

The principle of single portal for guidance is excellent, with the need for a well-structured, word-searchable website that is regularly updated.

The major flaw in this review, however, that in trying to reduce the amount of guidance weighed in words/pages to be written in plain English is that it has totally lost sight of its audience. This is most evident in the complacent language of some of the assessments, probably suggested by expert advisors who have either a limited understanding of the range of guidance needed by the various audiences that this guidance is trying to reach, or that they do not want this guidance in the public domain because it ensures that they continue to be consulted for this expertise. To suggest that many of the items are now "mainstream" says it all: they do not understand the purpose of the guidance - a common source of guidance available and accessible to all parties.

This major flaw undermines the value of the review's recommendations and suggests that, while work should go ahead in road-testing the vehicle (the new website) there is a need to rethink:

- the needs of the various audiences it must serve - from PINS to community groups like our members;
- the existence of any other guidance that is available - there is in most areas little (see below for our priorities); and
- the availability of expertise outside specialised consultancies who, as with data, seek to "protect" the "value" of their knowledge which is outside the resources of individuals and community groups, and often of many local planning authorities.

Rather than review the list of items in the annexes, the London Forum considers that the following:

- need to be retained: historic environment, flood risk
- need to be improved: town centre first guidance, including planning for a range of key town centre uses, undertaking need assessments, applying the sequential approach, undertaking impact assessments
- need to be created: planning for economic development, planning for more sustainable patterns of development, guidance on the most sustainable locations for trip-generating development, Guidance on the sequential approach for releasing open space uses

We consider that one of the main elements missing in the proposals for taking these issues forwards is to look at the proposed content from a community perspective. We would, therefore, like to offer to join any project group to help determine the content and structure of the proposed website. In addition. We could help in looking at the London dimension.

I hope this is helpful.

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