



**PRE-DRAFT**



**REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY  
(RSS)**



**TOPIC PAPER 9:**

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**



**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 3a: | Distributing the Housing Requirement |
| 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                           |
| Topic paper 19: | Climate Change                       |

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 18th March 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  
Regional Planning and Transport Team  
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly  
18 King Street  
Wakefield  
WF1 2SQ

Or email them to: [emma.hunt@yhassembly.gov.uk](mailto:emma.hunt@yhassembly.gov.uk)

All the topic papers and accompanying documents can be found at [www.yhassembly.gov.uk](http://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 9 - Sustainable Tourism

### Introduction

1. The RSS Project Plan (January 2004) identified the need to develop a spatial strategy for sustainable tourism as part of the RSS. As the Project Plan made clear, this work needed to link closely with that being undertaken by Yorkshire Forward, Yorkshire Tourist Board, Yorkshire Culture and the Countryside Agency with regard to the facilitation and development of sustainable tourism in the region.
2. This topic paper summarises the work that has now been carried out with these regional partners. The first challenge was to establish what was meant by sustainable tourism in the region – a set of principles for sustainable tourism has therefore been proposed. The second challenge was to understand the extent to which tourism in the region was currently moving towards or away from the implementation of these principles – an analysis of current tourism activity has been undertaken and key issues identified. The third challenge was then to identify how regional policy documents, including the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Regional Economic Strategy (RES), might respond to these issues to help to ensure that the principles of sustainable tourism were more likely to be implemented than is currently the case – a set of suggested regional policy responses have been put forward.
3. This topic paper summarises work carried out by The Tourism Company and SQW consultants on behalf of the regional partners. It draws directly from the Executive Summary and parts of their final report. The brief for the consultants and their full report (including maps) is available at [www.yhassembly.gov.uk](http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk) as part of the Planning and Transport Library.

### Background

4. Current RSS for Yorkshire and Humber (December 2004 based on the Selective Review of RPG12) sets out two policies directly related to tourism (see **Annex A**). E6 refers to the economic importance of tourism, its potential to aid regeneration and the need for integrated and sustainable approaches. T8 emphasises the role of public transport, cycling and walking areas of high tourism demand. During the Selective Review of RPG12, the background text relating to Policy E6 was changed to reflect the importance of sustainable tourism in the region. It was agreed that further work was needed to identify what this should mean for the region in more spatially-specific terms.
5. The new RSS for the region needs to be more spatially-specific and it should make clear how land use policies are part of a wider policy framework for the region. With regard to tourism, this could come through the consideration of tourism as a wide-ranging activity and the broader implications which arise for destination visitor management, as well as specific tourism land-uses. Policies could be needed for different

destinations which are specific to place, needs and capacity. These could be particularly significant in environmentally-sensitive areas.

6. The work on sustainable tourism policy which this paper summarises was carried out at time when structural changes in the organisation and management of tourism activity across the region were taking place. Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency, now has strategic responsibility for tourism in the region and a new delivery structure is being put in place at a regional and sub-regional level.
7. This means that it has been an opportune moment to look at the policy framework that should shape this activity. The suggested principles for sustainable tourism need to influence a range of policy frameworks for tourism at regional, sub-regional and local levels. At a regional level, the preparation of the new RSS (and specifically this pre-draft consultation) is the first opportunity to share the work that has been carried out with a wider range of stakeholders. In 2005, there will also be a review of the Regional Economic Strategy that will be able to feed off this work on sustainable tourism. It is also intended that this work will feed into the review and preparation of other regional strategies such as the Regional Cultural Strategy. It is hoped that this work will also influence the preparation of tourism-related strategies and plans at sub-regional and local level, in addition to the drafting of local development frameworks.

## Process

8. A steering group was set up to oversee the work on regional sustainable tourism policy to feed into the development of RSS and the review of the RES. This group had officer representatives from Yorkshire and Humber Assembly, Yorkshire Forward, Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber (Department for Culture, Media and Sport), Yorkshire Culture, the Countryside Agency and the Regional Environment Forum. The brief for the consultants is available at [www.yhassembly.gov.uk](http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk) as part of the Planning and Transport Library.
9. The Tourism Company and SQW Consultants were appointed to carry out the work on behalf of the regional partners. They followed a three-stage approach:
  - First, the English Tourism Council's generic principles for sustainable tourism were reconsidered against the objectives in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework; following focused consultation in the region, a set of seven principles was suggested for Yorkshire & Humber
  - Second, published and unpublished data on tourism activity, trends, policies and plans in Yorkshire & Humber, was collected and analysed, with the implications assessed for the region as a whole, and for eight sub areas, defined in relation to tourism

- The issues arising from the analysis were highlighted against the seven principles: progress was judged, and recommended policy responses put forward, together with key challenges. These were discussed with members of the steering group, and are included in this paper.
- 10.** During the first stage of the work, a seminar was held at the Great Yorkshire Show. This allowed a range of regional stakeholders to discuss and comment on the emerging principles. These were then also circulated for comment to local authority officers and officers in other agencies when they were asked to help collate information for stage two of the project.

