

Planning Policy Statement 26

**Tackling Climate Change
Through Planning:
The Government's Objectives**

Discussion Document

September 2006



Endorsements

The following organisations had formally endorsed this document as of 20 September 2006:



Vale Royal support is at officer level



- Acclimatise ■ Beck Mickle Hydro Ltd ■ Butterfly Conservation ■ Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Combined Heat and Power Association ■ The Council for British Archaeology ■ Council for National Parks
- Futerra Sustainability Communications ■ Green Alliance ■ Greenpeace ■ The Herpetological Conservation Trust
- Local Government Association ■ The National Trust ■ Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development
- Places for People ■ The Ramblers' Association ■ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds ■ Royal Town Planning Institute
- Sheppard Robson ■ Vale Royal Borough Council Officers ■ The Wildlife Trusts

Tackling Climate Change Through Planning

This document has been produced by the **Town and Country Planning Association** and **Friends of the Earth** to promote debate about the scope and contents of the Department for Communities and Local Government's forthcoming Planning Policy Statement on climate change. **It is not a government publication.** The contents reflect the need to address the 'patchy' delivery of climate change policy, and specifically:

- the need to provide an advocacy statement on the importance of climate change;
- the need to provide a systematic policy approach to climate issues, covering both mitigation and adaptation; and
- the need for brevity in the context of further detailed advice in accompanying best practice guidance.

This discussion document is the result of a six-month dialogue with stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The aim has been to begin to explore the issues that the new PPS on climate change will have to address and the direction that it should take. The Town and Country Planning Association and Friends of the Earth have liaised with officials in Department for Communities and Local Government to ensure that the process is of use to the Government.

It should be noted that although the organisations that have endorsed this discussion document (listed on the left) are in agreement with its broad principles, it may not reflect their detailed views.



**Friends of
the Earth**

TCPA HOMES AND COMMUNITIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ASSOCIATION

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1 Delivering Sustainable Communities

- 1.1** Climate change represents one of the greatest threats to our society. It is no longer simply an environmental problem but a wider issue affecting economic stability. The impacts of climate change will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of our communities, both in the UK and globally. A recent study by the Tyndall Centre¹ points to the need to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by around 6% year-on-year from 2010 onwards (assuming no emissions reductions before that time) to achieve climate stability by mid-century. This presents an enormous challenge and makes it clear that if we are to have any chance of success, then the principal mechanisms for CO₂ reduction need to be in place by 2010. This Planning Policy Statement (PPS) sets out the role of the planning system as one such mechanism.
- 1.2** The importance of global climate change and its relevance for all planned development has been increasingly recognised in PPSs. However, recent scientific evidence has pointed with increasing clarity to the unprecedented global threat that climate change poses to lifestyles, the built environment and the sustainability of communities, economies, social equity and ecosystems – and to the need for urgent action to reduce that threat. Planning can only be one of many elements in an effective response, but it does have an important role to play, mostly in the way that it shapes future communities, their emissions, their use of resources, and their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Planning also has a part to play in incentivising markets for new technologies and practices that will reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (mitigation) and reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts (adaptation). Some good responses are already evident, but the degree of urgency now requires more to be delivered, by all parties.
- 1.3** This statement sets out the need for stronger action to markedly improve resource efficiency and reduce both emissions and the vulnerability to climate change impacts. Mitigation and adaptation measures must play a key part, often working in tandem. Likewise, planning policy and decision-making should address climate change in existing communities as well as in new developments. This will require leadership and commitment, and a willingness to innovate at all levels. Local authorities should have the confidence to play a central role, but it will also require the active support of all public agencies, business and the wider community. For its part, the Government is committed to giving its full support and encouragement to such action, promoting wider awareness and understanding, and ensuring that all departments and agencies reflect the high standards required in their development and management processes. A companion guide illustrating innovative and good practice is published in support of this PPS.

¹ *Living Within a Carbon Budget*. Tyndall Centre, Friends of the Earth and Cooperative Bank, forthcoming

2 Climate Change: The Case for Action

2.1 Action to combat climate change and to adapt to any unavoidable impacts is a principal public policy objective of the Government.² Climate change will have a wide range of impacts which directly relate to the spatial planning framework. Best estimates from the 'Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change' conference held in Exeter in 2005 suggest that keeping average global temperatures within 2°C above pre-industrial levels will require stabilisation of CO₂ concentrations at around 450 parts per million. This is a huge challenge. Impacts of climate change will affect different parts of the country in different ways, but will be caused by:

- increased temperatures;
- increased sea levels, resulting in increased coastal flood risk and erosion and potential coastal realignment;
- increased probability of extreme weather events, such as heat waves and heavy downpours of rain; and
- long-term changes in seasonal weather patterns, resulting in increased probability of drought in summer and flood in winter.

