

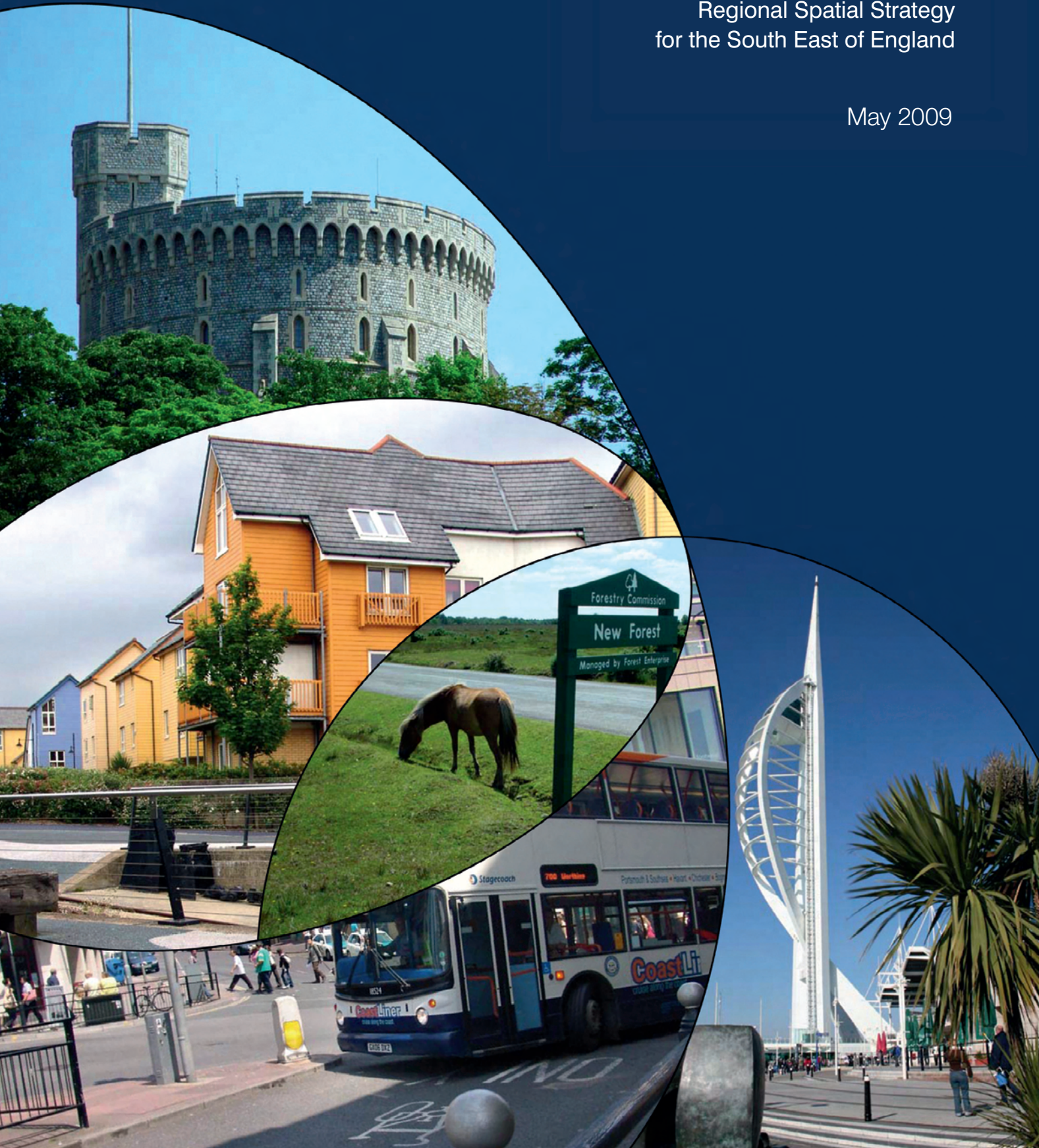


GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE SOUTH EAST

The South East Plan

Regional Spatial Strategy
for the South East of England

May 2009





GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE SOUTH EAST

The South East Plan

Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East of England

May 2009



London: TSO

The South East Plan
May 2009



information & publishing solutions

Published by TSO (The Stationery Office) and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

TSO

PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN

Telephone orders/General enquiries: 0870 600 5522

Fax orders: 0870 600 5533

E-mail: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Textphone 0870 240 3701

TSO@Blackwell and other Accredited Agents

Customers can also order publications from:

TSO Ireland

16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD

Tel 028 9023 8451 Fax 028 9023 5401

Communities and Local Government, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU

Telephone 020 7944 4400

Web site www.communities.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Copyright in the typographical arrangements rests with the Crown.

