



**Department for Communities and Local  
Government**

HENRY CLEARY - Deputy Director  
Housing & Growth Programmes  
Zone 2/G9, Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 020 7944 8850  
Fax: 020 7944 2128  
E-Mail: [henry.cleary@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:henry.cleary@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

**Chief Executives  
of Local Authorities**

**concerned with Eco-town proposals**

[www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

4 November 2008

Dear Chief Executive,

### **Eco-towns: Stage 2 Consultation – Planning Policy Statement and Sustainability Appraisal**

We are today publishing a draft Eco-Towns Planning Policy Statement for consultation, together with an accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and a written statement which sets out the updated short-list of locations under consideration. This formally commences our second stage of consultation on the eco-towns programme. I wanted to write to give you some further detail on the documents being published and to set out how we are taking forward our consultation activity to ensure that all interested parties have the opportunity to feed in views.

The **draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS)** provides further detail on the proposed planning process for eco-towns, with detail on the high standards that an eco-town application would need to meet in order to be approved through the planning system. We are seeking people's views directly on the standards proposed in the draft PPS and have set out a number of key consultation questions for respondents to consider.

The **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** which accompanies the PPS is an evidence based document which we have commissioned from Scott Wilson which sets out the strengths and weaknesses of the locations being considered and the issues which need to be addressed in proposals. It looks in detail at both the national and local picture.

Further details on the process, the consultation questions and how to respond are set out in the draft PPS. I am enclosing some of the most relevant documents and an overview of how the various documents come together. Further details are available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingsupply/ecotowns>.

**Next Steps** Consultation on the draft PPS and associated documents will run from November 2008 to February 2009 and will be followed by publication of the final PPS and list of locations with the potential to be an eco-town. We have expanded the list to take account of the Sustainability Appraisal, including two additional locations supported by local authorities. As the Minister has indicated it is important that we can secure some good exemplar projects to help guide our response to climate change but we are aware that some of the schemes still have major issues to overcome. The Minister has also stressed that she

is not committed to a particular number of locations for the final list. Going forward, worked-up proposals will still need to be considered through the planning system in the normal way.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H Cleary". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**HENRY CLEARY**

## **Eco-Towns: Stage 2 Consultation**

Launch of Stage 2 consultation sees the publication of several documents. These are summarised below, with details of how to access them and feed in views:

- **Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS):** provides further detail on the proposed planning process for eco-towns, with detail on the high standards that an eco-town application would need to meet in order to be approved through the planning system. We are seeking people's views directly on the standards proposed in the draft PPS and have set out a number of key consultation questions for respondents to consider. A final PPS is due to be published alongside the final list of prospective locations in 2009.
- **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA):** an evidence based suite of documents undertaken by Scott Wilson for CLG which set out the strengths and weaknesses of the programme and the locations being considered. Undertaken at a strategic level, it is necessarily broad in its assessment, conclusions, and recommendations. The SA should be read in four parts:
  - i) The **SA of the PPS**
  - ii) The **SA of the Programme – Introduction**
  - iii) The **SA of the Programme - Locational chapters**
  - iv) The **SA of the Programme – Conclusions**

The sections above are accompanied by a **Non-Technical Summary** which summarises the findings of the SA and HRA of the draft Eco-Towns PPS and Programme.

- **Impact Assessment:** assesses the likely costs, benefits and impacts of the eco-towns planning policy statement. This will be updated and published alongside the final PPS following consultation.
- **Summary of consultation responses:** summary of responses received during stage 1 consultation (April to July) and how views have been fed into stage 2.

These documents are subject to a 13-week consultation period (4 November 08 – 19 February 09). Further details on the process, the consultation questions and how to respond are set out in the draft PPS.

## **Consultation and engagement**

Launch of stage 2 consultation is complemented by a range of **supporting communications** activity. A range of exhibition and consultation events will be taking place in venues close to the sites of the potential eco-towns. The events, which will take place in November and early December 2008, will also be aimed at informing members of the public about the purpose of the national programme for eco-towns, in the context of housing pressures and the need to tackle climate change. In addition, stakeholder events will be taking place and enhanced information will be available online including opportunities for users to provide feedback. Details of the public exhibitions will be advertised as soon as they are finalised in advance in the local press, and will be available on the Communities and Local Government website.

All documents are available on the Communities and Local Government website at [www.communities.gov.uk/ecotowns](http://www.communities.gov.uk/ecotowns) and the consultation events at [www.direct.gov.uk/ecotownshaveyoursay](http://www.direct.gov.uk/ecotownshaveyoursay)

If you would like further information on any of the above or hard copies of documents where necessary please contact the Eco-Towns Team at Zone 2/G9, Eland House, London, SW1E 5DU or by email to: [ecotowns@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ecotowns@communities.gsi.gov.uk).

- Please note that it will take some time for the documents to be uploaded to the internet on the day of publication so please bear with us if you are having difficulty accessing.