

Údarás Réigiúnach an Oir-Dheiscirt
South-East Regional Authority



Regional Planning Guidelines for the
South-East Region 2010-2022

*Initial Public Consultation
Issues Leaflet*



Regional Planning Guidelines Office,
South-East Regional Authority,
Áras Forbartha,
1 Gladstone Street,
Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary.

February 2009

What are Regional Planning Guidelines? (RPGs)

The South-East Regional Planning Guidelines (the Guidelines) provide a long-term strategic planning framework which aims to guide the future growth of the South-East Region over the medium to long-term. The Guidelines will achieve this by establishing a framework for spatial planning within which City, County and Town Development Plans and Local Area Plans will function. The Guidelines will also promote good planning and the sustainable development of the Region while protecting the most important elements of our environment and landscape.

What area do they cover?

The Guidelines will cover the whole of the South-East Region which comprises the five counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford, and Wexford.

Why are they being reviewed?

While the existing Guidelines cover the period from 2004 to 2016, they must be reviewed every 6 years to ensure that they are up-to-date and provide an informed medium to long term direction for the region. This 6-year review is required by law and must be completed by May 2010. The operational period of the new Guidelines will be from 2010 - 2022.

What do they do?

The Guidelines provide direction for City, County and Town Development Plans of the local authorities and also seek to guide Government Departments on provision of infrastructure such as water and waste water services, new roads and public transport, health services and new schools.

The Guidelines also provide information for State bodies such as Enterprise Ireland, IDA, ESB etc. so that they each can make informed decisions in provision of infrastructure and services. The Guidelines aim to ensure a link between where people live and work and the services that they require to support them.

The Guidelines will also assist Councils and other bodies in making decisions that will protect the heritage and natural assets of the South-East Region.

Why do we need Regional Planning Guidelines?

The Guidelines provide an important link between national strategies, such as the National Spatial Strategy, the National Development Plan and City, County and Town Development Plans and Local Area Plans within the local authorities.

Regional Plans provide a direct link into all national documents and assist each of the Councils in the South-East Region in working together for the better planning and sustainable development of the Region.

What does the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) have to do with RPGs?

The Guidelines have a special role in relation to the National Spatial Strategy. The Guidelines are the direct link in a hierarchical chain of planning policy which brings together the many planning issues covered in the NSS.

The Guidelines set out how each local authority can deliver the policies of the NSS. They provide detail on a wide range of issues such as population growth and the housing needs in the Region, economic development, provision of new infrastructure, management of flood risk and protection of biodiversity. The Guidelines therefore provide the spatial planning framework for City, County, Town and Local Area Plans in the Region.

What's happening now?

The new Guidelines must be adopted by May 2010. Prior to the drafting of the new Guidelines, the Regional Authority is seeking the opinions of the public for the future development of the Region up to 2022. We are also consulting and seeking the views of the local authorities in the Region, key state and semi-state bodies, the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, the Department of Transport and other public and private interests within and outside the region.

What issues will be looked at in the new RPGs?

A wide range of issues are being assessed in the new Guidelines. The list below outlines the key issues identified in the Issues Paper

for the Region, but this is not an exhaustive list. The focus of the issues are generally on sectors that are influenced directly by planning policy. The issues identified are:

- Managing Population Growth and determining Housing Needs in the Region
- How Planning can support Economic Growth in the Region
- Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Competitiveness
- Critical infrastructure to drive Economic Growth
- Strategies to promote and strengthen Education, Research and Development and Skills Development
- Provision of Infrastructure and Utilities – Public Transport, Water and Waste Water Services, Strategic Road and Rail Networks, Ports and Airports, Energy and Communications
- Protecting Biodiversity, Built, Natural, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology of the Region
- Promotion of the Gaeltacht
- Regional Flood Risk Assessment and Protection of Flood Plains
- Agriculture, Marine and Rural Development
- Coastal Zone Management.
- The role of Planning in Providing Social Infrastructure
- Planning for Climate Change
- Planning for Recreation, Sports and Leisure facilities
- The role of Planning in Accommodating and Promoting Tourism in the Region
- Healthcare, Social Inclusion and Quality of Life Issues
- The Water Framework Directive
- Interregional Issues
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA).

