Local Government and Communities Committee

Planning (Scotland) Bill

Submission from Maggie Proctor

Please consider my submission toward the new planning bill.

1. Planning rules are heavily weighted towards the developers, who have the resources to keep coming back and appealing whereas communities do not have either the resources or the finances to compete.
2. Communities must be given the same chance as the developer to be a valid part of the decision making process, especially as their contribution to their community is as valid as a developer investing money in the area.
3. A longer response time is needed in order that communities are not disadvantaged - it’s quite typical of developers to post notices during peak holiday times with the aim of slipping in controversial plans under the radar.
4. Equal right of appeal is vital to ensure a level playing field, this is one of the most important aspect of a fair, transparent system.
5. There should be no interference by Ministers, decisions should be made by a completely independent legal body, accessible to the public and campaign groups.
6. More engagement with the community by all parties, not just leaflet drops and small adverts in local media for developments that have the potential to change lives and ruin our environment.
7. Developers never ‘own’ what they create - they move on once they have made their millions - communities have and cherish ownership of their environment as caretakers for the future.

*Remember - It's not what you do to people, it's what you do with people.* A fairer planning system in Scotland could be the envy of the world.

Yours sincerely

Maggie Proctor