

Panel Question (i)

Does the strategy communicate a clear, sustainable and appropriate vision for the sub-region? If not how should the strategy be modified? In particular:

- **do the proposals for employment, housing, transport and the environment amount collectively to a coherent and appropriate vision for the sub-region;**
- **are the proposals for employment land (of various kinds) appropriate and achievable;**
- **are the transport proposals adequate and logical in relation to the strategy as a whole;**
- **is adequate attention paid to issues of climate change and the protection of the environment;**
- **are there any other material deficiencies, which you perceive in the plan as it affects the sub-region;**
- **do you believe the proposals to be deliverable, through the development plan system or in other ways;**
- **the extent to which cross-border issues have been considered, especially in relation to Scotland;**
- **how will the sub-regional sub-area priorities be monitored?**

1.1 The process that has underlain the development of policies in each of the sub-regions is set out in section 2 of the Technical Appendix to the Submitted Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). A balance has been struck to produce a concise draft RSS between thematic policies that cover sub-regional aspects including housing and employment land requirements, and specific sub-regional policies that address the functional relationships and strategic policy deficit principles set out in PPS11¹. To ensure consistency between sub-regions within the draft RSS, the sub-regional policies are set within the context of overarching policy frameworks such as DP1 and RDF1, and relevant thematic policies.

1.2 The vision that emerged for Cumbria and North Lancashire was developed initially through the first detailed proposals² and latterly in the sub-regional policies and statement produced by the partnership of local authorities and other key stakeholders within the sub-region that formed the major contribution to sub-regional policy development for the area within the draft RSS.

1.3 The proposals for employment, housing, transport and the environment need to be considered both in terms of what is set out within the sub-regional section of draft RSS, and must be read across to other parts of draft RSS to produce a collective policy whole that is a coherent and appropriate vision for the sub-region. Thus, taking each of these subject areas in turn:

1.4 In terms of employment, the policies complement the framework set out in Policies W1 to W4. The Assembly's statement for matter 3A sets out the evidence base that derived the employment land requirements for the traditional sub-regions of the shire counties and former metropolitan areas in the North West. A number of respondents in the public consultation highlighted the need for district level

¹ Paragraph 1.13, Planning Policy Statement 11 (**PP11**)

² First Detailed Proposals provided to NWRA for the Options Consultation, March 2005

employment land figures. A potential approach to deriving district level employment land figures is discussed in Briefing Paper 7³. If the proposed approach was deemed to be appropriate, it would be possible to produce district level employment land requirements for the sub-region. The broad locations identified in Policy W2 are included in the Cumbria and North Lancashire Sub-Regional Diagram, and are referenced in the sub-regional policies where appropriate. Local employment opportunities are covered in the sub-regional policies and cross refer to Policy W3.

1.5 With regard to housing, the over-arching framework for the sub-regional policies is set by Policies L2 to L5, and includes Policy L4 that provides the quantum of new housing development to be delivered within the local authority areas that make up the sub-region. The detail regarding the sub-region's housing provision and distribution is set out under Matter 10B.

1.6 Each sub-region contains a policy that sets out the key priorities for the sub-region including transport which is aligned to various RT policies in the draft RSS. In the case of the Cumbria and North Lancashire Sub-Region, policies RT1 and RT8 are specifically cross referenced in policy CNL1. The remaining RT policies are linked into the sub-regional policy frameworks, in the same manner as the rest of the policies in the draft RSS, in line with the approach outlined in paragraph 1.3 of draft RSS. Moreover, the transport priorities in the sub-regional policies are in accordance with the Regional Funding Allocation submitted advice for the sub-region.

1.7 In line with the approach set out in paragraph 1.3 of draft RSS, the sub-regional policies need to be read across with Policy DP1 that sets out the approach required to deal with climate change, and Policies EM1 to EM5 plus RDF5, which provide the key aspects for environmental protection. Moreover, national policy provides sufficient detail regarding the Lake District National Park, therefore requiring no further repetition in RSS.

1.8 The Assembly is aware that work is currently underway in preparing the West Cumbria Masterplan. It is anticipated that the full detailed masterplan work will be available this autumn. It may be necessary to consider an early review of the policy framework set out in draft RSS for West Cumbria⁴.

1.9 Cross-border issues have been briefly covered in draft RSS⁵ and there was limited consultation response that highlighted the need for further detail.

1.10 The Implementation Plan⁶ sets out a programme for delivery for the draft RSS, and is covered in detail by statements for Matters 11A and 11C. The monitoring of sub-regional priorities will be incorporated into the Annual Monitoring Report process for RSS. The Assembly produces a monitoring manual each year – the next version will incorporate the necessary mechanisms for sub-regional monitoring. Moreover, monitoring is likely to be undertaken by sub-regional partners as part of their Local Development Frameworks which can feed into the regional monitoring framework.

³ Briefing Paper 7 - Apportioning Employment Land by Local Authority NWRA, September 2006

⁴ Pending the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07) no funding currently exists beyond 31st March 2008, to support the Assembly's RPB function (including the employment of staff). Therefore the Assembly is only able to commission new research that will be completed by 31st March 2008. Until the medium - long term funding situation is resolved, the Assembly is also unable to give a firm timescale commitments on undertaking a future review of RSS, as it may not be possible to comply with all the procedural process requirements of PPS11 over next 18 months, to ensure submission of a Draft RSS to Government before 31st March 2008.

⁵ See paragraph 15.1 of draft RSS

⁶ Draft Implementation Framework, NWRA, January 2006

Panel Question (ii)

Do sub-regional policies sufficiently address issues arising from the Energy Review 2006?

Matter 6C (ii) covers the general aspects of how the draft RSS is compatible with the Energy Review 2006. In terms of the sub-regional policies for Cumbria and North Lancashire, it may be premature to determine the fit between draft RSS and the Energy Review, given that key aspects pertinent to the sub-region (nuclear new-build and proposed changes to the planning regime).