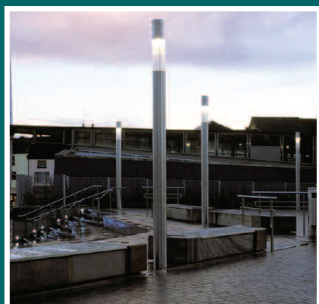




GOVERNMENT OFFICE  
FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

# Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands



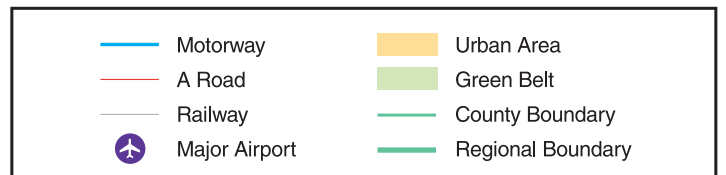
January 2008

# The West Midlands Region



This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries or potential scheme alignments.

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GOVERNMENT OFFICE  
FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

*Regional Spatial Strategy  
for the West Midlands*



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Incorporating Phase 1  
January 2008

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### **The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy**

- 1.1 This Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was first issued as Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) in June 2004. At that time a number of issues were identified for further work. These issues were subsequently divided into three blocks of work, with each one forming a partial revision to the RSS;
- Phase 1 – the Black Country
  - Phase 2 – including housing and employment, and
  - Phase 3 – including environment issues.
- 1.2 This document now incorporates the revisions to the RSS as a result of the Phase 1 revision. Revised text and policies are sidelined to help the reader to identify changes from the previous RSS. Subsequent reprints will incorporate the remaining Phases of revision.
- 1.3 The Phase 1 revision only impacts on a small part of the RSS. However, apart from this introductory section policies or text not affected by the revision have not been updated to reflect changes since the publication of RPG.
- 1.4 The RSS incorporates the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and provides the framework for the preparation of local development documents and local transport plans across the region. It also forms part of the Development Plan for each planning authority in the West Midlands.
- 1.5 The Spatial Strategy should inform the development of strategies and programmes of other public agencies and service providers including those involved in health, education, skills and learning, and crime reduction. It also provides the spatial framework for the Regional Economic Strategy (RES).
- 1.6 Deleted

### **The Context for Regional Planning Guidance**

#### *The Nature of the West Midlands Region*

- 1.7 The West Midlands is a Region of great diversity ranging from Major Urban Areas (MUAs) to sparsely populated rural areas. This diversity is also reflected in the nature of its population, with a wide range of multi-cultural communities. Combined with the variety of business, employment and skills, this creates major opportunities for the future. The challenge for the Region is to use this diversity as one of its key strengths.
- 1.8 Centrally located within England, the Region covers some 13,000 square kilometres and is home to around 5.3 million people. Within the Region there are seven Metropolitan District Councils, three Unitary Authorities, four Shire Counties and 24 District Councils.
- 1.9 At the centre of the Region is the West Midlands conurbation, made up of Birmingham, Solihull, and the Black Country local authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. Birmingham continues to develop a high level European and international profile and this has brought wider benefits to the overall Region. The other MUAs are
-

Coventry and the towns of the North Staffordshire conurbation in the Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme local authority areas. All of these areas have distinct characteristics and roles.

- 1.10 Within the shire counties, a network of towns and cities exist with complex inter-relationships, both with each other and with the MUAs. This is particularly so close to the West Midlands conurbation where towns such as Lichfield, Warwick/Leamington and Redditch have traditionally accommodated 'overspill' development needs. Challenging some of the thinking behind these traditional linkages has been central to the formulation of the Spatial Strategy.
- 1.11 The rural areas of the West Midlands continue to play an important role in the Region's economic, social and environmental fabric. There is great diversity within these rural areas which must be recognised and addressed. The remoter areas, particularly parts of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire on the western side of the Region, have distinct needs partly arising from high levels of deprivation and low population densities.

## The Polycentric Framework for the West Midlands

- 1.12 A study produced to inform this RPG, "A Polycentric Framework for the West Midlands"<sup>1</sup>, provides an understanding of the Region's functional areas and their inter-relationships. Although complex, some patterns are evident.
- 1.13 Of particular significance is the pattern of growing residential attractiveness (two key bands running from the periphery of Stoke-on-Trent to Shrewsbury and in a broken sweep from southern Coventry to Hereford) which is separated from the main areas of economic activity in the MUAs. Conversely, traditional industrial activity is often in areas that are not attractive, are losing population and could be considered as "vulnerable".
- 1.14 The new service and knowledge based economy is reinforcing some traditional economic centres with particular concentrations of knowledge based activity in Birmingham, Coventry and Stoke-on-Trent. However, a new pattern is also evident in a broad sweep around the south of the Region, matching to some extent the Coventry to Hereford area referred to above.
- 1.15 The implications of these patterns require further investigation. For example: the relationship between growing residential areas and economic activity; the ability to serve new patterns of economic activity by public transport and their effects on social exclusion; the relationship between shire and urban housing markets; and, more generally, how these patterns might be affected by the Milton Keynes/South Midlands growth area in the Sustainable Communities Plan.
- 1.16 In the light of this the Regional Planning Body (RPB) is encouraged to develop its polycentric approach further in order to better understand the functional inter-relationships between places within and, where appropriate, outside of the Region.

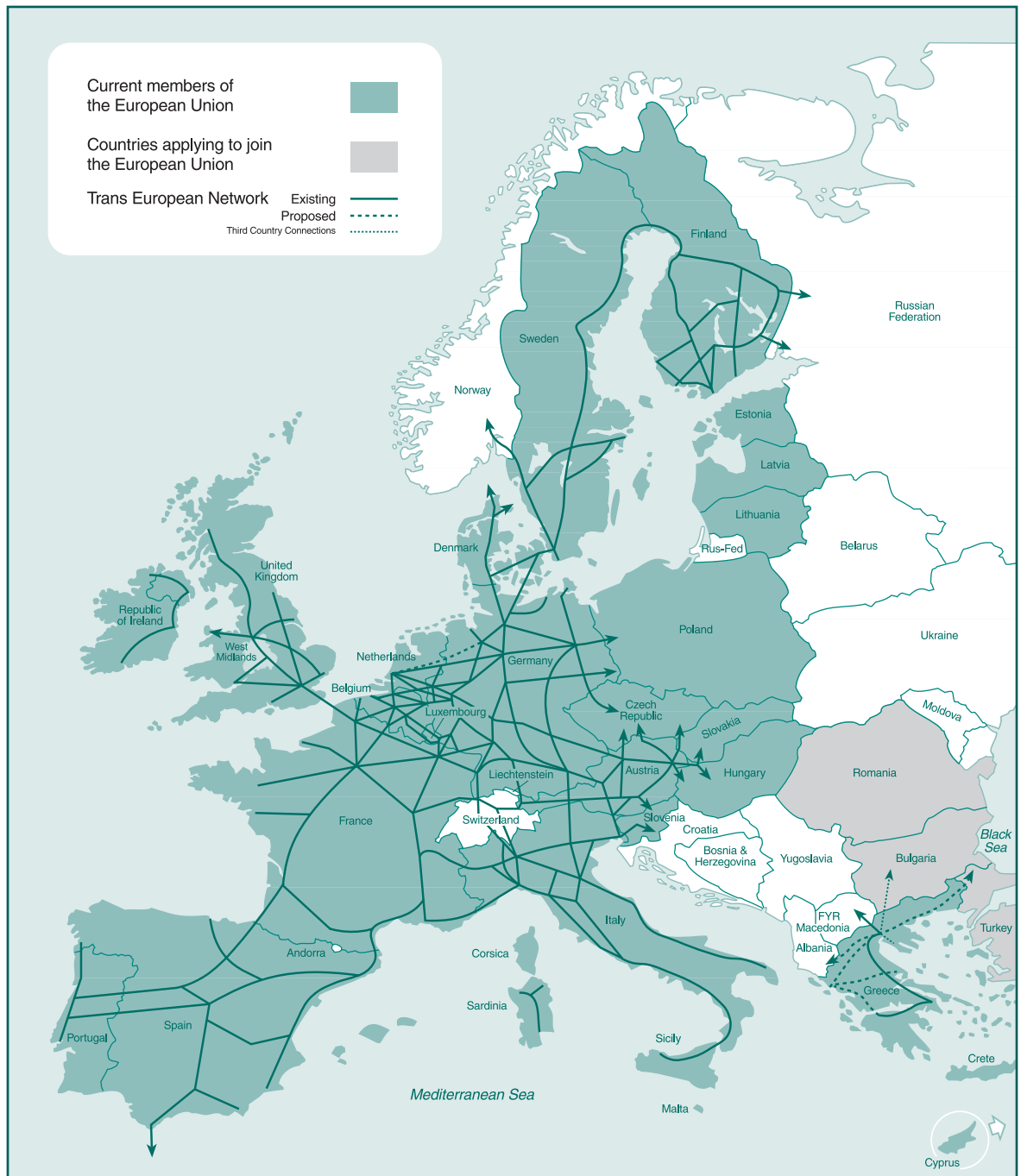
## The West Midlands within Europe

- 1.17 The West Midlands has an important position within Europe (Figure 1) at the crossroads of two Trans European Transport Network Routes (north/south and east/west). These have strategic significance in serving long distance land travel not only within England but also in connecting Eire, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to mainland Europe via the south coast and the ports of the east coast.
- 1.18 The European Union's approach to spatial planning is set out in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). This includes three spatial planning objectives:
  - development of a balanced and polycentric pattern of development and a new urban-rural relationship;

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<sup>1</sup> A Polycentric Framework for the West Midlands, ECOTEC, 2000.

Figure 1: The West Midlands within Europe – Trans European Network



- securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge; and
- sustainable development, prudent management and protection of natural and cultural heritage.

1.19 With regard to the first objective, as set out above considerable attention has been given to exploring how the concept of polycentric or multi-centred development could be utilised.



- 1.20 More can be done to take forward some of the important aspects of the ESDP. Development plans and other Regional strategies will need to explore these issues further. This will be assisted by the Region's on-going involvement in the INTERREG Community Initiative and associated projects including the further development of REGIS – a project looking at Regional geographic information systems, closely tied in to the monitoring of RPG in the West Midlands.
- 1.21 Involvement in these projects has involved trans-national co-operation with a range of regions across the EU and the Region is currently looking to see how it can become involved in the INTERREG III programmes building upon the benefits of previous participation. The West Midlands has also maintained an interest in the Spatial Vision for the North West Metropolitan Area and responded with a West Midlands perspective to the consultation carried out in early 2001.
- 1.22 European funds are important to the West Midlands, particularly European Regional Development Funds which will be necessary to help deliver some of the important aspects of RPG. The Single Programming Document for Objective 2 funding (2000-2006) is therefore vitally important in terms of its relationship to RPG.

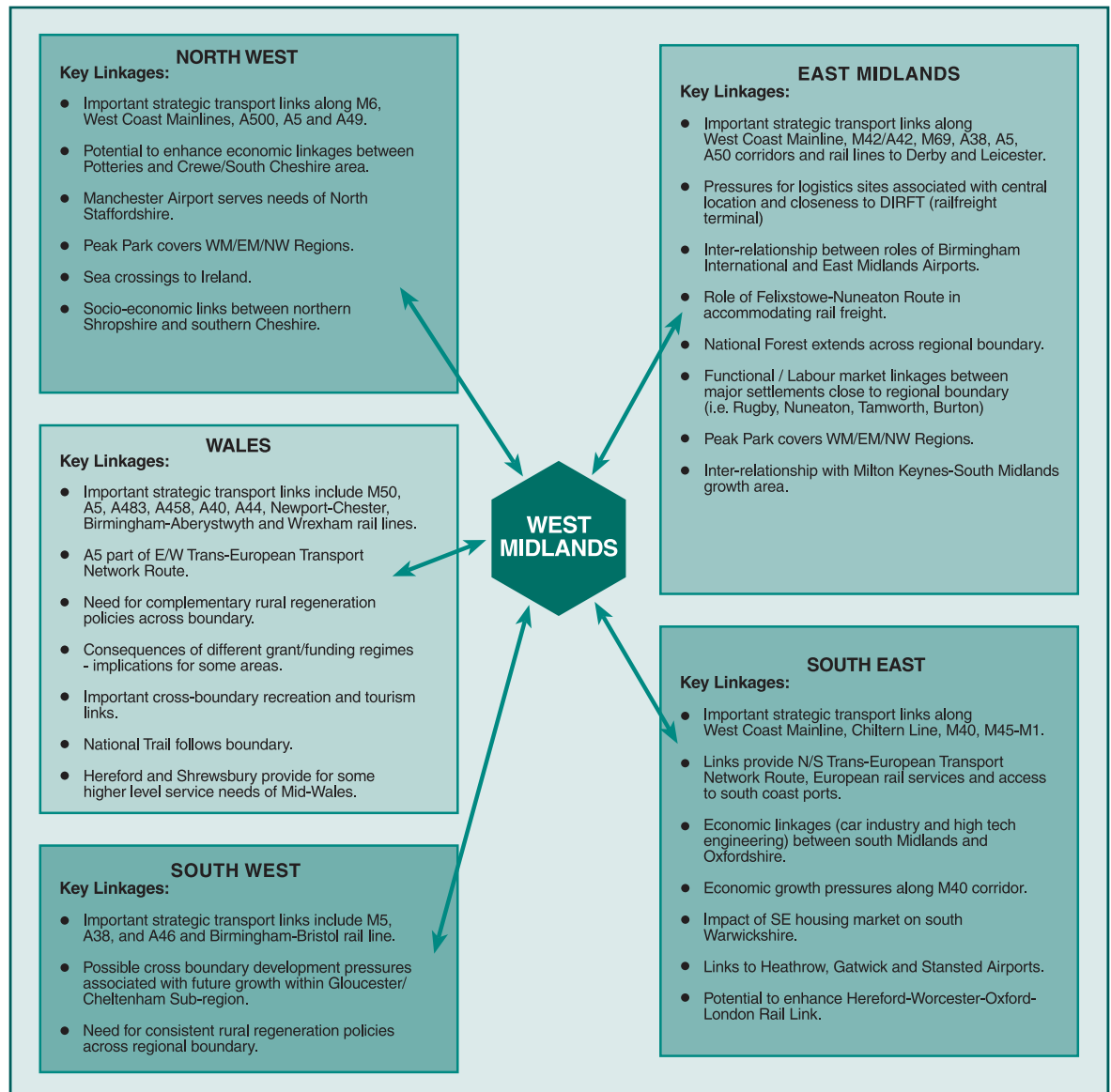
### **The West Midlands within the UK**

- 1.23 Preparation of this Spatial Strategy has been guided by the national policy framework applicable at the time of preparation/revision, and other key policy documents and plans including the National Sustainable Development Strategy.
- 1.24 It is important to develop consistent and complementary spatial policy between adjoining regions. In the case of the West Midlands, there are significant functional links with the East Midlands, North West, South East, South West and Wales and a summary of these linkages is identified in Figure 2. This demonstrates how the West Midlands lies at the crossroads of national transport networks and it is clear that access along them must be maintained if Regional and national economic competitiveness is to be supported.
- 1.25 Cross-boundary linkages have been taken into account particularly for matters relating to future transport policies and their inter-relationship with proposed patterns of development.
- 1.26 These external functional linkages should be examined more closely and where appropriate cross boundary sub-regions identified. In particular the nature of the relationship between the south-eastern part of the Region and the Milton Keynes-South Midlands growth area, identified in the Sustainable Communities Plan, will need to be investigated. This should inform both the review of this guidance and the detailed development proposals in the growth area. The impacts of any other major proposals in adjoining regions will also need to be similarly considered as they arise.

### **Planning in Partnership – Other Strategies within the West Midlands**

- 1.27 This guidance sets out a fundamental change of policy direction which, to be successful, will require support from a wide range of partners.
  - 1.28 It sets out a longer-term spatial policy perspective, to complement and give further direction to national and Regional strategies. Foremost among these are Sustainable Communities: building for the future, Planning Policy Guidance, the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action, the Regional Housing Strategy, the Regional Cultural Strategy, the Regional Sustainable Development Framework and the programmes of the major spending agencies within the Region, including health and education.
-

Figure 2: Inter-regional relationships.



1.29 With regard to economic development, the relationship between RPG and the RES is a critical one. As well as the former assisting the delivery of the latter, it is important that the RES now operates within and alongside the long-term spatial planning context of this guidance.

1.30 In wider terms the RPB should promote the Spatial Strategy and vision more generally, encouraging these to be adopted more widely across the Region by other public, private and voluntary agencies working together in partnership to common ends.



## Chapter 2

# Towards a More Sustainable Region

### Sustainable development

- 2.1 The Government's sustainable development objectives are set out below and lie at the heart of its planning policies and of this RPG and its Spatial Strategy:
- a) Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
  - b) Effective protection of the environment;
  - c) Prudent use of natural resources; and
  - d) Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
- ("A Better Quality of Life" – 1999)

### The Regional Vision

- 2.2 The broad view of where the West Midlands should aim to be over the coming decades was established early in the RPG review process as:
- "The overall vision for the West Midlands is one of an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable Region, which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together, are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life of future generations."
- 2.3 This Vision incorporates the key theme within the Brundtland Report definition of sustainable development; that is meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- 2.4 Specifically the Vision looks forward to a Region:
- a) where there are opportunities for all to progress and improve their quality of life;
  - b) with an advanced, thriving and diverse economy occupying a competitive position within European and World markets;
  - c) where urban and rural renaissance is successfully being achieved;
  - d) with diverse and distinctive cities, towns, sub-regions and communities with Birmingham as a "World City" at its heart;
  - e) which is recognised for its distinctive, high quality natural and built environment;
  - f) with an efficient network of integrated transport facilities and services which meet the needs of both individuals and the business community in the most sustainable way; and
  - g) where all Regional interests are working together towards a commonly agreed sustainable future.
-

## Managing Change

- 2.5** To realise the Regional Vision it is necessary to influence and manage some of the key underlying forces affecting the West Midlands. The Regional Sustainability Action Framework (2000) identified some of the Region's key challenges and the direction of change needed if the Government's sustainability objectives are to be met.
- 2.6** For RPG, this means:
- a) adopting positive measures to address the relative decline in the Regional economy in both urban and rural areas;
  - b) reversing the movement of people and jobs away from the Major Urban Areas (MUAs) and ensuring there is a greater equality of opportunity for all;
  - c) tackling road and rail congestion; and
  - d) achieving a more balanced and sustainable pattern of development, across the Region, including rural areas.
- 2.7** In spatial terms, it is particularly the outward movement of people and jobs away from the MUAs which is increasingly recognised as an unsustainable trend and one which provides the Region with a key challenge. The trend is seen as increasing the pressures on the environment, encouraging development of Greenfield sites, increasing the need for car-based travel and creating dangers of abandonment and greater social polarisation within the Region.
- 2.8** A clear sense of common purpose is needed to address decentralisation, supported by a holistic, integrated approach to policies which affect the distribution of people and activities across the Region. The long term Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands set out in this guidance is a first but significant step in addressing this key challenge.

## Guiding Principles

- 2.9** In order to balance the Government's sustainable development objectives within RPG, a framework of "guiding principles" was established by partners at an interim stage of the Review to assess options, guide the process of strategy choice and act as a key reference point in the development of policies. These principles, set out in Annex A, guided the development of the Spatial Strategy and the detailed policies that follow.

## Climate Change

- 2.10** Climate change is recognised as one of the greatest threats facing the world with climate models indicating that the West Midlands will continue to get warmer with wetter winters and drier summers. The major cause of climate change is the production of greenhouse gases, notably CO<sub>2</sub>, through the combustion of fossil fuels to make energy for homes, industry, businesses and transport. While it is usually considered primarily an environmental issue with nature conservation implications, recent experiences of flooding have shown how climate change can cause social disruption and, through reducing property prices and raising insurance premiums, affect people economically.
- 2.11** RPG has a responsibility to help meet national targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases. This will require establishing comprehensive and up to date data in order to enable the local authorities and agencies to develop co-ordinated and effective solutions. The use of the guiding principles in developing the Spatial Strategy has ensured that policies to assist the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions which may lead to climate change are an integral part of RPG.
- 2.12** For future RPG reviews the Regional Energy Strategy and the climate change scenarios generated by the West Midlands Climate Change Impact Study will be a valuable input. These scenarios will provide a basis for identifying
-



areas likely to be vulnerable to climate change and, consequently, help future RPG and other interests consider how they might minimise the adverse impacts of climate change and take advantage of opportunities it might present. The Study will also identify proposals and set Regional targets which will form the basis for discussions with neighbouring regions and the integration of policies and proposals.

- 2.13 The global environment is also affected. Transport was responsible for around a quarter of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions in 2000 and more importantly is one of the few sectors in which emissions are growing. Road transport constitutes about 85% of all carbon dioxide emitted from the transport sector, with passenger cars accounting for around half of that.
- 2.14 The challenge for local authorities is to generate corporate responses, through their services and activities, to potential climate change, working with the community and businesses to raise awareness about mitigation and adaptation.
- 2.15 Development plans and the plans, strategies and programmes of local authorities and statutory agencies should be co-ordinated to ensure that all new developments and activities which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions are identified. The impacts should be considered and where possible action taken to avoid, reduce, or offset them. This could include contributions through energy efficiency measures and Regional woodland targets.
- 2.16 Apart from promoting a more sustainable pattern of development which reduces the need to travel and encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport (T1,T2), this guidance includes a number of mechanisms for responding to climate change. These include encouraging the use of sustainable drainage systems (QE9), increasing tree cover (QE8), promoting the reuse of materials (M3, WD1), supporting new industries and technologies that address climate change, and encouraging renewable energy and energy conservation (EN policies).

## **Climate Change and the Black Country**

- 2.16A Planning policies have a major role to play in tackling climate change, including achieving the national objective to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010 and by 60% from 1990 levels by 2050. Whilst such policies apply across the Region as a whole, the scale of change and development in the Black Country which is necessary to meet the objectives of both economic and environmental transformation, and the area's unique environmental character, justify a policy for the Black Country alone to direct the more detailed plans and policies which are to guide that change.
-

## POLICY CC1: Climate Change

The Joint Core Strategy, the Area Action Plan for Brierley Hill and other LDDs for the Black Country should:

- A. Exploit opportunities to both mitigate and adapt to the worst impacts of climate change by:
  - (i) developing and using renewable energy;
  - (ii) reducing the need to travel; and
  - (iii) reducing the amount of biodegradable waste going to landfill;
- B. Enhance and extend natural habitats so that the opportunities for species migration are not precluded and biodiversity can adapt to climate change and hence help to mitigate its affects by reducing 'heat islands', acting as carbon 'sinks', absorbing flood water and providing renewable energy; and
- C. Require all new development to:
  - (i) minimise resource demand and encourage the efficient use of resources, especially water, energy and materials;
  - (ii) encourage the construction of climate-proofed developments and sustainable buildings to help ensure their long-term viability in adapting to climate change;
  - (iii) avoid development in areas at risk of flooding and direct development away from areas at highest risk;
  - (iv) promote the use of sustainable drainage techniques;
  - (v) facilitate walking, cycling and public transport;
  - (vi) facilitate effective waste management; and
  - (vii) protect, conserve, manage and enhance environmental and natural, built and historic assets;
- D. Regularly monitor progress and review policies accordingly.

## Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.17 To ensure that the principles of sustainability are woven into RPG emerging options, policies and proposals at key stages were tested using a sustainability appraisal methodology.
- 2.18 A methodology was developed early in the RPG review process which focused on the identification of the key assets of the Region and the criteria for assessing the impact of changes on these assets for sustainability. These criteria were generally consistent with the guiding principles referred to above although developed to a greater level of detail.
- 2.19 Independent sustainability appraisal has been a part of the development of this RPG. The principles will continue to be applied through its implementation to deliver sustainable development of the Region.

## Chapter 3

# The Spatial Strategy for the Development of the West Midlands

### A Fundamental Change of Direction

- 3.1 The RPG process has provided the opportunity to fundamentally reassess the nature of the West Midlands and the different circumstances, threats and opportunities that each place within it faces. In doing so the continued decentralisation of population and investment from the Major Urban Areas (MUAs) and the need to create balanced and stable communities across the Region have been identified as key issues. Sustainable communities: building for the future (a national plan of action) and the Regional plan (Sustainable communities in the West Midlands) mark a step change in the Government's approach to sustainable communities through, among other things, setting in place lasting solutions to reverse decline and regenerate deprived areas.
- 3.2 An important factor in the trend of decentralisation from the MUAs has been the availability of development land in the settlements close to them. This has contributed to the loss of investment, abandonment and environmental degradation in the MUAs and increased development and environmental pressures in other parts of the Region. The dispersal of population and activities under-uses the social and physical resources of the MUAs and contributes to unsustainable development patterns that lead people to make more and longer journeys, more often than not by the private car.
- 3.3 At the same time some rural areas have suffered from insufficient economic activity and suitable housing development to support a balanced population. This has resulted in people either leaving or needing to travel greater distances to access services and job opportunities.
- 3.4 In this context four major challenges are identified for the Region:
- a) **Urban Renaissance** – developing the MUAs in such a way that they can increasingly meet their own economic and social needs in order to counter the unsustainable outward movement of people and jobs facilitated by previous strategies;
  - b) **Rural Renaissance** – addressing more effectively the major changes which are challenging the traditional roles of rural areas and the countryside;
  - c) **Diversifying and modernising the Region's economy** – ensuring that opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and that they help reduce social exclusion; and
  - d) **Modernising the transport infrastructure of the West Midlands** – supporting the sustainable development of the Region.
- 3.5 It will not be enough to tackle these challenges in isolation of each other. They must be addressed simultaneously and as different aspects of the same issues. Compared with historical trends this will require a significant redistribution of new development, investment and action, particularly to support the development of the Region's transport networks, to bring forward appropriate development opportunities, and to improve the quality of the environment within the MUAs.
-

## The Spatial Strategy

- 3.6** The Spatial Strategy can be broadly summarised as enabling all parts of the Region to sustainably meet their own needs, in a mutually supportive way. Protecting and enhancing the Region's environmental assets, and where appropriate making economic use of them, together with the prudent use of natural resources, is a core element of this and will be particularly important in guiding the nature and location of development and improvements at sub-regional and local levels.
- 3.7** To achieve sustainable communities different responses are required dependent on circumstances around the Region. However, as places have functional inter-relationships with each other, for example sharing housing markets or relying on each other to provide leisure, shopping or employment opportunities, these different responses should be complementary to each other.
- 3.8** In the MUAs of Birmingham/Solihull, the Black Country, Coventry and the North Staffordshire conurbation more development opportunities will be created to retain and attract people and investment primarily by:
- a) supporting the market renewal of residential areas in Birmingham/Sandwell and North Staffordshire currently suffering from low demand;
  - b) tackling deprivation and creating employment opportunities in the five urban regeneration zones which cover parts of all the MUAs;
  - c) protecting and enhancing the quality of urban environments;
  - d) creating a balanced network of vital and vibrant town and city centres as the strategic focus for major retail, leisure and office developments;
  - e) resisting peripheral expansion for housing but, in certain circumstances, allowing Regionally important employment where this supports the urban renaissance; and
  - f) improving the quality of transport networks to reduce social exclusion, improve economic performance and facilitate a more sustainable pattern of development.
- 3.9** In other areas new development will be focused on the Region's other large settlements and in particular the five sub-regional foci of Hereford, Rugby, Shrewsbury, Telford and Worcester, with:
- a) new development primarily meeting locally generated needs; at a level to support balanced, sustainable communities;
  - b) the proportion of housing development to meet demand arising from the MUAs significantly reduced;
  - c) housing needs being satisfied in the sub-regional foci rather than by the peripheral expansion of the other large settlements;
  - d) rural renaissance initiatives concentrated in the rural regeneration zone in the west of the Region;
  - e) a balanced network of vital and vibrant town and city centres as the strategic focus for major retail, leisure and office developments, acting as service centres for their rural hinterlands; and
  - f) transport networks improved to reduce social exclusion and improve access to services and opportunities by serving movements between and within towns and cities, towns and their rural hinterlands, and within the rural areas.
-

- 3.10** Providing sufficient and suitable job opportunities is an important aspect of balanced and sustainable communities. The Spatial Strategy takes advantage of the many opportunities for economic activities within the Region. The Region's town and city centres, the six regeneration zones and three high technology corridors will provide the spatial focus for economic growth and diversification. These will provide investment and employment opportunities and through transport improvements be made more accessible to those in most need.

## **A Role for Each Place in the Region**

- 3.11** The key to the Spatial Strategy is achieving an urban renaissance in the four MUAs of Birmingham/Solihull, the Black Country, Coventry and the North Staffordshire conurbation. Nonetheless, the ultimate aim of the Spatial Strategy is a Region made up of a dynamic network of places, all important in their own right and with distinct characteristics, but with reinforcing economic, cultural and social functions. An important part of this is the development of a balanced network of town and city centres (PA11) that will act as the focus for major investment in retail, leisure and office developments. Broadly speaking this will mean:
- a) each of the MUAs developing enhanced economic and social roles, and building on their roles as service centres for cultural activities and on their historic heritage:
    - Birmingham – strengthening its role as the Regional capital with emerging world city status;
    - the Black Country – continuing its economic, physical and environmental renewal focused around improved infrastructure and the regeneration of town and city centres (including Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton) to create modern and sustainable communities;
    - Coventry – continuing to build upon its reputation as a forward-looking city which, along with Solihull and Warwickshire, can help create an important growth engine for the Region with links to the growing parts of the South East and East Midlands regions; and
    - North Staffordshire – building on its traditional strengths of ceramics and engineering but realising its potential as an accessible location with good links to the East Midlands and the more prosperous parts of the North West region;
  - b) the major shire towns and cities beyond the MUAs continuing to act as a focus for new investment to support wider regeneration and help meet the economic, social and cultural needs of surrounding rural areas:
    - building upon their traditional strengths of historic heritage and high quality environment, particularly in the cathedral cities of Worcester, Hereford and Lichfield and important county towns such as Shrewsbury, Stafford and Warwick/Leamington; and
    - supporting the continued development of towns such as Telford and Rugby with the potential and infrastructure to attract new investment; and
  - c) other parts of the Region, particularly other main towns and villages, all building on their locational strengths, environmental qualities, regeneration opportunities and the linkages between them and with their local hinterlands to deliver improved local services and develop their own distinctive roles and character.
- 3.12** For the Region to develop in this way, it is also vital that it develops as a “connected” Region with economic, social and cultural linkages supported by improvements in accessibility and mobility. This is a key theme embodied within this strategy.
-



- 3.13** Future reviews of this guidance will need to further refine policies and approaches so that they are more specific to the circumstances of the Region as a whole and to particular sub-areas within it in order to prioritise and target action most effectively. In doing so it will also need to better define the functional interactions between places within and, where appropriate, outside of the West Midlands.

## Spatial Strategy Objectives

- 3.14** The following strategic objectives provide a context for the policies in the topic Chapters:
- a) to make the MUAs of the West Midlands increasingly attractive places where people want to live, work and invest;
  - b) to secure the regeneration of the rural areas of the Region;
  - c) to create a joined-up multi-centred Regional structure where all areas/centres have distinct roles to play;
  - d) to retain the Green Belt, but to allow an adjustment of boundaries where this is necessary to support urban regeneration;
  - e) to support the cities and towns of the Region to meet their local and sub-regional development needs;
  - f) to support the diversification and modernisation of the Region's economy while ensuring that opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and reducing social exclusion;
  - g) to ensure the quality of the environment is conserved and enhanced across all parts of the Region;
  - h) to improve significantly the Region's transport systems;
  - i) to promote the development of a network of strategic centres across the Region; and
  - j) to promote Birmingham as a world city

## Objectives for the Black Country

- 3.14A** In addition, given the importance of the regeneration of the Black Country to the RSS, the following objectives provide the context for the Black Country policies in Chapters 4, 7, 8 & 9.
- a) to reverse out-migration
    - accommodating within the Black Country all of the generated household growth from 2011
    - meeting at least the levels of housing provision identified in Policy CF3 table 1;
  - b) to raise income levels
    - raising demand and household incomes (average earnings, GDP per head and reducing unemployment) to the UK average by 2033;
  - c) to create an inclusive and cohesive society within the Black Country
    - removing barriers to opportunity
    - changing the socio economic mix by increasing the proportion of social grades A and B to match the national profile by 2033 or earlier;
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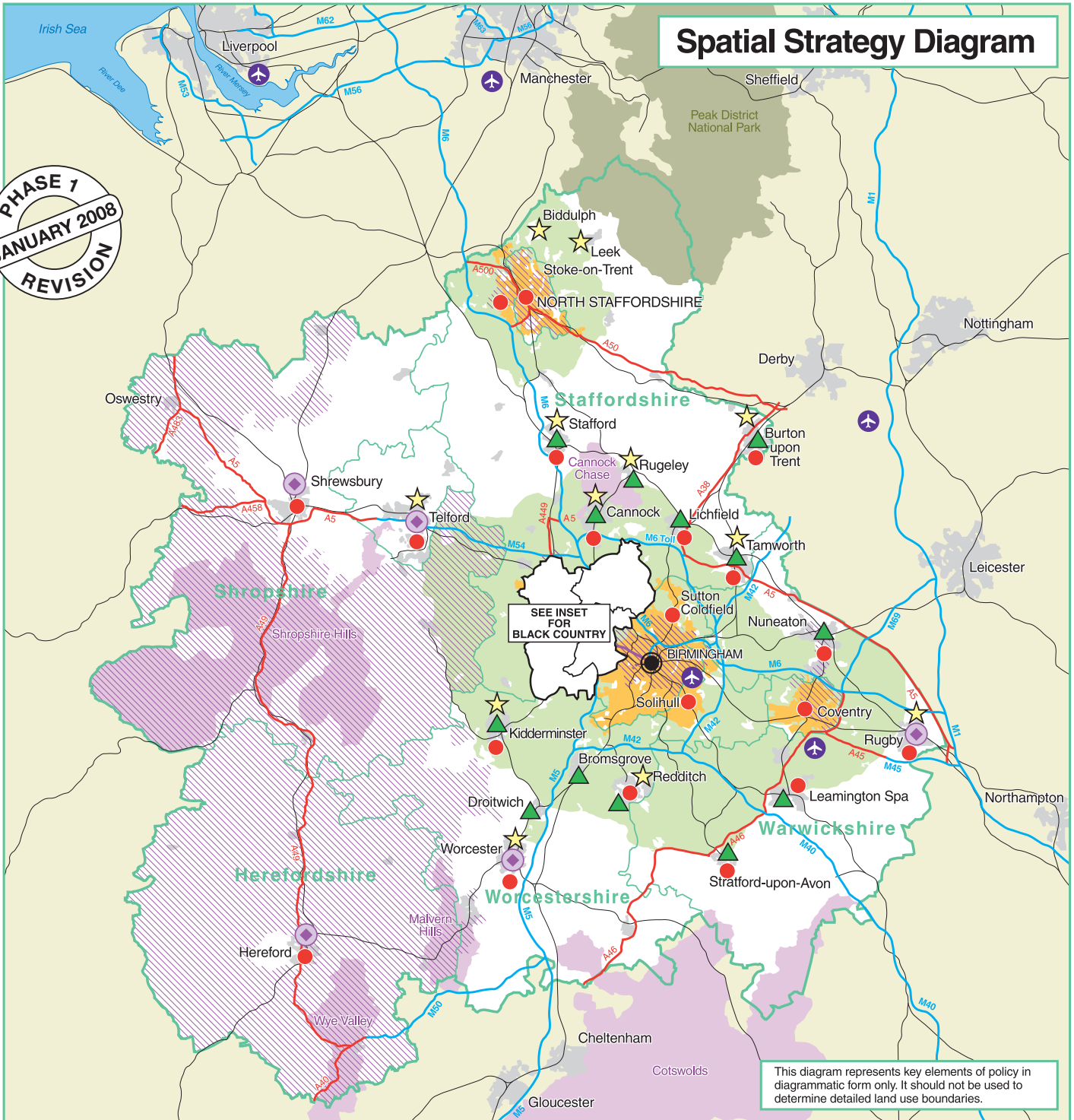
- d) to transform the Black Country Environment
- protecting and enhancing the sub-region's environmental and heritage assets and biodiversity
  - implementing the Black Country as Urban Park concept.

### **Delivering and Monitoring the Spatial Strategy**

- 3.15** The Spatial Strategy will be delivered by the implementation of the policies in this guidance and their effective integration and co-ordination with other relevant strategies, action plans and investment strategies such as those for transport, the economy, education, housing, health, training and the environment. This will require a high level of co-operation between the Region's public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders. The RPB should seek to broaden involvement in its working groups and new and innovative fora and delivery vehicles may also be required to complement local strategic partnerships, low demand pathfinder partnership boards, the Regional Housing Board and other existing mechanisms.
- 3.16** While it is not anticipated that the Spatial Strategy will require a fundamental review in the short to medium term it is expected to evolve in response to monitoring, lessons learnt, the changing external environment and new opportunities.

**PHASE 1**  
**JANUARY 2008**  
**REVISION**

# Spatial Strategy Diagram



This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries.

### Settlements

- Major Urban Area - Main focus for development and investment  
BIRMINGHAM  
BLACK COUNTRY  
COVENTRY  
NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE  
SOLIHULL
- Sub-Regional foci for development beyond MUAs
- Other large settlement

### Regeneration

- Regeneration Zone included in Agenda for Action
- Local Regeneration Area outside of Regeneration Zones
- Regional Centre
- Strategic Centre
- Growth Corridors
- Employment Land Investment Corridors

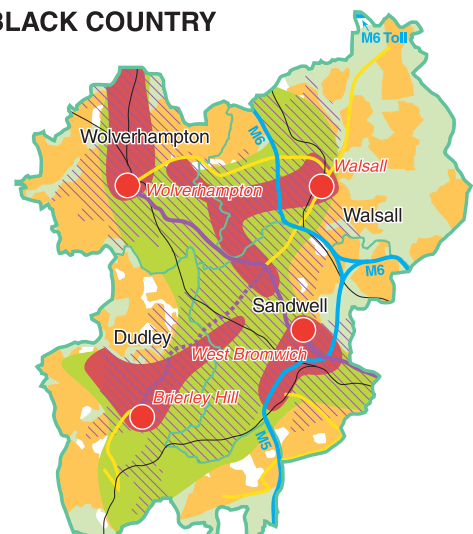
### Strategic Links

- Motorway
- Core Trunk Road
- Railway
- Midland Metro Line 1
- Metro Extensions (Brierley Hill & Edgbaston)
- Other high volume corridors with potential for enhanced public transport
- Airport

### Environment

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Park
- Green Belt
- Built-up Area
- Strategic Authority Boundary

### BLACK COUNTRY



## Chapter 4

# Urban Renaissance

### Introduction

- 4.1 The four Major Urban Areas (MUAs) of Birmingham/Solihull, the Black Country, Coventry and the North Staffordshire conurbation contain over half the Region's population and are the main focus for urban renaissance. Of the local authorities covering the MUAs only Birmingham, Solihull and Dudley did not experience a net loss of population between 1991 and 2001. Many of the people leaving are the most economically active. However, it is critical for the Spatial Strategy that all of the Region's urban areas once again become vital, attractive places for people of a wide range of circumstances and lifestyles.

### Creating High Quality Living and Working Environments

- 4.2 Past urban regeneration activity has tended to focus on the "worst areas" but has failed to change people's perception of them. It has also failed to provide urban areas which are attractive to a broad range of people's expectations and lifestyles. This guidance takes a more comprehensive approach, targeting radical change on selected areas, but aiming to raise the overall quality across the MUAs.
- 4.3 Fundamental to urban renaissance is the creation and marketing of sustainable urban communities in which people will choose to live, work and invest. This will be achieved within the MUAs through the creation of:
- a) a variety of high quality, healthy, affordable and sustainable living and working environments (QE3, QE4);
  - b) a sufficient number and variety of jobs to meet employment needs, along with associated education and training opportunities (PA1);
  - c) modern urban transport networks, with an emphasis on public transport provision (T1); and
  - d) rejuvenated city, town, and local centres to serve communities with high quality services, to promote identity and social cohesion and to drive economic change (PA11).
- 4.4 The RPB will identify demonstration projects in each MUA to illustrate the achievement of very high quality residential environments, particularly with regard to:
- a) combining high density with high quality living environments;
  - b) creating more attractive and sustainable urban and suburban communities through evolutionary development to raise capacity and provide the scale and demand for better local service provision; and
  - c) illustrating that clearance and redevelopment in some areas may be the best option to achieve regeneration.
- 4.5 Urban renaissance will require an integrated approach to improving the urban environment, housing choice, access to jobs, transport efficiency, the distinctiveness of centres, and service delivery. To tackle these issues holistically requires integrating land-use decisions with other activities (such as education, health, community safety, leisure and environmental services) and joint working with others, including residential and business communities. The
-

sustainable regeneration of the MUAs will be a Regional priority and that will be the focus for resources, but the principles should be applied to any redevelopment of urban areas.