2.2 Spatial planning has a major and positive contribution to make in meeting this challenge by promoting policies which:

- expect the highest standards of resource and energy efficiency in new and where possible existing development in order to achieve, for example, reduced CO₂ emissions arising from construction and operation;
- require planning and investment programmes to stimulate land use patterns that substantially reduce the need and the propensity to travel by unsustainable modes, including the car and aviation;
- promote 'spatial efficiency' to make the most effective use of land, by integrating land use with transport to make essential uses such as places of work, schools, food shops and healthcare facilities easily accessible to local residents;
- vigorously promote efficient supply of energy through small- and large-scale low- and zero-carbon energy projects targeted at communities as well as at individual buildings;
- ensure that resource use is minimised through sustainable waste management practices and sustainable energy generation where appropriate;
- help communities to adapt to the harmful impacts of climate change such as flood risk, drought and heat waves;
- build resilience into the built and natural environment, and into biodiversity, to adapt to climate change by, for example, anticipating increased temperatures and water constraints in the design and location of buildings and the adaptation of existing buildings; and
- incentivise markets for new and innovative technologies and processes.

² See the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy and PPS1: *Delivering Sustainable Development*

3 The Government's Response to Climate Change

- 3.1** The Government has set a number of targets to reduce releases of greenhouse gases, including CO₂. They include:³
- reducing the UK's CO₂ emissions by 20% from a 1990 baseline by 2010;
 - reducing CO₂ emissions 'by some 60% by about 2050... with real progress by 2020';⁴
 - reducing UK greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012 (a legally binding agreement under the Kyoto Protocol);
 - reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15-30% from 1990 levels by 2020 (agreed by EU Heads of State in March 2005);
 - supplying 10% of electricity from renewable sources by 2010 and 20% by 2020; and
 - providing 10,000 megawatts of combined heat and power by 2010.
- 3.2** The Government has sought to address climate change through a number of planning policy initiatives. In planning policy, tackling climate change is identified as a priority in PPS1: *Delivering Sustainable Development*. Further reference is made in PPS7: *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*; PPS9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*; PPS11: *Regional Spatial Strategies*; PPS12: *Local Development Frameworks*; PPS22: *Renewable Energy*; PPS23: *Planning and Pollution Control*; and PPS25: *Development and Flood Risk*.
- 3.3** PPS1 makes it clear that 'Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change'.⁵
- 3.4** The purpose of this PPS is to strengthen the Government's emphasis on climate change and to demonstrate the urgency of the need for action through the spatial planning system. It aims to provide a strategic overview of how policy can be delivered more effectively.

3 Chapter 4 of the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (TSO, 2005) reproduces the full range of the UK Government's international and domestic CO₂ reduction and renewable energy generation targets

4 *Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy*. Energy White Paper, DTI, 2003, and reaffirmed in *Climate Change. The UK Programme*. Defra, 2006

5 PPS1: *Delivering Sustainable Development*. ODPM, 2005. Section 13 (ii)

4 Key Policy Principles

- 4.1** An effective response to climate change requires a cross-cutting approach which better identifies action in a number of important sectors, including detailed zero-carbon design principles, zero-carbon energy generation, biodiversity, the built environment, transport, water resources, flood management and coastal policy. (Further information is included in the companion guide.)
- 4.2** In addition to cross-sectoral action, policy must address both the reduction of emissions to limit the overall impacts of climate change (mitigation) and adaptation to unavoidable consequences.
- 4.3** The cross-cutting nature of the climate change agenda provides an opportunity to join up the work of different government departments and policy areas under a common theme. However, without due care it can also lead to a fragmentation of policy and a lack of clearly-defined delivery mechanisms. As a result the Government wishes to see the following guiding principles applied to the formulation of climate change policy:
- Set any action for individual sectors, such as flood management or building standards, as part of an overall strategic response that provides effective and clear prioritisation to climate change in both the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the core strategy of Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The capacity of the RSS to draw together a range of delivery vehicles to achieve one strategic objective and to ensure co-ordination and effective monitoring should be maximised.
 - Set a clear policy framework to deliver low-carbon development solutions at the local level. This should include the effective use of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and design guidance.
 - Ensure that climate change issues are embedded in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process and that the results of the environmental report transparently inform policy action.
 - Ensure that policy emphasises the need to reduce climate change emissions while at the same time adapting to unavoidable climate change.
 - Guide strategic responses by measurable and deliverable trajectories – for example for CO₂ reduction – which support the policy approach set out in PPS11 and PPS12.
 - Continue to take a positive approach to development needs, but set these needs firmly in the framework set out in this PPS.

