-led proposals, or other proposals where members of the public are involved in the design and development process; or in large development or regeneration projects.

SP=EED™ also sets out 8 criteria for effective engagement:

1	Transparency & Integrity	5	Responsiveness
2	Co-ordination	6	Inclusiveness
3	Information	7	Monitoring & Evaluating
4	Appropriateness	8	Learning & Sharing

Each of the criteria is dealt with on a separate page, outlining what to aim for at each level, and how to achieve this.

The *What to aim for* statements should be regarded as universal, and applicable to any engagement scenario. The *How can you achieve it?* section provides guidance on how to meet the criteria, but SP=EED™ recognises that these are not the only ways in which the aims can be met.

Use SP=EED™ to design effective engagement:

- think about and plan engagement well before the process begins
- help everyone to understand the objectives of the process
- manage public expectation
- identify suitable approaches
- manage the consultation process
- evaluate and learn

Note – an engagement process might achieve different levels with regard to different criteria		
Level 1	Informing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an essential building block for engagement • a one-way process • a valuable end in itself and the most appropriate level to aim for in certain situations • an essential step in achieving Levels 2 and 3
Level 2	Consulting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporates and builds on Level 1 • an interactive and iterative process – listening, and being responsive to issues raised • an appropriate level in many situations • the level of engagement most often aimed for and achieved
Level 3	Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporates Levels 1 and 2, but goes well beyond • the most demanding level of engagement • achievable and appropriate in the right situation • may take place over an extended period of time • involves in-depth collaboration with partners, and could include potential for their input into design of proposals and the engagement process

1 Transparency and Integrity

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	The purpose of the engagement is clear and people can find out about it easily.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a clear statement about the integrity of the engagement process. • Explain clearly the purpose of the engagement process. • Be clear about potential timescales of the engagement process and delivery of development. • Establish whether there is a legacy of trust or distrust from previous engagement – research previous engagement and consultation processes. • Advertise any engagement process or event prominently e.g. leaflets, posters, websites, local press and radio, social media. • Attract passers-by to events by having banners and posters outside venues. • Explain how further information can be accessed. • Explain the limits of the planning system (i.e. matters material to use and development of land).
2 Consulting	Level 1 + Rights to participate are clearly explained and opportunities to express opinions are publicised.	Level 1 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clear which aspects of plans or proposals can and cannot be influenced via the engagement process. • Explain why any aspects of plans or proposals are non-negotiable. • Encourage balanced consideration of the pros and cons of plans and proposals. • Ensure statements and any assumptions in engagement materials are referenced. • Where appropriate, use professional planners to carry out engagement working under the RTPI Code of Conduct - make stakeholders aware of this. • Appoint dedicated note takers for group discussion events.
3 Partnership	Level 1 and Level 2 + Dialogue will take place with partners about how they will be involved in the engagement process and how their input will be used.	Level 1 and Level 2 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all potential partners early and explain to them, and other stakeholders, the benefits of a partnership approach. • Explain which aspects of the actual engagement process are negotiable. • Discuss how input from the engagement process will be used. • Discuss options for involving stakeholders in the design of proposals. • Keep a formal record of decisions and allow partners access to this.

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	The timetable for the engagement process will be published and relevant relationships explained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out the engagement strategy well in advance, identifying how to target key stakeholders. • Allow appropriate time for the engagement process. • Establish whether other engagement/consultation exercises are on-going. • Be clear about, and provide explanation of, the roles of all stakeholders involved. • Allow a realistic amount of time in the workload of those carrying out the consultation. • Be flexible and have contingencies for any delays.
2 Consulting	Level 1 + The timetable for the engagement process will include adequate periods for meetings, public events and discussion with stakeholders.	Level 1 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide when and how stakeholders' input will be sought and which methods should be used. • Take account of holiday periods and local or big events. • Plan times and locations of events to reach the widest range of stakeholders. • Where appropriate, be prepared to amend timescales. • Invite representatives from relevant local authority departments to meetings/events.
3 Partnership	Level 1 and Level 2 + The timetable for the engagement process will include opportunities for partners to develop their own ideas; partners will be involved in discussing how to co-ordinate actions.	Level 1 and Level 2 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap into resources from the community: enthusiasm, local knowledge, local volunteers and networks of contacts. • Consider setting up a steering group representing the local community and interested parties. • Plan ahead to allow partners to input into timescales; allocate time and resources for them to develop their own ideas and proposals. • Consult those with experience of a partnership approach for guidance e.g. on timescales, levels of resources required, techniques to use. • Liaise with key agencies/statutory consultees about the partnership approach and its timetable, and take into account any impact of their policies or projects.

