

Regional Spatial Strategies: Guide to Producing Regional Transport Strategies

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview of Regional Transport Strategies

1.1 Regional Transport Strategies (RTS) are an important element of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), which set out a broad development strategy for each region for at least 15 years ahead. The RSS should identify, amongst other things, the scale and distribution of future provision for new housing, the priorities for economic development, long term environmental and social considerations and the implications for transport needs and priorities within the overall framework of sustainable development. Planning Policy Statement 11 (PPS11) outlines the scope of a RSS and the requirements for preparing a RTS.

1.2 The underlying aim of a RTS is to provide a long term planning framework for transport in the region. It should be developed as an integral and clearly identifiable part of RSS and contribute towards the integration of realistic and affordable transport, spatial and economic planning policies within the RSS. Transport policies and priorities set out in a RTS should be consistent with national policies but they should also reflect and support the aims of the spatial strategy and the plans for housing growth and economic regeneration in the region. Spatial policies need in turn to fully recognise the importance of delivering more sustainable travel patterns and of matching locations of housing, commercial development and key services to areas of high public transport accessibility.

1.3 The RSS needs to take account of several other regional strategies, including the Regional Economic Strategies (RES) produced by Regional Development Agencies. It is only through the successful joining-up of regional strategies for housing, economic development and transport that a fully co-ordinated and coherent approach to sustainable regional development can be achieved. In July 2005 the Government issued details of funding allocations for each of the English regions, outside London, covering housing, economic development and transport. This has been welcomed as assisting regions to achieve a greater alignment of regional strategies and a stronger consensus on the long term policy and investment priorities within each region.

1.4 The RTS also has a critical role in providing a strategic framework for Local Development Documents (LDDs) and Local Transport Plans (LTPs). By focussing on planning policy levers to assist in developing more sustainable travel patterns, the RTS should steer the policies included in LDDs. This will help deliver more appropriate locations for new developments in relation to the existing and planned future transport network.

1.5 The RTS' role in relation to LTPs should focus on policy priorities at the sub-regional level including those that cross LTP area boundaries and on identifying transport measures of regional significance to be taken forward as part of the LTP process. This will include measures that address intra-regional and cross-boundary issues and relate for example to priority areas for regeneration and planned housing growth. The aim should be to add value to the national guidance on LTPs published in December 2004¹. That guidance emphasises the need for local transport authorities to demonstrate that the policies and priorities set out in LTPs are consistent with the RTS. It also makes clear the importance of local authorities considering the feasibility, affordability and value for money of transport measures identified in the RTS before including them in their LTPs. This reinforces the need for effective partnership working between regional bodies, local transport authorities and others in preparing RTS.

Purpose of the guide

1.6 This guide replaces the "Guide to Producing Regional Transport Strategies" published in April 2003. It aims to help improve the quality of RTS and strengthen the linkages between transport and

¹ http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/divisionhomepage/032384.hcsp

spatial and economic planning at the regional level. It is intended as a practical tool for Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs), Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), Government Offices for the Regions (GOs), and other organisations engaged in the RTS process. The guide offers advice on the main issues and considerations in the preparation of a draft RTS by RPBs. It does not deal with matters relating to the Public Examination of the RTS, the Panel Report and any subsequent modifications by the Secretary of State (for Planning). These are covered in PPS 11.

1.7 The guide should be read in conjunction with PPS11. It does not set out an overly prescriptive approach to developing the RTS; there are important differences between the regions which justify varied approaches to the RTS. However the guide does identify examples of good practice capable of wider application across the regions and advises on pitfalls to be avoided in carrying out reviews of the RTS.

Structure of this guide

1.8 The guide is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 outlines the strategic context for the RTS and advises on improving the linkages between the RTS and RSS and achieving better joined-up regional strategies.
- Chapter 3 provides advice on the preparation of the draft RTS, from the use of evidence-based analysis to identify problems, opportunities and issues for the region through to the setting of objectives and development of policies.
- Chapter 4 considers the content of the RTS, in particular the transport issues of regional significance that will need to be addressed in developing the RTS.
- Chapter 5 deals with the translation of objectives and policies into management and investment priorities; considers alternative options for achieving objectives; outlines a potential framework for determining the relative priority of transport proposals; and advises on setting out an implementation plan.

Chapter 2 - A joined up strategic vision

A shared vision of the region's future that sets out how the region will capitalise on its assets and improve its economic, environmental and social well-being and has clear objectives for joining-up and integrating strategies for delivery

Summary

2.1 The White Paper, *The Future of Transport*², set out the Government's long-term strategy for transport. This is based around three central themes:

- **Sustained investment:** spending by the Department for Transport will rise by an annual average of 4.5% between 2005-06 and 2007-08, and is planned to continue to grow in real terms through to 2015.
- **Improvements in transport management:** for example, the reorganisation of the rail industry set out in the White Paper, *The Future of Rail*, is improving performance and driving down cost; and the Highways Agency is taking steps to improve management of traffic flows on the national road network.
- **Planning ahead:** the Eddington study is considering how transport can contribute most effectively to national productivity over the period to 2030; the White Paper, *The Future of Aviation*, set out a clear long-term vision around which the UK's aviation industry can plan ahead; and the Government is leading the debate in how road pricing can help tackle congestion.

2.2 This strategy will enable us to anticipate and manage the pressures that a growing economy and an increasing demand for travel will bring for our transport infrastructure over the next 20 to 30 years, in a way which recognises that simply providing ever more capacity - even where this is feasible - is not always the answer. And it will help local authorities, businesses and individuals to plan effectively and to make better choices.

2.3 RTS need to operate within this overall context. They should provide an analysis of the transport needs of the region, set out plans for addressing these needs and identify priorities for action. Transport needs and issues cannot though be viewed in isolation from economic, environmental and social considerations. Transport demands are influenced by, and should also influence, the location of housing and employment-related developments. Transport measures also support priority areas for economic development.

