

Changing Attitudes of Community Through the Design Charrette Process

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ABSTRACT

The traditional planning process in the UK and elsewhere takes too long to develop, are demanding on resources that are scarce and most times tend to be unrelated to the needs and demands of society. It segregates the plan making from the decision making process with the consultants planning, the politicians deciding and the community receiving without being integrated into the planning and decision making process.

The Scottish Planning system is undergoing radical changes as evidenced by the publication of the Planning Advice Note, PAN by the Scottish Executive in July 2006 with the aim of enabling Community Engagement that allow for openness and accountability in the decision making process. The Public Engagement is a process that is driven by the physical, social and economic systems research aimed at improving the process at the level of community through problem solving and of the city region through strategic planning.

There are several methods available to engage the community in large scale projects. The two well known ones are the Enquiry by Design and the Charrette approaches used in the UK and US respectively. This paper is an independent and rigorous analysis of the Charrette process as observed in the proposed Tornagrain Settlement in the Highlands area of Scotland. It attempts to gauge and analyse the attitudes, perceptions of the participants the Charrette as well as the mechanics and structure of the Charrette. The study analyzes the Charrette approach as a method future public engagement in and its effectiveness within the Scottish Planning System in view of PAN 2005. The analysis revealed that the Charrette as a method of engagement could be effective in changing attitudes of the community to the design process under certain conditions as discussed in the paper.

Key Words: inclusiveness, process, sustainability, community