

# Regional spatial strategies

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## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** This note supplements Planning Policy Guidance Note 11 - Regional Planning (PPG11) (DETR, October 2000) following the introduction of the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill in December 2002. This note provides advice on how Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) can prepare for the introduction of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) and what this means for reviews of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) in the meantime. It is interim guidance in the sense that it is prior to the revised version of PPG11 due out later this year and it is based on the Bill as it stands at the end of February 2003. In so far as this note advises on RSS arrangements then it is subject to change in the light of what Parliament decides in relation to the new Bill. The revised PPG11 will also have to wait for the outcome of the Parliamentary process and will be issued in readiness for the commencement of Parts 1 and 2 of the Bill.

**1.2** It is important that the introduction of the new system does not lead to any delay in the review of development plans. RPBs and local planning authorities should discuss how current work on the review of structure, local and unitary plans can quickly and effectively be assimilated into the proposed new development plan system of RSSs and Local Development Frameworks (see definition at para 6 of annex A).

**1.3** This guidance advises on the critical actions RPBs should endeavour to undertake from now, a summary of which is set out below:

- define the areas or issues for which a sub-regional approach will be needed with planning authorities, the Government Office and other stakeholders as appropriate (see paragraph 4.3);
- be ready to enter into agency agreements, as appropriate, with selected strategic planning authorities (county, unitary and National Park authorities) in the region on commencement of Parts 1 and 2 of the Bill (see paragraph 7.3 and paragraphs 13-14 of Annex A);
- carry out discussions with the full range of planning authorities and stakeholders about the way in which revisions to the RPG/RSS should be developed (see paragraph 15 of Annex A and paragraphs 2.02-2.09 of PPG11);
- produce a timetable for the review of all, or parts, of the RPG/RSS (see paragraph 2.10 of PPG11);
- agree with strategic planning authorities and GOs a programme of studies, where appropriate, to deal with sub regional issues (see paragraph 4.3);
- agree with strategic planning authorities and GOs the balance of work on completing structure plans and developing the new approach to strategic planning (see paragraph 9 of Annex B); and
- set in place appropriate arrangements for delivering an annual monitoring and implementation report by end December 2003 (see paragraph 6.4).

**1.4** In addition this note advises on:

- style and content of the RPG/RSS revisions;
- stakeholder involvement;
- locational specificity and sub-regional content;
- co-ordination with other strategies;
- delivery mechanisms, monitoring and implementation; and

- general conformity of Local Development Documents with RSSs

**1.5** A summary of the new RSS arrangements is set out at Annex A.

**1.6** The transitional arrangements (referred to as the 'saving procedure' in this guidance) for Structure Plans are detailed in Annex B.

## **2. Style and content of the RSS**

**2.1** The main principles of RPG set out in PPG11 apply to RSSs. In particular RPG and future RSSs revisions should:

- set out a spatial strategy;
- be concise;
- avoid unnecessary repetition of national policy;
- address specific regional or sub-regional planning issues;
- set out the regional transport strategy (RTS);
- be consistent and supportive of other regional strategies and statements in delivering sustainable development; and
- be outcome-centred and focused on delivery mechanisms.

**2.2** RPGs and RSSs should be spatial strategies. They should set out the strategic policies and proposals, including infrastructure proposals and management policies, governing the future distribution of regionally or sub-regionally significant activities and development within the region. They should not be restricted to matters that can be implemented through the planning system for two main sets of reasons.

**2.3** The first is that RPG/RSS by virtue of its Regional Transport Strategy provides a regional and sub-regional context for the preparation of Local Transport Plans. As such it will need to include, for example, transport investment priorities necessary to deliver the spatial strategy and demand management measures relating to traffic use, provided these can be justified in terms of their land-use consequences. There will be a two-way relationship since the RTS in turn might necessitate changes to the spatial strategy with locations for new housing and commercial development being identified in areas of high public transport accessibility. It will be necessary, therefore, to ensure transport considerations are factored into spatial strategy development at an early stage and any investment priorities identified are capable of being delivered. In doing so the involvement of the Highways Agency and the Strategic Rail Authority will be important.

**2.4** The second is that as a spatial strategy RPG/RSS should also inform and take account of other strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land-use activities, including air quality, culture, education, energy, health, soil use, rural development and strategies to adapt to the effects of climate change. Policies in RPG/RSS should have a spatial dimension and help guide activity to appropriate parts of the region, but not all need to be expressed in terms of how they can be implemented through the planning system. For example, it may be appropriate to include a policy on spatial priorities for regeneration activity and investment.