5 Principle to Action: Implementing Climate Change Policy

5.1 The Government believes that both RSSs and LDFs should play a central role in the strategic spatial response to climate change. They should reflect the provisions of PPS1 to reduce climate change emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change, by ensuring that policies *'reduce energy use, reduce emissions (for example, by encouraging patterns of development which reduce the need to travel by private car, or reduce the impact of moving freight), promote the development of renewable energy resources, and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development'*.⁶

A Note on CO₂ Reduction Targets and Trajectories

There has been some debate as to whether this PPS should contain targets for CO₂ reduction in regional and local plans. The case for such an approach is based on two principal issues:

- 1** The Government has set out clear national targets for CO₂ reduction to secure climate stabilisation by mid-century. Target-setting is therefore already established in national policy. Such targets can only be achieved by ensuring that relevant policy incorporates the right kind of pathway or trajectory to deliver such measures. RSSs and LDFs are required to consider these targets through the SEA process, because of the powerful statement in PPS1, paragraph 13 on reducing the causes of climate change and a number of other national policies, including the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.
- 2** The EU SEA Directive requires the collection of baseline data on a wide range of issues in order to inform strategic policy choices (Annex I (b) and (c)). Appendix 4 of Government guidance on the SEA Directive⁷ explicitly identifies climate factors as a key baseline issue. It is difficult to conceive of how such data could be handled in the SEA process except in the form of targets and/or trajectories. Indeed, the guidance states: *'Objectives can be expressed in the form of targets, the achievement of which is measurable using indicators.'*⁸ Article 10 of the Directive places great emphasis on the need to monitor plans and programmes and take action if there are unforeseen adverse effects. It would seem

clear that an effective policy regime for CO₂ should adopt measurable and transparent targets or trajectories, at least at the regional level.⁹

RSSs should establish such trajectories up to and including mid-century (PPS11, paragraph 1.4 specifically identifies climate change as an issue which needs consideration beyond the horizon of a single plan). Individual plans will need to set milestone targets for CO₂ reduction. Such targets should be treated not as inflexible prohibitions on development but as a key part of measuring progress against the overall trajectory. Policy should encourage technological innovation where this can lead to faster reduction pathways. RSSs also provide the opportunity to set sub-regional delivery mechanisms and encourage cross-border co-operation in the same way as advocated in PPS10 on waste management. Regional climate change partnerships may provide a key way of agreeing data and approaches in the same way that Regional Technical Advisory Bodies provide guidance on waste issues.

LDFs should be in broad conformity with regional CO₂ reduction trajectories. Since the RSS forms part of the development plan, these targets will automatically inform decisions. There is, however, a strong case for locally established targets where these can encourage innovation in both spatial planning and in other local authority functions (for example the use of energy service companies (ESCos), as used in Woking).

⁶ PPS1: *Delivering Sustainable Development*. ODPM, 2005. Section 13 (ii)

⁷ *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive*. ODPM, 2005

⁸ *Ibid.* Paragraph 5.A.14

⁹ Also see http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commondata/105385/sea_climate_change_905671.pdf

6 Policy Approach

- 6.1** Delivery of the objectives of PPS1 requires a co-ordinated approach which ensures a clear long-term sense of direction for communities, businesses and other stakeholders. The emphasis should be on achieving a robust set of conclusions as quickly as possible, so that action can begin. To achieve this, the preparation of climate change policy should proceed through logical stages that address both mitigation and adaptation.

Stages in Climate Change Policy Preparation

Stage	Mitigation	Adaptation
1	Establish robust baseline data on CO ₂ emissions	Establish baseline data on local vulnerability to the impacts of climate change
2	Detailed analysis of the potential impacts of new policy options assessed against baseline conditions	Analysis of the vulnerability of detailed policy options to climate change and potential impacts of policy options on the ability of stakeholders to adapt
3	Establish transparent CO ₂ reduction trajectories	Establish transparent objectives and targets to promote resilience and adaptability to climate change, i.e. 'climate-proofing'
4	Policy action to reduce emissions in line with reduction targets. This should emphasise delivery and consider all available mechanisms	Policy action to adapt to the consequences of climate change
5	Effective monitoring and review	Effective monitoring and review

STAGES 1 AND 2: THE ROLE OF SA/SEA

- 6.2** SA/SEA has a crucial role to play in addressing stages 1 and 2 of the general policy approach by providing comprehensive baseline information. It will also help in understanding the range of potential climate change impacts that arise from strategic development options and potential impacts of a changing climate on these options over the lifetime of the development. Climate change issues, including current emissions of CO₂, should be embedded within the scoping stage of the SEA process, with the objective of understanding the carbon 'footprint' of the region. Sustainability checklists, such as the one for the South East¹⁰ and those now being developed for all regions, can provide an important tool for assessing the merits of proposed development options. The RSS preparation process allows for the full involvement of statutory and non-statutory organisations that have a specific stake in climate issues. Organisations such as the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UK CIP), Regional Development Agencies and the Environment Agency will be key sources of information in understanding specific regional climate change impacts.¹¹

¹⁰ See <http://www.sustainability-checklist.co.uk/>

¹¹ *Strategic Environmental Assessment and Climate Change: Guidance for Practitioners* (Environment Agency, May 2004) provides useful guidance – see http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commodata/105385/sea_climate_change_905671.pdf

STAGE 3: ESTABLISHING CO₂ REDUCTION TRAJECTORIES AND MEASURES TO PROMOTE 'CLIMATE-PROOFING'

- 6.3** Establishing regional emission reduction trajectories and measures to 'climate-proof' development is a vital part of guiding strategic policy on climate change. Trajectories provide a measurable and transparent framework with which to guide effective implementation. PPS11 explicitly recommends such an approach in paragraphs 1.7 and 1.18.

