

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

Phase Two Revision

**Documentation of the Themed Workshop Event
held on 6th June 2007**

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1 Introduction

The West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA), as the Regional Planning Body for the West Midlands, is currently working on the development of a Preferred Option for the RSS Phase 2 Revision. It is intended that the Preferred Option Draft Submission will be submitted to the WMRA Regional Planning Partnership (RPP) on the 22nd October 2007 for agreement, before it is submitted to the Secretary of State in December 2007.

In shaping the Preferred Option for the RSS Phase 2 Revision, WMRA is continuing to work in partnership with regional partners and communities. As part of the process of developing the Preferred Option, WMRA held a technical ‘themed workshop’ event on the 6th June 2007 to which all RSS Reference Groups and other stakeholder representative groups were invited.

The purpose of the event was to consider the ‘policy steer’ provided by the RPP at its meeting on the 31st May 2007 and to allow the RSS Reference Groups and other stakeholder representative groups an opportunity to make an input into the development of the Preferred Option.

WMRA would like to thank all participants for their contributions to the event. This report aims to summarise the discussion at the event. It is one of a suite of documents and pieces of information that will be used to inform the development of the Preferred Option.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the report including all figures and tables. However, WMRA cannot accept any responsibility for misrepresentations, omissions, errors or inaccuracies. The views expressed in this report are not necessarily those of WMRA.

Format of the event

9:30am	Registration and Coffee
9:45am	Introduction and welcome
9:50am	“Setting the Scene” – Developing the Preferred Option: Where are we now, where are we going, need and challenges and how do we get there.
10:10am	RSS Phase 2 - Sustainability Appraisal
10:20am	Discussion and Questions and explaining the purpose of the Workshops

Themed Workshops 1 – Developing the Preferred Option

10:40 – 10:55 Housing overview and workshop questions

11:00 – 12:30 Breakout into Workshops

- **Workshop 1- Regional Housing Provision**
- **Workshop 2 - Regional Housing Provision**
- **Workshop 3 - Regional Housing Provision**

12:30pm Lunch

Themed Workshops 2 – Developing the Preferred Option

13:00pm Workshops 2 – Other Policy Areas and cross-linkages

- **Workshop 4 - Regional Transport**
- **Workshop 5 - Regional Waste Provision**
- **Workshop 6 - Regional Employment Provision**
- **Workshop 7 - Regional Centres**

14:20pm **Feedback/discussion/round up**

Each Workshop Lead to feedback three key points emerged from the workshop discussion

14:50pm **Close of Workshop**

Please note: *Following the workshops there will be an opportunity for individual discussion/questions with the RSS Policy leads*

2 “Setting the Scene” – Developing the Preferred Option

At the beginning of the workshop a presentation provided an overview of the process of the Phase 2 revision and the purpose and structure of the workshop event. A copy of the presentation is available on the WMRA website.

3 RSS Phase 2 Sustainability Appraisal & Habitats Regulation Assessment

URSUS Consulting Ltd gave a presentation on the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment for Phase 2 of the RSS revision. A copy of the presentation is available on the WMRA website. The presentation was followed by a short questions and answers session which is summarised below.

Discussion points

- The importance of the SA process was stressed and that the SA needs to carry sufficient weight in the RSS process. Participants were reassured that the consultants who undertake the SA are closely involved in the development of the Preferred Option.
- There was some debate about the work on CO2 emissions which has been undertaken as part of the Phase 2 revision and which has informed the SA process. It was highlighted that the “high limitations” scenario was based on challenging assumptions and there were some doubts about the feasibility and appropriateness of that scenario (e.g. significant increase in demolition rates). Several participants felt that the CO2 emissions work should not only look at emissions arising directly from house building but also cover related emissions such as those arising from transport.
- The Habitats Regulation Assessment is a new requirement which has to be an important consideration in shaping the Preferred Option. It is critical that the level of development does not adversely affect the integrity of priority habitats.

4 Housing overview and workshop questions

The housing element of the workshop started with a presentation which provided an overview of the background, issues emerging from the Spatial Options consultation responses and the workshop questions. A copy of the presentation is available on the WMRA website. The presentation was followed by a short questions and answers session which is summarised below. More detailed discussion of housing and related matters took place in the workshop sessions which are summarised in Section 5.

