

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Date: 8 December 2004

Subject: **Proposed Changes to RPG9**
– **Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (Chapter 10)**
– **Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation (Chapter 14)**

Report of: Director of Planning and Transport

Recommendations:

- I. The Committee welcomes the Revised Guidance which closely reflects the proposed alterations submitted by the Assembly.
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I. Introduction

- I.1 The Regional Assembly's Proposed Alterations to RPG9 for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency "Harnessing the Elements" and Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation "Destination South East" were subject to a Public Examination in November 2003.
- I.2 The report of the Public Examination Panel was published in March 2004. Following consideration of the Panel's report, the Government Office for the South East, on behalf of ODPM, published Proposed Changes to RPG9 –on 8 July 2004. These were noted by this Committee at its meeting on 28 July 2004.
- I.3 The Government Office for the South East issued the final versions of revised Chapters 10 (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy) and 14 (Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation) on 30 November 2004. These now form part of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9).
- I.4 In the press release which accompanies the final documents, Keith Hill MP, Minister of State for Planning and Housing, welcomes the hard work of the Assembly in producing the proposed alterations for consultation and emphasises the importance of planning in addressing these two important policy areas.

2. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy - Key Points

- 2.1 The policies contained in the final guidance are largely unchanged from those included in the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes (July 2004), which were welcomed by the Assembly.
- 2.2 The only significant change is a clause in Policy INF8 (Location of Renewable Energy Development) advising that countryside character assessment is used to inform location and design of all renewable energy proposals. This was recommended by the Panel but not included in the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes. This reflected the view of the Assembly that such an approach would be unnecessarily onerous, and should only be applied in areas of more sensitive and designated landscape. This issue can be re-visited in refining the policies to be incorporated into the South East Plan.

3. Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation – Key Points

- 3.1 The policies contained in the final guidance are unchanged from those included in the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes (July 2004), which were welcomed by the Assembly.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Overall, the Proposed Changes are welcomed as they strongly endorse and enhance the Proposed Alterations made by the Assembly. The policies have been incorporated into the South East Plan but given they have already been subject to extensive consultation and examination, representations on these are not being sought as part of the consultation process.

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