

meeting	JOINT COMMITTEE ON PLANNING & TRANSPORT	
date	12 November 2004	agenda item number
from:	JOINT OFFICER STEERING GROUP	

UPDATE ON REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

Purpose of Report

To report on the recent developments on regional planning guidance in the East Midlands.

Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) Review

1. Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 8) provides a broad development strategy for the East Midlands up to 2021 and represents the 'spatial' planning element of the East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy.
2. The latest draft of RPG 8 incorporates the changes the Secretary of State proposes to make to the draft which was first published in April 2003. This draft takes into account the independent panel's recommendations following the Public Examination held in November 2003. Comments on the draft were submitted by both councils to the Secretary of State by 8 October.
3. It is anticipated that the Secretary of State will publish the final document in the spring of 2005 under the title of Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands to accord with the latest planning legislation. It does not incorporate any changes to previously approved housing figures for each county area.

The Next Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy

4. A report to the East Midlands Assembly Planning Board of 23 September 2004 outlined the provisional timetable to prepare the next review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. This will include the Government updated housing projections which are currently due to be published in the spring of 2005. They will incorporate the results of the 2001 census. The review of RSS will have new housing figures down to district level in line with the requirements of the new planning act.
5. The Planning Board on 23 September was informed that the first stage of the process will involve the production for public consultation of 3 key documents in April 2005:
 - SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)/SD (Sustainable Development) Scoping Report;
 - RSS Project Plan;

- Proposals for Community Involvement.
6. Following 12 weeks of public consultation, the RSS review will formally start in July 2005 and conclude (as far as the Assembly is concerned) in September 2006 with the publication of:
 - Final SEA/SD Appraisal;
 - Draft RSS for Public Consultation;
 - Pre-Submission Consultation Statement
 - Supporting Technical Documentation.
 7. The Secretary of State will then take the matter forward to an examination in public. The final RSS might be expected to be issued by the Secretary of State by the end of 2007.

The Midlands Way

8. 'Smart Growth: The Midlands Way' is an initiative led by the EMDA and Advantage West Midlands, with input from the Regional Assemblies and the Government Offices in both the East and West Midlands. Essentially it is a 'midlands' response to the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan, and in particular the Growth Areas in and around the South East (which include parts of the East Midlands) and the emerging Northern Way.
9. Consultants have produced an interim report which will now be developed over the next 3 months. There was considerable debate at both the Regional Assembly on 8 October and the Assembly's Planning Board on 23 September of the purpose of the study and the need for it to add value to existing strategies and plans.
10. Consultation on the themes identified in the interim report will now be progressed with representatives of regional stakeholders from both regions.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted

Background papers

Reports to the County Council and the City Council on their response to draft RPG.

Contact Officers

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