Discussion points

- Some participants felt that the adjustments to the way in which housing numbers are expressed (i.e. move to 2004-based household projections, 2006 base year and net figures) needed to be explained more clearly. WMRA officers explained that a note will be prepared to provide further clarification.
- Representatives from the house building industry queried whether the move from a 2001 to a 2006 base year would create a 'backlog' of housing provision. WMRA officers replied that this was not the case.
- The issue of how the potential 'gap' between the reference level and the household projections might be closed was discussed briefly (more detailed discussion of this issue was left to the workshops). Several participants were of the view that a 'sequential' strategy should be adopted in trying to close the potential 'gap', i.e. looking first at increasing provision in the Major Urban Areas (MUAs), second at the Foci settlements and third at other settlements.
- Different views were expressed in relation to the housing projections and the importance that should be given to them in determining the scale and distribution of housing provision. Some participants argued that the projections are an indicator of demand and should therefore be met. Other participants expressed concerns about the projections (e.g. due to the uncertainties involved) and argued that the projections should only be one of the factors determining housing provision (as stated in PPS3).

Housing workshop questions

1. Would the 'reference level' of around 340,000 dwellings (net) meet PPS3 policy objectives and adequately take into account housing market considerations?
2. Would the 'reference level' meet wider economic, social and environmental concerns?
3. In what way might it be possible to close the gap between the 'reference level' and the potential level of demand (a gap of between 40-60,000 dwellings net) whilst maintaining the principles of the Spatial Strategy?
4. What would be the implications of higher levels of housing, particularly for infrastructure and climate change considerations? How do we mitigate against climate change?
5. What implications are there for implementation and monitoring stemming from questions 1-4?
6. Does the overview of policy paper cover all the issues that need to be covered; if not what is missing and do any policies need to be strengthened? (N.B. attendees need to spend 5 minutes reading through the overview of policies paper).

5 Housing workshops

Following the overview presentation, participants formed three housing workshop groups to discuss the above questions and related matters. The discussion at each workshop group is summarised below.

Housing – Workshop 1

Housing Numbers and Distribution

- Workshop participants felt that the too much emphasis was being placed on the housing figures and the revision therefore seemed to be turning into a technically driven process.
- There were a number of other crucial factors that needed to be brought to the forefront of the debate. These included the impact of housing provision upon people, affordability and the debate about the sense of place, sustainability and infrastructure implications. In addition, it was considered that the monitoring and review of the RSS option for housing should also be built into the process at the earliest stage. Without considering these factors first, we cannot determine the level of numbers.
- The Group clearly agreed that phasing, monitoring and review elements to the Preferred Option were crucial factors and that this needed to be reflected. It is essential that this remains a continuous process.
- Officers clarified that the process of developing the Preferred Option would take into account the above factors. It was also confirmed that the numbers discussed at the workshop were a 'reference point' and that no decision had been made.
- Officers confirmed that the City Region had developed its policies to accommodate a housing figure at Option 2. It was now in the process of determining how polices could move toward a figure around Option 3 and the different ways that this could be achieved – e.g. Urban extensions. The findings will be shared with WMRA.
- The Group agreed that the recommendations agreed by RPP (Paragraph 5.8) are crucial to the distribution of housing and should therefore be reflected in developing the revised /new polices

Emerging Policies/Cross Cutting links

- There was overall support that policy T12 on transport infrastructure should reflect any new or revised proposals for development and that policy T2 should also potentially be amended.
- The Group supported the suggestion to amend the implementation section to reflect the importance of major infrastructure priorities. Access to services is essential if we are to achieve sustainable communities.

