

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revision Draft Consultation period extended to 30 June 2008**

In December 2007, West Midlands Regional Assembly, in its role as Regional Planning Body, submitted the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase Two Revision Draft to the Secretary of State. Following the submission of the document, a public consultation started on the 7 January 2008 and was originally scheduled to run until the 28 March 2008.

Following the submission to the Secretary of State, the Assembly received a letter from Baroness Andrews who is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for Communities and Local Government. In her letter, Baroness Andrews expressed concern about the amount of housing that had been put forward by the Assembly in light of the Government's agenda to increase housing building across the country. In view of this, Baroness Andrews informed the Regional Assembly that the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) would be commissioning an independent study to provide the Panel undertaking the Examination in Public into the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft with further options that could deliver higher housing numbers.

At the present time, it is envisaged that the study will be undertaken between April and June 2008 but the exact timing has not yet been finalised. Once the study is completed, GOWM intends to make it available as additional evidence for consultees to consider when making responses on the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft, and adequate time will need to be allowed for this.

At this stage, as we are unable to confirm when the study will be completed and made available for consultation, we are unable to agree the final date for a formal extension to the consultation period. However, as an interim measure, Assembly has provisionally extended the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft consultation period **to 30 June 2008** although, in practice, this is likely to be further extended to allow adequate time for consultees to consider the study when it becomes available.

Once GOWM are able to confirm the completion date for the study, the Assembly will confirm formally the final details for the consultation period and the anticipated date of the Examination in Public.

## **ENDS**

For further details about the government's study, please contact Government Office for the West Midlands at [rss.team@gowm.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rss.team@gowm.gsi.gov.uk)

### **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 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 Local Government Association (WMLGA) and other regional and local organisations from across the West Midlands region.
5. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body, and is also responsible for scrutinising the operation of the region's RDA, Advantage West Midlands.
6. For further information, visit our website [www.wmra.gov.uk](http://www.wmra.gov.uk)

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