### **Current picture of tourism activity in the region**

- 11.** Tourism is an important, and diverse, part of the regional economy. It includes the internationally-renowned visitor destinations of York, the North York Moors and the Yorkshire Dales; seaside resorts; major business destinations; market and event venues and a relatively undeveloped area around the Humber. Intra-regional tourism is a significant feature, with about one third of domestic tourists originating from within the region, and off-peak tourism is relatively strong. The latest tourism data, showing patterns of tourism activity for the region and for local areas, is analysed and mapped in the consultants' main report.
- 12.** Key characteristics are:
- West Yorkshire now generates the highest level of tourism expenditure, with Leeds as the major attractor. North Yorkshire is the most important destination in terms of the volume of domestic overnight trips – accounting for 37% of the total domestic overnight trips to the region in 2003.
  - York is in many ways the icon of the region for tourism and it is a major rail hub and destination. Harrogate attracts an important and essentially business-based, niche market.
  - The Dales, and also the Moors/Wolds/Coast, offer high quality and varied landscape, and opportunities linked into sustainable outdoor activity, heritage and culture, with distinctive local hubs; despite this distinctiveness, their market share is declining and they face real challenges
  - There are also significant issues and opportunities in South Yorkshire, which can be seen as an emerging destination; in Hull and Humber, where there is potential for the tourism product to evolve; and, perhaps to a lesser degree, in North Lincolnshire.
- 13.** The research identified eight tourism 'sub-areas' within the region that shared similar characteristics and visitor patterns that could help with future planning of tourism activity. These are: West Yorkshire; South

Yorkshire; York; Harrogate; The Moors, Howardian Hills, Wolds and Coast (east of A1); The Dales and Nidderdale (west of A1); Hull and the Humber Estuary; and North Lincolnshire. These are shown on Map 1 in **Annex B**, with the accompanying extract from the consultants' final report.

14. Map 1 and the text also identify key 'gateways' for tourism in the region – that are both established and emerging – and suggest centres that currently act as key tourism hubs, or which could develop into hubs to serve their local area. A key question for the preparation of the new draft RSS, and other regional and sub-regional tourism-related plans, is whether or not identifying such sub-areas, gateways and hubs would be useful to provide a more focused framework to support the development of tourism activity in the region.

### **Principles for sustainable tourism**

15. In aiming to establish how strategies, policies and plans in the region could support sustainable tourism, the first challenge in carrying out this work was to set out a number of principles for sustainable tourism - what was it that policies should be seeking to achieve?

16. The proposed principles are:

*Principle 1:*

Sustainable growth of tourism as an integral contributor to the economy, adding value and making best use of indigenous resources and existing tourism infrastructure across Yorkshire and the Humber

*Principle 2:*

Responsible investment in the quality of the tourism product and related services in order to provide a high quality experience, throughout the year, for all segments of the market

*Principle 3:*

Investment in local people skills and capacities in Yorkshire's tourism industry, making full use of the local labour supply to fill a range of existing and new high quality jobs in the tourism sector

*Principle 4:*

Sustainable growth of tourism that supports local cultural distinctiveness and contributes to the quality of life in the communities of the region

*Principle 5:*

Adoption of a more sustainable approach to tourism activity by visitors and regional businesses

*Principle 6:*

Conservation and enhancement of the built and natural environment through effective visitor management across a diverse region

*Principle 7:*

Development of an integrated, viable transport infrastructure that enables a realistic choice of travel mode to and within the region, supported by a management regime that encourages greater use of public transport by visitors

### **Analysis and issues for regional policy**

17. Based on an analysis of current tourism activity in the region, the extent to which the principles set out above were being implemented was then evaluated. The implications of this analysis for regional policy were then drawn out and a number of suggested 'regional policy responses' were put forward in each case. **Annex C** provides the extract from the Executive Summary of the consultants' final report which sets these out. A number of specific, detailed, challenges for the region were also identified but these are not reproduced in this summary.