**2.5** In particular, RPG/RSS should be carefully co-ordinated with three other key regional strategies: the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy (formerly the Regional Housing Statement) and the Regional Cultural Strategy. Further advice on co-ordination between these strategies is set out in section 5.

**2.6** Ultimately the policies and proposals in a spatial plan must be linked to the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives concerning the use and development of land. Any policies and proposals in RPG/RSS, which cannot primarily be delivered through the development plan or local transport plan process, should be clearly identified and the means of delivery clarified in agreement with the bodies concerned. The outcome nature of the RPG/RSS supported by an implementation plan as part and parcel of the strategy is central (see section 6).

**2.7** RPGs/RSSs should be concise. They can include annexes which should be treated as part of the RPG/RSS. RPGs/RSSs should cross-refer to supporting documents and published technical detail rather than include this material.

**2.8** RPGs/RSSs should not repeat or summarise national policy. National policy will apply unless a regional justification for not doing so is supported by the Panel following a Public Examination (EiP) and accepted by the Secretary of State. The last round of RPGs provided a number of examples of policies that are simply repetition of national policy, which in the future should be avoided. RPGs/RSSs should provide the spatially specific guidance on where and how national policies apply in the region.

**2.9** RSSs are, as the title suggests, regional strategies. Only policies that are regionally or sub-regionally specific should be included. This would include policies that are tailored to address specific circumstances in a region and policies and proposals that are geographically specific (examples of these can be found at Annex C). Policies that are too "local" and would be better suited to a LDF (or a Local Transport Plan) should not be included in the RSS.

**2.10** Compared to RPG, the RSS will in part replace the structure plan. The need for more sub-regional definition of the RSS compared to current RPG is discussed below.

### **3. Stakeholder involvement**

**3.1** PPG11, the Planning Green Paper and the July Policy Statement all emphasise the importance of stakeholder involvement. The most recent round of RPG reviews since PPG11 has involved wide consultation and the involvement of stakeholders through an inclusive Steering Group and the use of inclusive topic groups. This best practice needs to continue and be developed even further. This should in the context of RPBs being constituted on an inclusive basis (see annex A).

## 4. Sub-regional planning

**4.1** The focus of the new system on sub-regions provides a creative opportunity for strategic planning to focus on functional planning rather than being constrained by administrative boundaries. Improvements to both data collection and information systems should also mean that planning data is available on a more flexible basis, and can be aggregated for functional sub-regions.

**4.2** Sub-regional planning will be critical to the delivery of the strategy set out in "Sustainable communities: building for the future" (ODPM, February 2003) both in respect of planning for the growth areas and in tackling low demand and abandonment.

**4.3** In preparing revisions to RPG/RSS, and consistent with existing guidance, RPBs (which here and elsewhere are referred to as "planning bodies" rather than "planning authorities") should ensure that they:

- a. where appropriate to the review, set out sufficiently clear sub-regional objectives and policies in the draft RPG/RSS revisions to enable planning authorities to consider the sub-regional implications for development plan documents and major development proposals. Sub-regional issues in the RPG/RSS context will often cut across strategic planning authority boundaries;
- b. work with planning authorities, including district councils where appropriate, in identifying these sub-regional issues, including the definition of specific sub-regions where appropriate. However, this does not necessarily mean that the entire region should be split into sub-regions;
- c. take the lead in developing a work programme with planning authorities, particularly strategic planning authorities, and other stakeholders for tackling these sub-regional issues to ensure that the work on the RPG/RSS revisions (which may involve more than one RSS) and any associated work on structure plan reviews is tackled in a consistent way. The other stakeholders will, for example, include local transport authorities and other transport stakeholders where appropriate to ensure transport considerations are fully taken into account in any sub-regional work;
- d. consider the need for sub-regional studies for particular areas to inform sub-regional policies in an RPG/RSS or even several RPGs/RSSs. It is expected that, where appropriate, work being carried out by strategic planning authorities for structure plan purposes will contribute to agreed sub-regional studies to ensure the most effective use of scarce planning resources. For this and policy reasons sub-regional working should be of benefit to both the RPB and the strategic planning authorities;
- e. consider with planning authorities whether joint studies and policy development could inform both revisions to the RPG/RSS and development plan or LDF production;
- f. agree the partners who would be involved in taking forward any sub-regional studies;
- g. wherever possible specify broad locations for development of regional or sub-regional significance, and in any event establish sub-regional locational criteria; and
- h. consider what arrangements are necessary to ensure the sub-regional implementation of RPG/RSS policies.

