

Review of Planning Policy Guidance Note 21 (PPG21) on tourism - consultation

On 5th May 2006 the responsibilities of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) transferred to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

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Publication title: Review of Planning Policy Guidance Note 21 (PPG21) on tourism - consultation

Audience: Local planning authorities, tourism industry, tourism developers

Consultation period: February 2003 to 23 May 2003

Price: Free

Summary

This consultation paper seeks views on the cancellation of Planning Policy Guide 21 (PPG21) on planning for tourism and its replacement with good practice guidance.

ORDER

This publication is out of print and only available online - see below to view.

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Note: The above publication was issued by our former department, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). ODPM became Communities and Local Government **on 5 May 2006** - all references in the text to ODPM now refer to Communities and Local Government.

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Review of Planning Policy Guidance Note 21 on Tourism

This letter seeks views and comments on the attached consultation paper proposing the cancellation of PPG21 and its replacement with good practice guidance.

The planning green paper, published in December 2001, proposed changes to modernise the planning system to achieve an improved, simpler, faster and more accessible system that is better suited to the needs of communities and local economies. To help achieve this, a review of all national planning policy was proposed with the aim of producing more concise policy. More detailed advice on how policy can be implemented will be set out in good practice guides such as the one on tourism being proposed here.

The Government has an ongoing commitment to the tourism industry, which it wishes to see flourish in response to the market. At the same time tourism must contribute to sustainable development, seeking to balance growth with conservation of the environment. The aim must be to attract visitors while maintaining those features of wider and enduring value that help to encourage tourism in the first place.

Preparation of this consultation paper has taken account of the findings from research carried out on behalf of the ODPM and through working closely with DCMS who are the lead Government Department for tourism.

The period of public consultation will last for 12 weeks and we invite responses by **Friday 23 May 2003**.

Preparation of good practice guidance and the decision on the subsequent cancellation of the current planning policy guidance will take into account the responses received to this consultation paper.

Responses, and any questions about the Consultation Paper, should be directed to:

Maxine McLeary
ODPM Planning Policies Division
Zone 4/H4
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Telephone: **020 7944 3962**

Fax: **020 7944 3949**

Or by e-mail to: PPG21Consultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk

It would be helpful if responses from representative groups could give a summary of the people and organisations they represent.

The ODPM may wish to make responses to this Consultation Paper available for public inspection in the ODPM Library. We will assume that you do not object to this unless you specify otherwise. Additionally a summary of responses will subsequently be published on the

ODPM website.

This consultation is being conducted in accordance with the *Government's Code of Practice on Written Consultation*. The criteria are reproduced in the annex to this consultation paper. Any procedural observations or complaints about the consultation exercise should be sent to:

Siobhan Benita
3/17
26 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2WH

or by e-mail to: Siobhan.Benita@odpm-dft.gsi.gov.uk

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Yours faithfully

J P Channing

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Introduction

1. This consultation paper seeks views on the cancellation of PPG21 on planning for tourism and its replacement with good practice guidance. The criteria that the Government requires to be applied to all UK national public consultations in respect of documents in electronic or printed form have been followed in the preparation of this document. They are reproduced in the Annex to this consultation paper.
2. The planning green paper, published in December 2001, proposed changes to the planning system to achieve a better, simpler, faster, more accessible system that better serves both business and the community. To achieve that change it proposed the review of all national planning policy with the aim of having a more concise body of guidance providing clear statements of the national policy which should be followed. More detailed advice, on how policy can be implemented, which can be interpreted more flexibly, will be set out in companion documentation.