2.4 The RTS needs, therefore, to be developed with a view to ensuring consistency with the housing and land use policies in the spatial strategy (RSS) and other regional strategies, in particular the RDAs' economic strategies. The RSS is in turn subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which requires an analysis to be carried out of the social, economic and environmental impacts at various stages of preparation of the RSS (the RTS is not subject to a separate SA as it is an integral part of RSS). Guidance on Sustainability Appraisals - "*Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks*" - was published by the then OPDM in November 2005.³

2.5 If strategies are to be joined up successfully, they must be mutually reinforcing in policy terms and implemented in a co-ordinated way. The launch of regional funding guidelines figures covering transport, housing and economic development should help secure the better alignment of strategies and a more co-ordinated implementation across programmes and delivery agents.

² Cm 6234, July 2004, see especially para 7.28

³<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1161341>

Making linkages with the main themes of the spatial strategy

2.6 The RTS is an integral part of RSS and therefore should reflect and refer specifically to the key themes of the wider spatial strategy, for example housing, regeneration and policies for a region's urban and rural areas. Thus, if one of the main aims of the spatial strategy is to concentrate growth on particular major urban areas, the RTS should include specific transport policies to support this goal.

2.7 The spatial strategy must be developed in turn with a full appreciation of the transport issues and policies. While land use planning is focused on facilitating development, the strategy should not assume that transport infrastructure investment will follow as a matter of course. It will depend on the region's assessment of priorities within projected available resources which will be set out in indicative funding allocations. The strategy should also be influenced by and take account of the availability of capacity in the public transport network and the plans for its future development.

Integration with Regional Economic Strategies

2.8 There should be a two-way, non-hierarchical relationship between RSS/RTS and RDAs' economic strategies (RES). There may be important areas of overlap between the regional strategies, in particular the identification of locations for employment-related development both on greenfield and brownfield sites, and the extent of focus given to existing centres for commercial development (shops and offices). The plans and priorities for the management and development of the transport infrastructure set out within the RTS are key issues in developing the regional economy.

2.9 The relationship and the interactions between the RSS/RTS and RES should be explicitly recognised in each strategy. The RSS should shape the pattern of economic development and address in its policies and priorities the transport demand arising from that development. It is not sufficient for the RSS to refer in highly generalised terms to priorities needing to reflect objectives in the RES. Similarly, consideration within RES of issues relating to regeneration and growth proposals and potential private sector investment needs to take account of the impact on transport demand and broader land use and activity patterns, for example possible dispersion from major urban areas and traffic generation impacts of development. The statutory guidance to RDAs on RES⁴ underlines the need for the RES to take account of the spatial and transport priorities in the RSS.

2.10 The RTS should indicate how transport measures and infrastructure proposals will support the policies and specific priorities for economic development. For example, if the RES includes defined areas or sub-regions for regeneration (such as Objective One or Two areas, or areas with major brownfield sites), as well as key areas of economic growth (such as specific city centres or high technology corridors) the RTS should show how these elements of the RES are to be supported through committed or planned policies and/or investment.

Achieving Joined-Up Strategies

2.11 In many regions, the regional organisations have agreed frameworks to help develop closer integration and consistency between the different regional strategies. For example, in the East Midlands the regional bodies have developed an Integrated Regional Strategy, which incorporates a common overarching set of objectives for all the main regional strategies. In the Yorkshire & the Humber region, the RPB and RDA, together with the Government Office, have established a shared vision for the region and set out objectives for delivering this vision. Details of these initiatives are given in the boxes below.

East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy
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⁴<http://www.dti.gov.uk/regional/regional-dev-agencies/regional-economic-strategies/page19357.html>

The strategy document incorporates a framework for developing integration between the main regional strategies. It promotes sustainable development by helping to ensure, for example, that economic ambitions are not met at the expense of the environment and that decisions about land and buildings do not perpetuate social exclusion. Indicators and targets have been devised to measure the achievements of these strategies against the overarching objectives

The strategy document is currently being updated but the existing strategy is available at: <http://www.emra.gov.uk/irs/index.asp>

2.12 These initiatives have helped clarify the linkages between the various strategies and enhance the level of co-operation between the key regional bodies. Based on experience in these two regions, RPBs, RDAs and other regional stakeholders should consider developing an overarching strategy or vision for their region that places sustainable development at its core.

2.13 These may usefully provide a strategic context for the setting of objectives, policies and priorities in respective strategies and encourage a more joined-up approach across regional strategies generally. They may also help to provide a framework for the setting of objectives for the RSS Sustainability Appraisal.

The Vision and Strategic Framework - Advancing Together (Yorkshire and the Humber)

The vision statement draws together the region's plans and strategies - at regional, sub-regional and local levels. It provides a framework for informing, integrating and directing strategic decision making for the region. It also identifies a set of indicators for monitoring and evaluating progress in delivering the vision.

The vision statement is available at:

<http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk/index.cfm?routine=content&channel=Library&contentid=215>

Chapter 3 - Preparation of the RTS

Summary

3.1 As Chapter 2 explained, the focus in producing the RTS should initially be on developing a shared understanding amongst regional partners of the main transport, land use and economic development issues facing the region. That understanding needs to be firmly grounded in analytical evidence from a range of sources. Collaboration and consultation are vital in reaching a consensus on the key issues facing the region, in framing objectives to address problems, opportunities and issues identified by the analysis and in drawing together policies to achieve the objectives. That means that key stakeholders need to be closely involved - and from an early stage - in drawing up the RTS, for instance, infrastructure providers such as the Highways Agency.

The format of the RTS

3.2 PPS11 states that the RTS should be *an integral and clearly identifiable part of RSS*. This is likely to be best achieved by making the RTS a separate and distinct chapter in the RPG and by making clear the inter-connections with the wider spatial strategy and policies in other chapters of RPG. As it is only one aspect of the RSS, the RTS should be succinct in that it should cross-refer to, rather than repeat, the content of other chapters. For instance, where RSSs include an early chapter outlining the overarching spatial strategy for the region and specific sub-regions transport issues and priorities should be included in this chapter and reflected and expanded on in any transport chapter. There are other considerations in developing a succinct RTS. Contextual material, background analysis and description of the region's transport network and related land-use issues can be set out in a background document (see para 3.7).