**4.4** It will be the responsibility of the RPB, in consultation with planning authorities and other stakeholders to identify the circumstances in which a sub-regional approach to spatial policy development is required. When making this assessment, RPBs should be mindful of the following two key principles:

- the definition of need for a sub-regional approach should be based on an assessment of the functional relationships between settlements or land uses within the area affected by the same strategic planning issue which may well differ from pre-existing administrative boundaries. This could include consideration, for example, of how the strategic planning system can assist not only in creating and sustaining the economic competitiveness of cities, but in spreading the benefits of a prosperous city to the wider region i.e the concept of the city region as a sub-region of the RPG/RSS; and
- sub-regional definition should be based on a clearly recognisable 'strategic policy deficit' which cannot be adequately addressed by general RPG/RSS policy or by individual or joint development plan or LDF documents. It is likely that in some cases the most appropriate way to tackle planning issues which cross administrative boundaries will be through joint approaches to the production of development plan or LDF documents. The RPB may encourage the relevant local planning authorities to produce a joint development plan or LDF. However, where there are sub-regional strategic issues which cannot be tackled through a joint plan, it would be appropriate to have sub-regional policies as part of the RPG/RSS.

**4.5** Exceptionally, it may be necessary to develop a non-statutory sub-regional strategy to address issues that cut across regional boundaries. This non-statutory strategy can then inform the preparation of RPG/RSS revisions in two or more regions. It may be appropriate for these RPG/RSS revisions to be considered at one EiP.

**4.6** An important aspect of the revisions to RSSs will be the distribution of housing down to district level. This is an important geographic expression of the regional strategy. The RPB will co-ordinate this work and actively involve planning authorities and other stakeholders in the process of determining appropriate numbers that reflect the strategic objectives for the region. In some cases it may be sensible to group these as sub-regions in order to take account of other sub-regional policies and functional relationships.

**4.7** In carrying out sub-regional planning as part of an RPG/RSS review it is important to follow the guidelines on locational specificity set out in PPG11. The current versions of RPG are in part insufficiently locationally specific and some of the policies could be applied to anywhere in the country. However, in preparing RPG/RSS reviews RPBs should avoid being site specific for the reasons explained in PPG11 (see paras 3.11 to 3.14).

## **5. Co-ordination with other regional strategies**

**5.1** Overarching objectives and priorities for sustainable development in each region are set out in up-to-date regional sustainable development frameworks (RSDFs). The names given to RSDFs vary from region to region but they are all developed and kept under review by key partners, including Regional Chambers, Government Offices, Regional Development Agencies, business, local authorities, charities and voluntary groups. They are endorsed by the Regional Chamber and inform other regional strategies including both RPG and Regional Economic Strategies. PPG11 advises that the RPG needs to take account of objectives, policies and programmes specified by the RSDF. The options being canvassed in reviewing the RPG/RSS should be tested through the appraisal process for their contribution to delivery of the objectives, priorities and targets set out in the RSDF. Further advice on the role of the RSDF is set out in "*Guidance on Preparing Regional Sustainable Development Frameworks*" published by DETR in February 2000.

**5.2** RPGs/RSSs should cross-refer to rather than repeat other regional strategies. In doing so it is important that the RPG/RSS is supportive of other regional strategies in delivering sustainable development. Three key strategies are the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy (the former Regional Housing Statement) and the Regional Cultural Strategy. Advice on these is set out in chapters 4, 5 and 8 of PPG11. RPG/RSS should take account of how the various regional strategies fit together and where relevant the relationships between the delivery mechanisms. Although it is not the job of RPGs/RSSs to be the tools for integration, their development can have an important role to play. In particular RPGs/RSSs should provide the longer term planning framework for other regional strategies.

**5.3** As the White Paper on "*Your Region, Your Choice*" (DTLR, May 2002) acknowledged, regions have already made progress in joining up these different types of regional strategy. A good example is the "East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS)" published in February 2001. It sets out a vision for the region under four themes: social, environmental, economic and spatial. RPG is the key spatial strategy in the framework. The East Midlands IRS details how action can be integrated across component strategies and is a development of the RSDF in that region.

