

# *West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy*

*Phase 2 Revision  
The Emerging Draft Preferred Option –  
Draft Policies*

*Consultation Event  
26<sup>th</sup> July 2007*

# Prosperity for All – Employment

Ian MacLeod

# Introductory Section

General point: all policies need to be updated as necessary and amended where appropriate to:

- Tie-in with emerging Regional Economic Strategy Review
- Reflect rising importance of tackling climate change

# Policy PA1: Prosperity For All

- Revise from existing RSS.
- Reflect emerging RES Review. This is likely to require continuing policy development to ensure full integration. In particular include reference to worklessness.
- Add reference to sustainable construction techniques

Policy PA2: Urban Regeneration Zones – No change

Policy PA3: High Technology Corridors – Update for factual accuracy.

## Policy PA4: Development Related To Higher/Further Education And Research Establishments And Incubator Units

- No change

## Policy PA5: Employment Areas In Need Of Modernisation And Renewal – No change

## Policy PA6: Portfolio Of Employment Land And Premises

- Major change to split the existing policy into three separate policies.
- Rename policy to include reference to premises as well as land. Reflect that by also adding reference to premises in the policy.
- Part A of existing policy which defines the components of the employment land portfolio essentially remains the same, but definitions of what constitutes employment land and availability of land to be added for clarity.

## **Policy PA6A: Employment Land Provision**

- New policy to establish employment land requirements across the region, indicating a five year reservoir by District (minima for MUAs and Sub-regional Foci),
- Indicative long-term needs and brownfield land targets.
- Also will need to cover cross-boundary issues.
- Also to include part B of existing PA6.

## **Policy PA6B: Protection Of Employment Land**

- Strengthen parts C and D of existing PA6 and raise profile of the issue by inclusion in a separate freestanding policy.

## **Policy PA7: Regional Investment Sites**

- Policy update.
- Additional criteria to identify process to fill gaps in provision

## **Policy PA8: Major Investment Sites**

- No change apart from updating.

## **Policy PA9: Regional Logistics Sites**

- Significant change to update criteria and identify likely scale of demand for this type of site as well priority order of types of site and potential locations for additional provision.

# Prosperity for All – Centres

**Martin Eade**

# Policy PA 11: The Network of Town and City Centres

- Revised from existing RSS.
  - Tier 1 – Birmingham.
  - Tier 2 - Brierley Hill/Merry Hill, Coventry, Stoke-on Trent, Wolverhampton.
  - Tier 3 - Burton, Hereford, Leamington, Shrewsbury, Solihull, Telford, Walsall, Worcester.
  - Tier 4 - Cannock, Kidderminster, Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Nuneaton, Redditch, Rugby, Stafford, Stratford-on-Avon, Sutton Coldfield, Tamworth, West Bromwich.
- These centres to be the main focus for new investment in major comparison retail floorspace, and for major office, leisure, cultural, tourist, social and community uses – in line with the scale identified in subsequent policies.

## Policy PA 11A: Merry Hill/Brierley Hill

- To include whatever emerges from Phase 1 Revision.

## Policy PA12: Birmingham's Role as a World City

- No change from existing RSS.
- Promotes the development of Birmingham as a regional capital of European and international standing.

# Policy PA12(A) : Comparison Retail Floorspace Requirements

- New policy
- Figures provided for each strategic centre, based on re-iteration of centres study, taking account of updated data, 2004-based population projections, and emerging decisions on distribution of new housing, for:
  - 2006 – 2021
  - 2021 - 2026
- Figures for 2021 - 2026 to be treated as broad indications, and development to meet post 2021 needs to be phased back.

## **Policy PA12B: Non- Strategic Centres**

- To be expanded from existing RSS.
- To encourage a pro-active approach to supporting these centres.
- Recognise their particular importance in meeting convenience shopping, local service and day to day comparison needs.
- No fixed cap on scale of comparison growth, but proposals over 10,000 sm gross to meet specified criteria, including demonstration of local need and no adverse impact on development prospects in any strategic centre.