- The Infrastructure Study will need to be integrated in determining the scale and distribution of housing. There was concern that the Study may not adequately address or reflect the gaps in rural data and services. It will also need to be mindful that access to rural services, including healthcare provision, will change in the future. The phasing of the RSS (Phase 2 and 3) makes it difficult to bring together the issues around housing provision and distribution and rural services and green infrastructure. These factors will somehow need to be hooked into the Phase 2 process.
- Building on the above point, the Group felt that environmental issues (climate change and sustainable development) needed to be hooked into the Phase 2 process and woven into the Phase 3 revision. The Phase 2 SA will need to recommend what factors will need to be considered in Phase 3.
- Agreement that Policy PA6 should be amended to ensure adequate employment land provision. It was also acknowledged that a range of employment land sites needs to be made available to accommodate different types of uses. There was strong support for the need to get the right balance between housing and employment land. This is essential to for sustainable communities.
- With regards to the Green Belt, the RSS should be an enabling policy to help the LDF process to seek to accommodate changes. Changes to the green belt need to follow a sequential approach which is to be determined on the basis of impact upon regeneration areas, housing need and urban renaissance and sustainability. Need to consider whether urban extensions are factors to be considered in relation to any Green Belt changes. It was noted that reference in Paragraph 5.8 of the RPP paper did not refer to the MUAs.
- Climate Change/Sustainable Development. There was overall agreement to the inclusion of a policy on sustainable development and it was noted that this was not raised in the RPP paper. There is a need to provide an overarching policy on Climate Change and mitigation issues to be fed across the Phase 2 process and not just the housing chapter.

Housing within Major Urban Areas

- There was mixed opinion on the proposed changes to policy CF1 in relation to a specific policy section on North Staffordshire. A number of local authority officers felt that this should be equally applied across the MUAs, which identified local discretion over the minima targets.

Housing – Workshop 2

Scale and distribution of housing provision

- Differing views were expressed as regards the scale of housing provision. Some argued that household projections should be met. In any case, good reasons are required if household projections are not to be met. On the other hand, participants highlighted uncertainties involved in projections and that housing demand is not independent from the supply of housing and other factors. Household projections are one of a set of factors in PPS3 that need to be taken into account. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process was seen as an important factor in informing scale and distribution of housing provision.

- The need to distinguish between housing ‘need’ and ‘demand’ was stressed. It was suggested that we should plan for needs (of local residents) and not demand.
- Not only is the overall level of housing provision important but also its distribution. Participants expressed strong support for the existing RSS strategy. Housing provision in Phase 2 needs to support the objectives of urban and rural renaissance. The distribution of housing should not lead to overspill from the MUAs and thus undermine urban renaissance.
- Participants felt that housing provision should not just be a numbers game but a more sophisticated and robust approach is needed which gives sufficient weight to qualitative issues. It is important that the right type of development occurs in the right locations and at the right time. This includes consideration of design issues, sustainable construction, local impact and local distinctiveness.
- There was strong support for the view that development needs to be phased both spatially (in the right locations) and over time (at the right time). The first 10 years of the plan period are of particular importance for the urban renaissance strategy and the Preferred Option needs to ensure that urban renaissance can gather momentum over this period.
- The critical importance of windfalls for housing provision in the Region was highlighted. One participant felt this was an unreliable source but many participants stressed that in the West Midlands a large proportion of housing completions takes place on windfall sites. This needs to be taken into account in calculating the housing land requirement.
- It is important that due consideration is given to all consultation responses, including those of local residents.

Housing reference point and wider sustainability considerations

- The discussion showed varying views and conflicting objectives. Some felt that the reference point is a good starting point which takes into account a number of considerations, including need and capacity. It was also highlighted that in some parts of the region the reference level may be the maximum capacity of an area to accommodate growth, and that further growth would have negative environmental, social and infrastructure implications. In some parts such as Staffordshire, Option 1 or 2 levels may lead to a population level which may be too low to sustain current levels of service provision, but higher levels may have adverse environmental implications.
- A significant increase in the provision of affordable housing was widely acknowledged as a key challenge. Some argued that underprovision should be addressed by increasing the overall level of house building. However, many participants felt that sufficient affordable housing will only come forward if sufficient public sector funding is provided.
- House building needs to be linked to employment provision to enable all parts of the region to create sustainable communities. There is a need to recognise different needs and challenges in different parts of the region, e.g. MUAs as opposed to remote rural areas.

- Climate change considerations need to be factored in to development of the Preferred Option. This includes consideration of the level of CO₂ emissions arising from different scales and distribution of housing growth. However, not only should this look at CO₂ emission from the housing stock but also at emissions arising from other sources such as transport and demolitions.
- It was discussed whether urban extensions/new settlements could be a sustainable option. Some expressed the view that new settlements/urban extensions may provide a critical mass to allow good public transport provision and decentral energy supply. Others argued that the current RSS strategy rejects urban extensions/new settlements and that urban extensions/new settlements may run counter urban renaissance objectives, e.g. risk that a new settlement will draw investment from other areas.
- Several participants felt that development should be concentrated to create a critical mass to support public transport, decentralised energy supply and the provision of services. It was felt that concentration of development can also help to minimise CO₂ emission (e.g. through decentral energy supply and reducing the need to travel).