### **POLICY UR1: Implementing Urban Renaissance – the MUAs**

- A. Throughout the MUAs, local authorities, Regional agencies and partnerships should work together to:
- i) restructure land use and transport networks to create employment growth, new residential environments, improved environmental quality, integrate transport and join up centres;
  - ii) undertake environmental improvements (QE Areas of Enhancement diagram) including greening programmes (QE4) and conservation of the historic environment (QE5);
  - iii) maximise the use of the existing housing and business stock where economically and socially viable;
  - iv) raise the quality of urban design, architecture and public art and spaces (QE3,4);
  - v) rejuvenate urban centres to act as a focus for regeneration; and
  - vi) increase accessibility particularly for those currently disadvantaged in accessing jobs (T1).
- B. These objectives should be achieved using techniques such as:
- i) establishing local urban renaissance visions through effective participation of residents, businesses and other stakeholders;
  - ii) introducing neighbourhood management techniques;
  - iii) establishing innovative forms of delivery partnerships and mechanisms; and
  - iv) sharing best practice through demonstration projects.
- C. Targeted action should be taken in areas of greatest need and areas of opportunity to create growth and new choices. Partnership working should be prioritised towards:
- i) developing integrated renewal strategies for the most deprived communities;
  - ii) housing market improvements combined with improved services, such as health and education in the market renewal areas and housing renewal areas (CF 1);
  - iii) concentrated action within the urban regeneration zones, including business support, skills training, access improvements, land assembly and environmental improvement (PA2, QE3,4);
  - iv) developing strategies to provide for employment growth and creation of new residential environments in areas of opportunity; and
  - v) identification of the complementary roles and identities of centres within the MUAs as catalysts for urban renaissance (UR3).

- 4.6** Local authorities working with Local Strategic Partnerships, and where appropriate Regeneration Zone partnerships, need to develop visions for local urban renaissance. These will have a key role in integrating and co-ordinating land-use and investment decisions with the development of major services and facilities in the fields of education, health and leisure, community safety, environment and housing. Regional and sub-regional mechanisms will be established to provide opportunities for discussion of components of the visions which would benefit from wider ownership and co-ordination.



## Implementing Urban Renaissance in the Black Country

- 4.6A** As a major urban area which is home to more than 1 million people and 500,000 jobs, the renewal and regeneration of the Black Country is critical to the delivery of the Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands. Extensive work undertaken through the Black Country Study has highlighted a number of regeneration priorities which must be addressed. The following policies provide a sub-regional focus for Urban Renaissance in the Black Country.
- 4.6B** Sustainable urban renaissance in the Black Country depends on securing carefully balanced growth in housing, centres and the local economy. Housing and employment land capacity studies have been undertaken for the Black Country. The studies conclude that in order to achieve RSS housing figures to 2021, significant amounts of land currently (or last) in use for employment purposes or allocated for such uses, will need to be developed for housing. The Black Country Study provides a framework for the delivery of housing growth in Centres and Corridors. However, in order to ensure that an adequate supply of good quality employment land is maintained in the Black Country, the release of former employment sites for housing will only be considered where sufficient employment land of appropriate type and quality remains (in accordance with PA6). The process will also require management to ensure the co-ordinated provision of appropriate services, transport infrastructure and environmental enhancement to ensure sustainable quality of life.
- 4.6C** The growth corridors will be based on public transport routes, and parts of the sub-region's canal network. The corridors will include those connecting the strategic centres with each other, and the sub-region to Birmingham city centre. There will also be opportunities for growth in corridors which link the network of local centres in the Black Country. They should contain the areas where the need for new employment sites in accessible locations can be met, where new housing can be accommodated, and where significant environmental renewal is most needed.
- 4.6D** Implementation of the regeneration priorities will involve a range of existing delivery mechanisms and partnerships and complementary strategies. It will be important that the Black Country Local Authorities and their partners, including Advantage West Midlands and the Regeneration Companies, use their powers and resources and are enabled to bring forward land and infrastructure and secure the transformation sought for the Black Country, working closely with local communities (UR4).

### POLICY UR1A: Black Country Regeneration Priorities

- A. In the Black Country the primary focus for regeneration activity, development and investment will be the four strategic centres and growth corridors on the revised spatial strategy diagram. The centres and corridors will be defined in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and local development documents.
- B. Development and environmental enhancement should also be planned for and encouraged in other locations across the Black Country which:
- (i) support the network of local centres and communities;
  - (ii) take advantage of the availability of suitable sites; and
  - (iii) which are accessible by public transport.
- 4.6E** The Black Country has historically lacked a portfolio of good quality employment land. It is a priority to ensure that new, high quality sites are delivered focused on key Employment Land Investment Corridors which will be defined in the Joint Core Strategy. Local authorities should work with Advantage West Midlands in ensuring the delivery of new employment sites in the context of the Regeneration Zones.

- 4.6F** Development in the Black Country must be managed to ensure the sub-region meets its obligations with respect to the Water Framework Directive and Habitats Directive. The Black Country water catchment areas feed into designated conservation sites, including those in the Severn Estuary. There are concerns about water abstractions and discharges negatively affecting the Severn Estuary sites and when they are available the Habitats Directive reviews currently being completed should be taken into account in the development of water cycle strategies for Black Country development proposals.

### **POLICY UR1B: Housing and Employment Land**

- A. Within the growth corridors the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and Local Development Documents will define the Employment Land Investment Corridors shown on the revised spatial strategy diagram.
- B. Within the growth corridors and the Employment Land Investment Corridors, local authorities through the Joint Core Strategy and LDDs will:
- (i) identify and protect those sites most suitable for employment purposes to ensure the provision of sub-regional employment sites (10ha - 20 ha) and a portfolio of employment land,
  - (ii) identify sites, including through the transfer of employment land, for housing and mixed uses to ensure that the housing requirements in policy CF3 are met,
  - (iii) work towards the balanced development of both uses, and
  - (iv) produce water cycle strategies to ensure the quantity and quality of surface and ground water produced by developments does not exceed the capacity of supply and treatment infrastructure.

- 4.6G** The four strategic centres will be the main locations for major office (B1(a)) development, particularly for schemes exceeding 5,000m<sup>2</sup>. All four centres have both potential and capacity to absorb an equal proportion of proposed growth. In LDDs sites will be identified in each of the four strategic centres to accommodate up to 186,000m<sup>2</sup> of office development to 2021. This figure should be regarded as indicative and will be subject to review in the light of monitoring of the actual level of development and progress in implementing the Joint Core Strategy.

### **POLICY UR1C: Strategic Office Development in the Black Country**

Growth totalling up to 845,000m<sup>2</sup> gross of B1 (a) office floorspace (including commitments) will be provided in the Black Country in the period 2004 to 2021. Of this total, growth of up to 745,000m<sup>2</sup> is to be planned for in the four strategic centres of Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton and Brierley Hill.

- 4.6H** The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus the majority of further comparison retail investment within the four strategic centres as catalysts for regeneration. The strategy however also seeks to maintain the vitality and viability of other non-strategic centres in the sub-region. The apportionment of the additional comparison retail floorspace in the four strategic centres and the non-strategic centres over the period 2004 to 2021 is indicated in policy UR1D. These figures should be reviewed in the Phase 2 revision of this RSS to ensure they are consistent with those for other centres across the region.

## POLICY UR1D: Retail Floorspace

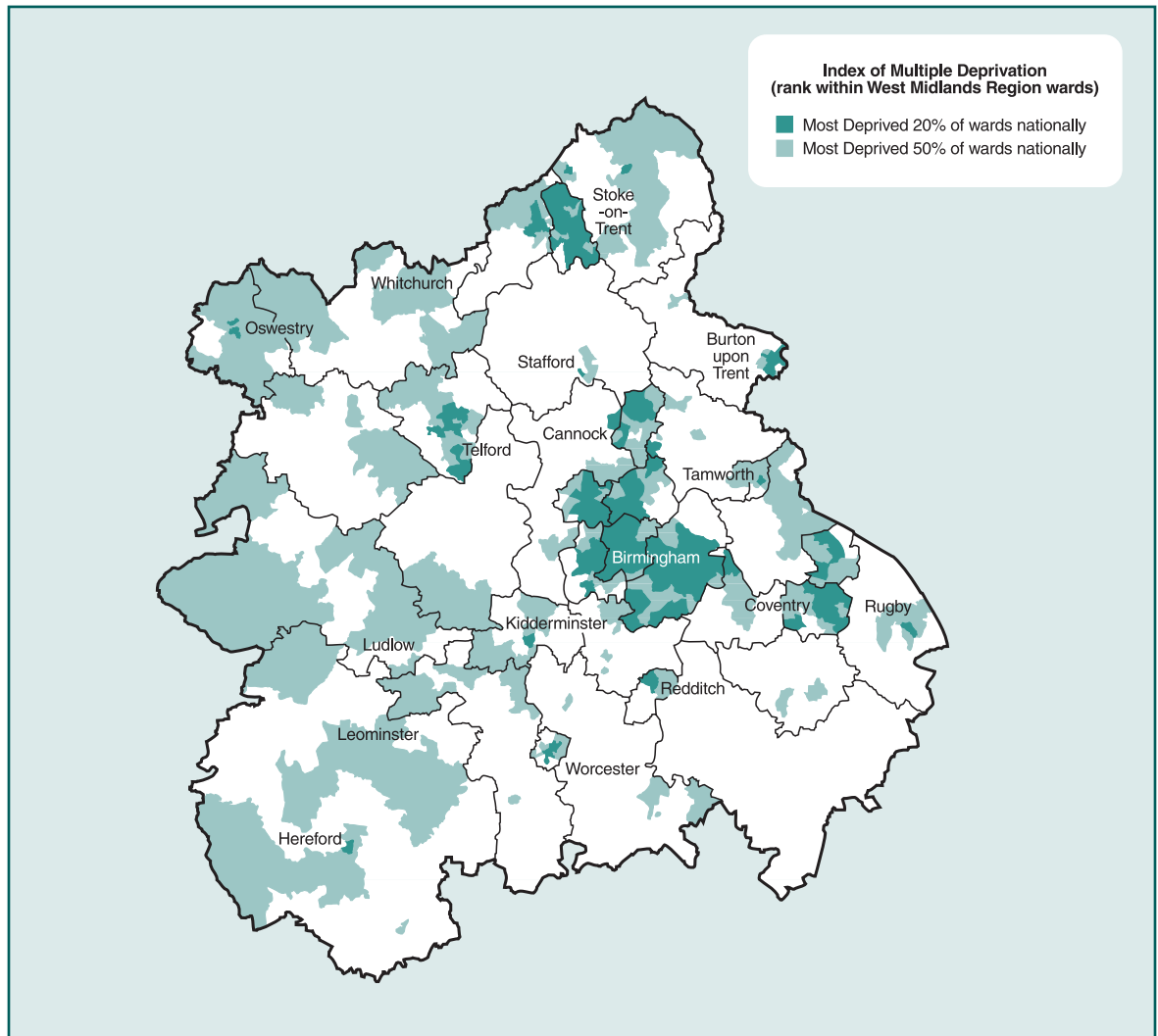
In the period 2004 - 2021 local authorities will plan for growth in comparison retail floorspace of 236,000m<sup>2</sup> gross including commitments:

Wolverhampton	54,000m <sup>2</sup>	Brierley Hill	51,000m <sup>2</sup>
Walsall	45,000m <sup>2</sup>	West Bromwich	35,000m <sup>2</sup>
Non-strategic centres	51,000m <sup>2</sup>		

### Towns and Cities Outside the Major Urban Areas

- 4.7 Parts of many towns and cities which lie outside the MUAs are also experiencing decline or negative change which is affecting their potential to sustain a successful economy or to provide quality living environments. In parts of these towns, some communities also experience high unemployment and loss of services. This particularly affects the most vulnerable social groups. This situation is reflected in the current pattern of deprivation across the Region (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Pattern of Need in the West Midlands.



## POLICY UR2: Towns and Cities Outside Major Urban Areas

- A. Local authorities and other agencies should seek to improve prospects in the following local regeneration areas by bringing forward local regeneration policies and programmes. Where possible access should be improved between concentrations of local deprivation and need within these towns and areas of economic opportunity, in line with policy T1. Any support for local regeneration programmes should not prejudice the need to focus resources within the MUAs.

Biddulph	Kidderminster	Rugby	Tamworth
Burton upon Trent	Leek	Rugeley	Telford
Cannock	Redditch	Stafford	Worcester

- B. The changing pattern of deprivation will continue to be monitored and the above list of local regeneration areas kept under review.

- 4.8 To implement this policy, local authorities should work with local, Regional and national agencies, the community/voluntary sectors and business partners to develop regeneration strategies to promote urban renaissance. The local regeneration areas identified are based on those areas that contain at least one of the most deprived 20% of wards nationally (see Figure 3).

### **Creating Jobs**

- 4.9 To be successful, urban renaissance must create the conditions for employment growth in addition to improving the residential environment. This means making adequate land, in appropriate locations, available for expanding local businesses and inward investment, supported by appropriate marketing.
- 4.10 The Regeneration Zones identified in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) have a particular role in this and will be used to link the wealth created by regeneration to people in the most deprived communities. The five urban regeneration zones cover most of the Region's weakest housing markets and all the wards are within the 20% most deprived in the country.
- 4.11 Evidence shows that the existing supply of employment land in the MUAs does not cater for the whole needs of industry. The approach to employment land taken in this guidance is broadly one of providing a portfolio of sites. As well as identifying new, appropriately located sites, existing sites should be reassessed for their suitability and reuse for alternative purposes considered. This approach is set out in detail in the Prosperity for All Chapter and policy PA6 in particular. Given the long lead-in time to bring forward often complex urban sites, priority should be given to investment in the MUAs.
- 4.12 Supporting and diversifying the economic base should be underpinned by a co-ordinated cross-sector package of measures linking physical, economic and social regeneration. These should address local circumstances and might combine business support, the reorganisation of land and premises, training, skills development (including basic literacy and numeracy) and improving accessibility. Business Renewal Areas, Business Improvement Districts and Business Neighbourhood Management and use of local planning agreements to promote local employment might be appropriate vehicles for this.

### **Creating Modern Transport Networks**

- 4.13 The Region's transport infrastructure needs substantial improvement to facilitate economic and social regeneration. Congestion constrains existing businesses, discourages inward investment and reduces people's quality of life. The Regional Transport Strategy is set out in full in the Transport and Accessibility Chapter.
- 4.14 This sets out how an integrated package of policies will be applied co-ordinating development plans, local transport plans and the investment programmes of transport operators and agencies. These packages should have a close relationship with regeneration action plans and local visions for urban renaissance. This will require strong partnership working between all concerned.

### **Enhancing the Role of City, Town and District Centres**

- 4.15 Revitalising city and town centres is an essential element of attracting people back into urban areas. This is not just because of the services they can provide but also because they play a key role in providing people with a sense of place. The Black Country and the North Staffordshire conurbation were formed by the merging of towns. People still strongly identify with their local town, although they may participate in activity across a wider area. This sense of identity and belonging needs to be nurtured and celebrated.
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- 4.16** The study of the functional inter-relationships in the West Midlands<sup>1</sup> has demonstrated a strong polycentric or multi-centred pattern both within and outside the MUAs. While all centres have a function to serve their local communities, many centres have distinctive roles that serve a sub-regional, Regional or even national function. The retail function is only one element and centres may have other significant roles, for example, in tourism, financial services or leisure. There is great potential to expand existing roles and develop new roles, for instance in cultural regeneration.
- 4.17** Flagship schemes and cultural projects can be a catalyst for regeneration (PA10, QE5). Developments such as the National Indoor Arena and Brindley Place in Birmingham, Victoria Hall and the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent, the Phoenix Project in Coventry, the Walsall Art Gallery, and The Public arts facility in West Bromwich contribute to creating distinctive roles for different places, helping to raise their profile, enhancing the sense of place and being a source of local pride. There should be a close two-way relationship with the Regional Cultural Strategy in bringing forward schemes and programmes that have a spatial dimension.

### **POLICY UR3: Enhancing the role of City, Town and District Centres**

City, town and district centres and in particular those centres identified in the network of town and city centres in PA11, should be enhanced to play a leading role in urban renaissance programmes in order to provide services for local communities, a sense of identity and as drivers of economic growth. This will be achieved through:

- i) maintaining and enhancing the pattern of urban centres according to their function and role in the Region;
- ii) developing strategies to maintain and enhance the underpinning role of all urban centres to serve their local communities in terms of retail provision, access to services and cultural/leisure activities;
- iii) developing strategies to promote a sense of identity and local distinctiveness;
- iv) identifying and creating opportunities for development, particularly for business, retail, leisure, tourism, cultural, educational and other services which are accessible to all;
- v) adopting strategies to encourage more people to live in or close to centres through the reuse of sites, development of mixed-use schemes, the conversion of property and initiatives such as “living over the shop”;
- vi) ensuring the highest standards of design are adopted, building on the existing character and identity of centres; and
- vii) enhancing urban centres as the primary nodes of the public transport network.

- 4.18** Local authorities, the RPB, and others including the business community, should work together to develop appropriate complementary roles between centres in order to reduce the areas of wasteful competition between them so that the overall performance of the Region’s centres exceeds the sum of its individual centres. Town centres are also covered in policies PA11-12 in the Prosperity for All Chapter.

## **Community Regeneration**

- 4.19** Evidence from many studies of urban regeneration demonstrate that one of the key ingredients for achieving success in regeneration and making it sustainable is the involvement of communities at all stages in the process from defining the problem, creating the vision, devising the actions, to implementing the proposed changes and maintaining the environment.

<sup>1</sup> A Polycentric Framework of the West Midlands, ECOTEC 2001.

## **POLICY UR4: Social Infrastructure**

- A. Service providers should work with local authorities and community organisations, in partnerships and through Local Strategic Partnerships, to demonstrate how their activities contribute to the delivery of urban renaissance consistent with the Spatial Strategy. Local authorities should facilitate the co-ordination of land use and investment decisions of providers with improved service delivery to:
- i) ensure that new social infrastructure is developed in or on the edge of an appropriate level of existing centre and is accessible by all modes by potential users;
  - ii) co-ordinate decisions on schools investment and the provision of new facilities with residential renewal;
  - iii) provide a range of educational facilities and services across all tiers to promote urban renaissance;
  - iv) facilitate the modernisation of local health services, informed by partnership working with Primary Care Trusts on local delivery plans and addressing inequalities in health;
  - v) provide support for a range of business development and education and training services, targeted at linking local people and businesses to economic opportunities, including Education Action Zones;
  - vi) promote the provision of other facilities necessary for local communities and maximise the potential of existing community buildings and other facilities wherever there is the potential for mixed use;
  - vii) concentrate development and investment in areas where there is the greatest need;
  - viii) support the creation of new quality residential environments in areas of opportunity; and
  - ix) encourage the creation of safer neighbourhoods.
- B. Local authorities should take account of the impact of proposed developments on the health of local communities based on an assessment carried out in liaison with Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts.





## Chapter 5

# Rural Renaissance

### Introduction

- 5.1 The renaissance of the Region's rural areas is one of the key objectives of the Spatial Strategy. While the West Midlands is often thought of as an industrial and urban Region, some 80% of its area in which 20% of its population lives is rural. These rural areas vary greatly in character and in the degree and nature of action they require in order to create stable, sustainable and attractive communities. Actions taken to achieve this must recognise the different circumstances that exist in different places in the rural areas.
- 5.2 Many of the actions necessary to achieve the rural renaissance will be small scale and specific to the locality. It is important that decisions about change and their implementation should include community involvement at all stages. The main strategic mechanisms for enabling this to happen are set out in this Chapter and in the policies covering the rural economy and diversification in the Prosperity for All Chapter (PA14-15). General guidance for planning in the countryside is set out in PPG7.
- 5.3 It is important that activities to improve the quality of life in the rural areas protect and enhance their unique qualities including their environmental assets. The policies in the Quality of the Environment Chapter will be particularly important in this respect.

### Rural Renaissance

- 5.4 All parts of the rural area are equally important but there are many differing characteristics. Policies and actions should be tailored accordingly. Areas such as southern Staffordshire, northern Worcestershire and much of Warwickshire, are heavily influenced by proximity to and functional linkages with MUAs and share some of their characteristics. Actions in both urban and rural areas need to be made in the context of this strong inter-relationship wherever it exists. Local authorities, in preparing their development plans, and service providers need to consider the inter-relationship of the rural areas with the larger cities and towns that serve many of their higher-order service needs and provide important sources of employment.
- 5.5 In others areas, such as the "rural west" and parts of north Staffordshire, which are among the most remote and sparsely populated areas in England, establishing a network of rural service centres will be important. In these areas there will be a greater need for local planning authorities, service providers and other partners to take a co-ordinated approach to centres, so that together they provide the widest possible range of quality services and opportunities.
-

## POLICY RR1: Rural Renaissance

- A. Rural areas of the West Midlands will be regenerated through the improvement of choice in housing; the diversification of the rural economy; better transport links both within rural areas and between urban and rural areas; improving health, education, skills training, social, shopping, community facilities and other services, the sustainable use of environmental assets, and the prudent use of natural resources.
- B. Policy priorities will vary according to a number of factors, including the quality of the environment, local character and distinctiveness, need for new employment, need for additional housing, including affordable housing, to meet local needs and stem population decline, and access to services and facilities.
- C. In preparing their development plans, local authorities will need to have regard to the inter-relationship between urban and rural areas and to draw a general distinction between:
  - i) rural areas which are subject to strong influences from the MUAs and which are relatively prosperous and have generally good access to services. For these, the main priority will be to manage the rate and nature of further development to that required to meet local needs, whilst ensuring that local character is protected and enhanced; and
  - ii) rural areas which may be remote from the MUAs, with generally sparse and in some cases declining population, poor access to jobs and services. Here the main priorities should be economic diversification (PA14-15), affordable housing, better services and improved public transport.
- D. Significant incidences of low income and social exclusion occur throughout the rural areas and should be addressed wherever they occur, although the most severe problems tend to be in the most remote areas.

- 5.6 In implementing this policy it is important that local people and organisations have the opportunity to contribute directly to decisions about the future of their area, and where appropriate to help put those decisions into practice. In a rural area, issues and choices are often local and distinctive in nature, requiring 'grass-roots' knowledge and understanding which may not be available to organisations operating more widely.
- 5.7 Community involvement should be planned as a positive and integral part of any programme so that it does not lead to indecision and delay. Community based organisations and individuals with local knowledge and understanding should be given the opportunity and support to become actively involved in land-use and transport planning and in related social policy areas such as health, education, skills training and crime prevention and the provision of other key services and facilities.
- 5.8 Parish councils, rural community councils, local amenity groups and other community based organizations should make a particularly important contribution. Mechanisms for involvement include parish and town plans, village appraisals, village design statements, and Local Agenda 21 and local biodiversity action plans. It is important that the role of each and the links between them, and with development plans, are clearly defined. Where appropriate the action plans and appraisals produced should be linked to development plans through adoption as supplementary planning guidance.

## The Rural Regeneration Zone

- 5.9 The main geographical focus for rural renaissance will be in the Marches, where a Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ) has been designated by Advantage West Midlands (AWM). The Zone covers parts of the rural areas of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire (shown on the Spatial Strategy Diagram) and has a population of some 280,000,

much of which is widely dispersed. The area is characterised by agriculture, market towns and villages and is rich in landscape, historic buildings and traditional crafts. However the economy is changing as employment in agriculture declines and new, mainly small businesses are created or move into the area. The growth of leisure and tourism has been significant in recent years. The population is ageing as young people move away in search of higher education and greater job opportunities while older people move into the area on retirement.

- 5.10** A wide range of action is required to tackle problems of unemployment, under-employment, low incomes, deprivation and social exclusion while preserving and enhancing the high-quality environment and strong character of this very attractive and distinctive part of the Region.

## **POLICY RR2: The Rural Regeneration Zone**

- A. In order to encourage the renaissance of those parts of the Region where rural communities are under greatest threat from economic change and other associated pressures, local authorities, AWM and other partnerships should focus investment within the Rural Regeneration Zone as identified on the Spatial Strategy Diagram. The RRZ will be the primary focus for rural regeneration in the West Midlands.
- B. Priority should be given to improvements in traffic management and public transport within the A49 transport corridor and any other parts of the Zone where they are necessary to support economic and social regeneration and to improve accessibility.
- C. Local authorities should work with the RRZ Partnership Board to identify initiatives which have spatial implications and to develop policies in their development plans to facilitate those initiatives. In particular, emphasis will be given to the following measures:
- i) supporting existing businesses and attracting appropriate new economic activity. Incubator and starter units and serviced employment land will be provided where necessary to attract appropriate economic activity to existing settlements;
  - ii) strengthening the range and quality of services available to residents through the establishment of a network of rural service centres. Where possible services should be based on market towns and large villages, but in the more sparsely populated areas they may need to be more widely dispersed or mobile, reflecting the settlement pattern;
  - iii) improving accessibility to jobs and services, including for education, training and learning, through improved transport (particularly public transport), better facilities such as multi-purpose centres and outreach facilities, and radical improvement of ICT infrastructure including access to the broadband network;
  - iv) providing affordable housing to meet local needs, in existing settlements wherever possible, and making full use of the existing housing stock (in line with policy CF5);
  - v) promoting rural diversification, particularly in association with environmental improvement, the enhancement of biodiversity and the development and marketing of local food and other products; and
  - vi) maintaining and enhancing the landscape (especially the three AONBs), natural, built and historic environment and distinctive character of the Zone and particular areas within it, and minimising the negative effects of any new development.

- 5.11** Responsibility for implementing this policy rests primarily with Advantage West Midlands, working with the Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire Partnerships. It will require close co-ordination with development and local transport plans.

- 5.12 Other relevant policies are found in the Prosperity for All and Quality of the Environment Chapters, in particular those covering economic development (PA14), tourism (PA10) and agriculture and forestry (PA15, QE8).

## Market Towns

- 5.13 Market towns have long been a focus for commercial and social activity in the rural West Midlands, but in recent years their functions have been affected by social, economic and agricultural change. The Region has many different types of market town, ranging from county towns, such as Shrewsbury, Hereford and Stafford, which have a degree of urban autonomy to small towns such as Kington and Craven Arms, which are firmly grounded in their rural hinterlands. Towns have reacted in different ways to changes in rural areas, and some have struggled to maintain and develop their roles.
- 5.14 Market towns should be the focus of rural renaissance in most parts of the Region, including the RRZ (RR2). In a county or market town, people should be able to buy most things they need, obtain a range of essential services, find a variety of housing, have a choice of jobs, obtain training and education and enjoy entertainment. So that these benefits are widely available to people in the rural hinterland of the town, transport (particularly public transport) improvements will often be needed. The distinctive character and environmental quality of a town is important in its own right but may also help it to develop as a centre of tourism (PA10) or as a focus for rural renaissance.

### POLICY RR3: Market Towns

- A. Market towns have a key role in helping to regenerate rural areas (RR1), as a focus for sustainable economic and housing development and by providing services and other facilities to their rural hinterlands. In fulfilling these roles, it is important that the distinctiveness and character of each individual town is maintained and where possible enhanced. Market towns which are to have a role in rural regeneration should be identified in development plans; having regard to the following characteristics:
- i) a close and interdependent relationship with the population and economy of a rural hinterland, whether or not the settlement has ever had a traditional agricultural market;
  - ii) an existing focus for and reasonable balance between employment opportunities, housing provision, community facilities and services, or potential to provide this;
  - iii) existing or potential for a planned and co-ordinated local transport network;
  - iv) generally, although not exclusively, a population of less than 20,000 and above 2,000; and
  - v) the capacity to accommodate new growth in terms of its character and setting, and the potential to develop as a sustainable community.
- B. The mixture of action required will vary from town to town. Development plans and other plans and programmes should normally prioritise, for each town, policies to:
- i) provide sites and premises to support the expansion of existing businesses and, where necessary, the generation of new ones;
  - ii) improve the natural, built and historic environment (QE3-6);
  - iii) provide additional housing to maintain viable communities and meet local needs, including the provision of affordable housing (CF2, CF5);

### **POLICY RR3: Market Towns – continued**

- iv) develop shopping and other key services and facilities within the town centre in accordance with PA11 where suitable sites exist; where no such sites are available, shopping development should be subject to the key tests and in particular the sequential test in PPG6;
- v) develop the accessibility of the town from its rural hinterland, for example by improving public transport facilities and services (also see policy T1);
- vi) develop ICT infrastructure to assist the local economy, including increased potential for home working and better access to local services;
- vii) facilitate the developing role of higher and further education, for example through the development of local centres and the use of shared facilities;
- viii) improve access to health facilities and enable their integration with social and other service provision; and
- ix) encourage the multi-purpose use of land and buildings for community facilities, leisure and service provision.

- 5.15** Market towns should be defined in development plans taking into account an assessment of the town's ability to accommodate development and the relationship with the other settlements in the area. When preparing proposals local authorities should discuss and agree priorities with the Market Towns Task Group and local partnerships, taking into account the likely effect of their proposals on neighbouring towns.
- 5.16** Particular attention should be given to the needs of the local community and those of surrounding rural areas. It will be important to involve a range of community groups and specialist organisations in developing and implementing proposals. Each market town should develop a vision, taking account of its relationship with other service centers, and may be given a health check and action plan, using the Market Towns Toolkit developed by the Countryside Agency. It will be important to prioritise the action required in each town.

### **Villages**

- 5.17** Depending on definition, the Region has approximately 2,300 villages. They perform an essential role in maintaining and enhancing the rural way of life by providing homes, jobs, services and other facilities for local people, many of whom cannot easily reach the nearest town. Consideration should be given to the extent to which sustainable development, which is appropriate in scale and nature, would enable villages to remain viable. It is not envisaged that any new villages will need to be developed.

### **The Open Countryside**

- 5.18** The open countryside consists of the whole of the rural area outside towns, villages and other small settlements.
- 5.19** The Rural Economy policies (PA14-15) in the Prosperity for All Chapter and many of the Quality of the Environment policies will be particularly relevant to local planning authorities in development plan preparation and determining planning applications. Detailed planning guidance on the countryside is contained in PPG7.

## Rural Services

- 5.20** Access to the services people need is one of the most important determinants of quality of life in rural areas. A village shop, school, doctor's surgery and bank are likely to be important to most households, but many other services will be 'essential' to particular people, depending on their circumstances and stage in the life cycle. Where services are not provided locally, public transport to a service centre may be a vital lifeline.
- 5.21** The Countryside Agency's Rural Services Survey 2000 showed that the West Midlands had a higher proportion of rural parishes without essential services than England as a whole. In many parts of rural Shropshire, Herefordshire and Staffordshire, fewer than 75% of households are within 2km of a post office, fewer than 40% are within 4km of a bank or building society and fewer than 70% are within 2km of a primary school.

### POLICY RR4: Rural Services

- A. Improving the range and quality of services available to rural communities is a key component of rural renaissance. Some services will be improved by bringing them closer to where people live, some may need to be concentrated in towns and other centres accessible from the surrounding area, and some can be provided jointly. Where possible, centres should develop complementary roles in service delivery.
- B. Development plan policies for housing and other forms of development should take into account the likely implications for the provision of services and facilities for the particular communities concerned, including the extent to which new development may help support the provision of local services.
- C. Development plans should set out how services will be provided for in rural areas, taking full account of the need to retain essential community services and to facilitate and provide for appropriate new and innovative forms of service delivery.
- D. Local Transport Plans should identify where improved public transport services are required to support rural services.

- 5.22** The threat to rural services is recognised in the Countryside Agency's "State of the Countryside 2003 (West Midlands)" and in limited circumstances it may be appropriate to protect services and facilities from other development proposals. To retain and improve the availability of services in the rural areas will require a co-ordinated approach between public and private sectors and Local Strategic Partnerships will have an important role to play. To assist, local authorities should consider developing service strategies for rural areas. These should take account of the broad range of services and delivery options (see para 5.23) in the context of local service standards developed in line with the Rural White Paper. Where there are land-use implications these should be taken into account in the preparation of development plans.
- 5.23** Innovative and imaginative solutions should be developed, particularly in the joint delivery of health, education, social, leisure and cultural and other services. This may also include the use of mobile services, ICT (PA14) and transport solutions (RR4). The implications of such solutions, which may include increased potential for homeworking and for a number of service providers to share facilities, should be taken into account in the preparation of development plans. Service provision should be adequately co-ordinated with public transport services from the rural hinterland. In some cases, groups of market towns may be identified to work together to deliver locally effective solutions.
- 5.24** For the review of this RPG the RPB should work with partners including the Countryside Agency and AWM to identify and prioritise the critical services that need to be protected, enhanced or secured in the different parts of the Region and establish mechanisms for delivering them.
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## Chapter 6

# Communities for the Future

### Introduction

- 6.1** The Spatial Strategy in this RPG requires a significant redistribution of housing provision. This will involve moving from the recent position of two houses built outside the Major Urban Areas (MUAs) for each one within them, to less than one outside for each one within. To support this, residential environments within the MUAs will need to be made more attractive, so that they can increasingly retain their populations. At the same time new housing provision in the other areas will need to be reduced to levels where it is largely meeting local needs, hence discouraging decentralisation. This marks a shift from the previous RPG which provided housing in the Central Crescent towns, including Worcester, Telford, Warwick/Leamington and Lichfield, to meet the needs of those working in the metropolitan area.
- 6.2** The distribution, location and type of new housing development has an important role to play in delivering the urban and rural renaissance agendas and regard should be had to the relevant Chapters of this guidance. In increasing the level of development in the MUAs particular attention should be paid to the policies in the Quality of the Environment Chapter.
- 6.3** Delivering this strategy will require a co-ordinated approach to housing provision across administrative boundaries and between planning and housing authorities, private housing builders, the Housing Corporation and private and social housing landlords. The Regional Housing Board will be crucial in identifying Regional priorities and targeting resources.

### Housing within the Major Urban Areas

- 6.4** Research into the Region's housing markets<sup>1</sup> indicates that substantial areas within the MUAs are failing to provide the attractive choice of home and community environments needed to encourage economically active and independent households to stay. In the worst cases the low demand for housing in these areas has led to abandonment and a localised collapse of the housing market. To effectively address these issues it is imperative that RPG and the Regional Housing Strategy develop a co-ordinated approach.

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<sup>1</sup> The West Midlands Housing Markets: Changing Demand, Decentralisation and Urban Regeneration, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS), The University of Birmingham 2001.

## **POLICY CF1: Housing within the Major Urban Areas**

- A. In order to create a variety and choice of good quality housing within the MUAs, local authorities (through their development plans and housing strategies) should work with the private sector as the major provider of new housing, and the Housing Corporation, to:
  - i) significantly improve the quality of the existing housing stock both through enhanced renovation programmes and increased rates of redevelopment;
  - ii) increase the scale and range of new housing development opportunities in appropriate locations;
  - iii) create attractive urban communities and living environments (QE3-4) within which more people will wish to live and invest by mixing housing types, tenures and densities; and
  - iv) ensure the provision of affordable social and low-cost market housing in accordance with policy CF5.
- B. This approach should be adopted across all parts of the MUAs in order to retain economically active households, provide support for local services and to create and maintain sustainable communities.
- C. Significant action and investment, including where appropriate large scale redevelopment, should be targeted within those parts of the MUAs where the housing market is particularly weak, particularly in the two market renewal/low demand pathfinder areas of west and north Birmingham/east Sandwell, and Stoke-on-Trent/Newcastle under Lyme.
- D. Action to renew and redevelop neighbourhoods should also be focused in those areas where there is a risk of problems of decline spreading to adjoining housing areas, particularly in parts of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton. The Regional Housing Strategy provides a framework for action in these areas, which are shown as Housing Renewal Areas on the Communities for the Future Diagram. The intervention levels will be defined according to local needs, studies for the 'Black Country and South Telford' and 'East Birmingham/North Solihull' have already commenced.
- E. Both Market and Housing Renewal Areas should be reflected in local authority development plans together with details of where initiatives to rehabilitate the existing housing stock will be concentrated and where clearance and redevelopment is expected.

**6.5** Local authorities and their partners should work together to ensure cross-sector co-ordination in support of the priorities for action agreed through the Regional Housing Strategy process. For market and housing renewal areas partnership boards and other fora, representing a wide range of interests including local strategic partnerships and the private sector, will need to be established and taken forward in the context of the Regional Housing Strategy. Active community engagement will also be critical to the success of the policy.

**6.6** In implementing this policy local authorities and partners should take opportunities to restructure the urban fabric where necessary, which may for example involve consolidating employment and open space uses to release land for housing development as well as improvement of the housing stock.

## **Housing Beyond the Major Urban Areas**

**6.7** Outside the MUAs progressively lower levels of housing growth are proposed, so that they ultimately meet local needs and do not provide for continued out-migration. In locating development priority should be given to using previously developed land in sustainable locations in the other large settlements and sub-regional foci identified on the Spatial Strategy diagram. The RPB should undertake studies to identify the role of each of the foci and through monitoring



and the review of this RPG will advise on the timing and broad scale of development likely to be required at each location. These studies will also need to consider the effects on employment, environment, and transport to ensure the foci are developed in a sustainable way.

### **POLICY CF2: Housing beyond the Major Urban Areas**

- A. Beyond the MUAs, longer-term strategic housing development should be in those locations which are capable of balanced and sustainable growth. The five towns identified in the Spatial Strategy (Worcester, Telford, Shrewsbury, Hereford and Rugby) will fulfil this role as sub-regional foci for development. These towns:
  - i) act as sub-regional service centres;
  - ii) have the opportunity of balancing new housing and employment developments that will be consistent in terms of affordability and job skills;
  - iii) avoid the congested parts of the Regional transport network and have good accessibility by public transport;
  - iv) have the capacity to accommodate additional development without harm to local communities; and
  - v) have the potential to link areas of need with areas of opportunity.
- B. The function that each of the foci would be expected to fulfil should be determined through further study.
- C. Elsewhere the function of the other large settlements identified on the Spatial Strategy Diagram and the Region's market towns should not generally be to accommodate migration from the MUAs.
- D. In rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local housing needs and/or to support local services, with priority being given to the reuse of previously developed land and buildings within existing villages enhancing their character wherever possible.
- E. "Local housing needs" constitute needs arising from the immediate area, excluding migration from elsewhere.

- 6.8** The delivery of policies CF1 and CF2 will rely on close partnership working between planning and housing authorities, private housing builders, private and social housing landlords and through the Regional Housing Board, the support of Government and its agencies including the Housing Corporation, English Partnerships and Advantage West Midlands. This partnership approach should take place at Regional, sub-regional and local levels. All housing development should respect the natural, built and historic environment in accordance with the QE policies.

### **Levels and Distribution of Housing Development**

- 6.9** The metropolitan area of Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull and the Black Country is a major economic driver and source of employment opportunities. Provided a sufficient choice of attractive residential environments is made available, the Spatial Strategy assumes that net out-migration can be stemmed. Achieving the levels of housing identified for the metropolitan area to accommodate these people will depend upon a commitment to large-scale housing renewal and redevelopment, a proactive approach to redevelopment with high replacement ratios for cleared housing stock and a willingness to support a significant increase in overall densities.
- 6.10** Whilst a similar approach will be necessary in North Staffordshire the failure of the housing market is more pronounced than in the metropolitan area and the level of anticipated economic activity substantially lower. Renewal strategies will

need to take account of the extent to which out-migration can be stemmed and avoid over-provision. In this case high overall replacement rates may not be appropriate. This issue will evolve as the pathfinders are developed and will need to be kept under review by the RPB.

- 6.11** The distribution of housing in Table 1 sets out how the MUAs will increasingly meet their own generated needs while provision in the shires and unitary areas is correspondingly reduced. This shows a transition from the former ratio of new housing development between the MUAs and other areas of 1:2, through a position at 2007 where this is near 1:1, to 2011 where the ratio is in favour of the MUAs.
- 6.12** Although the completion of the transition may seem to be rather distant there are a number of important factors which dictate the timing. These include both the short-term impact of existing planning permissions and the need for significant work in some parts of the MUAs to develop the transport capacity, social infrastructure and quality environments to ensure they are attractive to a range of potential residents. This timing is also consistent with the Sustainable Communities Plan which anticipates healthy housing markets in the pathfinder areas nationally between 2010-2015, reflecting the time necessary to bring forward capacity and create confidence in the housing markets.

### **POLICY CF3: Levels and distribution of housing development**

- A. Development plans should make provision for additional dwellings to be built at the annual rates specified in Table 1 below. These rates are to be applied as minima for the MUAs and maxima elsewhere.
- B. The following environmental safeguards will be applied in order to ensure that the aim of making the MUAs attractive places to live in is not undermined. In particular:
- i) the levels of housing provision are to be subject to testing by detailed housing capacity studies;
  - ii) there should be no added pressure on urban open space/playing fields and greenspace consistent with PPG17;
  - iii) any provision above the Table 1 rates within the MUAs should be on previously developed land, consistent with PPG3 and any strategies arising from policy CF1C;
  - iv) compliance with locally adopted design guidelines consistent with PPG3; and
  - v) protecting other uses of land that will be critical to achieving urban renaissance (such as employment).
- C. Within the MUAs, the most efficient use should be made of previously developed land and conversions, consistent with raising the quality of the environment in accordance with policy QE3. Locations which extend the boundaries of the MUAs will not be acceptable as they would run counter to the approach taken throughout the Spatial Strategy and the policies set out within this document. Outside the MUAs, new development should be allocated in accordance with policy CF2.

- 6.13** In the context of the Spatial Strategy, policies CF2 and CF3 should be read alongside the guidance in PPG3 when applying the sequential approach to identifying and allocating land for housing.

