

**LEICESTERSHIRE TOGETHER (LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP)**  
**BOARD**

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2005**

**EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**REGIONAL HOUSING, PLANNING & TRANSPORT JOINT BOARD**  
**22 SEPTEMBER 2005**  
**AN UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL PLAN**

**Synopsis**

**This report provides an update on the Review of the Regional Plan. Section 1 outlines the proposed response to comments raised by the consultation of the Draft Review Project Plan. Section 2 outlines the main elements of the Options Consultation Paper contained in Appendix 2, which the Board is asked to agree for public consultation. Section 3 proposes for the Board's agreement Draft Service Level Agreements with Section 4(4) authorities.**

**1. Results of Public Consultation**

1.1 The Draft Review Project Plan and the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report were published for public consultation on the 12 April 2005. All local authorities, parish and town councils in the East Midlands (and in those areas immediately adjoining the East Midlands) were consulted, along with a wide range of other bodies and organisations.

1.2 Copies of the documentation were placed in every local authority office and public library in the Region for public inspection. Information in electronic form is available through the Regional Plan website: <http://www.emra.gov.uk/regionalplan>

1.3 The start of a consultation period was marked by a formal launch event at PERA on the 12 April attended by 130 delegates. All local authorities and Members of the Assembly were invited to attend. As well as the Regional Assembly, speakers included representatives from *emda*, MORI and the consultants undertaking the Sustainability Appraisal. A number of smaller sub-regional events also took place during late May and early June across the Region.

1.4 A total of 154 responses were made to the Draft Review Project Plan:  
60 from local authorities and other public bodies  
29 from town and parish councils  
36 from the private sector  
29 from not for profit, voluntary/community groups including the general public

1.5 All responses duly made were reported to the Assembly's Planning Board on the 21 July 2005. A summary of all the comments made can be found on the Regional Plan web-site: [www.emra.gov.uk/regionalplan](http://www.emra.gov.uk/regionalplan)

## **Proposed Response: The Vision**

1.6 There was broad support for the existing Vision Statement. The majority of respondents also considered it helpful that the Regional Plan Vision should be the same as that for the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) – the recently agreed Sustainable Development Framework for the Region. As a result, no changes to the Vision are proposed:

### **The Region's Vision**

“The East Midlands will be recognised as a region with a high quality of life and sustainable communities that thrives because of its vibrant economy, rich cultural and environmental diversity and the way it creatively addresses social inequalities, manages its resources and contributes to a safer, more inclusive society.

This will be achieved for the benefit of present and future generations through the integration of:

- A vibrant and competitive economy with increased productivity characterised by high quality employment learning and skills, enterprising individuals, innovative businesses and improvements in the physical infrastructure.
- Cohesive and diverse communities that empower and engage people, are safe and healthy, combat discrimination and disadvantage and provide hope and opportunities for all.
- A rich, diverse and attractive natural and built environment and cultural heritage.
- Sustainable patterns of development that make efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure, reduce the need to travel, incorporate sustainable design and construction, and enhance local distinctiveness.”

## **Proposed Response: The Objectives**

1.7 A number of detailed comments were made on the Regional Plan Objectives, and as a result changes are proposed to reflect concerns of respondents and the Government's new Sustainable Development Strategy 'Securing the Future', which was published in March 2005. The revised objectives are set out below. They are not in any priority order and will need to be achieved in an integrated way for the Vision Statement to be achieved. By way of comparison, the existing RSS8 Objectives are also set out below.

### **Proposed new Objectives:**

**To reduce social exclusion** through measures including the:

- regeneration of disadvantaged areas, and
- reduction of inequalities in the location and distribution of employment, housing, health and other community facilities and services;

**To protect and enhance the environmental quality of urban and rural settlements** to make them safe and attractive places to live, work and invest in, through measures including the:

- promotion of 'green infrastructure';
- enhancement of the 'urban fringe'; and
- promotion of high quality design which reflects local distinctiveness.

**To improve the health of the region's residents** through measures including improvements in:

- air quality;
- 'affordable warmth';
- the availability of good quality housing; and
- access to health, leisure and recreation facilities & services.

**To improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness** through measures including:

- the improvement of access to labour and markets; and
- ensuring that sufficient good quality land and premises are available to support economic activity in sectors targeted for growth by the Regional Economic Strategy.