### **Messages for the new draft RSS**

18. There are clearly many messages emerging from this work that will need to be picked up during the preparation of strategies other than the RSS. For example, issues related to the need for training and skills development, quality improvement, encouragement for different business practices and marketing and development will all be relevant for the imminent review of the Regional Economic Strategy and identification of priorities for the new regional tourism body. As stated in paragraph 7, Yorkshire Forward and other partners will therefore also be drawing on this work.
19. From the consultants' work, it is possible to identify 'spatial planning' issues that the new draft RSS and/or local development frameworks could reflect. Many of these are reflected in current RSS policy (see Annex A). The matters that are drawn out in the following paragraphs are therefore those that policies in the new RSS could cover *in addition* to current policies in order to ensure that they are more regionally and spatially specific.
20. The research has suggested eight different tourism sub-areas in the region, many of which cross local authority boundaries. These areas, and the issues and opportunities that they face, could be identified in the draft RSS to clarify how tourism activities and pressures differ across the region and to suggest where cross-boundary working on frameworks such as visitor management plans could be particularly important.
21. The research also identifies gateways and hubs for tourism across the region, some of which are established but others of which are emerging. Draft RSS could identify these, again to provide a framework for where tourism activity, and access to opportunities, could best be focused.
22. The research that has been carried out has started to identify some more specific issues related to the tourism offer in the region that the new draft RSS could also reflect. These include:

- the need for more good quality serviced accommodation, supplemented by conference and meeting facilities, especially in urban areas and in the coastal resorts
- evidence that there is generally an adequate supply of self-catering accommodation across the region
- evidence that the visual and environmental capacity for static caravans has been reached in most areas, so that priority could now be on enhancement rather than expansion of these types of accommodation
- the need for key hotel sites within defined areas of resorts to be retained or protected
- the need for priority to be given to the enhancement of existing attractions and for applications for new attractions to be treated on their own merits, with applications for non-footloose, small rural attractions especially to be considered within the context of visitor management studies and capacity analyses
- the need for priority to be given to developing and promoting outdoor activities (walking, riding, cycling, water sports) in rural areas
- evidence that environmental capacity is not often breached in the region (key pressure points identified as film locations, resorts on peak summer days and York city centre) but that all areas require proper visitor management

**23.** The consultants emphasise the reliance of tourism on transport – ‘tourism is predicated on travel to the region’ and within it. They point out that whilst the majority of trips to the region are made by road, the region attracts the highest proportion of visitors by public transport (mainly rail) than any other region (except London). The focus for encouraging modal shift within regional policies should therefore perhaps be on how people travel within the region once they have arrived, or if their origin is from within the region. The consultants make the following suggestions for policies in the Regional Transport Strategy (which is an integral part of the RSS):

- The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) should develop and promote multi-modal choice of access from the main visitor catchment areas (including Trans Pennine and north-south links).
- The RTS should support the spatial objectives for tourism development in rural, coastal and urban areas of the region through enhancing key linkages from major tourism drivers and gateway points including rail hubs, airports and sea ports to the different sub-area destinations.
- All promotion of tourism should encourage the use of sustainable means of access to the region.
- Traffic management should be an integral part of any visitor management plan.
- Visitor management plans should consider special, innovative travel arrangements for tourists in rural areas and at key destinations such as York, the resorts in summer, drawing on and developing further the examples of, Moorsbus, the Malham Shuttle, Park and Ride in York.

- Walking, cycling, horse riding and water borne transport needs to be encouraged as a means of access as well as attractions in their own right.
- Need to improve access for all especially through non-car dependent modes.

### **Questions for consultation**

1. *Do you agree with the seven principles for sustainable tourism that are set out in paragraph 16? If not, are there other principles that you would suggest for regional, sub-regional and local tourism-related strategies and plans to follow?*
2. *Do you think that draft RSS, and other regional and sub-regional plans related to tourism development, should identify the sub-areas, gateways and hubs suggested in this report (detailed in Annex B) to provide a focus for the development of tourism activity, and the preparation of visitor management plans, in the region? Are there other sub-areas, gateways or hubs that you would identify for this purpose?*
3. *Do you agree that the new RSS should provide more regionally and spatially-specific policies in addition to those in current RSS, as suggested in paragraphs 20 to 23? If not, in what other ways do you think the new RSS should respond to the issues that have been identified?*

### **References**

The consultant's brief for the work (issued by Yorkshire Forward and Yorkshire and Humber Assembly) is available at [www.yhassembly.gov.uk](http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk) as part of the Planning and Transport Library

The report of discussions held at the Great Yorkshire Show as part of the first stage of the work is available at [www.yhassembly.gov.uk](http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk) as part of the Planning and Transport Library

The final report from the consultants is available at [www.yhassembly.gov.uk](http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk) as part of the Planning and Transport Library