Housing reference point and projected housing demand

(To some extent already covered above)

- In determining the scale and distribution of housing both urban and rural renaissance objectives need to be pursued. The RSS needs to allow all parts of the region to create sustainable communities.
- A key test is whether housing figures are deliverable. This includes the provision of infrastructure to support/facilitate housing growth (transport, social and green infrastructure).
- Participants pointed out that private sector house building has remained fairly constant over the past 25 years and expressed doubts as to whether a significant increase in completion rates can be achieved through the private sector. Many felt that public sector provision/investment is required, especially to deliver affordable housing which is not coming forward sufficiently through private sector.

Housing – Workshop 3

Key Points

1. Tensions exist between the philosophy of complementary urban and rural renaissance contained within the West Midlands RSS, the 2004 Housing Projections and the requirements expressed in PPS3. Key issues include:
 - Distribution;
 - Phasing
 - Quality of Development
2. Difficulties will exist in satisfying housing need (in terms of housing type, housing tenure, affordability, location). Whilst the RSS will determine the broad scale and distribution of housing, a range of other factors (e.g. economic) and levers (e.g. funding) will impact upon the implementation of the Strategy.

3. To enable the implementation of housing growth within the West Midlands considerable investment in infrastructure will be required. In some cases “showstoppers” may well exist and the lack of such investment may well cause the strategy to fail. Radical thinking is required to ensure success.

Housing provision

- It was suggested by house-builder interest that, on basis other Regions’ EiPs, the WMRA would have great difficulty in justifying a housing level lower than that suggested by the Projections (i.e. circa 382k). Consequences would include continuing affordability issues.
- A number of others in the workshop supported this stance with the debate widening to express concern that the a level of provision of c340k would work against the Region’s interests by:
 - discouraging the full range of housing need being addressed through the planning system (i.e. effectively encouraging developers to continue to provide flats/apartments over family housing);
 - working against the provision of affordable housing (whether open market or otherwise);
- The group therefore felt that, overall, the proposed level would not be enough to satisfy need and would not therefore be in accordance with PPS3.
- This view however was tempered by the fact that the current process is a ‘revision’ to the RSS not a ‘review’ and that the numbers implied by the 2004 Housing Projections coupled with PPS3 might threaten the core philosophy within the RSS. It was questioned whether an inappropriate distribution would emerge:
 - we would be putting houses where there is insufficient demand to justify;
 - inappropriate urban/rural split
- The workshop acknowledged the link between housing and economy and the need to ensure sufficient local employment is generated to support expanded housing. It was agreed though that this needs to be balanced so that out-migration of jobs and population is not encouraged. Overall, it was concluded that house prices were not in practice constraining the regional economy given that they were significantly lower than in the SE Region.
- Two further issues of balance were discussed:
 - house builders will not want too much land to be made available all at once – there is a delicate balance between satisfying need and maintaining demand;
 - distribution and phasing considerations are critical to enable complementary urban and rural renaissance.
- The house price/income/affordability conundrum was discussed with it being suggested that a step-change to meet housing need. However, this was not simply a matter of increasing the scale of house building; the type of accommodation and type of tenure were also critical. It was suggested that the housing needs of poorer people, particularly in rural areas, cannot be met through current/planning measures alone. More publicly funded schemes will be needed to achieve any significant increase in provision over current rates (e.g. possibly via a new council housing building programme).

