



PRE-DRAFT



**REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY
(RSS)**



TOPIC PAPER 5c:

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT
ACCESSIBILITY**



**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

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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 5c – Public Transport Accessibility

Introduction

1. Public transport accessibility criteria are important tools for implementing locational policy (i.e. policies that address where new homes, new businesses and service facilities are built) as they are used to ensure that jobs, retail and leisure facilities are highly accessible by public transport.
2. Better public transport accessibility is one of the main goals of both transport and land-use planning policy; it can help to link Local Transport Plans with the new Local Development Frameworks.

Background

3. The Government's Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG11), required Regional Planning Guidance for Yorkshire and the Humber (RPG12) to include criteria for public transport accessibility and in the absence of Government guidance on such criteria, the Assembly decided to commission work to develop them as part of the Selective Review of Regional Planning Guidance that commenced in 2002. The new guidance criteria were tested at the Examination in Public of the Selective Review of RPG and are now set out in the resulting Regional Spatial Strategy that was issued in December 2004 as the outcome of the Selective Review. Work is currently in hand to develop improved guidance to include in the new RSS and also produce a manual to facilitate their use.
4. The criteria may be used to identify highly accessible locations suitable for major new development or to identify where poor public transport accessibility threatens to undermine the spatial strategy. They may also help with the determination of parking standards by identifying areas where restrictive parking standards are appropriate because of high public transport accessibility.

Process

5. As noted above, the Assembly developed a set of public transport accessibility criteria as part of the Selective Review of RPG. Tables were included in RPG giving criteria for both "destination accessibility" and "origin accessibility". The first table helps to define the catchment areas of schools or health facilities and the second sets out guidance on access to facilities from housing site locations.
6. The criteria were subject to detailed review at the Public Examination of Draft Revised RPG in February 2004. Overall the Panel welcomed the efforts made by the Assembly to meet the requirement but noted that

the guidance as set out in Draft Revised RPG12 should be made easier to use.

7. The Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to Draft RPG12, published in the summer, included some detailed changes to the wording, and the Assembly was asked to carry out further work to assist local planning authorities when they need to understand the use of the criteria.
8. Consultants have been appointed to develop a practical guide to the use of accessibility criteria, drawing on the information included in the consultants' report which informed the original criteria, to produce a users' manual. When this work is completed the manual will be made freely available, probably by posting it on the Assembly website.
9. The criteria now included in existing RSS (as published in December 2004 and based on the Selective Review of RPG) somewhat over-simplified the requirements for urban areas by making the assumption that urban areas would all be served by comparable levels of public transport. The Assembly's consultants will advise on specific values of accessibility for urban areas that will recognise differing levels of public transport provision.
10. A specific omission in existing RSS (based on Selective Review of RPG12) is that there are no criteria for accessibility to rail stations. This will be addressed by the current work.
11. A workshop was held in December 2004 to enable the consultants to review their work with officers from local authorities in the region, who will be the main users of the revised criteria.
12. This work will be completed in time to be included in new Draft RSS, but it is not possible to include proposed revisions to guidance in this paper.

Current work

13. The latest wording of policy (in existing RSS based on Selective Review of RPG12) presents the two key tables, supported by a number of changes to the text supporting Policy T2.
14. The specific difficulty of addressing accessibility within urban areas, where there may in practice be variations in public transport provision, is being addressed in current work. This means providing criteria for travel times within urban areas similar to those already provided for other types of area.
15. There is a potential problem with definitions of different types of area where development may be proposed. These may need to be changed as RSS adopts a sub-area approach and acquires greater specificity.

Accessibility issues

16. Although 'accessibility' in this context was originally taken to mean 'physical' accessibility of proposed developments using public transport, work by the Government's Social Exclusion Unit and subsequent guidance on Local Transport Plans, has widened this definition to refer to a broader 'social' definition of 'accessibility' to key services, particularly by disadvantaged groups. All authorities with responsibility for Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are required to carry out accessibility planning as part of their second round of LTPs, which are due to be submitted in July 2005.
17. The development of new GIS-based accessibility mapping techniques for the second round of LTPs provides an opportunity to apply specific accessibility criteria but also may provide mapping capability over larger areas than has previously been possible. The key question is whether these developments can usefully inform the new RSS in the timeframe available.

References

The specific requirement for public transport accessibility criteria is set out in PPG11 (Regional Planning) dated October 2000.

More detailed guidance is set out in the DfT Guide to Producing Regional Transport Strategies (April 2003).

PPS11 ((Regional Spatial Strategies) dated 2004 supersedes PPG11. It notes, *inter alia*, that the RTS should help develop sustainable travel patterns and guide new built development to locations accessible by the existing and planned future public transport network. It also refers to the development of accessibility assessment in identifying levels of accessibility at broad locations across the region.

PPS12 (Local Development Frameworks) dated 2004, notes, *inter alia*, that accessibility should be a key consideration when drawing up local development documents.

The starting point for the current review of public transport accessibility criteria in Yorkshire & Humber is the information on this topic set out in existing RSS.