## **Annex A**

### **Policies directly relating to tourism in current RSS (December 2004, based on Selective Review of RPG12)**

#### **Policy E6 Tourism**

In preparing development plans, local transport plans, and rights of way improvement plans, local authorities should have due regard to the importance of tourism to the Region's economy and to its potential to assist economic and environmental regeneration and should include policies which enable tourism to develop in an integrated and sustainable way and which:-

- a) In partnership with other agencies: -
  - i) identify the various assets and resources necessary for tourism in order to protect, manage, enhance and promote these;
  - ii) identify, review and introduce management measures for areas and environments which are under pressure from visitors with a view to ensuring that any additional development is compatible with the carrying capacity of the proposed location and where appropriate reducing pressure on designated landscapes by the identification of sustainably located alternative attractions;
  - iii) improve the quality and range of attractions and accommodation in the region, compatible in scale, design and nature with their setting and minimising traffic.
- b) Maintain a balance between the needs of visitors and the needs of host communities whilst protecting environmental quality and tranquillity.
- c) Ensure effective management of visitor flows and activity and encourage greater use of alternative modes of transport to the car.
- d) Identify measures to maintain and enhance the natural, man-made and cultural assets that attract tourists and visitors.
- e) Encourage improved provision for visitors with disabilities.

#### **Policy T8 Tourism-related transport measures**

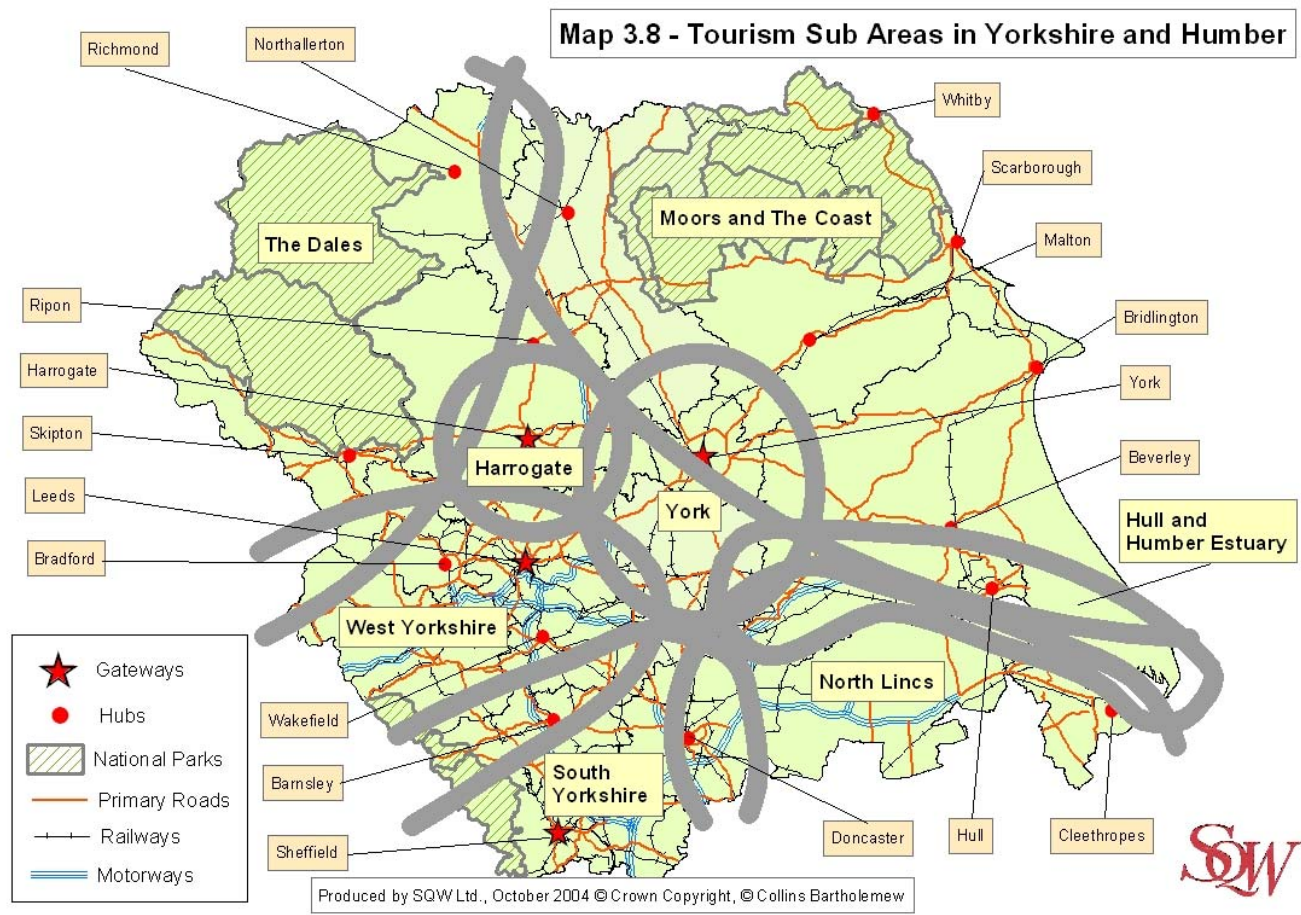
Initiatives should be promoted through development plans and local transport plans to maximise the use of public transport, cycling and walking in areas of high tourist demand (in addition to measures in Policies T6 and T7), including:

