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To: All Heads of Planning
CC: Development Plan teams

Our ref: A14667410
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Dear Colleague

Change in Approach to Planning and Architecture Division (PAD) Involvement in Development Plan Preparation

I'm writing to let you know about some changes to my team's involvement in development plan preparation.

During the past two years, we have undertaken extensive engagement with planning authorities as development plans have been progressed. We committed to that as part of the implementation of National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy in June 2014 and with a view to providing clarity about Ministers expectations on the content of plans.

You will be aware that the review of planning is now well underway and development planning is one of the 6 key themes. The Scottish Government's July response to the Independent Panel's report indicated that we will reduce our input on current development plans. This is intended to both focus our involvement on those parts of the process where there is either a statutory requirement or where most value can now be added and to ensure that we can effectively resource other priorities, including the planning review.

This change in approach will mean that we will concentrate our support for plan preparation on the following key plan stages to ensure Ministerial policies and priorities are considered in plan preparation.

- Proposed Plans,
- Requests from further information from DPEA relating to national developments,
- Intention to Adopt Local Development Plans (LDPs),
- Intention to Adopt Supplementary Guidance, particularly on key policy topics, and
- SDP Approval.

PAD will no longer input to the plan stages listed below:

- Working drafts of documents
- Main Issues Reports,
- Further Information Requests from DPEA, with the exception of those relating to national developments, as noted above,
- Statutory Supplementary Guidance consultations,
- Non-statutory planning guidance, and
- Action Programmes.

We have published a Service Standard for the Development Plan Gateway, which provides more information on the new approach to our involvement in plans and the service which stakeholders can expect. The standard is attached as an annex to this letter and is available online at: <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/planning-architecture/development-plans/>. We have also produced a note summarising the issues that we have regularly raised with authorities over the last two years. This also points to some good practice examples of where we consider matters have been appropriately addressed. We hope the Service Standard and note will be helpful to your development plan teams when preparing plans and guiding them on key issues for Scottish Government and our involvement.

If you or your development plan team colleagues have any queries regarding the change in approach, please contact us on any of the details below.

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Yours sincerely

John McNairney

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