This publication, excluding logos, may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium for research, private study or for internal circulation within an organisation. This is subject to it being reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the publication specified.

For any other use of this material, please write to Office of Public Sector Information, Information Policy Team, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU.

Any queries relating to the content of this document should be referred to the Government Office for the South East at the following address:

Government Office for the South East, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4GA

ISBN 978 0 11 753998 3



Printed in Great Britain on material containing 75% post-consumer waste and 25% ECF pulp
N6122215 C16 05/09

Section A

1 Introduction and Overview	7
2 Challenges and Context	11
3 Vision and Objectives	15

Section B - Core Regional Policies

4 Spatial Strategy	17
5 Cross Cutting Policies	31
6 Sustainable Economic Development	43
7 Housing	53
8 Transport	65
9 Natural Resource Management	83
10 Waste and Minerals	117
11 Countryside and Landscape Management	145
12 Management of the Built Environment	153
13 Town Centres	161
14 Tourism and Related Sports and Recreation	169
15 Social and Community Infrastructure	181

Section C - Sub-Regional Policies

16 South Hampshire	189
17 Sussex Coast	201
18 East Kent and Ashford	209
19 Kent Thames Gateway	219
20 London Fringe	229
21 Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley	239
22 Central Oxfordshire	249
23 Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale	259
24 Gatwick	267
25 Isle of Wight and Areas Outside Sub-Regions	273

Section D

26 Implementation, Monitoring and Review	283
27 Appendix 1 - Saved Policies	287
28 Glossary	289

POLICY SP1: SUB-REGIONS IN THE SOUTH EAST	17
POLICY SP2: REGIONAL HUBS	18
POLICY SP3: URBAN FOCUS AND URBAN RENAISSANCE	25
POLICY SP4: REGENERATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	26
POLICY SP5: GREEN BELTS	27
POLICY CC1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	31
POLICY CC2: CLIMATE CHANGE	31
POLICY CC3: RESOURCE USE	32
POLICY CC4: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION	33
POLICY CC5: SUPPORTING AN AGEING POPULATION	35
POLICY CC6: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND CHARACTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT	36
POLICY CC7: INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION	37
POLICY CC8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	39
POLICY CC9: USE OF PUBLIC LAND	41
POLICY RE1: CONTRIBUTING TO THE UK'S LONG TERM COMPETITIVENESS	43
POLICY RE2: SUPPORTING NATIONALLY AND REGIONALLY IMPORTANT SECTORS AND CLUSTERS	44
POLICY RE3: EMPLOYMENT AND LAND PROVISION	46
POLICY RE4: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	47
POLICY RE5: SMART GROWTH	49
POLICY RE6: COMPETITIVENESS AND ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL ECONOMIC WEAKNESS	50
POLICY H1: REGIONAL HOUSING PROVISION 2006 - 2026	54
POLICY H2: MANAGING THE DELIVERY OF THE REGIONAL HOUSING PROVISION ...	57
POLICY H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING	58
POLICY H4: TYPE AND SIZE OF NEW HOUSING	59
POLICY H5: HOUSING DESIGN AND DENSITY	62
POLICY H6: MAKING BETTER USE OF THE EXISTING STOCK	63
POLICY T1: MANAGE AND INVEST	66
POLICY T2: MOBILITY MANAGEMENT	67
POLICY T3: CHARGING	68
POLICY T4: PARKING	69
POLICY T5: TRAVEL PLANS AND ADVICE	69
POLICY T6: COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY	70
POLICY T7: RURAL TRANSPORT	70
POLICY T8: REGIONAL SPOKES	71
POLICY T9: AIRPORTS	71
POLICY T10: PORTS AND SHORT SEA SHIPPING	72
POLICY T11: RAIL FREIGHT	73
POLICY T12: FREIGHT AND SITE SAFEGUARDING	73
POLICY T13: INTERMODAL INTERCHANGES	74
POLICY T14: TRANSPORT INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES	74