**To improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services** through measures including the:

- promotion and integration of opportunities for walking, cycling;
- promotion of the use of high quality public transport; and
- encouragement of patterns of new development that reduce the need to travel.

**To protect the environment** through measures including the:

- conservation, enhancement, sensitive use and management of the region's natural and cultural assets;
- avoidance of significant harm and securing adequate mitigation or compensation for any unavoidable damage; and;
- recognition of the limits of the environment to accept further development without irreversible damage.

**To achieve a 'step change' increase in the level of the region's biodiversity** through measures including:

- the management and development of habitats to secure net gains in biodiversity; and
- ensuring that no net loss of priority habitats or species is allowed to occur.

**To reduce the causes of climate change** through measures including:

- maximising of resource efficiency and of the level of renewable energy generation;
- making best use of existing infrastructure;
- promoting sustainable design and construction, and
- encouraging patterns of new development that reduce the need to travel.

**To reduce the impacts of climate change**, in particular the risk of damage to life and property from flooding and sea level change and the decline in water quality and resources, through measures including the location, design and construction of new development.

**To minimise the environmental impact of new development and promote optimum social and economic benefits** through measures including the promotion of sustainable design and construction techniques.

## **Existing RSS8 Objectives:**

- to address social exclusion, through the regeneration of disadvantaged areas and reducing regional inequalities in the distribution of employment, housing, health and other community facilities;
- to protect and where possible enhance the quality of the environment in urban and rural areas so as to make them safe and attractive places to live and work;
- to improve the health of the region's residents, for example through improved air quality, the availability of good quality housing and access to leisure and recreation facilities;
- to promote and improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness;
- to improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services across the region by developing integrated transport, ensuring the improvement of opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of high quality public transport;
- to achieve effective protection of the environment by avoiding significant harm and securing adequate mitigation where appropriate, and to promote the conservation, enhancement, sensitive use and management of the region's natural and cultural assets;
- to bring about a "step change" increase in the level of the region's biodiversity, by managing and developing habitats to secure gains wherever possible, and ensuring no net loss of priority habitats and species;
- to promote the prudent use of resources, in particular through patterns of development and transport that make efficient and effective use of existing infrastructure, optimise waste minimisation, reduce overall energy use and maximise the role of renewable energy generation;
- to take action to reduce the scale and impact of future climate change, in particular the risk of damage to life and property from flooding, especially through the location and design of new development; and
- to promote good design in development so as to achieve high environmental standards and optimum social benefits.

## **Proposed Response: The Work Programme**

1.8 A number of responses felt that the timescale for the proposed work programme is too demanding. However, at least an equal number including the Government Office for the East Midlands and a number of local authorities were very keen that the timetable be met to inform work on local planning documents. Although the timing of a number of individual tasks has been amended, the overall Review timetable has not been altered. As a result, it is still proposed to produce a draft Regional Plan for public consultation by September 2006. A full Review timetable is contained in appendix 1.

1.9 A number of County and Unitary Authorities considered that both they and the Assembly would benefit from a more structured approach to the delivery of the work programme. As a result a series of draft 'service level agreements' have been developed between the Assembly and the County and Unitary Authorities covering requirements for technical advice on issues such as housing and employment land provision and the development of sub-regional spatial strategies. These are highlighted for agreement later in the report.

## **Work Area 1: Housing**

1.10 There were a wide range of comments on what should be the most appropriate level of housing and significant concern about the low level of affordable housing, particularly in rural areas. However, most respondents supported the approach the Assembly is taking to the development of new housing figures. Specific attention will be given to the needs of gypsies, travellers and migrant worker, in line with respondent's comments and the latest Government guidance. Options for future levels of housing are outlined later in this report. Work has also started on developing profiles of each of the 10 Housing Market Areas that have been identified in the East Midlands. However it is likely that complete information on urban capacity in the identified Principle Urban Areas will slip into 2006.

