

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

Phase Three Options Consultation

Overview

- What is the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)
- Key Objectives of the West Midlands RSS
- RSS Revision Process
- RSS Phase Three Revision
- Appraisals and Assessments
- Provisional Timetable
- Next Steps – Options Consultation

What is the RSS

- Part of the 'Development Plan' - Local Development Documents and major planning decisions need to be in general conformity with the RSS
- Provides a framework for other regional, sub-regional and local strategies, plans and programmes, e.g. Regional Economic Strategy
- Draft RSS prepared by the WMRA
- RSS finalised and published by Central Government (i.e. Government policy)

Key Objectives of the West Midlands RSS

Current RSS Identifies 4 Key Challenges:

- Urban Renaissance
- Rural Renaissance
- Diversifying and modernising the Region's economy
- Modernising the transport infrastructure of the West Midlands

Revisions of the RSS

- RSS originally published in June 2004
- Secretary of State recommended some issues should be developed further
- Phased Revision – 3 Phases
- A “partial revision” that will support and develop the existing strategy – not a full review

A 'Phased' Revision

Revision undertaken in three phases:

- **Phase One**: Sub-regional strategy for the Black Country
- **Phase Two**: Covering selected issues on housing, employment land, centres, transport and waste
- **Phase Three**: Critical Rural Services; Culture, Sport and Tourism; Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople; Environmental Issues and Minerals Policy

RSS Revision Process

- Preparation of Project Plan, incl. formal consultation
- Development of Options, incl. period of public consultation
- Development of Preferred Option, submission to Secretary of State and formal consultation
- 'Examination in Public' by independent Panel
- Secretary of State's Proposed Changes, incl. period of public consultation
- Secretary of State publishes final RSS Revision



WMRA &
partners



Secretary
of State/
GOWM/
Panel

Sub National Review

- In July 2007, the Government published a **Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration**. Among other things, Government proposes to bring RSS's and the Regional Economic Strategies together into a single Regional Strategy
- WMRA and GOWM agreed to review the process and timetable following the Options consultation to ensure that the Phase Three work completed to date will be taken forward into the single Regional Strategy in the most effective way

Phase Three Revision – Topics

- **Rural Services:** To identify provision of services that are critical to the sustainability of rural communities
- **Housing:** To increase provision of pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- **Culture, Sport and Tourism:** To strengthen RSS policies to support cultural, sport and tourism needs of the Region
- **Environment:** To update existing Quality of Environment policies in the RSS and consider need for new policies related to flood risk, renewable energy and Green Belt
- **Minerals:** To safeguard minerals and examine future supply of aggregates

Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Traveller Showpeople (GT&TS) - Objectives

- Increase the number of pitches to address under-provision identified in GT Accommodation Assessments (GTTA's)
- Ensure sufficient plots for the accommodation of Travelling Showpeople
- Recognise, protect and ensure the traditional travelling way of life of GT&TS, also respecting the interests of settled communities
- Include fair, realistic and inclusive policies for the accommodation needs of GT&TS

Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GT&TS) – Key Issues

GTAA's suggest a regional need for:

- **660** additional Residential G&T pitches (2007-2012)
- **279** additional Residential G&T pitches (2012-2017)
- **244** additional Transit G&T pitches between (2007-2017)
- **118** additional Travelling Showpeople pitches (2007-2012)
- Current pattern of provision in Region is uneven
- Views sought on number of pitches and plots to accommodate the needs of GT&TS across the Region
- Views sought on broad distribution of GT&TS pitches and plots across the Region

Appraisals and Assessments

- Sustainability Appraisal: will examine the environmental, economic and social effects of the revised policies
- Habitat Regulations Assessment: will ensure that revised policies do not adversely affect European habitat sites within the West Midlands
- Rural Proofing: will ensure that the needs of rural areas are adequately considered

Provisional Timetable for RSS Phase Three Revision



- 29th June - 14th August Options document issued for consultation
- Autumn / Winter 2009 - Development of a Preferred Option
- February 2010 - Preferred Option submitted to Secretary of State
- Spring 2010 - Consultation on Preferred Option
- Autumn 2010 - Examination in Public
- Autumn 2011 - Final RSS Phase Three Revision published

**Note: WMRA and GOWM to review process and timetable following
Options consultation**

Next Steps

Phase Three Options Consultation

- Options consultation event – at Burlington Hotel, Birmingham – 2nd July
- Consultation event with the RSS Reference Groups – 30th July
- Consultation with Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Sub-Regional consultation events
- Consultation closes Friday, 14th August 2009

Further Information

Further information and copies of RSS Phase Three Revision documents available from WMRA website:

[www.wmra.gov.uk/Planning and Regional Spatial Strategy/RSS Revision/RSS Revision Phase 3.aspx](http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Planning_and_Regional_Spatial_Strategy/RSS_Revision/RSS_Revision_Phase_3.aspx)