## **Policy PA13: Out of Centre Comparison Retail Development**

- To be updated from existing RSS.
- No need for any major out-of-centre developments of regional significance.
- Smaller-scale proposals to be considered in light of local development plan policies and national guidance.

# Policy PA13A: Office Development Requirements

- New policy to be introduced
- New office floorspace figures to be provided for each strategic centre for 2006 – 2026.
- Figures to be based on base-line trend-based estimate from Regional Centres Study, adjusted to take account of :
  - policy objective to shift the focus of office development to centres
  - local capacity constraints
  - local regeneration requirements

# Policy PA13B: Out-of-Centre Office Development

- A new policy to be introduced.
  - No specification of District-wide figures.
  - Large-scale office schemes (5000 sm and above) to be in the strategic centres, but exceptions allowable where it can be demonstrated that certain criteria are met, including demonstration of a need not capable of being met in-centre, and no adverse impact on prospects of in-centre schemes proceeding.
  - Permissions for general employment development to be subject to conditions limiting B1(a) content.

# Policy PA13C: Regional Casinos

- New policy
- Set criteria for assessing proposals, to include:
  - regeneration
  - sequential approach
  - links to existing major leisure/tourism venues

# Transport and Accessibility

**Danny Lamb**

# Introduction

- Partial Revision
- Four Transport Policies:
  - Strategic Park and Ride
  - Parking Standards
  - Demand Management
  - Airports
- Update Text

# Strategic Park and Ride

- Criteria
- Potential Locations

# Parking Standards

- Sub-regional Standards
- More restrictive in congested centres

# Demand Management

- Managing peak demand in congested areas
- Linked to parking standards and public transport provision
- Building on TIF evidence

# Airports

- Birmingham International Airport is the principal airport in the Region
- 25% minimum public transport mode share
- Other airports complementary to BIA

# Other Changes

- Priorities for Investment
- Policy T12 to be updated to reflect factual changes
- Transport Delivery Plan provides details
  - Strengthening Linkages
    - RSS/MMES
    - Growth
    - Delivery/investment

# Waste Management

**Bruce Braithwaite**

# Waste Management

- Waste should be considered as a Resource and managed as close to the top of the Waste Hierarchy as possible.
- Each Waste Planning Authority should manage an **equivalent** tonnage to the amount of waste arising in its area.
- Waste Planning Authorities should safeguard and expand suitable sites with an existing waste management use, provided that they meet local environmental and amenity criteria, and should not allow the continued operation of the sites to be compromised by new development on adjoining land.

# Waste Management - continued

•Where there is evidence that additional capacity is required the basis on which WPAs identify additional sites should be based on the following criteria;

- ensuring a range of sites of different size and geographical distribution;  
and

- good accessibility to the source of waste arisings and/or end users; and

- good transport connections including, where possible, rail or water.

# Waste Management - continued

- Waste management facilities should only be permitted on open land, including land within the Green Belt, where they are:
  - close to the communities producing the waste; and where there are no alternative sites; and
  - where it would not harm the openness of land, or the objectives of Green Belt; or
  - where it can be demonstrated to be necessary to support an existing essential activity and to facilitate other key development; or would improve the agricultural, biodiversity or biodiversity value of the area.

## Waste Management - continued

- Waste Development Frameworks and Local Development Frameworks should restrict the granting of planning permission for new sites for landfill to proposals which:
  - are necessary to restore despoiled or degraded land, including mineral workings; or
  - which are otherwise necessary to meet specific local circumstances; and
  - where they are supported by robust evidence of suitability and need arising from a shortage of local capacity that exists in the plan period; and
  - where geological conditions are suitable for existing landfill capacity.

