



Planning for the future

Thursday 14th June 2012

Baby Grand, Grand Opera House, Belfast

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magazine

**Carson
McDowell**

Planning for the future

agendaNi is organising a seminar for interested stakeholders on issues around the future of planning in Northern Ireland. Environment Minister Alex Attwood has indicated that he is intent on tackling the significant backlog of major 'article 31' planning applications and has identified speeding up the planning process as a key priority for his department. This seminar will provide an opportunity for all those with a role or interest in planning locally to come together for discussion and debate.

The local planning system is focused on three key issues going forward: planning reform; planning policy and future challenges.

In terms of reform, the Planning Reform Bill will see local councils taking responsibility for the preparation of local development plans, determining the majority of applications and taking enforcement action. While a number of key functions will remain with the Department of the Environment, including planning legislation, policy and guidance, this still represents a major shift in planning responsibility. Alderman Jim Dillon who chairs NILGA's Planning Sub-Group will brief the seminar on how local councils have been preparing for this change over a number of years, and how they are embracing the challenge.

A number of significant pieces of planning policy and guidance have either recently been published or are due for publication imminently, including PPS 16 'Tourism', Draft PPS 23 'Enabling Development' and Draft PPS 2 'Natural Heritage'. Speakers at the seminar will examine some of the key planning policy statements and their impact on the relevant sectors.

Alongside ongoing reform, the planning system locally faces a number of other challenges going forward and senior planners are currently preparing for a new single strategic planning policy document for Northern Ireland. The seminar will hear from Scotland's Chief Planner, Jim Mackinnon who will give an overview of the process of planning reform in Scotland how they moved towards a single statement of planning policy.

Key issues examined during the seminar will include:

- ✓ Overview of planning policy
- ✓ Planning for major and strategic projects
- ✓ How Scotland has moved towards a single statement of planning policy
- ✓ The legal framework for planning
- ✓ Planning reform
- ✓ Planning for successful and prosperous cities
- ✓ Tourism planning
- ✓ Planning for renewable energy

Speaker panel



Alex Attwood MLA was appointed Minister for the Environment in May 2011. He was previously Minister for Social Development since May 2010. He has been an SDLP Assembly Member for West Belfast since 1998. He was a Councillor on Belfast City Council from 1985 until 2005 and a member of the Northern Ireland Policing Board from 2001-2007 and 2009-2010.



Alderman Jim Dillon has been a Councillor on Lisburn City Council since 1977. He has been a Member of the Council's Planning Committee throughout his local government service and chaired the Committee from 1989-1991 and 1996-1997. He is currently serving as Chair of NILGA's Planning Working Group and has been working to move forward the design and implementation of the new planning system from its current arrangements to a 'fit for purpose' service through the reform programme and the review of public administration.



Geraint Ellis is Senior Lecturer in the School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering at Queen's University, Belfast. He has published widely on the way planning relates to energy, health and marine issues and is currently co-editing a book titled Learning from Wind Power: Governance, Society and Policy Perspectives on Sustainable Energy which will be published by Palgrave in early 2012.



Jim Mackinnon is Chief Planner and Head of the Planning and Building Standards Group in the Scottish Government, a role he took up in November 2000 having formerly been Head of Planning Division. He joined the former Scottish Office in 1979 and held a wide variety of posts and responsibilities. These include preparation of a wide range of policy and advice, casework, research management and the establishment of the Planning Audit Unit. He was a member of the UK delegation to the Committee on Spatial Development and was appointed as an expert advisor on the National Spatial Strategy.



Mary MacIntyre has been the Director of Strategic Planning Division in the Department of Environment (DOE) since September 2011. Mary is a Chartered Town Planner who began her career in Manchester with Salford City Council before returning to Northern Ireland where she worked in private practice before joining DOE in 1991. Her current responsibilities include the Strategic Projects Team dealing with major planning applications throughout Northern Ireland as well as waste, minerals and renewable energy developments.



Gary McGhee is a Partner in Carson McDowell Solicitors and heads up the specialist Planning and Environmental Law Team within the firm. Created 18 years ago, Carson McDowell's Planning and Environmental Law Team comprises a team of four solicitors and a consultant specialising exclusively in the areas of planning and environmental law. Gary has been involved in most of the major judicial reviews of planning decisions in Northern Ireland over the last 18 years and has substantial experience in both promoting and objecting to major developments. Gary presently advises clients including Tesco, NIE, Belfast International Airport and the Port of Belfast on planning and environmental law issues.