What are Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment?

For the first time, the new Guidelines will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment. SEA is a step by step approach which is documented to ensure that key environmental issues are carefully considered and that significant environmental impacts are

addressed in the drafting of the Guidelines. The SEA process will include the following key stages:

- ◆ the drafting of a Scoping Report which will highlight and document the key environmental issues affecting the Region. This Report will be drafted during the consultation period on the Issues Paper and will be completed in April/May 2009.
- ◆ the drafting of a detailed Environmental Report based on the issues highlighted in the Scoping Report above. This Report will be advertised for public consultation during the same period as the draft RPGs (Oct – Dec 2009).

Appropriate Assessment is an assessment by a competent person, such as an ecologist, who looks at the potential impacts of new plans and policies on the conservation objectives of protected sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), also referred to as Natura 2000 sites. This assessment must document how decisions are made in the RPG review process and must ensure that negative impacts, both within and outside these sites, are avoided. Like SEA, a report will be prepared assessing how the Guidelines will impact on all Natura 2000 sites with the ultimate aim of avoiding negative impact on them.

What is your role?

The Regional Authority wants to know what are the key regional issues for people living/working within and adjoining the South-East Region. The RPGs are a spatial planning document and will therefore not provide a solution to all of the South-East Region's problems. They will, however, have a long-term positive impact on the growth and development of the Region, both now and in the future. We would like to know what you want your Region to look like, how it should function and where investment and growth should be focused. Submissions received during the consultation period will be used to frame the draft Guidelines.

What is your organisation's role?

As an organisation, you may have specialist skills and experience in areas that could make a telling contribution to the new Guidelines. This experience may be related to running businesses in the South-East Region or may be in working with community groups. Your input will be invaluable in the framing of the new Guidelines. If your organisation is involved in providing key infrastructure or supplying ICT for example, we are keen to be made aware of expansion plans and their level of importance in servicing the business and residential communities of the South-East Region.

When can you make submissions?

Submissions on the Issues Paper are invited, in writing only, during the period

**26th February - 5pm on 30th April, 2009
inclusive**

Submissions should be made to:

**RPG Officer,
South-East Regional Authority
Áras Forbartha
1 Gladstone Street
Clonmel
Co. Tipperary.
E-mail: dir@sera.ie**

What happens after all the submissions are received?

All submissions will be read, summarised and assessed in a report by the Director of the Regional Authority. The Report will then be presented to the Steering Committee of the South-East Regional Authority and subsequently to its Members (Councillors from each of the six County/City Councils). This document, along with other policy documents and reports, will form the basis of the draft Guidelines.

Will you get to see and comment on the Draft Guidelines?

Yes. The new Guidelines will be prepared in draft form by October/November 2009. Once

they are finalised and agreed by the Steering Committee and the Members of the Regional Authority, they will be placed on public display for a minimum period of 10 weeks. You will then have the opportunity to put forward your suggestions and ideas on how the draft RPGs have been developed in the light of the issues raised in this consultation. The Guidelines will be finalised following the public display of the draft document. Issues raised will be considered and amendments made, where necessary, before the document is finally adopted.

Who “makes” the Guidelines?

The decision to adopt Regional Planning Guidelines is made by the Members of the Regional Authority. The research and drafting of the Guidelines are carried out by the Regional Planning Guidelines Team in the South-East Regional Authority.

Where can I get more information?

You can get information on the Regional Planning Guidelines Review by contacting the

**RPG Officer,
South-East Regional Authority
Áras Forbartha
1 Gladstone Street
Clonmel
Co. Tipperary.
Tel: 052 6126200
Fax: 052 6126512
E – mail: dir@sera.ie**

Should you wish to read more about the RPG review, you should visit the Regional Authority's website at www.sera.ie and view the current RPGs and the Issues Paper. The Issues Paper provides a more detailed outline of the issues identified through the review to date. You can also visit your local County, City or Town Council offices where all of the above documentation is available.