

INTRODUCTION



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- 1.1 This section provides background information on the role, purpose and coverage of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan. As a regional spatial strategy the Plan is about managing places – the ‘spaces’ where we live, work, spend time and move around. It focuses on ‘where things take place’, and on ‘how much’ in terms of relative scales and priorities for development and investment. In a large and diverse region like Yorkshire and Humber the concept of spatial planning is very relevant and, as a consequence, the Yorkshire and Humber Plan (the Plan) plays a key part in planning and shaping its future.

- 1.2 This Plan is the Region's new Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). It is a comprehensive revision of the current RSS for Yorkshire and the Humber (based on a selective review of RPG 12), which was published in December 2004.
- 1.3 Public consultation on the draft Plan runs from January to March 2006. In Autumn 2006, an Examination in Public will be held by an independent Government-appointed Panel to publicly test this document. The Panel will subsequently issue a report. The Secretary of State will consider the report and consult on any proposed changes to the draft. It is expected that the Plan will become formally approved and fully operational late in 2007.

THE PURPOSE OF THE DRAFT PLAN

- 1.4 The Plan guides development up to 2021 and beyond. It influences and is influenced by the economy, housing, transport, the built and natural environment and much more. It asks questions about the future roles of places; how places work together and, ultimately, about the effect places have on the quality of life that people living in, working in or visiting that area experience. It provides a broad and long term development strategy for the Region and affects everyone in the Region as well as generations to come. It seeks to help the Region become more competitive, meet its housing needs and address its environmental and transport pressures.
- 1.5 The Plan embodies the Regional Transport Strategy. It must be taken into account by local authorities in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and Local Transport Plans. It will also be an important influence on housing, economic development, waste, renaissance and other strategies, and guide the investment plans and priorities of a range of agencies and infrastructure and service providers.
- 1.6 Local Development Documents prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act) must be in general conformity with the Plan. The Plan will form part of the statutory 'development plan' for each district or unitary local authority area, so alongside local policies it now must be taken into account in determining planning applications. The existing 'December 2004 RSS' already has statutory status. The Plan will have the same statutory status when it replaces the 'December 2004 RSS'.
- 1.7 Regional Planning Bodies (the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly in this Region) are now also statutory consultees in the planning system. This provides a remit for the Assembly to object to major planning applications that do not support the Plan.

WHAT THE PLAN CAN AND CAN'T DO

- 1.8 The Plan does not make site-specific allocations of land for development. Its remit is broad locations and the movement of people between these locations. It is a long-term strategy and framework, guiding how things should take place in the future. This relates both to development and investment. A wide range of factors will influence change across the Region. Both global and local actions will have an influence. In some areas responsibilities rest with National Government, in others it may rest outside the control of the Plan.

Fig.1.1 THE ENGLISH REGIONS



1.9 The Plan forms part of a group of regional strategies (which are further explained in section 5). Each regional strategy has its own remit. For example, the Regional Economic Strategy deals with issues about investment and action to deal with economic development and skills issues. The Regional Housing Strategy guides investment and action to address the Region's housing needs.

1.10 The Plan therefore concentrates on its core business of spatial planning. It can make a significant difference in fostering *sustainable communities* – places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. The Government further defines sustainable communities:

'They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all'.