Analysis and problem identification

3.3 The analysis should bring together an assessment of the main features of the transport system in the region and include an assessment of the problems to be addressed by the strategy, and the underlying causes of those problems. The box below describes what the analysis should aim to deliver.

A robust, evidence-based assessment of:

- pressures on and deficiencies in the transport network and services forecast over the next twenty years;
- the main locations proposed to accommodate forecast population, housing and economic growth, as well as the location of major environmental pressure points and constraints on growth;
- transport management, investment and policy options for dealing with forecast growth in travel demand and supporting the spatial policies;
- the changes in travel patterns and impact on travel demand of the forecast trends;
- the impact of alternative land-use and transport management and investment options on the economy, regeneration, the environment, social cohesion, and sustainability of the region. This will help to ensure that transport considerations can inform the development of land use and economic strategies.

3.4 RPBs should make full use of technical studies and/or modelling frameworks already available in the region, including technical analysis available from multi-modal studies of parts of the strategic

transport network. Work commissioned by the Highways Agency, DfT Rail and Network Rail, including the Regional Planning Assessments and Route Utilisation Strategies underway or planned for each region, are other relevant sources of analysis. Further information about the availability of regional and sub-regional transport and other official statistics that may be useful can be found in the DfT Regional Transport Statistics publication, accessible via the Statistics area of the Department's website, http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcst?n=6875&l=1. The sub-national statistics enquiry point can be contacted by phone (020 7944 4746) or by e-mail (subnational.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk).

3.5 Information from local authorities on levels of accessibility to services, from the strategic accessibility assessments carried out as part of the development of authorities' LTPs, may also help inform the background analysis at the sub-regional level.

3.6 As part of the preparation for reviews of the RSS and RTS, the RPB should, as a first step, review the evidence it intends to rely upon in producing the draft strategy. It is for the RPB, working with regional stakeholders and delivery agencies, to satisfy itself there are no gaps in analytical evidence critical to the assessment of the region's needs and to underpinning the objectives, policies and priorities in the strategy. Where gaps are identified, further work should be commissioned by the RPBs and their regional partners as soon as possible.

3.7 It would not be appropriate to set out all of the analysis and evidence underpinning the RTS in the document itself. It should instead be widely available in a separate background document (see box below), referred to and referenced in the RTS itself, which should also make clear the source of the evidence. The RTS should outline briefly the context for the strategy, by summarising the main transport and spatial development challenges, issues, and priorities identified in the analysis. It should generally be sufficient for the RTS document to set out the most important elements of the evidence used to support the RTS policies and the identification of priorities.

Suggested coverage of analysis in background note

- **General profile of the region.** Analysis of the main priorities for the spatial strategy; a profile of the region's transport network on a regional and sub-regional basis; and the key transport connections with other regions.
- **Profile and analysis of the transport network.** Maps of the transport network indicating areas and points of congestion and pressure; analysis of the main safety issues; and identification of the transport nodes where opportunities exist for improvements in integration of modes and networks of regional significance.
- **Transport land-use analysis.** Analysis to identify the main transport opportunities, problems, issues and priorities in relation to the priorities of the spatial strategy and planned patterns of spatial development in the region. This should include:
 - identifying highly accessible locations as well as areas where transport improvements may be required to support the spatial strategy;
 - identifying strategic transport requirements to help support the priorities of the regional spatial strategy, in particular major planned development areas, main locations proposed to accommodate population, and main areas for regeneration and growth;
 - identifying environmental designations and pressure points, and areas where developing more sustainable travel patterns is important to the wider spatial strategy;

- assessing the impact on the region of current national and cross-regional initiatives; and
- consideration of specific transport infrastructure issues such as airports, ports and freight interchanges of particular relevance to the region.
- **Scenario testing.** Development and assessment of a series of land-use and transport policy scenarios. This should test out the impact of variations to the spatial strategy on housing, the economy and regeneration and the implications for transport requirements in the region.

Setting Objectives

3.8 PPS11 underlines the importance of an objectives-led approach for the RSS/RTS. Objectives should stem from the issues and problems identified in the analysis and in turn provide the basis for the development of options for policies and priorities. RPBs should also take account of the guidance on Sustainability Appraisals of RSS, which explains that RSS objectives should be consistent with sustainable development objectives.

3.9 The key considerations in setting objectives are described in the box below.

Key considerations in setting RTS objectives

- The focus should be on broad land use and the wider policy priorities of the spatial strategy and not on narrow transport issues.
- Objectives should be regionally-specific and add value to national policy.
- The setting of objectives should be an iterative process and amended as necessary to ensure that they can be realistically achieved within the RTS timeframe.

3.10 The objectives should make clear how the RTS will support the wider spatial strategy and its main social, economic and environmental priorities, The RPBs should seek to gain consensus on the objectives through building up a shared understanding of the issues facing the region but it should not be at the cost of an overly general "lowest common denominator" approach.

3.11 The tendency has been for RTS objectives to repeat or restate national policy objectives and to lack regional specificity. This can make it difficult to understand what the policies and priorities are seeking to achieve. The objectives should differentiate between different parts of the region, whether sub-regions, areas for growth or regeneration or urban and rural areas. They also need to be realistic; it is unhelpful for example to set objectives which depend on measures not capable of being delivered within the RTS timeframe. Examples of the sort of specific objectives that would be appropriate to a RSS/RTS are set out in the box below.

Examples of specific objectives

- Support regeneration by enhancing accessibility in (specified) priority areas for regeneration.
- Improve and develop more sustainable regional and sub-regional transport links and services with key international transport gateways (airports, ports, and international rail stations) in or close to the region.