## **Work Area 2: Employment & Economy**

1.11 Many respondents stressed the importance of working closely with *emda* on the development of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), to ensure that the RES and the Regional Plan are developed from a common evidence base. *emda* have supplied information on job growth that has been used to inform the sustainability appraisal and which will also be used to make an initial assessment of future requirements for employment land. Following late amendments to the Gambling Act, there is no longer the need to address the issue of regional scale casinos. A draft version of the Regional Economic Strategy, '*Creating a flourishing region together*' was launched by *emda* on the 7 September 2005 for 12 weeks public consultation ending on 2 December 2005. It is available on the following web-site: [www.haveyoursay.co.uk](http://www.haveyoursay.co.uk)

## **Work Area 3: Transport**

1.12 A number of concerns were raised about the environmental implications of growth at Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA) and the importance of ensuring that the NEMA 'masterplan' is consistent with Regional Plan Policy. Following the recent announcement by Government of a indicative capital budget for transport for the East Midlands up to 2014, the Assembly is working closely with partners to advise Government on spending priorities by January 2006. A full report will be given at the Joint Board meeting of 9 December 2005. Work has also commenced on the Behavioural Change project and the development of a 3 Cities Land Use Transportation Integrated (LUTI) model. The Transport Group and the Joint Board will consider presentations on the NEMA Master Plan in November 2005 and the 9 December 2005 respectively.

## **Work Area 4: Environmental Quality and Protection**

1.13 There was general support for the proposals for environmental work. Links with the revised Regional Biodiversity Strategy were highlighted by a number of respondents. Climate Change was also highlighted as a Work Area in its own right, although with no specific details of what should be undertaken. However it proposed that it is best addressed as a cross cutting issue relevant to all existing Work Areas. Phase 1 of the

Environmental Infrastructure project is now drawing to a close, and more detailed work will start later this year. Initial scoping work to develop a Regional Flood Risk Assessment is underway, but will need to consider the revised PPS25 (Flood Risk) which is due to be published in the autumn of this year. An initial assessment of future water resources has been undertaken as part the Sustainability Appraisal for the housing options. Further more detailed work will be undertaken to inform further policy development.

### **Work Area 5: Energy**

1.14 Concern was expressed about the impact higher target for wind energy would have in rural areas, although other respondents supported the need to improve energy efficiency and increase renewable energy generation across the region. A regional seminar will held in the new year to discuss energy issues. For more information, please contact **Helen Chadwick** on **01664 502555** or e-mail to [helen.chadwick@emra.gov.uk](mailto:helen.chadwick@emra.gov.uk)

### **Work Area 6: Waste**

1.15 There were relatively few comments on waste, but most supported the approach to assessing the requirement for new waste treatment facilities. A regional seminar will be held early in the new year to discuss how the approach taken in the Regional Waste Strategy should be reflected in the Regional Plan. For more information please contact **Alasdair Brown** on **01664 502555** or e-mail to [alsadair.brown@emra.gov.uk](mailto:alsadair.brown@emra.gov.uk)

### **Work Area 7: Sub-Regional Issues**

1.16 Proposals for the development of sub-regional strategies around the Lincoln Policy area and in the Three Cities and Northern sub-areas were generally supported. However, a number of County and Unitary authorities raised concerns about the resulting resource implications, and number of district authorities expressed the desire to become fully involved in sub-regional working. These concerns have been addressed in the relevant 'service level agreements'.

### **Work Area 8: Regional Cross Border Issues**

1.17 There was broad support for the proposed approach to cross-border working, although a number of local authorities expressed concern about the resulting resource implications. The cross border implications of the proposals in this Options Paper will be discussed with neighbouring regions at a series of meetings during the consultation period.

### **Work Area 9: Monitoring & Implementation**

1.18 There were relatively few comments on monitoring and implementation, although those that did supported the proposed approach in the Project Plan.

## **Work Area 10: Sustainability Appraisal**

1.19 There was general support for the analysis and conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, although a number of detailed comments were made on data issues and some elements of the proposed appraisal framework. A summary of the comments made on the Scoping Report are also available on the Regional Plan website: [www.emra.gov.uk/regionalplan](http://www.emra.gov.uk/regionalplan), and have been used to inform the ongoing sustainability appraisal process.

## **New Work Area 11: Culture**

1.20 Following representations from 'Culture East Midlands', the Region's Cultural Consortium, it is proposed to add another work area relating to cultural issues. This will ensure that the Regional Plan can reflect and inform the conclusions of the review of the Regional Cultural Strategy which is now underway.

