



Scottish Government consultation on Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods: draft planning guidance, 20 July 2023

Q1 how helpful is section one – very helpful

We suggest adding a reference within the relevant policy area to the National Walking Strategy. This was published in 2014 and is currently under review but it will be an important resource for the development of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

We are particularly pleased to see the section on how 20-minute neighbourhoods could work in rural and island contexts.

Q2 how helpful is section two – very helpful

Q3 how helpful is section one – very helpful

Comment

We fully support the statement on p19 that:

Whatever the context - cities, town, village, rural and island communities - the views and interests of local people must be at the forefront of the decisions made about a place

However, it is also important that the parameters for this policy are clearly set and accepted by everyone at the start of the process, ie, the principles stated on 9 In People, place and planet.

In large scale public surveys there is generally strong support for the kind of measures that lead to more liveable places (such as investment in active travel provision). However, in practice when individual schemes come to fruition, this can lead to local opposition which can hold up schemes for a long period while concerns are dealt with. This can give the impression that local authorities are imposing these schemes on an unwilling population and engenders hostility, whereas in reality often those opposing the changes are a small minority. This challenge can be mitigated through careful and positive presentation of the benefits of schemes to both individuals and communities, alongside meaningful community engagement rather than arms-length consultation exercises. While this is more time-consuming and costly, it may be cost-effective in the long run if used for the initial changes in any area. This is because public support is more likely to be forthcoming once a number

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of successful schemes are up and running and the benefits of the changes are demonstrated.

Q4 how helpful is section three – very helpful

Q5 how helpful is section three – very helpful

Comment

We support the approach set out in part 3. Community engagement will help to build a sense of ownership of the plan. This should lead to great acceptance and understanding of what the process is aiming to achieve and a better chance of long term implementation. However, we do have concerns that there may not be sufficient resources to build community capacity and ensure the delivery of this process. At the same time, it is important to recognise that many of the aspects of these plans will depend on there being enforcement and regulation of behaviour. For example, pavement parking and speeding undermine confidence in changing behaviour to encourage more people to walk and cycle. In parks and greenspaces, litter and vandalism can deter people from enjoying these spaces and they need to be monitored and well maintained. It is crucial that all public sector partners, including Police Scotland, buy into this approach and recognise their role.

Q8 how helpful is section four case studies – very helpful

There is a good range of contexts and approaches.