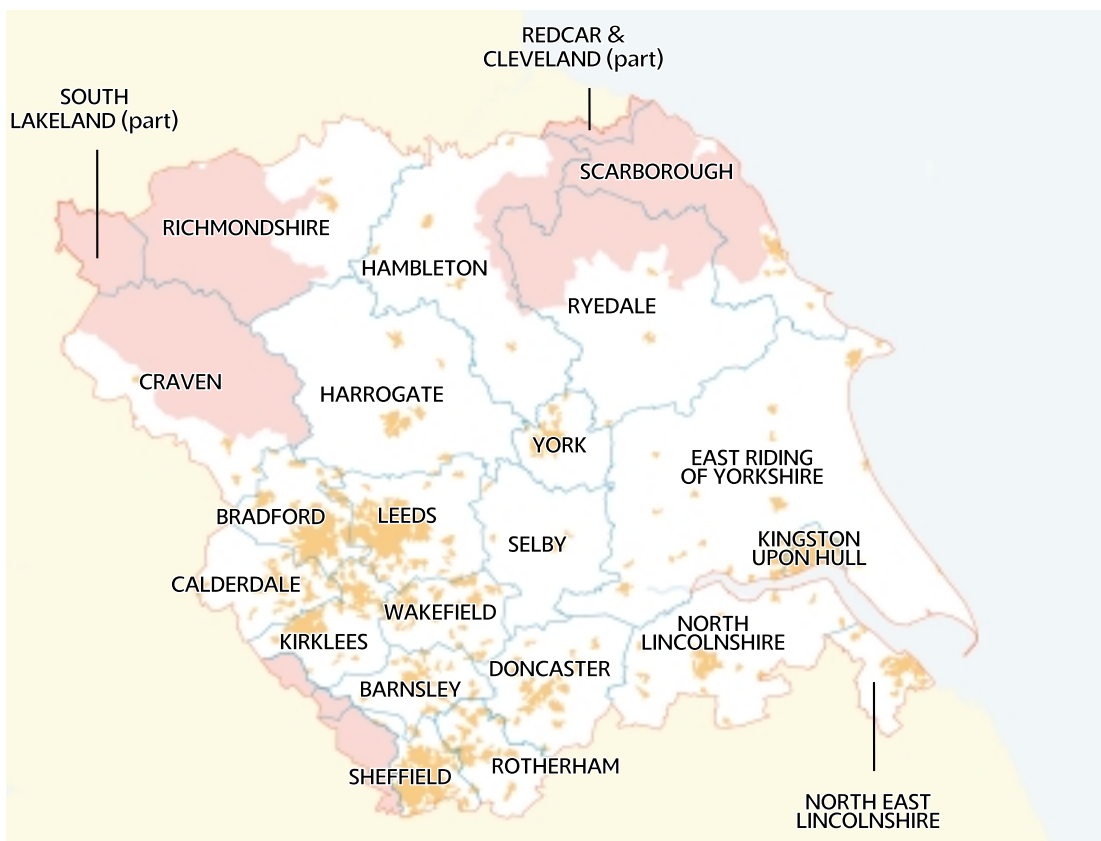
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF THE PLAN

1.11 Yorkshire and Humber is one of eight English regions for which RSSs are prepared. Greater London is, effectively, a ninth 'region' for which a London Spatial Plan is prepared. Figure 1.1 shows the Region in the wider English context.

1.12 Within Yorkshire and Humber there are 24 Planning Authorities, including North Yorkshire County Council, North York Moors National Park and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The Yorkshire and Humber Plan applies to the following geographical area:

- The metropolitan districts of South and West Yorkshire (apart from those parts of Barnsley, Sheffield and Kirklees falling within Peak District National Park which is covered in its entirety by the RSS for East Midlands).
- The City of York, the County of North Yorkshire and the whole of the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Parks (including those parts within the Redcar and Cleveland and South Lakeland Districts).
- The City of Kingston-upon-Hull, and the East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire districts.

Fig. 1.2 | STRATEGIC PLANNING AREAS



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RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING STRUCTURE PLANS

- 1.13 RSS and Local Development Frameworks now provide the means by which strategic and local planning policies will be set out. This has replaced the 'old system' in which Regional Planning Guidance, Structure Plans and Local Plans were produced, or (in the case of West and South Yorkshire) unitary development plans.
- 1.14 In terms of existing strategic planning policies, there are three adopted Structure Plans still operational in the Region. These cover North Yorkshire, the 'south bank' authorities in the former 'Humberside' area and Hull/East Riding of Yorkshire. The Act enabled adopted structure plans to be 'saved' for a period of three years from September 2004 or from when they were adopted, whichever is later.
- 1.15 The North Yorkshire and Humberside Structure Plans were both adopted some time ago and are therefore 'saved' until September 2007. The Joint Structure Plan for Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire was adopted in June 2005 and is therefore 'saved' until July 2008. There is scope in the Act to 'save' certain structure plan policies for a further period to avoid any potential policy voids. Further work will be undertaken on 'saving' policies for an extended time during the public consultation period. It is initially proposed that:
- The Humberside Structure Plan will be fully superseded in September 2007 by the RSS that is current at that time
 - Policy E8 of the North Yorkshire Structure Plan should be saved to avoid a policy void on the general extent of the green belt in North Yorkshire – with all other policies being fully superseded in September 2007
 - The Joint Structure Plan for Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire will be fully superseded in July 2008