- Facilitate urban renaissance by developing the transport network to support the key policy of the spatial strategy to concentrate growth and development on the principal urban areas in the region.
- Support economic development by improving accessibility to and from (specified) remote and peripheral parts of the region, including rural areas and tourism destinations.
- In the (specified) most congested parts of the region, to take forward measures to manage travel demand and improve public transport to major travel generating employment locations.
- Tackle congestion and reduce pollution on the road network in a (specified) key transport corridor with an integrated range of infrastructure and service improvements across different modes.
- Improve accessibility and capacity on public transport networks serving the major urban commercial centre in the region, to help maintain and enhance its role as a key economic driver for the region.

Policies and proposed solutions

3.12 The RTS should set out policies and proposed solutions for addressing the problems and issues identified in the analysis and the objectives for the wider spatial strategy. It should explain how national transport policies and programmes will be delivered in each region, and outline the transport and land use policies and measures that will together support the spatial strategy. It should also identify policies for addressing pan-regional issues, where appropriate.

3.13 Policies are likely to involve a combination of measures, from land use policies on the location of development and environmental measures through to solutions for making best use of the existing transport network, demand management and proposals for new or improved transport infrastructure. The key considerations in developing policies are described below.

RTS Policies: Key Considerations

The RTS should:

- include a clear and reasoned justification for the policies;
- add value to national policy and guidance;
- set out regionally specific policies that distinguish between different parts of the region;
- provide a clear policy framework for cross-boundary work between local authorities.

3.14 Linking policies and proposals to identified problems and objectives ensures that there is a clear and reasoned justification for them. The RTS should explain briefly the rationale and analytical basis for each policy and cross-refer to relevant material in background documents.

3.15 Policies should only be included in the RTS if there is a genuine and distinctive regional dimension to the issue and an appropriate mechanism for a policy response at the regional level. Many RTS have, in the past, included policies that simply duplicate national policies. Policies that generally encourage, for example, the development of traffic management measures or walking and cycling initiatives do not add value to the policy framework set out in national guidance. Similarly initiatives,

such as small-scale road safety improvements which have no regional significance, are best addressed at the local level through Local Transport Plans.

3.16 The RTS should, therefore, avoid referring to general policies or including unnecessary material in relation to local transport initiatives where there is no specific need for distinctive regional policies. It should aim instead to provide a regional context for national policies, and, using the examples above, specify traffic management measures to be targeted at a particular congested transport corridor or spatial area and focus policy on the delivery of a regional or sub-regional cycle network. Below are examples of types of policy that might be included in a RTS.

Examples of types of policies

- Development should be planned to make best use of the existing transport network and, other than within urban areas well served by public transport [define], not located where it is likely to generate high volume person movements close to the junctions of the strategic highway network [define].
- Priority to be given to the development of high quality interchange facilities [broad locations specified] between all modes.
- Development to be located and designed to reduce average journey lengths [quantified] to a major urban area/centre of employment [broad locations specified].
- Maximum levels of parking provision to be adopted for non-residential developments, linked to integrated programme of public transport accessibility improvements [broad locations specified].
- Maximise the use of public transport in areas of high tourist demand [specified] to assist it in attracting investment and improving its attractiveness and accessibility as a tourism destination. [Examples of measures such as concentrating car parking at specific sensitive sites and incorporating bus-based services to key attractions to be included as appropriate].
- Priority to be given to demand responsive transport services to sectors and areas with low accessibility [sectors and areas specified].

3.17 RSS are likely to focus increasingly on adopting a sub-regional approach towards setting objectives and policies. The RTS will need to reflect this approach by indicating how transport measures will contribute to delivering the broad spatial strategy for different sub-areas of the region. It will also need to take account of the shared priorities for transport agreed between the Government and the Local Government Association - tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, safer roads and better air quality. Where the RTS can add value is in identifying how policies and priorities will differ between sub-areas.

3.18 A sub regional approach will also enable the RTS to provide a policy framework for issues and policies that cut across regional boundaries, for key corridors or sub-regional areas that are located in more than one region (e.g. the Thames Gateway or the Trans-Pennine Corridor). This approach will also provide a strategic framework for specific sub-regions where an integrated and coherent approach across Local Transport Plan boundaries is essential to the planning and delivery of policy priorities. This might include issues such as parking standards or the location of major developments, where a consistent approach may be necessary to avoid perverse incentives for development or unhelpful competition between different areas.

3.19 Below is an example of where a sub-regional approach has been adopted to developing a regional strategy and has successfully drawn together the spatial, economic and transport policies appropriate to each particular sub-region.

Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands: Sub-regional approach

The Regional Assembly, working with EMDA and the local authorities, split the region into 5 distinct sub-regions. The overarching objectives of the RSS were redefined into 25 more specific sub-area objectives covering all the sub-regions. Sub-regional policies were determined in relation to the sub-area objectives and these were in turn linked to the main objectives of the RTS set out in the transport investment priorities table. The region was able to demonstrate in its regional strategy how its main objectives would be delivered in each of the sub-regions.

Chapter 4 - The content of the RTS

Summary

4.1 PPS11 identifies a number of topic areas that need to be addressed in developing the RTS. The topics cover:

- managing and improving the trunk road network and local roads of regional or sub-regional significance;
- developing a strategic framework for public transport;
- development of airports and ports;
- promotion of sustainable freight distribution;
- parking policies;
- demand management.

4.2 This chapter seeks to expand on the guidance at Annex B of PPS11, by providing advice on relevant issues of regional significance and suggestions on approaches that might be adopted in specific topic areas.

Managing and improving the road network

4.3 The majority of issues and problems in relation to the road network are likely to be those of congestion and capacity constraints, as reflected in journey times and journey time reliability, road safety and adverse environmental effects. The analysis of existing and future transport problems for the region should indicate where the strategic road network and local roads of regional or sub-regional significance are congested or are likely to be so within the time frame of the RSS and why this is the case.

4.4 It will be necessary to consider the impact of congestion in relation to the objectives of the wider transport and spatial strategy. The RPB should consider what management action, if any, might be taken at the locations where congestion occurs, or could occur if planned development goes ahead, or whether the problems need to be tackled through improvements to other modes, demand management measures or infrastructure investment. In looking at issues and problems on the road network, the RPB should take account of any schemes in the locality that have entered the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvements and major Local Transport Plan schemes that have been approved or are under consideration, including major road and bridge renewals.