**5.4** In Yorkshire and the Humber an overarching regional strategy "Advancing Together" was the starting point for the RES and RPG. Both were prepared concurrently and were subject to a joint sustainability appraisal. The 2002/03 reviews of the RES and RPG have again been closely linked and subject to a joint sustainability appraisal in the context of the RSDF.

**5.5** The White Paper on "*Your Region, Your Choice*" (DTLR, May 2002) emphasises that the Government will promote a constructive dialogue between the Regional Chambers and Government-funded bodies in each region, building on existing best practice. The transfer of responsibility for regional planning from local authority only bodies to the Chambers is assisting this.

**5.6** The White Paper also announced that the Government Offices would provide a forum for other public sector bodies in a region to review their high-level strategies and improve read-across between them. Since then in "*Sustainable communities: building for the future*" (ODPM, February 2003) the Government has announced a further mechanism for ensuring greater regional strategy integration. The new regional housing boards will help ensure that regional housing strategies reflect the overarching framework established in the RSDF, are co-ordinated with economic and planning strategies, and facilitate sub-regional approaches to housing problems extending beyond individual local authority boundaries.

## **6. Delivery mechanisms, monitoring and implementation**

**6.1** PPG11 advises that in RPG there should be a clear link between the strategy's objectives, policies and implementation programmes. Policies should, therefore, be linked to targets and indicators wherever possible. RPG/RSS policies should make clear (either in each policy or at the end of the relevant chapter) how they are to be delivered through development plans, local transport plans, and other strategies, plans and programmes. Where practical, process/implementation targets should be set in terms of the key policy principles, proposals and actions which the RPB will look to see in lower order strategies, plans and programmes. Where appropriate these should be accompanied by a timescale, which will deliver the desired RPG/RSS outputs and outcomes. Therefore an implementation plan for delivery should be part and parcel of the RPG/RSS. Output targets should also be set for real world developments, such as housing completions. Detailed guidance is contained in ODPM's good practice guidance "Monitoring RPG: Good Practice Guidance on Targets and Indicators" published in November 2002.

**6.2** The successful involvement of stakeholders should go hand in hand with a commitment to implementation by service providers and the commitment of investment and operational plans to help deliver the RPG/RSS. The role of the various delivery agencies should be clearly outlined. There is already good practice in RPG but this needs to be developed further with clear milestones for delivery by the key agencies. An example is demonstrated in the table at the end of each chapter in RPG12 for Yorkshire and the Humber. Where, as in the case of certain transport schemes, further appraisal work is required before a delivery timetable can be confirmed the RPG/RSS will need to clarify the status of the relevant scheme/ priority clearly.

**6.3** Monitoring should be a continuous pro-active process with monitoring reports produced by RPBs on an annual basis. The reports should focus on the outcome of the scrutiny of plans and strategies and associated progress with the implementation programme and the real world impacts of the RPG/RSS. They can act as triggers for RPG/RSS reviews. Detailed advice on format and content is contained in the ODPM good practice guidance on 'Monitoring Regional Planning Guidance' (OPPM, November 2002).

**6.4** It is the Department's intention to introduce a reporting and publication date of end December at the latest for these annual monitoring and implementation reports. Under the Bill they are required to be submitted to the Secretary of State. Given their importance in understanding how policy is being implemented and whether further RSS reviews are needed as a consequence, they can be expected to be the subject of discussion with both the Government Offices and other stakeholders both before and after publication.

## **7. General Conformity of LDFs with RSSs**

**7.1** Under the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill the RPB will provide its opinion on whether the submitted local development plan document is in general conformity with the RSS within the period prescribed in regulations. The emphasis is on general conformity and the RPB will need to focus on whether the spatial strategy, set out in the draft development plan document, is in general conformity with the strategy set out in the RSS. A first step in establishing conformity will be self-assessment by the local planning authority (LPA). Each LPA will be expected to provide the RPB with a statement explaining how any new development plan documents conform to the RSS.

**7.2** It is recognised that this will result in an increase in RPB workloads which is one of the reasons why additional resources are being directed to the RPBs from the planning delivery grant. Although it should be noted that RPBs should already be monitoring to what extent development plans are implementing RPG.

