

THE ARCHAEOLOGY FORUM

a grouping of independent bodies concerned with archaeology

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30 October 2009

Dear Mr Hurley,

Policy statement on Regional Strategies and Guidance on establishment of Leaders Boards

The Archaeology Forum is a grouping of the key, non-governmental organisations concerned with archaeology in the UK. Its members with a remit for England include the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers UK, the Council for British Archaeology, the Institute of Conservation, the Institute for Archaeologists, the National Trust, Rescue, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers, and the Society of Museum Archaeologists UK.

The Archaeology Forum is grateful to have the opportunity to contribute its views to the consultation on the policy statement on regional strategies. There has been a significant evolution in the approach to developing regional policy for sustainable economic growth since consultation last year regarding the Sub-National Review (SNR) and its implications. In particular, we welcome in the new policy statement that 'sustainable economic growth means economic growth that can be sustained and is within environmental limits' and that 'responsible regional authorities will therefore need to consider the environmental limits that should apply in preparing their strategy and how its policies impact on such limits'.

The Forum notes that Defra is working to develop a national core sustainability framework and that, in the context of this, will be publishing guidance on the consideration of environmental limits in the policy formulation process. The Forum would like to emphasise

that the consideration of environmental limits should take into account the character of the historic environment.

Looking at the draft policy statement for the ‘Content of Regional Strategies’, we note the requirement for an evidence base to underpin the Strategy. There will need to be guidance on this for historic environment aspects, given that the existing evidence base is held variously at district, county and unitary authority levels.

The Forum is strongly of the view that in 4.9, point 7. (scope of the Regional Strategy’s policies and priorities), ‘Priorities for the protection, enhancement and access’ to the environment should include ‘the built and natural environment, including biodiversity and the historic environment’.

We are pleased to see that English Heritage (the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England) is included as a relevant body for consultation on regional strategies.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Gill Chitty
Council for British Archaeology,
Secretary, The Archaeology Forum

The Archaeology Forum’s members are:

The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers UK
The Council for British Archaeology
The Institute of Conservation
The Institute for Archaeologists
The National Trust
The National Trust for Scotland

Rescue: the British Archaeological Trust
The Society of Antiquaries of London
The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
The Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers
The Society of Museum Archaeologists UK