**TABLE 1: Housing**

<i>Planning Area</i>	<i>Annual Average Rate of Housing Provision</i>		
	<i>to 2007</i>	<i>2007–2011</i>	<i>2011–2021</i>
Birmingham	2300	3000	3000
Coventry	650	650	830
Dudley	600	700	975
Herefordshire	800	600	600
Sandwell	900	900	975
Shropshire	1300	900	900
Solihull	400	400	470
Staffordshire	2900	2500	1600
Stoke-on-Trent	600	600	600
Telford & Wrekin	1330	1330	700
Walsall	500	500	825
Warwickshire	2000	1500	1350
Wolverhampton	500	500	825
Worcestershire	1900	1200	1000
MUAs (approx)	6450	7250	8500
Other Areas	10230	8030	6150
<b>Total</b>	<b>16680</b>	<b>15280</b>	<b>14650</b>
Ratio MUA: Other	1:1.6	1:1.1	1:0.7

- 6.14** The figures in Table 1 maintain the continuity with previous RPG11 by including the need for new dwellings together with the replacements for demolished stock.
- 6.15** The actual requirement for housing provision will vary with the level of demolitions and the replacement rates achieved. Table 2 provides the levels of demolitions assumed for each authority in preparing the figures in Table 1. A replacement rate of 1:1 is assumed except for Stoke-on-Trent where the ratio is 0.6:1. Authorities should strive to exceed the assumed replacement rates of 1:1 for demolished stock except in North Staffordshire where the low demand pathfinder analysis may conclude that a lower replacement rate is appropriate.
- 6.16** Current vacancy rates, by authority, have been used in determining demand for additional provision. As the rates decline (as a result of policy CF4) the needs must be reviewed.
- 6.17** The RPB should closely monitor the demolition, replacement, and vacancy rates in addition to the total new housing provision. The annual 'plan, monitor and manage' process, or a review, would determine the appropriate response to any divergences. In future reviews of this RPG, and in development plans, the RPB and local planning authorities should clearly define 'additional housing provision' and specify demolition, replacement, and vacancy rate assumptions.

**TABLE 2<sup>2</sup>: Demolition Assumptions**

<i>Planning Area</i>	<i>Annual Demolitions</i>	
	<i>to 2011</i>	<i>2011–2021</i>
Birmingham	1200	1200
Coventry	80	40
Dudley	110	150
Herefordshire	40	40
Sandwell	560	390
Shropshire	30	30
Solihull	10	10
Staffordshire	50	110
Stoke-on-Trent	500	500
Telford & Wrekin	5	5
Walsall	50	100
Warwickshire	130	110
Wolverhampton	110	150
Worcestershire	50	50

## The Design of Housing Development

- 6.18** The Spatial Strategy redoubles the need for high density, high quality developments. Within the MUAs it is particularly important that the range of housing types and sizes is attractive to economically independent households. Development plans should follow the principles in PPG3 and the good practice in the “By Design”<sup>3</sup> guide and “Better Places to Live: By Design”<sup>4</sup> to ensure the most efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the environment (QE3-6). Attention should also be paid to energy efficiency (EN2) and to securing safe neighbourhoods.
- 6.19** The Regional Housing Partnership will also be important at the Regional level working with housing and planning authorities and housing providers to ensure quality developments, while community and neighbourhood strategies, town and village design statements, conservation area appraisals, and town and parish plans have a key role in providing local perspectives.

## The Reuse of Land and Buildings for Housing

- 6.20** At least 76% of new housing in the Region should be on previously developed land (as defined in PPG3, Annex C). The estimated percentages for housing development in the 2001-2011 period are set out in Table 3. The RPB should undertake further work on appropriate targets for 2011-2021 to inform the review of this guidance. This work should take account of the functional housing sub-regions to be defined by the RPB together with the Regional Housing Board.

2 Analysis of Regional Housing Land and Urban Capacity Survey 2001 – WMLGA March 2002.

3 By Design – Urban design in the planning system; Towards better practice, DTLR 2000

4 Better Places to Live: By Design; a companion guide to PPG3, DTLR 2001

**TABLE 3: Housing Development on Previously Developed Land**

<i>Planning Area</i>	<i>2001-2011 Target % on Previously Developed Land</i>
Birmingham	94
Dudley	98
Sandwell	100
Walsall	79
Wolverhampton	99
Coventry	93
Solihull	74
Warwickshire	64
Staffordshire	66
Stoke-on-Trent	84
Shropshire	59
Telford and Wrekin	53
Worcestershire	67
Herefordshire	68
<b>Regional Profile:</b>	
Metropolitan Boroughs	93
Shires and Unitaries	65
West Midlands Region	76

**POLICY CF4: The reuse of land and buildings for housing**

- A. Local planning authorities should optimise the opportunities for recycling land and buildings for new housing development through contributing to the achievement of a Regional target of at least 76% of future housing provision being on previously developed land between 2001-2011.
- B. The RPB should, through its overall monitoring, assess the progress being made on achieving the above percentages, and, where necessary, should advise where development plan reviews should seek to increase the scale of achievement in order to support the Spatial Strategy. In giving this advice, the RPB should take particular account of:
- i) the opportunities for the reuse of redundant employment land and premises in urban areas;
  - ii) the opportunities for increasing the scale of housing provision in areas where high quality public transport services are available in urban areas, such as city and town centres, or can be planned into new development; and
  - iii) the action taken by local authorities to reduce vacancy rates (e.g. by using Empty Homes Strategies) and the Government's target to reduce them.

**6.21** The RPB, local authorities, private developers and relevant funding agencies such as English Partnerships and AWM should work together to bring forward the necessary levels of previously developed land. In implementing this policy account should be taken of the policies in the Quality of the Environment Chapter, in particular policy QE2.

## Delivering Affordable Housing and Mixed Communities

- 6.22 Housing should be provided for those whose access to and choice of accommodation is restricted for reasons of affordability.
- 6.23 Local authority housing and planning departments should plan for mixed and balanced communities in accordance with PPG3. It is important that local authorities plan for affordable housing needs to be met where they arise.
- 6.24 For the period 2001-2011 the estimated 6,000-6,500 affordable dwellings needed each year across the Region will be used as the basis for monitoring. There are, however, marked differences in affordable housing needs across the Region<sup>5</sup>. Broadly speaking there is poor quality and lack of choice in the MUAs while insufficient affordable housing is the main problem in the south and east of the Region. In this area and the more rural areas generally, reliance on relatively small windfall sites makes it difficult to secure affordable housing. In these circumstances local planning authorities should consider whether there is a need to seek affordable housing on smaller sites, and bring forward proposals through the development plan process.

### POLICY CF5: Delivering affordable housing and mixed communities

- A. Local authorities, developers and social housing providers should co-operate to create more balanced and mixed communities through the provision of a range of housing types and tenures within new housing developments and sites across all parts of the Region.
- B. Local authorities should keep under review the need for affordable housing in their area, based on local housing needs assessments, using a broadly consistent approach, the production of which will be co-ordinated by the RPB. Both social and low cost market housing should contribute to meeting the need for affordable housing. Opportunities should be sought within the existing housing stock where this would help the creation of mixed communities, as well as through new build.
- C. The Regional Housing Partnership should facilitate partnership approaches to the assessment and delivery of affordable housing across common local housing market areas.
- D. Local planning authorities in their development plans should:
- i) indicate how many affordable homes need to be provided throughout the plan area;
  - ii) in rural areas specify the balance of affordable housing to be achieved between market towns and villages where there is a need to retain or strengthen services; and
  - iii) consider the need to prevent the unjustified use of affordable housing provision for general market housing purposes.
- E. Local authorities should also consider whether there is a need for affordable housing to be sought on sites below the thresholds set out in national guidance in areas where low income households have particular difficulty in affording local general market house prices. Where local authorities can demonstrate that local circumstances, particularly the likely viability of developments, justify adopting a lower threshold, they should bring forward proposals through the development plan process. This applies especially in the south and east of the Region, in the corridor extending from the Malvern Hills to the Warwickshire border with the South East Region, and in some rural areas where appropriate thresholds should be set for settlements with populations of 3,000 or less.
- F. Development plans should ensure that adequate provision is made for suitable sites to accommodate gypsies and other travellers. Such provision should reflect the order of demand in the area as indicated by the trends shown by the ODPM annual count and any additional local information.

<sup>5</sup> The West Midlands Housing Markets: Changing Demand, Decentralisation and Urban Regeneration, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS), The University of Birmingham 2001.

- 6.25 In implementing this policy local planning authorities and the RPB should work closely with the Regional Housing Board and in particular should have regard to the objectives and investment priorities of the Regional Housing Strategy and to any functional sub-areas for housing that may be defined.

## Managing Housing Land Provision

### **POLICY CF6: Managing housing land provision**

- A. Development plans should incorporate policies which:
- i) allow for the managed release of new housing land, so as to secure the development of previously developed land and conversions taking account of the need for any new infrastructure and ground preparation; and
  - ii) take account of potential housing land provision and the policy framework in adjoining local authority areas so as not to undermine urban renaissance in other districts.
- B. Development plans should include measures to manage the release of housing land in a manner consistent with the implementation of the Spatial Strategy of RPG and at the rates set out in Table 1.

- 6.26 In managing the release of housing land local planning authorities should have regard to the advice in “Planning to Deliver”<sup>6</sup> in determining the most appropriate approach for their area.
- 6.27 The RPB will monitor permitted supply and demand on a sub-regional basis and provide an opportunity for the results to be discussed with other stakeholders at an annual seminar. The seminar will address the qualitative and quantitative impacts of the housing developments on the delivery of the Spatial Strategy.
- 6.28 The RPB will then issue advice to local planning authorities on whether there need to be any short-term changes in supply in particular areas to reinforce the Spatial Strategy. The RPB should also comment on the extent to which any policies may need to be reviewed or more strongly enforced.
- 6.29 The results of this monitoring process will also inform any decision on the need for a review of this RPG.

## Planning for Sustainable Communities

- 6.30 The perception of factors such as crime and school performance can have a considerable influence on people’s decisions about where to live. To create sustainable communities it is crucial that actions are co-ordinated and integrated across a wide range of agencies.
- 6.31 In order to ensure communities can be provided with necessary services and social infrastructure, development plans should consider the need to identify opportunities for the development of key facilities, including those for health, education, spiritual, and leisure purposes. In identifying such opportunities, consideration should be given as to the most appropriate and sustainable locations that accord with the Spatial Strategy.
- 6.32 Effective partnership working between planning authorities and partners is needed at all levels to ensure that the necessary linkages are in place between the various strategies and initiatives. The relevant considerations are set out in policy UR4.

6 Planning to Deliver – The managed release of housing sites: towards better practice, DTLR 2001

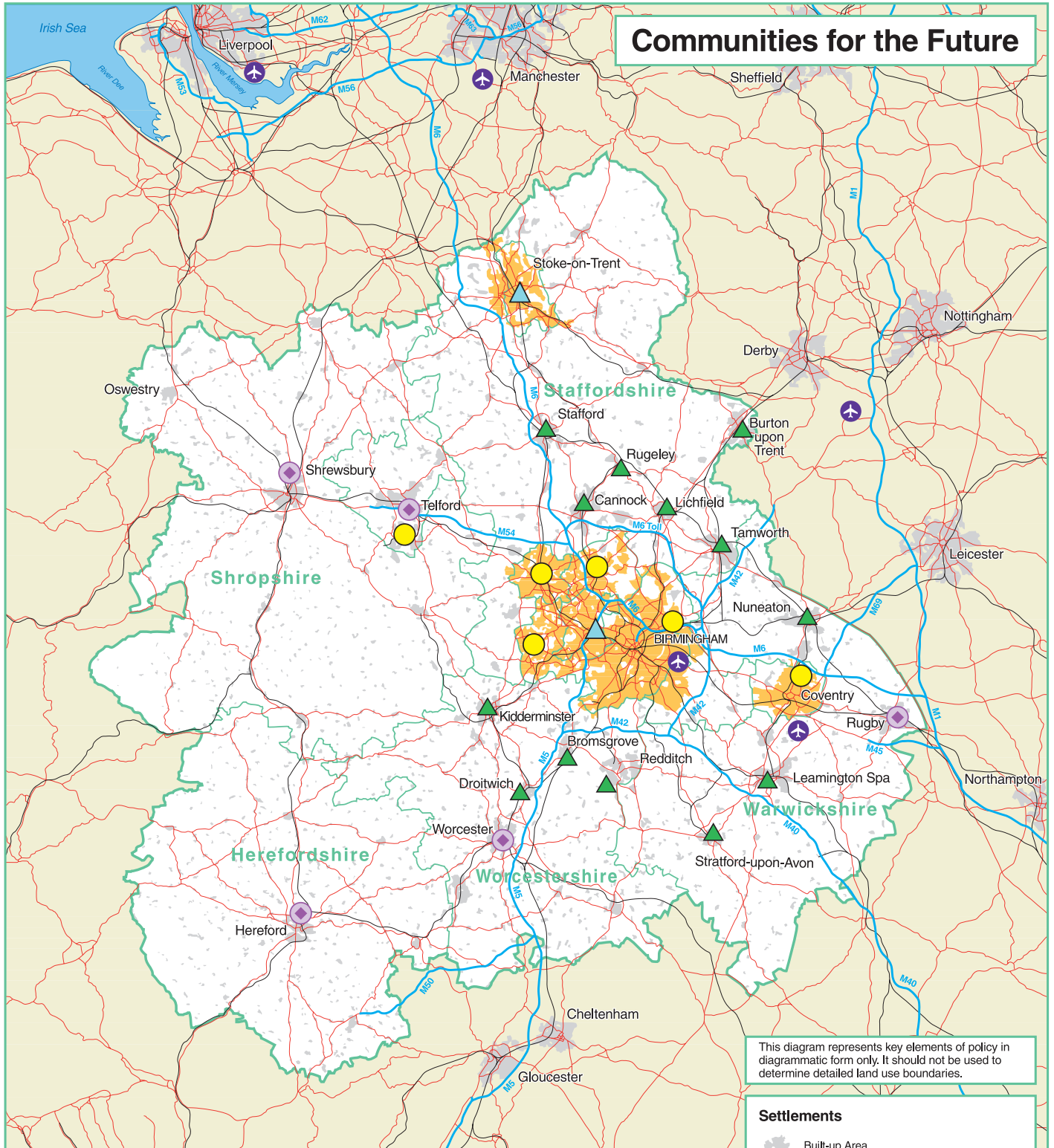
## COMMUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE – MONITORING:

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS</b>			
CF1 – Housing within the Major Urban Areas	(a) To provide dwellings in the Region in accordance with the rates set out in Table 1 of policy CF3	<p><b>1. Housing completions and conversions</b> (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)</p> <p>(a) totals by planning area</p> <p>(b) Housing completions in Major Urban Areas/Other</p> <p>(c) Number and proportion built at densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare (net); between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and above 50 dwellings per hectare. (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)</p> <p>(d) Housing completions on greenfield and previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings (compared with RPG target). (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)</p> <p>(e) Number and proportion built, split between social housing and affordable/low cost housing financed through S106 agreements, compared with RPG target.</p>	Annual Residential Land Survey.
CF2 – Housing beyond the Major Urban Areas	(b) MUA/Other ratio of: 1:1.6 by 2007, 1:1.1 by 2011 1:0.7 by 2021		
CF3 – Levels and distribution of housing development	(c) Target to be determined		
CF4 – The reuse of land and buildings for housing	(d) 76% of dwellings completed on previously developed land or by reuse of existing buildings by Planning Area between 2001-2011, as set out in Table 3.		
CF5 – Delivering affordable housing and mixed communities	(e) 6,000-6,500 affordable dwellings to be provided across the Region each year between 2001-2011		



## COMMUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE – MONITORING: continued

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued</b>			
CF3 – Levels and distribution of housing development	Monitor against Table 2 demolitions	<b>2. Gross number of demolitions and conversions away from residential use</b>	Annual Residential Land Survey
CF3 – Levels and distribution of housing development	Replacement ratio to be 1 : 1 except in Stoke-on-Trent where target is 0.6:1	<b>3. Average replacement ratio of sites in Major Urban Areas.</b>	
<b>PROCESS INDICATORS</b>			
CF5 – Delivering affordable housing and mixed communities	(a) 100% of development plans to make reference to local and sub-regional housing needs assessments.	<b>4. Development Plan conformity:</b> (a) Mix of housing types, etc. related to a local housing needs assessment.	Conformity checks
CF6 – Managing housing land provision	(b) 100% of development plans to contain appropriate phasing policies.	(b) Appropriate phasing (against analysis of completions and site finding)	
CF3 – Levels and distribution of housing development	No adjustment of boundaries at the inner edge of the Green Belt for housing development. Any adjustments to Green Belt boundaries in Shire County areas beyond the MUA's to follow the application of the Communities for the Future policies.	<b>5. Monitor land released for development through the redefinition of Green Belt boundaries</b>	Development Plans
<b>CONTEXTUAL INDICATOR</b>			
CF4 – The reuse of land and buildings for housing	To reduce vacancies	<b>6. Change in the number of vacant dwellings by tenure and location</b>	



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**Settlements**

- Built-up Area
- Major Urban Area - Main focus for development and investment
- Low Demand Pathfinder
- Housing Renewal Area
- Sub-Regional foci for development beyond MUAs
- Other large settlement

**Strategic Links**

- Motorway
- A Road
- Railway - Passenger
- Airport
- Strategic Authority Boundary

## Chapter 7

# Prosperity for All

### Introduction

- 7.1 Critical to the success of the Spatial Strategy will be the future performance of the Region's economy. There is a clear and direct link between economic performance and quality of life, particularly for disadvantaged groups and communities who may suffer from high rates of unemployment and poor access to employment opportunities. Improving factors such as housing, environmental quality, transport and access to leisure facilities, will also enhance the attractiveness of the Region to inward investment.
- 7.2 The West Midlands lags behind other regions of the UK and Europe in terms of economic performance, particularly on measures of GDP. This reflects a number of factors including levels of productivity, investment and the Region's industrial structure. The policies in this Chapter encourage the development of new high growth employment sectors and the modernisation of the Region's existing traditional industries, whilst ensuring that the opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and reducing social exclusion.
- 7.3 The approach taken is to establish and maintain a portfolio of sustainably located employment sites, attractive to developers and operators and appropriate to market needs. Spatial focus is given to economic activity through, among other things, the identification of regeneration zones, high technology corridors and a network of strategic town and city centres. The centres identified will form the basis of a multi-centred Region and provide an important strategic focus for social, cultural, economic, commercial and regeneration activity.
- 7.4 The policies in this Chapter must be considered in the context of the full RPG. The Urban and Rural Renaissance and Quality of the Environment Chapters are particularly relevant considerations.

### Prosperity for All

- 7.5 The policies in this Chapter will contribute to the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth as a key element of the overall strategy for sustainable development by helping to support improvements both in the environment and the quality of life for everyone who lives in the Region. The policies are closely linked with, and support the implementation of, the Regional Economic Strategy.
- 7.6 The diversification of the Regional economy will be encouraged through the promotion of high value-added businesses and the attraction of inward investment. Existing economic activities in the Region will be encouraged to modernise, both to stay competitive and to embrace the opportunities offered by new technologies and ICT, particularly through improvements and innovations in products and processes. The potential for existing industries to apply new technology to help address the implications of global climate change is also recognised.
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## POLICY PA1: Prosperity for All

- A. Economic growth should, wherever possible, be focused on the Major Urban Areas (MUAs), with an emphasis on creating greater opportunities for development and support for existing economic activities within agreed regeneration areas.
- B. In the development of related (but essentially non-land-use) policies and programmes, local authorities, AWM and other agencies should:
  - i) ensure that conditions in 'areas of need' are addressed so that they also become 'areas of opportunity'. Particular emphasis in this approach should be given to the Regeneration Zones (PA2, RR2). To the extent that needs and opportunities cannot be matched, then beneficial economic linkages should be developed between areas of economic opportunity and more economically vulnerable areas of employment need;
  - ii) maintain and improve transport accessibility – both of goods and people – by all modes into, within and through all parts of the Region;
  - iii) ensure that the environmental and cultural assets are maintained and enhanced to help attract and develop business activity; and
  - iv) develop the skills and abilities of the West Midlands people by improving access to training, higher education and employment opportunities.
- C. Where growth opportunities are provided outside the MUAs, emphasis should be given to locating development where:
  - i) it can help meet the needs of the MUAs and promote positive economic linkages with them in areas accessible by sustainable forms of transport;
  - ii) it can help meet the needs of rural renaissance, especially of market towns;
  - iii) it can serve the needs of the local regeneration areas; and
  - iv) it can help create more sustainable communities by generally providing a better balance between housing and employment and limit the need for commuting.
- D. Any development proposed on the edge of the MUAs or on other greenfield sites should meet the following criteria:
  - i) there are no suitable alternatives available on previously developed land and buildings within built up areas;
  - ii) the development should be capable of being served by rail or high quality public transport within easy access of centres and facilities; and
  - iii) the development respects the natural environment, built environment and historic heritage in accordance with policies QE1-9.

**7.7** With regard to the criterion Bi), development plans should examine the potential for strengthening economic and transport links between areas of need and opportunity particularly within the high-technology corridors (PA3). The aim should be to encourage greater levels of development within the MUAs through a positive relationship with areas of opportunity beyond.

- 7.8** In all cases, the scale and nature of development should be controlled to ensure that it meets local needs and does not encourage a further decentralisation of people and jobs from the MUAs.
- 7.9** Implementation of this policy will require partnership working between all those involved in development and local transport plans, economic development, the environment and education and skills.

## Urban Regeneration Zones

- 7.10** In order to focus action, the Regional Economic Strategy identifies six Regeneration Zones (RZs), five urban and one rural (see policy RR2) covering approximately one third of the Region's population and more than half of its unemployed. While the Zones cover the areas of greatest need they also contain substantial opportunities.

### **POLICY PA2: Urban Regeneration Zones**

In order to encourage urban renaissance and help reverse long-standing trends of decentralisation of economic activity and population and to encourage the regeneration of economies, policies and programmes of local authorities, AWM, local economic partnerships and other agencies should focus investment within the following Regeneration Zones:

- i) East Birmingham and North Solihull;
- ii) North Black Country and South Staffs (Future Foundations);
- iii) North Staffordshire;
- iv) Coventry and Nuneaton; and
- v) South Black Country and West Birmingham (Arc of Opportunity).

- 7.11** These Zones are diverse in nature and local partnerships will identify – in Prospectuses and Action Plans – strategic priorities including spatial targeting of investment within each Zone.
- 7.12** Development plans and local transport plans should draw upon the work of the Regeneration Zone Partnerships in setting out priorities for investment in terms of employment land, housing and the renewal of infrastructure provision. Regeneration Zones will be the primary focus for meeting much of the Region's new development needs and where supporting infrastructure should be concentrated.
- 7.13** Within the Regeneration Zones in the MUAs, particular emphasis should be given to the provision of high quality employment sites, the regeneration of town centres and other opportunity areas. In appropriate circumstances, compulsory purchase powers will be used to assemble sites and to create regeneration opportunities.
- 7.14** Where adequate employment opportunities to meet the needs of the Regeneration Zones within the MUAs cannot be provided within these Zones, emphasis should be given to encouraging development in locations accessible to them by public transport.
- 7.15** Specific measures should be introduced in the Regeneration Zones to enhance employment and training opportunities arising from new investment in these areas.
- 7.16** Monitoring procedures should be established by the RPB and AWM in order to assess the progress being made in each Zone and a programme established for regular reviews of performance.

## High-Technology Corridors (HTC)

- 7.17** The Rover Task Force, set up in the wake of the BMW decision to sell their interests in Rover Cars, commissioned extensive work which identified three areas of the Region that were particularly vulnerable to any resulting loss of business. The identified corridors also had the potential for the establishment of long-term strategies for the development of high technology clusters of activity.

### **POLICY PA3: High-Technology Corridors**

- A. In order to encourage the diversification of the Regional economy, three High-Technology Corridors (HTC) are identified within which cluster developments, closely linked to the Region's critical research and development capabilities and advanced technologies, will be promoted:
- i) Birmingham to Worcestershire (Central Technology Belt);
  - ii) Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire; and
  - iii) Wolverhampton to Telford.
- B. In land-use terms, new developments within the HTCs should be focused on the MUAs and at specific nodes shown on the Prosperity for All Diagram.
- C. In order to reduce pressure for the development of greenfield sites, it is particularly important that scarce land resources within the HTCs should be used for developments which will reinforce the potential of the particular corridor. Development plans should consider the use of appropriate conditions, legal agreements, or other implementation mechanisms, such as landlord control, to help achieve this.
- 7.18** The term 'corridor' reflects the functional linkages between activities. It does not imply any form of ribbon development will be permitted. Local authorities, AWM, local economic partnerships and other agencies should work together to identify a portfolio of sites and premises (in line with policies PA6-7) to meet the needs and realise the potential within each corridor. This should include the provision of incubator space in close proximity to the critical research bases within each corridor, such as DERA/QinetiQ at Malvern, the universities and their related science parks.
- 7.19** The provision of other land and premises for more mature and growing firms who do not need to be in such close proximity to the research base should be provided within the key nodes. Sites should be attractive to business and have, or be capable of being served by, good quality public transport links. In identifying appropriate sites, account should first be taken of appropriate existing employment land allocations, subject to the re-assessment of sites set out in PA6, followed by other redevelopment opportunities on previously developed land.
- 7.20** Overall, corridor developments should be at key nodes well served by public transport, where there is a high quality environment and supporting infrastructure, including higher education, research facilities, leisure and cultural facilities and attractive housing. The corridors should also provide a focus for transport improvements particularly where this can help enhance links and accessibility within, to and from Regeneration Zones. An example of this is the M54-M6 Toll link which would benefit the Wolverhampton-Telford HTC and the North Black Country and South Staffs Regeneration Zone.
- 7.21** Under the overall guidance of AWM the arrangements for implementation in each corridor are well advanced, although in the short term this is concentrating on projects drawing down funding from the Rover Task Force. It is important that these arrangements also consider the longer-term potential to ensure that the HTCs are a force for Regional prosperity throughout the period covered by this RPG.

- 7.22 Implementation of this policy will require partnership working between all those involved in development and local transport plans, economic development, the environment and education and skills. Monitoring procedures should be established by the RPB and AWM in order to assess the progress being made in each corridor and a programme established for regular reviews of performance.

### **Innovation and Cluster Development related to Research and Higher/Further Education Establishments**

- 7.23 Clusters are defined by the common technology or end product of a group of companies linked through customer and supply chains and associated training, finance and research – unlike sectors that relate to a particular business or industry classification. Innovation is encouraged in all sectors, but in most cases development should be accommodated within the employment land portfolio (PA6).
- 7.24 The Region's higher education and research establishments are important sources of innovation and critical to the future of the Region's economy. Development plans should facilitate their appropriate expansion and the close location of new, emerging and as yet unforeseen forms of economic activity where there is a need for physical proximity to the research or educational establishment.

#### **POLICY PA4: Development related to Higher/Further Education and Research Establishments and incubator units**

- A. Development plans should facilitate the needs of higher/further education institutions and research facilities to grow and expand. They should facilitate the development of businesses supportive to the Regional Economic Strategy cluster priorities that are linked to higher/further education institutions and research facilities by the provision of sites, premises and supporting infrastructure, taking into account:
- i) the locational and operational requirements of the businesses;
  - ii) the likely scale and rate of growth;
  - iii) providing employment opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged groups and communities;
  - iv) existing or proposed sustainable forms of transport, particularly good quality public transport; and
  - v) the opportunities to develop previously developed land and the need to protect and enhance the environment.
- B. Sites identified to serve a particular higher/further education institution or research establishment should be reserved for that use through specific designation and the imposition of appropriate conditions or the use of legal agreements.
- 7.25 Development plans should consider the need for the physical enhancement and expansion of existing educational and research facilities to ensure that the educational, training and research potential of the Region can be realised.
- 7.26 In the case of universities, particular emphasis should be given to developing their research and development capabilities and the further encouragement of links with business, particularly with knowledge-based industries.
- 7.27 Implementation of this policy will require partnership working between local planning authorities, the relevant education and research establishments and those involved in economic development. The land-use requirements will vary considerably and should be addressed in detail by development plans. Inward investment agencies should



support these efforts through targeted marketing of particular sites to appropriate businesses and supporting activities.

## Employment Areas in Need of Modernisation and Renewal

- 7.28 There is an urgent need to renew many existing employment areas whose worn-out and untidy appearance discourages new investment and encourages further decline.

### **POLICY PA5: Employment Areas in Need of Modernisation and Renewal**

- A. Local authorities, AWM, local economic partnerships and other agencies should work together at a local level to improve significantly and maintain the physical and business environment of the Region's established employment areas.
- B. To assist in this process local planning authorities should consider the designation of those employment areas within their areas which are in particular need of improvement. These areas should then be reflected in development plans and backed up by implementation plans drawing on relevant powers and funding regimes.
- C. Existing companies should be especially encouraged to participate in the revival of their local business 'communities' and to establish local partnerships. Where appropriate, local authorities and AWM should use their powers of land assembly in order to encourage the renewal process through such partnerships.

- 7.29 These initiatives should form part of the "toolkit" for local definition and intervention, along with other mechanisms such as those set out in the Urban Renaissance Chapter (4.12). Local strategic partnerships, the local business community and other stakeholders should play an important role in this process.

## Employment Land Provision

- 7.30 Ensuring the provision of employment land in the right amounts, of the right type and in the right places is a key part of the Spatial Strategy. However, experience has shown that certain types of site are very difficult and time-consuming to provide. The "portfolio" of employment sites set out in policy PA6 is intended to ensure that desirable employment development is not lost due to lack of site availability. However, any proposals for employment development should be subject to the other policies of RPG including those which seek to protect the environment.
- 7.31 In assembling the portfolio a greater proportion of employment development should take place within the MUAs. It is important that accessible employment opportunities and attractive sites for developers are provided to support the urban renaissance and Spatial Strategy. Should there be insufficient sites on previously developed land of sufficient size, quality and location, to support the diversification and modernisation of the Region's economy, some greenfield development for employment purposes may be necessary. The RPB should monitor the scale and distribution of employment land allocations and permissions to ensure that it supports the Spatial Strategy.
- 7.32 Local planning authorities should provide a range of sites, but not necessarily the whole portfolio. Regionally and sub-regionally significant, strategic sites will have cross-boundary implications and should be brought forward and monitored by the RPB. To avoid over-provision where strategic sites are located within an authority's area then these should be reflected as part of the portfolio for that authority.
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- 7.33** Only sites where development is a realistic possibility should be included in the portfolio. To inform the review of this guidance the RPB should review the Regional employment designations and, in preparing their development plans, local planning authorities should review all their employment sites for market realism and sustainability in terms of accessibility by public transport.

### **POLICY PA6: Portfolio of Employment Land**

- A. Local authorities, AWM, local economic partnerships and other agencies should aim to provide and maintain a range and choice of readily available employment sites to meet the needs of the Regional economy. This portfolio should be developed in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and will include the following hierarchy of sites:
- i) First tier sites/locations of Regional significance including:
    - Regional Investment Sites (RIS) – see policy PA7;
    - Major Investment Sites (MIS) – see policy PA8;
    - Regional Logistics Sites (RLS) – see policy PA9.
  - ii) Second tier, locally-significant employment for which development plans should establish the level and distribution for their areas within the following categories:
    - Sub-regional Employment Sites – high-quality attractive sites, generally 10 to 20 hectares in size in sustainable urban locations – including market towns – with potential to meet both cluster priorities and local needs. Sites in this category should be suitable to attract clients with an international/ national/ regional choice of location. Land in this category would usually need to be located on or have a direct link to the strategic highway network and be, or proposed to be, well served by public transport.
    - Good Quality Employment Sites – good quality sites suitable for locally based investment. Sites in this category are likely to exceed 0.4 hectares in size. This category may include larger sites which are some distance from the strategic highway network as well as sites within rural areas.
    - Other Employment Sites – land likely to be of interest only to local investors. Sites in this category are likely to be either very small (less than 0.4 hectares in size) or only likely to be suitable for marginal or ‘bad neighbour’ activities. This category may also include small sites within rural areas.
- B. In undertaking this task, local authorities, in conjunction with AWM, should identify:
- i) future land needs, working closely with existing businesses and taking account of the needs of inward investors;
  - ii) the strategic priority given to Regeneration Zones in meeting employment needs within the Region;
  - iii) the potential for the maximum use of recycled land for employment purposes to meet these needs but to recognise that the use of some greenfield land will be required, albeit as a last resort;
  - iv) that in all cases land allocations should take account of the need to protect and enhance the Region’s natural, built and historic environment;
  - v) a classification of employment sites within their areas according to the above hierarchy both in development plans and for the purposes of regional monitoring through the RELS database;
  - vi) any deficiencies in the supply of land, especially within the MUAs, and action required to remedy this; and
  - vii) the extent to which office developments should be restricted on certain sites (in accordance with PA11).

## POLICY PA6: Portfolio of Employment Land – continued

- C. As part of the review of development plans local planning authorities should review all existing employment sites within their area to establish their continued suitability for employment development. This assessment should take account of:
  - i) the physical suitability of the use of the land for employment purposes;
  - ii) a realistic assessment of the market attractiveness of the site for employment purposes, irrespective of the attractiveness of the land for alternative, higher-value uses;
  - iii) whether the site is or can be served by high-quality public transport; and
  - iv) the likely level of employment land required over the plan period.
- D. Where the above review establishes that existing employment sites have no realistic prospect of development under current market conditions in their current physical state within the plan period, careful consideration should be given to:
  - i) what remedial action/infrastructure works will be required to justify the retention of the site within the portfolio; and
  - ii) identification/re-allocation of the site for an alternative use or uses.

**7.34** This policy does not cover land suitable for employment purposes within town centres. In accordance with PA11 and PPG6, large-scale office developments (Class B1(a), more than 5,000m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace) should be located within the network of strategic town and city centres. Where large-scale office developments are proposed, particularly outside strategic centres, the views of the RPB's centres working group (7.63) should be an important consideration. Such proposals should be made explicit and justified through the development plan process.

**7.35** To ensure that strategic sites are identified, re-assessed for their appropriateness and implemented, progress on RIS, MIS and RLS should be monitored on a continuing basis by the West Midlands Employment Land Advisory Group (WMELAG) on behalf of the RPB. The RPB should encourage the active participation of a broad range of interests, including representatives from the development industry, in this process.

## POLICY PA7: Regional Investment Sites

- A. Within the portfolio of employment sites, provision should be made for a series of Regional Investment Sites (RIS) the purpose of which will be to support:
  - i) the diversification and modernisation of the Region's economy; and in particular
  - ii) the development of the Region's cluster priorities as identified in the Regional Economic Strategy.
- B. Regional Investment Sites will be identified within development plans. The RPB should be consulted on such proposals. Sites should generally be:
  - i) between 25-50 hectares;
  - ii) high-quality sites attractive to national and international investors;
  - iii) served or capable of being served by multi-modal transport facilities and broadband IT infrastructure;
  - iv) well related to the motorway and trunk road network;
  - v) located within, or close to, the areas of greatest need; and

## POLICY PA7: Regional Investment Sites – continued

- vi) accessible to effective education and training opportunities to ensure that the employment benefits are available to the local workforce.
- C. In identifying such sites, account should be taken of provision of existing Premium Employment Sites (PES), the needs of the High Technology Corridors (PA3), and the potential of existing major sites to fulfil this role.
- D. Taking account of current PES (set out below), at least one RIS should be made available within or linked by public transport to:
  - i) each of the Urban Regeneration Zones; and
  - ii) each of the High-Technology Corridors.
- E. In some circumstances, a particular RIS may serve the needs of more than one Zone/Corridor.
- F. New RIS will be required to meet the needs of the following High-Technology Corridors/Regeneration Zones:
  - i) Birmingham to Worcestershire HTC;
  - ii) Coventry and Nuneaton RZ; and
  - iii) South Black Country and West Birmingham RZ
- G. Additional provision may be required in the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire HTC.
- H. The potential for bringing forward proposals within the Regeneration Zones should be considered first. Development proposed on the edge of MUAs or on other greenfield sites should meet the criteria set out in policy PA1.

**7.36** Developments on RIS will be strictly controlled to ensure that they support the objectives of the Spatial Strategy. In particular, large-scale speculative development which can be more appropriately accommodated within town centres and warehousing-only developments will not be permitted.

**7.37** In respect of the RIS serving the following areas; Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire HTC, Birmingham to Worcestershire HTC, Coventry and Nuneaton RZ and the East Birmingham and North Solihull RZ, development should be restricted to high-quality developments falling within Class B1. High-quality developments falling within Class B2 uses will be permissible on the RIS identified to meet the needs of the following areas; Wolverhampton to Telford HTC, North Staffordshire RZ, North Black Country and South Staffs RZ and the South Black Country and West Birmingham RZ.

**7.38** The following areas are currently considered to be adequately served by RIS (existing PES); the North Staffordshire RZ; North Black Country and South Staffs RZ; Wolverhampton to Telford HTC; East Birmingham and North Solihull RZ.

**7.39** Current PES where development has commenced or is identified in an adopted development plan:

• Birmingham Business Park	Coventry Solihull Warwickshire HTC & E Birmingham/N Solihull RZ
• Blythe Valley Park	Coventry Solihull Warwickshire HTC
• Hilton Cross	N Black Country & S Staffs RZ & Wolverhampton to Telford HTC
• Wolverhampton Business Park	N Black Country & S Staffs RZ & Wolverhampton to Telford HTC
• Wobaston Road	N Black Country & S Staffs RZ & Wolverhampton to Telford HTC
• Trentham Lakes	North Staffordshire RZ

- Blythe Bridge North Staffordshire RZ
- Chatterley Valley North Staffordshire RZ

The principle of a site at Bassetts Pole – E Birmingham/N Solihull RZ – is contained in the adopted Birmingham UDP, the alterations to the UDP have identified a specific site.

**7.40** Current PES included in emerging development plans;

- Blythe Valley Park Extension Coventry Solihull Warwickshire HTC

### **POLICY PA8: Major Investment Sites**

- A. Within the portfolio of employment sites, provision should be made for two Major Investment Sites (MIS) the purpose of which will be to meet the need for accommodating very large-scale investment by single users with an international choice of locations in order to help diversify and restructure the Regional economy.
- B. The MIS will be identified within development plans. The RPB should be consulted on such proposals. Sites should generally be:
- i) in the order of 50 hectares;
  - ii) high-quality sites;
  - iii) served or capable of being served by multi-modal transport facilities and broadband IT infrastructure;
  - iv) well related to motorway and trunk road network, but avoiding sites immediately adjacent to motorway junctions where this is likely to exacerbate congestion problems;
  - v) located in areas close to a large pool of labour with employment needs;
  - vi) accessible to effective education and training opportunities to ensure that the employment benefits are available to the local workforce; and
  - vii) supported by the RPB.
- C. The Region should at all times have two sites readily available for development in order to respond quickly to demand. Development proposed on the edge of MUAs or on other greenfield sites should meet the criteria set out in policy PA1.
- D. Three MIS have already been identified in development plans at Peddimore (Birmingham), Wobaston Road (north of Wolverhampton), and Ansty (to the north east of Coventry) and the Regional priority will be to direct suitable investments to these locations.

**7.41** The need for further sites, including a MIS in North Staffordshire, should be considered in a subsequent review of this RPG. In all cases, MIS should be located within or close to the MUAs and have good quality existing or potential public transport links to areas of employment need.

**7.42** Development on MIS will be strictly controlled to ensure that they support the objectives of the Spatial Strategy. In particular, large-scale, speculative development, which can be more appropriately accommodated within town centres and warehousing-only developments will not be permitted.

**7.43** In the event that a MIS is released for a development significantly smaller than 50 hectares, then the balance of the land allocated should remain undeveloped pending either expansion by the user or for its consideration through the development planning process.

- 7.44 Land at Ansty to the north-east of Coventry is identified as a MIS in the Warwickshire Structure Plan and has recently been identified for major new investment by Marconi. If this proposal is not forthcoming as a MIS the RPB should reassess its designation, including consideration as to whether part of the site could be used as a science park serving both the Coventry and Nuneaton RZ and the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire HTC.

## Warehousing and Distribution

- 7.45 Warehousing and distribution is an important and fast growing sector within the Regional economy accounting for almost 9% of all jobs. However, traffic generation, particularly from large distribution facilities can make their location within urban areas problematic.

### POLICY PA9: Regional Logistics Sites

- A. Within the portfolio of employment sites, provision should be made for Regional Logistics Sites (RLS) the purpose of which will be to provide opportunities for the concentrated development of warehousing and distribution uses.
- B. RLS will be identified within development plans. The RPB should be consulted on such proposals. Sites should generally:
- i) be in the order of 50 hectares or more;
  - ii) possess good quality access to the Regional rail and highway networks and public transport links, or capable of having such links provided;
  - iii) be served or proposed to be served by multi-modal transport facilities and broadband IT infrastructure;
  - iv) have easy access to an appropriate labour supply and education and training opportunities; and
  - v) aim to minimise compromise to the local environment.
- C. The Region should have a choice of RLS available at any point in time and consideration and priority should be given to bringing forward previously developed sites in North Staffordshire and Telford. Development proposed on the edge of MUAs or on other greenfield sites should meet the criteria set out in policy PA1.
- 7.46 In order to ensure an adequate supply of RLS to meet the Region's needs, the RPB, working in conjunction with local authorities, the private sector, the Strategic Rail Authority, the Highways Agency, and AWM, should co-operate in the production of a study. This should identify the number, size and broad location of additional facilities, if any, taking into account existing supply and the implications and desirability of further concentrating such developments in locations such as the Rugby area. Further locations will be brought forward as necessary in the next review of RPG. Appropriate sites will then be allocated in the reviews of development plans.
- 7.47 Development uses on RLS will be strictly controlled to ensure that they support the objectives of the Spatial Strategy, with B1/B2 development not being permitted unless it is demonstrated that this is essential to support the primary purpose of the site.
- 7.48 Major concentrations of warehousing and distribution will be discouraged both within urban areas and immediately adjacent to motorway junctions, where a high level of heavy goods traffic would further exacerbate congestion.