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	Information will be relevant, accurate and comprehensible to the target audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the relevant issues clearly and succinctly. • If possible, present information visually; avoid too much text. • Identify at the outset gaps in information available, and how to source this information. • Explain national and regional plans/issues within the local context. • Provide summaries of the role and content of key documents e.g. Local Development Plans, Planning Advice Notes, and explain how to access full versions. • Invite people to sign up for updates e.g. by email or newsletter. • Reference all sources of information. • Consider holding a public meeting to attract and gauge public interest in plans or proposals.
2 Consulting	Level 1 + Information will be communicated and shared, aiming to invite feedback.	Level 1 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make every reasonable effort to satisfy requests for new information. • Present information in a way which will invite comment and debate. • Flag up any areas of uncertainty; state when and how these may be resolved; and provide opportunities for discussion of these areas. • Provide suitable means for responses and comments to be made. • Collate comments and suggestions - feed them back into the process so that information is up-to-date.
3 Partnership	Level 1 and Level 2 + Identification, collection and dissemination of relevant new information by partners is encouraged.	Level 1 and Level 2 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a dialogue with all partners from an early stage to collate knowledge and information. • Start the information gathering process as early as possible for maximum efficiency. • Discuss with partners the best means of disseminating information. • Seek professional advice on information gathering techniques e.g. designing questionnaires and other surveys, with the aim of avoiding the problem of unreliable data.

4 Appropriateness

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	<p>Information will be presented to suit its intended audience and can be accessed by all stakeholders at each stage of the process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the best means of publicising the engagement process e.g. public notice boards, libraries, community centres, local press. Use clear English and avoid planning-related jargon. Be aware that the target audience will not be planning professionals. Explain maps, drawings and diagrams in clear and simple terms. For public events, use venues which are easy to find and times that allow all stakeholders to attend; provide access for people with disabilities and other needs.
2 Consulting	<p>Level 1 + Engagement processes to fit the situation will be used, with opportunities for discussion and for questions to be raised and answered.</p>	<p>Level 1 +</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that meetings, exhibitions and workshops are held at times and locations to suit different areas and groups within the community. Allow responses to be submitted by various means (letter, telephone, email) as well as in person at consultation events. Arrange for relevant professional staff to be on hand to answer questions at all times, or detail when they will be there. Use models and visualisations of proposals. Where appropriate, offer workshops and themed focus groups as well as exhibitions.
3 Partnership	<p>Level 1 and Level 2 + A collaborative approach to working with partners on proposals, and regular review of the engagement process.</p>	<p>Level 1 and Level 2 +</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering groups, meetings and forums will be open to all, and minutes will be made available publicly after these and any other open meetings. Allow independent professionals/consultants to be brought in to explore possible solutions. e.g. architects, transport consultants etc. Consider mediation in appropriate situations – when there are divided opinions but common aims.

5 Responsiveness

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	<p>Relevant information will be provided at every stage of the process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that contact details for enquiries/responses are given on all materials. • Deal with enquiries promptly. • Enable access to relevant documents on internet and place copies of relevant documentation at public places e.g. libraries, post offices, community centres, planning authority offices. • Publicise any proposed changes to plans or proposals. • Record and publicise changes to plans or proposals as a result of the engagement process.
2 Consulting	<p>Level 1 + Findings from the engagement process will be analysed, disseminated, and potentially incorporated.</p>	<p>Level 1 +</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a representative to record and answer questions at events. • If appropriate, provide respondents with a written response. • Offer further workshops or discussion groups to hear people's views or in response to feedback received. • Inform stakeholders if, how and why the proposal has been amended as a result of consultation. • If significant changes to a proposal are introduced, consider holding additional consultation events.
3 Partnership	<p>Level 1 and Level 2 + Partners will be offered the opportunity to present and discuss their own ideas and receive feedback.</p>	<p>Level 1 and Level 2 +</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready to consider suggestions for modifying the engagement process. • Be prepared to give feedback on ideas and new matters raised by stakeholders. • Commission professional expertise e.g. trained facilitators to make best use of interactive methods for developing proposals and making decisions.

