

APPENDIX 6

East Midlands Regional Plan: Partial Review

Section 4 (4) Authority Advice to the East Midlands Regional Assembly

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Background

1. The County Council has been requested by EMRA to advise on how best to address national statutory carbon reduction targets with regard to the most viable renewable and low carbon energy technologies for their area (particularly heat networks, on-site renewable, and regional scale renewables including wind farms). This advice should be based on the period from 2006 to 2031.
2. The Climate Change Act 2008 requires Government to reduce CO₂ emissions by 80% by 2050 against 1990 levels (subject to any changes that may be agreed at Copenhagen).

Current Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Emissions and Targets

3. The following table sets out the historical, current and targets for annual CO₂ emissions in Leicestershire. The figures to be achieved by 2031 effectively require that we halve our current emissions per capita by that time. However, it is important to note that the 2031 target is not an end point, but a step on the way towards a low carbon lifestyle.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Targets (Leicestershire)	Thousand Tonnes	Tonnes per capita
1990 (20% higher than 2007)	6,875	12.0
2007 Actual	5,730	8.9
2031 Target	3,300	4.5
2050 Target (80% lower than 1990)	1,375	1.7

See footnote

4. Clearly, business as usual is not an option if the Government's CO₂ target is to be met, and climate change mitigated. A step change is needed in the way we currently live and work. The RSS itself can only help in some ways in helping to deliver this step change. However, it should certainly do all that it can to help deliver the changes needed. These ways include:
 - a) Ensuring all new development is as low carbon as possible. All new development, other than a few exceptional energy positive buildings, will add to the CO₂ burden; the best that the RSS can do would be to

ensure that development is as carbon efficient as possible. The government's current proposal is for housing development to be zero carbon from 2016 and non-residential development from 2019. The RSS should consider whether:

- i) these dates need to be brought forward in order to help achieve carbon reduction targets; and
 - ii) there should be interim targets established to help developers make the journey to zero carbon and to help deliver reduced carbon emissions;
- b) Ensuring that policies are developed that encourage renewable energy generation projects to be brought forward and that reduce obstacles to their consent. The County Council considers that it would not be appropriate for the planning system to attempt to take a view on what technologies are going to be the most viable at this time but instead considers that the industry as a whole should be encouraged on appropriate sites;
 - c) Provide a transport framework that is based on the Government's 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System' approach;
 - d) Ensuring that green infrastructure provision is both adequate in terms of area, accessibility and quality.

Footnotes

- a) The Climate Change Act requires Government to reduce CO₂ emissions by 80% by 2050 against 1990 levels (subject to any changes that may be agreed at Copenhagen)
- b) Emissions in Leicestershire in 2007 are estimated by the Department of Energy and Climate Change at 5,729,000 tonnes (or approximately 8.9 tonnes per capita).
- c) There are no CO₂ figures available for Leicestershire in 1990. In order to get a proxy for this the Government estimates that 2007 figures were 20% lower than 1990. Therefore for Leicestershire the 1990 base would be approximately 6,874,800 tonnes.
- d) The Leicestershire target for 2050 would therefore be 1,374,960 tonnes – i.e. a further reduction against 2007 figures of some 4,354,040 tonnes.
- e) By 2031 the target to be reached would be 3,298,861 tonnes (on a straight arithmetic basis – although there are good grounds for arguing that progress should aim to be faster than this).
- f) The Regional Spatial Strategy Partial Review documentation includes a variety of population figures for 2031. (The RSS 2009 housing provision scenario gives a figure for Leicestershire of 727,906 and the ONS 2006 based trend scenario would give 792,824). The lower of these two figures would give a population increase of some 88,000 against 2007 levels. The per capita emissions in 2031 would need to be 4.5 tonnes to achieve the 2031 'target' – i.e. we each need to reduce our CO₂ emissions by about 0.2 tonnes per annum.