Developing CO₂ Reduction Trajectories

- 6.4** While the UK Government's target under the Kyoto Protocol relates to reductions in emissions of the six main greenhouse gases – CO₂, methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆) – the Government decided to set national goals for CO₂ only, as it is by far the most important of the six gases, and will be responsible for about two-thirds of the expected future climate change. It is also one of the more difficult gases to control.¹² This position will be periodically reviewed by the Government.

Establishing Regionally Specific CO₂ Reduction Trajectories

- 6.5** National CO₂ reduction targets should provide the starting point for establishing regional trajectories. Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) will need to consider what is unique about a particular issue and whether or not the regional tier is best placed to address it through a sectoral target or policy response (some may be adequately dealt with at national level or may be better addressed through LDFs). The companion guide to this PPS gives more guidance on what is considered appropriate.¹³ RPBs will then need to develop an appropriate pathway to achieve these targets, taking into account regional conditions. The RSS may include interim reduction targets which reflect the need to achieve the right trajectory of reduction over the medium to long term. Establishing a transparent trajectory also allows for effective monitoring.
- 6.6** There may be specific regional issues that might influence effective target-setting: for instance, some regions are net exporters of energy. One such example is the model established in the adopted Yorkshire and Humber RSS (see Annex 1), in which targets are based on energy consumption and reflect a fairer and more realistic basis for action than targets based on energy production.

Establishing Objectives and Targets on Adaptation

- 6.7** Objectives and targets should be set to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. For example, such objectives might include: providing wildlife corridors; providing adequate health services and infrastructure; ensuring that drainage systems can cope with changing rainfall patterns/intensity; and designing buildings and urban areas to cope with new climate extremes.¹⁴ The RSS and LDFs should also set out possible indicators, for example the proportion of developments with a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) or the number or percentage of homes built in floodplains.

Cross-Sectoral Action

- 6.8** The RSS should consider the translation of headline CO₂ reduction and adaptation targets into individual targets for specific sectors. The UK Sustainable

¹² *Securing the Future*. The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy. TSO, 2005. Chapter 4

¹³ *The Planning Response to Climate Change: Advice on Better Practice* (ODPM, 2004) contains some guidance on this

¹⁴ From http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commondata/105385/sea_climate_change_905671.pdf

Development Strategy indicates that policies to reduce emissions and to adapt to climate change fall under six broad sectors:¹⁵

- the energy supply industry;
- business;
- transport;
- households;
- agriculture, forestry and land use; and
- the public sector.

The RSS should also ensure the integration of strategies which deal with these sectors. For example, CO₂ reduction strategies should be integrated with renewable energy generation targets and energy demand management and reduction measures. Likewise, spatial efficiency should be optimised by fully integrating the Regional Transport Strategy within the RSS and ensuring co-ordination between the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the LDF.

STAGE 4: REGIONAL MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION MEASURES

- 6.9** Delivering CO₂ reduction trajectories and adaptation to climate change requires effective cross-sectoral action in line with guidance in PPS 1, paragraph 13. At the regional level, the RSS should focus on shaping broad patterns of growth and change in ways that contribute to combating and adapting to climate change. The RSS should also set the principles for low-carbon development and emphasise the need to actively promote low- and zero-carbon energy sources and to ‘climate-proof’ development.¹⁶ RPBs should consider the adoption of a climate change action plan (see Annex 1), or similar, which draws together strategic policy, partnership working and funding mechanisms to help deliver effective change. The plan should be delivery focused and should be included as part of the RSS implementation plan.

Local Mitigation and Adaptation Measures

- 6.10** LDFs have a vital role play in dealing with climate change by shaping future development in ways that support a low-carbon, ‘climate-proofed’ vision for sustainable communities. LDFs should prioritise action on climate change as a key element of core strategy and should consider apportionment of targets at a local level where this contributes to overall risk reduction and adds to transparent monitoring. Local and regional level targets should be used to inform policy action and decision-making. They can also raise awareness of the need to improve the performance of existing buildings.