## Tourism and Culture

- 7.49** Local authorities, AWM, the Regional Cultural Consortium, tourism bodies and other cultural agencies should encourage the further development of tourism and culture, including media and sport, as a key element in the diversification of the Regional economy. In so doing, recognition will be given to the important contribution that tourism and culture can make to employment generation, to local business development, environmental quality, educational opportunities and regeneration.
- 7.50** Tourism and culture should be developed in an integrated and sustainable way through a partnership approach, taking into account existing national and Regional policies in the Regional Cultural Strategy and the Regional Sustainable Tourism Strategy to be produced by AWM. In developing policies and programmes, all organisations will be encouraged to contribute to the Region's distinctiveness, diversity and multi-cultural strengths carefully considering the need to balance the needs of visitors and the host community, and to avoid significant damage to the environment.

### POLICY PA10: Tourism and Culture

- A. Development plans should generally encourage both the improvement of existing provision as well as the creation of new facilities, subject to the capacity of infrastructure and the environment to accommodate the new facilities and visitors associated with them. They should include policies that support the further development and success of key Regional tourism and cultural assets such as:
- The National Exhibition Centre.
  - Birmingham International Airport.
  - The International Convention Centre and Eastside regeneration in Birmingham.
  - Historic town and city centres such as Ludlow, Shrewsbury, Worcester and Lichfield.
  - Stratford-upon-Avon and Shakespeare Country.
  - Warwick Castle.
  - The Region's network of live theatre and music venues.
  - The Malvern Hills and the Marches and the small parts of the Peak District National Park (covered by RPG for the East Midlands) and the Cotswolds that lie within the West Midlands Region.
- I
- Black Country Heritage Attractions in particular Dudley Town Centre and its surroundings.
  - Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, the Severn Valley Steam Railway and West Midlands Safari Park.
  - Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Park.
  - Stoke and the ceramics and pottery heritage.
  - The canal network.
  - The Region's significant historic sites, buildings and gardens.
  - The Region's registered museum collections, major libraries and archive collections.
  - Indoor and outdoor sports stadia and venues of all types.

## **POLICY PA10: Tourism and Culture – continued**

- B. Where large-scale, innovative projects can contribute to the overall “offer” of the Region, these should also be encouraged in suitable locations well served by public transport and where this can make an appropriate contribution to urban or rural regeneration. In this respect it is important that development plans take forward and carefully consider the long-term potential of the National Forest.
- C. Within development plans, local authorities should identify those areas where the development of sustainable tourism can be encouraged to the benefit of the local economy and employment without damaging local environment or character. In doing so, they should assess the cumulative impact of tourism on the environmental assets (including biodiversity), character, infrastructure and local economy of each area, and on the needs of local residents. In the light of these factors, it may be necessary to limit development to particular types or scales of tourism. Plans should also include proposals to mitigate any problems caused by existing tourism.

- 7.51 Where it is appropriate to encourage tourism development, plans should identify the facilities needed to support it. These may include, for example, accommodation, improvements to public transport, Regional footpaths or cycle routes, alterations to the rights of way system and opening up of inland waterways. Particular attention should be given to promoting links between urban areas and the countryside.
- 7.52 Proposals for large-scale tourism developments in particular will need to demonstrate that they are compatible with the environment and character of the countryside and the other criteria in the final part of this policy. Those which cannot do so should not be permitted in rural areas.
- 7.53 AWM, local authorities, Visit Heart of England and other industry bodies should continue to develop aspects of the tourism package of the Region and encourage the development of networks of complementary attractions and facilities in an effort to maximise the value of visitors to the Region. The quality of the natural, built and historic environment and the availability of cultural facilities, including sport, and recreation are important aspects of this policy and regard should be had to the relevant sections of the Quality of the Environment Chapter.

### **Town and City Centres**

- 7.54 Town and city centres are at the heart of communities throughout the Region and their future health and attractiveness will be a major determinant of the quality of life for everyone.
  - 7.55 Policies PA11 to PA13 together with UR2 and UR3 address the key strategic issues affecting town and city centres and the location of development. The network of town and city centres in policy PA11 should be seen as a network within the polycentric concept of complementary centres rather than one of centres competing with each other.
-

## POLICY PA11: The Network of Town and City Centres

A. A network of strategic town and city centres will be developed across the Region as set out below:

Birmingham	Kidderminster	Shrewsbury	Walsall
Brierley Hill	Leamington Spa	Solihull	West Bromwich
Burton-upon-Trent	Lichfield	Stafford	Wolverhampton
Cannock	Newcastle-under-Lyme	Stratford-upon-Avon	Worcester
Coventry	Nuneaton	Sutton Coldfield	
Hanley (Stoke-on-Trent)	Redditch	Tamworth	
Hereford	Rugby	Telford	

B. This network of 25 town and city centres will be the focus for:

- i) major retail developments (i.e. those of more than 10,000m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, excluding floorspace dedicated to the retailing of convenience goods);
- ii) uses which attract large numbers of people including major cultural, tourist, social and community venues (see also PA10 and UR3); and
- iii) large scale leisure and office (Class B1 a) developments (i.e. those of 5,000m<sup>2</sup> or more gross floorspace).

C. There are many other centres within the Region that meet local needs and development plans should identify and develop policies for such centres within their respective areas which best meet local needs. Local authorities should be proactive in encouraging appropriate development to maintain and enhance their function as town centres (UR3, RR3).

- 7.56** Town and city centres are the drivers of the Regional and sub-regional economies and are of crucial importance to the Region's economic and social well-being and to the achievement of a sustainable pattern of development. Centres should be a key focus for future regeneration activities as well as investment in public transport.
- 7.57** Significant growth is forecast in non-food retailing, leisure and other town centre activities<sup>1</sup>. In some areas this will be substantially taken up by existing commitments, at least in the short term. Significant retail development should be targeted to town and city centres having regard to sustainability issues, and to assist in regeneration.
- 7.58** The RPB should undertake further work to inform an early review of the strategy for town and city centres. This should identify the centres where major new retail, leisure and office investment should be focused in order to achieve a balanced network, taking into account where investment could be accommodated without significant harm elsewhere, where it would assist the regeneration of vulnerable centres and where it would support sustainability objectives. In doing so it should also indicate where further significant development would not be appropriate for the health of the network.
- 7.59** Local authorities should take a proactive approach through their town centre strategies to identifying potential sites and premises for development within these centres, including, where necessary and appropriate, the wider use of compulsory purchase powers. Priority should be given to encouraging balanced development of a wide range of town centre uses and thereby avoiding the vulnerability associated with excessive reliance on a single function. Where major education or health institutions, public administration or other community uses are located within or in close proximity to town or city centres particular attention should be paid to facilitating their retention and expansion (UR4).
- 7.60** It is not intended to impose a formal hierarchy of distinctive roles for the strategic centres – other than to recognise the unique character of Birmingham as the Regional capital and an international city (PA12).

<sup>1</sup> A Study into the West Midlands Hierarchy of Centres, Chesterton 2001.



- 7.61** The following factors are of particular importance in developing strategies for individual centres:
- a) the ten centres in the network within the MUAs (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Hanley, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton), have a key role to play in achieving Urban Renaissance;
  - b) strategies for all the major town and city centres within the Regional network will be expected to have regard to their potential complementary roles in providing supporting services and activities for each other; and
  - c) a number of centres inside and outside the Regional network, including Dudley, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Bromsgrove, West Bromwich, Kidderminster and Stourbridge are highlighted as particularly vulnerable. These centres should be identified in development plans for targeted improvements to the range and quality of services they offer in order to rejuvenate their vitality and viability and fulfil their regeneration potential.
- 7.62** The emphasis on larger centres should not preclude development plans identifying more local centres (UR3) where similar local strategies and town centre management approaches might be developed, particularly where this can support urban and rural regeneration.
- 7.63** A centres working group has been established by the RPB. This group should oversee the review of the region's strategic centres and in particular advise on the appropriateness of large-scale development proposals for all key town centre uses as set out in PPG6. Where large-scale developments (PA11) are proposed, the views of the RPB should be sought and its view should be an important consideration. The membership of the group should be widened and include, for example, representatives from the private sector and town centre management groups.

## **Strategic Centres in the Black Country**

- 7.64** Growth will be planned in the four strategic centres in the Black Country leading to the development of a balanced network of centres. Their success will play a pivotal role in the sustainable growth of the sub-region. The designation of Brierley Hill as a strategic town centre in place of Dudley will provide a fourth major centre in the Black Country together with the centres of Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich. The Area Action Plan for Brierley Hill must integrate the existing elements of Brierley Hill High Street, the Waterfront commercial complex and the regional shopping centre at Merry Hill, and ensure that growth in main town centre uses at Brierley Hill is managed carefully to enable it to play an important role in the sustainable regeneration of the sub-region.

## POLICY PA11A: Brierley Hill and Dudley

- A. A new strategic town centre is designated at Brierley Hill, to include Brierley Hill High Street, the commercial centre at the Waterfront and Merry Hill shopping centre. The new town centre will play an important role in the regeneration of the Black Country and will develop as part of a balanced network of four strategic town and city centres in the sub-region with the centres of Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich.
- B. Development at the new Brierley Hill will be guided by an Area Action Plan for the whole area which will define the extent of the centre, to combine the three elements of the High Street, Waterfront and Merry Hill. It will provide a clear framework for phased development and regeneration to create a sustainable town centre. It will provide for mixed use development, including residential and employment uses, public transport and improved accessibility to and within the centre. The Area Action Plan will define a northern limit to development south of the SSSI surrounding the SAC Fens Pool to ensure supporting habitats outside the site are not compromised.
- C. Retail development at the new Brierley Hill within the allocation of 51,000m<sup>2</sup> gross\* in the period 2004 to 2021 will be carefully controlled so that no new comparison retail floorspace is brought into operation until all the following conditions are met:
  - a) adoption by the Local Planning Authority of the Area Action Plan for Brierley Hill; and
  - b) implementation of improvements to public transport, including completion of initiatives of equivalent quality and attractiveness to the proposed Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill, and improvements to bus services connecting the centre with other locations in the Black Country and beyond, and other measures to improve accessibility to and circulation within the centre by non-car modes; and
  - c) introduction of a car parking management regime including the use of parking charges compatible with those in the region's network of major centres.
- D. Once these conditions have been met any further retail development at the new Brierley Hill strategic town centre will be subject to review and assessment of the progress of the strategy for regeneration and balanced growth.
- E. Dudley will continue to perform an important role as a non-strategic town centre in the Black Country. Its future renaissance will be founded upon the town's unique tourism and cultural assets and major residential development as well as retail and other uses appropriate to a non-strategic centre.

\* Subject to revision as a result of the RSS Phase Two Revision.

**7.64A** Policy T12 as revised identifies the importance of the proposals for extension of the Metro network to the area's renaissance. This includes the proposed extension of the Metro to Brierley Hill. Its importance is endorsed by commitment of private sector investment to delivery of this scheme. Further improvements to transport links to other destinations will be needed to effect a significant increase in the proportion of journeys made to Brierley Hill by non-car modes. Such public transport initiatives would need to take account of bus quality contracts / franchising arrangements.

**7.64B** Policies PA11 and PA11A recognise the reality of the importance of Brierley Hill, and the potential it has to contribute to the regeneration of the sub-region. However, its circumstances are exceptional and future retail growth at Merry Hill needs to be strictly controlled in order to ensure that Brierley Hill as a whole evolves as a sustainable town centre. Policy PA11A sets out the conditions that will need to be satisfied before additional comparison retail floorspace comes into operation at the centre. Thereafter any further retail expansion there will be managed in accordance with

PPS 6 and will be subject to monitoring and review of the impact and effectiveness of policies for the growth of the four strategic centres and the role they play in the economic regeneration of the sub-region. This will include assessment of the overall need in the Black Country and the region for additional floorspace, especially for comparison retail, leisure and office development, and, having regard to the capacity and accessibility of the strategic centres, identification of where this need would best be met. Further comparison retail growth will depend, among other things, on the extent to which the adopted Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country and Area Action Plan for Brierley Hill are being implemented.

## Birmingham's Role as a World City

- 7.65** Birmingham City Centre sits at the heart of the West Midlands Region and provides many important facilities and services for the wider Region. It is recognised that, as a Regional capital, it has a special role to play in the network of centres and should continue to be developed as a major Regional capital of European and World standing.

### **POLICY PA12: Birmingham's Role as a World City**

- A. Birmingham should continue to be developed as a major Regional capital of European and international standing by providing further development opportunities and supporting infrastructure, including telecommunications, and by:
- i) the further expansion and development of Birmingham City Centre as a focus for international financial and business services;
  - ii) the development of Birmingham as a major centre for business tourism and major cultural, sporting and other tourist activities;
  - iii) maintaining and enhancing the provision of a network of supporting facilities and activities across the wider Region (examples include the Regional cultural and tourism assets identified in policy PA10) maintaining Birmingham City Centre's role as the Regional shopping centre in line with policy PA11;
  - iv) maintaining the accessibility of the City within the Region and strengthening its international links by air and rail;
  - v) significantly improving major transport interchange facilities and overcoming capacity constraints at Birmingham New Street Station; and
  - vi) the provision of high-quality residential environments, with supporting high-quality health and education services, promoting the attractions and benefits of "city centre living".
- B. Policies and proposals in development plans across the Region should support this policy, whilst having regard to policies QE3 and QE4.

- 7.66** Within the context of creating the balanced network of centres set out in policy PA11, Birmingham City Council, with the support of authorities across the Region and other key partners, should continue to secure development and investment that will further enhance the City's status as a world city.
- 7.67** The City Council should work closely with immediate neighbours, particularly Solihull MBC in relation to the Birmingham International Airport and National Exhibition Centre. Wider Regional partnerships will be significant, for example in relation to the delivery of transport improvements, to ensure that the benefits are shared as widely as possible.

## Out-of-Centre Retail Development

- 7.68 The network of town and city centres set out in PA11 is an important element of the Spatial Strategy. The role and regeneration of these centres should not be undermined by large-scale out-of-centre retail development.

### POLICY PA13: Out-of-Centre Retail Development

It is not envisaged that any further large-scale (10,000m<sup>2</sup> gross) out-of-centre retail developments or extensions to existing developments will be required during the period covered by this RPG. Smaller-scale out-of-centre retail proposals should be considered in the light of policies and proposals in development plans and take full account of Government guidance including the requirement to demonstrate 'need' and the sequential test. No existing out-of-centre developments should be redefined as town centres.

- 7.69 The RPB should be consulted by the local planning authority on any large-scale out-of-centre retail proposals coming forward within the Region (7.63). The views of the RPB's centres working group should be sought and its view should be an important consideration.

## The Rural Economy

- 7.70 In rural areas, particularly those not within reach of jobs in or close to urban areas, the economic development priorities are to broaden the economic base, reduce over-reliance on traditional employment and provide a wider range of local job opportunities. The emphasis should be on jobs suitable for local people rather than on attracting workers from other parts of the Region or further afield.

### POLICY PA14: Economic Development and the Rural Economy

- A. Development plans and other strategies should support the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprise. This should be undertaken in ways that meet local employment needs, maintain viable and sustainable local communities, conserve and enhance environmental assets and respect local character and distinctiveness.
- B. Development plans should ensure that, subject to policy PA15, most economic development is concentrated in towns and other large settlements accessible to their rural hinterlands. Development should be consistent with the character and environment of the settlement.
- C. Priority should be given to: economic activity with strong links to the rural area, including for example food and drink processing, tourism and leisure, the environmental economy and businesses ancillary to farming and forestry; and to sustainable new activity which will strengthen the Region's rural economy.
- D. Encouragement will be given to the provision of affordable broadband services in rural areas to aid the development of businesses using ICT, including increased opportunities for home working.

- 7.71 The land-use planning system has only limited influence on the nature of new economic development. It is important that local planning authorities work with those responsible for rural development, for example AWM and local economic partnerships, through the England Rural Development Programme, and through the use of European Structural Funds to give priority to the types of economic activity identified in the policy.

- 7.72 ICT will be particularly important to rural economic development. It can often help existing businesses to develop and diversify and allow the introduction of new enterprises. Local authorities should take account of AWM's Regional ICT strategy which includes the extension of broadband services to the Region's rural areas and encourages the use of ICT to develop the skills base in those areas.

## **Agriculture and Farm Diversification**

- 7.73 Agriculture remains one of the most important activities in the Region's rural areas and has strong inter-dependency with many other sectors.

### **POLICY PA15: Agriculture and Farm Diversification**

Development plans and other strategies should recognise the continuing importance of the agricultural sector in the Region. Development plans should include positive policies to promote agriculture and farm diversification through the development of innovative business schemes including sustainable tourism, environmentally sustainable farming, forestry (QE8) and land management, new and innovative crops, on-farm processing adding value to existing production and the promotion of local marketing and supply chains. Any development should be appropriate in scale and nature to the environment and character of the locality.

- 7.74 Farm diversification, both agricultural and non-agricultural, covers a wide range of potential activity which can add value to agriculture and supplement farm incomes. Of particular significance to the Region will be the continued development of Regional and local food products, organic produce, local supply chains and marketing and links to the Region's strong and growing environmental economy and tourist industry. Guidance on the reuse of buildings in the countryside is given in PPG7.
- 7.75 Forestry and woodland planting and management (QE8) can make an important contribution to the economy, environment and community life of the rural West Midlands.
- 7.76 Other policy documents relevant to agriculture and farm diversification include 'A new Direction for Agriculture', the Action Plan for Farming, the England Rural Development Plan and the Rural White Paper.
-

## PROSPERITY FOR ALL – MONITORING:

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS</b>			
		<b>1. Hectares of employment land developed (B1a, rest of B1, B2 and B8 all separately):</b> (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)	Annual Employment Land Monitoring Systems
PA6 – Portfolio of Employment Land	(a) To meet the needs of the regional employment land portfolio as set out in policy PA6 (b) Target to be determined	(a) total. (b) Greenfield	
UR1 – Implementing Urban Renaissance – The MUAs	(c) Target to be determined (d) Increase the amount of development within Major Urban Areas	(c) previously developed land. (d) in Major Urban Areas	
PA2 – Urban Regeneration Zones RR2 – The Rural Regeneration Zone	(e) Increase the amount of development within Regeneration Zones	(e) in Regeneration Zones	
PA3 – High-Technology Corridors (HTC)	(f) Increase the amount of development within High Technology Corridors.	(f) in High Technology Corridors	
PA7 – Regional Investment Sites PA8 – Major Investment Sites PA9 – Regional Logistics Sites		(g) The amount developed for Regional Investment Sites, Major Investment Sites and Regional Logistics Sites.	

## PROSPERITY FOR ALL – MONITORING: continued

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued</b>			
		<b>2. The amount and proportion of floorspace developed for industrial and commercial use</b> (separately for B1a, rest of B1 and B2); and for B8 (indicators a-c only): (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)	Annual Employment Land Survey
PA6 – Portfolio of Employment Land	(a) To meet the needs of the regional employment land portfolio as set out in policy PA6	(a) total.	
UR1 – Implementing Urban Renaissance – The MUAs	(b) Increase the amount of development within Major Urban Areas	(b) in Major Urban Areas	
PA2 – Urban Regeneration Zones RR2 – The Rural Regeneration Zone	(c) Increase the amount of development within Regeneration Zones	(c) in Regeneration Zones	
PA3 – High-Technology Corridors	(d) Increase the amount of development within High-Technology Corridors.	(d) in High-Technology Corridors	
PA6 – Portfolio of Employment Land	(i) Target to be determined (ii) Target to be determined	(e) For B1a only: (i) greenfield (ii) previously developed land.	
PA11 – The Development of Town and City Centres	(iii) Locations to be in line with policy PA11	(iii) within the strategic town centres, within other town centres, within edge of centre and outside town centres.	

## PROSPERITY FOR ALL – MONITORING: continued

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
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### OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued

**3. Square metres of retail development completed:**  
(This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)

PA11 – The Development of Town and City Centres  
PA12 – Birmingham's role as a World City  
UR3 – Enhancing the role of City, Town, and Local Centres  
PA13 – Out-of-centre retail development

(a) Locations in line with policy PA11  
(b) Locations in line with policy PA11. No further large scale out of centre retail developments

(a) total  
(b) within the strategic town centres, within other town centres, within edge of centre and outside town centres

Annual Retail Survey

**4. Square metres of leisure development completed:** (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)

PA10 – Tourism and Culture  
PA12 – Birmingham's role as a World City

(a) Targets to be determined  
(b) Locations in line with policy PA11

(a) total  
(b) within the strategic town centres, within other town centres, within edge of centre and outside town centres.



**PROSPERITY FOR ALL – MONITORING: continued**

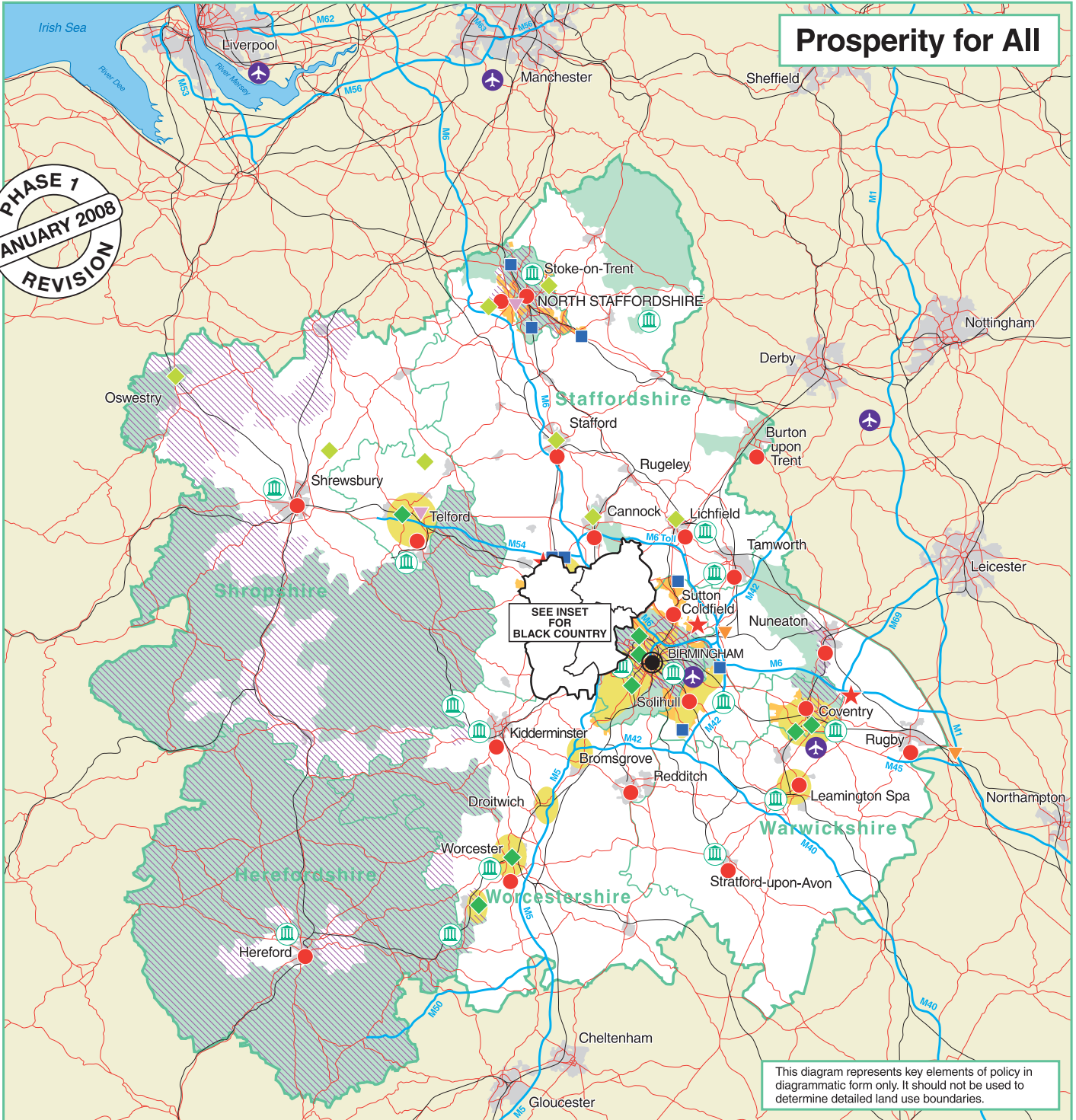
Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued</b>			
PA7 – Regional Investment Sites	(a) At least one RIS within or linked by public transport to each Regeneration Zone, and at least one within each High Technology Corridor.	<b>5. Availability and location of investment sites:</b> (a) Regional Investment Sites (RIS) in relation to each Regeneration Zone and High Technology Corridor. (b) Major Investment Sites (MIS) (c) Regional Logistics Sites (RLS).	Development Plans
PA8 – Major Investment Sites	(b) Two MIS available in the Region at any time.		
PA9 – Regional Logistics Sites	(c) A choice of RLS in the Region.		
PA4 – Development related to Higher/Further Education and Research Establishments and incubator units	Amount of High-Technology Incubator Space developed	<b>6. Increase the amount of High-Technology Incubator Space developed across the Region.</b>	

## PROSPERITY FOR ALL – MONITORING: continued

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>PROCESS INDICATORS</b>			
PA5 – Employment Areas in Need of Modernisation and Renewal	(a) 100% of development plans to consider and identify where appropriate		
PA7 – Regional Investment Sites	(b) At least one RIS within or linked by public transport to each Regeneration Zone, and at least one within each High Technology Corridor.		
PA8 – Major Investment Sites			
PA9 – Regional Logistics Sites			
PA6 – Portfolio of Employment Land	(c) Overall supply and portfolio of employment land to meet regional and sub-regional needs.		
	Any adjustments to Green Belt boundaries to follow the application of the Prosperity for All policies.		
		<b>7. Development Plan conformity:</b>	Conformity checks
		(a) Whether, if appropriate, they identify economic renewal areas	
		(b) Whether, if appropriate, they identify land for RIS; MIS; RLS.	
		(c) Whether the overall potential supply and portfolio of employment-related proposals is adequate in relation to regional and sub-regional needs	
		<b>8. Monitor land released for development through the redefinition of Green Belt boundaries</b>	Development plans

**PHASE 1**  
**JANUARY 2008**  
**REVISION**

**Prosperity for All**



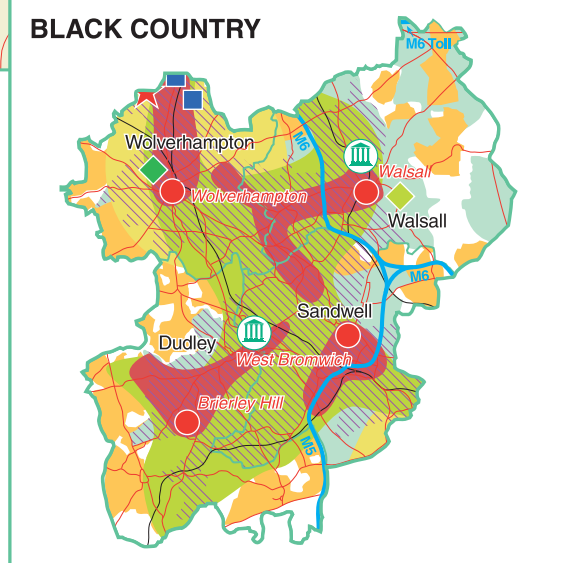
This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries.

**Regeneration**

- Regeneration Zone included in Agenda for Action
- Objective 2 Area
- Major Investment Site (MIS)
- Regional Investment Site (RIS) (only existing/proposed former Premier Employment Sites are shown)
- Regional Logistic Site (existing)
- Regional Logistic Site - warehousing (proposed)
- Regional Economic Strategy - key nodes in High Technology Corridors
- Key Education / Research Facilities within High Technology Corridors
- Other Key Education / Research Facilities
- Tourism and Culture Site
- Regional Centre
- Strategic Centre
- Growth Corridors
- Employment Land Investment Corridors

**Strategic Links**

- Motorway
- A Road
- Railway
- Airport
- Strategic Authority Boundary
- Major Urban Area - Main focus for development and investment





## Chapter 8

# Quality of the Environment

### Introduction

- 8.1 Conserving the quality of the environment and prudent use of natural resources are key elements in the achievement of sustainable development and the implementation of the Spatial Strategy and Regional vision. To fulfil this role requires losses of environmental quality to be minimised and a planned approach to securing higher environmental quality outcomes. Resource utilisation must recognise environmental limits, employ sound management practice and enable an ongoing reduction in waste and harmful side effects.
- 8.2 This Chapter sets out a range of policies on different aspects of the environment, all of which should be considered together as there are many inter-linkages between them. The underlying philosophy is that, whilst in some instances the environment may act as a constraint on certain types of development, overall it should be regarded as a major asset to the Region supporting wider economic and social aspirations and acting as a key component in regeneration.
- 8.3 The Region's "countryside character", "natural areas", and "historic landscapes" defined by the Countryside Agency, English Nature, and English Heritage provide an important context for the Spatial Strategy. These embrace the wide range of natural, cultural and historic elements of the landscape together with more aesthetic and qualitative aspects such as tranquillity.
- 8.4 The policies within the Chapter are set out in four sections as follows:
- Part 1 – Environment Policies
  - Part 2 – Energy Policies
  - Part 3 – Minerals Policies
  - Part 4 – Waste Policies

### PART 1 – ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

- 8.5 The West Midlands contains a wide variety of environmental assets, both natural and cultural. Environmental assets describes the range of features and components of the natural, historic and built environment which are deserving of conservation intrinsically and for the benefits they contribute to the quality of life. The majority of these are not covered by any formal designation but nevertheless make an important contribution to the quality of life in the Region. The effect on these assets and the need to create new ones will be an important consideration in implementing policies elsewhere in this RPG, in particular those concerning housing, employment, transport, energy, minerals and waste.
- 8.6 The assets include part of the Peak National Park (covered by RPG8 for the East Midlands), five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and numerous listed buildings, archaeological sites, conservation areas and sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs).
-

## POLICY QE1: Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

- A. Environmental improvement is a key component of the Spatial Strategy in order to underpin the overall quality of life of all areas and support wider economic and social objectives.
- B. Local authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies and proposals should:
- i) support regeneration, by restoring degraded areas, conserving existing environmental assets, including the reuse of redundant and under-used buildings of merit, and creating new, high quality, built and natural environments, particularly within the MUAs;
  - ii) conserve and enhance those areas of the Region, where exceptional qualities should be reinforced by sustainable use and management, including the Peak National Park, the five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the European wildlife sites, and the World Heritage Site (see Environmental Assets Diagram);
  - iii) protect and where possible enhance other irreplaceable assets and those of a limited or declining quantity, which are of fundamental importance to the Region's overall environmental quality, such as specific wildlife habitats (Annex B), historic landscape features and built heritage, river environments and groundwater aquifers;
  - iv) protect and enhance the distinctive character of different parts of the Region as recognised by the natural and character areas (Figure 4) and associated local landscape character assessments, and through historic landscape characterisation.
- C. In bringing forward development, all agencies and developers should adopt high standards for sustainable natural resource use and management in line with policies such as QE3, QE9, EN1-2 and M3.

## Environmental Assets

- 8.7** Certain environmental assets in the wider landscape, including features of historic value and particular habitats of nature conservation interest, cannot be replaced. Their protection should have a high priority. However, where there are over-riding social or economic reasons for development, some reduction of less sensitive assets may be justified providing wherever possible appropriate measures are taken to mitigate and/or compensate for the loss.
- 8.8** The RPB should work with partners to identify specific Regionally and sub-regionally significant assets and areas for improvement and enhancement. The identified assets and areas should provide the focus for cross-boundary and cross-sectoral investment and action. This may involve sub-regional studies into, for example, the urban fringe, Regionally significant networks or corridors of environmental assets, transport corridors and areas of urban dereliction. In carrying out this work the RPB should have regard to the wider economic, social and environmental benefits that might arise from these assets and should seek to develop criteria to enable an integrated approach to consideration of these benefits.
- 8.9** In preparing development plans local authorities should also work with partners to identify locally significant environmental assets and assess their contribution to the broader quality of life indicators. Local authorities should identify those assets considered to be irreplaceable in the development plan and provide appropriate protection. In other cases development plans should provide guidance on where mitigation and/or compensation will be required.

## Restoring Degraded Areas and Managing and Creating High Quality New Environments

- 8.10 The Spatial Strategy and its emphasis on the urban renaissance places a high priority on the reuse of derelict land (CF4). This is particularly important in the MUAs where much of the derelict land is located.

### **POLICY QE2: Restoring degraded areas and managing and creating high quality new environments**

- A. Local authorities, other agencies and local communities should work together to develop strategies and programmes that optimise the contribution that the natural, built and historic environment can make to the physical, economic and social regeneration of the West Midlands. Regeneration schemes should capitalise on the quality and distinctiveness of the Region's urban and rural environment.
- B. Development plans and other strategies should:
- i) contain policies that promote environmental improvements as a means of regenerating areas of social, economic and environmental deprivation;
  - ii) promote the restoration and remediation of derelict and contaminated sites and reuse of buildings, having regard to the Region's biodiversity and historic assets;
  - iii) initiate programmes of physical regeneration in areas suffering from inadequate investment in the built and natural environment; and
  - iv) aim to provide measures which reduce the impact of the environmental problems associated with transport growth and bring forward environmental improvements particularly along major transport routes.
- C. In implementing this policy the need to make the most efficient use of previously developed land should take into account the need to preserve buildings of historic value (QE5) and preserve and create open spaces for recreation, community health and natural habitats (QE4, QE7-9).

## Creating a High Quality Built Environment for All

- 8.11 Good design can contribute to creating high quality environments where more people want to live, work and invest. Flagship projects can often change the image of an area giving renewed confidence.
- 8.12 Both within new developments and in the reuse of land and buildings, the aim should be to create distinctive built environments that provide a sense of identity and place to which local communities can relate and in which they can have pride. Policy QE5 which deals with the historic environment and the advice for residential areas in the Communities for the Future Chapter are also important in this respect.
- 8.13 Attention should also be paid to securing safer neighbourhoods and discouraging crime. The importance of greenspace in the built environment is dealt with in policy QE4 and urban forestry in QE8.

### **POLICY QE3: Creating a high quality built environment for all**

- A. Development Plans and other strategies should promote the creation of high quality built environments as part of urban and rural renaissance and the regeneration strategies for the Region's cities, towns and villages.
- B. Particular attention should be given to:
  - i) securing a high quality of townscape, urban form, building design and urban spaces, through the use of architecture, urban design and landscape design, which respects Regional and local character, culture and history;
  - ii) promoting public art;
  - iii) incorporating sustainability considerations such as energy and water efficiency, use of renewable energy, sustainable construction and drainage, building orientation, use of recycled materials, minimisation of waste, construction materials, and prolonging the lifespan of buildings;
  - iv) assessing and minimising the impacts of noise and light pollution as a result of development;
  - v) creating safer environments which discourage crime; and
  - vi) promoting community safety.
- C. Regard should be had to how land and buildings could be reused to achieve this objective.

- 8.14** Local authorities, other agencies and developers all have a role to play in creating more sustainable built environments. This will only be achieved through multi-agency/multi-disciplinary approaches and with the involvement of local communities.

### **Urban Greenspace**

- 8.15** Access to quality greenspace can contribute greatly to the Region's urban renaissance, improving the quality of life in urban areas by providing opportunities for sport and recreation and supporting biodiversity. Maintaining, enhancing and, where appropriate, increasing the amount of greenspace is, therefore, an important factor in considering the most efficient use of land. In doing so, regard should be paid to English Nature's guideline of people in towns and cities having accessible greenspace within 300 metres of their homes (Annex B). Urban forestry is promoted in policy QE8 and at a smaller scale, the opportunities for creating landscape frameworks reflecting local landscape character for example, by using local native species, should be encouraged.



## **POLICY QE4: Greenery, Urban Greenspace and Public Spaces**

- A. Local authorities and other agencies should undertake assessments of local need and audits of provision, and develop appropriate strategies for greenspace to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality urban greenspace with an emphasis on:
  - i) significantly improving the overall quality of public space, especially in city and town centres;
  - ii) enhancing the setting of local residential neighbourhoods in built up areas;
  - iii) increasing the overall stock of urban trees;
  - iv) improved accessibility and community safety; and
  - v) maintaining and enhancing sports, playing fields and recreation grounds.
- B. Development plan policies should create and enhance urban greenspace networks by:
  - i) ensuring adequate protection is given to key features such as parks, footpaths and cycleways, river valleys, canals and open spaces;
  - ii) identifying the areas where new physical linkages between these areas need to be forged; and
  - iii) linking new urban greenspace to the wider countryside to encourage the spread of species.
- C. Local authorities and others should also encourage patterns of development which maintain and improve air quality and minimise the impact of noise upon public space. Artificial lighting should be used sensitively to aid safety whilst minimising pollution.

- 8.16** In implementing this policy, consideration should be given to how under-investment in the management of existing urban parks, a number of which are now registered as historic parks and gardens, should be reversed. The longer-term management and maintenance of landscaping and public spaces generally, should be addressed at the outset when new developments are being implemented, for example by negotiating commuted sums.

### **Recreational Resources**

- 8.17** Recreational resources are an important component in the overall quality of life of the Region. The Spatial Strategy emphasises the need to make the most efficient use of land, in doing so development plans should set out appropriate policies and proposals to maintain and enhance provision taking into account policy PA10 and the provisions of PPG17, which includes guidance on playing fields, the treatment of major sporting facilities, the urban fringe and rights of way.
- 8.18** Working with partners the RPB should assess the distribution and provision of Regional and sub-regionally significant recreational facilities with a view to identifying and addressing any strategic gaps in provision.

### **Protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment**

- 8.19** The distinctiveness of different parts of the Region is largely a function of their past history and changing cultural traditions. The West Midlands State of the Historic Environment Reports show that whilst the Region's most valued historic heritage is protected by statutory designations it is also important to consider historic landscapes and townscapes as a whole to understand what gives an area its sense of place and identity.
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- 8.20** A Force for the Future, the Government's statement on the historic environment, sets out its potential for regeneration, tourism and social inclusion as well as for conservation. Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and Ironbridge Gorge are existing examples of how this can occur. The Regional priorities and opportunities for other such initiatives are set out in the policy below.

### **POLICY QE5: Protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment**

- A. Development plans and other strategies should identify, protect, conserve and enhance the Region's diverse historic environment and manage change in such a way that respects local character and distinctiveness.
- B. Of particular historic significance to the West Midlands are:
- i) the historic rural landscapes and their settlement patterns;
  - ii) historic urban settlements, including market towns and cathedral cities;
  - iii) listed buildings, scheduled and unscheduled ancient monuments, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, all in their settings, and battlefields;
  - iv) areas of industrial heritage such as the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter;
  - v) the historic transport network;
  - vi) strategic river corridors (Severn, Wye, Trent, and Avon); and
  - vii) Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.
- C. Development plans and other strategies should recognise the value of conservation led regeneration in contributing to the social, spiritual and economic vitality of communities and the positive role that buildings of historic and architectural value can play as a focus in an area's regeneration.
- D. In particular, strategies should explore the regeneration potential of:
- i) redundant or under-used industrial and commercial buildings;
  - ii) rural settlements and market towns outside the MUAs;
  - iii) Victorian and Edwardian commercial centres particularly in the MUAs;
  - iv) traditional buildings of the countryside;
  - v) existing church buildings and their potential community uses;
  - vi) 19th and early 20th century urban housing; and
  - vii) the canal network.

- 8.21** In implementing this policy, action to protect and enhance the Region's historic environment and to manage change should include:
- a) developing an increased understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment, for example, through the use of character based approaches (8.3) and involving the community in decisions about regeneration;
  - b) protecting the resource from insensitive change, exploitation or detrimental visitor pressure (PA10) whilst enhancing its contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
  - c) providing appropriate resources and guidance to secure the long-term preservation, conservation and interpretation of the historic environment.
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- 8.22 Local authorities and other agencies should provide appropriate support for the specialist skills and the availability of traditional materials needed to maintain the historic environment through the operation of appropriate planning policies.

## **The Conservation, Enhancement and Restoration of the Region's Landscape**

- 8.23 The special qualities of Cannock Chase, the Cotswolds, Malvern Hills, Shropshire Hills and the Wye Valley are nationally recognised by their statutory designation as AONBs (the Peak District National Park is covered by RPG8 for the East Midlands). This status must be reflected by the level of protection given to them in development plans. Detailed guidance on the treatment of AONBs and local countryside designations is set out in PPG7.
- 8.24 Beyond these designated areas, the character and distinctiveness of the wider countryside must also be respected and opportunities to enhance and restore the quality of existing landscapes should be actively pursued (QE7).
- 8.25 In this context the urban fringe is recognised in PPG7 as being subject to particular pressures. For many residents of urban areas it represents their nearest countryside and is a highly valuable resource for leisure and recreational opportunities as well as nature conservation. Local authorities and their partners should take a proactive and integrated approach to its planning and management having particular regard to Policies QE2, QE4, and QE8.

### **POLICY QE6: The conservation, enhancement and restoration of the Region's landscape**

Local authorities and other agencies, in their plans, policies and proposals should conserve, enhance and, where necessary, restore the quality, diversity and distinctiveness of landscape character throughout the Region's urban and rural areas by:

- i) ensuring that a consistent approach is taken to landscape and character issues, particularly where they cross local planning authority boundaries;
- ii) establishing a positive and integrated approach to the use, management and enhancement of the urban fringe;
- iii) supporting the Community Forest and National Forest programmes;
- iv) protecting and, where possible, enhancing natural, man-made and historic features that contribute to the character of the landscape and townscape, and local distinctiveness;
- v) considering other factors that contribute to landscape character including tranquillity and the minimisation of noise and light pollution; and
- vi) identifying opportunities for the restoration of degraded landscapes including current and proposed minerals workings and waste disposal sites.

- 8.26 In implementing this policy local authorities should consider with the RPB the potential for adopting and developing, through local assessments, character based approaches (8.3) in the preparation of their development plans and other strategies.