- Business representatives expressed concern that the indiscriminate reuse of employment land for housing purposes should not be seen as an easy way to satisfy housing land requirements. This should be regularly monitored and managed. This issue was further highlighted as important in relation to
 - the £10bn output gap and the need for WM Region to narrow this.
 - the need for appropriate infrastructure provision, particularly in the MUAs, to open up land for effective economic use.
- The Group acknowledged that the most sustainable location for development is in urban areas, particularly the MUAs, where there already exists an appropriate critical mass of jobs, services and other opportunities. However, the quality of any development needs to be high in order to make it attractive to investment for both people and business.
- A brief discussion on Urban Extensions to the MUAs concluded that, whilst outside the policy principles of current RSS, in some locations urban extensions might provide part of a solution if a greater scale of housing provision was to be achieved. It would need to be demonstrated, however, how this could benefit rather than hinder Urban Renaissance. Any such partial solution may be complicated by:
 - the need for cross-authority working etc;
 - the need to ensure infrastructure demands of large scale concentrated development (water, transport, etc) are incorporated and the ability to incorporate on-site energy generation demonstrated.
- This was followed by a brief discussion around new settlements. The group accepted that the potential for this would be limited by the large amount of land required to create a sense of place and the demands for infrastructure investment - which could work against the interests of Urban Renaissance.
- The Group were reminded, in line with PPS3, of the need to consider Housing Market Areas.

Infrastructure

- In the limited time remaining the Group had a quick discussion which identified the difficulties and importance of the provision of supporting infrastructure. Whilst RSS was stated by the Group not to be a 'bidding' document the financial implications of the infrastructure requirements arising from growth proposals could be immense beyond the scope of existing programmes.
- The comment was made that if this infrastructure investment is not forthcoming, particularly in the MUAs and areas identified for growth beyond, the RSS will not happen – radical thinking may be required.

Technical clarification required on:

- Does the shift in base year from 2001 to 2006 result in under-provision i.e. the needs in that period not being met?
- An explanatory note is needed on the relationship between Gross and Net housing figures and how these are derived.

Additional point

- Attention was drawn to a Commission for Rural Communities' launch on 14th June relating to Affordable Housing at which a Ministerial Statement is anticipated.

6 Employment land workshop

Key Points

1. Need to protect employment land from the swing in favour of housing development.
2. Need to develop rigorous/defensible methodology for the appropriate allocation of employment land through the Plan Period
3. Need to make an allocation of land to uses lost to other employment purposes (e.g. sui generis).

Employment Land allocations

- Policy Lead introduced by reporting:
 - Strong support for the MUA Minima approach reported. Shire Maxima approach is less clear cut due to the variable patterns of employment land development and importance of the foci.
 - Reference made to Options Report table 3 – now proposing to maintain presence of the “Long Term Need” column.
 - Floated the idea of District-level 5 year and indicative 10 year long term allocations
 - The need to maintain the concept of District allocations to enable the spatial aspects of provision to be managed
- The calculation of the allocations was briefly discussed and the need to devise a rigorous / transparent methodology accepted – essential for EiP purposes. It was suggested that the RSS might “err on the side of caution” so that justifiable (upward) local variations could be readily accommodated with appropriate criteria/guidelines. It was questioned whether past trends is a robust starting point to determine future need though alternative options have not been brought forward.
- It was questioned that since economies are sub-regional whether the correct level for allocations was District level. In the absence of Structure Plans it was felt that such District level information is important and that the potential of cross-boundary working should not be overlooked.
- Definition of “employment land” was explored. Originally taken to include B1, B2 and B8 consideration may now be given to include new waste facilities and an allowance for “sui generis”. The need to make an allocation lost to other employment was identified. The vulnerability of employment land is exacerbated by the lower yields received in comparison to housing
- The need to ensure linkages employment to housing was reiterated to ensure more sustainable patterns of development. Further questions were asked around the determination of the right balance of development and how this should be determined. The importance of mixed-use development was highlighted.
- The approach adopted in other regions was queried and suggested that the link between employment and housing in the WM region was the loosest - though the

danger of over prescription was acknowledged. The need to lock employment policy into the Regional future was emphasised.

- The links with the RES were questioned. Gaps in RIS sites will be considered, along with ancillary uses, and authorities encouraged to bring forward sites with Member support. It was highlighted that the RES is neither locationally specific nor provides a quantum of development. What it does do is provide a framework for activity which is increasingly aligned with the RSS and Infrastructure policy.