## **1.21 New Work Area 12: Minerals**

A limited number of respondents highlighted the issue of aggregates apportionment, particularly for the period after 2016. Although 2016 represents the limit of current Government guidance, it has been decided to further explore current and future planning assumptions with the Regional Aggregates Working Party (RAWP) and ODPM, to determine how this can be taken forward to 2026

## **Community Involvement**

1.22 There was general support for the proposals for community involvement and the Public Participation Support Service (PPSS). A number of district councils also considered that they can play a more prominent role liaising with local communities on the development of the plan, and discussions have already taken place between PPSS and a number of districts.

1.23 For further information about the Public Participation Support Service please contact **Penny Gregory** on 0115 852 4266 or e-mail to: [emco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:emco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk). A project officer **Alice de la Rue**, has now been appointed to deliver the training aspects of the Service, and can be contacted on 0115 852 4261 or e-mail to: [alice.delarue@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:alice.delarue@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk). A **Helpline - 0870 850 9802** is now available for general queries and advice about the Service.

## **2. Draft Options Paper**

2.1 PPS11 requires that the RPB should develop and consult on different options to deliver the agreed Vision and Objectives of the RSS (paragraph 2.34). The SEA Directive requires that all 'reasonable alternatives' to the plan should be 'identified, described and evaluated' (Article 5.1). This should include the impact of the continuation of current policies (i.e. what is actually happening on the ground). However the SEA Directive does not apply to the policies and proposals of national Governments and Articles 4(3) and 5(2) of the Directive specifically set out to avoid duplication of appraisal between different levels of the planning hierarchy.

2.2 At the last meeting of the Regional Planning Board, Members agreed an approach to developing options for new housing for the period up to 2026 based on 3 levels of development and 3 different approaches to distributing development. These options have now been quantified in the following manner:

### **How much new housing development should there be?**

**Ref**

**Title**

**Description**

**1**

Limiting Growth (below trend)

This is based on the 2002 Household Projections less 20% and implies a reduction in projected in-migration from other Regions. However at the Regional level, this option is virtually identical to the level of new housing envisaged in the current RSS8, at around 10,960 new dwellings per year. This is equivalent to an annual increase in the total current housing stock of about 0.72%

**2**

Trend Based Growth

Based on the 2002 Household projections. This would imply a level of housing growth of about 13,700 per year. This is higher than the current RSS8, but recent levels of actual development have been running at around 13,500 new dwellings per year. This is equivalent to an annual increase in the total current housing stock of about 0.9%

**3**

Going for Growth (above trend)

This is based on the 2002 Household Projections plus 20% and implies maximising in-migration from neighbouring regions, in particular the 'Wider South East'. This would give a figure of around 16,440 new dwellings per year. This is equivalent to an annual increase in the total current housing stock of about 1.08%

### **Where should housing development be located?**

**Ref**

**Title**

**Description**

**A**

Trend Based

This is based on distribution implied by the 2002 Household Projections, and would result in lower housing growth in many larger urban areas and growth in many rural areas and small and medium sized towns.

**B**

Urban Concentration plus Regeneration

This is based on the policy stance in the recently adopted RSS8 and the most recent round of Structure Plans. It implies growth at the main urban centres (the Principal Urban Areas of Derby, Leicester, Nottingham, and Lincoln), the identified Sub-Regional Centres and in a number of areas requiring regeneration, but limits growth elsewhere.

**C**

Strong Urban Concentration

This is based on Option B, but with higher levels of housing growth in the Housing Market Areas covering Derby, Leicester, Lincoln and Nottingham, with reductions in surrounding areas.

2.3 In **Northamptonshire**, the level of development up to 2021 has already been set by the Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) Strategy, which forms part of the existing Regional Plan (RSS8). These are expressed as annual build rates for five year periods running from 2001. The task for the Regional Plan Review is to consider the level of housing provision in Northamptonshire for the period 2021-26. It is proposed to consult on **three** options for this:

**Ref**

**Title**

## **Description**

### **NA**

Average Provision (2001-2021)

This is based on the average level of planned provision for the period 2001-2021. This would give total figure for Northamptonshire of 4,975 new dwellings per year the period 2021-2026.

### **NB**

Rolling forward the 2016-2021 figure

This is based on planned figure for 2016- 2021. It would give a total figure for Northamptonshire of 5,415 new dwellings per year for the period 2021-2026.