The Government's Proposals

3. PPG21 has now been reviewed in the context of the green paper and research (<http://www.planning.communities.gov.uk/rropflat/index.htm>) recently undertaken on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. The main conclusion of this review is that planning for tourism will be better served by issuing good practice guidance than by revising PPG21. This is because the national planning policies that impact on tourism are actually contained in other PPGs where the central issues in planning for tourism - sustainability, accessibility and location of development - are dealt with. So the policies most relevant to tourism are not in PPG21, but in PPG6 on Town Centres, PPG7 on The Countryside and Rural Economy and PPG13 on Transport. Other PPGs are also of relevance - for example PPG2 on developments in Green Belts. Beyond the national policies outlined in other PPGs it is difficult to argue that tourism requires further specific policies at the national level.
4. We propose to issue good practice guidance to help authorities and others understand the significance to planning for tourism of these broader principles and messages. So this guidance could show how key policies should be applied, particularly to derive the economic benefits of tourism while meeting the other objectives of sustainable development. It will also help to overcome the concern in the tourism industry that many local planning authorities lack an understanding of the industry.
5. Guidance should complement detailed policies for tourism to be developed at the regional level. Tourism is a clear example where regional and sub-regional planning could be used to provide a more detailed planning policy framework. Such a shift towards more detailed policies at the regional level would fit well with the regional approach to tourism strategies that already exist.

The Importance of Tourism

6. Travel and tourism is a huge industry of enormous economic importance. Most communities

in the UK feel its effects in some way. As one of the largest industries in the UK it:-

- is worth approximately £74 billion a year, roughly 4.5% of GDP and accounts for 6% of consumer spending;
- supports around 2.1 million jobs - around 7% of all people in employment in Great Britain;
- consists of 127,000 VAT registered businesses, 80% of which are small or micro enterprises with a turnover of less than £250,000 per annum; and
- brought in 23 million overseas visitors to Britain in 2001 and is our largest invisible export earner.

7. A wide range of businesses depends in whole or in part on tourism. These include not only hotels and other accommodation providers, but also restaurants, shops, theatres, transport businesses and attractions like theme parks and museums. Other sectors such as retailing and construction also benefit indirectly from tourism income.

8. Global predictions are for the volume of visitors to grow in the long-term. In the UK the key trends are:-

- continued growth in domestic short-breaks, of between 1-3 nights, at the expense of holidays of 8 nights or longer. 31% of domestic holiday trips were classified as 'secondary holidays' in 1990, but by 1999 this had increased to 60%.
- a steeper rise in the number of visits to towns and cities over other locations, but in terms of overall trips, the seaside is still the largest sector;
- a growth in leisure day visits; and
- steady growth in business tourism spend, above the overall tourism growth rate.

National Tourism Policy

9. The Government's policy, as set out in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's 1999 strategy document Tomorrow's Tourism, is to encourage tourism to be world-class in every respect. It wishes to see tourism grow rapidly and to be harnessed as a driving force in bringing about development that contributes to the nation's economic, social and cultural well-being. This will be facilitated by modernising infrastructure such as hotels, restaurants and transport links and augmenting it with new infrastructure located to support the long-term sustainable development of the industry.

10. However, to ensure sustainability we must also take care of the broader fabric on which tourism in the UK depends - our environment, heritage, culture, and the diversity of our landscape and local communities. So tourism growth should be handled carefully to:-

- be an element in regeneration projects in many coastal resorts and urban areas, stimulate growth, develop and attract new businesses and revitalise run down areas;
- provide much needed training and employment opportunities for large numbers of people;
- contribute to revitalising rural economies and communities;
- enable the conservation of many historic buildings and landscapes that might otherwise be lost;
- contribute to nature conservation and biodiversity; and
- foster social inclusion and widen access to culture, heritage and the countryside.

Tourism and Planning

11. The land use planning system has a key part to play in ensuring that tourism-related development maximises the economic and employment benefits that tourism can bring, in a way that is sustainable and protects those qualities in the environment on which tourism depends. The key issues for sustainable tourism development remain constant and they are the need to ensure:-

- new development is sustainable, including the need for sustainable transport links which offer access by a variety of modes of transport;
- new tourism development appropriately located and sensitively designed;
- that tourism makes a full contribution to economies of both urban and rural areas; and
- the role of tourism in urban renaissance and the rural economy is fully recognised.