Technical clarification required on;

- Calculation methodology for 5 year+10 year reservoir approach to provision of employment land

7 Centres workshop

Context/cross-cutting themes

- Centres policy should not only look at retail and offices but also take into account other uses, e.g. education, recreation and broader cultural provision. One suggestion was to link the hierarchy of strategic centres to a hierarchy of facilities (e.g. sports and cultural facilities).
- Climate change considerations need to be integrated into all policy, including centres and office policy (e.g. carbon emissions and mitigation measures).
- Need to consider the impact of strategic centres policy on existing businesses and communities, including ethnic minority groups, and on smaller centres and business areas. The RSS should inform centre/retail policy at local level by stressing the needs of small and minority ethnic businesses.
- The right balance needs to be struck between promotion of strategic centres/provision of larger facilities and ensuring local provision/meeting daily needs. It was recognised that it is a balancing act to decide whether centre related development should be concentrated in a smaller number of centres or spread among a larger number of centres.
- Transport/accessibility play an important role in promoting the vitality of centres. It is therefore important that links between centres and transport policies are made.

Strategic centres

- The concept of a hierarchy of centres was generally supported. The designation of centres should reflect their current status but also policy considerations such as regeneration needs and proposed levels of housing growth. Many participants felt that some degree of flexibility was needed so that centres can move between tiers of the hierarchy to reflect, for example, the level of housing growth and changing circumstances.
- Similarly, many participants felt that some degree of flexibility was needed as regards the retail floorspace figures for strategic centres. It was suggested that, rather than having figures for the tiers only, a more detailed approach should be adopted in which a figure is specified for each strategic centre. These figures should reflect local circumstances and policy considerations such as regeneration needs, physical capacity and proposed levels of housing growth.
- There was broad support for the concept of phasing retail development in strategic centres. Phasing is important to assess whether development occurs in the right locations at the right time. This requires appropriate monitoring mechanisms. However, different views were expressed as regards the proposed timeframe of the phases. One proposal was to use the two periods 2006-2016 and 2016-2026.
- There are physical constraints to the expansion of some strategic centres and in some cases these constraints may increase as a result of higher levels of housing growth.

Non-strategic centres

- Different views were expressed as regards the need for a broad ‘cap’ on the permissible level of retail development in non-strategic centres. Some felt that the RSS should set a ‘cap’ to support strategic centre policy and to assist the conformity process.
- Several local authority representatives argued the RSS should not set a fixed threshold but that flexibility was needed to allow consideration of local circumstances and needs. This could take the form of a ‘need’ and/or ‘impact’ test which takes into account policy considerations such as regeneration needs and proposed levels of housing development.

Offices

- As regards strategic centres, it was suggested that the RSS should set criteria which specify in what circumstances the figures can be exceeded, e.g. to allow regeneration of centres.
- As regards office development outside the strategic centres, there was broad support for the proposal of not specifying district-wide figures.
- Clarification is needed as to whether the employment land figures include office development in non-strategic centres.
- Many participants highlighted the need for effective control out-of-centre development. It was suggested that large office developments should generally be in strategic centres but to allow exceptions in specific circumstances which are defined by a set of criteria. It was suggested that these criteria should include climate change considerations.

8 Transport workshop

Key Themes

- Need to address climate change
- Transport infrastructure is needed to support growth
- Strategy must be deliverable (realistic and prioritised)
- Need to link potential funding mechanisms e.g. Regional Funding Allocations and Transport Innovation Fund
- All transport policies must be presented in a more explicit 'joined-up' way – we need text changes in the RSS Transport and Accessibility chapter

Discussion Points

There was significant discussion around the specific transport policies being revised and the potential effect on Priorities for Investment. There were a wide variety of views expressed and the following sets out a brief synopsis of these.

- Strategic Park and Ride – different opinions, some agree with proposed changes others do not e.g. park and ride allows people to live outside the major urban areas
- Car Parking Standards – different opinions, some agree with proposed changes others do not. The presently proposed policy approach is based upon the views of the majority of local authorities. However others felt that this would lead to inconsistencies in the approach adopted. Other stakeholders were concerned about any reduction in the availability of parking and its effect on business.
- Demand Management – general agreement, there was considerable support for the retention of the reference to the economy in the existing policy and suggestion that criteria should take account of e.g. the tourist/visitor economy.
- Airports – general agreement however, the impact of aviation on climate change is a major concern and suggestion that the RSS should identify rail as an alternative to air travel
- Priorities for Investment – agreed that this policy needs to be updated to take account of funding mechanisms and the implications of housing/employment policy changes

Headline Conclusions

- The RSS needs:
 - a clear set of prioritised transport schemes – national, regional and sub-regional;

- to demonstrate that the schemes are integrated with other RSS policies - notably housing/employment, are sustainable/support sustainable development; and
 - most importantly address climate change.
- The Regional Transport Strategy must be deliverable – we need to bridge the funding and reality gaps between strategy and delivery.
 - Funding and phasing transport priorities is critical.

