

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy
Phase Two Revision – Spatial Options
Analysis and Review of Consultation Responses, May 2007

**Addendum to the report to reflect the consultation response received from
RPS Planning and Development on behalf of Hilton Park @ Junction 11
(Respondent No 1270)**

Background

It has been brought to WMRA's attention that some elements of the consultation response to the Spatial Options consultation made by RPS Planning and Development on behalf of Hilton Park @ Junction 11 are not included in the consultation report. The following steps have been taken to address this and to ensure that the response is taken into account in the process of developing the Preferred Option:-

1. The WMRA Secretariat asked Consensus Planning Ltd., the consultants who prepared the consultation analysis report, to analyse those elements of the consultation response which had been omitted.
2. The analysis of those elements of RPS Planning and Development's response on behalf of Hilton Park @ Junction 11 is included in this addendum to the consultation report (see below).
3. This addendum and RPS Planning and Development's full response on behalf of Hilton Park @ Junction 11 have been forwarded to the RSS Policy Leads who have been asked to take these documents into account in the process of developing the Preferred Option together with the consultation report and other relevant considerations.
4. This addendum has been forwarded to RPS Planning and Development for information.
5. The addendum has been made available on the WMRA website along with the consultation report.
6. The WMRA Regional Planning Partnership has been informed about the addendum to the consultation report.

Please note that this addendum does only cover those elements of RPS Planning and Development's response on behalf of Hilton Park @ Junction 11 which were not included in the original consultation report. The addendum should therefore be read in conjunction with the original consultation report.

Analysis of the response

Employment

RIS1 comments

In the North Black Country and South Staffordshire, there has been success in bringing forward RISs. Land at M6 Junction 11 offers the opportunity to extend high quality investment opportunities further in this sub-region, in conjunction with planned investment by the Highways Agency in the M54 to M6/M6 Toll Motorway link road.

It extends to some 50 ha and can serve the investment needs of the sub-region flexibly, with part of the area suitable for meeting road based distribution requirements.

RIS2 comments

Sub-regional Studies should be undertaken to identify the need for further sites in each sub-region, having regard also to the availability of development options and their accessibility and linkages to wider areas.

RIS3 comments

The emphasis should rightly be placed on high quality sites, but the uses that can be accommodated on RISs should be broadened to include uses across the range from certain B1 office developments, that are not best located in strategic centres, B1 research & development, B1 light industry, B2 general industry and B8 distribution.

Sites should be master planned and broad zones identified for prospective mixes of uses depending upon the size and configuration of the site. However, to maximise the potential for attracting inward investment, the policy should seek to encourage and allow flexibility and avoid over-prescription.

There should be a recognition that RIS investment is likely to require Greenfield land in many parts of the Region.

MIS1 comments

MIS provision involves safeguarding large serviced employment land sites of 50ha for the potential occupation by single major companies. The policy has been unsuccessful in attracting such investment notwithstanding the availability of the Ansty site east of Coventry in Rugby Borough.

South Staffordshire has granted permission for a range of provision at Wobaston Road, north west of Wolverhampton for a MIS and also i54 High Technology site. There is therefore not need for the safeguarding of a further MIS opportunity in the North Black Country South Staffordshire area in the current RSS Revision.

There should however be further flexible RIS opportunities to complement MIS and RLSs where required.

MIS2 comments Each Local Authority should examine the potential for its area to attract and accommodate such development.

MIS3 comments Before sites are selected as MISs they require to be fully assessed in terms of their attractiveness and the realism for an allocation for this purpose. Where sites have failed to deliver, despite appropriate marketing initiatives, the policy should allow some flexibility for alternative forms of occupation especially where substantial investment has already been committed.

RL1 Comments RPS considers that part of the future requirement can be accommodated on large RLSs meeting a range of locational criteria including rail connections. However, a significant proportion of the demand for B8 distribution centres will not have a rail connection requirement and the principal locational requirement will be accessibility close to main centres of population to the national motorway network.

Land at M6 J11 is such a location that need not meet the criteria of RLS policy but which can flexibly accommodate B8 development in conjunction with other employment sectors across a comprehensively masterplanned area. This area is close to the North Wolverhampton and Cannock centres of population on the A460 public transport corridor and on the route of the planned M54 to M6/M6 Toll motorway link road.

RL2 Comments Hilton Park @ Junction 11 recognises that additional RLS should be considered.

Selecting sites that acceptably conform to the proposed criteria will not be straight forward. Few opportunities will emerge in the region that satisfy the proposed criteria, particularly in terms of environmental acceptability.

RPS is not in a position to answer this question directly.

RL3 Comments RPS considers that the proposed criteria are broadly appropriate, qualified with the comment that a significant part of the demand for B8 distribution is not rail based and can appropriately be accommodated on motorway based sites close to centres of population on sites that can be more readily developed in terms of environmental and visual impacts.

Provided the RSS recognizes that B8 development in areas of high demand will not be restricted to RLSs, then the use of the proposed criteria for selecting specialist larger rail based facilities can reasonably proceed.

RL4 Comments Hilton Park@junction 11 has no comment on North Staffordshire RLS requirements.

RL5 Comments The North Black Country and south Staffordshire area is agreed to be one of high demand for distribution and a suitable area for search for a RLS opportunity.

However, concern is expressed over the desirability of developing a 50

to 75 ha site adjacent to one of the railway lines in South Staffordshire in terms of the expected environmental impact.

There are alternative locations adjacent to the motorway nodes in this sub-region where B8 distribution uses can be accommodated, albeit at a lesser scale.

RL6 Comments

Priority should only be afforded to extending existing RSL where there is capacity in the rail and road infrastructure, demand and the availability of the necessary labour supply within a short commuting distance.