
LIS RESPONSE TO GREEN RECOVERY
SUBMITTED TO THE ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND REFORM COMMITTEE –
11.08.2020

Consultation Q1: Do the principles of sustainable development (as set out in the annexe), and those for a resilient recovery, as proposed by the UK Committee on Climate Change, provide a comprehensive framework for guiding an effective green recovery in Scotland?

LIS Response

The Landscape Institute believes that a green recovery means prioritising action which can grow the economy whilst improving public health and wellbeing, and result in tangible action on climate change. How we design and manage our built and natural environment is key to that.

The principles set out by the Committee are right, though bespoke action by the Scottish Government will be limited in areas where powers have not yet been devolved. For example, in the Government's ability to vary inward migration to meet population or sectoral needs or, say, specific fiscal measures such as adjusting VAT to drive retrofit, repair and circular economy thinking.

Consultation Q2: What are the key barriers to delivering a green recovery (within your sector and / or community)?

LIS Response

The landscape sector is key to ensuring that any post-Covid investment in places will be green and sustainable. The risk however is that expediency, and the need for quick public investment, will lead to unsustainable investment, and behaviours which support "business as usual". For example: prioritising investment in grey infrastructure over green infrastructure, because the latter is less well understood, and could require upskilling of the existing construction industry and the need to build additional capacity into supply chains.

Consultation Q3: What key policies, actions and immediate priorities are needed to deliver a green recovery (within your sector and / or community)?

LIS Response

The Landscape Institute would like to see the Scottish Government develop ambitious place-based and landscape-led policies in planning, infrastructure and housing, with the controls and incentives needed to deliver a multifunctional, sustainable approach to the built environment. This needs to bring professionals, landowners, developers and communities together to tackle climate change,

deliver biodiversity net gain, improve health and wellbeing, meet environmental and housing targets, and help to resolve land use conflicts.

The Landscape Institute will shortly (12th August) be publishing a full paper on the action needed to secure a green recovery through the built and natural environment. We will share a copy of this report with the Committee when it is published.

In our report, we recommend action in 5 areas:

1. Take a **natural capital approach** to new infrastructure and housing
2. Invest in **maintenance and retrofit** of existing places
3. Set higher and **fairer standards** for green space
4. Invest in **nature-based solutions** to climate change
5. Create a step-change in green **skills, digital, and data**

Consultation Q3: How should the 2021/22 Budget support a green and sustainable recovery and avoid locking in carbon; and what funding is needed in the ECCLR portfolio to deliver a green and sustainable recovery?

LIS Response

1 Take a natural capital approach to new infrastructure and housing investment

- Provide economic stimulus packages which accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy, by properly embedding natural capital thinking into decision-making
- Require all publicly funded infrastructure and large-scale housing to meet high standards of environmental and social benefit, including targets for healthy green space.
- Promote GI within the housing grant process and include GI as a measurable indicator in the Value for Money tool for new affordable housing.
- Resource Planning Authorities to implement a landscape-led approach to planning all new developments and to require from development a broader set of placemaking outcomes based around the Place Standard and new GI standards.

2. Invest in maintenance and retrofit of existing places

- Rebalance investment from capital to revenue spend to properly resource the management of public landscape assets to address environmental challenges, deliver health and wellbeing services and resources to the community and individuals, and contribute to equitable inclusive growth.
- Develop a financial mechanism to equalise VAT rules that encourage new build in favour of encouraging retrofitting of green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage, and repair of existing places and infrastructure.
- Continue to resource the reallocation of existing highway space and “depaving” schemes to deliver more urban greening and active travel.

3. Set fairer standards for green space

- Develop a new Landscape Green Deal funding mechanism to support action by public/private/community landscape partnerships to deliver greenspace and green infrastructure investment to tackle persistent inequalities in our communities and to reinvigorate degraded land.

4. Invest in natural solutions to climate change

- Invest in green infrastructure and nature-based solutions that can deliver for jobs, nature and the economy. This should include increased funding for GI retrofitting, peatland management, woodland creation and woodland management, river basin management and flood management.
- Develop a new Landscape Green Deal funding mechanism to support action by public/private/community landscape partnerships to deliver landscape-scale action over multiple ownerships, to promote cultural landscapes and to address tourism landscape hotspots.
- Include funding mechanisms in a new Scottish Rural Development Programme that aim to deliver landscape quality outcomes, and increase partnership working and community-led innovation in relation to rural and agricultural landscapes.

5. Invest in skills, digital and data

- Invest in green jobs and training to allow those most affected by the economic downturn to reskill for a low carbon economy.