

Matters to be dealt with in planning schemes are set out in the schedules to the principal Act and the 1929 Amendment. The objectives are to provide for the best use of land and other natural resources and for the co-ordination of national, regional, and local public utilities, services, and amenities.

All plans are to be preceded by careful and comprehensive surveys, the procedure for which is set out generally in the Acts and, particularly, in the Town-planning Regulations 1927.

Apart from the establishment of the Ministry of Works, with functions in relation to planning as described in the main report, progress in planning legislation subsequent to the 1929 Act has been principally as follows:—

In 1944, by section 31 of the Finance Act (No. 3), the Government and local authorities were empowered to combine for the purpose of acquiring, executing, controlling, and managing any work or scheme of development that in the opinion of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Works is of both national and local importance. By section 29 of the same Act provision was made for public notice of schemes of development and reconstruction, and, although this provision was primarily designed to stabilize compensation for land required for works while the proposals were publicly discussed, the effect is very helpful in enabling Regional Councils, local authorities, and interested Government Departments to discuss freely, fully, and publicly the details as to where and when development should take place.

In 1945, by section 34 of the Finance Act, 1945, the Main Highways Board and the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council were authorized to join with local authorities in agreements for joint undertaking of development works. By section 30 of the same Act the Minister of Works was empowered to carry out the subdivision and development of land for industrial, commercial, residential, and recreational purposes, and the carrying-out of such works became a “public work” within the meaning of the Public Works Act, 1928.

While a great deal of progress has been made during the past year in the co-ordination of the plans of Government and local authorities affecting the same areas, and all concerned are evidently realizing the possibilities inherent in the legislation as it stands, practical application has shown that this legislation will require even further amendment before it can be regarded as entirely satisfactory.

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