4.5 The following categories of problems or measures relating to the roads network should be regarded as regionally significant and therefore included in the RTS:

- measures that are related to an important objective of the spatial strategy (e.g. those serving a priority area for regeneration or area for plan-led expansion, or relieving environmental pressure on a key area for environmental protection);
- measures related to major problems of congestion on the strategic trunk road network;
- measures of congestion or safety problems that cut across the boundaries for different LTP areas;
- projects that will play an important role in improving integration with the national road network, other modes and key transport nodes such as major airports, ports, freight interchanges, or railway stations; and
- measures which are needed to provide service access for regionally significant airport and port expansions.

Strategic Framework for Public Transport

4.6 PPS 11 sets out the development of a strategic framework for public transport as an integral part of the RTS. It envisages taking a more holistic approach to public transport, from rail to bus services, ensuring integration with spatial planning considerations.

4.7 The RPB in the Yorkshire & the Humber region commissioned in this respect a study aimed at developing a framework for encouraging LTPs to adopt an integrated approach to public transport between modes and across local authority boundaries. The initial focus has been on reviewing the existing public transport networks and identifying the main demands for travel between key centres. This has involved analysing journey to work patterns, by mode and in aggregate, and identifying the key corridors for movements or combinations of transport flows of importance to public transport supply.

4.8 This approach has considerable merit, enabling the identification of where services do not necessarily fit current land use patterns, better use of the existing network can be made, and where further improvements are needed to support the spatial strategy. It should also enable the RPB to build up a hierarchy of public transport interchanges (ie, in turn, of regional, sub-regional or local significance) and a network of corridors across all modes which link these interchanges. This should in turn inform the prioritisation of transport measures set out in the RTS.

4.9 This approach should be capable of wider application in other regions, and RPBs should consider adopting similar techniques in developing a strategic public transport framework in their areas.

Airports

4.10 The White Paper, *The Future of Air Transport*, published in December 2003, sets out a strategic framework for the development of airport capacity in the United Kingdom over the next 30 years. It sets out the conclusions of the Government, and of the devolved administrations, where appropriate, on the case for future expansion at airports across the United Kingdom, following extensive study and consultation. RTS should be consistent with national policies set out in the White Paper and address the regional and sub-regional considerations for delivery of these key policies - in particular, surface access requirements. RPBs should consider the surface access issues and priorities for airports in the region based on current levels of air services and any expansion and development outlined in the White Paper. There are also likely to be significant land-use and urbanisation implications and issues for the spatial strategy, which should be considered and investigated alongside the transport issues.

4.11 The RPB should work closely with airport operators and relevant local authorities to ensure that the RTS reflects and informs airport operator master plans and local strategies for delivering more sustainable patterns of surface access to airports. Most regionally significant airports have an Airport Transport Forum to oversee the strategy. Where appropriate, the surface access requirements should be incorporated in the list of priorities. This might involve new infrastructure, services, or travel management measures. Clearly some of these interventions will be fairly local in scale, and the RTS should focus on the overall airport surface access strategy and only specify in detail the more significant infrastructure projects.

4.12 Regional significant surface access proposals are likely to relate to improvements to surface access which affect links and draw traffic from throughout the region, and from other regions. This may involve working jointly with adjoining RPBs to ensure inter-regional access issues are fully addressed. Proposals could include:

- major new public transport infrastructure or services which link to other major national public transport networks;
- road development on the strategic road network which substantially improves access;
- developments that considerably improve access in a particular sub-region (to be part of the sub-regional strategy);

- airport traffic management measures;
- co-ordinated region-wide marketing and through ticketing initiatives.

Ports

4.13 The RTS should provide a strategic steer on the future development of ports and related infrastructure needs. The RPB will need to take account of national policy for ports, as set out in *Modern Ports: a UK Policy* in November 2000 and the role of RPG and RTS in relation to port development is set out in paragraphs 2.5.7 to 2.5.9 of *Modern Ports*. The Government's review of ports policy was initiated by the publication on 22 May 2006 of the discussion document *Ports Policy - Your Views Invited*. The review will take account of emerging RTS. Once a new policy statement has been produced following the review, this will provide the policy context for subsequent RSS and RTS revisions.

4.14 The RPB should consult the main ports in the region with a view to assessing their future development prospects, and to identifying relevant land-use and transport infrastructure needs and priorities. These might include improvements to the transport network in locations distant from the port itself, perhaps even in another region. Where the port's development plans are of regional significance, the RTS should set out proposals for expansion and improved accessibility, where appropriate.

4.15 Many operators (of ports and of other transport undertakings) will be planning longer-term investments, so operators do need to be consulted to ensure the best long-term balance is struck. Likewise, good consultation will help the region's planning and should involve not only the largest operators but also small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Some ports may be able to offer their own independent evidence or model-based analysis. While the largest operators may play significant regional and pan-regional roles, the SME ports collectively may offer significant regional potential often in areas of non-transport activity. SME ports collectively may also offer alternative capacity within the region as contingency cover for larger ones.

4.16 RPBs should recognise that any potential waterside housing developments, and any associated infrastructure, need to work well alongside port operations. Where economically reasonable, ports' needs should be recognised through port land and wharves being safeguarded for potential future development.

4.17 The needs of ports (and port-based business developments) for good road and (where applicable) rail connections to the public network should be recognised. Rail improvements and encouragement of short-sea coastal routes may alleviate road traffic congestion as well as promote more environmentally-friendly movement of goods.

4.18 The RTS should identify the principal ports in the region and should set out the supporting regional or inter-regional infrastructure projects or other main access schemes proposed for investigation. These are likely to include:

- ports serving national or regional markets, or of regional or sub-regional significance in economic and employment terms;
- locations where action and investment is required at the sub-regional level across LTP boundaries in order to support the role and development of major ports; and
- supporting infrastructure and proposals for possible future investigation in relation to potential new port developments or major port expansions.