## Protecting, Managing and Enhancing the Region's Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Resources

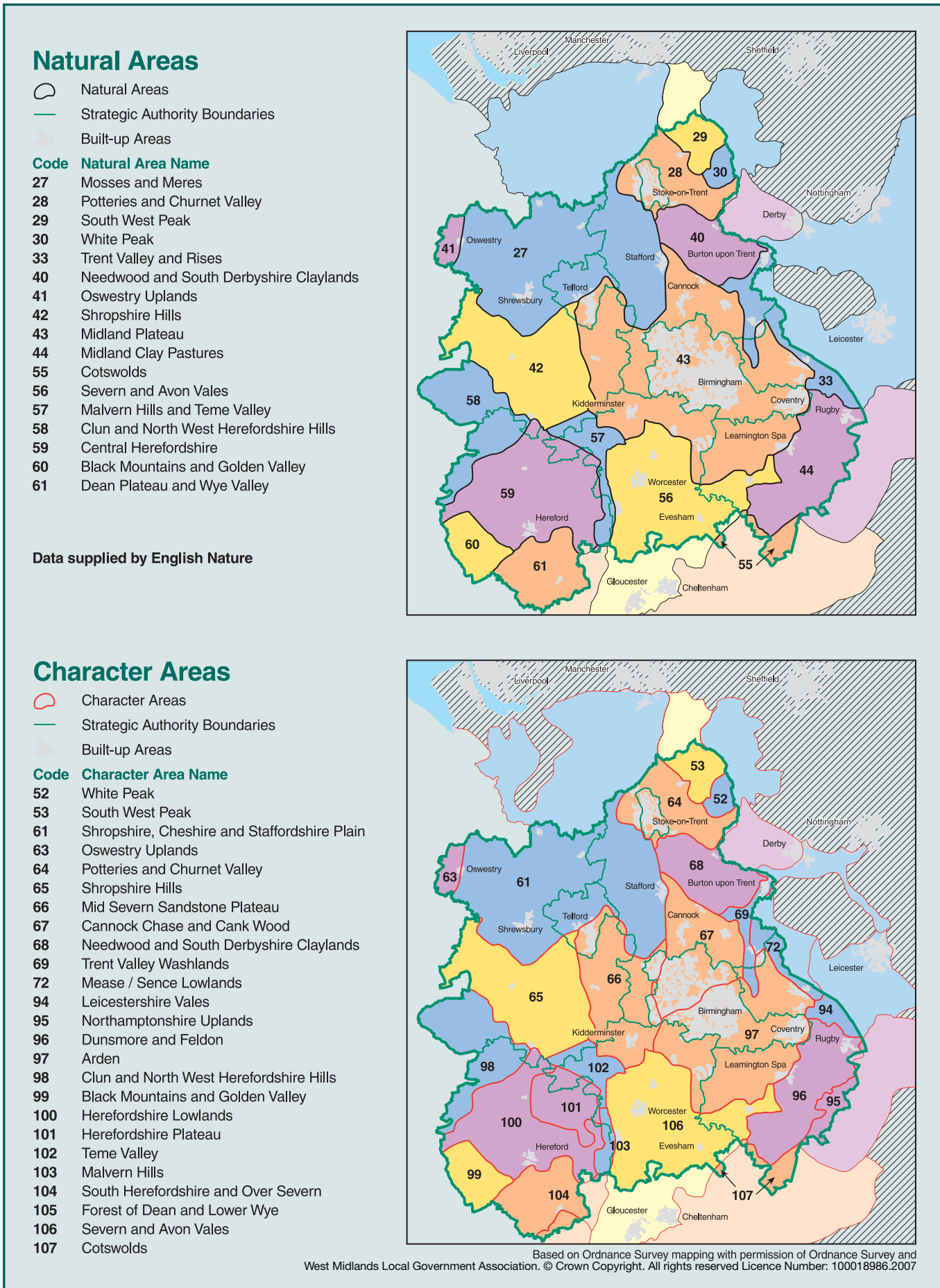
- 8.27** The areas for biodiversity enhancement identified on the Quality of the Environment Areas of Enhancement diagram offer some of the best prospects for retaining environments with a rich and resilient biodiversity resource. Within these areas ecological integrity should be reinforced by:
- a) supporting existing biodiversity and landscape enhancement projects;
  - b) buffering habitat units from adverse impacts;
  - c) restoring and re-creating locally characteristic habitats;
  - d) expanding and linking isolated habitat units; and
  - e) promoting social and economic benefits by investing in linked facilities for sustainable access, enjoyment and education, and in businesses that contribute to and capitalise on a high quality natural environment.
- 8.28** The UK Biodiversity Action Plan's (UKBAP) targets have been developed, through a Regional Biodiversity Audit,<sup>1</sup> into the Regional Priority Habitat Targets set out in Annex B. Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) will carry forward these targets on a sub-regional basis. Their implementation requires cross-sectoral collaboration and must be reflected in all partnerships and strategies. Planning conditions and agreements, agri-environment schemes, management agreements, land acquisition for nature reserves and projects such as the Forest of Mercia or the Meres and Mosses project are valuable tools to assist in achieving the targets.
- 8.29** The natural area profiles for the West Midlands<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 4) and an understanding of the local status of Regionally important landscape features for biodiversity (Annex B) should inform development plan policies addressing wildlife conservation needs in the wider landscape.

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<sup>1</sup> West Midlands Regional Biodiversity Forum, 2001 'West Midlands Regional Biodiversity Audit

<sup>2</sup> English Nature, Natural Areas in the West Midlands Region 1999

Figure 4: Natural and Character Areas in the West Midlands.



## **POLICY QE7: Protecting, managing and enhancing the Region's Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Resources**

All the plans and programmes of local authorities and other relevant agencies should:

- i) encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the Region's wider biodiversity resources, giving priority to:
  - the protection and enhancement of specific species and habitats of international, national and sub-regional importance as identified in the West Midlands Regional Biodiversity Audit, Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) and other BAPs;
  - those that receive statutory protection; and
  - the biodiversity enhancement areas shown on the QE Areas of Enhancement Diagram.
- ii) include policies and proposals which enable the West Midlands to achieve its minimum share of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) targets as set out in Annex B and the targets of local partnerships and other BAPs;
- iii) take a common approach to biodiversity and nature conservation issues which cross local planning authority and Regional boundaries, especially those relevant to:-
  - the strategic river corridors and tributaries of the Severn, Trent, Avon and Wye, river catchments, and issues in current local Environment Agency plans; and
  - priorities derived from English Nature's Natural Areas Framework and associated Area Profiles and the West Midlands Biodiversity Audit.

- 8.30** The quality of biodiversity on most sites depends on good management. Both through development processes and generally, all relevant parties should work with landowners/managers to achieve favourable management of biodiversity assets within their care.

### **Forestry and Woodlands**

- 8.31** Woodlands form an important part of the Region's biodiversity (QE7) and its Priority Habitat Targets (Annex B). The England Forestry Strategy and the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework (in preparation) provide the basis for a steady and targeted increase in woodland cover.
- 8.32** Tree planting can make important contributions to health, recreation, and regeneration as demonstrated through the National Forest, Forest of Mercia Community Forest and the Black Country Urban Forest initiatives and should be encouraged particularly in urban and urban fringe areas (QE2, QE4, QE6).
- 8.33** Where semi-natural woodlands are small and fragmented priority should be given to expanding and linking them by planting native species.
- 8.34** Development plans should encourage increases in tree cover and prevent the loss of woodland, setting out in what circumstances loss would be acceptable and how this should be compensated for. The encouragement of tree cover should not, however, result in planning permission being granted for development which is otherwise unacceptable or contrary to national or local policies.
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- 8.35** Tree planting and woodland management can be a significant economic activity as well as providing a range of other benefits. The by-products of woodland management and wood processing together with species such as willows are increasingly important as fuel for renewable energy production in the Region.

### **POLICY QE8: Forestry and Woodlands**

- A. Development plans, other strategies and programmes should encourage tree cover in the Region to be increased, where it is appropriate to the character of the area, taking account of the Regional Forestry Framework, and in ways that reinforce and support the Spatial Strategy by:
- i) designing new planting and woodland expansion so as to maintain and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape character within the Region, ensuring that new planting does not adversely impact on the biodiversity of a site;
  - ii) replacing woodland unavoidably lost to development with equivalent areas of new woodland preferably in the same landscape unit;
  - iii) realising the potential for creating larger multi-purpose woodlands, woodlands along transport corridors and reducing fragmentation of ancient woodlands;
  - iv) encouraging the development of forestry and woodland industries where they can contribute to the rural economy particularly where suitable facilities are available, or can be provided, for local processing;
  - v) ensuring that woodland expansion and management, and the development of any associated facilities, observe sustainable development principles and minimise environmental impacts;
  - vi) promoting urban and community forestry, including the continuing development of the National Forest, the Forest of Mercia and the Black Country Urban Forest;
  - vii) promoting, where appropriate, opportunities for short rotation coppice as a raw material and where this can provide a renewable energy resource; and
  - viii) involving local communities wherever possible.
- B. Development plans and other strategies should seek to conserve and protect woodlands, especially ancient and semi-natural woodlands, by:
- i) prohibiting the conversion of semi-natural woodland (as defined in the UK Forestry Standard Notes) to other land uses unless there are over-riding conservation benefits;
  - ii) increasing the protection of ancient woodland sites or ancient semi-natural woodland through consultation with the Forestry Commission over any planned application within 500m; and
  - iii) exercising a general presumption against the conversion of any woodland to other land uses unless there are overriding public benefits.

- 8.36** Planting should meet the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard and Environmental Guidelines, thereby safeguarding other habitats, landscape character and local distinctiveness.
- 8.37** The Forestry Commission (FC) should be consulted (as a non-statutory consultee) on a consistent basis by local authorities for all planning applications within 500 metres of ancient semi-natural and ancient woodland sites, except where the proposed development clearly has no effect on the woodland.

## Protection of Agricultural Land

- 8.38** Agricultural land quality must be considered by local authorities in the preparation of plans and consideration of development proposals. Agricultural land quality is defined in accordance with DEFRA's Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales. Land is graded 1, (best), to 5, (worst). Further guidance is set out in PPG7. In preparing development plans and proposals local planning authorities should also take into account the aims and objectives of the Soil Strategy for England.
- 8.39** The West Midlands has a higher proportion of grade 1 land than England but the distribution between counties is uneven, with a higher proportion in Herefordshire and Shropshire and lower proportions in Staffordshire and Warwickshire. To inform the review of this guidance the RPB should investigate the implications of the pattern of agricultural land quality for the distribution of development.

## The Water Environment

- 8.40** Development plans should recognise the multi-functional nature of rivers, lakes and canals, contributing to the quality of landscapes and townscapes while providing important habitats, recreational facilities, opportunities for education, and often proving attractive to developments assisting in regeneration.

### POLICY QE9: The Water Environment

- A. Development plan policies and plans of the Environment Agency and other agencies should be co-ordinated, where necessary across local authority and Regional boundaries, to:
- i) protect or improve water quality and where necessary significantly reduce the risk of pollution especially to vulnerable surface and groundwater in order to improve health and well-being;
  - ii) manage demand, conserve supply, promote local recycling of water and the multiple use of water resources;
  - iii) protect and enhance wetland species and habitats, particularly those subject to local biodiversity partnerships;
  - iv) ensure that abstraction from watercourses and aquifers does not exceed sustainable levels;
  - v) reduce any adverse effects of development on the water environment by encouraging consideration of sustainable drainage systems where appropriate at an early stage in the design process;
  - vi) ensure the timing and location of development respects potential economic and environmental constraints on water resources; and
  - vii) maintain and enhance river and inland waterway corridors as key strategic resources, particularly helping to secure the wider regional aims of regeneration, tourism and the conservation of the natural, built and historic environment.
- B. Development that poses an unacceptable risk to the quality of groundwater or surface water in this or other regions should therefore be avoided.

- 8.41** The Environment Agency's (EA) 25 year Water Resources Strategy sets out how it will deal with the needs of public water supply, agriculture, commerce and industry as well as the environment. In preparing development plans, local authorities should take advice from the EA, at the earliest possible stage, on the implications for their plans of the Water Framework Directive, which is being implemented progressively from 2003. In particular they should seek



advice from the EA on those areas in the Region most at risk from over abstraction and pollution and where these are already detrimental to the environment. Development plans should also promote the efficient use of water in order to maximise the use of existing supplies.

## Development and Flood Risk

- 8.42** The implications of climate change for the severity of floods is uncertain but the most realistic approach is to accept that flooding is an inevitable process. PPG 25 Development and Flood Risk sets out detailed guidance on how flood risk should be considered at all stages of the planning and development process, including a sequential approach to locating development. Local authorities should also consider local EA plans, Catchment Flood Management Plans and indicative floodplains (Quality of the Environment – Assets Diagram).
- 8.43** For the review of this RPG the RPB with the EA and other partners should identify where flooding issues are likely to be of Regional significance, assess their implications for the distribution of development and where appropriate, set out appropriate policies and measures to address them. This could include defining areas where sustainable drainage systems would best contribute to reducing flood risk, and improving water quality where the need to improve the performance of the floodplain, attenuate flows and provide local treatment of polluted run-off is greatest. However it should be borne in mind that sustainable drainage systems are unlikely to provide the complete answer to problems associated with large-scale river flooding episodes; in the longer term they can help attenuate flows and reduce the risk of flooding in urban areas downstream.
- 8.44** When considering the possible risks, implications and steps needed to prevent general flooding affecting new development, the potential for sewer flooding should also be considered by developers and planning authorities. Large new developments may require some new or updated infrastructure in the existing sewer network and treatment works in order to cope with the additional load. Sustainable drainage systems can, in the correct conditions, help alleviate sewer flooding problems by preventing surface water from entering the sewerage system.

## Air Quality

- 8.45** The Environment Act 1995 provides a statutory framework for local air quality management (LAQM). Local authorities are required to review and assess air quality in their areas against objectives set out in the National Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Although air quality in the Region is improving, local authorities with poor air quality may need to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) and to produce action plans to reduce air pollution to meet national standards. Reducing the need to travel will play a key part in this and Regional and local planning policies, together with local transport plans, must play their part in helping reduce air pollution throughout the Region. In developing these plans consideration should be given to how any adverse effects from development on air quality might be mitigated, such as by appropriate tree planting (see policy QE8).
- 8.46** Local and sub-regional air quality reviews and assessments, Air Quality Management Areas and action plans need to be taken into consideration in developing planning policy. For the review of this RPG the RPB should identify the areas where air quality issues are likely to be of Regional significance, assess their implications and where appropriate, set out policies and measures to address them.

## Transforming the Environment of the Black Country

- 8.46A** Of central importance to the achievement of urban renaissance in the Black Country is the objective of transforming the environment. The general poor quality of the living and working environment has been a factor influencing the scale

of net out-migration and low levels of investment. The environmental and historic assets of the Black Country provide a foundation to work towards a step change in environmental quality, and the aim of making the Black Country as a whole a more attractive place within which to live, work and invest will be reflected in the Joint Core Strategy and LDDs (QE1-9).

- 8.46B** A key component in the process of improving the quality of the environment will be to give physical expression to the concept of the 'Black Country as Urban Park'. The Black Country local authorities will work on a Landscape Action Plan and measures to identify and implement a network of key landscape corridors for enhancement, informed by the approach set out in the Black Country Study, including proposals for waterways and canals, a network of open spaces, biodiversity enhancement areas, wildlife corridors and accessible natural greenspace, and the creation of new greenspace and water assets to connect the Black Country towns and communities with each other and to surrounding countryside via walkways and cycleways. Further work will promote vistas, gateways and historic assets and combine landscape improvement with sustainable management of drainage in the Stour and Tame River basins.
- 8.46C** The Landscape Action Plan will interact with, and support, the promotion of World Heritage Status for the Black Country Canal Network and its environs and the promotion of an integrated tourism offer in the Black Country focused on Dudley Town Centre and its surroundings. It will examine opportunities to integrate the two Biodiversity Enhancement Areas identified in RSS within the Black Country. Efforts will be made to integrate the development and implementation of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans with increasing accessibility to natural greenspace, developing opportunities for environmental / ecological tourism and promoting healthy lifestyles and education (QE1 - QE9, TA3).

### **POLICY QE10: Transforming the Environment of the Black Country**

Local Authorities and others will plan for the transformation of the environment by:

- (i) giving physical expression to the concept of the 'Black Country as Urban Park' through identification of Beacons, Corridors and Communities;
- (ii) preparing and implementing a joint Black Country Landscape Action Plan (incorporating a Canal Management Plan) based on the West Midlands' Green Infrastructure approach to define and deliver an integrated network of open spaces, waterways and canals; to protect and enhance topographical, biodiversity and historic assets; and to promote walking and cycling;
- (iii) supporting the promotion of World Heritage Status for the Black Country Canal Network and its environs;
- (iv) ensuring appropriate policies are included in the Joint Core Strategy to facilitate the above.

## **PART 2 – ENERGY POLICIES**

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

- 8.47** As recognised in Chapter 2 the need to respond to climate change is a key challenge facing the Region particularly given the concentration of manufacturing industry with high levels of energy use. The "greenhouse effect" caused by carbon dioxide emissions is a major contributor to climate change. Both energy conservation measures and energy generation from renewable sources can help to reduce emissions, minimise adverse change and support measures to address climate change.

- 8.48** The Region should aim to contribute as far as possible towards the achievement of the UK's legally binding target under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% below 1990 levels over the period 2008-2012 as part of a wider European Community commitment, and the UK's domestic goal to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide to 20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2010.

## Energy Generation

- 8.49** The Region should aim to contribute as far as possible towards the achievement of the national energy target – 10% of electricity produced from renewable energy by 2010, with an aspiration to double renewables' share of electricity between 2010 and 2020.
- 8.50** In 2000, the Region generated less than 0.1% of its consumption from renewable sources and had installed capacity to deliver some 30MW from combined heat and power (CHP). In both cases there is scope for major increases. The Regional Energy Strategy should include targets for renewable electricity generation, CHP and heat production from renewable sources, having regard to the changing European and national context.
- 8.51** Technical studies have indicated substantial Regional potential for renewable energy generation over the coming decades from biomass, solar, waste and wind sources. Together these could provide in excess of 15% of Regional needs with potential as follows:
- a) Biomass – energy crops, forest management wastes and animal wastes – can be used mainly in rural areas and the urban fringe within both large installations generating electricity for the National Grid and smaller ones providing electricity or heat for local use. These developments can help to diversify the agricultural base and provide rural employment thus supporting Rural Renaissance policies.
  - b) Solar energy can, in the short term, be used throughout the Region mostly for passive heating of buildings and for domestic water heating. Planning authorities should ensure that development plans facilitate the use of photovoltaic electricity generation technology as this becomes more economic.
  - c) Energy from waste (EfW) developments are already established in the MUAs and can contribute to the value-recovery targets of policy WD2. Planning authorities should consider EfW where options higher up the waste management hierarchy (as set out in the National Waste Strategy) are not available. Opportunities may also exist to increase use of methane from landfill sites and by coal measures that are not otherwise being exploited.
  - d) Energy from wind is likely to become more feasible as technological advances widen potential areas for use. Both major multi-turbine developments and smaller installations supplying power directly to housing or businesses may become possible throughout the Region. Local co-ownership of these may assist community regeneration, supporting policies RR1 and UR3.

Other types of development, for example small water turbines, could also contribute to local energy supply.

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## POLICY EN1: Energy Generation

Local authorities in their development plans should:

- i) encourage proposals for the use of renewable energy resources, including biomass, onshore wind power, active solar systems, small scale hydro-electricity schemes and energy from waste combustion and landfill gas, subject to an assessment of their impact using the criteria in iii) below. Specific policies should be included for technologies most appropriate to the particular area;
- ii) provide locational guidance through supplementary guidance as necessary on the most appropriate locations for each renewable energy technology, having regard to resource potential, the desirability of locating generation sites close to or within areas of demand, and landscape character assessment where appropriate;
- iii) identify the environmental and other criteria that will be applied to determining the acceptability of such proposals including:
  - a) impact on the landscape, visual amenity and areas of ecological or historic importance;
  - b) impact on surrounding residents and other occupiers;
  - c) traffic implications, and proximity to transport infrastructure;
  - d) the environmental impact of any additional transmission requirements;
  - e) the extent to which the proposal helps to achieve wider environmental benefits such as reducing harmful emissions to the atmosphere;
  - f) the way in which the proposal assists in achieving national targets of new electricity generating capacity from renewable energy sources;
  - g) the extent to which there has been community involvement in developing the proposal; and
  - h) the extent to which the proposal supports other policies in the development plan; and
- iv) facilitate, where proposals come forward, the construction and upgrading of fossil fuel power stations that incorporate clean coal technology, the dual use of fossil and renewable resources, good quality combined heat and power or significant emissions abatement technologies in line with national policies for abatement at source.

**8.52** The location of renewable energy facilities is a cross-boundary, sub-regional and Regional issue. If energy targets are to be met, it is important that development plans where possible incorporate policies to help facilitate the realisation of the energy generation potential from all the above sources. The Energy White Paper has highlighted the importance of decision-making at local and Regional level, including planning, to deliver energy policy objectives, and has indicated the Government's intention to ensure that a strategic approach to energy is developed and implemented by each English region. The RPB should take account of the targets and objectives of any future Regional energy strategy and undertake work to address its spatial implications including, where appropriate, identifying unacceptable and preferred areas for particular sources of energy. In identifying such areas, any protective designations are an important consideration to be taken into account.

## Energy Conservation

- 8.53** Appropriate design and construction of buildings can avoid energy loss; minimise energy demand through use of natural lighting, heating and cooling; allow on-site generation of heat or electricity from renewable sources of energy; and can help reduce running costs. The housing development at Lyng (West Bromwich) based on the “integer” design is an example of this.
- 8.54** The simultaneous generation of usable heat and power, or combined heat and power (CHP) is applicable in a wide range of circumstances from large scale industrial, commercial and housing developments to smaller community and domestic facilities. The incorporation of energy-efficient materials and technologies such as CHP can particularly support policy CF5 by improving the affordability of housing and also Prosperity For All policies by lowering business overheads. A good example is Stetchford Cascades Leisure Centre (Birmingham) whose CHP unit also serves 150 adjacent houses. Suitable layout and orientation, especially of housing developments, can maximise these benefits.

### POLICY EN2: Energy Conservation

Development plans should include measures to:

- i) minimise energy demands from development, redevelopment and improvement by encouraging the use of sustainable construction techniques, best practice in energy efficient design, and orientation of all building types to maximise passive solar gain; and
- ii) encourage the use of good quality combined heat and power systems and district heating schemes for developments, particularly major new mixed use developments.

- 8.55** In implementing this policy local planning authorities may develop more detailed advice as appropriate.

## PART 3 – MINERALS POLICIES

- 8.56** Mineral extraction is an important part of the Region's economy and an adequate supply is necessary to meet society's needs. The Government's planning policy for minerals is set out in its minerals planning guidance notes (MPG). The relationship between mineral exploitation and the environment is an important one and due regard should be paid to the Quality of the Environment policies in this RPG.

### Mineral Working for Non-Energy Minerals

- 8.57** The West Midlands contains areas where there are deposits of Etruria marl, gypsum and silica sand which are nationally important minerals, along with limestone important in the production of cement. There are also significant reserves of aggregates, building stone, shale, coal and other clays, including fireclays. Some are of Regional significance, for example building stone, and brickshale and fireclay which are important to the Region's brick industry. Whilst there are pockets of metalliferous minerals, these are not significant and are not subject to current or future proposals for exploitation.
- 8.58** In line with national guidance, the aim of Regional policies is to encourage the prudent use of available mineral resources and to maintain an appropriate on-going supply.
- 8.59** There can be particular advantages in providing sites in and on the periphery of the MUAs where integrated material supply facilities for future construction activity can be developed. This can reduce traffic journeys, provide materials
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close to the point of use, encourage recycling and reuse of minerals and help create markets for recycled materials to meet Regional needs. In identifying such sites, local planning authorities should take into account the extent to which such proposals will be consistent with Green Belt objectives.

### **POLICY M1: Mineral Working for Non-Energy Minerals**

- A. Appropriate provision should be made in the West Midlands for the supply of nationally and Regionally significant minerals. In making this provision, account will be taken of the following:
- i) the need to secure the best balance of community, social, environmental and economic interests, consistent with the principles of sustainable development;
  - ii) the need to maintain landbanks of permitted reserves of non-energy minerals;
  - iii) the contribution that alternative sources of material or imports from outside the Region should make;
  - iv) other national and Regional policies; and
  - v) the provision made for aggregates in policy M2.
- B. Development plans should:
- i) identify and safeguard mineral resources to ensure that appropriate levels of planned and future supplies can be maintained, including reviewing the continued appropriateness of unpermitted allocations in mineral local plans;
  - ii) indicate sites/areas where future mineral working would or would not be appropriate having regard to the environmental capacity of the area and the impact on the local community;
  - iii) include policies to indicate the circumstances under which mineral working might be permitted;
  - iv) identify and safeguard opportunities for the transportation of minerals by rail or water, including the maintenance of existing, and the provision of new, railhead facilities;
  - v) include policies to safeguard mineral resources from other forms of development;
  - vi) subject to Green Belt policies, identify and safeguard sites on the periphery of and within MUAs for the development of integrated material supply facilities; and
  - vii) protect and seek improvements to biodiversity during the operational life of workings and include policies requiring that the restoration of mineral workings should contribute to local/regional biodiversity targets.

**8.60** In implementing this policy, development plans should ensure that an appropriate provision is made to meet the Region's future needs for a minimum of 10 years from adoption. For certain non-energy minerals this may require a "landbank" of planning permissions to be provided to ensure that there is continuity of production. The landbank may vary according to the minerals worked.

**8.61** Where the environmental sensitivity of a particular location has significantly changed, where more sustainable sites come forward, or where there is no longer the particular need upon which the working was originally permitted, there may be a case for reviewing allocations in mineral local plans, particularly inactive sites. In some cases the amortisation of plant or the need for specialist minerals might be relevant considerations in permitting workings.

**8.62** The working and restoration of mineral sites will need to be carried out to the highest possible environmental and operational standards if sustainable development objectives are to be met. This should include wherever possible the

delivery of minerals and mineral related products by sustainable transport but proposals for rail or water borne transport must be realistic and capable of being delivered. Before drafting plans for mineral working, it will be essential to assess the likely generation of traffic and its impact upon the local highway network.

- 8.63** In restoring sites, there may be opportunities to increase and enhance woodland cover, biodiversity and habitats (see policies QE6-7), public access and in some cases provide sports and recreation provision. Where there are extensive mineral workings in river valleys, this may have the potential to make significant contributions to retaining and improving landscape character and meeting local and Regional biodiversity targets.

## **Minerals – Aggregates**

- 8.64** Aggregates such as sand and gravel, crushed rock and a range of secondary and recycled materials used for construction purposes are the most widely used minerals found within the West Midlands. The Region nevertheless relies on imports of material from other regions and Wales for 23.3% of its requirements (source: *Collation of the results of the 2001 aggregates minerals survey for England and Wales, January 2003*).
- 8.65** The National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2001-2016 published in June 2003 sets out current Government guidelines for aggregates provision from 2001-2016, based on technical advice from the Regional Aggregates Working Parties and long-term demand studies. It identifies a need for 255 million tonnes of aggregate materials to be provided from primary land won sources within the West Midlands, with an additional 104 million tonnes from other sources, including imports from outside the Region and from Wales and secondary and recycled materials. The projections also provide for the export of primary aggregates to other regions.
- 8.66** These revised Guidelines for the supply of land won primary aggregates, together with the arrangements for monitoring and review and the performance indicators, should be used to guide mineral planning authorities in making appropriate provision in their development plans for the future supply of aggregates in the West Midlands. The figures shown in Table 1 of Policy M2 reflect the situation in the West Midlands County Area where in approximately 3-4 years time reserves of crushed rock will be exhausted. The West Midlands County Area apportionment has been redistributed from 2006 onwards between the counties of Warwickshire and Shropshire on the basis that these counties have similar rock types and are therefore more likely to be able to meet any shortfall in the local market.
-

## POLICY M2: Minerals – Aggregates

Mineral planning authorities should continue to work together to make provision for land won primary aggregates to 2016 on the basis of the apportionment agreed by the RPB, taking into account the National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2001 – 2016 (June 2003) as set out below:

### Apportionment of the Regional Guidelines 2001 – 2016 (million tonnes)

	Annual Apportionment 2001-2016	Annual Apportionment 2001-2005	Annual Apportionment 2006-2016
	Sand and Gravel	Crushed Rock	Crushed Rock
Hereford	0.283	0.424	0.424
Worcestershire	0.871	0.163	0.163
Shropshire	0.820	2.662	2.949
Staffordshire	6.602	1.395	1.395
Warwickshire	1.043	0.593	0.88
West Midlands County	0.506	0.575	0
Regional Total	10.125	5.812	5.812
Regional Total 2001-2016	162	93	

Source : WMRAWP sub-regional apportionment October 2003

- 8.67** The apportionment of the new Guidelines should help sustain economic growth in the Region during the period of the Guidelines. The reduction in the level of land won resources required should also ensure that the Region's resources are managed in a sustainable way and its environmental assets are protected.

## The Use of Alternative Sources of Materials

- 8.68** A key objective of national aggregates policy is to ensure that the proportion of supply from primary land won sources in England is minimised. The National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2001-2016 are based on the assumption that recycled and alternative materials will meet, nationally, 23% of total demand for aggregates over the period to which they apply.
- 8.69** The Guidelines assume that in the West Midlands 88 million tonnes (24.5%) of the 359 million tonnes will come from recycled and alternative sources. This amounts to 5.5 million tonnes per annum throughout the period of the Guidelines.
- 8.70** In 2001 it was estimated that around 5 million tonnes of recycled and other alternative materials were reused in the West Midlands (source: Symonds Group surveys for 2001). In order to increase this figure to the required level of 5.5 million tonnes and thus minimise the risk of needing to exploit additional primary aggregates sources, the amount of construction and demolition material that needs to be recycled per capita must rise across the Region from 0.7 tonnes per annum to 0.8 tonnes per annum, assuming that supplies from other sources such as road planings and secondary aggregates, for example power station ashes, remain constant.



### **POLICY M3: Minerals -The Use of Alternative Sources of Materials**

- A. Local authorities, minerals and construction industries, the West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party and the West Midlands Regional Technical Advisory Body should work together to reduce the reliance on land won primary aggregates by increasing the contribution of alternative sources of material in meeting the Region's requirements by:
- i) developing better systems to monitor the level of usage and the way in which alternative sources of materials are used in construction projects;
  - ii) developing targets for local authorities and for the construction industry to increase the use of alternative sources of materials in construction projects; and
  - iii) encouraging local authorities and developers to recycle and reuse materials on site in construction projects having regard to the environmental implications of any proposed operations and their overall acceptability.
- B. Development plans should:
- i) identify sites or policy criteria to secure an appropriate provision of recycling plants in appropriate locations for example on the fringes of MUAs; and
  - ii) include policies to increase the contribution of alternative sources of material, including adopting methods of operations that will assist reuse and recycling in construction projects.

**8.71** The use of secondary and recycled aggregates is increasing within the Region, but it remains difficult to collect reliable quantitative information. To maintain and improve on the rate of use it will be important to improve the level of information available for strategic monitoring purposes. This will help ensure that the targets set at the Regional level are capable of being measured and delivered at the local level.

**8.72** To sustain economic growth levels without increasing the use of land won aggregates it is vital that the assumptions contained in the Guidelines are met. It is recognised, however, that it will not be possible to utilise all potential sources of alternative material because of environmental, planning and technical constraints. Some examples of where improvements could be made are:

- local authorities utilising secondary and recycled aggregates in their own construction projects. A project audit should be undertaken of the level of usage of such materials and the way in which they are being used and the information supplied to MPAs for collection and collation;
- local authorities and developers could adopt methods of operations that will assist reuse and recycling and use wherever possible sustainable construction techniques;
- developers utilising secondary and recycled aggregates in development projects. Contractors to keep records of all usage of materials and to supply the information to LPAs for collection and collation at the end of the project;
- developers supplying information on proposed waste utilisation and utilisation of secondary and recycled aggregates; and
- maximising the opportunities for temporary recycling at both construction and demolition sites.

## Energy Minerals

- 8.73** There are significant reserves of unworked coal in the West Midlands along with other hydrocarbon resources. In some areas, previous coal mining has left a legacy of untreated and unrecorded mineshafts, surface methane venting, minewater drainage arrangements and vegetated colliery spoil heaps. As land use changes, this legacy will diminish but the venting of methane and greenhouse gases to the atmosphere contributes to climate change. Using the methane to supply local energy needs could reduce this impact whilst also helping to release land for development.
- 8.74** Coal remains important as a main contributor to the diversity and flexibility of UK electricity production into the foreseeable future. Whilst access to the UK's coal resource by conventional mining is declining, other cleaner coal technologies are emerging such as coalbed methane (CBM) and underground coal gasification. These may extend the life of the Region's coalfields, may contribute to future energy needs and will need to be taken into account in the drafting of future plans.
- 8.75** MPG3 provides advice to mineral planning authorities and the coal industry in England on how to ensure that the development of coal resources and the disposal of colliery spoil only takes place in accordance with the full and proper protection of the environment and the principles of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 indicates that there will normally be a presumption against coal extraction unless the proposal meets stringent environmental and policy tests.

### POLICY M4: Energy Minerals

Development plans should include policies which:

- i) recognise that energy minerals are of national and Regional importance;
- ii) recognise the contribution that the exploitation and utilisation of energy minerals can make to meeting the Region's future energy needs in the medium to long term;
- iii) recognise the development and role of new technologies in releasing sources of energy from worked and unworked coal resources in the Region for local use; and
- iv) take account of existing national guidance in relation to coal mining, emerging guidance on oil and gas and new technologies and revisions to national energy policy.

- 8.76** In implementing this policy, development plans should recognise the importance of the Region's indigenous coal and hydrocarbon resources for meeting future energy needs. They should ensure that the resources are exploited and utilised sustainably where there is a clear and demonstrable case and where this will not lead to an unacceptable impact on local communities or their amenities or damage the Region's environmental assets.

## PART 4 – WASTE POLICIES

- 8.77** PPG10 sets out how the planning system can contribute to sustainable waste management and includes the principles of 'the Best Practicable Environmental Option', 'regional self-sufficiency', the 'proximity principle' and the 'waste hierarchy', for locating waste management facilities.
- 8.78** The waste policies in this guidance have been informed by the draft Regional Waste Strategy (RWS) prepared by the Regional Technical Advisory Body (RTAB). In preparing development plans PPG10 expects Waste Planning Authorities (WPAs) to take the RWS into account.

- 8.79** Data shows that the Region is largely self-sufficient in terms of meeting its own needs for waste treatment and disposal. However, the acknowledged net flow of household and industrial waste from the metropolitan area to landfill in the shire counties and the reverse flow of special wastes means there is continued importance in co-ordinating waste planning at the Regional level.
- 8.80** The way in which waste is managed will need to change in response to new waste management legislation. This will involve the full implementation of the Waste Framework Directive, the Landfill Directive and the emerging legislation. In order to meet the requirements of the Landfill Directive there will be a need for significant initiatives to provide facilities for the recovery and treatment of all waste streams, including municipal, industrial and commercial. Some of the ways in which change will need to take place were addressed in the Waste Strategy 2000 for England and Wales.
- 8.81** The RPB, in conjunction with the Regional Technical Advisory Body, should undertake a study of the Best Practicable Environmental Option for Waste in order to inform an early review of the waste policies in this Chapter. In addition, priority should be given at the Regional level, by both individual authorities and other stakeholders, to initiatives and facilities which will encourage and promote waste reduction and the reuse of materials and products across all sectors in the West Midlands. These principles should also be communicated to businesses and members of the public.
- 8.82** Local authorities and industry and commerce are encouraged to apply the principles of life cycle assessment to ensure that the full range of environmental as well as other costs and benefits have been taken into account.

### **Targets for Waste Management in the Region**

- 8.83** The Region must play its part in delivering the targets set out in the National Waste Strategy. Given the present overall performance in the Region and the need for new contracts and investment in infrastructure in the short and medium term, any more stringent targets than those in the National Waste Strategy would be unrealistic. It is therefore proposed that the national targets are adopted for the West Midlands.
- 8.84** The RWS for the West Midlands aims to maintain Regional self-sufficiency and incorporates challenging Government targets for different forms of waste management. This includes increased quantities of waste to be treated further up the waste hierarchy and the adoption of the 'proximity principle' where there is scope for this to be taken further in individual waste plans.

#### **POLICY WD1: Targets for Waste Management in the Region**

Development plans should include proposals which will enable the following Regional targets to be met:

- i) to recover value from at least 40% of municipal waste by 2005; 45% by 2010; and 67% by 2015;
- ii) to recycle or compost at least 25% of household waste by 2005; 30% by 2010; and 33% by 2015; and
- iii) to reduce the proportion of industrial and commercial waste which is disposed of to landfill to at the most 85% of 1998 levels by 2005

- 8.85** The Region's progress towards achieving these targets will be closely monitored. Relevant stakeholders will, through their involvement in the RTAB on Waste, contribute data that will be presented in an annual report to the RPB. RTAB will also need to consider how these targets relate to particular sub-regions and set appropriate targets.
- 8.86** Whilst overall the Region is self-sufficient in waste treatment and disposal facilities, performance locally with regard to waste minimisation, reduction and recycling varies widely. The achievement of the statutory performance standards

for waste recycling for 2003/4 and 2005/6 will improve the Region's overall waste management performance in the short term.

## The Need for Waste Management Facilities by Sub-Region

- 8.87 The RTAB has carried out technical work to determine a broad indication of the needs for municipal waste recycling/composting and recovery facilities in the West Midlands. Further work is needed, however, to assess the level of requirements to manage and treat other waste streams.

### **POLICY WD2: The Need for Waste Management Facilities – by Sub-Region**

- A. The type and precise location of waste management and treatment facilities to be provided within the Region in order to meet the National Waste Strategy targets and the future waste management needs of all major waste streams are matters to be determined in development plans and through Waste Management Strategies.
  - B. Regarding municipal waste produced in the Region, additional facilities will be required to recycle, compost or in other ways recover value from at least 47.9 million tonnes, and landfill capacity will be required for approximately 40 million tonnes, between 1998/99 and 2020/21.
  - C. Landfill capacity with planning permission exists in the West Midlands to satisfy the identified need to dispose of approximately 75 million tonnes of industrial and commercial waste, and 29 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste, between 1998/99 and 2020/21.
  - D. In preparing development plans, local planning authorities should take into account the needs outlined in Table 4 – for waste treatment and landfill capacity generated by each sub-region.
  - E. Where necessary, and in accordance with the principles of best practicable environmental option and proximity, local authorities should seek agreement with neighbouring authorities to make provision in their plans to meet these needs (including those in neighbouring regions).
-

**TABLE 4: Needs for Waste Management Facilities by Sub-Region**

Sub Region	Municipal waste recycling and composting facilities	Municipal waste recovery	Cumulative landfill void capacity required for all waste streams taking into account the target reductions in the National Waste Strategy 1998/99 – 2020/21		
	Annual throughput capacity required by 2020/21 ('000 tonnes)	Annual throughput capacity required by 2020/21 ('000 tonnes)	Municipal ('000 tonnes)	Industrial & commercial ('000 tonnes)	Construction & demolition ('000 tonnes)
Herefordshire	44	45	1,227	1,693	
Metropolitan area	845	1,020	16,616	31,709	
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin	150	155	4,216	7,562	
Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent	364	383	7,837	18,010	
Warwickshire	172	173	4,479	9,379	
Worcestershire	159	164	4,414	6,883	
West Midlands Region	1,734	1,940	38,789	75,236	28,700*

\* data not available to enable a sub-regional assessment

**TABLE 5: Additional Municipal Waste Management Facilities Required by 2021**

Sub Region	Recycling and Composting		Recovery – either EfW or MRF		
	Additional capacity required by 2021 (annual throughput capacity in '000 tonnes)	Equivalent number of facilities @ 50,000 tonnes pa capacity	Additional capacity required by 2021 (annual throughput capacity, '000 tonnes)	Equivalent number of EfW facilities required at 300,000 tonnes pa	Equivalent number of MRFs required at 50,000 tonnes pa
Herefordshire	38	0.5	45	-	1
Metropolitan Area	781	16	382	1	8
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin	136	2.5	155	0.5	3
Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent	284	5.5	187	0.5	4
Warwickshire	151	3	173	0.5	3
Worcestershire	134	2.5	164	0.5	3
West Midlands Region	1,524	30	1,106	3-4	22

- 8.88** Targets have been set in Tables 4 and 5 for each waste planning authority (WPA) or group of authorities where figures are aggregated in the Environment Agency's Strategic Waste Management Assessment, to meet the targets in the National Waste Strategy. These targets are set out in a way that meets the requirements of PPG10 with regard to the preparation of waste strategies by waste planning authorities.

### **Criteria for the Location of Waste Management Facilities**

- 8.89** Circumstances across the Region vary from densely populated urban areas to very sparsely populated rural areas and the level of investment in infrastructure to handle and dispose of waste differs.
- 8.90** RTAB's survey of existing facilities shows no additional landfill capacity is necessary unless it is a means of achieving other essential planning objectives. There will, however, be a significant need for additional waste management, recovery and treatment facilities throughout the Region.