POLICY NRM1: SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES AND GROUNDWATER QUALITY	85
POLICY NRM2: WATER QUALITY	86
POLICY NRM3: STRATEGIC WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT	87
POLICY NRM4: SUSTAINABLE FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT	88
POLICY NRM5: CONSERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY	91
POLICY NRM6: THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA	99
POLICY NRM7: WOODLANDS	102
POLICY NRM8: COASTAL MANAGEMENT	103
POLICY NRM9: AIR QUALITY	105
POLICY NRM10: NOISE	106
POLICY NRM11: DEVELOPMENT DESIGN FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY	108
POLICY NRM12: COMBINED HEAT AND POWER	109
POLICY NRM13: REGIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGETS	110
POLICY NRM14: SUB-REGIONAL TARGETS FOR LAND-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY	111
POLICY NRM15: LOCATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT	113
POLICY NRM16: RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA	115
POLICY W1: WASTE REDUCTION	118
POLICY W2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION	119
POLICY W3: REGIONAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY	119
POLICY W4: SUB-REGIONAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY	122
POLICY W5: TARGETS FOR DIVERSION FROM LANDFILL	122
POLICY W6: RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING	123
POLICY W7: WASTE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY REQUIREMENTS	125
POLICY W8: WASTE SEPARATION	127
POLICY W9: NEW MARKETS	128
POLICY W10: REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT FACILITIES	128
POLICY W11: BIOMASS	129
POLICY W12: OTHER RECOVERY AND DIVERSION TECHNOLOGIES	129
POLICY W13: LANDFILL REQUIREMENTS	130
POLICY W14: RESTORATION	131
POLICY W15: HAZARDOUS AND OTHER SPECIALIST WASTE FACILITIES	131
POLICY W16: WASTE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE	132
POLICY W17: LOCATION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES	133
POLICY M1: SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION	136
POLICY M2: RECYCLED AND SECONDARY AGGREGATES	137
POLICY M3: PRIMARY AGGREGATES	139
POLICY M4: OTHER MINERALS	140
POLICY M5: SAFEGUARDING OF MINERAL RESERVES, WHARVES AND RAIL DEPOTS	142
POLICY C1: THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK	145
POLICY C2: THE SOUTH DOWNS	146
POLICY C3: AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY	146
POLICY C4: LANDSCAPE AND COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT	147
POLICY C5: MANAGING THE RURAL-URBAN FRINGE	148
POLICY C6: COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS AND RIGHTS OF WAY MANAGEMENT	150
POLICY C7: THE RIVER THAMES CORRIDOR	151
POLICY BE1: MANAGEMENT FOR AN URBAN RENAISSANCE	153
POLICY BE2: SUBURBAN INTENSIFICATION	155
POLICY BE3: SUBURBAN RENEWAL	156
POLICY BE4: THE ROLE OF SMALL RURAL TOWNS ('MARKET' TOWNS)	157

Contents

POLICY BE5: VILLAGE MANAGEMENT	158
POLICY BE6: MANAGEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	158
POLICY TC1: STRATEGIC NETWORK OF TOWN CENTRES	163
POLICY TC2: NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT IN TOWN CENTRES	166
POLICY TC3: OUT-OF-CENTRE REGIONAL/SUB-REGIONAL SHOPPING CENTRES	166
POLICY TSR1: COASTAL RESORTS	170
POLICY TSR2: RURAL TOURISM	172
POLICY TSR3: REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT SPORTS FACILITIES	173
POLICY TSR4: TOURISM ATTRACTIONS	174
POLICY TSR5: TOURIST ACCOMMODATION	175
POLICY TSR6: VISITOR MANAGEMENT	177
POLICY TSR7: PRIORITY AREAS FOR TOURISM	177
POLICY S1 : SUPPORTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	181
POLICY S2 : PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE HEALTH SERVICES	182
POLICY S3: EDUCATION AND SKILLS	183
POLICY S4: HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION	184
POLICY S5: CULTURAL AND SPORTING ACTIVITY	184
POLICY S6: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE	186
POLICY SH1: CORE POLICY	190
POLICY SH2: STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS	191
POLICY SH3 – SCALE, LOCATION AND TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT	192
POLICY SH4 – STRATEGY FOR MAIN TOWN CENTRES	194
POLICY SH5: SCALE AND LOCATION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 2006-2026	196
POLICY SH6: AFFORDABLE HOUSING	197
POLICY SH7: SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY	197
POLICY SH8: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	199
POLICY SH9: IMPLEMENTATION AGENCY	200
POLICY SCT1: CORE STRATEGY	201
POLICY SCT2: ENABLING ECONOMIC REGENERATION	202
POLICY SCT3: MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES AND PREMISES	203
POLICY SCT4: EMPLOYMENT PRIORITY IN NEW LAND ALLOCATIONS	204
POLICY SCT5: HOUSING DISTRIBUTION	204
POLICY SCT6: AFFORDABLE HOUSING	206
POLICY SCT7: IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY	206
POLICY EKA1: CORE STRATEGY	210
POLICY EKA2: SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASHFORD GROWTH AREA	212
POLICY EKA3: AMOUNT AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING	213
POLICY EKA4: URBAN RENAISSANCE OF THE COASTAL TOWNS	214
EKA5: THE GATEWAY ROLE	214
POLICY EKA6: EMPLOYMENT LOCATIONS	215
POLICY EKA7: INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND NATURAL PARK	217
EKA8: EFFECTIVE DELIVERY	217
POLICY KTG1: CORE STRATEGY	220
POLICY KTG2: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT	221
POLICY KTG3: EMPLOYMENT LOCATIONS	222
POLICY KTG4: AMOUNT AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	223
POLICY KTG5: THE ROLE OF THE RETAIL CENTRES	224
POLICY KTG6: FLOOD RISK	225
POLICY KTG7: GREEN INITIATIVES	226
POLICY LF1: CORE STRATEGY	230
POLICY LF2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	231

