



PRE-DRAFT



**REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY
(RSS)**



TOPIC PAPER 5f:

**TRANSPORT INVESTMENT
PRIORITIES**



**Consultation
Winter 2004/05**



Foreword

The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly has reached another crucial stage in the development of 'PLANet Yorkshire and Humber' - the new Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). A draft of the new RSS is to be submitted to Government by the end of April 2005.

In preparing the new draft RSS the Assembly is committed to involving as wide a range of organisations and individuals as possible. The preparation process for the new draft RSS therefore provides for two specific periods of public consultation *before* a new draft RSS is prepared and submitted to Government. This is in addition to the continual involvement of many partners in the technical work for the new RSS.

The first consultation document - 'Draft Spatial Vision and Strategic Approach' (July 2004) - considered the overall approach that should guide the preparation of the new RSS (particularly the role of sub-areas), key issues facing different parts of the region and possible responses to these issues.

We have now reached the second stage of consultation. This is based on the need to consider in more detail how we can develop a clear spatial strategy for the region that takes into account all of the issues identified in the RSS Project Plan ('Shaping the Future', January 2004). This second stage of consultation is therefore structured around a series of 'topic papers', of which this is one. The full list of topic papers is:

- Topic paper 1: Introduction to Pre-Draft RSS
- Topic paper 2: Spatial Options
- Topic paper 3: Housing
- Topic paper 4: Economy
- Topic paper 5a: Freight
- Topic paper 5b: Strategic Public Transport
- Topic paper 5c: Public Transport Accessibility
- Topic paper 5d: Demand Management
- Topic paper 5e: Aviation
- Topic paper 5f: Transport Investment Priorities
- Topic paper 6: CAP reform
- Topic paper 7: Energy
- Topic paper 8: Water
- Topic paper 9: Sustainable Tourism
- Topic paper 10: Forestry
- Topic paper 11: Biodiversity
- Topic paper 12: Culture
- Topic paper 13: Health
- Topic paper 14: Education
- Topic paper 15: Minerals
- Topic paper 16: Sustainable Waste Management
- Topic paper 17: Retail and Leisure
- Topic paper 18: Monitoring

Please bear in mind that these topic papers are raising many challenges that policies in the new RSS will need to address. The topic papers do not include draft policies and there will need to be a great deal of integration across topic areas before the policies are drafted. The purpose of this stage of consultation is to receive feedback on what direction you think RSS policy should take.

Please note that these topic papers have not been endorsed by the Assembly, or its advisory body the Regional Planning and Infrastructure Commission. They do not represent Assembly policy but give an important opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to feed in to the further development of the new RSS for the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Your comments

We would like your comments on these topic papers. You can answer the questions that we ask in the papers or you can send us your general comments.

We need to hear from you by **Friday 25 February 2005** so that your views and ideas can be taken into account as we prepare the new draft RSS to submit to Government.

Please send your comments to

Chris Martin
Director of Planning and Transport
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly
18 King Street
Wakefield
WF1 2SQ

Or email them to: emma.hunt@yhassembly.gov.uk

All the topic papers and accompanying documents can be found at www.yhassembly.gov.uk

Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal

At each stage of the development of the new RSS, a Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) is being carried out. At this stage, this appraisal has particularly concentrated on Topic Paper 2 – Spatial Options. The report of this appraisal is also available from the Assembly.

Any queries

If you have any queries about the topic papers, or any aspect of RSS, please call the Regional Planning and Transport team on 01924 331590.

Topic Paper 5f: Transport Investment Priorities

Introduction

1. The Regional Spatial Strategy (as with its predecessor RPG) is required to set out regional priorities for transport investment and management across all modes. These should support the wider objectives of RSS and also contribute to providing the framework within which local authorities prepare their Local Transport Plan submissions.

Background

2. The regional priorities for transport investment are one of the issues for the Regional Transport Strategy part of the Regional Spatial Strategy which attracts the most interest and comment. In Yorkshire & Humber we have worked to develop a set of priorities which will support the RSS and, in particular, help to deliver sustainable growth in the region.
3. The current set of priorities in RSS is the outcome of work undertaken for the Selective Review of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) and was published on that basis in December 2004. The priorities themselves, and the method of presenting them, have been subject to continual review during the Review process in 2004 and we believe that they are widely supported by regional partners.
4. However, new detailed Government guidance on prioritising transport investments is awaited and it may be expected guidance that this and the current broad range of policy work to move from existing RSS to the new RSS will have implications for the set of transport priorities that is eventually included in the new RSS.

Process

5. Although investment priorities were considered in the drafting of RPG (October 2001) the recommendations were criteria-based and did not give the degree of specific guidance required as a framework for Local Transport Plans.
6. A comprehensive review of priorities was most recently addressed in the Selective Review of RPG. The process involved drafting a 'long-list' of schemes that would help to deliver the wider objectives of RPG. A methodology for prioritising interventions was devised and this was then used to identify the 'short-list' of priorities which was subsequently published in the Draft Revised RPG that was submitted to Government in July 2003.
7. The Assembly used PPG11 (Regional Planning) to guide the defining of priorities for the Selective Review of RPG, as it was the Government's

approved guidance at that time. However, Government has issued new revised guidance for the preparation of RSS which puts less emphasis on identification of individual schemes. Unless there is a clear commitment by the delivery agency, PPS11 recommends that priorities should be described in terms of desired outcomes.

