

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Culture, Sport and Tourism Facilities Must Meet the Needs of the Region says the Regional Assembly**

Are Regional assets such as museums, sports stadia and tourist attractions good enough and in the right locations to meet the needs of the West Midlands? This is just one issue up for debate in a seven-week consultation that draws to an end this Friday, as part of the Phase Three Revision into the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy.

Prepared by the Regional Assembly, and led by local government, the Strategy sets out targets for homes, the economy, infrastructure and the environment through to 2026. Amongst several other objectives, the Strategy aims to support the delivery of culture, sport and tourism assets in the Region in order to improve the well-being of local communities as well as support sustainable economic growth.

“This is your chance to inform us on the type of culture and sporting facilities required to meet the needs of residents and tourists in the Region” said Mark Middleton, Director of Policy at the Assembly.

“Tourism is a key and growing part of the Regional economy. In the run up to 2012 Olympic Games we have a golden opportunity to attract new visitors to the Region, but to do so we must have facilities that are truly of a regional or national standard. We can’t create any more World Heritage sites like the Ironbridge Gorge, but we can make sure planning policies are in place to protect and promote such unique assets.”

The consultation is in its last week and will run until Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August, where the public will have the opportunity to submit their views via an online questionnaire or in writing. A Preferred Option is due to be drafted based on the consultation feedback later this year, and be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval.

**ENDS**

**You can read the Phase Three Options consultation document and fill in the Questionnaire at:**  
[http://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)

**For further information please contact:**  
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### **Notes to Editors**

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 elected 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 Leaders Board (WMLB) and other regional and local organisations from across the West Midlands Region.
5. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body.
6. For further information, visit our website [www.wmra.gov.uk](http://www.wmra.gov.uk)