Low-Carbon Development Principles

- 6.11** The building regulations have an important role in raising the environmental performance of buildings. However, because of its wider ‘spatial’ reach, planning has a strategic role in ensuring that the right locations and development principles are considered in planning policy. Planning can play a vital part in the promotion of actions which go beyond detailed construction standards, to include embedded renewables and the promotion of sustainable travel patterns.
- 6.12** There are a range of tools available that can help local authorities meet targets and objectives and assist with monitoring. For instance, local authorities should include policies within their Local Development Documents (LDDs) that require

¹⁵ *Securing the Future*. The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy. TSO, 2005. p.79

¹⁶ See *Adapting to Climate Change: A Checklist for Development – Guidance on Designing Developments in a Changing Climate*. GLA, 2005

proposals for new homes to meet Code for Sustainable Homes standards. Full use should also be made of the flexibility in the LDF framework to adopt SPD and to masterplan the delivery of new development. Further guidance on framing policies and preparing guidance is contained within the companion guide.

‘Climate-Proofed’ Development Principles

- 6.13** Climate change is already affecting society and the built and natural environments. Direct and indirect impacts will increase over coming decades – and in the case of sea level rise for centuries – irrespective of any reduction in emissions today (greenhouse gasses emitted today will not impact on the climate until later in this century). These impacts include, among others: heat waves, with consequent impacts on society, the built environment and natural systems; changes to cropping patterns; coastal flooding and accelerated coastal erosion; inland flooding and landslips; water shortages in some areas; changes to species distribution and abundance and in the timing of natural events; and health.
- 6.14** The need to adapt to a changing climate is urgent even if the probability of particular events is uncertain. For instance, adaptation actions such as amending building or urban design, relocating out of ‘at risk’ areas, safeguarding infrastructure, and making space for wildlife can all be planned for. Incorporating climate adaptation is especially important for long-term sustainability when making long-lasting decisions, for example about where to locate new developments.
- 6.15** There is an urgent need to manage for uncertainty and implement ‘no regrets’ strategies – social, economic and environmental ‘win-win-win’s that will be generally beneficial regardless of the full extent of climate change impacts. The overarching goal should be to minimise risk and vulnerability across a range of land uses, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- 6.16** As clarified in the Government guide *The Planning Response to Climate Change*,¹⁷ ‘there is a real urgency to put in place regional and local planning policies on adaptation to climate change. PPS1, paragraph 13 formalises this requirement. Policies in the RSS, LDFs and LTPs should take into account anticipated direct and indirect impacts of climate change and plan for adaptation in the following key sectors:
- agriculture and forestry;
 - biodiversity conservation;
 - coastal defence and re-alignment;
 - flood risk;
 - land and landscape;
 - urban and rural development;
 - water resources;
 - energy infrastructure provision;
 - transport infrastructure provision; and
 - healthcare infrastructure provision.

Further detailed policy advice in these areas is included in Annex 2 and in the companion guide. PPS25 also provides detailed guidance on flood risk and development. The Greater London Authority *Adapting to Climate Change* checklist¹⁸ provides guidance on what ‘climate-proofed’ development should incorporate.

¹⁷ *The Planning Response to Climate Change*. ODPM, 2004

¹⁸ *Adapting to Climate Change: A Checklist for Development – Guidance on Designing Developments in a Changing Climate*. GLA, 2005

Planning and Building Regulations

6.17 The planning system must play a complementary role to the building regulations in driving up the design standards of new development to take account of climate change mitigation and adaptation. Planning policy should not directly duplicate the minimum standards for energy efficiency set out in the building regulations. Instead, it should seek to build upon these standards, encouraging innovation in design, construction and masterplanning with the kind of measures set out in paragraphs 6.11-6.16 and in the companion guide. Decision-makers should view the impact of the building regulations and planning policy as a holistic package of CO₂ reduction and climate change adaptation measures in the built environment. It is vital, for example, that the SEA for a new plan takes into account carbon savings and adaptation measures from both planning policy and the building regulations in considering future development options.

Community and Stakeholder Involvement

6.18 The planning framework is a powerful tool for promoting community empowerment, and planning authorities should encourage full public participation in the development of policy. Early and full participation provides an opportunity to develop 'bottom up' solutions on climate change and to build consensus on appropriate strategies. It is vital that business and other stakeholders play a constructive role. There is an important leadership role in fostering effective community engagement, and the Government will provide the support to enable this.

STAGE 5: MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.19 Effective monitoring and review is essential in securing effective action to tackle climate change. The RSS and LDFs should contain a commitment to regular monitoring and reviews of climate change policy. This is particularly important given the growing body of scientific understanding of the impacts of climate change. Targets will also need to take account of likely changes in our understanding of climate stabilisation rates and adaptation.

6.20 The successful implementation of spatial strategies depends on active stewardship at regional and local levels. Where monitoring suggests that implementation has not been achieved in line with an agreed strategy, it will be important to respond effectively. The Government will support planners in this role using the Planning Inspectorate. Monitoring reports should pay specific attention to an authority's performance in delivering the CO₂ reduction trajectory and the targets for 'climate-proofing', and should describe the action intended to correct any necessary adjustment to implementation. The outcome of this process should feed directly into the review of regional and local spatial policy.

