

Final opportunity for the Planning Bill to put people first

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The Scottish Conservatives have set out their top priorities that the Planning (Scotland) Bill must address prior to becoming law.

The final stage of the Planning (Scotland) Bill is due to dominate parliamentary timetable at Holyrood this week. MSPs at Holyrood will consider stage three amendments on the bill on all three parliamentary days.

The Scottish Conservatives have tabled amendments on three key areas, which will be voted on during the final stage of the bill.

The Scottish Conservative amendments will focus on:

- Making it easier for people to build their own homes
- Including mediation between community and developer rather than the equal right of appeal
- Devolving powers to local authorities to create short term let control areas so they can respond flexibly to the needs of different communities

The Scottish Conservatives will state that these key amendments will ensure that, from now on, Scottish planning laws work in the interests of people and their communities.

Graham Simpson, Scottish Conservative housing and planning spokesman said:

“All of these solutions will put people at the heart of the planning system.

“Many people would like to build their own homes but simply cannot find a plot.

“My amendments would facilitate that process and help more people build the life they’ve always dreamed of – the home they have always wanted.

“Too many people feel cut out of the planning system, which is really what has fuelled the demand for equal appeal rights.

“The Scottish Conservative solution of mediation will give communities the voice they need and ensure constructive resolution of controversial planning projects.

“The rapid growth in short-term lets has led to conflicts between the needs of communities with wider economic and tourism interests.

“The Scottish Conservative amendments in this section would give councils the powers to designate a problem area as a short term let control area.

“These amendments will give councils the flexibility that they need to respond appropriately to the concerns of their communities.”