Freight

4.19 The RTS should focus on freight issues and problems for which decisions are most sensibly taken at the regional and sub-regional level. Principal among these are location of inter-modal freight interchanges and the provision of lorry parking and driver rest areas.

4.20 Adequate and suitably located facilities for inter-modal freight interchanges are vital to fulfilling national and regional policy objectives in relation to freight transport. RPBs should consider the best approach to assessing issues and options for freight interchanges as part of the background analysis for the RTS. The analysis should consider the key issues and capacity constraints for freight services in the context of the wider strategy for ports, airports, inter-modal freight interchanges and strategic rail freight interchanges. The analysis should map out the freight flows and key freight routes and show how the demands on the transport network are likely to change over time. This should enable regionally important locations for inter-modal freight interchanges to be identified and safeguarded in the RTS. The RTS should also make clear where regional and national needs have to be accommodated within local development and transport plans.

4.21 Adequate lorry parking and driver rest areas are a crucial part of the infrastructure required for safe and efficient road transport and working time legislation will add to the demand for these facilities. RPBs should assess the need for lorry parking and driver rest areas against current provision and, in consultation with industry bodies and other stakeholders, consider how these needs should best be met at the sub-regional level.

4.22 PPG13 provides guidance to RPBs on protecting transport infrastructure, including wharves. RPBs should consult with British Waterways and the Environment Agency on the scope for developing the use of rivers and canals for freight transport through safeguarding wharves, piers and moorings. Guidance is available on how good planning can promote the use of inland waterways for freight transport⁵.

4.23 Stakeholders such as the Freight Transport Association and freight operators have a valuable technical as well as policy input in this area. A good example of successful partnership working between the freight industry and regional bodies is evident in the regional freight strategy produced for the North West, details of which are outlined below.

North West Regional Freight Strategy

The Regional Freight Strategy highlights a number of important freight related issues which should be taken into consideration in developing the RTS. The strategy:

- outlines the key freight routes and likely pressure points, which should form part of the background analysis for the RTS;
- builds on work carried out in key freight sub-regions;
- promotes a consistent approach across the region on issues such as parking facilities and access in urban areas; and
- highlights regional freight priorities, which should be considered in developing the regional priorities for the RTS.

⁵ http://www.aina.org.uk/pdfs/waterfreight_v5.pdf

Parking Standards

4.24 Parking provision is likely to be a key element in managing demand for car use and accessibility to town and city centres when it is part of an integrated strategy to improve public transport. The RTS has an important role in ensuring parking policies collectively support the wider spatial strategy and avoids wasteful competition between locations based around the supply or cost of parking. The RTS should aim to ensure that there is a consistent approach to parking applied in Local Development Plans by setting out the context in which local authorities develop their individual parking policies within Local Transport Plans.

4.25 The Government's guidance on parking provision in new development (or the expansion and change of use of existing development) is set out in PPG13 Transport, which is supplemented by specific guidance in relation to parking provision in housing development in PPG3 Housing (shortly to be replaced by PPS3). The key thrust of this guidance is for local authorities to use parking policies alongside other planning and transport measures to promote sustainable transport choices and reduce reliance on the car for work and other journeys. PPG13 says that local authorities should set maximum levels of parking provision and sets out national maxima for development above certain sizes, but planning bodies may adopt more rigorous standards.

4.26 There needs to be a clear analytical basis for the setting of parking standards in the RTS. The RPB should consider the nature of and relative levels of public transport accessibility and capacity in different locations and types of locations in the region (e.g. major conurbations, smaller towns, rural areas). The RPB will need to satisfy itself that the evidence will be sufficient to justify the approach to parking standards at the Public Examination, particularly if that approach differs significantly from that outlined PPG13.

4.27 There should be consideration and analysis of the extent to which restrictive parking standards might harm the future competitiveness and viability of towns and town centres (including market towns in rural areas) as successful commercial and retail locations. Restrictive parking standards in a city centre could potentially lead to perverse incentives for out of town or edge of town development, thus undermining the wider policies of the transport and spatial strategy. RPBs should also consider the potential impact of parking standards in relation to wider policies to concentrate development and employment in existing urban areas and to influence travel behaviour.

4.28 The standards set out in the RTS are intended as minimum standards, and there is scope for local planning authorities to apply more rigorous standards for specific locations or developments according to local circumstances. This suggests an overly detailed approach would not be appropriate at the regional level.

Demand Management

4.29 The expected increases in traffic over the next 30 years will have serious environmental, social and financial consequences unless we take steps now to tackle congestion. Regions have found it difficult to date to reach regional consensus on demand measures, particularly road pricing and workplace parking levies, but the policy context is changing nationally. "The Future of Transport" and subsequent statements by Ministers made clear that demand management, including road pricing, needs to be a key element of the strategy for tackling congestion at all levels - nationally, regionally and locally. The Government has set up the Transport Innovation Fund, which will make up to £200m a year available to local authorities for schemes which tackle congestion through a combination of effective demand management and complementary measures to encourage modal shift.

4.30 The region needs to identify where traffic related problems are, or are likely to become, problems and work with authorities in considering possible solutions: especially if these problems are sub-regional in nature and could require joint action by a number of authorities. The RTS should consider the possible impacts of demand management across the region as a whole, across regional boundaries, but, more importantly, the relationship between possible proposals within the region. This could help

reduce any concerns about the introduction of demand management on a particular town's economic competitiveness.

Chapter 5 - Identifying investment and management priorities

Summary

5.1 In considering how best to achieve the RTS objectives and to address the transport issues identified in Chapter 4, regions will need to first consider a range of options for ensuring the effective use of existing transport assets and for influencing transport users. The options considered should take into account the opportunities for dealing with identified problems through, for example, influencing demand on the transport network or adopting alternative land use strategies.