9 Waste workshop

Broad Locations for Waste Management provision

- General feeling that GOWM needed to clarify what they considered to be broad locations and how this should be built into the RSS.
- Officers felt that the RSS should not be expected to specify where provision should be located within individual sub-regions, as these should be reflected in the Waste Development Framework and should not be driven by a top down approach. Instead the RSS should set out suggested tonnage for each WPA.
- The key role of the RSS was an enabling role to ensure that the provision and location of sites is made available.
- Policy Lead suggested that rather than specifying specific site locations the way forward should be to specify broad locations that in line with the settlement classification set out in the current RSS and Preferred Option (i.e. MUAS, Sub-Regional Foci other larger settlements). It was agreed that the Policy Lead would draft a form of words and to share/agree this with GOWM.
- At the strategic level the RSS will need to specify that a range of sites of different sites will need to be made available through the Core Strategies. It should also specify that broad locations should be accessible to their source area.
- In relation to Green Belts, RSS policies should include a form of wording that states any development of Waste Management facilities should not distract away from the Green Belt.

Hazardous Waste

- The WM is a net importer of hazardous waste and there is a requirement for a 3rd facility. There is a need to provide a facility in or close to the MUA to treat contaminated soil prior to redevelopment.
- One suggestion was that Sandwell has produced Supplementary Planning Guidance, which identifies a potential hazardous waste treatment site. This could provide a facility for the Black County and Birmingham.

Sustainable Design

- The discussion referred to a point raised in the Housing Workshop on policy CF12 in relation to sustainable design of buildings. The group felt that this should be applicable to all developments and not just housing and that sustainability in construction should have two elements to this:
 - The construction process;
 - Operational use of the building – design for life.

10 Feedback, discussion and round up

- It was stressed that climate change considerations need to be woven in throughout the development of the Preferred Option. If necessary and appropriate, an overarching policy could be inserted but, more importantly, it needs to be demonstrated that climate change has been considered in all policy fields.
- It was suggested that rather than having an overarching climate change policy the RSS could include an overarching sustainable development policy which also covers climate change.
- In order to address the challenges of climate change, the RSS needs to look at both mitigation and adaptation measures. The latter could include an increase in green space in urban areas to reduce temperatures.
- Quantitative issues around the provision of housing are important but qualitative issues also need to be considered in developing the Preferred Option. This needs to include climate change and environmental considerations. The higher the number of housing growth, the greater the need to ensure high quality of the location, type and standard of development.
- It is important that due consideration is given to all consultation responses, including those of local residents.
- The importance of creating walkable neighbourhoods and ensuring local provision of facilities was highlighted. The question was raised whether the RSS could include a statement to support this.

11 List of participants¹

John	Acres	Redrow Homes
Alex	Angus	WMRA
Paul	Ansell	Lichfield District Council
Janet	Baker	Department of Health (West Midlands)
Maurice	Barlow	Solihull MBC, WMRA Policy Lead Environment
Dorothy	Barratt	North Warwickshire Borough Council
Paul	Bayliss	WMRA
Jake	Berriman	South Shropshire District Council
Angela	Blair	Sandwell Primary Care Trust
Chris	Blakeley	WMRA
Nick	Blamire-Brown	Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Bruce	Braithwaite	Staffordshire County Council, WMRA Policy Lead Waste
Jeremy	Bruce	Sustainability West Midlands
Valerie	Burton	West Midlands Amenity Societies Association
Brian	Camfield	Staffordshire County Council
Dave	Carter	Birmingham City Council, WMRA Policy Lead Employment Land
Gavin	Clarke	Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Rowena	Clayton	Department of Health (West Midlands)
Paul	Coburn	Telford & Wrekin Council
Ray	Colbourne	GOWM
Paul	Collings	South Staffordshire Council
Adrian	Cooper	Shropshire County Council
Andy	Cowan	Warwickshire County Council
Liam	Cowden	Shropshire County Council
Denise	Craig	West Midlands Policy Development Officer
Heather	Crocker	AWM

¹ All RSS Reference Groups and other stakeholder representative groups were invited to the event and this list contains those who confirmed their attendance/attended the event. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the list. However, WMRA cannot accept any responsibility for omissions, errors or inaccuracies.