8. In order to limit the number of priorities in the Selective Review of RPG to those that were regionally significant, schemes which would be managed within the Local Transport Plan process were not specified: the exception being proposals for light rail, where the scale of the interventions, in terms of sub-regional impact and cost, appeared to warrant individual identification.
9. The Examination into the Selective Review of RPG (February 2004) included detailed consideration of the proposed set of priorities. A particular issue was judging the realism of the priorities when the costs of several of the individual components were unknown and there was no overall regional budget against which to measure affordability. This latter question is being addressed by current work on Transport Boards and Government consultation proposals on the principle of identifying indicative regional budgets for transport.
10. The existing RSS (based on the outcome of the Selective Review of RPG) adopts revised terminology for priorities and made clearer links between interventions and objectives. This set of priorities is now believed to have general support, and was most recently validated during the work of the Experimental Transport Board for Yorkshire & Humber.
11. When specific Government guidance on the Regional Transport Strategy elements of RSS is available, this will inform a further review of the priorities, but the primary driver will be progress with the new RSS itself – particularly the need to develop a clearer, more locationally-specific spatial strategy which the priorities can help to deliver.

Key Issues

12. There are inevitably some changes that will need to be made to the list of priorities in existing RSS simply to reflect developments and progress over the past year. A significant example of this will be the work by the Highways Agency to define its final recommendations for motorway widening following the outcome of the South and West Yorkshire Multi-Modal Study (SWYMMS).
13. The Regional Transport Forum regularly receives updates of the current position on the priority interventions.
14. A 'Regional Transport Delivery Group' (which includes officer representation from the Assembly, Yorkshire Forward, Government Office, the Highways Agency and the Strategic Rail Authority) exists to review progress of all these projects of regional significance,

particularly the work of the two principal delivery agencies – the Highways Agency and Strategic Rail Authority.

15. The new Regional Spatial Strategy will have clearer spatial references than RPG. With greater specificity, the evaluation of “movement” implications should provide a stronger context for the identification of investment priorities across all modes and the rationale behind them.
16. Work on developing a strategic framework for public transport is continuing (see Topic Paper 5b). Towards the end of this exercise it is likely that some recommendations for future investment may arise.
17. The Northern Way Growth Strategy has provided a useful overview of inter-regional and pan-regional transport issues – an area where existing RSS could usefully be strengthened. It includes some specific proposals on transport that are intended to be delivered through RSS. However, it is understood that any Northern Way proposals which are included in the RSS will need to be tested through the RSS process. The principal initiatives identified, so far, in the Northern Way Growth Strategy for our region are:
 - Improve access to Manchester Airport and prepare a Northern Airports Access Plan;
 - Improve road and rail access to the North’s sea ports;
 - Create premier transit systems in each city region and stronger transport linkages between city regions.
18. The role of the RSS in supporting member authorities’ Local Transport Plan (LTP) submissions will have to be considered, as the Regional Transport Strategy (within the RSS) is intended to provide a context and framework for the preparation of LTPs.
19. A particular aspect of this is will be the transport implications in planned work to develop the distinctive ‘sub-area’ concept within the new RSS. However, it is not yet clear to what extent a greater degree of sub-regional specificity should be reflected in the list of regional priorities.
20. Issues have arisen over the interpretation of the priority list. It was originally developed to provide a list of priorities for investment at the regional/sub-regional level. A deliberate effort was made to restrict the size of the list – to focus attention on a specific set of interventions which can be regarded as essential for the region. Inevitably this means that some proposals, although important, are not specifically mentioned. For example, there are few references to rural areas or to the contribution that smaller scale schemes can make when applied in packages.
21. Guidance is still awaited from the Department for Transport (DfT) in respect of specific guidance on developing priorities. There are some unresolved issues about the degree of specificity of interventions, the status of longer-term or “aspirational” schemes and whether the

prioritisation system used for the Selective Review of RPG (and now embodied in the current RSS) should itself be reviewed.

Questions for Consultation

1. *As outlined above, investment priorities have not yet been reviewed for new draft RSS as they will need to be identified once clearer spatial strategy has been developed – the aim of the priorities is to deliver the proposed strategy. However, the following points need to be considered:*
2. *When considering the medium/ longer term transport investment needs of the region, does the use of outcomes (as opposed to referring to interventions) to specify the transport requirements adequately inform our understanding of the issues?*
3. *Should the investment priorities included in the new RSS be regarded as the definitive list for all regional purposes?*
4. *The current emphasis of the investment priorities is on major interventions. Should this be changed in order to accommodate lower-cost measures such as traffic “solutions” in rural areas?*
5. *How should the question of affordability be addressed? In the past there was often only outline understanding of costs and no defined budget to work to. Will indicative regional allocations make it easier to propose priorities which are deliverable in financial terms?*

References

Government Guidance PPG11 (Regional Planning) dated October 2000, required Regional Transport Strategies to provide regional priorities for transport investment and management, across all modes, to support the regional strategy....

The Department for Transport Guide to Producing Regional Transport Strategies (April 2003) provided more detailed guidance.

Government Guidance PPS 11 (Regional Spatial Strategies) dated 2004 (superseding PPG11), requires Regional Transport Strategies to provide regional objectives and priorities for transport investment and management across all modes to support the spatial strategy and delivery of sustainable national transport policies.

It should be noted that further specific guidance on developing the Regional Transport Strategy is awaited from the Department for Transport.

The Northern Way Growth Strategy (September 2004) includes a section on “connectivity” which has implications for Yorkshire & Humber. It should be noted that this work is being further developed, the lead role being taken by Yorkshire Forward. Copies of the Northern Way Growth Strategy documentation can be found on the Northern Way web-site at www.thenorthernway.co.uk.