#### **POLICY WD3: Criteria for the Location of Waste Management Facilities**

- A. In their development plans, appropriate planning authorities should include policies and proposals for all major waste streams to:
- i) guide the location and siting of waste treatment and recycling facilities to appropriate locations, having regard to the proximity principle and other environmental and amenity principles as identified elsewhere in this guidance;
  - ii) wherever possible and consistent with the principles of Best Practicable Environmental Option and Proximity, encourage the use of rail and water transport in preference to road transport; and
  - iii) require the submission of a waste audit and provision for in-house or on-site recycling and treatment of wastes, in the case of major development proposals.
- B. Where possible, site-specific proposals for new waste management facilities should be included in development plans. Consideration should be given to the potential advantages of making provision for waste management in the form of small-scale facilities that may be more easily integrated into the local setting.
- C. Development plans should restrict the granting of planning permission for new sites for landfill to proposals which are necessary to restore despoiled or degraded land, including mineral workings, or which are otherwise necessary to meet specific local circumstances. The depletion of landfill capacity will be the subject of regular monitoring.

- 8.91** RTAB and the RPB should work together to develop more Regionally specific locational criteria and identify sub-regional priorities for the provision of facilities. This should take into account cross boundary flows, particularly those across the boundary of the metropolitan area.

## ENVIRONMENT – MONITORING:

Source of information

Indicator

Target

### OUTPUT INDICATORS

<p>QE2 – Restoring degraded areas and managing and creating high quality new environments</p> <p>QE3 – Creating a high quality Built Environment for all</p> <p>QE4 – Greenery, Urban Greenspace and Public Spaces</p>	<p>Increase proportion of derelict land reclaimed</p>	<p><b>1. Amount of derelict land reclaimed:</b></p> <p>(a) In total and as a proportion of the outstanding supply of derelict land</p> <p>(b) By end use (particularly soft end uses)</p>	<p>Annual Derelict Land Survey</p>
<p>QE8 – Forestry and Woodlands</p> <p>QE2 – Restoring degraded areas and managing and creating high quality new environments</p>	<p>Increase amount of woodland planting</p>	<p><b>2. Area of new woodland planting:</b></p> <p>(a) In total.</p> <p>(b) Amount and proportion on derelict, contaminated and former industrial land.</p>	<p>Grants for woodland planting from Forestry Commission. Additional data from the National Forestry Unit, National Forest and Forest of Mercia.</p>
<p>QE5 – Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment</p>	<p>(a) Reduce the percentage of listed buildings and ancient monuments at risk of neglect or decay.</p> <p>(b) Reduce the number of listed buildings demolished.</p>	<p><b>3. Protection of listed buildings</b></p> <p>(a) Number and % of listed buildings and ancient monuments at risk of neglect or decay.</p> <p>(b) Number and proportion of listed buildings demolished.</p>	<p>English Heritage.</p>

## ENVIRONMENT – MONITORING: continued

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued</b>			
QE7 – Protecting, managing and enhancing the Region's Biodiversity and Nature Conservation resources.	<p>(a) No loss of SSSI areas.</p> <p>(b) Targets as set out in Annex B</p>	<p><b>4. Biodiversity:</b></p> <p>(a) Condition of SSSI habitats – % of SSSIs which are in a favourable condition (by Strategic Planning Authority area).</p> <p>(b) Change (additions and subtractions) by county, district and unitary planning authority due to new development, management programme, and planning agreement in areas (ha) of biodiversity importance, that is: Priority biodiversity habitats (by type). (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)</p>	<p>Local Authorities</p> <p>Biodiversity Action Plan Partnerships</p> <p>Local Record Centres</p>
<b>PROCESS INDICATORS</b>			
QE3 – Creating a high quality Built Environment for all	(a) 100% of LDFs incorporating design strategies and guidance.	<p><b>5. Development Plan conformity</b></p> <p>(a) design strategies and guidance, including promoting the reuse of buildings</p> <p>(b) link to the strategies for the provision of open space</p> <p>(c) landscape character assessments considered</p> <p>(d) policies for sustainable urban drainage systems</p>	Conformity checks
QE4 – Greenery, Urban Greenspace and Public Spaces	(b) 100% of Local Authorities preparing strategies to match open space provision to local needs and aspirations.		
QE6 – The conservation, enhancement and restoration of the Region's landscape	(c) All Development Plans to have considered, with the RPB, landscape character assessments.		
QE4 – Greenery, Urban Greenspace and Public Spaces	(d) Policies for sustainable urban drainage systems included		
QE4 – Greenery, Urban Greenspace and Public Spaces	100% of local authorities with a Greenspace Strategy, taking account of English Nature's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard	<p><b>6. Number of local authorities that have prepared a 'Greenspace Strategy'.</b></p>	Conformity checks



## ENERGY – MONITORING:

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
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### OUTPUT INDICATORS

EN1 – Energy Generation	10% of electricity produced from renewable energy by 2010, with an aspiration to double renewables' share of electricity between 2010 and 2020	<b>7. Provision of new renewable energy capacity (MW) by type.</b> (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)	
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## MINERALS – MONITORING:

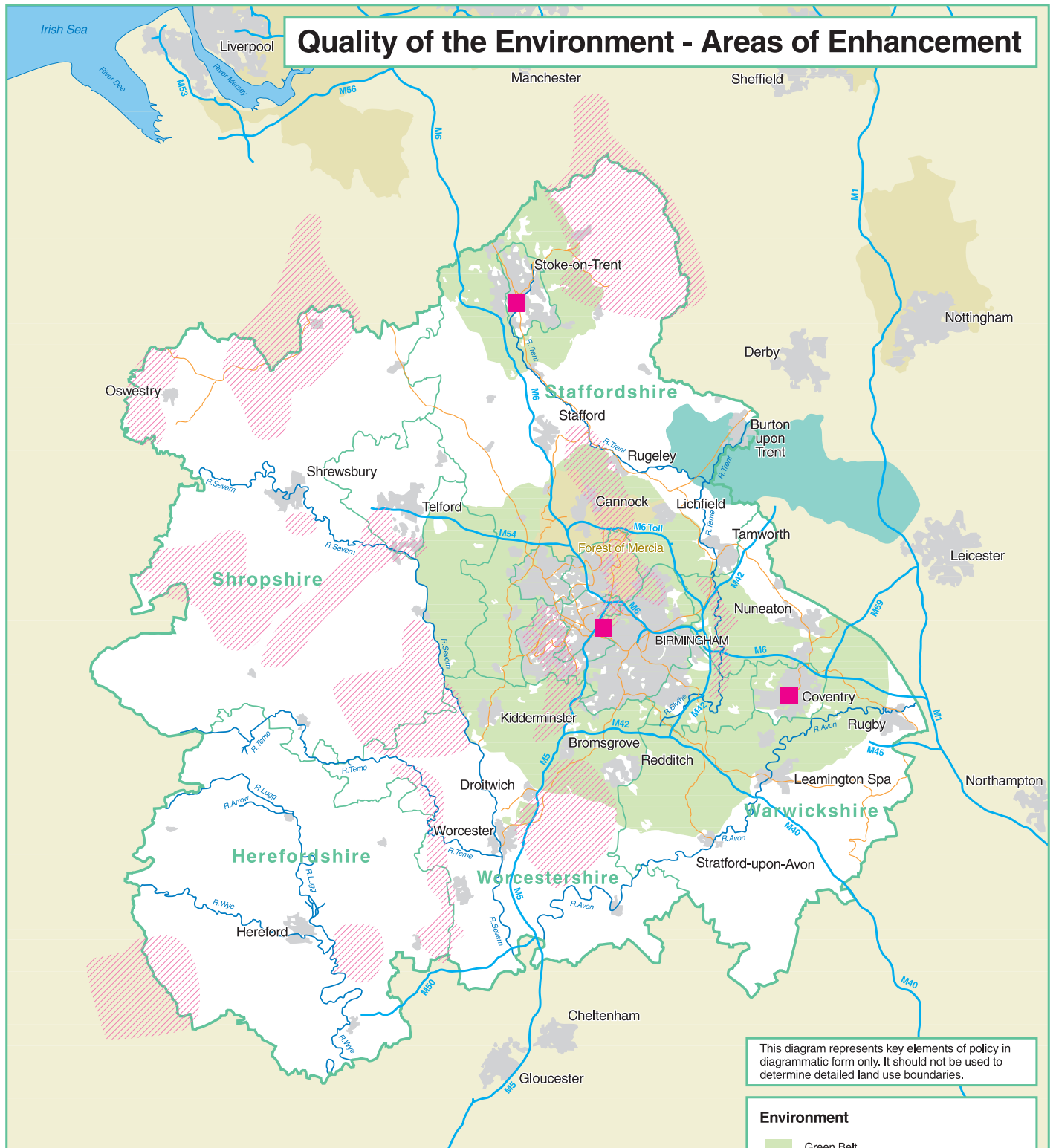
Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
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### OUTPUT INDICATORS

M2 – Minerals – Aggregates	(a) Production of primary land-won aggregates over the period to 2016 in line with the sub-regional apportionment as set out in Policy M2.  (b) Increase production of secondary/recycled aggregates.	<b>8. Aggregates:</b> (a) Provision for the production of primary land-won aggregates (by Minerals Planning Authority area) in relation to the sub-regional apportionment in Policy M2. (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)  (b) Production of secondary/recycled aggregates (by Minerals Planning Authority area) (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)	Annual Regional Aggregates Survey.  Private Sector Mineral Operators (process for data collection would have to be established).
M1 – Mineral Working for Non-Energy Minerals M2 – M2 – Minerals – Aggregates	Check that development plans make appropriate provision for the production of minerals.	<b>9. 100% of Development Plans to include policies which make the appropriate provision for the production of minerals.</b>	

## WASTE – MONITORING:

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS</b>			
WD2 – The Need for Waste Management Facilities – by Sub-Region	Targets as set out in WD2.	<b>10. Capacity of waste management facilities by type at April 2003 (e.g. for landfill, the recycling and recovery of waste and other alternatives to landfill) by Waste Planning Authority area, compared with targets set out in the Regional Waste Strategy.</b> (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)	Environment Agency/Waste Planning Authorities.
WD1 – Targets for Waste Management in the Region	Recover value from at least 40% of municipal waste by 2005, 45% by 2010 and 67% by 2015. Recycle or compost at least 25% of household waste by 2005, 30% by 2010, and 33% by 2015. Reduce the proportion of industrial and commercial waste which is disposed of to landfill to, at the most, 85% of 1998 levels by 2005. By 2010, reduce to 75% of that produced in 1995, by 2013 reduce to 50%, and by 2020 reduce to 35% of that produced in 1995	<b>11. Amount of waste managed (tonnes) by management type (e.g. recycling, landfill, etc.) by waste planning authority.</b> . (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)  <b>12. Amount of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill each year to be reduced in line with EU Landfill Directive.</b>	For municipal waste: Waste Disposal Authorities' Annual Surveys of Municipal Waste.  For other waste sources: Environment Agency.
<b>PROCESS INDICATORS</b>			
WD2 – The Need for Waste Management Facilities – by Sub-Region	Development Plans or Municipal Waste Management Plans should indicate the type and location of waste management and treatment facilities to be provided, encouraging sustainable modes of transport and waste audits for redevelopment proposals, in line with Table 4	<b>13. Check that development plans make appropriate provision (by type and location) of waste management facilities.</b>	



This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries.

**Environment**

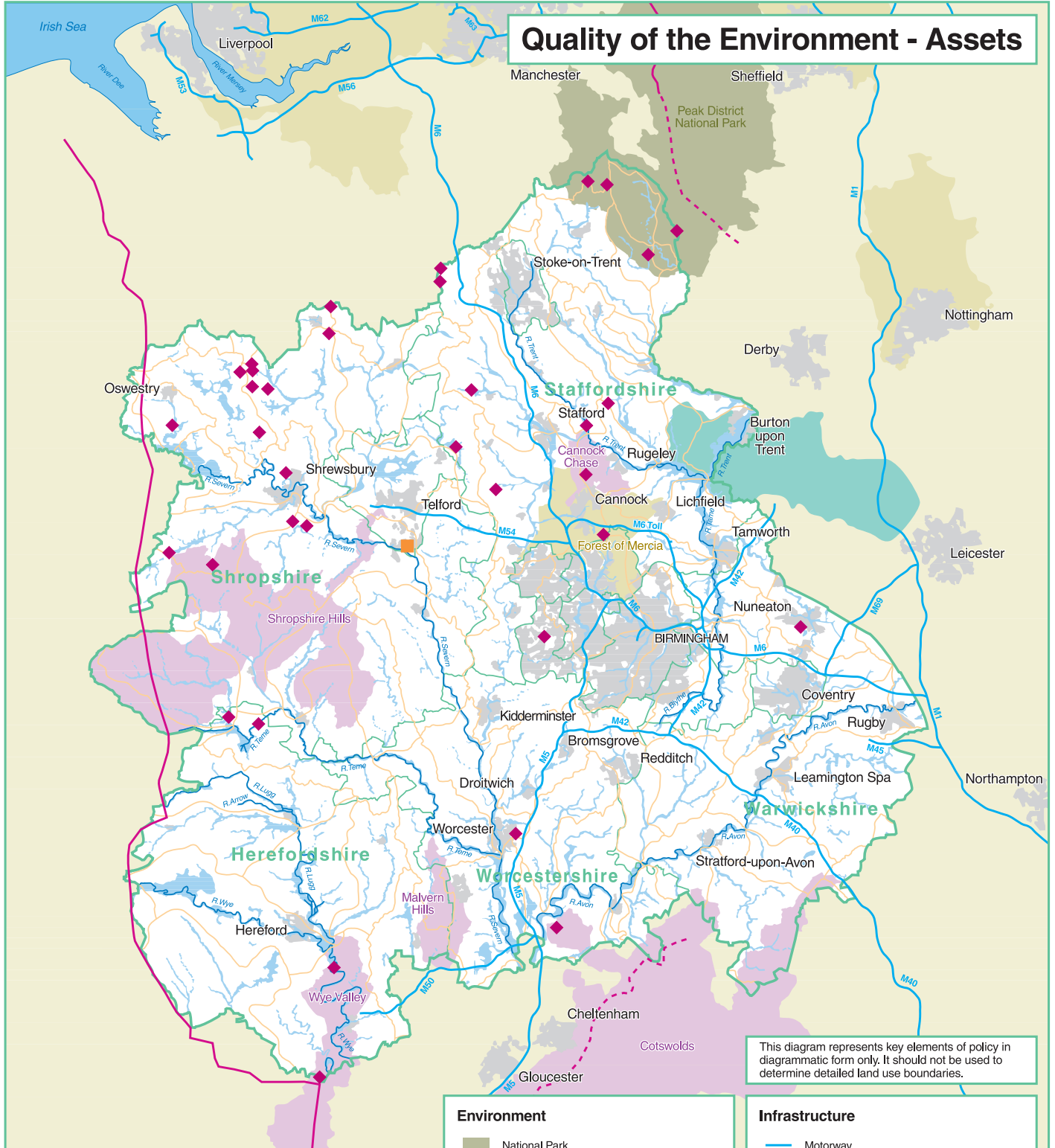
- Green Belt
- National Forest
- Community Forest
- Area for Concentrated Bio-Diversity Enhancement
- Strategic River Corridor for Enhancement
- Major Urban Environmental Improvement Initiatives

**Infrastructure**

- Motorway
- Canal
- Built-up Area
- Strategic Authority Boundary

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# Quality of the Environment - Assets



This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries.

### Environment

- National Park
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Strategic River Corridor
- Flood Plain \* (West Midlands Region only)
- River Basin Catchment Area
- National Forest
- Community Forest
- European Wildlife Site (West Midlands Region only)
- World Heritage Site
- National Trail
- National Trail approved but not yet open

\* EA defines floodplains as all land adjacent to a watercourse over which water flows in the time of flood, or would flow but for the presence of flood defences where they exist.

### Infrastructure

- Motorway
- Built-up Area
- Strategic Authority Boundary

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## Chapter 9

# Transport and Accessibility

### Introduction

- 9.1 Better transport is essential for key components of the Spatial Strategy. In particular:
- a) Concentrating development and investment in the Major Urban Areas (MUAs) will require accessibility and mobility in these areas to be maintained and, in some areas, significantly enhanced;
  - b) Diversifying and modernising the Regional economy will require improved access for goods and services, particularly across national networks within and beyond the Region;
  - c) Urban and rural renaissance will only be successful if fully supported by appropriate transport policies, as highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5, where improved access must be a key component of an improved quality of life; and
  - d) Conserving and enhancing the environment will require land use decisions which reduce the need to travel, behavioural change initiatives to encourage more sustainable patterns of travel, and adequate mitigation for any unavoidable effects of building new infrastructure. Any transport proposals must be considered in the context of the Quality of the Environment Chapter.
- 9.2 A key objective of the Spatial Strategy is to improve significantly the Region's transport systems to a quality comparable to that of competitor regions, and the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) sets out in this Chapter the necessary transport and investment policies to achieve this over the timeframe of the RPG.

### The Strategic Context For Transport

#### *The National Context*

- 9.3 The Government has set out five over-arching objectives for transport:
- a) to protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
  - b) to improve safety for all travellers;
  - c) to contribute to an efficient economy and support sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations;
  - d) to promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all, especially those without a car; and
  - e) to promote the integration of all forms of transport and land use planning, leading to a better, more efficient transport system.
- 9.4 The implementation of these policy objectives has been developed in "Transport 2010 – The Ten Year Plan" published in July 2000. The Plan is intended to deliver the Government's priorities of reduced congestion, better integration and a wider choice of quicker, safer, more reliable travel on road, rail, and other public transport. The Plan is supported by a programme of investment totalling over £180bn across the decade from 2001/2 to 2010/11. A progress report was
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published in December 2002, and the Department for Transport is currently undertaking a review of the Plan with the intention of rolling it forward.

- 9.5** A discussion paper, *Managing our Roads*, was published by the Department for Transport in July 2003, to inform the Ten Year Plan review. This identifies the pressures the road network will face nationally over the next 20-30 years, and sets out the need for further work in three key areas: managing roads to get the best out of the road space available; taking account of possibilities opened up by new technology; and getting the right balance between additional capacity and measures which ensure benefits are 'locked in'. It also announced that the Government would undertake a comprehensive feasibility study, involving key user groups and other stakeholders, looking at the possibilities for road user charging in the UK.
- 9.6** The Government's priorities for the rail industry over the Ten Year Plan period are set out regularly in the SRA's Strategic Plan.
- 9.7** The Government published an Air Transport White Paper in December 2003. The land use and surface transport implications arising from the White Paper will need to be considered in a future review of this RPG.

### *The Regional Context*

- 9.8** The West Midlands is at the centre of the national road and rail network and its four MUAs lie astride it. This gives rise to competing demands between local, Regional, national and international movements often using the same elements of the network.
- 9.9** The RTS must balance the needs and interests of an extremely diverse range of users. However, the one underlying trend is the diminishing ability of the Region's network as a whole to cater for the range of demands placed upon it, leading in particular to increasing congestion in the MUAs and on the strategic transport corridors.
- 9.10** Congestion on the motorways is extending over an increasing proportion of the working day, and this is exacerbated by the impacts of accidents and incidents. Traffic attempting to avoid motorway congestion diverts to unsuitable local roads, resulting in a deterioration of conditions across a wide area. This widespread congestion has a major impact on businesses: goods cannot be transported reliably, workers have difficulty in getting to their place of work.
- 9.11** Quality of life is also affected, with pollution reaching excessive levels in some MUAs and streets becoming unsafe for walking and cycling. Public transport becomes more unreliable, less attractive and more costly to operate, directly affecting those who do not have access to a car and are most susceptible to social exclusion.
- 9.12** In response to the growing severity of transport problems and competing demands on the strategic road network a number of multi-modal and road-based studies have been commissioned by the Government:

Study	Status
West Midlands – North West (MidMan) MMS	Secretary of State responded December 2002
West Midlands Area MMS	Secretary of State responded July 2003
West to East Midlands MMS	Consultants reported Summer 2003
A5/A483 Shrewsbury – Chester RBS	Secretary of State responded April 2003
A46/M40 Longbridge Roundabout RBS	Secretary of State responded April 2003

- 9.13** Recommendations from all these studies, except the West to East Midlands MMS, have been considered in the preparation of this RPG. It has not been possible to consider the outputs from the West to East Midlands MMS as part of the current review of RPG. The recommendations and Secretary of State's response will need to be considered in a future review.
- 9.14** The West Midlands Area MMS was completed in parallel with the development of this RPG, and the Spatial Strategy objectives were an input. The key transport drivers were considered together with the levels of intervention necessary to achieve the Study objectives. This resulted in the definition of a strategy which would require:
- a) significant behavioural change across the region;
  - b) changes in the cost of transport; and
  - c) the construction of new infrastructure.
- 9.15** The other studies were also undertaken within the context of the evolving RPG and the recommendations have been considered in relation to the aims of the Spatial Strategy.
- 9.16** The Secretary of State for Transport has considered the recommendations from these studies, taking into account the views of the Regional Planning Bodies and other regional stakeholders, the Government's national objectives for transport, and the level of resources likely to be available for transport over the RPG timeframe. This RPG reflects, where appropriate, the measures emerging from these studies which are expected to be delivered.

## **A Transport Strategy for the Region**

- 9.17** The RTS set out in this Chapter aims to provide a strategic framework for Regional and local transport planning in the West Midlands by:
- a) ensuring better integration between transport policies and priorities and the wider Spatial Strategy;
  - b) bringing together the outcomes of the multi-modal studies affecting the Region; and
  - c) steering the development of the Region's local transport plans, the key planning and funding mechanism for local transport.
- 9.18** Policy T1 provides the overarching framework for the strategy. At its heart is the importance of improving accessibility and the performance of the transport system whilst not perpetuating past trends in car traffic and trip length growth. A significant education campaign will form one element of the necessary 'hearts and minds' measures, whilst other elements of the Spatial Strategy, aimed at improving the quality of the conurbations, will encourage those with jobs in the conurbation to choose to live there.
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### **POLICY T1: Developing accessibility and mobility within the Region to support the Spatial Strategy**

- A. Access within and across the Region will be improved in a way that supports the RPG's Spatial Strategy, reduces the need for travel, expands travel choice, tackles congestion, improves safety and protects the environment.
- B. This will be achieved by:
  - i) measures to improve significantly accessibility and mobility within the MUAs, including the development of high quality sustainable and public transport, so that they are able to accommodate greater levels of development, retain population and attract new jobs;
  - ii) measures to improve accessibility and mobility in other urban areas, market towns and rural areas so that more sustainable means of travel are encouraged and local regeneration initiatives are supported;
  - iii) measures to improve national road and rail networks to ensure that strategic links to external markets are maintained and the Region does not become a transport bottleneck undermining national economic growth;
  - iv) measures to encourage behavioural change across the entire Region; and
  - v) measures to improve the safety and security of the transport system.

- 9.19** The rest of this Chapter outlines the RTS' key policies and investment priorities. It focuses first on the importance of behavioural change across the Region followed by transport issues for the MUAs, other urban areas and rural areas before discussing the national and Regional transport network. Finally the Region's key transport investment priorities are set out in policy T12.
- 9.20** But the strategy should not be viewed in isolation from the rest of the RPG, and the importance of transport is reflected in other policies throughout this document which guide developments to appropriate locations and seek to minimise the impact of transport on the environment.
- 9.21** The RTS is not intended to cover every transport issue affecting the West Midlands. Considerable guidance on transport and land use planning at a local level is provided in PPG13, while national guidance on local transport plans advises on their content, format and the national priorities to be addressed. The aim of this strategy is to provide guidance on issues which need to be considered at the Regional level and are of direct relevance to the Spatial Strategy.
- 9.22** Delivery of the RTS will require action by a wide range of partners, together with higher levels of revenue and capital investment from both public and private sectors than has been available over the last decade. The Region and its constituent local authorities will need to take the lead but an equal commitment is needed to the strategy from Government, other agencies, transport providers and, most significantly, local communities. Strong Regional leadership will help to ensure co-ordinated and effective delivery.

### **Delivering the RTS**

- 9.23** A central cross-cutting theme of the RTS is the need for behavioural change across the West Midlands. The importance of changing travel patterns in the Birmingham/Black Country conurbation was clearly recognised and endorsed by the West Midlands Area MMS and MidMan MMS, but it is applicable to all areas of the Region.
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- 9.24** Changing people's travel patterns requires a holistic approach. No single measure is capable of effecting major change by itself; a successful behavioural change strategy requires a coherent package of measures. These include:
- a) measures to reduce the need to travel;
  - b) well located facilities;
  - c) provision of good quality, well designed walking and cycling facilities;
  - d) promotion of travel awareness initiatives;
  - e) better public transport;
  - f) introduction of well-designed Park & Ride schemes;
  - g) improved provisions for powered two-wheelers and taxis;
  - h) better management of public and private car parking; and
  - i) consideration of appropriate demand management measures.
- 9.25** All of these measures will help to reduce the current pressures on the transport system. However, the Spatial Strategy relies on continuing development of the Region and this is unlikely to be achieved without increasing the demand for the transport of people and goods. There will therefore be a need to continue to remove bottlenecks from the strategic networks and provide improved accessibility for regeneration areas. In implementing these infrastructure improvements it will be necessary to ensure they do not undermine the objectives of the Spatial Strategy, for example by encouraging longer distance commuting.

### **Reducing the Need to Travel**

- 9.26** Land use changes can have significant implications for the demand for transport. The Spatial Strategy aims to develop balanced communities with appropriate levels of housing, jobs and services. In preparing local development plans authorities can influence the level of transport demand likely to be generated by developments. High density developments should be encouraged in locations well served by public transport.
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## POLICY T2: Reducing the need to travel

Local authorities, developers and other agencies should work together to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and to reduce the length of journeys through:

- i) encouraging those developments which generate significant travel demands to be located where their accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling is maximised, including close to rail and bus stations and Metro stops. High-density development will be supported in such locations in accordance with policy CF4;
- ii) promoting patterns of development which reduce the need for travel (UR4), including a more balanced provision of different uses in larger settlements including the sub-regional foci;
- iii) encouraging those developments which generate significant freight and commercial movements to locate close to suitable inter-modal freight terminals, rail freight facilities, or roads designed and managed as traffic distributors;
- iv) encouraging the use of telecommunications for the purposes of business and for other service provision; and
- v) supporting the retention and enhancement of local service provision, especially where public transport provision is poor.

## Walking and Cycling

- 9.27** Walking and cycling are the most sustainable means of travel. Substituting some car journeys, especially for short trips, by walking and cycling will contribute towards improving the general health of the population and help to reduce congestion, pollution, noise and severance of heavy traffic. But pedestrians and cyclists are vulnerable to accidents, and it is vital that action is taken to improve the environment for these modes.
- 9.28** In practice, increases in walking and cycling depend on action at a very local level and will not involve Regionally significant proposals, although cumulative action can have an influence on congestion and pollution at a Regional level. Local walking and cycling strategies will, therefore, need to be developed across the Region in partnership with local communities.

## POLICY T3: Walking and cycling

Development plans and local transport plans should provide greater opportunities for walking and cycling by:

- i) developing safe, secure, direct, convenient and attractive networks which connect town centres, local facilities, educational premises, public transport interchanges, residential and employment areas;
- ii) giving pedestrians and cyclists priority in residential areas and town centres;
- iii) providing links between smaller settlements and centres and development of greenways and quiet roads;
- iv) developing the National Cycle Network;
- v) making the most effective use of canal towpaths;
- vi) expanding 'cycle & ride' and cycle carriage on public transport; and
- vii) ensuring that new developments and infrastructure proposals improve walking and cycling access.

## Promoting Travel Awareness Initiatives

- 9.29** It is vitally important that the awareness of the impact of individual travel decisions is raised. The importance of a Regional approach was recognised in WMAMMS and other Multi-Modal Studies. Whilst most of the necessary action must be at the local level there is a need to address cross-boundary issues in a co-ordinated and effective manner. Past trends have resulted in lifestyles which are highly car dependent, often involving lengthy commuting into the MUAs.
- 9.30** Improved cross boundary information, services, and ticketing will expand the available choices for individuals. Sub-regional campaigns and personal travel advice will help to increase awareness of the alternatives to the car. Regional campaigns aimed at business can address the alternatives to business travel and the scope for homeworking.

### POLICY T4: Promoting travel awareness

- A. Local authorities and transport operators should work together and with schools, businesses and other appropriate organisations to develop travel and transport strategies and plans that increase the awareness of alternative travel choices and reduce current levels of car use. Strategies should be implemented in a co-ordinated way across the Region.
- B. Development plans should support this approach by requiring all planning applications involving significant travel demands to include transport assessments in line with the advice in PPG13 and provide proposals for travel plans.
- C. Authorities should include in their next local transport plans targets for work and school travel plans in accordance with the targets in this RPG.

## Public Transport

- 9.31** Better public transport is vital if everyone in the Region is to have real travel choices. Those without access to a car can potentially face social exclusion if public transport is inadequate. Public transport improvements across the West Midlands are consequently crucial to supporting regeneration and enhancing the quality of life for both urban and rural communities.
- 9.32** The local bus is by far the most common form of public transport in the West Midlands, with 453 million journeys made in 2001/2. Although perceptions of buses can be poor, experience has shown that bus patronage can be increased by more than 30% through better quality services, infrastructure, and higher frequencies.
- 9.33** The level and nature of bus provision will inevitably differ across the Region. The greatest opportunities for patronage increase are in the MUAs, and there are good examples of initiatives to improve the quality of bus services in these areas, such as Centro's Showcase quality bus corridors. But it will also be vital to improve bus services in other urban areas and rural areas, where the bus often performs a vital social service, providing access to jobs and services particularly for those without a car. An innovative approach is needed to the provision of public transport in rural areas that recognises the needs of communities and is sustainable. There are many good examples of rural transport partnerships in the Region and this work needs to be extended.
- 9.34** Rail can also have a valuable role enhancing travel choices and supporting social inclusion in some areas, and the development of the heavy rail network across the Region is discussed further later in this Chapter. The Region already has one successful Light Rapid Transit (LRT) scheme linking Birmingham with the Black Country in operation and

another two extensions seeking TWA approval. Further extensions may help to improve attractiveness of this MUA, but will need to be justified against lower cost alternatives, such as guided buses, to ensure they offer value for money.

### **POLICY T5: Public Transport**

- A. The development of an integrated public transport network where all people have access to high quality and affordable public transport services across the Region is a key element of the Regional vision.
- B. Local authorities, transport operators and other agencies, including the Strategic Rail Authority, should work together towards achieving this vision thereby providing attractive and reliable alternatives to the use of the private car.
- C. An integrated hierarchy of public transport services will be developed with the highest priority being given to investment in infrastructure and services to support the regeneration of the MUAs. This will include investment in:
  - i) the development of high quality public transport systems, building upon the existing Metro system within Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country;
  - ii) improved rail services on key routes, including new rolling stock and capacity enhancements;
  - iii) the development of integrated networks of high quality bus services, including the further extension of bus quality partnerships and the introduction of bus lanes and priority measures, re-allocating roadspace where necessary, with road and junction widening where there is no other practicable solution; and
  - iv) improved interchange facilities both within and between different modes of travel, including the provision of further 'park & ride' facilities (T6).
- D. Outside the MUAs, an integrated hierarchy of public transport services should be developed with priority given to the improvement of services and interchanges within urban areas, and the development of links with catchment areas. In rural areas, priority should be given to the development of community and public transport services, particularly those providing links from rural hinterlands to key local service centres.
- E. In all cases, the aim will be to achieve a frequent, reliable, affordable, secure and attractive public transport service which takes into account the needs of all users, including disabled people and others with reduced mobility. Local authorities, the PTE and transport providers should work towards the provision of integrated public transport services with an emphasis on travel information and ticketing arrangements, particularly across boundaries and modes.

- 9.35** This policy will need to be implemented by the Strategic Rail Authority, local authorities, Centro, Network Rail, the Highways Agency and other transport providers. There is also a need to develop and enhance links between urban areas as referred to later (National and Regional Transport Networks).

### **Park & Ride**

- 9.36** Park & Ride provides an attractive interchange option for many motorists. Current provision is largely in the form of local parking at railway stations or bus-based sites around the edges of major settlements. WMAMMS defined a functional hierarchy of Parkway, Strategic Park & Ride, and Local Park & Ride.

- 9.37** Local Park & Ride provides opportunities to interchange across the network, and generally close to the origin of the trip. Opportunities to develop such facilities should be considered when local authorities are preparing development plans and local transport plans. However, they are generally not of more than local significance.
- 9.38** Strategic Park & Ride sites would be expected to be readily accessible from the strategic highway network, generally have a minimum of 500 parking spaces, and be served primarily by a frequent, rapid, rail, LRT (or possibly bus) service to a major centre. Parkways are a particular type of Strategic Park & Ride where interchange with long distance rail services to more distant destinations is also possible.
- 9.39** A study has been completed which should lead to the inclusion of broad locations for Strategic Park & Ride sites in a future review of this RPG. At present, one at Brinsford has been identified in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan as indicated on the Transport and Accessibility Diagram.

### **POLICY T6: Strategic Park & Ride**

- A. Local authorities, other agencies and key representative Regional organisations should work together to develop a network of Strategic Park & Ride sites to reduce congestion in major centres.
- B. One site has been identified at Brinsford, north of Wolverhampton. Proposals are also currently being developed for a Worcester Parkway station at the crossing of the Worcester/Oxford and Birmingham/Cheltenham lines. Any further broad locations agreed by the RPB should be included in a future review of this RPG.
- C. Locations should be considered against the following criteria:
- i) the frequency, capacity and quality of the Ride element;
  - ii) the environmental and traffic impacts at the Park location;
  - iii) the potential for interchange with other public transport;
  - iv) the potential relief to routes into the target destination; and
  - v) the implications of the Park & Ride on the railway network and other services.
- D. The Spatial Strategy acknowledges that there may be circumstances in which Green Belt locations for Strategic Park & Ride may be the most sustainable option, and regard should be had to the guidance set out in paragraph 3.17 of PPG2 (as revised by PPG13).

### **Car Parking**

- 9.40** The availability of car parking has a major influence on the means of transport people choose for their journey and their ultimate destination. To support the strategy of encouraging development in the MUAs and in locations accessible by public transport, land required for parking needs to be minimised wherever possible. Maximum standards have not been specified for residential development, local approaches should reflect the advice given in PPG3.

## POLICY T7: Car Parking Standards and Management

### Maximum Standards

- A. Local authorities should work within maximum standards for parking associated with new development in line with those given in PPG13 and reflecting the approach set out in PPG3. All local authorities should work together to identify, before the next review of RPG:
- i) those town centres and heritage areas to which more restrictive standards should be applied, because of their public transport accessibility, higher densities and/or sensitive character; and
  - ii) a broad indication of more restrictive maximum standards for relevant land use categories.
- B. These areas and standards should then be incorporated into development plans. Care should be taken to avoid deterring investment in town centres, particularly those judged to be vulnerable (PA11).

### Management of Car Parking

- C. Local authorities, working together, should manage their car parking to reduce congestion and encourage more sustainable forms of travel by:
- i) managing the supply, location, and price of parking in town and city centres to limit the provision of long-stay spaces, where this is necessary to reduce congestion;
  - ii) co-operating with each other to avoid using car parking charges as a tool for competition between centres;
  - iii) using additional income to support the development of more sustainable forms of travel;
  - iv) securing an adequate supply of car parking at railway stations and other transport interchanges;
  - v) securing local Park & Ride sites as an alternative to town centre parking; and
  - vi) developing a network of strategic Park & Ride sites, generally at railway stations, to meet the needs of the Region (T6).
- D. Local authorities should work with private sector operators to encourage a consistent approach within centres. Where car parking is provided it should be safe and secure with appropriate provision for people with disabilities. Local authorities should also consider the adoption of decriminalised parking enforcement powers in order to secure more effective management of car parking and demand management measures.

## Demand Management

- 9.41** The demand for travel is such that it will not be possible to meet it in full, in all parts of the Region, even with increased investment in infrastructure. It will, therefore, be necessary to manage the demand for travel, especially travel by car, in order to minimise congestion on the Region's transport network.
- 9.42** The demand for travel is influenced by:
- a) the perceived cost of travel, and the relative cost and convenience of different modes of travel;
  - b) the location of development, especially the proximity of employment and services to where people live; and
  - c) the cost, location and availability of car parking, both public and private.
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All of these demand management mechanisms operate at the moment, and will continue to operate, and the WMAMMS has indicated that consideration should be given to greater use of demand management techniques in order to reduce congestion. It recommended the introduction of cordon charging for selected centres as a first step towards congestion charging across the conurbation, which was envisaged by the end of this RPG period.

### **POLICY T8: Demand Management**

- A. Local authorities, other agencies and key representative Regional organisations should work together to identify the measures needed to manage peak demand on congested parts of the highway network, including motorways and trunk roads, town and city centres in the context of other policies in this RPG.
- B. Initially local authorities and others should consider the restriction and management of car parking, including development of the strategic Park & Ride network (T6,T7), and the management and re-allocation of highway space (T9).
- C. Local authorities should be encouraged to bring forward local charging schemes in the more congested city centres, such as Birmingham, before 2011 to ensure hypothecation of charges. Local authorities considering schemes should take account of the:
  - i) potential impact on the economy of the area concerned;
  - ii) availability and quality of public transport alternatives;
  - iii) needs of commercial and delivery vehicles in urban areas;
  - iv) potential of any charging scheme to encourage decentralisation;
  - v) impact of any traffic reassignment on other parts of the network; and
  - vi) the impact on residents.
- D. Further guidance should be developed for inclusion in the next review of this RPG to ensure a consistent approach across the Region to the introduction of road user charging schemes.

### **Better Transport for the Major Urban Areas**

- 9.43 Within the MUAs (North Staffordshire, Birmingham/Solihull, the Black Country, and Coventry) transport can make a significant contribution to improving the overall quality of life, a key issue for the Spatial Strategy. Enhancing accessibility and mobility whilst improving environmental quality are vital components of urban renaissance.
- 9.44 Tackling congestion, through making efficient use of the existing transport network, improving travel choices and traffic restraint where appropriate, must be a key priority. With their greater concentration of population, there are better opportunities for public transport, while the proximity of facilities can result in short journeys. The retention of services in communities is as important in MUAs as elsewhere in the Region.
- 9.45 Buses will continue to be the key public transport mode in the MUAs. Within the Birmingham/Black Country/Solihull conurbation, Showcase and Super Showcase routes – using high quality accessible buses, red routes and bus priority lanes – will be developed, in line with Centro's 20 year strategy, to form a comprehensive bus network. This network will be complemented by service improvements to the local rail network and the potential development of further LRT extensions where these can be justified. The provision of public transport in the Black Country will be an important consideration in the sub-regional study which the RPB has commissioned (1.32).

- 9.46** North Staffordshire and Coventry also face major transport and regeneration problems. High-quality public transport networks need to be developed including high quality services from and to nearby towns. Bus showcase and Park & Ride schemes will continue to be developed. For North Staffordshire, a sub-regional transport study has been commissioned. This study will develop the recommendations from the MidMan MMS whilst taking account of the local regeneration strategy and housing renewal issues. The study is being managed by a partnership including Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council, the Highways Agency, Advantage West Midlands and Government Office for the West Midlands.
- 9.47** Demand for highway space will generally need to be managed in the MUAs, although there remain some areas where targeted road building and improvements may be necessary to provide a balanced network or support regeneration, particularly in urban Regeneration Zones.

### **Better Transport for Other Urban Areas**

- 9.48** In many of the Region's other larger settlements and market towns, especially in the foci for development (CF2), transport issues are similar to those found in MUAs with improvements to quality of life and environment essential to maintain the viability and vitality of these locations.
- 9.49** Good public transport services, combined with quality walking and cycling facilities will provide better accessibility, more choice, and reduce the effects of social exclusion in these urban areas. This, together with quality living environments close to employment areas, should help to encourage a reduction in longer distance journeys. The increased application of travel plans and 'hearts and minds' measures will also contribute to an increased proportion of travel by sustainable modes.
- 9.50** The nature of solutions, however, depends on the size and scale of the urban settlement, and this needs to be reflected in the local transport plans. The scope for extensive public transport networks is inevitably less in the smaller towns. However Bus Quality Partnerships should continue to be developed and where practical rail services should be developed to provide a high quality alternative for longer distance movements. In some of the larger settlements, including the foci for development, higher capacity rapid transit modes may be viable in the future.
- 9.51** Many larger settlements and market towns are also the focus of an extensive rural hinterland. Whilst the private car will continue to play an important role for transport, especially in remote rural areas, the retention and enhancement of existing public transport services, including rail, is important. There is a need to improve links to and between these towns, and to higher order centres, as well as developing community transport solutions such as car-sharing clubs and voluntary drivers schemes where demand is less concentrated.

### **Better Transport for Rural Areas**

- 9.52** Over the past few decades, the nature of the economy and population of rural areas has changed considerably as recognised within the Spatial Strategy and the Rural Renaissance Chapters. This has resulted in some pockets of deprivation and a major change in the travel habits of the population. This is reflected in an increased need for rural people to travel longer distances to reach essential goods, services and employment along with an associated higher level of car ownership.
- 9.53** Efforts have been made to encourage the development of the local rural economy, including through tourism, and this must continue (PA10, PA14-15). This has to be done sensitively, particularly in areas characterised by their natural beauty and environmental sensitivity where there are risks including those from the harmful effects of car use. Also, where rural businesses exist, they are frequently serviced by larger vehicles that cause damage to rural lanes and raise
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perceptions of safety concerns. Taken as a whole, all of these factors have led to an increase in traffic on the Region's rural roads.

- 9.54** Developing sustainable transport in rural areas is a major challenge given the diverse nature of movements, the major differences in character between areas and the small volumes of flows. An innovative approach is needed that provides services that are sustainable in the long term, supported by land use policies that seek to retain employment, the local provision of rural services, and reduce social exclusion (RR1).
- 9.55** Local authorities and other partners need to work together with other agencies to deliver innovative transport solutions that are sustainable in rural areas. It is also important to develop multi-modal connections to urban areas and market towns which provide appropriate levels of accessibility without encouraging increased out-commuting from rural areas, particularly to the MUAs.