Dealing with Uncertainty

6.21 While the five-stage policy process is designed to be a systematic tool to deliver better outcomes, it should not be used as an inflexible linear process which may result in delay in delivering reduction and adaptation strategies. For example, uncertainty around data sets in stage 1 should not prevent interim action on reduction or 'climate-proofing' targets at stage 4. Increased experience of the SA/SEA framework, as well improving data sets, will ultimately improve the efficiency of the system. The key requirement will be to establish clear CO₂ reduction and adaptation trajectories and then to prioritise them in plan- and decision-making.

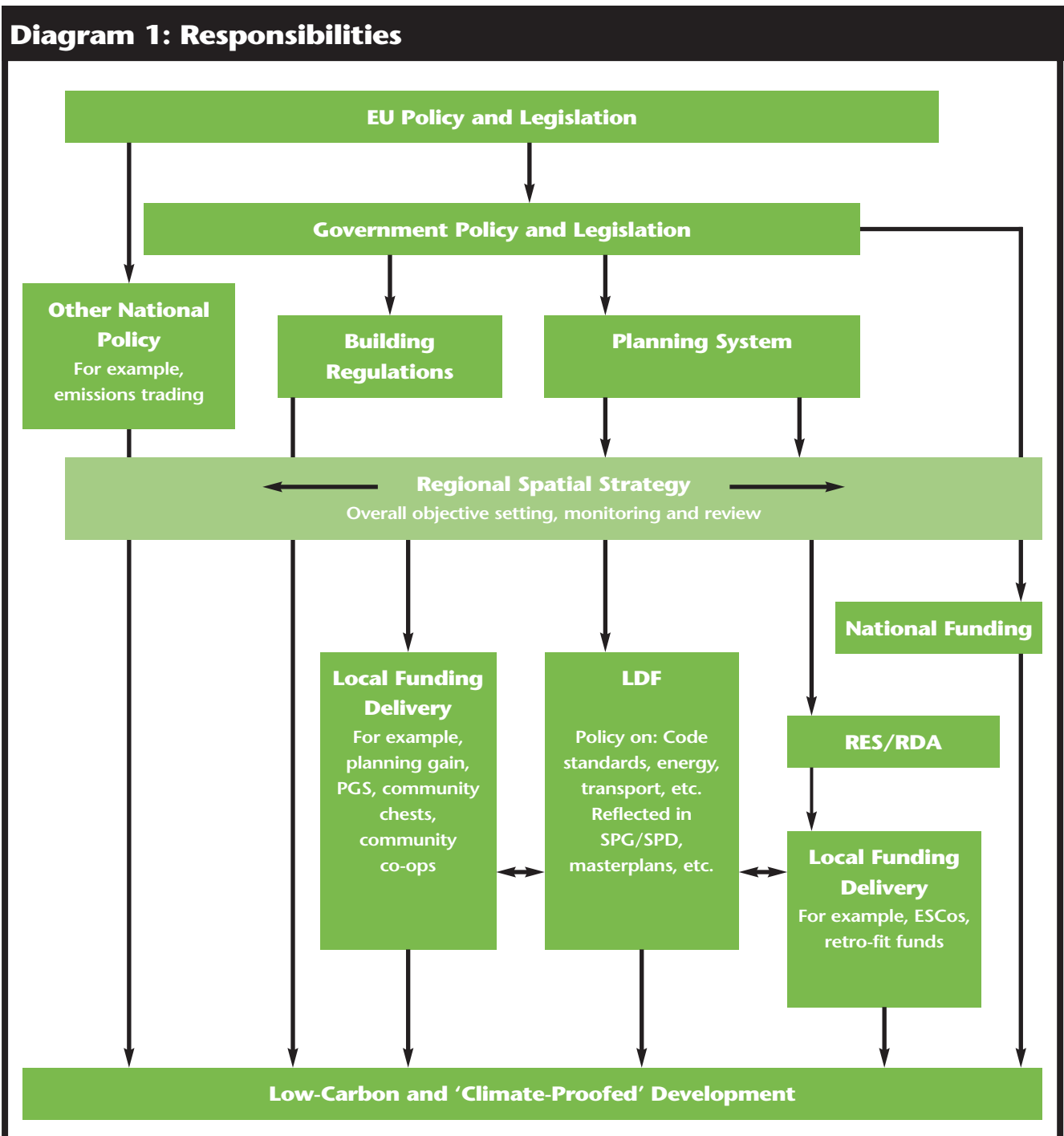
7 Determining Planning Applications

7.1 Development plans set out the framework within which decisions on proposals for development are taken. It is important that plans are kept up-to-date and properly reflect national policy. In the interim period before the development plan is updated to reflect the policies in this PPS, planning authorities should ensure that development proposals are consistent with the policies in this PPS and should avoid placing inconsistent requirements on applicants. Planning authorities should look favourably on applications which contribute to reducing overall CO₂ emissions and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Authorities should consider rejecting applications which, by adding significantly to CO₂ emissions or to climate change vulnerabilities, do not conform to the objectives of the development plan.