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	Relevant representative groups/ organisations will be identified and information will be designed and disseminated to reach them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a contacts database and keep it up-to-date. Use formal and informal networks to make the contacts database as representative as possible. Identify seldom heard groups and consider how they tend to access information – e.g. via local newspapers/groups/venues/libraries etc. Record data on factors relevant to inclusiveness and representativeness e.g. age, gender, residence, tenure etc. Think creatively about venues appropriate to the type of proposal and all groups you want to reach, including seldom heard groups.
2 Consulting	Level 1 + An emphasis will be placed on allowing the voices of seldom heard groups and those most likely to be affected to be heard.	Level 1 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target publicity at all groups likely to be positively or negatively affected by the proposal. Target seldom heard and potentially under-represented groups such as young people, BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) Groups, Gypsy/Travellers, women with young children, people with disabilities and elderly people. Seek assistance from organisations specialising in promoting inclusiveness and relevant local authority staff: Equalities Officers, Youth Engagement Officers, Access Panels, etc. Build links with local primary and secondary schools. Knock on the doors of people affected by proposals rather than assume they will come to events; or use mobile units to reach a variety of areas.
3 Partnership	Level 1 and Level 2 + Assistance and advice will be made available to seldom heard groups to enable them to become partners in the process; overall, a representative range of stakeholders will be consulted.	Level 1 and Level 2 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan an outreach programme to identify and listen to the needs of specific groups. Go beyond statutory requirements for engagement. Consider using Equalities Impact Assessments or Health Impact Assessments at the start of the process and review regularly. Consider using liaison officers to work directly with specific groups. Where possible, compare the profile of stakeholders involved throughout the whole engagement process to that of areas as a whole. Consider using professionally designed and conducted surveys to ensure that the views of the population as a whole are known.

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	Distribution of information and feedback received on the engagement process will be analysed after the process is completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record and monitor distribution of information at the end of the process. Record the number and type of any events that take place. Look at the demographics of those who attended. Consider ways to improve future exercises based on the above and feedback received about the engagement process.
2 Consulting	Level 1 + Monitoring and evaluation of the engagement process will take place on an on-going basis.	Level 1 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the satisfaction of stakeholders at different stages of the process using appropriate techniques. Keep a record of responses and other contributions to the engagement process, and assess the value, impact and outcome of contributions. Encourage qualitative responses as to how the engagement process could be improved. Reflect on the overall quality of the engagement undertaken.
3 Partnership	Level 1 and Level 2 + Monitoring and evaluation processes will be devised in collaboration with stakeholders.	Level 1 and Level 2 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask partners at the outset about their thoughts on how best to evaluate satisfaction with the process. Be ready to modify approaches to monitoring and evaluating as required on an on-going basis. Analyse findings as you go along, aiming to embed the idea of monitoring and evaluation into every stage.

LEVELS	WHAT TO AIM FOR	HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE IT?
1 Informing	Lessons from the engagement process will be identified and lead to on-going improvements in quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify action points from what has been learned. • Build lessons learned into future engagement processes. • Ensure all those within the organisation leading the engagement process are informed about outcomes and lessons learned.
2 Consulting	Level 1 + Lessons from the engagement process will be reviewed and shared with a focus on learning and training.	Level 1 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share and discuss experiences more widely e.g. with other community groups, or organise forum events. • Make engagement a focus for in-house staff training. • Actively research other engagement processes and possible new techniques to use. • Take people who are new to engagement to meet people who have experience of recent or current projects. • Discuss how to improve future engagement exercises.
3 Partnership	Level 1 and Level 2 + The creation of a creative, problem-solving culture where skills and experience are pooled, shared and enhanced.	Level 1 and Level 2 + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise from the outset that active participation can be a very rich way of learning and seek ways to capitalise on this. • Audit individuals' skills and share via formal or informal training sessions. • Share information about the engagement process, and findings from all partners, with all involved stakeholders. • Offer opportunities for members of the public as well as professionals to receive training.

PAS training workshops are targeted at the **professional** and **community** sectors.

Training in **SP=EED™** is particularly relevant for:

Planning Authorities	Community Councils
Planning Consultants	Community Groups
Developers	Development Trusts
Other Consultants	Members of the Public

What are the benefits of **SP=EED™** training?

- explore and understand **SP=EED™** and its practical use
- an opportunity for networking - showcase and share ideas regarding effective engagement
- learn about the Scottish planning system and how to undertake effective engagement
- re-energise and re-focus your ideas

What is the content of **SP=EED™** training?

For Professionals: training focuses on the practical use of **SP=EED™** and developing skills for effective engagement in planning, whether in development plan or development management situations.

For Communities: training is aimed at community groups seeking to undertake a development project and wishing to improve their engagement skills. It is also relevant to groups seeking to develop their understanding of effective engagement in relation to planning.

