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*NORTH EAST REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY REVISION*

# EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

## Note of the First Preliminary Meeting

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Held on

Tuesday 13 December 2005

at the

Swallow Hotel  
Gateshead

Panel Secretariat Office  
North East RSS EiP  
Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4WH  
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Prepared by the Panel Secretariat  
Approved by the Panel Chair  
December 2005

**Note of the First Preliminary Meeting held at 2.00 pm on  
Tuesday, 13 December 2005 at the Swallow Hotel, Gateshead.**

PRESENT:

**Examination in Public Panel Members**

Jim Parke, Chairman

Peter Beasley, Inspector

**Examination in Public Secretariat**

Brian Cobley, Panel Secretary

Elaine Lamb, Panel Assistant

**Examination in Public Planning Officer**

Mark Wilson, Higher Planning Officer, Planning Inspectorate

## **Participants**

Names of individuals withheld due to Data Protection Act regulations

*Examination in Public*

*Participant/Agent*

Alan Cave (Planning Development & Regeneration)

Alistair Grills Associates

Alnwick Council

Banks Development

Berwick upon Tweed Council

Berwick upon Tweed Council

Blyth Valley Council

British Ceramic Confederation

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Capital Shopping Centres

CoalPro

Commission for Architecture & Built Environment

Confederation of British Industry

Countryside Agency

Countryside Agency

Cyclist Touring Club

Derwentside District Council

DPP Development Planning Partnership

Durham Cathedral

Durham City Council

Durham County Authorities

Durham County Council

Durham County Council

Durham County Council

Easington District Council

Environment Agency

Environment Agency

Fairhurst, W A & Partners

Fellgate Residents

Fellgate Residents

Friends of the Earth NE

Friends of the Earth NE

Gateshead Council

Government News Network

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Government Office for the North East

Hallam Land Management

Hartlepool Borough Council

Hartlepool Borough Council

Highways Agency

Home Builders Federation

*Examination in Public*

*Participant/Agent*

Indigo Planning Ltd  
Kiln Pit Hill Residents  
King Sturge LLP  
Middlesbrough Borough Council  
Morpeth & District Civic Society  
Multiplex Developments  
Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners  
NECTAR  
NECTAR  
Newcastle City Council  
Newcastle International Airport  
NEXUS  
North East Assembly  
North East Assembly  
North East Assembly  
North East Assembly  
North East Assembly  
North East Chamber of Commerce  
North East Rural Affairs Forum  
North East Pennines AONB  
Northern Way  
Northumberland County Council  
Northumberland National Parks Authority  
Northumberland Renewables  
One North East  
PD Ports  
Redcar & Cleveland District Council  
RPS Planning  
Sedgefield Borough Council  
SENNTRi  
Signet Planning  
South Tyneside District Council  
South Tyneside District Council  
Spawforth Associates  
Sunderland Arc  
Sunderland Arc  
Sunderland City Council  
Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit  
Tees Valley Regeneration  
Tees Valley Regeneration  
Teesdale District Council  
Tithe Barn Land  
Tyne & Wear Authorities  
Tyne & Wear Authorities  
Tynedale District Council  
Wear Valley District Council

## **1 INTRODUCTIONS**

- 1.1 Jim Parke, the Chairman of the Panel for the North East Regional Spatial Strategy Revision Examination in Public, opened the proceedings. The Chairman introduced Peter Beasley, the Inspector for the North East Regional Spatial Strategy Revision Examination in Public. Also introduced were Brian Cobley, the Panel Secretary and Elaine Lamb, the Panel Assistant. A Planning Officer from the Planning Inspectorate Mark Wilson was also in attendance.
- 1.2 The Chairman made the point that the Panel was in all respects independent of the North East Regional Assembly (the Regional Planning Body) and all other parties to the Examination in Public, including the Government Office for the North East (GO-NE).
- 1.3 The Chairman advised that all Participants should have received a copy of the 'Notes for Participants' and the Provisional Programme comprising the Proposed Timetable, Preliminary List of Matters and Participants. A Final Programme comprising the Timetable, Final List of Matters and Participants would be available and published on the Examination in Public website in due course.
- 1.4 The Chairman added that there would be an open session for questions by attendees towards the end of the meeting, but reminded the meeting that the Panel would not complete the assessment of the representations until after the First Preliminary Meeting.

## **2 EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC PROCESS**

- 2.1 The Chairman commented that The Examination in Public Process would be conducted in accordance with the Governments "Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies". In brief:
  - the five weeks of the Examination in Public would focus on the North East Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Deposit Revision (Submission Draft);
  - it would be held in Gateshead in this building; and
  - the meeting today formed the First Preliminary Meeting for the North East Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Deposit Revision Examination in Public.

