

**WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**'Shadow' Strategic Advisory Panel**  
**18 November 2008**

**West Midlands Regional Strategy: Phase 2 Revision**  
**Assembly Response for 08 December 2008**

**1. Context**

- 1.1 At the following Regional Assembly meetings in October, Members were advised of the need for a Regional Assembly response on the RSS Phase Two Revision and the Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP report) to meet the 08 December deadline.

Regional Environment Partnership	09 October 2008
Regional Housing Partnership	16 October 2008
Regional Planning Executive	17 October 2008
Regional Transport Partnership	20 October 2008
Regional Planning Partnership	28 October 2008

- 1.2 This response has to be submitted to the Panel Secretary by 08 December in order that the independent Panel can make progress with the preparations for the RSS Examination in Public, which commences in April 2009.
- 1.3 It was agreed at the full Regional Assembly meeting on 29 October that it would be of value to have an early 'Shadow' meeting of the Strategic Advisory Panel to consider the emerging WMRA 08 December response. These views would then be considered at the lunchtime meeting of the joint Regional Planning and Environment Executive /Regional Housing Executive which would be recommended to endorse the WMRA approach prior to final consideration of the full response by the Regional Assembly Board on 03 December 2008.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 At the various Regional Assembly meetings in October 2008, it was agreed that WMRA and its partners were in an unusual situation. At this stage in the RSS 2 process, regional stakeholders would normally be only commenting on the RSS Phase Two Revision Draft ('The Preferred Option')
- 2.2 Since the intervention of Baroness Andrews in January 2008, the whole process had been changed, including the recent publication of the Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) Housing Study for GOWM. Nevertheless, the NLP is only technical evidence and the GOWM's policy stance will not be known by any regional stakeholder before the 08 December 2008 deadline.
- 2.3 It was agreed at the October Assembly meetings that the focus should remain on the RSS Strategy and the Preferred Option which the WMRA would explain and defend at the Examination in Public. Nevertheless, it was concluded that it would be helpful if the WMRA could issue an interim position statement and a suggested way forward in preparing its response by the 08 December 2008 deadline. This would help inform and guide the responses of other regional stakeholders.

- 2.4 Accordingly, this interim policy statement has been progressed by WMRA officers with the RSS Co-ordination Group. The comments made by the RSS Coordination Group have been taken on board and a revised version has been prepared (attached at Appendix 1) for your consideration.
- 2.5 In addition, a draft outline structure of the Assembly response has been progressed with the RSS Co-ordination Group. These comments have been incorporated into the revised version of the outline structure, which is attached at Appendix 2 for your consideration.
- 2.6 It is proposed that the outline structure should provide the basis for the Assembly response by 8th December.

### **3 Process and Timetable for finalising the Assembly response**

- 3.1 The process for finalising the Assembly response for submission by 8th December 2008 is set out below. This takes into account the operational review of the Assembly governance arrangements as endorsed in principle by the full Assembly on 29th October 2008 (and due to be ratified by the Assembly Board on 03 December) :
- 18 November: 'Shadow' Strategy Advisory Panel (Planning, Environment, Housing and Transport Partnership Members) for consultation, followed by;
  - 18 November: Joint meeting of Regional Planning Executive and Regional Housing Executive to take a view to recommend to Assembly Board;
  - 3 December: Assembly Board for consideration and final sign-off.

### **4 Recommendation**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Advisory Panel considers and comments on the Interim Assembly Position Statement and the draft outline response structure as set out at Appendices 1 and 2 to inform the recommendations to the Board of the Regional Planning and Housing Executives.**

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**Appendix 1 – Interim Assembly Position Statement on responding to NLP Report**  
[circulate as separate document]

**Appendix 2 – Outline structure of Assembly response by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008**  
[circulate as separate document]