

The 10th International Conference on Sustainable Development and Planning University of Siena, Italy

Supported by the International Legal & Professional Development Grant Programme I attended and presented a paper at the 10th International Conference on Sustainable Development and Planning organised by the Wessex Institute UK and the University of Siena from 4-6th September 2018.

Held at the University of Siena, the conference programme was varied, uniting academics, professionals and policy makers to explore current issues in planning for sustainable development. As a junior member of the planning bar I frequently engage with planning concepts and ideas at inquiries, but I rarely have the time or opportunity to explore the latest research in detail or at leisure. Attending the Conference in Siena allowed me to learn about some of the 'hot topics' in planning for sustainable development.

A conference highlight was the special session on 'Liveable and healthy city design'. Dr Marichela Sepe's presentation about liveable and healthy city design invited contemplation and appreciation of the spectacular Piazza del Campo in Siena, only ten minutes' walk from the conference venue, and regarded as one of Europe's greatest medieval squares. Professor Tim Townshend of Newcastle University presented his paper "*National Park City = Salutogenic City?*". Professor Townshend's paper examined the foundations of the national park city initiative and associated health and wellbeing benefits asking whether such initiatives can lead to the realisation of the salutogenic city concept.

The special session on 'Special Protection in Historical City Centres' featured several authors presenting papers on the challenges facing the protection and management of the UNESCO world heritage site in Istanbul. It was fascinating to learn more about preserving outstanding universal value for world heritage sites in a Turkish context, having worked on planning cases concerning the Liverpool UNSECO world heritage site.

I presented my paper "*Sustainable Development in English Planning Policy: a Lawyer's Perspective*" on the final day of the conference in the session concerning environmental policies and planning. My presentation followed a presentation concerning planning for sustainability in the Australian pulp and paper industry. A holistic discussion with the preceding speaker about how sustainability is defined in UK policy and New South Wales legislation ensued.

My paper will be made available via the Kings Chambers Resources & Training webpage and WIT Transactions and Journal Papers e-library.

Shortly after returning from the conference I had the opportunity to explore the ideas I examined in my conference paper at two further events. I addressed attendees at the Lawyers in Local Government Legal Training Course in Durham on 'Sustainable Development' and the 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' in the revised National Planning Policy Framework ('the NPPF'). This talk allowed me to reflect on the paper I had prepared for the Siena conference and share my thoughts and ideas with other

UK based planning lawyers. In addition, I organised and delivered a breakfast seminar with 'Women in Property' on 'planning policy interpretation and the law'. I provided attendees with a copy of my paper and encouraged discussion of how the concepts of 'sustainable development' and 'the presumption in favour of sustainable development' had evolved in the revised NPPF. I am sure that my work on my conference paper meant that I was able to offer a more developed level of critical analysis at both of these events.

The opportunity offered by the International Legal & Professional Development Grant Programme motivated me to write, submit and present a paper to an international audience of professionals and academics. I know that the time I have spent researching my paper will pay dividends in future conferences, talks and planning inquiries. I benefitted from a unique opportunity to learn about broader international issues in sustainability planning.

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