POLICY LF3: BROAD AMOUNT AND DISTRIBUTION OF FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	232
POLICY LF4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING	233
POLICY LF5: URBAN AREAS AND REGIONAL HUBS	234
POLICY LF6: DEVELOPMENT AT FORMER DERA SITE, CHERTSEY	235
POLICY LF7: TOWN CENTRES	235
POLICY LF8: SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORT HUBS AND SPOKES	236
POLICY LF9: GREEN BELT MANAGEMENT	236
POLICY LF10: SMALL SCALE SITE TARIFF	237
POLICY WCBV1: CORE STRATEGY	240
POLICY WCBV2: EMPLOYMENT LAND	243
POLICY WCBV3: SCALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	244
POLICY WCBV4: THE BLACKWATER VALLEY	246
POLICY WCBV5: THE COLNE VALLEY PARK	246
POLICY CO1: CORE STRATEGY	250
POLICY CO2: ECONOMY	251
POLICY CO3: SCALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING	252
POLICY CO4: GREEN BELT	254
POLICY CO5: TRANSPORT	255
POLICY MKAV1: HOUSING DISTRIBUTION BY DISTRICT 2006-2026	261
POLICY MKAV2: SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR MILTON KEYNES GROWTH AREA	262
POLICY MKAV3: SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR AYLESBURY GROWTH AREA	263
POLICY MKAV4: EFFECTIVE DELIVERY	265
POLICY GAT1: CORE STRATEGY	268
POLICY GAT2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	268
POLICY GAT3: HOUSING DISTRIBUTION	269
POLICY IW1: ENABLING ECONOMIC REGENERATION	275
POLICY IW2: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	276
POLICY IW3: RURAL AREAS	276
POLICY IW4: STRATEGIC TRANSPORT LINKS	277
POLICY IW5: INFRASTRUCTURE	277
POLICY AOSR1: SCALE AND LOCATION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 2006-2026	277
POLICY AOSR2: SCALE AND LOCATION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 2006-2026	278
POLICY AOSR3: THE WHITEHILL/BORDON OPPORTUNITY	278
POLICY AOSR4: SCALE AND LOCATION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 2006-2026	279
POLICY AOSR5: SCALE AND LOCATION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 2006-2026	280
POLICY AOSR6: SCALE AND LOCATION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 2006-2026	280
POLICY AOSR7: MAIDSTONE HUB	281
POLICY AOSR8: TONBRIDGE/TUNBRIDGE WELLS HUB	281
POLICY IMR1: MONITORING THE RSS	284

Contents



The South East Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East

1 Introduction and Overview

Why Produce a South East Plan?

- 1.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East of England (known as the South East Plan) sets out the long term spatial planning framework for the region over the years 2006-2026. The Plan is a key tool to help achieve more sustainable development, protect the environment and combat climate change. It provides a spatial context within which Local Development Frameworks and Local Transport Plans need to be prepared, as well as other regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land use activities. These include the regional economic and housing strategies as well as strategies and programmes that address air quality, biodiversity, climate change, education, energy, community safety, environment, health and sustainable development. In addition, policies in this Plan carry weight in decisions made on planning applications and appeals for development.
- 1.2 The Plan includes spatial policies for:
- the scale and distribution of new housing
 - priorities for new infrastructure and economic development
 - the strategy for protecting countryside, biodiversity and the built and historic environment
 - tackling climate change and safeguarding natural resources, for example water and minerals
- 1.3 The Plan also incorporates the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and will be supported by an implementation plan.