# Communities for the Future- Housing

## Ada Wells

# Introductory Section

- Maintaining the emphasis on the RSS spatial strategy, e.g. urban renaissance and the concentration of housing within the Major Urban Areas.
- At the same time recognising provision will be needed in other parts of the region to meet housing demand.
- Focus of development outside the MUAs on named settlements capable of balanced and sustainable growth.
- Also, a need to provide housing to meet the requirements of other settlements, market towns and rural areas.

## H1 – Housing Within The Major Urban Areas

- Emphasis on retaining the economically active population in the MUAs.
- Recognition of the North Staffordshire area as an area of low demand. Need to avoid over-provision.
- Recognition of the need for major restructuring of urban areas. In the conurbation need for large scale renewal, redevelopment, high replacement ratios and an increase in densities.

## H2 - Housing Beyond The Major Urban Areas

- Concentrate development in towns capable of balanced and sustainable growth.
- Some development required in other urban areas and market towns.
- Development in villages to meet local requirements, e.g. affordable housing, support for local services and local regeneration needs.

## H3 – Level And Distribution Of New Housing Development

- Provision figures to be net 2006-2026.
- There will be an annual average and a total for the 20 year period.
- The MUAs (other than North Staffs) to be minima figures, other areas 'targets'.
- Areas for significant new development to have an allocation.
- Joint core strategy areas to have a combined allocation, e.g. North Staffordshire, Black Country, Southern Worcestershire authorities.
- A need to move on from the reference point.

## H4 – Phasing Of New Development

- Annual rates of development to be set out for two periods, 2006-2016 and 2016-2026.
- Rates to be set out for West Midlands Conurbation, North Staffordshire Conurbation, Rest of the Region, West Midlands Region total.
- Numbers for the phasing policy can not be developed until we have the overall numbers finalised and the urban capacity study results.

## H5 – Providing Homes In Sustainable Locations

- New policy to guide Local Planning Authority housing allocations.
- Issue: Is this a repeat of national policy?

## **H6 – The Reuse Of Land And Buildings For Housing**

- Emphasize the priority of brownfield land.
- Set a target for % brownfield land delivery at Regional level.
- Text recognises not brownfield land for housing at all costs; need to protect greenspaces and quality employment land sites.

## **H7 – Making Efficient Use Of Land**

- Local development plans to set out density policies to reflect local circumstances.
- Local authorities to aim for an average density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare.
- Densities should be higher on sites in and close to centres and in areas of good public transport.

## H8 – Delivering Affordable Housing

- To set out a level of delivery for the region and each Regional Housing Strategy housing market area.
- LDDs should set out local requirements.

## H9 – Delivering Mixed Communities

- Development plans to set out the mix of accommodation to be built (using Housing Market assessments and other local information).

## H10 – Gypsies And Travellers

- Holding policy. To be developed as part of Phase 3

## H11 – Managing Housing Land Supply

- Brownfield land and conversions as a priority.
- A need to take account of policy framework in adjoining local authority areas so as not to undermine urban renaissance.
- Inclusion of windfall sites when local planning authorities determine 10 year housing trajectory if strong evidence available.

# Environmental Cross Cutting Themes

**Chris Blakeley**

# Proposed New Climate Change Policy (adapted from Phase 1)

- New policy reflecting the recognition that climate change is the greatest threat to the region
- Regional targets
- Opportunities for mitigation
- Adaptation for climate change
- Regular monitoring

# New Sustainable Communities Policy

- Overarching new policy designed to bring together the key principles for developing sustainable communities
- Mix of housing
- Necessary services and social infrastructure
- Comprehensive green infrastructure network
- Key infrastructure required to support new development

# New Sustainable Construction Policy

- New policy to secure high standards of energy and resource efficiency
- Seek standards beyond Building Regulations and Code for Sustainable Homes
- Minimum 10% of energy requirements of significant new developments to be provided for by on site renewable energy generation
- Homes to meet or exceed water conservation standards in level 3 of Code for Sustainable Homes
- Promotion of retrofitting of existing homes and buildings