8 Delivery

8.1 Identifying delivery mechanisms is a vital part of developing an effective strategy on climate change. The regional and local tiers of planning offer differing delivery opportunities, and further detailed advice on best practice is available in the accompanying companion guide. The key responsibilities for each tier are illustrated in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Responsibilities



8.2 While the RSS does not encompass all aspects of delivery on climate change, such as the building regulations, it does provide an important context in which the differing delivery mechanisms can be understood, monitored and reviewed coherently. PPS11 is clear that the new regional spatial planning system has a remit well beyond land use and is specifically designed to draw together strategic planning across wide areas of policy. For example, there is increasing and successful integration between the non-statutory regional economic development strategy and the statutory RSS. The regional tier provides the ideal context for integrating the various delivery mechanisms on climate change. The RSS can be used to establish overarching objectives and put in place a co-ordinated strategy that demonstrates the linkage between a number of delivery mechanisms. To some extent this work is already being delivered in some regions through regional climate action plans, but this an *ad hoc* approach. Diagram 1 gives an indication of how a range of strategies – including building regulations, spatial planning and potential funding mechanisms – could be co-ordinated at regional level.

Local Delivery

8.3 A wide range of delivery options are available to local authorities. Although many of these are outside the direct remit of the planning system, they are still of relevance to planning and decision-making processes. The LDF provides an opportunity to shape the development of communities in ways that reduce emissions and robustly adapt to climate change. There are a range of other tools available to local authorities, including:

- partnership-building, including between public, private and voluntary sectors;
- the possible use of planning gain or a Planning Gain Supplement;
- energy or environmental services (such as an ESCo), which may involve more than one local authority department and lever in private finance;
- community trusts; and
- the Nottingham Declaration Action Pack – a new online support tool developed to assist local authorities in devising and implementing their response (both mitigation and adaptation) to climate change, and closely linked to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, which has been signed by over 130 councils in England and Wales.¹⁹

More guidance on the detail of local delivery tools is available in the companion guide.

¹⁹ The Nottingham Declaration Action Pack can be freely accessed at <http://www.nottinghamdeclaration.org.uk>

Annex 1 Examples of Best Practice

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER RSS

Policy SS: Climate Change

Local and regional authorities and agencies and others should:

- a) Include policies and proposals in their development plans, local transport plans, strategies and investment programmes to help reduce the Region's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2010 and by at least 25% below 1990 levels by 2015.
- b) Take into account the land use implications of the predicted impacts of climate change on their area and plan for both the successful adaptation to the resulting effects and maximisation of potential economic, environmental and social opportunities in land use terms.

Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber to 2016 based on Selective Review of RPG12. Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber, December 2004

DRAFT SOUTH EAST PLAN

Policy CC2: Climate Change

The strategy and policies of the Plan will promote measures to mitigate and adapt to the forecast effects of climate change and should be implemented through application of local planning policy and other mechanisms. Behavioural change will be essential in implementing this policy and the measures identified.

Mitigation, through reducing greenhouse gas emissions, will primarily be addressed through greater resource efficiency including:

- i Improving energy efficiency performance of new and existing buildings and influencing behaviour of occupants
- ii Reducing the need to travel and ensuring good accessibility to public and other sustainable modes of transport
- iii Promoting land use that acts as carbon sinks
- iv Encouraging development and use of renewable energy
- v Reducing the amount of biodegradable waste landfilled.

In addition, and in respect of carbon dioxide emissions, regional and local authorities, agencies and others shall include policies and proposals in their plans, strategies and investment programmes to help reduce the region's carbon dioxide emissions by at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2010 and by at least 25% below 1990 levels by 2015. A target for 2026 will be developed and incorporated in the first review of the Plan (and no later than 2011).

Adaptation to risks and opportunities will be achieved through:

- i Guiding strategic development to locations offering greater protection from impacts such as flooding, erosion, storms, water shortages and subsidence
- ii Ensuring new and existing building stock is more resilient to climate change impacts
- iii Incorporating sustainable drainage measures and high standards of water efficiency in new and existing building stock
- iv Increasing flood storage capacity and developing sustainable new water resources
- v Ensuring that opportunities and options for sustainable flood management and migration of habitats and species are not foreclosed.