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- a) Enhancements to bus-based infrastructure, new bus-based and rail-based park and ride facilities, improvements to existing rail links and new links to particular tourist attractions where provision can viably be made.
- b) Cycling and pedestrianisation schemes.
- c) Traffic calming in particular problem locations, for example on routes through the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks.

- d) Concentration of car parking at specific sites sensitive to their surroundings with shuttle buses to particular attractions where appropriate.
- e) Increases in car parking charges at these locations to fund other measures, such as access buses.
- f) Consideration of road visitor access charges at places and on routes of peak demand.

Annex B – extracted from SQW/TTC report



- **West Yorkshire Sub-area**

Of the four sub-regions, West Yorkshire now generates the most tourism expenditure in the region. As the commercial capital of the region, Leeds is the main driver of business tourism and the recent growth in good quality hotel accommodation provides important infrastructure for leisure breaks. The range of retail, cultural and other tourism facilities and infrastructure also makes Leeds the major attraction for leisure day visits. The other towns of West Yorkshire also have a mix of urban attractions and business accommodation albeit more limited in terms of scale and quality. Although they have their own local identity, the same policy issues apply and their mutual proximity suggests that the region should be treated as a single destination for policy and planning purposes. West Yorkshire is also a driver of tourism in the rest of the region.

Leeds with its road, rail and air access is a major gateway to the region. Bradford and Wakefield are important potential hubs given their accessibility and resources.

- **South Yorkshire Sub-area**

South Yorkshire is an emerging destination based on similar attributes as Leeds albeit at a smaller scale in tourism terms. Traditionally, South Yorkshire has suffered significant economic decline and has a poor image despite a range of leisure attractions (including the Magna Centre, Millennium Galleries) and rural assets such as the Southern Pennines and easy access to the Peak District. However, on the evidence of the data, South Yorkshire is growing more rapidly than the other three sub-regions as a tourism destination, albeit from a lower base. Sheffield has developed as a particular focus for sports events and related tourism and business tourism is relatively important. Sheffield generates the lion's share of tourism spending (around twice that of the next biggest generator, which is Doncaster). There is no four-star quality hotel provision in the centres of Barnsley, Rotherham or Doncaster, although all three towns have aspirations to develop their visitor offer based on identifying and bringing forward a distinctive visitor profile and package. Barnsley, for example, is also branded a Pennine town.

Sheffield as an emerging destination with fast road and rail connections and the new airport near Doncaster is a major gateway to the region. Barnsley and Doncaster are potential tourism hubs given their accessibility and resources.

- **York Sub-area**

York is the regional icon and driver in tourism terms, an international attraction with its own particular strengths and also weaknesses that need to be addressed; the latter include the need for more quality accommodation to increase the number/proportion of staying visitors and visitor management in the city centre to improve the visitor experience and protect the character of the historic core. York is second only to Leeds in terms of jobs created in tourism, and has important, although smaller and more specialist functions as

a destination for business visitors, linked to its administrative roles, traditional industries and more recent science-based developments.

York is a major rail hub and destination. It also relates closely to much of the rest of North Yorkshire. It is a major regional gateway.

- **Harrogate Sub-area**

Harrogate as a conference, exhibition and event centre represents a very important niche destination in the region, with business facilities supported by the leisure market. It attracts more staying visitors and tourist days than York. This role distinguishes the town from the rest of the region and warrants being a distinct sub-area of its own. For this important business market, Harrogate is the gateway to the region. Ripon provides a secondary destination, with its own distinctive attractions, and links to the Dales and central transportation corridor.