Each workshop will cover:

- the importance of engagement in planning
- effective engagement and consultation practices
- using **SP=EED™** to design, manage and evaluate engagement

SP=EED™ training can be arranged at a time and place that suits you.

For more information, or to book your training, please contact:

sp=eed@planningaidscotland.org.uk

or call 0131 220 9730

Note

Planning Aid for Scotland's website has a series of planning information sheets, providing further information.

Scottish Government Circulars 1/2009 Development Planning, and 4/2009 Development Management, provide further information on requirements for consultation and engagement.

Access Panels

Voluntary bodies set up to promote the rights of people with any form of disability.

Design/Development Brief

A document which sets out broad or detailed proposals for development of a specific site or area.

Developer

A person, business or organisation making a planning application. They do not have to own the land affected by the application as long as they notify the owner.

Development

The carrying out of building, mining, engineering or other operations in, on, over or under the land or the making of any material change of use in the use of any buildings or land (as defined by the planning acts). Development, so defined, requires planning permission.

Development Plan

A generic term for the Strategic Development Plan and/or Local Development Plan (see separate entries), the main planning documents which apply to a planning authority area.

Development Plan Scheme

A document required to be published annually by planning authorities,

outlining a timetable for preparing the Development Plan, and including a participation statement outlining how they will undertake consultation.

Equalities Impact Assessment

An assessment which considers how a policy or plan may impact, on different sectors of the population.

Facilitator

A person, who has a neutral stance on matters being discussed, appointed to guide a meeting or discussion group.

Health Impact Assessment

A means of assessing the health impacts of policies, plans and projects using quantitative, qualitative and participatory techniques.

Local Development Plan (LDP)

Part of the Development Plan - a statutory document required to be prepared, after full public consultation, by all planning authorities in Scotland. The LDP is the basis for making planning decisions in a given area and deciding future land uses. In the four city-regions, the LDP will be supplemented with a Strategic Development Plan (see separate entry); elsewhere the Development Plan will comprise only the LDP.

National Developments / Major Developments

Planning proposals are divided into 3 categories: 'national', 'major' and 'local'. National developments are set out in the National Planning Framework. Major planning applications e.g. 50 houses or more, are defined in Scottish Government Planning Circular 5/2009 Hierarchy of Developments. National and major proposals require Pre-application Consultation (see separate entry).

Masterplan

A document, usually comprising a schematic plan, 3-dimensional

images, and text, which illustrates and explains how it is intended to develop a site.

Mediation

A process involving a neutral, independent, trained mediator who aims to assist parties with differences to communicate effectively to resolve their differences.

Open Space Strategy

A document assessing existing open space and potential for new or improved open space within a local authority area.

Planning Advice Note (PAN)

Documents produced by the Scottish Government providing advice on good practice and other relevant planning information.

Planning Application

An application to a planning authority seeking planning permission for development.

Planning Authority

The body which is responsible for carrying out planning in any area – the local Council or National Park Authority.

Pre-application Consultation / Pre-application Consultation Report

A process required to be undertaken by prospective applicants for national or major planning applications prior to submission of applications to enable local communities to be better informed about significant development proposals in their area. See also: Proposal of Application Notice; Public Event

Proposal of Application Notice

Required to be submitted to the planning authority, and copied to relevant community councils, by prospective applicants for national or major developments at least 12 weeks prior to submission of the planning

application, giving details of the proposal, including how engagement will be undertaken.

Public Event

An event, required to be held by prospective applicants for national or major development proposals as part of the Pre-application Consultation process, where members of the public can make comments.

RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute)

The UK's leading planning body for spatial, sustainable, integrative and inclusive planning.

Steering Group

A group of interested and relevant stakeholders appointed to guide and lead a project.

Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

Part of the Development Plan - a statutory document prepared after full public consultation. SDPs apply to Scotland's 4 'city-regions'. SDPs will set parameters for Local Development Plans (see separate entry); contain 'vision statements' and 'spatial strategies'; and will consider how land use proposals for neighbouring areas will impact on the SDP area.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A process designed to measure the likely environmental impacts (both positive and negative) of a 'Scottish public plan, programme or strategy' (PPS).

Supplementary Guidance

Documents produced by planning authorities to provide additional detailed guidance on certain topics, policies or proposals which are set out in Development Plans.

Acknowledgements

PAS reiterates its thanks to the original steering group made up of public, private and voluntary sector organisations which guided the delivery of the first edition of **SP=EED™** (2008).

We remain indebted to Professor Cliff Hague who guided the original project.







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