Joe	Crook	North Shropshire District Council
Roger	Culcheth	Policy Unit Member
Martin	Dando	Dudley MBC
Peter	Davenport	WMRA Policy Lead Transport
Sharon	Doak	WMRA
Andy	Donnelly	CEPOG Core Support
Peter	Douglas Osborn	WMRA RPP Member
Martin	Eade	Birmingham City Council, WMRA Policy Lead Centres
Jeff	Edwards	Natural England
Trevor	Errington	CEPOG Support Team
Clive	Francis	WMRA
Neil	Hansen	The Highways Agency
Tamsin	Hartley	Renew North Staffordshire
Christopher	Harvey	Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Chris	Haynes	Birmingham City Council
Neil	Holdstock	Wyre Forest District Council
Keith	Homer	Travel West Midlands
David	Howatson	Government Office for the West Midlands
Imran	Hussain	GOWM
Christine	Ide	Stoke on Trent City Council
Christina	Jackson	Institution of Civil Engineers
Peter	Jones	Housing Corporation
Ben	Jones	DfT - Regional and Local Transport Delivery
Glenn	Jones	East Staffordshire Borough Council
Jo	Jones	Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council
Gerald	Kells	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Mike	Kinghan	West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership
Danny	Lamb	WMRA
John	Lameris	Staffordshire County Council
Peter	Langley	Other Stakeholder Groups
Karen	Leach	Localise West Midlands
Hilary	Livesay	URSUS Consultants

Clive	Lloyd	Worcestershire County Council, WMRA Policy Lead Plan, Monitor, Manage
Tony	Lovett	Staffordshire County Council
Zena	Lynch	WMRA
Paul	Maitland	Worcestershire County Council
Ayaz	Maqsood	Coventry City Council
Dave	Marsh	Play England
Hanna	Mawson	Home Builders Federation Ltd
Hazel	Mcdowall	Natural England (Regional Advocacy and Partnerships)
Anna	Miller	Tamworth Borough Council
Simon	Murphy	Birmingham, Coventry and the Black Country City Region
David	Nicholson	Herefordshire Council
Paul	O'Connor	Worcester City Council
Peter	O'Grady	EEF West Midlands
Amanda	Patterson	The Environment Agency
Rachael	Pipkin	GOWM
Liz	Plume	WMRA
Vicki	Popplewell	WMRA
Rose	Poulter	WMRA
Stefan	Preuss	WMRA
Mike	Price	GOWM
Nick	Read	West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum
Sara	Roberts	WMRA
Claire	Robinson	AWM
Anna	Rose	Rugby Borough Council
Michelle	Ross	Wolverhampton City Council
Penny	Russell	Dudley MBC
Stacey	Shuttlewood	WMRA
Dave	Simpson	Solihull MBC
Karen	Sinclair	Bridgnorth District Council
Amanda	Smith	English Heritage (West Midlands)
Sarabjeet	Soar	West Midlands Minority Ethnic Business Forum
Philip	Somerfield	East Staffordshire Borough Council

John	Staniland	Redditch Borough Council
Colin	Staves	Stratford on Avon District Council
Andy	Stevenson	Energy West Midlands
Roger	Stone	West Midlands Business Council
Maggie	Taylor	Sport England, WMRA Policy Lead Culture
Nick	Taylor	Shropshire County Council, WMRA Policy Lead Rural Renaissance
Sandy	Taylor	Birmingham City Council
Dave	Thew	WMRA
Amanda	Turner	Staffordshire County Council, WMRA Policy Lead Monitoring
Nigel	Vaughan	DfT
Dave	Wallace	Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council
John	Ware	Rugby BC
Andrew	Webb	
Gavin	Willetts	Culture West Midlands
Mark	Willietts	Advantage West Midlands
Lesley	Wroe	Coventry City Council
Alex	Yendole	Stafford Borough Council
Nick	Young	Natural England (Regional Advocacy and Partnerships)