5.2 Regions should also consider options for encouraging necessary investment. Much transport investment is by the private sector, together with the voluntary sector. Regions should consider carefully the impact of their proposed policies on such investment. Investment by the private sector in airports, ports or public transport for example may be encouraged or deterred by policies included in the RTS.

5.3 Regions will also wish to consider proposals for significant public sector investment, and to provide in their strategies a framework within which affordable priorities for such investment can be clearly determined. The focus in identifying priorities for such investment should not be exclusively on new infrastructure enhancements. It should in the first instance be on making best use of the existing transport network, for example through improved network management and small-scale incremental enhancements. The RTS should also examine how far objectives can be met by policies and measures aimed at influencing and managing demands on the network.

5.4 Just as objectives & policies should add value and be consistent with national policies, so regional priorities should take into account national priorities and existing plans and programmes for developing the national transport network.

5.5 Priorities should take into account the importance of the transport measure in supporting the spatial strategy and wider regional objectives. Priorities should also reflect the advice from DfT and delivery agencies on the likely availability of resources, together with the prospective costs and benefits of different measures and the importance placed on relative value for money. Where priorities can only be defined in broad terms, the costs and benefits of possible transport interventions will be necessarily more indicative. The RTS should also incorporate a framework for implementing the strategy, which indicates the status of prioritised schemes or options under investigation, the likely timescales for implementation, and identifies the organisations with lead responsibility for delivery.

Linking priorities to relevant RSS/RTS policies

5.6 The RTS should make clear how priorities link to the objectives and policies of the RSS and, where appropriate, other regional strategies. An example of how priorities could be presented to show the linkages with RSS/RTS policies is described below.

Transport & land-use policy	Priorities
<p>Policy A.</p> <p>To improve transport links within and to area B to support regeneration and economic development</p>	<p>Improve capacity and service frequency on rail-line B.</p> <p>Improve capacity and access to the MXX motorway at and between junctions x and y.</p> <p>Improve packages of measures (e.g. bus-based park and rides sites) to enhance attractiveness and accessibility of tourism destinations.</p>

<p>Policy B.</p> <p>Take forward infrastructure improvements and demand management measures to tackle congestion and accommodate housing growth in the corridor between town x and city y.</p>	<p>Widening of main trunk road between junctions x and y.</p> <p>Safety improvements and speed restrictions on A-road between village a and town x.</p> <p>City y congestion charging scheme.</p>
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5.7 Affordability is a key issue in setting priorities for public sector investment and regional bodies should take account of advice from DfT and its delivery agencies on the level of indicative transport resources to be assumed over the RSS period. The Government in July 2005 issued long term funding guidelines for each region covering transport, housing and economic development and asked each region to submit advice to it on which schemes should be given priority within these guidelines. The Government responded to this advice in July 2006. The work which has been done as part of this process should help the regions in setting realistic, affordable and deliverable priorities for transport within the RTS, and regions will wish to build upon it in preparing the RTS. The RPBs should also carry out sensitivity analysis of the impact on the RTS and wider spatial strategy of higher or lower levels of resources being available. The results of that analysis should be readily available in a separate document to the draft RSS and reflected in the ranking of priorities listed in the RTS.

5.8 The process of prioritisation should be undertaken in a transparent and consistent way and make clear the relative strengths and weaknesses of each proposed transport measure. The process should rely on robust available evidence and information about the expected impacts and outcomes of the measure as well as its contribution to the region's objectives and policies. Each region drew up a methodology for prioritising schemes as part of submitting advice to Government on its regional funding allocations in January 2006, and the Department commissioned further work to consider what lessons may be learnt from this work. ⁶But there can be no single methodology for determining priorities and regions will want to develop the most practical arrangements for their areas.

5.9 An example of an outline framework that could be used in determining the relative priority of different measures is described below. This sets out likely key elements of methodologies aimed at "systemising" the judgements that need to be made in determining priorities.

Outline prioritisation framework

Key element 1: Robust information and evidence on each transport measure under consideration

Evidence should be drawn together and include information on:

- the extent to which the measure contributes to the region's wider objectives, policies and strategies;
- the assessment made of alternative options of meeting objectives, policies etc;
- where possible, assessment of costs and benefits and of the impacts on the environment, regeneration and accessibility;
- the deliverability of the measure.

The standard of evidence would need to be sufficient to convince a Panel examination of the RSS and show that the prioritised measures are:

⁶ http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/divisionhomepage/039134.hcsp

- based on soundly based assessments of a range of broad options, including the scope for making better use of the transport network;
- consistent with RTS objectives and policies and wider objectives of RSS;
- consistent with national transport policies and priorities; and
- technically capable of being delivered within the RSS/RTS timeframe.

Key element 2: Assessment of measures against a range of qualitative criteria

Criteria should be devised against which qualitative assessments can be made of the wider economic, social and environmental impacts and outcomes of the transport measures. The quality of the relevant evidence will be important in making assessments of a measure's importance for example in terms of:

- its economic significance to the region and the UK economy generally;
- its importance to wider regional connections;
- its regional or sub-regional significance in delivering the spatial policies in the RSS and contributing to transport and other relevant PSA targets;
- the extent to which it supports the RDA's economic strategies, in particular key regeneration areas;
- addressing issues of social exclusion; and
- in securing positive or giving rise to negative environmental impacts.

The above criteria are not exhaustive and some weighting could be attached to those criteria considered to be of more critical importance.

Key element 3: Assessment of value for money and affordability

Value for money is an important consideration in prioritising between different transport measures and any assessment should accord with the DfT "Guidance on Value for Money"⁷. Where a full vfm assessment is not possible, perhaps because a proposal has not been worked up in sufficient detail, it may be possible to draw on the evidence of outcomes and costs from similar schemes to come to an informed view. In translating measures into specific schemes regions will need to take account of the need for full appraisals to be carried out. Regions should also have regard to the strong presumption that schemes which offer low or poor value for money are unlikely to attract DfT funding. Similarly where the vfm assessment shows particular interventions as likely to consume a disproportionate amount of likely available resources, regions would need to consider the implications in terms of the overall balance of the transport priorities in supporting the wider objectives of the RSS.