What is a Spatial Strategy?

- 1.4 Spatial planning, which has its legislative underpinnings in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, recognises that there are policies, processes and decisions capable of shaping the future geography of an area other than those associated with the traditional remit of land use planning. Examples include investment decisions on infrastructure, the working of the property market, personal preferences on where people want to live and work, and what people value about their area. A spatial plan needs to understand these processes and set out a range of policy levers to influence them.
- 1.5 A successful spatial strategy must:
- understand the South East Region - how it functions, what its strengths and weaknesses are, and what differentiates it from other regions. This needs to be evidence based.
 - understand the forces of change that will affect the region in the long term. A summary of *key drivers of change* in the region is set out in Chapter 2.
 - set out its *vision* for what the region should be like in 2026, and its *objectives* for managing this change. Chapter 3 sets out this vision and the accompanying objectives.
 - include a clear spatial strategy for managing anticipated change. This is set out in Chapter 4, and is accompanied by a key diagram showing the core strategy.
 - identify the policy levers that it can use to manage these changes. In this Plan these are grouped into cross-cutting policies (Chapter 5), topic-based policies (Chapters 6 to 15) and policies specifically relating to the eight sub-regions identified in the spatial strategy (Chapters 16 – 24). A further chapter (25) covers areas outside defined sub-regions, including the Isle of Wight.
 - set out a clear implementation and monitoring framework to explain how policies are to be delivered, by whom, and whether changes are being managed in the way the Plan anticipates (Chapter 26, and the separate implementation plan which will be updated over time by the regional planning body).

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) - Principles

- 1.6 A key factor in the preparation of the Plan is the level of detail that it should go into. On the one hand, it should reflect the considerable degree of technical work and expert input which underpinned its preparation. On the other, it should be as short and succinct as possible, to make it easy to understand and use. The Plan should only contain policy and proposals that are appropriate to its scope and scale, where it is not possible or desirable to make that policy at a more local level. It should also add value to the planning process by not replicating national policy, and should be specific to a region. Further background on policy and procedure for regional planning is set out in Planning Policy Statement 11: *Regional Spatial Strategies* (PPS11). This can be downloaded from the Department for Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk.

Relationship to the Previous Regional Spatial Strategy

- 1.7 This Plan replaces existing Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9, March 2001). RPG9 became the statutory RSS for the region in September 2004 when the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force. It covers a smaller administrative area than RPG9, and no longer includes Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex (now part of the RSS for the Eastern region), and Greater London (now covered by the Mayor's London Plan). The Plan also replaces RPG9a (*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*) and RPG9b (*Strategic Guidance for the River Thames*), where they apply to the South East region.
- 1.8 This Plan also incorporates policy stemming from partial reviews to RPG9 carried out since 2001. These are:
- Regional Transport Strategy, July 2004
 - Ashford Growth Area, July 2004
 - Renewable Energy and Tourism, November 2004
 - Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, March 2005
 - Waste and Minerals, June 2006
- 1.9 These documents are now replaced with the exception of the Part A Statement of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, which continues to apply. In the event of any conflict, the South East Plan will take precedence.

Relationship with County Structure Plans

- 1.10 The publication of this final version of the South East Plan means that all the saved policies which had been extended by the Secretary of State in the following structure plans are no longer in force:
- Berkshire Structure Plan 2001-2016
 - Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011
 - East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011
 - Surrey Structure Plan 2004
 - Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Review)
 - West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016
- 1.11 The saved policies in the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 were extended by the Secretary of State in September 2008 after the publication of her Proposed Changes to the draft South East Plan. It was not possible, therefore, to set out at that stage which of those policies would be expressly replaced by policies in the South East Plan. These are now set out in Appendix 1. In relation to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006, the Secretary of State has decided that none of its policies should be extended so these will cease to have development plan status when their three-year saved period expires on 6 July 2009.

The Process

- 1.12 There were three main stages in reviewing the South East Regional Spatial Strategy:
- The South East England Regional Assembly prepared a draft South East Plan between 2003 and 2006. It submitted this draft to the Government on 31 March 2006; a copy can be found on the Assembly's website at www.southeast-ra.gov.uk. A period of public consultation then drew some 17,000 responses from over 7,000 separate individuals and organisations.
 - An independent Panel of inspectors examined the draft South East Plan at a public examination between November 2006 and March 2007 testing it for soundness. Their report, published in August 2007, can be viewed on the GOSE website at www.gos.gov.uk/gose.
 - The Government considered the Panel report and in July 2008 issued a Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Plan for public consultation. The responses to that consultation have been considered, and as a result the Government has produced this final version of the South East Plan.

Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.13 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC require strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of plans, including this Plan. This is contained within a wider sustainability appraisal (SA), which looks at the implications of the plan against environmental, economic and social considerations. Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is also required, to assess the potential impacts of development proposals in the plan on nature conservation sites of European importance. Both the SA and HRA are iterative - they are plan-making tools that help guide the preparation of the plan, making sure that it has taken both sustainability considerations and the need to protect the integrity of important wildlife sites into consideration. The draft South East Plan, as prepared by the Regional Assembly, underwent separate assessments for SA and as required by the Habitats Regulations. The draft SA report was published for consultation with the draft Plan submitted to the Government in March 2006, and a separate draft HRA was published in October 2006 – termed 'Appropriate Assessment' at the time.
- 1.14 Both were available to the independent Panel which examined the draft Plan. The Government then commissioned an updated sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. The results of these were taken into account in the preparation of the Proposed Changes document, and there has been a further iteration of the combined appraisal following the further changes that were put into this final version of the Plan. A summary report of the findings and recommendations of both the SA and HRA are set out in the Supporting Document that is being published at the same time as this Plan, and the full appraisals are also being published.

2 Challenges and Context

The South East - Present and Future

- 2.1 The South East and London are strongly inter-linked: the wealth and influence of the city spreads by varying degrees throughout the region. There are large commuter flows, with 370,000 South East residents travelling to London each day while 128,000 Londoners travel outwards to jobs in the South East. However, the South East also has a number of nationally significant centres such as Reading and Oxford that generate their own wealth and jobs and in turn their own commuting flows. The result is a multi-centred or 'polycentric' region gathered around London, a city that operates on a global scale. The challenge for this Plan is to manage development whilst dealing with the inequalities and accessibility issues between the eastern and western halves of the region, the threat of dangerous climate change and the ongoing need to protect the extensive and precious natural resources which contribute to the region's character.

A South East Pen Picture – A Region of Contrasts?

“Many people think that most of South East England is sprawling suburb and continuous seaside resort. Like many popular ideas of different regions of Britain this is far from the truth. There are large tracts of glorious countryside and a fascinating series of towns.”

⁽¹⁾

There is much to cherish.

The South East is a rich region - in wealth, natural resources, culturally and in terms of quality of life.

It is an affluent region...

At £126.6 million, gross disposable household income in the South East in 2006 was higher than that of any other region - 55% more than the total of the neighbouring East of England region, for example. London and the South East are the only UK regions to have a GVA (Gross Value Added) per head higher than the UK average. The region has a strong research presence, and a strong service sector based economy with better paid and higher skilled jobs. The South East has historically had the highest employment rate of any UK region at 79.5% and the lowest unemployment rate at 3.8%.

...and also one of the most beautiful.

80% of the South East is classified as 'rural' ⁽²⁾ and the region is home to almost a third of all England's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, in turn covering a third of the South East. It contains the New Forest National Park, with a further national park now declared in the South Downs. 16% of the region is designated as Green Belt, ⁽³⁾ and the South East contains 40% of the nation's ancient woodland. ⁽⁴⁾

It benefits from exceptional cultural and natural assets...

The South East draws visitors from around the world – to the towns of Windsor, Oxford and Canterbury, to the landscapes of the Chilterns, Wessex Downs and the New Forest and to the coasts and beaches of Sussex and Kent. The region has a rich heritage of historic buildings and contains over 300 museums and galleries, attracting over 10 million visitors a year.

...and healthy credentials...

1 David Lloyd, *Historic Towns of South East England*, quoted in Living Places – Urban Renaissance for the South East, URBED for Department of Transport and the Regions and GOSE, December 2000

2 Around 80% of the land area is classified as rural under the ONS classification derived from census data

3 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2007

4 Environment Agency, South East State of the Environment Report 2007

The South East is considered to be the least deprived and the most healthy of all the English regions. The region has a comparatively low percentage of people with limiting long term illness: 14.8% compared to 22.1% in the least healthy region.

... and is seen as a good place to live...

Nine out of ten residents in the South East rate their quality of life as good or very good - nearly half (49%) of the residents are very satisfied with the South East. Generally they are more satisfied with where they live than residents elsewhere in the country and the trend has been upwards since the first MORI survey in 2002.⁽⁵⁾

...which means that more people want to live here.

In 2006, 225,000 people moved into the South East from the rest of the UK while 221,000 moved out. The biggest net migration is from London - in 2006, 96,000 people arrived from London, while 56,000 moved to the capital.