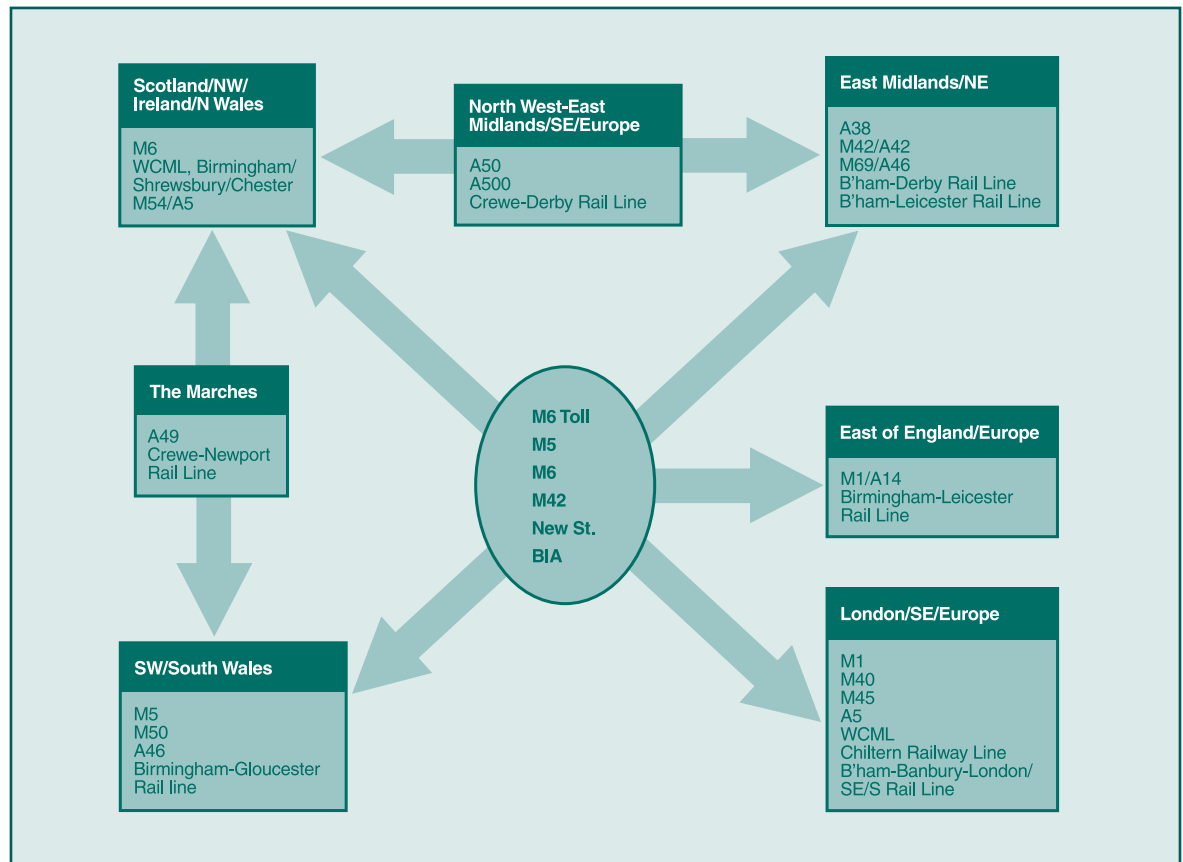
## National and Regional Transport Networks

- 9.56** The improvement of Regional transport networks has been identified as a key priority of the Spatial Strategy in order to support the competitiveness of the Region's economy. Improvements will need to be implemented in such a way that they provide the improved accessibility which is required to improve the competitiveness of the Region (and others) whilst also reducing dependence on the car and improving mobility for those without access to one.
- 9.57** The Region lies at the crossroads of two of the nation's most important transport corridors and Birmingham New Street acts as the hub of the nation's rail network. In broad terms, there are two main national corridors: South West to North East and South East to North West, North Wales, Scotland and Ireland. There are also a number of regionally significant corridors; on the West through the Marches, East/West between North Staffordshire and Derby, and to the East of England and Europe. In some cases, these corridors provide important connections between the MUAs in the Region.
- 9.58** The international importance of the network is reflected by the inclusion of the West Coast Main Line and the Ireland/UK/Benelux countries road link (A5/M54/M6/A14) in the priority Trans-European Transport Network (TEN).
- 9.59** The expansion of rail services is very much dependent upon major improvements in the West Midlands conurbation which are discussed later (The Regional Rail Network, 9.75).
- 9.60** Figure 5 demonstrates the main components making up each of the key Transport Corridors with further details set out below.

### *a. South East-North West, North Wales, Scotland and Ireland*

- 9.61** This corridor includes M6, M40, M6 Toll, sections of M5 and M42, M54, A5, the West Coast Main Line, Chester to Birmingham via Shrewsbury, and Birmingham-Banbury-London/South railway lines. The corridor includes elements of the priority TEN.
- 9.62** Overall, the objective is to maintain accessibility along this broad SE/NW corridor as an important inter-regional link across the Region.
- 9.63** The general approach proposed for the strategic highway routes is to manage them as part of a national and international network with restrictions on development where this would adversely affect the network. The key highway improvement is the proposed widening of M6 junctions 11a to 19 (in response to the recommendations of the MidMan MMS). The M6 Toll may have an impact on the M6 east of junction 4, any identified need for widening will be referred to the RPB for its consideration. Improvements are also being implemented on the A5 between Weeford and
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Figure 5: Key Transport Corridors



Fazeley, while further improvements between the M69 and M42 may be needed to support local regeneration in the area.

- 9.64 The upgrade of the West Coast Main Line to 125mph running is proceeding as part of the SRA's West Coast Main Line Strategy. This upgrade will deliver faster and more frequent services between London and Birmingham, Coventry and other key inter-city stations in the Region. The Cherwell Valley section of the Birmingham-Banbury-London/South line is also being upgraded which will also allow faster and more frequent London to Birmingham services on this line. In support of the Spatial Strategy, and specifically the proposed Wolverhampton-Telford High Technology Corridor (PA3), rail links may also need to be improved between Telford and the Birmingham/Black Country conurbation with services to Shrewsbury and beyond. Access within this local corridor will also be improved by the provision of a new link between the M54 and the M6/M6 Toll.

#### **b. South West to North East**

- 9.65 This broad corridor comprises the M5, M42/A42, A38 north of Birmingham, A46 and M69, together with the railway route between South Wales/Bristol-Birmingham-Derby and Birmingham-Leicester. The corridor encompasses two High Technology Corridors (PA3) and also other local corridors where the aim is to improve links between areas of opportunity and need. This includes the A38 north which is intended to be managed (with some improvements) to support the regeneration of Birmingham as well as providing a nationally significant connection.
- 9.66 Whilst the areas adjacent to the core routes are generally well served by public transport and can support the above policies, other areas are less accessible by this mode, particularly those adjacent to the M42. This has led to

considerable peak-time congestion on parts of the M42, and the Highways Agency is due to trial hard shoulder running at peak periods as part of the Active Traffic Management pilot between junctions 3a and 7. Further consideration of the need for full widening of this section of the M42 will be given by the Secretary of State for Transport in the light of this pilot, recognising the importance of adequate strategic access to the key Regional assets of Birmingham International Airport (BIA) and the National Exhibition Centre (NEC). In order to ensure the limited capacity of the M42 is safeguarded and not taken up by local movements, public transport must be improved along with a general restraint on development that is not directly related to the above Regional assets or has no Regional or national significance.

- 9.67 With regard to other components of this broad SW/NE corridor, it is proposed that the M69/A46 should be protected as an inter-regional route outside of the MUAs supported by improvements at A45/A46 Tollbar End, A46/M40-Longbridge, and A46 Alcester-Stratford. The West to East Midlands MMS has recommended further potential improvements to the strategic transport links from Birmingham and Coventry to the East Midlands.

### *c. The Marches*

- 9.68 The corridor which forms a north-south spine between Shrewsbury and Hereford and beyond provides a valuable link between a number of settlements. Road and rail networks need to be managed, developed and enhanced in a way that maintains the role of the A49 and adjacent railway route, protects the landscape and natural, built and historic environment of the corridor, promotes regeneration and links areas of opportunity (RR2).
- 9.69 The A49 in Hereford is subject to increasing congestion. This has a number of implications for sub-regional land use development and regeneration. To address this issue, a local multi-modal study has been completed. The study has identified a potential package of measures to release travel capacity needed to accommodate development and regeneration and to allow Hereford to fulfil its identified role as one of the sub-regional foci. Further work is proposed to identify the role of the foci as part of an early partial review of this RPG. This will need to be informed by the multi-modal study and consider the priority that needs to be allocated to its outcomes.

### *d. North Staffordshire-Derby*

- 9.70 The A500 through North Staffordshire and the A50 to Derby and the M1 form part of a key route between the M1 and M6. They should be managed to protect their strategic role whilst facilitating regeneration in north Staffordshire and links between areas of opportunity and need within this corridor.
- 9.71 The Crewe-Stoke-Derby railway route provides an important cross-country link but improvements are needed to reduce journey times and increase frequencies.

### *e. East of England/Europe*

- 9.72 The M6/A14 within and beyond the Region, together with the rail routes to Leicester via Nuneaton provide an important connection between the Region and the East Coast ports of Felixstowe and Harwich. Access for rail freight to these ports will be improved.

## **Management and Development of the Highway Network**

- 9.73 The network must be maintained and managed in a way that preserves the utility of strategic routes, and supports business efficiency critical to the competitiveness of the Region. However, excessive demand for car travel means that sections of the strategic road network, such as the M6, M5 and M42, experience severe congestion at peak times and other routes are predicted to have similar problems in the near future.

- 9.74 Increasing highway capacity can generate additional traffic and so any road improvements will have to be introduced as part of a strategy which supports the Spatial Strategy and may include demand management measures.

### **POLICY T9: The Management and Development of National and Regional Transport Networks**

- A. The Primary Route Network (PRN) within the Region will consist of motorways, trunk roads and other primary routes as identified on Figure 6.
- B. Local authorities and the Highways Agency will give high priority to investment in the maintenance, management and selective improvement of this network in order to maintain accessibility for essential movements, including freight, within and through the Region. This includes those parts of the Trans European Road Network which pass through the Region.
- C. Local authorities, the Highways Agency, transport operators and other agencies should work together to provide and maintain a strategic transport system which:
  - i) enhances the competitiveness of the Region by providing journey time reliability;
  - ii) provides improved links and accessibility both within the Region and to other UK and European regions and beyond; and
  - iii) supports the Spatial Strategy, particularly by providing improved accessibility in those parts of the Region in greatest need of regeneration.
- D. In bringing forward detailed policies, proposals and programmes, consideration should be given to:
  - i) optimising the use of existing infrastructure across all modes;
  - ii) ensuring capacity is safeguarded by appropriate selection of development location, minimising the need for local movements to use the strategic network (T1);
  - iii) adopting the priorities for investment in strategic networks (T12) to support the objectives and policies of RPG, and ensuring the investments are not undermined by inappropriate development;
  - iv) ensuring that motorways and trunk roads are managed and improved to operate effectively as part of the national transport network, including the use of appropriate demand management techniques to improve journey time reliability;
  - v) road building only after all other solutions have been examined and where proposals support other objectives of the RPG; and
  - vi) ensuring the Region is provided with an improved and integrated rail network to encourage greater use of rail, particularly for longer distance travel both within the Region and beyond.
- E. New accesses on the PRN will not be encouraged and should not inhibit the strategic function of these routes. Where development proposals impact on the PRN, local planning authorities should ensure that transport and environmental impact assessments are undertaken to ensure that the function of the network is maintained and appropriate financial contributions to improvements are made.

### **The Regional Rail Network**

- 9.75 The expansion of the Regional rail network is very much dependent upon capacity improvements in the West Midlands conurbation. The West Midlands Rail Capacity Study, jointly commissioned in 2000 by the SRA, Railtrack,



## Freight

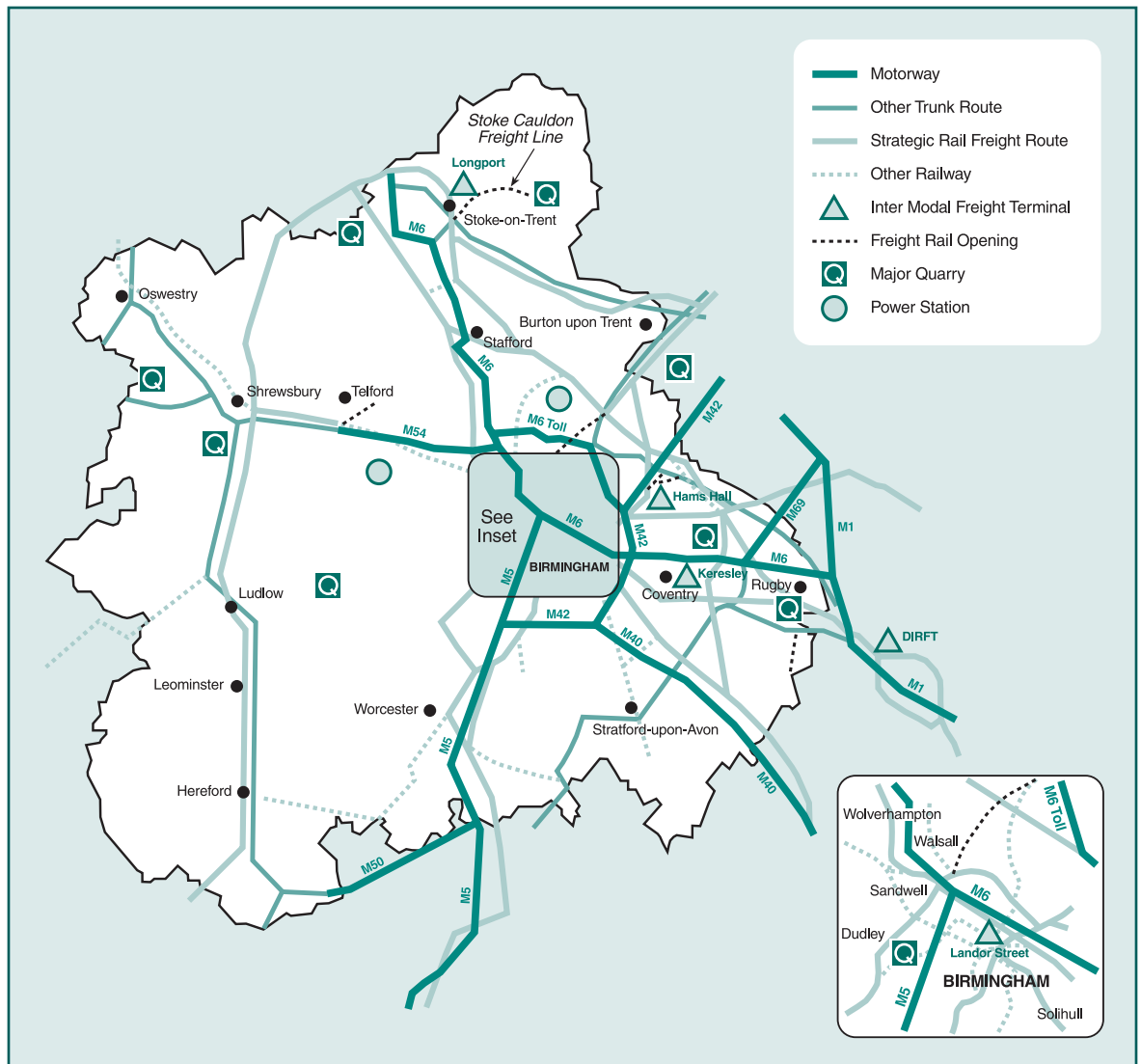
- 9.79** The efficient movement of freight is a key component of a successful regional economy, particularly where a significant proportion of employment is based on manufacturing.
- 9.80** Of the 2.4 million working population in the Region, 560,000 are in manufacturing. The Region accounts for 11% of UK manufacturing and 25% of manufacturing exports. Freight plays a key role in improving and maintaining Regional competitiveness and the Prosperity for All policies recognise the potential contribution that warehousing and distribution can make to the Regional economy.
- 9.81** In 2000, 152 million tonnes of goods were carried in the West Midlands Region. Two-thirds of these had a destination within the Region. The most significant other destinations were the East Midlands (12mt) and the North West (11mt).
- 9.82** Freight movement is often thought of solely in terms of manufacturing, construction and retailing sectors where its involvement is often highly visible and understood. However, the totality of the business sector through, for example, office supplies, documentation, and related services is a massive generator of freight trips which can be by lorry, van, car and motorcycle. In addition, trips can be brought about as a result of office and office equipment maintenance services.

### POLICY T10: Freight

- A. The reliable movement of goods and services is the lifeblood of the West Midlands economy. Development plans, local transport plans and the economic strategy should aim to improve the efficiency of freight movement and support the development of Regional Logistics Sites (PA9), by:
- i) addressing problems for freight vehicles on the Primary Route Network to improve reliability of journeys;
  - ii) addressing delivery and servicing problems through traffic management;
  - iii) encouraging the development of local and Regional Freight Quality Partnerships;
  - iv) encouraging the use of rail and inland waterways for freight;
  - v) safeguarding existing and disused railway lines and sidings which could be used for rail traffic in the future;
  - vi) encouraging the development of new rail freight terminals and improving access to existing terminals;
  - vii) encouraging developments that generate significant amounts of freight in locations that have good access to the rail network; and
  - viii) encouraging local sourcing.
- B. Local authorities and other agencies should co-operate to develop a Regional Freight Strategy covering all forms of freight transport, i.e. road, rail, water and air taking into account the Regional Rail Freight Strategy.

- 9.83** The implementation of this policy will be based around the development of the Regional Freight Strategy, local freight strategies in local transport plans, and Freight Quality Partnerships (FQP). FQPs can help local authorities, the freight industry, businesses, environmental groups, residents and others to address issues at the local level. FQPs have already been established in several areas. Figure 7 illustrates freight opportunities across the Region.

Figure 7: Freight



## Airports

- 9.84 Birmingham International Airport (BIA) is located centrally within the Region. There are also a number of airports and airfields across the Region providing a range of business, leisure and military facilities. The central location of the West Midlands also results in the use of other UK airports by people and businesses from within the Region, particularly Manchester and East Midlands together with those located in the South East.
- 9.85 Given its central location and close proximity to the rail and motorway network, BIA presents an opportunity to provide for more of the Region's air transport needs. Its growth will also benefit the Region's economy. A Surface Access Strategy has been developed in partnership with the National Exhibition Centre in order to provide a framework within which the two organisations can work together to achieve the modal change targets required of them. The strategy includes major infrastructure projects and a variety of smaller measures that can combine to improve the choice of means of access to sites, particularly by public transport.

- 9.86 Nationally, air transport has been examined through a series of studies, (i.e. The Future of Aviation consultation document and the Regional Air Services Studies) all of which suggest that there will be a major increase in the demand for air transport in the future. These studies informed the White Paper on Air Transport which was published in December 2003. Policy T11 will need to be reviewed when the RPB has considered the implications of the White Paper.
- 9.87 There is also a need to consider the general aviation needs of the Region. These needs will increasingly be provided for by the smaller airfields across the Region which are generally located in rural areas. Development of these facilities will need to be accompanied by appropriate access improvements and controls.
- 9.88 Air transport has a major impact on the environment. It is important that any development is designed to minimise environmental impacts and that access by public transport is maximised.

### **POLICY T11: Airports (To be reviewed following the Air Transport White Paper, December 2003, as part of a future revision of this RPG)**

- A. Birmingham International Airport (BIA) will continue to be developed as the West Midlands' principal international airport with appropriate facilities in order to increase the extent to which it serves a wider range of global destinations to meet the Region's needs.
- B. The planning permission for expansion of BIA has a target to achieve a public transport mode share of 20% (passengers, employees and visitors) by 2005 or 10 mppa whichever is the later.
- C. To accommodate future significant levels of growth additional passenger terminal facilities would be required. Also, to serve more distant international destinations an extension to the main runway would be required. Development plans in Solihull and neighbouring authorities should include policies to provide for the assessment of proposals for the expansion of the airport to meet the demand. Criteria for development proposals should include the requirement that they be subject to rigorous environmental assessment and must demonstrate:
- i) that both economic benefits and harmful environmental impacts have been assessed, in line with the principles of sustainable development;
  - ii) that unavoidable harm be reduced through mitigation; and
  - iii) where harm cannot be avoided or mitigated, it should be compensated for.
- D. Satisfactory provision should also be required for improved surface access including:
- i) improvements where necessary to the M42; and
  - ii) an increase in the percentage public transport mode share for passengers, employees and visitors – supported as necessary by improved public transport services.
- E. Consideration should also be given to the provision of remote check-in and or parking facility to serve BIA and the need for bus-based Park & Ride facilities to serve BIA/NEC.
- F. Coventry Airport, as primarily a freight airport, provides a complementary service to those at BIA. Development plans for Warwick District and neighbouring authorities should include policies for the assessment of proposals for the expansion of Coventry Airport. Criteria should require the approach to environmental assessment and impacts set out for BIA above; and any proposals for use of Coventry Airport by charter or scheduled passenger flights should be subject to the availability of public transport to serve the airport.



### **POLICY T11: Airports (To be reviewed following the Air Transport White Paper, December 2003, as part of a future revision of this RPG) – continued**

- G. The further development of other airports and airfields in the Region providing complementary services to those at BIA, will be supported providing that proposals can be justified following rigorous environmental assessment; mitigation or compensation can be provided for unavoidable, harmful environmental impacts; and any proposals for charter or scheduled passenger services are subject to the availability of public transport.
- H. Local transport plans and the Airport Surface Access Strategies should aim to ensure that improvements to strategic and local transport networks and interchanges are provided in order to ensure continued access by all modes to airports is maintained. Within these plans and strategies, challenging targets should be set to encourage a greater percentage of trips, by passengers, visitors and staff, by more sustainable modes.
- I. The Region should also work with other regions to develop improved public transport access to other key airports beyond the Region, as appropriate.

- 9.89 In the short to medium term, further passenger terminal capacity is being provided at BIA with improved access provided by the multi-modal interchange at Birmingham International Station which incorporates a people-mover link to the terminals, and improved links to the A45.

### **Priorities for Investment**

- 9.90 The following policy illustrates the wide range of investment that is needed to improve accessibility and mobility across the Region. The results of the WMAMMS have highlighted that there is no single solution to transport problems and that a balanced package needs to be implemented. The delivery of this programme requires funding and action by a wide range of partners over the period of this RPG. The overall Spatial Strategy relies heavily on the implementation of an integrated investment programme. It is proposed to develop an implementation document which will consider this matter in more detail and priorities will need to be kept under review as circumstances change in the future.
- 9.91 When an individual project is identified, it is intended to support the Spatial Strategy and policies, and is seen as being “regionally significant”. The highway improvements identified under National and Regional priorities relate to the core trunk road and motorway networks.
- 9.92 Revenue and capital funding will be required from central Government, Highways Agency, Strategic Rail Authority, Network Rail, rail operators, public transport operators, local authorities, income from local charges, Birmingham International Airport, Countryside Agency, Advantage West Midlands, developers, and other partners.

## POLICY T12: Priorities for Investment

Scheme	Key Policy Links	Status as of June 2004	Delivery Mechanism	Key Delivery Role	Support Delivery	Implementation Period
<b>National and Regional Priorities</b>						
A programme of measures aimed at achieving behavioural change, including: travel awareness, walking/cycling networks, quality public transport, access to regeneration sites	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, UR2, RR2, PA11	Various, co-ordination required	LTP and operators (mainly)	LA, operators	Other agencies and operators	
West Coast Mainline Strategy	T5, T10	C, part constructed	West Coast Mainline Strategy	SRA	NR	
Upgrading rail freight routes to Felixstowe and Southampton	T10	FA, scoping underway	SP	SRA	NR	
M6 widening J11a – J19	T9	FA decision on TPI entry expected summer 2004	TPI	HA		
M40 J15 Longbridge Improvement	T9	C, in preparation	TPI	HA		
M42 Active Traffic Management Pilot	T9	C, due to commence summer 2004		HA		
M42 widening J3-7	T9	FA, decision on TPI entry post analysis of ATM pilot results	TPI	HA		
M54 – M6/M6 Toll link	T9	FA decision on TPI entry expected 2005	TPI	HA		
Active Traffic Management for M5/M6/M42 motorway box	UR1A	PI	HA	HA		

**POLICY T12: Priorities for Investment – continued**

Scheme	Key Policy Links	Status as of June 2004	Delivery Mechanism	Key Delivery Role	Support Delivery	Implementation Period
A5 Weeford – Fazeley Improvement	T9	C, under construction	TPI	HA		2001- 2006- 2011- Post 2005 2010 2015 2015
A38 Streethay – A50 Improvements	T9	UI, W2EMMMS	TPI	HA		
A45/A46 Tollbar End Improvement	T9	C, in preparation	TPI	HA		
A483 Pant & Llanyrnymech Bypass	T9	C, in preparation	TPI	HA		
A500 City Road & Stoke Road Junctions	T9	C, under construction	TPI	HA		
Various route management strategies, including the A46	T9	UI	HA			
West Midlands Rail Short and Medium term capacity and performance enhancement schemes	5, UR2	UI	SP/NRBP	SRA	NR	
Passenger capacity enhancement Birmingham New Street	T5, UR2	UI	SP/NRBP	SRA	NR	
West Midlands Rail Strategy – long term capacity needs	T5, T10	PI, SRA/MM partners	SP	SRA	NR	
Local congestion charging studies	T8, UR2	PI, study to be commissioned	LTP	LA		
West to East Midlands MMS (W2EMMS) Recommendations	T5, T9	Study reported				
BIA, development of services and improved surface access, especially by public transport	T11	Ongoing	BIA, LTP, TPI, SP	BIA, Centro, HA, LA, SRA	LA, SRA, NR, Operators	

## POLICY T12: Priorities for Investment – continued

Scheme	Key Policy Links	Status as of June 2004	Delivery Mechanism	Key Delivery Role	Support Delivery	Implementation Period
<b>Sub-regional Priorities – Within MUAs</b>						
Bus showcase / Quality busnetworks development	T5, UR2	Ongoing	LTP	Centro LA, Operators	LA, Operators	
Bus Super Showcase / High Quality bus networks	T5, UR2	UI	LTP	Centro LA, Operators	LA, Operators	
Red Route network development	T5, T9, UR2	UI	LTP	LA		
Metro extension thro' B'ham CC to Five Ways	T5, UR2	C, TWA orders to be obtained	LTP	Centro	LA, Operators	
Metro extension Wednesbury to Brierley Hill	UR1A, T5, UR2 PA11A	UI	TIF/LTP	Centro	LA, Operators	
Further Metro extensions in the Black Country and Birmingham	UR1A T5, UR2	UI TWA orders to be obtained	TIF/LTP	Centro	LA, Operators, Developers	
A50 Trentham Lakes Junction	T9	C, in preparation	Developer	HA	Developer	
Strategic Park & Ride – Brinsford	T6	FA	LTP, Developer	Centro, LA	SRA, Operators	
Strategic Park & Ride – Other sites – Centro Study	T6	PI	LTP	Centro, Developer	LA, SRA, Operators	
Improved transport networks within the Black Country	T9, T5, UR2	UI (BCS)	Various	LA, Centro	Various	
Improved public transport network in North Staffordshire	T5, UR2	UI (NSITS)	Various	LA, Operators	Various	

## POLICY T12: Priorities for Investment – continued

Scheme	Key Policy Links	Status as of June 2004	Delivery Mechanism	Key Delivery Role	Support Delivery	Implementation Period
<b>Sub-regional Priorities – Outside MUAs</b>						
Improved access to regeneration sites	PA7-9	Ongoing	LTP, Development	LA, Developers		
M5 Junc 1-2 improvements	UR1A	PI	HA	LA/HA		
M6 Junc 9-10 improvements	UR1A	PI	HA	LA/HA		
Improved transport networks to facilitate access to centres of Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, and Brierly Hill	UR1A	UI	LTP	LA	LA	
Improved transport networks to facilitate improved access to the four Employment Land Investment Corridors; Black Country North, Central, East and West	UR1A	UI	LTP	LA	LA	
Retention and development of local services, including links between Local Regeneration Areas and areas of opportunity	T5, RR2, CF2	Ongoing	LTP, refranchising	SRA	LA, Operators	

## POLICY T12: Priorities for Investment – continued

Scheme	Key Policy Links	Status as of June 2004	Delivery Mechanism	Key Delivery Role	Support Delivery	Implementation Period
<b>Sub-regional Priorities – Outside MUAs</b>						
Enhancement and development of rural public and community transport, particularly links between market towns and their hinterlands	T5, RR2, CF2	Ongoing	LTP, RBG	LA	Operators	
Development of improved road network management and prioritisation, including between nodes in High Technology Corridors	T9	Ongoing	LTP, HABP	LA, HA		
Worcester Parkway Strategic Park & Ride	T6	UI	LTP	LA, Developer	SFA, Operators	
Improved access to regeneration sites	PA7-9	Ongoing	LTP, Development	LA, Developers		

### NOTES

BCS Black Country Study NSITS North Staffordshire Integrated Transport Study

### Status

C (Committed) schemes approved by the SoS and included in the relevant programme, eg SRA Strategic Plan, HA Targeted Programme of Improvements, although powers may still be required.

FA (Further Appraisal Work Needed) schemes identified in a MMS or the Strategic Plan but requiring further appraisal work.

UI (Under Investigation) appraisal work is underway, eg MMS.

PI (Proposed for Investigation) schemes or studies necessary to deliver the spatial strategy, but not yet clearly defined.

TJF (Transport Innovation Fund)

LTP (Local Transport Plan)

Sidelined schemes (Phase 1 revision) Status as of Nov 2007

### Organisations

HA Highways Agency LA Local Transport Authorities NR Network Rail

SRA Strategic Rail Authority

### Delivery Mechanism

HABP HA Business Plan NRBP NR Business Plan RBG Rural Bus Grant

SP SRA Strategic Plan TPI HA Targeted Programme of Improvements

### Studies

W2EMMMS West to East Midlands MMS

## TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY – MONITORING:

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS</b>			
T2 – Reducing the need to travel		<b>1. Reducing the need to travel:</b>	
T4 – Promoting travel awareness	(a) 50% by 2006 100% by 2011	(a) Schools with School Travel Plans	To be determined'
T7 – Car Parking Standards and Management	(b) 30% of all employees to work in organisations committed to WTP by 2011 and 50% by 2021 (c) 100%	(b) Employees in organisations with Workplace Travel Plans (c) Percentage of new development on sites complying with car parking standards (This is based on proposed National Indicators, see Chapter 10)	To be determined' To be defined
T7 – Car Parking Standards and Management	(a) To be determined (b) Reduce by 1% per annum until 2011	<b>2. Parking provision:</b> (a) Central area public spaces (b) Long stay	To be determined'
T6 – Strategic Park and Ride	(c) (i) Increase by 100% (ii) 50% by 2011 (d) Increase by 100% by 2011 (e) 2000 new spaces by 2011	(c) Number of parking spaces at rail stations; (i) Metropolitan area (ii) Rest of region (d) P&R for town centres spaces (e) Strategic P&R spaces	Centro To be determined' To be determined' To be determined'
T5 – Public transport	(a) By 2011 increase by (i) 10% (ii) 8%	<b>3. Bus use:</b> (a) journeys by bus (i) Metropolitan (ii) Rest	NTS ave for 99/00-01/02 355 98

## TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY – MONITORING – continued

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued</b>			
	(b) Increase – further work needed on targets	(b) proportion of residents within X mins. of Y frequency bus, Metro or local rail service (i) MUA (ii) Other UA (iii) Rural	To be determined <sup>1</sup>
		<b>4. Metro performance:</b>	
T5 – Public transport	(a) To be determined	(a) reliability	To be determined
	(b) To double usage to 10m by 2011	(b) light rail journeys	Centro data 5m 99/00
		<b>5. Rail use:</b>	
T5 – Public transport	Increase by 100% by 2011	Capacity – seats arriving Birmingham city centre am peak	Centro
T2 – Reducing the need to travel	Target to be determined	<b>6. Percentage of new development (by type of development) on sites complying with public transport accessibility criteria.</b>	
T1 – Developing accessibility and mobility within the Region to support the Spatial Strategy			



**TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY – MONITORING: continued**

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>OUTPUT INDICATORS – continued</b>			
T9 – The Management and Development of National and Regional Transport	To reduce to below 2000 levels by 2010	<b>7. Road Congestion:</b> Congestion on trunk roads – seconds lost per vehicle km (all periods)	4.4 seconds per vehicle km in 2000 DfT
T11 – Airports	20% by 2005 or 10 mppa	<b>8. Access to Birmingham Airport:</b> Proportion by public transport	BIA surveys 13% in 2000
<b>PROCESS INDICATORS</b>			
T12 – Priorities for Investment	Target to be determined	<b>9. Progress against programmes</b>	
<b>CONTEXTUAL INDICATORS</b>			
All	6500 by 2011	<b>10. Miles travelled per person per year (all modes)</b>	NTS 85/86 99/01 ~5000 6513
All	1000 by 2011	<b>11. Trips per person per year (all modes)</b>	NTS 85/86 99/01 ~1000 1006

**TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY – MONITORING: continued**

Policy	Target	Indicator	Source of information
<b>CONTEXTUAL INDICATORS – continued</b>			
All	(a) 6 by 2011 (b) 6	<b>12. Commuting average trip length (miles)</b>  (a) Metropolitan area (b) Rest of region	NTS 85/86 99/01 5.7 11 5.7 7
All	(a) 1.5 by 2011 (b) 2.5 by 2011	<b>13. Education average trip length (miles)</b>  (a) Metropolitan area (b) Rest of region	NTS 85/86 99/01 1.3 3 2.6 3

**NOTES**

NTS National Travel Survey

1 Numbers to be included by authorities in LTPs to be submitted July 2005

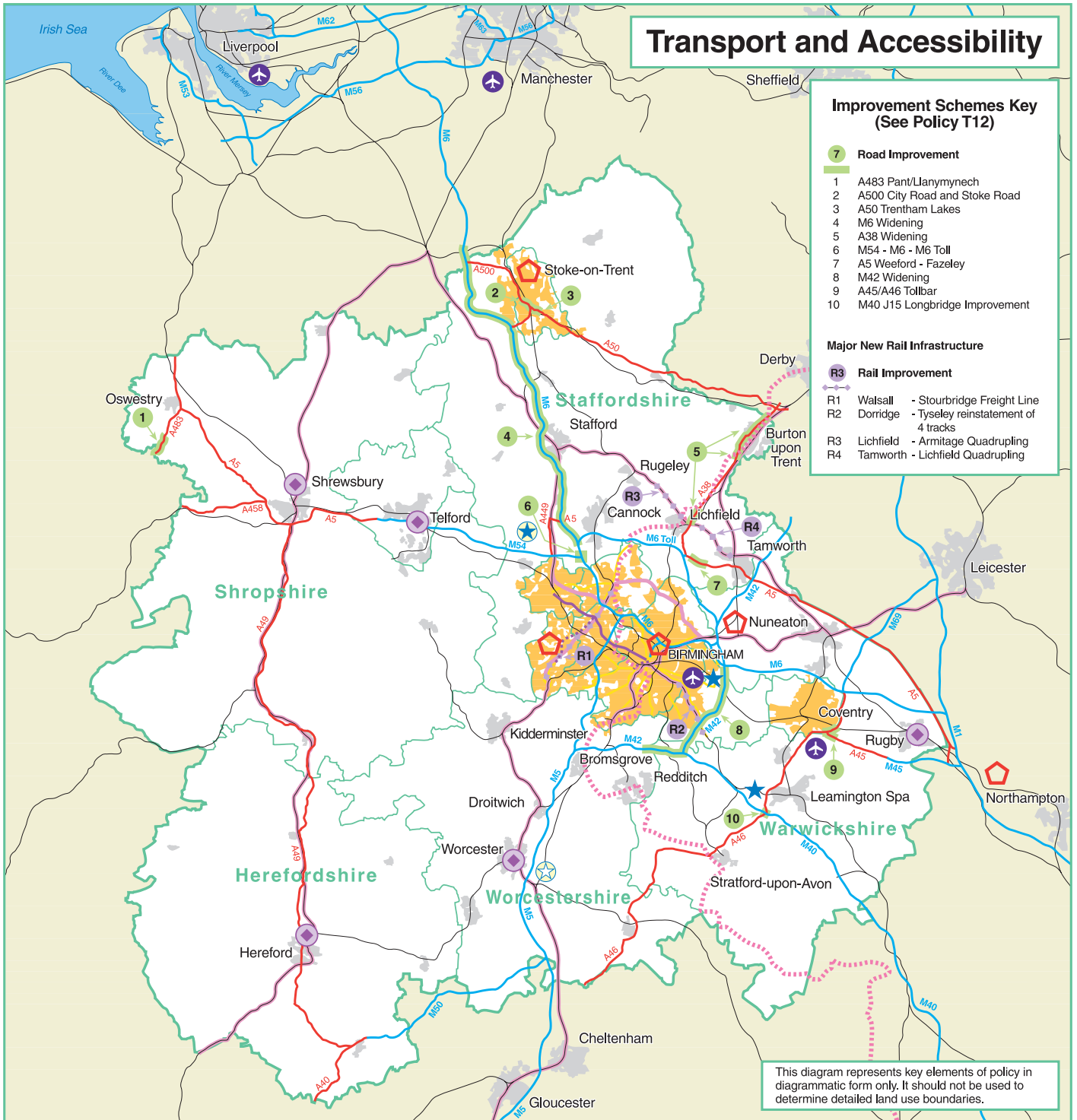
# Transport and Accessibility

## Improvement Schemes Key (See Policy T12)

- 7 Road Improvement**
- 1 A483 Pant/Llanymynech
  - 2 A500 City Road and Stoke Road
  - 3 A50 Trentham Lakes
  - 4 M6 Widening
  - 5 A38 Widening
  - 6 M54 - M6 - M6 Toll
  - 7 A5 Weeford - Fazeley
  - 8 M42 Widening
  - 9 A45/A46 Tollbar
  - 10 M40 J15 Longbridge Improvement

## Major New Rail Infrastructure

- R3 Rail Improvement**
- R1 Walsall - Stourbridge Freight Line
  - R2 Dorridge - Tyseley reinstatement of 4 tracks
  - R3 Lichfield - Armitage Quadrupling
  - R4 Tamworth - Lichfield Quadrupling



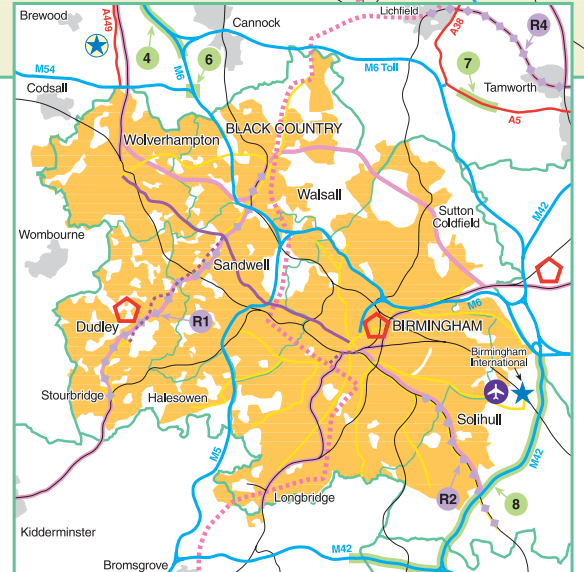
This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries.

### Transport Infrastructure

- Motorway
- Core Trunk Road
- Railway
- Railway Line contributing to Strategic Rail Freight Network
- Midland Metro Line 1
- - - Metro Extensions (Brierley Hill & Edgbaston)
- Other high volume corridors with potential for enhanced public transport
- - - National Cycle Millennium Route
- Airport
- Strategic Park & Ride Site / Parkway:
  - ★ - Existing
  - ★ - Identified
  - ★ - Under Investigation
- Important Freight Terminal

### Settlements

- Built-up Area
- Major Urban Area - Main focus for development and investment
- Sub - Regional foci for development beyond MUAs
- Strategic Authority Boundary





## Chapter 10

# Implementation and Monitoring

### Implementation

- 10.1** The policies in this RPG will be implemented by numerous mechanisms. Many of these are set out in the preceding Chapters but it is expected that these will necessarily change and evolve over time.
  - 10.2** To realise the Spatial Strategy set out in this RPG will require the contribution and active participation of many partners and stakeholders at Regional and local levels. In producing the draft RPG the WMLGA established an inclusive process which provides a good basis for that participation, and the transfer of the RPB role to the West Midlands Regional Assembly will help this to evolve. PPG11 emphasises the importance of implementation measures and the RPG supporting document “Towards an Implementation Framework” identified key actions necessary for implementation, including potential changes to organisational structures and inter-organisational relationships. The Study also suggested a number of themes to be addressed. These include: establishing clear visions at Regional and sub-regional levels; the need for stronger Regional co-ordination in planning, monitoring and the strategic management of development and implementation; recognition of the role and more effective engagement with the private sector; and the need to strengthen the capacity of organisations to deliver action programmes. The Regional Assembly will need to work with other stakeholders to build on this innovative study.
  - 10.3** The West Midlands has a history of partnership working at the Regional level. An important recent example being the Regional Concordat between the Regional Assembly, AWM, GOWM and the WMLGA. This set out a framework for Regional working and a mechanism for the integration of Regional strategies and has recently been reviewed, to incorporate a wider range of Regional partners and to recognise the need to integrate key Regional strategies including RPG. The work on the implementation framework has been an important consideration in this review.
  - 10.4** There is a close relationship between the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), prepared by AWM, and RPG, it is important that these continue to be closely aligned and complementary. The Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) is a key document prepared in the context of the RES and RPG. Both the RES and the RHS indicate the direction of significant resources and consequently play an important role in helping to implement RPG.
  - 10.5** Local authority development plans have a key role by giving local expression to RPG. The RPB will play a crucial part in assessing development plans and other plans and strategies which implement the RPG and accord with its spatial principles. It should give its views on Regionally significant development proposals. The RPB’s findings and actions should be set out in the annual monitoring report.
  - 10.6** The working groups of the RPB will be important in providing advice on progress with implementing RPG, such as transport, employment land and town centre development. These groups should wherever possible continue to incorporate representatives from industry, statutory agencies, other public sector organisations and interest groups. It is important that all authorities within the Region take advantage of opportunities for sub-regional, joint-working arrangements to ensure that administrative boundaries do not obstruct strategic planning objectives.
  - 10.7** The engagement of a broader range of organisations is critical to the delivery of RPG and an important move in the direction of Regional Spatial Strategies which have a greater integration with non land-use planning matters. For the Spatial Strategy to be a success the RPB should actively promote the spatial principles of this RPG with other
-

stakeholders, to increase understanding of its purpose and to influence the strategies and investment programmes of other agencies, including health, education and private house building.