Regions will also want to consider developing a scoring system to denote, in absolute or relative terms, the impacts of different measures. A scoring system should allow vfm comparisons to be made between measures where there is more or less information available, though scoring of the latter would be more subjective and attract less confidence. This should enable information and assessment of transport measures to be presented in a rational and consistent form and help decision-makers to prioritise between measures.

⁷ This can be found at http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcst?n=12577&l=2

5.10 The key elements described above should be present in prioritisation methodologies both at the strategic level in the RSS, where transport interventions may not be fully developed, and at the individual scheme level. Regions will also need to take account of wider initiatives in developing a prioritisation methodology.

5.11 Whatever prioritisation framework is adopted in relation to the RSS, it should form part of a supporting document to be made available at the time of the consultation on the draft RTS and ahead of the Panel examination as part of the evidence in support of the stated objectives, policies and priorities.

Indicating the status and timing of priority measures

5.12 Priorities for public sector investment will include committed schemes, schemes for which funding has been identified within Ministerial agreed programmes and proposals for schemes where options have been identified but funding decisions have not yet been taken. Over the longer term of the RTS, priorities should be defined in terms of broad transport measures of regional or sub-regional significance.

5.13 It is important there is a clear indication of the status of measures of regional or sub-regional significance included in the list of regional priorities. The RTS should only list individual schemes as committed where they fulfil the criteria set out in the table below.

5.14 For priorities in the longer term, beyond 2010, the proposed measures are unlikely to have been subject to full appraisal. The RTS should not pre-judge the appraisal process and thus longer term priorities should recognise the indicative nature of any specific measures. The stage that proposed measures have reached in the appraisal process should be clearly indicated. It should also be made clear which individual schemes have been prioritised by the region under the separate regional funding allocation process. A suggested approach to the labelling of proposed priorities is set out below.

5.15 Indicative timescales for implementation of committed schemes and other identified measures should be shown in the list of priorities. RPBs should take advice from the Department and delivery agencies on the likely timetable for delivering schemes and other measures. Priorities should be listed with their anticipated dates of completion, though particularly for later years these might be in bands covering, say, three to five years. It is likely that schemes or measures identified as deliverable within five years will have already received a degree of formal approval or the appraisal work will be sufficiently well advanced that imminent approval is expected.

Framework for indicating status of priority measures

■ **Committed.** This category covers:

- Major trunk road schemes which have been fully appraised, which have achieved all the statutory powers necessary for their delivery and for which funding has been allocated within the Highways Agency Targeted Programme of Improvements.
- regionally or sub-regionally significant local transport schemes that are being taken forward by local authorities and which have been either conditionally or fully approved by the Secretary of State through the LTP settlement process.

Such schemes would remain committed unless a significant change in circumstances should arise, for example cost increases that might bring into question the affordability and continued value for money of the scheme. In this event, the schemes should be shown in the priorities as "Schemes within the programme."

- **Schemes within the programme.** This category should comprise: (i) Highways Agency schemes that appear in the Targeted Programme of Improvements but which do not fall into the Committed category above; and (ii) schemes which have achieved Programme Entry status under the LTP system.
- **Under investigation.** Where there is an identified problem subject to a study, on which appraisal work is under way, or for which a business case has been prepared. The transport issues should be shown as "under investigation" and potential solutions described as part of a range of options under consideration.
- **Proposed for Investigation.** The RTS should identify (in general terms) proposed measures necessary to deliver the spatial strategy, but which are not yet clearly defined. These should be listed as "proposed for investigation".

Setting out an implementation plan

5.16 PPS11 indicates that the successful monitoring and implementation of the RSS will depend upon the co-operation and agreement of a wide range of organisations including on the transport side the national delivery agencies (eg HA) private sector operators and the RPB, along with local planning and transport authorities.

5.17 For each of the policies and priority proposals in the RTS, the likely delivery mechanisms (e.g. Targeted Programme of Improvements for major highway schemes, Local Transport Plan major schemes, Rail franchises, Bus Quality Partnerships) should be set out in the RSS implementation plan. The plan should distinguish between the measures to be delivered at the sub-regional level and those which are region-wide.

5.18 All agencies and organisations should be involved in drawing up the implementation plan to gain common agreement in the delivery of the priority measures. For some measures a partnership approach will need to be developed with the private sector, for example in relation to bus services and parking charges.

5.19 A number of approaches have been adopted to manage the delivery process. They include:

- indicating for each priority measure, which organisation or set of organisations are responsible for delivery and the main delivery mechanisms;
- identifying the lead agency for taking forward major schemes identified in the regional list of priorities;
- setting out the implementation context by explaining which transport operators are responsible for important components of transport infrastructure in the region; and
- describing the roles and responsibilities for implementation of key strategic agencies and transport operators.

Specifying targets and indicators

5.20 The RTS should set out a framework and a series of targets and indicators for monitoring and evaluation. Guidance on the monitoring of RSS "*Regional Spatial Strategy Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide*"⁸ was published by the then ODPM in December 2005. In preparing the RTS, RPBs should have regard to this guidance.

⁸ This can be found at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1162809>

5.21 Regional targets need to be developed within a robust analytical framework taking into account national targets set by Government and local targets incorporated into LTPs. In terms of definitions and form (eg definitions of congestion), regional targets should where possible bear relation to national targets. RTS should similarly adopt definitions at the regional level that take account of the measurement and collection of data on targets and indicators outlined in Local Transport Plans.

5.22 Where possible, targets and indicators should be clearly linked to policies so they can be used to measure the degree to which the identified problem has been addressed. Policies should incorporate targets to enable progress to be clearly measured. Thus a policy to improve safety on a particular part of the road network could include a target for the reduction of fatal or serious accidents.

5.23 RPBs should discuss the proposed framework of targets and indicators with the Government Office and relevant DfT and DCLG policy divisions, to ensure the RTS is informed by work and data collection being undertaken at the national level.