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# Spatial Economics Research Centre

Wednesday, 18 May 2011

## Cash for planning permission

The RTPI is 'appalled' that the government is proposing to amend the planning act to give weight to financial considerations in planning applications.

Their main concern is that this change would mean that money from the New Homes Bonus could outweigh other factors (e.g. views of the local community or environmental impacts) when making decisions about planning permission. But why shouldn't financial considerations sometimes outweigh other considerations? Isn't planning about balancing a whole range of costs and benefits? If a local authority was faced with proposals for a very financially rewarding scheme that was environmentally sound, but opposed by local residences shouldn't it be able to still decide in favour? Isn't that what we have local democracy and a planning process, to try to balance competing needs?

The details of the argument may well revolve around whether these considerations apply at the point of drawing up the plan or of granting permission on individual applications. But as with their objection to including price signals as material considerations, you get the impression that the major issue for many planning professionals is that they want the planning system to behave as if the local economy and public finances are irrelevant.

Posted by [Prof Henry G. Overman](#) on [Wednesday, May 18, 2011](#)

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