

Embargoed until 0.00 Monday 10 December 2007

NEWS RELEASE



Date 10 12 2007

Ref. 2007 1012

Minister for the Region to publicly present the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft

Liam Byrne MP, Minister for the West Midlands Region is to formally present the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase Two Revision Draft at an event on Monday 10 December.

The Phase Two Revision will be presented alongside the West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy (WMRES) in what is seen as a strong starting position in the development of the first single integrated strategy for the West Midlands.

The Phase Two Revision includes proposals to develop a minimum of 365,600 extra new homes in the region over the next twenty years. These proposals are the culmination of a major piece of work involving all local authorities in the region, which has examined carefully the development of the region. Later this month these figures, within the Phase Two Revision, will be recommended to the Secretary of State. Following submission, there will be a 12 week formal consultation period running from 7 January through to 28 March 2008. It is anticipated that an examination in public will be held sometime over the autumn of 2008, with the final approval coming in 2009.

West Midlands Regional Assembly chairman, Cllr David S Smith said: "The WMRSS Phase Two Revision is the most important strategy ever produced for the Region. More than any other plan produced for the Region, the Phase Two Revision will change the way we live for the next 20 years. It establishes where future housing will be located, how we will locate centres of employment to provide the jobs for the future. It addresses issues as far reaching as climate change, transport and waste recycling.

"We have worked closely with Advantage West Midlands to ensure our policies, for example, for employment land provision and the future developments of our town and city centres are fully aligned and consistent with the WMRES, and based upon a common evidence base. The WMRSS Phase Two Revision is a vitally important document and has a key role to play in providing the opportunities for sustainable development that is necessary to achieve the economic growth to which the Region aspires."

Liam Byrne MP added: "We are pleased that the WMRSS Phase Two Revision has continued to place considerable emphasis on Urban Renaissance and the use of brownfield land. This is exactly the sort of action that is required across all Major Urban Areas of the Region – including Birmingham, the Black Country, Coventry and the North Staffordshire Conurbation.

The alignment of the WMRSS and WMRES bodes well for the future representing an important first step towards developing a single Integrated Regional Strategy.”

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Notes to editors:

The presentation of the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft will be held at Innovation Centre, Longbridge Technology Park, Birmingham, B31 2TS from 8.30am to 10am.

Issued by: Chilufya Dawo, Head of Communications, 0121 678 1044/ 07917475652

1. The West Midlands Regional Assembly ('the Assembly') represents a wide range of democratic, social and economic interests throughout the West Midlands region.
2. The Assembly's membership consists of 100 nominated representatives, with 68 members representing the local authority, 16 representing the business sector and 16 representing other economic and social partners.
3. The Assembly provides a platform for organisations to consider matters of common concern including: regional planning, transport, economic prosperity, sustainability, culture and Europe. It also supports regional policy forums and task groups on social inclusion, faith, housing, life long learning/skills, health, rural and community safety/crime reduction.
4. The Assembly works in partnership with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) the regional development agency (RDA), the Government Office West Midlands (GOWM), Regional Action West Midlands (RAWM) the West Midlands Local Government Association (WMLGA) and other regional and local organisations from across the West Midlands region.
5. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body, and is also responsible for scrutinising the operation of the region's RDA, Advantage West Midlands.
6. For further information, visit our website www.wmra.gov.uk

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