PLAN PREPARATION PROCESS

- 1.16 The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly has led the preparation of the Plan in its designated role as Regional Planning Body. As the Assembly is a regional strategic partnership, this work has involved all of the Region's local authorities and a wide range and type of partners.
- 1.17 The Region already has an agreed regional vision – '*Advancing Together*'. This sets a high level vision and puts in place objectives (see section 3) to create a 'world class region', with improving economic, social and environmental well-being. '*Advancing Together*' provides the framework within which the Regional Development Agency (Yorkshire Forward) have also prepared their Regional Economic Strategy and Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber and the Regional Housing Board have prepared the Regional Housing Strategy.
- 1.18 The RSS Project Plan ('Shaping the Future', January 2004) stated that '*Advancing Together*' should provide the Plan's starting point. The Plan is the spatial and land-use expression of '*Advancing Together*'.

- 1.19 The alignment of the Plan and the Regional Economic and Housing strategies, under 'Advancing Together', has been achieved as all three strategies have been reviewed in 2005.
- 1.20 In July 2004, the 'Draft Spatial Vision and Strategic Approach' consultation document was published, following this a second pre-draft consultation exercise on a series of topic papers was undertaken in early 2005. These have provided two important opportunities for people and organisations to informally and pro-actively influence decisions before they were made. The Assembly itself is also a forum that inherently requires stakeholder involvement in decision-making. The influence that the consultation exercises has had on the Plan is explained in the separate 'Pre-submission Consultation Statement'.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 1.21 The Plan has been subject to a combined Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) process through all stages of its preparation process. A comprehensive and open approach has been fostered to ensure that the SEA/SA process has actively influenced the Plan's shape and content. The SEA/SA is an independent test. Its findings are set out in the 'Sustainability Appraisal Report', which is also published and submitted alongside this Plan and the Consultation Statement.

CORE EVIDENCE BASE

- 1.22 Significant research and technical work has been carried out which collectively forms a broad evidence base for developing the Plan. The reviews of the Regional Economic and Regional Housing Strategies also undertaken during 2005 have provided key shared evidence bases. The SA process has also generated valuable insights and evidence. For the development of this Plan evidence has been particularly drawn on from:
- Annual Monitoring Reports – prepared to measure the performance of the existing Regional Spatial Strategy
 - 'Progress in the Region' – which measures progress against 'Advancing Together' indicators
 - The 'Information Baseline' – prepared for the SEA of the Plan.
 - The information base developed for the 'Regional Settlement Study', June 2004

MONITORING APPROACH

- 1.23 Monitoring is a critical component in ensuring that policies are effectively implemented and progress is being made towards desired outcomes. An annual cycle of monitoring is adopted in the Plan. This facilitates continuous review and enables the charting of progress towards achieving wider regional objectives.
- 1.24 The Government places increasing importance on the monitoring of RSSs and Local Development Frameworks. It emphasises that regional and local monitoring should complement one another. As Regional Planning Body, the Assembly must submit an Annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State no later than the end of February

following the year it applies. Local Authorities submit an annual monitoring report to the Secretary of State no later than December of the year it applies. The delay in the submission of the RSS monitoring report is intended to ensure alignment between RSS and Local Development Framework monitoring results and supports a coordinated regional approach to the monitoring of implementation.

- 1.25 The Assembly has developed a new monitoring framework for the Plan, which builds upon the lessons learned in the implementation of the monitoring framework for RSS (based on the selective review of RPG12). The new monitoring framework is consistent with monitoring guidance provided in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 11 and the good practice set out in Monitoring of Regional Planning Guidance (ODPM July 2004).
- 1.26 The approach taken to monitoring is an outcome led framework, summarised at Annex B. This is consistent with both PPS11 and ODPM guidance and enables performance to be evaluated. There are three types of policy used in the Plan, the User Guide and Annex B provide an explanation of these. The monitoring framework acknowledges the linkages between the implementation and delivery of these different types of policies.
- 1.27 Up and until the Examination in Public work will continue to refine indicators and targets. Once the Plan is issued, there is a need to further develop indicators and data collection methods for the medium to long term. This may require specific research studies and also alignment with national monitoring systems. The opportunity to form a Regional Monitoring Group to progress an integrated approach to monitoring in the Region will be explored as will producing a Regional Monitoring Manual – to identify potential data sources and definitions.