



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE SOUTH EAST

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Dear Paul

Formal Submission of Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy: The South East Plan

I am pleased to confirm receipt of the draft revised RSS and associated documents which you have submitted to us in accordance with part 5(8)(b) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Assembly and its officers on reaching this important milestone in the RSS process.

As you know, we are expecting an Examination in Public to be held by an independent panel to test the Plan starting in November 2006. A final decision will be made on this in accordance with section 7(4) of the Act after the end of the consultation period. A shadow panel has been appointed, chaired by Corrine Swain with Martin Shaw and Mary Travers acting as Panel Inspectors. Sue Morgan has been appointed as Panel Secretary, and she should be your point of contact with the Panel. A Panel Assistant is due to be appointed shortly. The Panel Secretariat will be based at Bridge House, Guildford.

I would like to remind you that there are certain things the Government Office staff will not be able to do now that you have submitted the draft RSS. In particular, we will not be able to enter into discussions, with yourselves or other stakeholders, about the content of the Plan. This is to ensure that we do not prejudice our role later in the process when we will advise the Secretary of State about proposed changes and final revisions to the Plan in light of the Panel report and representations received.

We will of course continue to be actively involved in the RSS process over the coming months. By the June deadline we will submit comments, on behalf of Government, to the independent Panel focusing on any aspects of the Plan that we think potentially conflict with national policy or need further consideration through the Examination process. We, along with yourselves will liaise with the Panel Secretary in order to provide factual briefing as required and to advise on the selection of matters and participants for the EiP. We will continue to provide advice about procedural matters.

Finally, I would suggest that it may be helpful to make the contents of this letter publicly available and would suggest that if possible it accompanies the consultation documents when they are made public.

Yours sincerely



Darren Richards

CC

Rolande Anderson

Richard Lemon