**7.3** One of the ways in which this might be implemented is through the RPB entering into agency agreements with the county councils, unitary authorities and National Park authorities under the terms of the new Bill. In such instances, these authorities could act as consultants to the RPB and advise on conformity issues.

## **Annex A: Outline of Proposed RSS Arrangements (under the Bill and regulations as at February 2003)**

**1.** RPG will be replaced by Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) which unlike regional planning guidance will form part of the development plan for purposes of determining planning applications.

**2.** Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) will be recognised by the Secretary of State (SofS) providing certain criteria to be specified in regulations or guidance are met. These are likely to be Regional Chambers. All RPBs should be constituted on an inclusive basis, not just represent local authorities, and members should be treated on an equal basis.

**3.** The Regional Chambers will be funded directly by the SofS under provisions in the Regional Assemblies (Preparations) Bill, subject to Royal Assent.

**4.** Each RPB will be under a duty to:

- keep the RSS under review;
- keep under review matters affecting development in the region;
- prepare draft revisions of the RSS;
- carry out a sustainability appraisal of RSS proposals;
- monitor the implementation of the RSS;
- prepare an annual monitoring report on the delivery and performance of the RSS and submit it to the SofS;
- where appropriate, advise relevant bodies on the preparation/ revision of policies etc relevant to the implementation of the RSS; and
- send its opinion on the question of general conformity of a local development document with the RSS to the SofS and the local planning authority.

**5.** In preparing a draft revision of an RSS the RPB should have regard to:

- current national policies and guidance issued by the SofS;
- current RSS for adjoining regions and the Wales Spatial Plan or the London Mayor's SDS if appropriate;
- the resources likely to be available for implementing the RSS; and
- other matters which may be prescribed by the SofS.

**6.** The new type of local plans and supplementary planning guidance - collectively called the Local Development Framework - must be in general conformity with the RSS. Although the term 'LDF' is not used in the Bill it refers to the folder of all the local planning authority's local development documents. Some of these documents will be subject to statutory requirements as to consultation and formal testing through an independent procedure and will form part of the development plan (called development plan documents). There will also be less formal non-statutory documents which will have the same status as supplementary planning guidance under the existing system.

**7.** County councils will continue to have important strategic planning responsibilities in assisting RPBs with the preparation and review of the new RSSs and in providing advice and information to districts in preparing the new local development documents. They will be statutory consultees in relation to the preparation of both draft revisions to RSSs and development plan documents.

**8.** County councils will not lose funding through the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) as a result of no longer preparing structure plans.

**9.** Strategic planning authorities should contribute positively to spatial planning, for example, in respect of public service and infrastructure provision to underpin sustainable communities. For instance, through engagement with local strategic partnerships and regional partnerships, they may be able to advise on the spatial interrelationship between development and public service provision or infrastructure. As local transport authorities, county councils are likely to continue to prepare local transport plans, even where they are not required to by Government. Where appropriate they are encouraged to prepare these jointly with neighbouring authorities.

**10.** County councils will retain responsibility for minerals and waste planning, and will prepare Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks for their areas. These are similar to LDFs and are folders of the county council's planning documents but relating to minerals and waste only.

**11.** In addition to their minerals and waste responsibilities, where it is agreed locally county councils will also be partners in the production of local development documents under the joint committee arrangements provided for in clause 28 of the Bill.

**12.** Under the Bill county councils will be under a duty to keep under review those matters that may be expected to affect the development of their area in relation to county matters. Under regulations they will also have other survey functions recognising the importance of the data collected and analysis undertaken by the counties in relation to both regional and local planning tiers.

**13.** RPBs will be able to appoint county councils, unitary authorities and National Park authorities as their agents in relation to:

- providing technical expertise to assist with the RSS review, including in the district distribution of housing figures;
- assisting in or taking the lead as appropriate in sub-regional work specified by the RPB;
- assisting the RPB on general conformity issues;
- monitoring and advising district councils on LDFs and making representations on planning applications where regional or sub-regional considerations are raised; and
- any other RSS planning related function which the RPB may specify.

**14.** RPBs will be responsible for establishing the agency arrangements, including the precise role of the agent and the level of reimbursement, if any. These arrangements should be in the form of service level agreements which specify clearly the contribution to regional planning each relevant authority will make, together with specific agreed targets for any activities contained in the agreement. Each agency agreement will set out clearly those activities which the authority will provide as part of its contribution to the regional agenda and those items which may be chargeable to the RPB. These are likely to be specifically commissioned pieces of work rather than activities the authority would have carried out anyway as part of its strategic planning work. This arrangement should be of benefit to both parties. The RPB will gain from the expertise of the strategic planning authority while the latter will gain from being able to use its strategic expertise, data collection and analytical skills in contributing to regional planning work. This could have policy benefits for the strategic planning authority and enable it to maintain valuable planning staff resources which might not otherwise be justified.