12. The existing PPG21, published in November 1992, contains much material about the nature of the tourism industry, its contribution to the national economy and the need to protect the quality of the environment on which tourism depends. Very few of the messages it contains are specific planning policies. PPG21 does not reflect the more recent policy emphasis on sustainability, the urban renaissance agenda or the issues around social inclusion, which are already contained in other, more recent, PPGs, and in particular:-

- PPG13 on Transport
- PPG6 on Town Centre and Retail development
- PPG7 on the Countryside
- PPG2 on Green Belts
- PPG17 on Open Space, Sport and Recreation

13. These PPGs will be revised into the new style Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) proposed in the planning green paper. The aim of this process will be to make their policy messages clearer and more concise. The general benefits of this will be enjoyed by the tourism industry as much as any other because policy will be more readily understood and implemented.

Good Practice Guidance on Planning for Tourism

14. It is most important for the tourist industry that local planning authorities have a good understanding of the needs of the industry and have advice and guidance to enable them to develop appropriate policies for tourism in development plans (or their successors) and to take the right decisions on planning applications. The existing planning policy guidance gives little assistance with this. We believe that both planners and the tourism industry will reap substantial benefits from the provision of up-to-date good practice guidance that addresses issues of concern to planners and tourism developers. It will advise on how planning policy can be developed and applied in ways that can benefit the tourism industry and meet national policy objectives.

15. We believe that a revision of PPG21 on Tourism, within the parameters set out in the Green Paper, would do no more than repeat the policy advice already contained in other PPGs. Effective good practice guidance, which can be more comprehensive in what it considers, more practical and more applicable to the problems of particular areas, will be of far greater value in meeting the needs of planners and the industry. Good practice guidance can address, in detail, issues such as:-

- tourism in city centres and rural areas;
- predicting and managing visitor numbers and impacts;
- how the growth in sustainable business tourism can be facilitated;
- the increasing interdependence between tourism and sport and leisure;
- locating new hotel development;
- dealing with seasonal occupancy issues arising from some types of tourism development;
- making provision for environmental improvements to caravan parks; and
- relating regional economic and tourism strategies to the more detailed planning policy framework for tourism at the local level.

16. We intend to produce comprehensive good practice guidance which will:-

- examine the key issues around planning for tourism;

- highlight the relevant planning policy guidance with implications for tourism;
- include examples of best practice in developing planning policies which meet planning policy objectives whilst recognising and responding to pressures for tourism development; and
- suggest tools and techniques for taking these issues into account in regional planning guidance and development plans (or their successors).

17. It will provide local planning authorities with the advice and information they need to take full account of the needs of tourism in their areas. It will help ensure planners recognise the employment opportunities and economic advantages that can result from a successful tourism industry, whilst at the same time protecting both the local environment and the needs of local residents. It will also allow local authorities dealing with important tourism issues, to share understanding of how these may be best resolved and successful solutions devised. We envisage the provision of advice for local authorities on approaches to a wide range of tourism issues, together with tools and techniques for balancing the needs of the industry with other planning policy objectives. We see the preparation of this guidance as providing the opportunity to involve tourism industry representatives and local planning authorities.

18. Once good practice guidance is published we believe that PPG21 would serve no useful purpose in terms of planning guidance and we would then propose to abolish it.

Consultation on these proposals

19. We welcome comments from local authorities, the tourism industry and other interested parties and individuals on the issues set out in this consultation paper, including what should be covered in the proposed good practice guidance. We would particularly welcome an answer to the question

"Do you agree that PPG21 should be cancelled once good practice guidance on planning for tourism is published?"

20. All responses should be sent to

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4/H4 Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU

Telephone: **020 7944 3962**
Fax: **020 7944 3949**

Or by e-mail to PPG21Consultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Responses should be received not later than Friday 23rd May 2003

Annex

Statement of Consultation

1. Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.
2. It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.
3. A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.
4. Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.
5. Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.
6. Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.
7. Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.