- 10.8** At a more local level, local strategic partnerships will provide a general platform for cross sector input into RPG implementation, but more specific groupings such as Regeneration Zone and High Technology Corridor partnerships will also be appropriate to focus action on a specific issue or locality.

## Monitoring

- 10.9** PPG11 emphasises the importance of regular monitoring of the implementation of the RPG strategy so that its effectiveness can be kept under review. The ODPM published good practice guidance on monitoring RPG in November 2002<sup>1</sup>. Revised draft national indicators formed part of the consultation draft Planning Policy Statement 11 – Regional Planning. These have been taken into account in the preparation of this RPG, some indicators may require revision when the national indicators are finalised. National indicators which do not relate to a policy in this RPG have not been included in this RPG, but the RPB will be expected to monitor and report on them.
- 10.10** It is the responsibility of the RPB to carry out this monitoring and review in liaison with GOWM and other partners. The latter, which among others include AWM, the Regional Observatory and the statutory agencies, have important roles to play in monitoring the progress of RPG. Their roles should be co-ordinated by the Assembly so that, where possible, a common evidential base is created and duplication avoided.
- 10.11** Indicators are included in the relevant Chapters. These monitor the context of general conditions in the Region, the implementation of the processes, and the tangible outputs of policies. The annual monitoring report prepared by the WMLGA, together with the ODPM good practice guidance indicators, will provide the context for measuring progress. ‘Headline Indicators’ which measure progress towards the key aspects of the Spatial Strategy are at the end of this Chapter. The success of the policies in the Urban and Rural Renaissance Chapters will be judged by the monitoring of the policies in the topic Chapters. This monitoring, together with analysis of the ‘Headline Indicators’ will show progress towards urban and rural regeneration.
- 10.12** Further work is needed to refine the indicators and targets. In particular, the monitoring of new Regional and sub-regional entertainment, sport and physical recreation, and health and educational facilities should be considered when RPG is reviewed.
- 10.13** The RPB will publish an annual monitoring report and intends to hold monitoring seminars to disseminate information and advise on the implications of monitoring for the Spatial Strategy and the application of policies. These will also have a role in informing the refinement of indicators and targets.

## Review

- 10.14** It is not anticipated that a fundamental review of RPG strategy will be necessary in the short term. The step change in the distribution of housing set out in RPG occurs in 2007. Progress towards achieving the distribution of new housing development set out in RPG will be an important consideration in determining whether a review is necessary. Nonetheless, an early partial review to develop RPG is expected, taking into account important additional information coming forward. An indication of the additional work to inform the review is set out in the Introduction. In particular a key study is proposed for the Black Country to assist in resolving the many inter-connected issues affecting this part of the Region.

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<sup>1</sup> Monitoring Regional Planning Guidance – Good Practice Guidance on Targets and Indicators. November 2002

Headline Indicators to measure progress towards Urban and Rural Renaissance		
Indicator	Relation to Spatial Strategy Objectives	Source of Information
1. Pattern of housing development across the Region.	a, b, c, e	Annual Housing Land Surveys.
2. Pattern of population movement to and from the Major Urban Areas and changes over time.	a	NHSCR migration data.
3. Pattern of employment development across the Region.	a, b, c, e	Annual Employment Land Surveys.
4. Changes in the number of jobs in different parts of the Region over time.	a, b, c, e, f	Annual Business Inquiries.
5. Changes in the % of the population who are economically active in different parts of the Region	a, b	Labour Force Surveys.
6. The pattern of deprivation across the Region.	a, b	Indices of Deprivation.
7. Changes in house prices, relative to the Regional average across different parts of the Region.	a, b, c	Land Registry
8. The pattern of development within and between town centres and the health of town centres.	e, f, i, j	Annual Retail and Office Surveys. Valuation Office. GOAD plans.
9. Percentage of residents satisfied with living in their local community.	a, b, g	ODPM Best Value general satisfaction survey – information available at local authority level
10. Changes in the level of accessibility to employment and key services in different parts of the Region.	h	2005 round of Local Transport Plans and subsequent Annual Monitoring Reports.
11. Patterns and levels of congestion on the Region's primary highway and public transport network.	g, h	Highways Agency (trunk roads) Local authorities (local roads and public transport) Strategic Rail Authority (rail).
12. Changes in the amount of derelict and contaminated land in different parts of the Region.	g	Annual Derelict Land Surveys. Information on contaminated land.
13. Changes in the number of days with poor air quality in different parts of the Region.	g	District Councils. National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory.
14. Changes in the level of crime and people's perception of crime, in different parts of the Region.	a, b	Crime and Disorder Audits. British Crime Survey.

## Annex A

# Guiding Principles for the West Midlands RPG Review

Through the various stages of consultation a set of Guiding Principles for the Review was defined. Their main role was to provide a framework of values to guide decisions and choices on the content of the RPG and subsequent development plans. This approach was adopted in order to help ensure an integrated and sustainable approach to the future planning of the Region.

The agreed framework of the Guiding Principles is outlined below. Although expressed as eight statements, they are linked together combining to guide towards an integrated and sustainable approach to the development of the Region. They are listed in no order of priority.

### *Principle A*

#### **To secure more sustainable patterns of development throughout the Region**

- stemming the unsustainable decentralisation of people, jobs and other activities away from the Region's major urban areas by improving the quality of the urban environment as a whole;
- making the best use of existing urban capacity, built environment and infrastructure, while also respecting environmental quality and historical heritage;
- improving or where necessary replacing existing infrastructure, if it is agreed that it has passed the end of its viable life, and reusing existing buildings;
- ensuring that development is directed sequentially with priority given to promoting brownfield development in sustainable locations, but not where it is detrimental to the quality of the environment.

### *Principle B*

#### **To encourage a better balance between jobs, houses and services within each part of the Region in order to create more sustainable and stable communities**

- providing opportunities for an appropriate mix of new development, including mixed uses in some locations, in order to limit the need for travel;
  - adopting an integrated approach to policy across all regeneration and other development areas and administrative boundaries;
  - using the principles of 'plan, monitor and manage' to control the release of land and achieve more sustainable patterns of development;
  - being sensitive to local requirements and needs in order to achieve a better qualitative, as well as quantitative, balance of development both in location and social terms.
-



### ***Principle C***

**To encourage economic growth and increased prosperity throughout the RPG period which serves the broad sustainable development needs of the Region**

- assisting development plans to enable the Region to meet its longer term economic potential and employment needs in line with the aims of the Regional Economic Strategy and the Regional Sustainability Strategy;
- encouraging higher quality jobs, particularly where they meet sustainability criteria;
- providing types of employment suited to the changing needs of the local work force, urban and rural, including wider access to better quality jobs;
- promoting and enabling new economic activity where it can deliver environmental benefits and social benefits, particularly in areas of need.

### ***Principle D***

**To ensure that regional inequalities in education, employment, health, environment, and social and cultural potential are narrowed**

- ensuring that education, employment and health opportunities are accessible to all urban and rural communities, including support for appropriate community development to encourage the take up of such opportunities;
- promoting the development of appropriately located social, cultural and recreational facilities to meet the needs of communities;
- ensuring that there is sufficient housing of the right quantity, quality, type, tenure and affordability to meet people's needs locally;
- addressing environmental inequalities in air pollution, water quality, open space provision and access to wildlife.

### ***Principle E***

**To facilitate appropriate development in rural communities where job and service needs exist**

- supporting rural communities by providing appropriate development opportunities in areas with potential for meeting local employment and service needs without encouraging further decentralisation;
  - providing policy support for local initiatives, particularly where they address local needs identified by the community;
  - improving the availability and range of services in rural areas;
  - encouraging the diversification of the rural economy
-

### ***Principle F***

**To protect and enhance the quality of the environment, strengthening the interrelationship with economic and social progress and health and well-being**

- protecting and enhancing the Region's natural, historic, and cultural assets and recognising the importance of conserving regional character and local distinctiveness;
- planning environmental enhancements as an integral part of development and ensuring that all significant adverse environmental impacts are mitigated or compensated;
- ensuring that the integral role the environment plays in achieving economic and social goals is realised;
- reducing waste, pollution, the unsustainable use of natural resources, and the negative effects of climate change;
- requiring high quality design in all development and supporting measures that minimise environmental impact;
- ensuring that the Region meets or exceeds its responsibilities in addressing national and international obligations.

### ***Principle G***

**To ensure that the Region's economic and social potential is not undermined by congestion and inaccessibility, but is supported through the provision of a better balanced and improved transport system**

- aspiring to a fully integrated, multi modal transport system serving all parts of the Region;
- ensuring that the transport infrastructure is developed in ways that support and help drive forward the aims of the Region's regeneration programmes;
- encouraging more sustainable patterns of living to reduce the need and demand for travel;
- reducing the impact of transport on the environment

### ***Principle H***

**To ensure that every part of the West Midlands has a positive role to play in achieving a wider regional vision, and to have full regard to the linkages and relationships that exist between the West Midlands and adjacent areas**

- preserving and enhancing the diversity of different sub-regions, incorporating both urban and rural areas, and their potential for contributing to a better West Midlands;
  - promoting consistent policy approaches with adjacent areas in neighbouring Regions, and seeking to manage spatial relationships that cross regional boundaries in a sustainable manner;
  - helping to develop the specific roles of different sub-regions to enhance their regional, national and international standing.
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## Annex B

# Targets for the protection, restoration and re-creation of habitats in West Midlands Region

Priority habitat type (see Note 1)	Extent of habitat in England (hectares) (see Note 2)	Targets for protection of existing habitats (hectares) (see Note 3)	Targets for restoration of habitats (hectares) (see Note 4)	Targets for re-creation of habitats (hectares) (see Note 5)	Relevant Natural Areas (see Note 6)
Upland oakwood	21,250 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples	450 ha by 2010	350 ha by 2010	<b>28, 29, 30, 42, 43, 57, 58, 60, 61</b>
Lowland beech and yew woodland	27,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples	No present target	No present target	56, 57, 61
Upland mixed ashwoods	37,125 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples	250 ha by 2015	350 ha by 2015	<b>30, 42, 57, 58, 29</b>
Wet woodland	19,800 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain current 627 ha	25 ha by 2015	370 ha by 2015	All ( <b>43, 40, 28, 29, 30</b> )
Lowland wood pasture and parkland	22,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain current 2,581 ha	250 ha by 2010	Initiate 20 sites by 2005	27, <b>40, 42, 43, 44, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61</b>
Lowland oak and mixed deciduous woodland	429,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples	1,700 ha by 2020	1,700 ha by 2020	All
Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows	138,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples	50% by 2005, 100% by 2010	No present target	All ( <b>28, 29, 30, 40, 43, 44, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61</b> )
Cereal field margins	18,309 ha	Full extent unknown. (Total cereal area c271, 400 ha)	1,000 ha by 2010	No present target	All ( <b>28, 40, 44</b> )
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	229,000 ha	Maintain current 4,898 ha of wet grassland.	250 ha by 2010	40 ha by 2010	<b>27, 29, 40, 43, 44, 56, 59</b>
Lowland meadows and pastures	8,500 ha	Maintain current 1,553 ha.	30% by 2005, 100% by 2015	30 ha by 2010	All ( <b>28, 30, 40, 41, 42, 43, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60</b> )

Priority habitat type (see Note 1)	Extent of habitat in England (hectares) (see Note 2)	Targets for protection of existing habitats (hectares) (see Note 3)	Targets for restoration of habitats (hectares) (see Note 4)	Targets for re-creation of habitats (hectares) (see Note 5)	Relevant Natural Areas (see Note 6)
Upland hay meadows	1,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples.	No present target	No present target	29, 30, 42, 60
Lowland calcareous grassland	38,450 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain current 367 ha.	30% by 2005 100% by 2015	20 by 2010	<b>30, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61</b>
Upland calcareous grassland	10,000 ha	Maintain current 72 ha (est)	75% by 2005	5-10 ha by 2005	<b>30, 41, 42, 60</b>
Lowland dry acid grassland	20,500 ha	Maintain current 755 ha	30% by 2005, 100% by 2015	50 ha by 2010	<b>28, 29, 30, 42, 43, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61</b>
Upland heathland	270,000 ha	Maintain current 3,726 ha	300 ha by 2015	190 ha by 2010	29, 30, 42, <b>58, 60</b>
Lowland heathland	41,000 ha	Maintain current 2987 ha	Improve condition of all existing sites by 2010	300 ha by 2005	27, <b>28, 29, 42, 43, 44, 58, 60, 61</b>
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	11,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all examples.	30 % by 2005, 100% by 2015	20 ha by 2010	28, 29, 43, <b>58, 60</b>
Fens	8,107 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain current 180 ha	Improve quality of degraded sites by 2005	No present target	<b>27, 28, 29, 30, 42, 43, 56, 58, 59, 60</b>
Reedbeds	9,560 ha	Maintain current 33 ha	70 ha by 2010	50 ha by 2010	27, 43, 44, 56
Lowland raised bog	11,419 ha	Maintain current 451 ha of raised bog sites and intact bog	improve condition of degraded sites by 2015	No present target	<b>27, 40</b>
Blanket bog	215,000 ha	Full extent unknown, maintain all sites.	1,670 by 2015	No present target	<b>29, 60</b>
Mesotrophic lakes	No data	Full extent unknown, maintain all sites.	No present target	No present target	27, 29, 30, 40, 43, 44, 56, <b>58</b>
Eutrophic standing waters	No data	Full extent unknown, maintain current 234 ha	No present target	No present target	<b>27, 28, 29, 43, 44, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61</b>

Priority habitat type (see Note 1)	Extent of habitat in England (hectares) (see Note 2)	Targets for protection of existing habitats (hectares) (see Note 3)	Targets for restoration of habitats (hectares) (see Note 4)	Targets for re-creation of habitats (hectares) (see Note 5)	Relevant Natural Areas (see Note 6)
<b>Regionally important landscape features</b>					
Rivers and streams	unknown	Full extent unknown, maintain 822 km of main river.	No present target	No present target	All
Standing open waters, ponds and canals	unknown	Full extent unknown, maintain current 4,565 ha and 1585 km of canal.	No present target	No present target	All
Hedgerows	All types c329,000 km	Unknown	No present target	No present target	All
Small woodlands	Unknown	Unknown	No present target	No present target	All
<b>Nature conservation targets in towns and cities</b>					
Built up areas and gardens	Unknown	Full extent unknown, maintain current 8,444 ha	Government-endorsed English Nature standards for accessible natural greenspace (ODPM September 2002): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a greenspace of at least 2ha &lt;300m from home</li> <li>• a Local Nature Reserve provision at a minimum of 1ha per thousand population.</li> <li>• at least one greenspace of 20ha within 2km of home, one 100ha site within 5km of home and one 500ha site within 10km of home.</li> </ul>		All

**Note for users.** The priority habitat targets are minimum targets necessary to achieve the England share of UKBAP targets. The targets are dynamic and in some cases are based on incomplete information, which is subject to a process of improvement. Targets may be added where derived from national survey and research. Confirmation of the most current version of a regional target may be accessed from the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership (WMBP).

**Maintenance** – refers to ensuring the current extent and favourable condition (quality) of the habitat resource.

**Restoration** – refers to restoring/rehabilitating existing areas of habitat currently in unfavourable condition by:

- achieving the specified attributes for favourable condition of all priority habitats occurring in SSSIs
- achieving demonstrable improvements in the condition of the resource outside SSSIs deemed capable of some improvement in quality with conservation management (as defined in the published Habitat Action Plan).

**Re-creation** – refers to creation of new habitat above and beyond what existed in 1995 (the baseline year of the first national habitat action plans) and is achieved when the key elements of the habitat structure and ecological function are in place.

(1) National priority habitats identified in *'Biodiversity: the UK Steering Group Report. Volume 2: Action Plans'* (UKBSG 1995) HMSO and *'The UK Biodiversity Group Tranche 2 Action Plans Volumes 11 and V1'* (UKBG/English Nature 1998-9).

Listed as *'Habitats of Principal Importance for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in England'* under Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way act 2000.

(2) Source: [http://www.ukbap.org.uk/asp/2002\\_LPLogin.asp](http://www.ukbap.org.uk/asp/2002_LPLogin.asp) (17 Dec 2002)

(3) Source: West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership (WMBP) (August 2001) *'West Midlands Regional Biodiversity Audit'*.

(4) Source: Measures, G (November 2000, May 2002.unpub) *Habitat Guidance for Target Setting in Government Regions in England*. English Nature, Peterborough.

(5) Source: As (4)

(6) Source: West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership (August 2001) *'West Midlands Regional Biodiversity Audit'* English Nature (1999) *'Natural Areas in the West Midlands Region'*. English Nature (1997/98) *Natural Area Profiles*.

#### **Numbered Natural Areas are shown in Figure 4 of this guidance**

Natural Areas in bold typeface signify the priority habitat is judged a characteristic or significant feature, whose conservation is key to maintaining the Natural Area's distinctive ecological character (see Figure 5). Normal typeface signifies the habitat is present. The emboldened Natural Areas are the chief but not exclusive localities for achieving the targets for these habitats. At a finer scale, priority localities for target implementation are indicated as *'Biodiversity Enhancement Areas'* on the Quality of the Environment – Areas of Enhancement Diagram.

Targets relevant to Natural Areas 29 and 30 are largely addressed through the Peak District National Park Biodiversity Action Plan and East Midlands RPG, with some Staffordshire share.

**Regionally Important Landscape Features** – Landscape features of major importance for wild flora and fauna (other than priority habitats) in the West Midlands Region; in accordance with Regulation 37 of *'The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994'*. Statutory Instruments 1994 No 2716. HMSO.

**Targets for accessible natural greenspace in urban areas are defined in:** Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (September 2002) *'Assessing needs and opportunities, a companion guide to PPG 17'*

## Annex C

# Glossary of Terms

This Glossary is intended to assist in the understanding of RPG, particularly where it includes technical or unfamiliar terms. Unless stated these are not definitive or legal descriptions.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Advantage West Midlands	AWM	The Regional Development Agency for the West Midlands
Affordable Housing		Low cost market housing and subsidised housing irrespective of tenure, ownership or financial arrangements, available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market
Agenda for Action		The implementation framework for the West Midlands' RES
Aggregates		Granular or particulate material that is suitable for use in construction as concrete, mortar, roadstone, asphalt or drainage courses or for use as construction or railway ballast.
Agricultural Land Classification		Quality grading of agricultural land: 1 = best, 5 = worst.
Allocation		The use assigned to a piece of land in a local Development Plan
Annual Monitoring Report		Report to be prepared each year by WMLGA to consider performance against targets and indicators set out in the RPG.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	AONB	Site with statutory national Landscape designation to provide special protection of the area's natural beauty. These are designated by the Countryside Agency.
Best Practicable Environmental Option	BPEO	Principle of waste management as defined in PPG10 – i.e. the outcome of a systematic and consultative decision making procedure which emphasises the protection and conservation off the environment across land, air and water
Biodiversity		The whole variety of life encompassing all genetic, species and ecosystem variations.
Black Country		The area covered by the four boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton
Centro		The executive arm of the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority
Combined Heat and Power	CHP	Use of waste heat from power generation to provide heating for a building or neighborhood.
Cluster		Locational concentration of inter-connected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries and associated institutions (e.g. universities) in particular fields that compete but also co-operate.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Common Agricultural Policy	CAP	The name given to the European Union's agriculture policy. The basic aim of CAP has been to provide efficient farmers with an income comparable to that of people outside farming, in the service and individual sectors, while ensuring that consumers receive adequate supplies of food at reasonable prices.
Commitments		Land that is the subject of an existing planning permission and other projects or proposals where it is accepted will take place due to financial or other reasons.
Community Forest		National programme of major environmental improvements, shaped by local partnership working, which use multipurpose forestry to improve countryside around towns and cities by restoring areas scarred by industrial dereliction to support employment, recreation, education and wildlife.
Community Strategy		Strategies for enhancing the quality of life of the local community which each local authority has a duty to prepare under the Local Government Act 2000. They will be developed and implemented by a local strategic partnership and should include: a long term vision; an action plan; shared commitment to, and proposals for, implementation; and arrangements for monitoring and review.
Conservation Area		Areas designated by the local planning authority which are considered of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it wishes to preserve or enhance.
Corridor		Area linking two or more centres, normally focused around transport infrastructure.
Countryside Character Areas		Areas of distinctive landscape, wildlife and natural features as defined by Countryside Agency.
Density		Measure of the number of dwellings per hectare (ha)
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	DEFRA	Following the June 2001 Government reorganisation the Department with responsibility environmental, agricultural and rural matters.
Development Plans		These can be Unitary Development Plans (UDPs), Structure Plans or Local Plans.
Economic Renewal Area	ERA	Focus to improve significantly and maintain the physical and business environment of the Region's established employment areas.
Employment Land		Land allocated in a Development Plan for business (B1), industrial (B2) and storage/distribution (B8) uses
England Rural Development Programme	ERDP	The ERDP sets out how the Government will implement the Rural Development Regulation (RDR) over the next six years. The RDR provides a set of measures and CAP (q v) funds which EU countries can use, alongside their own funds, to benefit the rural environment, economy and communities.



Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Environmental Impact Assessment	EIA	Procedure and management technique that ensures that the likely effects of new development on the environment are fully appraised and taken into account before the development is allowed to go ahead.
European Regional Development Fund	ERDF	One of four European Structural Funds. It addresses the needs of specific areas, specifically in terms of Capital projects such as buildings, roads and transport.
European Social Fund	ESF	One of four European Structural Funds. It generally aims to improve the employability of the workforce, as well as creating employment. ESF projects are particularly focussed on training, such as reskilling of the unemployed, upskilling workers and providing support to SMEs.
European Spatial Development Perspective	ESDP	An approach to spatial planning intended to achieve the balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union.
Farm diversification		Engaging in new and different economic activity to support existing agricultural businesses and farm incomes, and to make use of surplus land or buildings. Examples include food processing, forestry and tourism.
Flood Plain		Land adjacent to a watercourse over which water flows, or would flow but for defenses in place, in times of flood.
Green Belt		Land designated in development plans to be kept open in accordance with PPG2.
Government Office for the West Midlands	GO-WM	Combined offices of key Government Departments at the West Midlands level.
Greenfield land		Undeveloped land
Gross Domestic Product	GDP	Measure of economic wealth generated.
Health Action Zone	HAZ	Government initiative launched in 1997 to tackle persistent health and social problems in disadvantaged areas. The aim is to encourage collaboration between statutory, private, voluntary and community sector bodies and the local community to identify and implement innovative strategies to reduce health inequalities to improve long term health and well being.
Health Improvement Programme	HImp	Government initiative designed to bring together national targets and priorities, and local strategies to deliver the agenda for health improvement outlined in the Government White Paper "Our Healthier Nation – Saving Lives". HImps provide a measurable programme on which the performance of Health Authorities is judged.
Heavy Rail Transport	HRT	Conventional railway
Hi-tech (or high tech) industry		Advanced manufacturing, computing or other state of the art industry (e.g. biotechnology).

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
High Technology Corridors	HTCs	Specific corridors identified, within which cluster development closely related to the region's critical research and development capabilities and advanced technologies, will be promoted.
Homeworking		Relates to the growing practice of working from home, especially when related to the use of ICT
Incubator/Starter Units		Small scale commercial units, often subsidised, to assist new enterprise. These may be associated with clusters.
Information and Communications Technology	ICT	Telephone, Computing and other technology designed to enable remote working and communication.
Light Rapid Transit	LRT	Light, rail-based system of transport e.g. tram, West Midlands Metro system
Local Agenda 21		A comprehensive programme of action prepared by local authorities and designed to achieve sustainable development.
Local Biodiversity Action Plans		Prepared by public-private-voluntary sector partnerships to implement the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and its associated priority habitat and species plans.
Local Needs		Anticipated requirements (e.g. for housing) generated by local growth or other (e.g. demographic) trends. This specifically excludes demands generated by migration from elsewhere.
Local Plan		Part of the Development Plan that sets out the detailed policies and proposals based on strategic policies in structure plans.
Local Regeneration Areas		Areas outside of the RZs that contain Wards from the most deprived 20% of wards nationally. Such areas commonly face regeneration challenges associated with the decline or restructuring of traditional; industries.
Local Strategic Partnership		A locality based partnership of strategic organisations commonly involving social, business and other appropriate interests.
Local Transport Plan	LTP	Plan prepared by Strategic Planning Authorities detailing transport priorities and actions to be taken.
Major Investment Site	MIS	Sites to accommodate large scale investment by single users with and international location choice. Designed to help diversify and restructure the Regional economy.
Major Urban Areas	MUAs	The focus of Urban Renaissance which will underpin the spatial strategy. There are 4 MUAs in the West Midlands: Birmingham; the Black Country; Coventry; and the North Staffordshire Conurbation.
Market Housing		Housing either bought or rented in the private sector
Market Town		Settlements in predominantly rural areas that serve as a service centre for inhabitants of the town and its hinterlands.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Market Towns Task Group		A West Midlands Group, chaired jointly by Advantage West Midlands and the Countryside Agency, established to set the policy and programme framework to promote the regeneration of market towns in the Region. It consists of a range of sectoral and sub-regional representatives and will meet at least twice a year.
Market Towns Toolkit		An approach developed by the Countryside Agency to assess and improve the vitality of market towns and their surrounding countryside. It involves carrying out a healthcheck to identify the town's economic, social and environmental health and producing an action plan to set out projects and initiatives.
Metro		The name given to the light rapid transport system in the West Midlands conurbation.
Minerals Development		The acquisition and working of minerals by surface or underground methods and associated ancillary business like secondary mineral industries and aggregate handling depots.
Minerals Planning Guidance Note	MPG	Document prepared and issued by Central Government as advice to minerals planning authorities and minerals industry.
Mixed community		Especially in respect of new housing, where there is a cross section of affordable and market, large and small housing available designed to meet the needs of all sectors of the community.
Mixed use development		A new development that makes provision for a variety of uses – e.g. residential, retail and business. An example of this might be the Mailbox in Birmingham.
Multi-Modal Studies	MMS	Transport studies in which consideration is given to problems and solutions affecting all modes of travel. Those in the West Midlands include the area around the West Midlands Conurbation (WMAMMS), the M6 corridor to the North West Region (MIDMAN), and the West – East Midlands Study.
National Forest		Project recreating woodlands in the English Midlands and encouraging alternative land use by farmers and landowners.
National Park		Protected area with statutory designation. Established to protect the most important areas of wildlife habitation and geological formation. The only National Park wholly or partly falling in the West Midlands is the southwestern part of the Peak District National Park.
Neighborhood Renewal Strategy		Government initiative designed to enable the eighty eight most deprived authorities to improve services, thereby narrowing the gap between deprived areas and the rest of the Country.
Objective 2		ERDF Objective to support Economic and Social conversion of areas facing structural difficulties. Eligible areas in the West Midlands include much of the Welsh Marches, the West Midlands and North Staffordshire conurbations and some other areas.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	ODPM	The Government Department with responsibility for planning issues.
Other Urban Areas	OUs	Significant settlements outside the MUAs, including Market Towns (to be defined in Development Plans) capable of providing sustainable communities.
Parish Plan		A holistic plan covering all issues of concern to the community living in the parish. It is normally produced by the community itself with help from the Rural Community Council or relevant local authority. It may be eligible for a grant from the Countryside Agency.
Park & Ride		Long stay parking areas at the edge of a built up area linked by frequent public transport links to the city centre.
Plan, Monitor and Manage	PMM	Approach to housing provision involving: Plan for an overall annual rate and distribution of housing; Monitor the proposed provision against targets and indicators; Manage the process
Planning Policy Guidance Note	PPG	Document prepared and issued by Central Government setting out its policy on different aspects of planning. Local authorities must take their content into account in the production of development plans.
Polycentricity		An approach to strategic spatial planning which recognises the diverse multi-centred nature of the West Midlands Region. It gives equal consideration to the circumstances and value of each place and recognises that spatial planning policies should not be determined by a single hierarchy where, for example, all higher order functions have to be focused in higher order places. Instead, polycentric policies address the specific combination of roles that different places play and the dynamic relationships between them.
Premium Employment Site	PES	Sustainably located, high quality peripheral employment land intended for inward investment and to allow for the expansion of existing firms with particular requirements (PA7)
Precautionary principle		Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation. (Rio Declaration)
Previously Developed Land	PDL	Fully defined at Annex C of PPG3. Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excl. agricultural or forestry buildings) and associated fixed surface structures. The definition covers the curtilage of the development.
Primary Route Network	PRN	Motorways, Trunk Roads and other primary routes identified to be of regional strategic importance.
Proximity principle		Principle of waste management defined in Box 1 of PPG10, i.e. waste should generally be managed as near as possible to its place of production because transporting waste itself has an environmental effect.
Regeneration Zone	RZ	Aspect of RES that directs investment to those areas most requiring it. There are currently five RZs – four Urban and one Rural.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Regional Cultural Strategy		Strategy prepared by the West Midlands Regional Cultural Consortium.
Regional Economic Strategy	RES	10 year economic strategy prepared by Advantage West Midlands to maximise the opportunity for sustainable economic growth in the West Midlands.
Regional Employment Land Survey	RELS	Annually updated database designed to monitor the availability of industrial land in the West Midlands.
Regional Investment Site	RIS	High quality, regionally identified sites of 25-50ha attractive to external investment designed to support the diversification and modernisation of the regional economy especially in relation to the Region's cluster priorities
Regional Logistics Site	RLS	Regionally identified sites to provide opportunity for the concentrated development of warehousing and distribution uses.
Regional Planning Body	RPB	Institution responsible for the preparation of Draft RPG and the monitoring of RPG. In this region WMRA now perform this role.
Regional Sustainable Development Framework		Sets out a framework for action where the three priorities of social progress, a better environment and a healthy economy combine to achieve a genuine sustainability
Registered Social Landlord	RSL	Housing Association or charitable body providing affordable housing on a rented basis.
Renewable energy		Energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment (e.g. from sun, wind or wave or fall of water). Plant and some waste materials are also potential sources.
River corridor		Land which has visual, physical or ecological links to a watercourse and which is dependent on the quality or level of the water it contains.
Retail uses		Shops (A1). Professional and Financial Services (A2) and Food & Drink (incl. Hot food takeaways) (A3).
Road Based Study	RBS	A study of problems on a particular section of trunk road.
Rover Task Force		Task Force set up by the Government in the wake of the decision by BMW to sell their interest in Rover cars.
Rural Area		Areas outside the urban areas whose landscape is predominated by countryside and small settlements. Depending on proximity, such areas have varying relationships with the MUAs.
Rural Regeneration Zone		One of six Regeneration Zones designated by Advantage West Midlands in which the majority of its activity and funding will be concentrated over the next ten years. It covers rural areas in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire (see Spatial Strategy Diagram) and has a population of some 283,000.
Rural Renaissance		The objective of addressing the challenges facing rural areas in the region and to maintain viable and sustainable rural communities.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Rural Services Standard		Minimum standards and targets covering access to and the delivery of public services in rural areas. They are set out on pages 19 – 22 of the Rural White Paper (Our Countryside: the Future, Nov.2000).
Sequential Approach		A search sequence derived from PPGs 3 and 11 designed to guide the allocation and release of land for housing purposes to encourage the use of PDL and sustainable locations.
Single Programme Document	SPD	Document that defines the programme and priorities for the ERDF.
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI	Nationally important sites for wildlife or earth science where proposed development must be given special scrutiny
Small and Medium Enterprise	SME	Precise definitions vary, but typically allude to employers of 250 or less.
Social Exclusion Unit		Inter-Departmental body employing civil servants and secondees to facilitate the inclusivity of Government programmes and promote social inclusion generally.
Spatial strategy		A strategy to provide a clear sense of direction for the longer term spatial development of the Region, influencing the future investment decisions of all sectors, both public and private.
Special Areas of Conservation	SAC	Statutorily protected European site (under the Habitats Directive) for rare and threatened habitats, plants and animals, on land and at sea.
Special Protection Area	SPA	Statutorily protected European site (under the Birds Directive) for bird habitats and species plans.
Structure Plan		Development plan which sets out strategic planning policies for a particular shire county and forms the basis for detailed policies in local plans.
Sustainability Appraisal		Appraisals of plans, strategies and proposals to test them against the four broad objectives set out in the Government's sustainable development strategy.
Sustainable Development		Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland 1987)
Traffic management		Measures to control the volume and speed of traffic and to assist road safety
Tranquillity		Freedom from noise and disturbance, as measured by the distance from factors such as major roads, railways and built development. An analysis by the Council for the Protection of Rural England suggests that the area of tranquillity in the West Midlands shrank by 21% between the 1960s and the 1990s.
Trans European Networks		Strategic rail and road routes and airports designated by the European Union because of their importance for the future development of Europe.
Transport & Works Act	TWA	Defines the statutory procedures to be completed prior to development of rail or light rail schemes.

Term	Abbreviation (Where used)	Meaning
Unitary Development Plan		Plan prepared by Metropolitan District and some Unitary Local Authorities containing policies equivalent to those in both a Structure Plan and Local Plan.
Urban Capacity Study		Study to determine the potential of an area to accommodate further development, its density and its wider implications for sustainable development.
Urban open space		Parks, play areas, sports fields, commons, allotments, green corridors alongside rivers/canals/railways and other open areas vital to the cultural, aesthetic and historic heritage of urban life.
Urban Renaissance		The objective of addressing the challenges facing urban areas in the region and to maintain viable and sustainable urban communities.
Use Classes Order	UCO	Existing classification of land use by economic activity
Village Design Statements		A document prepared by the local community to guide the design of new development so that it fits its surroundings and is in keeping with local character. It may contribute to the preparation of a Parish Plan (q v).
Waste hierarchy		Identified by the Government the hierarchy sets the priority to first reduce waste, followed by recycling, energy recovery and then, as a last resort, safe disposal by tipping.
Welsh Marches		The part of the West Midlands Region adjacent to the Welsh border characterised by widespread rural deprivation and a dispersed population. Comprises of parts of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire.
West Coast Mainline	WCML	High speed rail line extending from London Euston, via Coventry and Birmingham, towards the North West
West Midlands		The standard planning region comprising the seven Metropolitan Authorities (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton), the four Shire Counties (Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire) and the three Unitary Authorities (Herefordshire, Stoke on Trent and Telford and Wrekin).
West Midlands Area Multi-Modal Study	WMAMMS	See MMS
West Midlands Local Government Association	WMLGA	Voluntary association of all thirty eight local authorities in the West Midlands Region.
West Midlands Regional Assembly	WMRA	The Regional Planning Body for the West Midlands
Windfall sites		Sites that have not been specifically identified as available in the local plan process. They comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.
World Heritage Site		UNESCO designation of cultural/natural heritage considered to be of outstanding universal value and worthy of special protection.

## Annex D

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West Midlands Round Table for Sustainable Development *'Quality of Life – the future starts here. A sustainability strategy for the West Midlands'* Autumn 1999

### ***Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Minerals Planning Guidance Notes (MPG)***

Many of the PPG are currently being updated to Planning Policy Statements (PPS), a full list of the current national policy documents can be found at [www.planning.odpm.gov.uk/index.htm](http://www.planning.odpm.gov.uk/index.htm)

### ***Background Technical Reports***

To support the development of the Spatial Strategy and Policy contained within this Regional Planning Guidance a number of key studies were commissioned.

Details of these studies can be obtained from the West Midlands Regional Assembly, Albert House, Quay Place, Edward Street, Birmingham B1 2RA. Telephone: 0121 678 1010 e-mail: [info@wmlga.gov.uk](mailto:info@wmlga.gov.uk)

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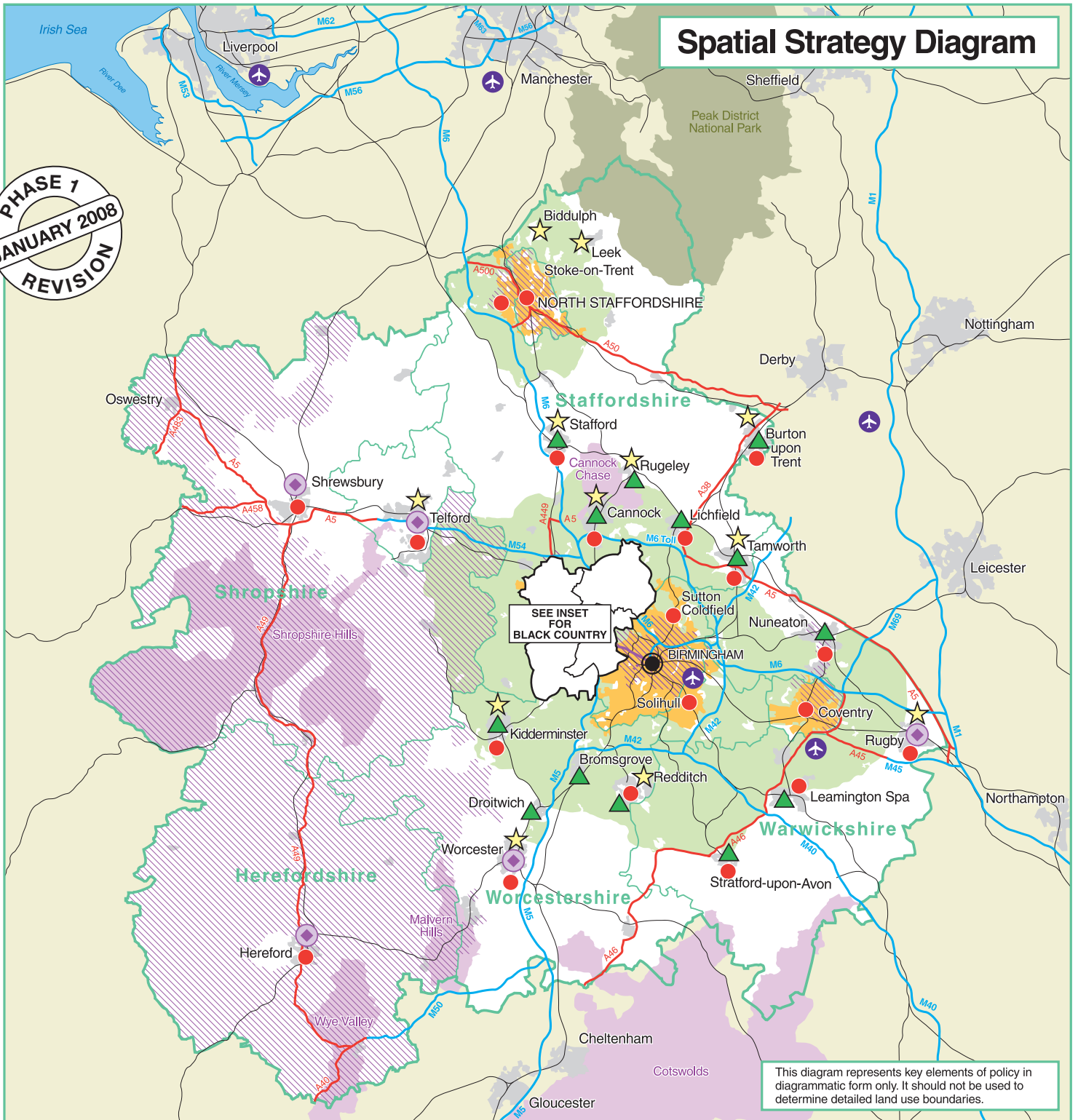
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# Spatial Strategy Diagram

PHASE 1  
JANUARY 2008  
REVISION



This diagram represents key elements of policy in diagrammatic form only. It should not be used to determine detailed land use boundaries.

## Settlements

- Major Urban Area - Main focus for development and investment  
BIRMINGHAM  
BLACK COUNTRY  
COVENTRY  
NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE  
SOLIHULL
- Sub-Regional foci for development beyond MUAs
- Other large settlement

## Regeneration

- Regeneration Zone included in Agenda for Action
- Local Regeneration Area outside of Regeneration Zones
- Regional Centre
- Strategic Centre
- Growth Corridors
- Employment Land Investment Corridors

## Strategic Links

- Motorway
- Core Trunk Road
- Railway
- Midland Metro Line 1
- Metro Extensions (Brierley Hill & Edgbaston)
- Other high volume corridors with potential for enhanced public transport
- Airport

## Environment

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Park
- Green Belt
- Built-up Area
- Strategic Authority Boundary

## BLACK COUNTRY