- **The Moors, Howardian Hills, Wolds and Coast Sub-area**

The Moors, Howardian Hills, Wolds, and Coast (east of A1) share many issues with the Dales sub-area but need to be treated separately and as a single destination because of the commonality between the contiguous rural areas of high quality and the evolving inter-relationship, in tourism terms, between the coast and its rural hinterland. Coastal resorts have been in decline and are in the process of change, losing accommodation stock, declining quality and increasing number/proportion of day visitors; these issues now need to be addressed in the context of the wider sub-area product. Resorts are increasingly seen as visitor destinations that happen to be beside the sea. Scarborough, along with other resorts has suffered from the structural changes in British holiday-taking, reinforced by its relative isolation. It is undertaking a major project to review its long-term position in the market. There are also commonalities in terms of the scale and nature of enterprises and the working partnerships in the sub-area. Whitby, Scarborough, Bridlington, Malton and Beverley are important local hubs of tourism. Northallerton is potentially important as a transport hub.

- **The Dales Sub-area**

The Dales including Nidderdale (west of the A1), share many of the attributes and issues with the Moors sub-area. This area of contiguous high quality landscape is already being promoted as a separate destination. Like the Moors, the Dales have been major drivers of tourism but both areas were badly affected by FMD and recovery has been slow. Whilst some key points remain under pressure of visitors, there is concern in some areas about the decline in staying tourism. The Dales sub-area, like the Moors and Coast, is seeking now to promote sustainable tourism involving outdoor activity, heritage and culture.

Despite its success, there are significant issues in the sub-area, linked to the proliferation of lifestyle businesses – which have limited aspirations and may not always take a professional approach - and some over-supply in self-

catering. There is a lack of large hotels for group business and public transport in these rural areas is poor. Skipton, Settle, Leyburn and Richmond are important local hubs for tourism.

- **Hull and Humber Estuary Sub-area**

Hull and the Humber estuary should be seen as an evolving destination based on the urban qualities of the city and the surrounding natural attractions of the river estuary and its hinterland, notably the Humberhead levels. Hull is an international port but given the volume of visitors, the city can not really be defined as a regional gateway. It is an important hub.

- **North Lincolnshire Sub-area**

The sub-area is dominated by the resort hub of Cleethorpes and although it might otherwise be included in the coastal sub-area, the geographical and functional separation demand separate consideration.

## **Annex C – extracted from SQW/TTC report**

### **How the region is faring against the proposed principles for sustainable tourism and what might be regional policy responses**

#### **Principle 1 – Tourism as integral contributor to the economy**

##### *Main Issues*

1. The great importance of tourism to the regional economy (and social life) in urban and rural areas needs to be understood. The potential for it to play a greater role in urban and rural regeneration will only be realised if the identified product weaknesses are addressed and market opportunities grasped.
2. The different sub-areas of the region need different policy responses to reflect their specific constraints and opportunities. Relevant factors include current tourism impacts, future social and environmental capacity and the economic need for further tourism development (including farm diversification).

##### *How is the region faring against Principle 1?*

3. Tourism is a major contributor to the regional economy. Economic benefit varies across the region and the balance of tourism in the region is shifting. However, all parts of the region would gain from further economic benefit from tourism and most areas could cope with more visitors. In the traditional tourism areas of North and East Yorkshire, the coastal and some rural parts of the Region need specific support. In the major cities, urban tourism is maturing based on day visits and business.

##### *Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

4. The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:
  - The focus of tourism development should be on increasing value before volume, focusing on the development of bednights and added value.
  - The Region should seek to encourage appropriate tourism development in all areas, capitalising upon the sub-regional strengths and addressing structural changes, for the benefit of the regional economy.
  - In tourism terms, tourism planning sub-areas can be identified based on existing and potential tourism volumes, patterns and profiles, the need for economic development and/or management of growth.
  - Visitor management plans should be drawn up for relevant tourism sub-areas to reflect local need and capacities for sustainable new development with relevant management and development proposals for maximising the benefits of tourism and ameliorating potential problems. (See Principle 6)
  - Planning should be based on extensive consultation and co-ordination of the public, private and voluntary sectors.

- Planning should be adequately resourced to address the additional research, analysis and monitoring required.

## **Principle 2 – Quality of tourism product**

### *Main Issues*

5. The quality of tourism facilities is crucial not only to attract and retain visitors (lengthen stay and increase spend) but also for the benefit of local residents. Evidence shows that the quality of products and service is variable across the region and often sub-standard. Raising standards through training, accreditation and investment in tourism facilities and the public realm will be essential if the overall priority of increasing the value of tourism is to be realised.
6. There is a need for more, good quality serviced accommodation, to service the business and leisure markets, supplemented by conference and meeting facilities where appropriate. Generally, there appears to be an adequate supply of self-catering accommodation and the visual and environmental capacity for static caravans has been reached in most areas.
7. Good quality attractions contribute to local distinctiveness, and can raise the profile of a destination, but they are relatively minor drivers of tourism. New large attractions, which can cause concern, are relatively rare given current markets and funding constraints. There is therefore no need for regional criteria to be formulated specifically for large tourism facilities; these can be treated on their individual merits. Major events can attract significant numbers of visitors and raise the profile of the region but they need to be located, timed and managed to minimise disruption.