**15.** An RPB will be required to consult all planning authorities in its region in reviewing an RSS.

**16.** When a draft revision of an RSS is submitted to the SofS, he or she:

- will allow a period for written representations to be made;
- may cause a public examination to be held;
- where an examination is not held, will consider the written representations received including if necessary through a Panel; and
- will publish the RSS subject to any changes.

**17.** The SofS will have a default power to direct the preparation of a draft revision to an RSS and a power to prepare such a draft revision himself, including where an RPB does not comply with such a direction.

## **Annex B: The Transitional Arrangements ('Saving Procedure') for Structure Plans**

**1.** Structure plans will be 'saved' for a period of three years unless during that period:

- RSS revisions are published, which are expressed to replace the structure plan policies in whole or in part; or
- the Secretary of State (SofS) directs under sub-paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 5 to the Bill that the three-year period does not apply to such structure plan policies as are specified in the direction.

**2.** With regard to the first of these bullet points, if the RPB wishes to replace saved structure plan policies with RSS policies it should identify which policies in the relevant draft RSS revision replace which policies in saved structure plans. This can then be tested at an EiP into the RSS revision. The same principles will apply after the three-year period for those policies included in a direction under sub-paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 5.

**3.** An RPB may of course decide that it does not wish to replace the saved structure plan policies during this three-year period but instead wait for the period to end. At that point, unless otherwise directed by the SofS, the structure plan will cease to have effect as a development plan.

**4.** With regard to the second of the bullet points in paragraph 1, the RPB will need to consider whether any policies in the saved plan should be saved for a longer period. Where an RPB wishes this to be the case then principles along the lines set out below will apply (to be set out in guidance):

- a. it is in general conformity with the RSS for the area;
- b. it does not contain unnecessary policies or merely repeat national policy;
- c. it does not materially alter the underlying policy position from that of the 'saved' plan nor materially change the operation of the policies which are to continue beyond the three-year period, and
- d. even where the policy is not compliant with one or more of the above the SofS considers that it is expedient or appropriate to dis-apply the 'three year limit'.

**5.** The RPB will need to put its case to the SofS for extending the saved period and the SofS can then direct accordingly under sub-paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 5 to the Bill. An example of a structure plan policy which might be extended for more than three years would be housing distribution which was consistent with the RPG and which was specified in the structure plan to the district level. The SofS could then exercise his power of direction to extend the period for the 'saved' policies.

**6.** If there is any conflict between an RSS and a structure plan whichever was adopted, approved or published most recently will take precedence. Any structure plans which are adopted or approved after commencement of Parts 1 & 2 and Section 37 of the Bill will, under sub-paragraph 2 (2) of Schedule 5 of the Bill, be done so under Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. They will not have to be in general conformity with the RSS. However, the RPB may wish to ensure that it makes any necessary representations to be considered at the structure plan EiP so that the structure plan is consistent with the RSS.

**7.** For the purposes of the above where the SofS prescribes that an RPG should be treated as an RSS its publication date will be the date the relevant RPG was published.

**8.** Development plan documents will need to be in general conformity with the RSS. However, where there are saved structure plans, the relevant authority will be free to make representations at the examination into the draft development plan document that the policies should be changed to reflect the structure plan policies. In other words the saved plan will still be a relevant consideration.

**9.** It is desirable to move forward into the new system as quickly as is practicable, and RPBs, in co-ordination with GOs, should look for opportunities to do so. They should therefore encourage county councils and unitary authorities to review their structure plan preparation programmes and re-consider whether it would now be sensible to redirect the resources towards the appropriate elements of the RSS. In some cases, where the remaining period of a structure plan is short, or a review is very well advanced, it may still be appropriate to proceed with the structure plan. However, only in exceptional cases should both a sub-regional programme and a continuing structure plan process be necessary.