Alex Morton joined Policy Exchange in October 2010 as a Senior Research Fellow in the Economics unit, with a particular focus on housing and planning issues. Prior to joining Policy Exchange Alex was Secretary to the Conservative Party's Globalisation and Global Poverty Group Policy Group. Following this he worked at the Department of Health, before leaving to publish Making Housing Affordable, a major Policy Exchange report on how to overhaul housing and planning policy. He has also co-authored Cities for Growth, arguing that we need to allow new Garden Cities and large scale suburbs, and move away from the 1940s style local authority planning system.



Diane Ruddock is External Affairs Manager for the National Trust in Northern Ireland, with responsibility for co-ordinating and facilitating the Trust's relationships with a wide range of external bodies, including the Executive, Assembly Committees and key government departments. She manages the Trust's policy and advocacy activity, particularly in relation to landscape protection, land use planning policy, protection of wildlife and the built environment, and climate change issues. A journalist by training, Diane previously headed up the Trust's marketing and public affairs team in Northern Ireland for 10 years, having joined the Trust's staff in 1986.



Simon Turbitt is an assistant solicitor in Carson McDowell's Planning and Environmental Law Team. Before joining Carson McDowell in November 2009, Simon trained and practiced as a solicitor with Clifford Chance LLP in London. Simon specialises exclusively in planning and environmental law and his recent experience includes: the instigation of judicial reviews on environmental grounds; successful judicial reviews of planning consents and Ministerial decisions respectively brought on environmental grounds; advising waste operators on enforcement issues; and advising clients on contaminated land and consenting issues.

Seminar programme

09.00	Chairman's welcome and introduction: Simon Turbitt , Planning & Environmental Law Team Carson McDowell		Questions & answers / Panel discussion
	MINISTERIAL ADDRESS: <i>Getting planning right: Striking the balance between economic development and environmental protection</i> Alex Attwood , MLA, Minister for the Environment	11.00	Morning coffee / networking break
	<i>Planning law update</i> Gary McGhee , Partner & Head of Planning & Environmental Law Team, Carson McDowell	11.30	<i>Planning for strategic projects: Key issues</i> Mary MacIntyre , Director of Strategic Planning, Planning and Local Government Group Department of the Environment
	<i>Planning and social acceptance of renewable energy projects</i> Geraint Ellis , Senior Lecturer, School of Planning Architecture and Civil Engineering Queen's University Belfast		<i>Planning reform in Scotland</i> Jim Mackinnon , Chief Planner, Scottish Government
	<i>Examining the impact of PPS 16 in facilitating sustainable tourism development</i> Diane Ruddock , External Affairs Manager The National Trust		<i>Cities for growth: Solutions to our planning problems</i> Alex Morton , Senior Research Fellow for Housing and Planning, Policy Exchange
			<i>Preparing for the transfer of planning to local government</i> Alderman Jim Dillon , Chair, Planning Sub-Group Northern Ireland Local Government Association
			Questions & answers / Panel discussion
		13.00	Seminar lunch / networking break

"The first six months of 2012 can be a sea change in planning - decisions being made, certainty for all, positive development of our built and natural heritage and planning a key tool in economic progress and jobs in times of need."

Environment Minister Alex Attwood, MLA, February 2012



Booking form

I wish to:

- Reserve ____ places at the
Planning for the future seminar
Seminar fee £175 + VAT @ 20% = £210
- Discounted rate for local government sector
(councillors and officers)
Seminar fee £150 + VAT @ 20% = £180
- Discounted rate for voluntary/community sector
Seminar fee £150 + VAT @ 20% = £180

Fee includes documentation, lunch and other refreshments served during the course and is payable in advance.

Delegate details

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Who should attend?

This seminar will be of interest to all stakeholders involved in and affected by the planning system in Northern Ireland, including:

- Planning professionals;
- Senior policy makers;
- Elected representatives;
- Local government officers;
- Developers;
- Building companies;
- Housing sector managers;
- Senior managers in government agencies;
- Infrastructure developers;
- Quantity surveyors;
- Architects;
- Environmentalists;
- Lawyers;
- Planning consultants;
- Public affairs consultants.

How to register



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Acknowledgement of registration

Confirmation of registration will be sent to all delegates. Joining instructions will be sent out following receipt of registration details. If you have not received your acknowledgement seven days prior to the start of the course, please contact Cathy Glenn at cathy.glenn@agendaNi.com to confirm your booking.

Cancellations / substitutions

For those unable to attend, a substitute participant may be sent at any time for no additional charge. Alternatively a refund will be given for cancellations received in writing, by fax or email, up to 14 days prior to the workshop, less an administration charge of 25%. Regrettably no refunds can be made after that date.