Not all South East districts are facing migration pressures...

While 10 out of the 67 South East districts had a net in-migration of 1,000 or more between 2005 and 2006, five districts had a net out-migration of 1,000 or more. Altogether, 17 districts - including many of the region's larger towns and cities - had more people moving out than moving in.

...and not all areas are benefiting the same way from the region's economic growth.

Apart from London, the South East is the region with the widest range of social deprivation and economic disparities. There are over 400,000 people classed as deprived (the worst 20% of the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation) in the South East.⁽⁶⁾

Economic success brings its own set of problems...

The development pressures, both national and international, call for more land. Some people contend that the region is already 'full up'; others point out that around 90% of its land mass remains undeveloped.

...with housing affordability worsening...

In 2006, the average first time buyer deposit needed to get on to the housing ladder in the South East was £37,319. The ratio between lower quartile house prices and lower quartile incomes in 2007 was 8.9, compared to 5.8 in 2001.

...and our ecological footprint is growing.

South East residents remain relatively wasteful in their use of natural resources, leading to the region having an ecological footprint 17% above the national average,⁽⁷⁾ the highest of any region. Per capita production of pollutants, greenhouse gases and CO₂ is higher than any other region as is per capita water consumption.

Yet the region has learnt to use its land resources more wisely.

In 2006/7, 82% of new homes were built on previously developed land and 80% of new homes in the South East were built at densities of 30 dwellings per hectare or more.

5 MORI, for The South East England Regional Assembly - Perceptions of the South East and its Regional Assembly, June 2008

6 *The Profile of South East England*, SEEDA, February 2005

7 South East England Regional Assembly and Partners - *The South East Regional Sustainability Framework - Towards a Better Quality of Life*, June 2008

Key Drivers Of Change - Challenges And Opportunities

- 2.2 Much progress has been made in making the South East one of the best regions in which to live and work. However, the regional context is being transformed by significant socio-demographic, economic, technological and environmental trends. The rapidly changing future context demands that the region needs to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges ahead so that all those who live and work in the South East in 2026 will enjoy an even better quality of life than that enjoyed by most residents at present.
- 2.3 **The region is facing unprecedented levels of population growth.** In mid-2006, the South East was home to about 8.2 million people living in 3.5 million homes.⁸ The population is projected to grow by an unprecedented 64,300 per year over the next 20 years, exceeding a total of 9.5 million by 2026.⁹ This means potential for significant economic growth, significant pressures on social and physical infrastructure and challenges to the aim of stabilising the region's ecological footprint.
- 2.4 **The South East population is ageing.** Over 64% of the population growth in the 20 years to 2026 is projected to come from those who are, or will be, aged 60 or above. In 2006, there were about three economically active people to support every one person of 60 or over. This will reduce to about two by 2026.¹⁰ There is therefore a need to 'age proof' all key plans and strategies that aim to shape the region's future.
- 2.5 **Globalisation has changed the economic landscape.** Notwithstanding the current recession, it is widely predicted that the global economy will double in size over the next 20 years. The economic impact of globalisation is, however, proving to be both uneven and unpredictable with international competition increasingly moving from low-skilled to highly-skilled sectors. This trend means that businesses and individuals in the region will have work to remain competitive in terms of the interplay between type and level of skills, adaptability and productivity. Globalisation helps to promote productivity and economic growth allowing market leaders to expand further, creating new markets for existing products and services as well as to create new products and services altogether. A particular challenge for the Regional Spatial Strategy is to create a spatial context that helps businesses and individuals to adapt swiftly, to minimise adjustment costs and to make the most of new opportunities as they arise. This will be especially important in enabling the South East to emerge as strongly and as quickly as possible from the current recession. Flexible and open regional economies are best placed to serve the interests of the regional business and resident communities as well as the needs of the UK economy.
- 2.6 **The pace of technological change** is having an increasing effect on the way we live, work and do business. The premium on skills and rewards for innovation are increasing and strength in activities higher up the value chain is increasingly essential if the region is to remain competitive in the global market. The region needs to continue to enhance and update its skills and knowledge base. This also means re-training to avoid some people being 'left behind' and area specific efforts to ensure that all parts of the region are set to share the benefits of the knowledge economy.
- 2.7 **The size of households (i.e. the number of people) in the UK and in the region has been declining,** leading to a rate of household growth in the South East that is more than twice as fast as that of population growth. For the region, this means a need to focus on sustainable strategic solutions for addressing the need and demand for more housing while taking an innovative approach towards preventing, minimising and mitigating the impacts of housing and economic growth.
- 2.8 **Housing supply in the South East has been lagging behind population growth and housing affordability is worsening.** About 208,400 households remain on local authority Housing Registers, with 7,680 homeless households listed as being in temporary