## **Annex C: Examples of Policies Tailored to Address Specific Regional or Sub-Regional Circumstances**

### **RPG 6, East Anglian**

#### **Policy 21: Vision and Planning Framework**

The local authorities, supported by EEDA and other local partners, should develop a vision and planning framework for the Cambridge sub-region which will:

- Allow the sub-region to develop further as a world leader in research and technology based industries and the fields of higher education and research;
- Foster the dynamism, prosperity and further expansion of the research and technology based economy;
- Protect and enhance the historic character and setting of Cambridge and the important environmental qualities of the surrounding area;
- Provide a more sustainable balance between rates of growth in jobs and housing, allowing the sub-region to accommodate a higher proportion of the region's housing development;
- Promote a more sustainable and spatially concentrated pattern of locations for development and more sustainable travel patterns;
- Facilitate the provision of an attractive, accessible, ecologically rich countryside;
- Secure development of the highest quality;
- Provide a high quality of life and seek to avoid social exclusion, including by addressing the issue of housing affordability in the area;
- Be based on a co-ordinated approach to development, which maximises and integrates the different sources of investment; and
- Allow scope for, rather than constrain, continuing development beyond 2016.

### **RPG8, East Midlands**

#### **Policy 3 - Priority Areas for Regeneration**

The development plans of the areas of greatest need for regeneration should include proposals to assist the regeneration initiatives of local authorities, regional development agencies and other organisations. These areas are:

- The North Derbyshire/North Nottinghamshire coalfield, with its concentration of economic, social and environmental problems linked to the decline of the coal industry;
- Those parts of the region's urban areas which exhibit very high and concentrated levels of deprivation;
- Peripheral and isolated rural and coastal areas; and
- Those market towns whose hinterlands display high levels of deprivation.

#### **Policy 14 - Storage and Distribution Sites**

If the proposed employment land and freight studies demonstrate a need for regional scale distribution sites, particular attention should be given to the regeneration needs of the Northern Coalfields sub-area, subject to the conclusions of the studies. Development plans should allocate sites away from urban areas where there is good access to transport, to the national road network and where practicable, to a rail freight or water freight facility. Development should not cause unacceptable environmental problems. Where existing sites elsewhere can meet these criteria,

expansion will be a sustainable solution to the region's needs. Local authorities should consider the need to allocate in development plans additional smaller scale storage and distribution facilities to serve local markets.

### **Policy 79 - East Midlands Airport**

#### **Development plans and local transport plans should:**

- Provide for the further operational expansion of EMA within its boundaries subject to rigorous assessment of the full range of impacts;
- Consider the surface access needs of EMA as part of the wider transport strategy for the area;
- Assess the measures necessary to increase the share of trips to EMA made by public transport in accordance with agreed targets;
- Seek to ensure that transport proposals are compatible with the need to create effective public transport links to EMA for the long-term;
- Identify and safeguard land for improving access to EMA, particularly by non-car modes, and including a fixed rail link to support expansion in the long-term;
- Give particular encouragement to the transfer of freight traffic generated by EMA from road to rail; and
- Seek to ensure that travel plans are brought forward for new development at EMA.

### **Policy 83 - Controlling Urban Form in the Three Cities Sub-Area**

The principle of a Nottingham-Derby Green Belt is well established and should be maintained. Development plans should control urban form by maintaining the well established principle of a Nottingham-Derby Green Belt and have regard to the need to protect valued green space.

### **Policy 85 - Development in the Peak Sub-Area**

Development plans should help to secure the conservation and enhancement of the Peak District National Park, respecting the statutory purpose of its designation. Policies should also address the social and economic needs of the Park's communities for example by the development of appropriate business and affordable housing. Traffic should be diverted away from the National Park where possible. Access to it and across it by public transport and other non-car modes should be improved.

### **RPG12, Yorkshire and the Humber**

#### **Policy SOC3 (a) - Retail and Leisure Facilities**

No further out-of-centre regional or sub-regional shopping centres or large scale-expansion of those that exist, including those at Meadowhall and White Rose, should be permitted.

### **Policy S2 - Regeneration Priority Areas**

The priority for regional regeneration initiatives and programmes will be:

- first - South Yorkshire and the Coalfields (particularly the Dearne Valley Development Zone)

- second - the more deprived parts of the older industrial areas and the remote rural and coastal areas

Within these areas it can be expected that there will be the greatest need to target funding and encourage mobile investment in order to support regeneration initiatives.

Outside these areas local planning authorities may define local regeneration zones within their development plans to focus investment on areas of greatest needs.