A Clear Vision for the South East. The South East Plan Core Document. South East England Regional Assembly, March 2006

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Regions should consider the adoption of a climate change action plan, as is being undertaken in Yorkshire and the Humber. This aims to: *'provide the region with the framework to respond to the threats and opportunities present by climate change. It will utilise and expand our knowledge of the regional impacts of climate change and develop strategies to cope with these impacts. Concurrently, it will work towards long-term reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from the region to play our part in solving this global problem... By taking this approach, the climate change action plan will enable significant steps to be made over the next 3-5 years towards ensuring the region is both prepared for the likely impacts of climate change and to achieve 60% greenhouse gas reductions by 2050.'*

Your Climate. Yorkshire & Humber's Climate Change Action Plan. Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber, December 2005

DRAFT SOUTH WEST RSS

SD2 Climate Change

The region's contribution to climate change will be reduced by:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions at least in line with current national targets, i.e. by 30% by 2026 (compared to 1990 levels)
- Following the principles outlined in SD1.

The region will adapt to the anticipated changes in climate by:

- Managing the impact of future climate change on the environment, economy and society
- Identifying the most vulnerable communities and ecosystems given current understanding of future climate change and provide measures to mitigate against these effects
- Avoiding the need for development in flood risk areas and incorporating measures in design and construction to reduce the effects of flooding
- Recognising and putting in place policies and measures to develop and exploit those opportunities that climate change will bring
- Requiring 'future proofing' of development activity for its susceptibility to climate change
- Improving the resilience and reliability of existing infrastructure to cope with changes in climate and in the light of future demand. It will be a priority for the places identified in Section 3 to determine potential future climate change impacts and plan ways in which key services and infrastructure need to adapt.

All Local Authorities in their LDDs will need to demonstrate how they intend to contribute towards the required 60% cut in CO₂ emissions by 2050 and how they intend to identify and respond to the potential impacts of climate change in their area.

The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026. South West Regional Assembly, June 2006

THE MERTON RULE

The Merton Rule is so called because this type of planning policy was first developed by the London Borough of Merton in its Unitary Development Plan (as amended by the Government Inspector and approved in November 2003). It demonstrates one approach which local planning authorities can use to address one aspect of climate change mitigation.

London Borough of Merton's Policy PE13 stipulates that *'The council will encourage the energy efficient design of buildings and their layout and orientation on site. All new non-residential developments above a threshold of 1,000 sqm will be expected to incorporate renewable energy production equipment to provide at least 10% of predicted energy requirements.'*

More information can be found at <http://themertonrule.org/>

Annex 2 Climate Change

Adaptation

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Anthropogenic climate change threatens species and ecosystem functions and processes upon which human survival and well-being depend. Isolated sites are unlikely to accommodate all of the UK's characteristic biodiversity or to sustain it in the light of climate change. Resilient systems absorb and respond to changes while sustaining biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services. There is an urgent need to develop and implement strategies which ensure that the widest biodiversity can survive and evolve. Planning should seek to maintain and restore ecologically functional landscapes and seascapes which enable species to adapt and move freely in response to climate change. It should take account of UK Biodiversity Action Plan targets for species and semi-natural habitats. Plans and planning decisions should:

- Protect all semi-natural habitats, including designated sites, not just a representative sample of sites.
- Take account of the need for all semi-natural habitats planted with non-native conifers to be restored, where any significant relict features survive.
- Ensure that development is not approved on land where habitat creation could be undertaken to put biodiversity on a more sustainable footing. This is of greatest importance where it would extend existing ancient or semi-natural habitats.
- Increase the resilience of semi-natural habitats by allocating space for habitat creation, to buffer them from negative edge effects caused by development and other intensive land uses.
- Increase the ability of biodiversity to migrate across landscapes by making the intervening land use (such as built development, agriculture or forestry) between semi-natural habitats more biodiversity-rich, rather than simply physically linking them.
- Integrate the needs of landscape-scale action for biodiversity with those of development at every scale to deliver wider benefits – for example in relation to soil conservation, cooling, air and water quality, flood alleviation, high-quality food, health, employment and recreation.

COASTAL DEFENCE AND RE-ALIGNMENT

Planning authorities must plan for anticipated sea level rise and more frequent storms, which is likely to mean that many buildings, land uses and areas of undeveloped land on the coast are at risk from accelerated erosion and/or flooding. LDFs should be informed by shoreline management plans, and should enable adaptation to sea level rise by identifying:

- areas at risk;
- areas where managed re-alignment can occur;
- alternative areas where displaced development or resources could be relocated; and
- areas for the creation of resources (for example wildlife habitat) to replace those that will be lost through sea level rise.

LDF policies should also seek to prevent permanent built development in areas at risk; although more temporary uses may be appropriate.

WATER RESOURCES

In the face of climate change all planning authorities must ensure that water is managed and used sustainably and wisely. Spatial plans, including RSSs and LDFs, should identify areas where multi-functional wetlands could be created to help people and wildlife adapt to the stresses caused by our changing climate. They should also ensure that water is managed so that sufficient supply is available to meet needs for the plan period and beyond. Policies should refer to techniques such as rainwater harvesting and water efficiency measures.

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