8 Office for National Statistics, 2006 Revised Mid Year Subnational population estimates, published 2007

9 Office for National Statistics, 2006-based Subnational population projections, June 2008

10 Based on a proxy economically active age group of 15-59

accommodation.⁽¹¹⁾In the South East between 2001-2006, there has been a 70% increase in average house prices, an 88% increase in lower quartile house prices, and a nearly 30% increase in the average deposit required by first time buyers. Although current market conditions have led to a fall in house prices in the region, long-term pressures on housing supply and affordability remain. Constraints on supply in the current market will only increase the unmet need for housing. When access to credit returns, a lack of supply will exacerbate housing pressures - the long term housing supply and affordability challenge therefore remains.

- 2.9 **The South East is already being affected by signs of climate change.** The 1990s was the warmest decade in 100 years, and the twelve-month period to April 2007 was the warmest since records began.⁽¹²⁾Given its large ecological footprint, the region needs to do much more to contribute to the national target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to prepare itself better for the impacts of climate change. Balancing affluence with the need to live within environmental limits will mean changes in the behaviour of residents, businesses and all others who live, work, visit or invest in the region, and will be one of the biggest challenges for the next few decades.

11 South East England Regional Assembly Annual Monitoring Report 2007, Department for Communities and Local Government Statutory Homelessness Statistics 2007.

12 Environment Agency, South East England State of the Environment Report 2007

3 Vision and Objectives

A Healthier South East

- 3.1 This Plan has been developed to help deliver the following vision for the South East, as set out in the Regional Sustainability Framework: ⁽¹⁾

A socially and economically strong, healthy and just South East that respects the limits of the global environment. Achieving this will require the active involvement of all individuals to deliver a society where everyone, including the most deprived, benefits from and contributes to a better quality of life. At the same time the impact of current high levels of resource use will be reduced and the quality of the environment will be maintained and enhanced.

- 3.2 A healthier region means working to improve:
- the physical and mental health of its citizens, their wellbeing and productivity
 - the health of the environment around us, including water and air quality, vegetation, habitats, wildlife and landscape
 - the health of our neighbourhoods, underpinned by a sharing of the benefits of growth, good quality housing and the provision of community facilities with sustainable transport links between them, green space and a feeling of security
 - the health of the region's built environment and historic buildings.
- 3.3 This will involve pursuing policies that strive to manage growth in a way that maintains a high quality of life and increases prosperity and opportunities for all, whilst nurturing and enhancing the region's environmental assets and increasing the efficiency with which we use resources. In practice this will require a combination of good forward planning – the right development in the right place at the right time and connected in a way that encourages healthy travel choices to be made - and recognition of the need for behavioural change.
- 3.4 This vision is supported by a core set of objectives that have underpinned and guided its development. These objectives will be pursued through implementation of policies in this Plan and should be used as a basis for the development of local development frameworks.

Core Objectives

- i. a sustainable balance between planning for economic, environmental and social benefits will be sought, to help improve quality of life for everyone in the South East
- ii. economic growth and competitiveness in the region will be sustained, with Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region increased by 3% per annum over the period 2006-2016
- iii. new initiatives to tackle skills deficits will be promoted
- iv. a closer alignment between jobs and homes growth will be pursued
- v. economic and social disparities within the region will be reduced
- vi. a sufficient level of housing development will be delivered
- vii. a substantial increase in the supply of affordable housing will be pursued, through a package of measures to deliver this goal
- viii. adequate infrastructure will be provided in a way that keeps pace with development
- ix. key transport links will be improved, providing access for all, especially disadvantaged groups
- x. health provision and access will be improved

1 South East England Regional Assembly and Partners - *The South East Regional Sustainability Framework - Towards a Better Quality of Life*, June 2008

- xi. spatial planning in the region will take into account the needs of an ageing population and its implications
- xii. crime and the fear of crime will be reduced
- xiii. better natural resource management and efficiency will be pursued, leading to reductions in the consumption of water and energy and the production of waste
- xiv. new development will be delivered in a manner which mitigates the effects of, and adapts to, climate change
- xv. the best of the region's historic, built and natural environment will be protected and where possible enhanced, both for its own sake and to underpin the social and economic development of the region
- xvi. new development will be of high quality sustainable design and construction, and be an asset to the region