### **NC**

MKSM Study Indicative Provision (2021-2031)

This is based on the level of housing growth envisaged by the MKSM Study for the period 2021-2031. This would give a total figure for Northamptonshire of 5,840 new dwellings per year for the period 2021-2026.

2.4. As a result, the Assembly will be consulting on nine Housing Options the Region outside Northamptonshire up to 2026, and three Housing Options for the period 2021-2026 for Northamptonshire itself. All these options have been subject to a sustainability appraisal which is summarised in the Options Paper. This includes an assessment on each option's impact on the existing Trunk Road network (carried out by the Highways Agency), water supply and treatment (carried out by the Environment Agency and relevant water companies) and the labour supply and job growth (carried out with *emda*). Some of this work is still in progress at the time of writing, but will be complete by the time the Board meets. Kim Harding from consultants LUC will give an update by way of a short presentation to the Joint Board and answer any questions on the Sustainability Appraisal.

2.5 In addition to the level of new housing, the Options Paper includes proposals for revised sub-area boundaries based aggregations of district council areas and Housing Market Areas, and also seeks views on changes to policies guiding development form (Policies 2 and 3 of the current RSS8)

2.6 A copy of the full Draft Options Paper is contained in Appendix 2 of this report. **This is available on the Regional Assembly website at <http://www.emra.gov.uk/spatial/planning-board.asp> - Paper 4 App2.** Following discussion and agreement by the Joint Board today, the Options Paper will be launched for 12 weeks public consultation on the afternoon of the 24 October 2005 at PERA, Melton Mowbray. During the consultation period use will be made of the Public Participation Support Service to engage with 'hard to reach groups', networks of regional stakeholders, the Section 4(4) Authorities and local 'citizen panels' where they exist.

2.7 After considering the consultation responses received, the Joint Board will need to agree a preferred way forward on the 22 May 2006. This will provide the overall regional context for the sub-regional work and local housing and employment land allocations.

## **3. Draft Service Level Agreements with Section 4(4) authorities**

3.1 Members of the Planning Board agreed on the 21 July 2005 to ask that 'service level agreements' be drawn up between the Regional Assembly and the local authorities defined under Section 4 (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to support the delivery of the Regional Plan Review. These agreements cover the requirement for

technical advice on issues such as housing and employment land provision, and the development of sub-regional spatial strategies where relevant.

3.2 The Draft Service Level Agreements set out in Appendix 3 of this report have been developed in consultation with the officers of the relevant local authorities

#### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 Members agree the proposed changes set out under section 1 of this report resulting from the public consultation on the Draft Review Project Plan, subject to any comments from Members.

4.2 Members agree the text of the Options Paper contained in Appendix 2 of this report for public consultation, subject to any comments from Members, and delegate any outstanding changes to the Chair and Vice Chair to agree prior to publication.

4.3 Members agree the Draft Service Level Agreements with Section 4(4) authorities set out in Appendix 3, subject to any comments from Members.

Key Contact:

Andrew Pritchard Tel: 01664 502554

Email: [andrew.pritchard@emra.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.pritchard@emra.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1: Review Timetable

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 22 September 2005: | Agreement by Joint Board of text of Options Paper and Section 4(4) SLAs.  |
| 26 September 2005  | Finalisation of Options Paper text with printers  |
| 24 October 2005:   | Launch of Options Paper for 12 weeks Public Consultation  |
| 8 December 2005    | Joint Board to consider progress on the Review Work Programme   |
| 16 January 2006    | Closing Date for comments on Options Paper  |
| 16 February 2006   | Initial consideration by the Joint Board of comments received on the Options Paper and endorsement of sub-regional issues papers for public consultation. |
| 18 May 2006:       | Agreement by the Joint Board of preferred Option as a basis for detailed policy development   |
| 6 July 2006:       | Discussion by Joint Board of Framework Text of Regional Plan and emerging sub-regional policies   |
| 7 September 2006:* | Agreement by Joint Board and Full Assembly of text of Draft Regional Plan (including Sub-Regional Strategies)   |
| 28 September 2006: | Launch of Draft Regional Plan for 12 weeks public consultation, along with final SD Appraisal Report and Statement of Community Involvement.              |

\*to be agreed