### *How is the region faring against Principle 2?*

8. There is a concern that quality in tourism products and services has diminished through poor management and maintenance, due in part to limited revenue/resources, notably in resorts. Quality investment in specific products and services is required, notably in good quality serviced accommodation.

### *Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

9. The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:
  - Priority should be given to enhancement of the existing product supplemented by new product developments identified in sub-area visitor management plans or tourism strategies.
  - General support should be given to new serviced accommodation, particularly in urban areas and coastal resorts.
  - In resorts, key hotel sites within a defined core area should be retained/protected in order to help maintain a diversified economy in the long-term.

- In the self-catering sector, the priority should be on enhancement, particularly in the static caravan sector, encouraging conversion to appropriately designed cabins/chalets supplemented by environmental improvements.
- Priority should be given to the enhancement of existing attractions. Applications for new attractions should be treated on their individual merits, subject to identified need, their nature, local capacity and appropriate plans for visitor management. Non-footloose, small rural attractions would best be dealt with in the context of a visitor management study and overall capacity analyses.
- In urban areas, leisure based attractions and entertainment may be more appropriate than in rural areas, subject to local assessment.
- Rural attractions should be small scale and reflect the nature of the local environment.
- In rural areas, priority should be given to developing and promoting outdoor activities, notably walking, riding, cycling, water sports. The rural hinterland and related activities and attractions are increasingly important for visitors to coastal resorts.
- Providing facilities for those with disabilities is a priority.

### **Principle 3 – Local people skills and capacities**

#### *Main Issues*

10. There is concern regarding standards of customer service and delivery throughout the region and in all tourism-related sectors. Also about the availability of relevant skills and training in the region to meet the needs of proposed higher value tourism activity, particularly in rural areas.
11. A skilled and flexible local workforce is essential; this will require investing in people through training and re-skilling. The development of profitable, well-managed businesses should be encouraged and facilitated through appropriate business support.

#### *How is the region faring against Principle 3?*

12. More needs to be done to improve skills and service levels in the workforce and businesses.

#### *Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

13. The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:
  - Training needs and business support in the region must be addressed by the sector itself and regional agencies.

### **Principle 4 – Local cultural distinctiveness and quality of life**

#### *Main Issues*

14. Tourists are actively seeking cultural distinctiveness in Yorkshire, including local food, arts and crafts, events and traditions. Equally, local

residents are concerned to preserve their way of life. While in general there is an appreciation of the contribution of tourism to the rural economy in particular, quality of life can be affected by the impact of visitors, on traffic congestion and parking, price rises in housing, excessive revelry in resorts at certain times of the year.

15. The development and support of cultural distinctiveness requires an important link between strategies for tourism and cultural development.

*How is the region faring against Principle 4?*

16. Yorkshire still retains a strong regional image and much effort is being expended on trying to sustain local distinctiveness. Tourism is contributing significantly to quality of life but more can always be done.

*Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

17. The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:
  - Tourism agencies should collaborate with partner organisations in the cultural sector to develop and promote local distinctiveness.
  - Need to encourage use of local produce and services by businesses and visitors, particularly food and drink, to demonstrate distinctiveness and support the local economy.
  - Need to encourage greater use of indigenous materials and local landscape forms.
  - Visitor management is needed to address local impacts in residential areas that can undermine quality of life.
  - Social issues need to be identified in local capacity analyses e.g. a balance between holiday homes and accommodation for local residents.
  - Local communities should be regularly consulted to discuss both negative and positive impacts of tourism e.g. York's Residents First Weekend.

## **Principle 5 – sustainable products and 'green' approaches**

*Main Issues*

18. Some efforts to engage local tourism operators in the opportunities for 'greening' their enterprises have met with limited success, but there are notable exceptions, and there have been efforts to focus on products that are in themselves sustainable or contribute to sustainability; including festivals of local food and drink, and the promotion of cycling and walking.

*How is the region faring against Principle 5?*

19. With some notable exceptions, there is little evidence of a significant effort by the industry itself to make the sector more sustainable.

*Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

20. The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:

- Take every opportunity to promote information and educate tourism industry and visitors about the environment and individual responsibility e.g. travel, accommodation and activity choices.
- Local agencies need to help support and develop new initiatives tailored to the tourism sector, such as green audits, accreditation initiatives ('green stars'), special services (for example, food recycling), networking opportunities, incentive and award schemes and related promotion.
- Ensure that all new tourism developments are environmentally friendly and that sustainability issues and responsibilities are included in all public sector initiatives with the industry, including business support.
- Priority should be on development in urban areas or communication hubs such as market towns. New rural development should be in settlements.
- New hotel and other foot-loose tourism development, particularly those that contribute to the vitality and viability of town centres, must be located in town centres or rural settlements (as appropriate) well served by public transport, for the most part subject to the sequential test.
- Events need to be located where the appropriate infrastructure is available and can be adequately managed.
- Encourage tourists and the local industry to contribute to the upkeep of the environment through visitor payback schemes.

## **Principle 6 – conservation and enhancement of built and natural environment**

### *Main Issues*

21. There are relatively few locations in the region where environmental capacity has been breached and these are often limited to peak times. Key pressure points include film location villages on peak weekends; the resorts on peak summer days; York city centre.
22. But notwithstanding this, and a generally positive approach to tourism development, there is concern about potential impacts, notably in the designated areas. There is a need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment and tranquillity which people come to enjoy.
23. There is limited capacity in sensitive landscapes and communities to absorb large visitor numbers, given the potential for tourists to cause congestion, pollution, inconvenience, environmental conflict and damage, in some instances through the cumulative impact of many small developments. Urban areas have relatively greater potential for growth given their transport infrastructure and ability to absorb larger tourism developments and events and the related volumes of day and staying visitors.

### *How is the region faring against Principle 6?*

- 24.** Conservation of the environment is at present threatened by tourism at only a few locations and times of the year. However, if growth is to be catered for and if benefits are to be maximised, better visitor management is, and will be, required.

### *Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

- 25.** The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:
- New tourism development in rural areas should be strictly controlled and subject to local capacity assessment.
  - Urban areas should be promoted as appropriate for larger scale developments and events.
  - Visitor management (or spatial planning for tourism) is the most effective way to promote sustainable tourism development and ameliorate the perceived impacts associated with the development of a diverse range of activities at tourism destinations. Land-use planning should be part of this wider planning/ management process but it is just one of a range of potential policy tools for tourism development.
  - Visitor management plans should be prepared for the identified sub-areas, based on capacity analyses, and to show how change (growth or decline) can best be managed at any destination.
  - All agencies should co-ordinate and contribute to the gathering of better quality tourism data.

## **Principle 7 – an integrated and viable transport infrastructure**

### *Main Issues*

- 26.** Tourism is predicated on travel to the region. Yorkshire is generally accessible from the rest of the UK by both car and public transport. Tourism in the region is overwhelmingly domestic with the main catchment areas for overnight visits being Yorkshire itself, the North West and the South (East Midlands, London and the South East), using the trans-pennine routes and the north-south transport corridor.
- 27.** Travel is overwhelmingly by road (72%+ for staying and day trips). The global effects of tourism traffic emissions are likely to be significant. However, with the exception of London, the proportion of visitors to Yorkshire and Humber using public transport is the highest of all English regions.
- 28.** Public transport to the region and within the urban areas (the main destinations) is generally good and efforts are being made to coordinate provision across the West and South Yorkshire PTE boundary; but rail fares can be prohibitive and there are capacity constraints.
- 29.** Public transport in rural areas is weak. It needs investment in the quality, frequency and coverage of services, information, new links such as those

between local train services on the Moors and to the Dales and integration with other modes.

30. It is important to support integration of modes and promote public transport for visitors with related information to enable visitors to make decisions about travel choices.

*How is the region faring against Principle 7?*

31. The large majority of visitors still arrive by car and travel around the region in cars. Alternative transport modes for visitors in the rural areas are generally poor.

*Suggested Regional Policy Responses*

32. The following suggested regional policy responses are put forward:
  - The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) should develop and promote multi-modal choice of access from the main visitor catchment areas (including Trans Pennine and north-south links).
  - The RTS should support the spatial objectives for tourism development in rural, coastal and urban areas of the region through enhancing key linkages from major tourism drivers and gateway points including rail hubs, airports and sea ports to the different sub-area destinations.
  - All promotion of tourism should encourage the use of sustainable means of access to the region.
  - Traffic management should be an integral part of any visitor management plan.
  - Visitor management plans should consider special, innovative travel arrangements for tourists in rural areas and at key destinations such as York, the resorts in summer, drawing on and developing further the examples of, Moorsbus, the Malham Shuttle, Park and Ride in York.
  - Walking, cycling, horse riding and water borne transport needs to be encouraged as a means of access as well as attractions in their own right.
  - Need to improve access for all especially through non-car dependent modes.