### **Purpose of the Examination in Public**

- 2.2 The Chairman advised that the Examination in Public was about matters, which the First Secretary of State needs to be more fully informed by means of public discussion in order to reach decisions on a revised RSS for the North East. It was:

- an opportunity for the discussion and testing in public of selected matters arising from consideration of the Deposit Draft Revision (Submission Draft) to test the soundness of the Submission Draft;
  - to enable the Panel to advise the First Secretary of State of the most appropriate way forward; and
  - not an examination of the whole of the Submission Draft, nor was it a hearing of all the objections.
- 2.3 The Chairman informed the meeting that after the Examination in Public the Panel will prepare a report for the First Secretary of State. The report will be advisory and the final decision on any modifications to the Submission Draft will rest with the First Secretary of State.

### **3 PRELIMINARY LIST OF MATTERS AND PARTICIPANTS**

#### **The Selection of Matters for Discussion**

- 3.1 The Panel Secretary reported that the Panel had consulted North East Assembly (the Regional Planning Body) and the Government Office for the North East in preparing the Preliminary List of Matters to be examined. In determining those matters, the process has been greatly assisted by the representations received by the Secretariat on the Submission Draft. The Panel considered that it had included all the main issues of controversy/real Regional and Strategic significance.

#### **Panel Tours**

- 3.2 The Panel Secretary reported that the Panel, the Secretariat and the Planning Officer have undertaken some initial familiarisation tours prior to commencement of the Examination in Public.

The Panel tours to date have focused on the broad areas of:

- Tees Valley;
- South Tyneside and Durham County; and
- North Tyneside and Northumberland County.

A fourth tour would be undertaken focusing on:

- Tyne Valley and the Core Areas of Newcastle/Gateshead.

- 3.3 Once the Panel Tours have been carried out the details would be published on the Examination in Public website. The Panel may also wish to undertake further tours which it considers necessary as the Examination in Public progresses. The Panel welcomed suggestions for further tours.

## **The Selection of Participants**

- 3.4 The Panel Secretary reported that the participants had been selected to represent a range of views and interests. The Panel had invited approximately 98 different participants, some for more than one Matter. Because of their special roles, the North East Assembly (as promoter of the Deposit Draft Revision) and GO-NE (to explain relevant national policy) had been invited to all of the Matters. The Preliminary List of Participants had been drawn up in consultation with the North East Assembly and the Government Office for the North East.
- 3.5 The main criteria for the selection of Participants had been "the significance of the contribution which they can be expected to make to the discussion, having regard to their knowledge and expertise and/or the views they had already expressed". The Panel has also had regard to:
- the need for a 'balance' of the views expressed; and
  - the need to ensure that the number of Participants invited did not preclude meaningful debate.

## **Consultation Process on the Preliminary List**

- 3.6 The Panel Secretary said that approximately 69 comments had been received in respect of the Preliminary List of Matters and Participants, the majority concerning participation at the Examination in Public, and others concerning the actual Matters to be discussed. The Panel was very grateful to all those who took the time to make comments and had found the representations to be very helpful in formulating the Final List of Matters. The Panel had carefully considered all of the comments it had received by the deadline.
- 3.7 The Panel has also consulted the North East Assembly and the Government Office for the North East in producing the Final Programme. As a result of the consultation, a few additional Participants might be invited and some additional sub matters might be included.
- 3.8 The Panel now considered that the Final List of Matters and Participants would enable it to obtain a representative and informed selection of views on the various Matters. However, the Panel would be meeting after the close of the First Preliminary Meeting to consider if any further changes to the Final Programme were necessary.
- 3.9 Where the Panel had been unable to accommodate particular requests for participation there were two options open for those who felt that they could assist the Panel in its deliberations:
- (a) submit written representations to the Panel Secretariat Office by Friday 3 February 2006, addressing the relevant questions in the Final

Programme. Such representations would be circulated to all the Participants for the relevant Matter/sub matter; and/or

(b) contact those who had been invited and who shared similar views to see if they could assist in putting the views across.

3.10 The Examination would take place in public and it would be open to anyone to sit in and listen to the discussions, but not take part.

#### **4 EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC PROCEDURE**

4.1 The Panel Inspector indicated that for detailed guidance Participants needed to refer to the "Notes for Participants". If the answer to any query or concern cannot be found in the Notes then contact should be made with the Panel Assistant who would be happy to assist. For the purposes of this Meeting, the Panel would wish to draw attention to particular issues of key importance to the Examination in Public process.

#### **Participants' Statements**

4.2 The Panel Inspector advised that detailed guidance could be found in Section 9 and 10. Please follow the instructions - it will assist the tasks of the Panel and the Panel Secretariat. The Panel Inspector emphasised the need for participants to provide an electronic copy of Statements.

#### **Deadline for Statements**

4.3 The Panel Inspector said that the Panel had specifically selected the deadline date for Statements to ensure that all the material could be circulated to other participants and also for consideration by the Panel. An extension would only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. The Panel Inspector reminded all Participants that the deadlines for all Participants' Statements was:

**5.00pm Friday 3 February 2006**

4.4 The Panel Inspector hoped that all Participants recognised the clear benefits in having Statements circulated at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Arrangements for Distribution**

4.5 The Secretariat would distribute the Statements to Participants at the earliest opportunity. To avoid any delays in distribution it was important that Participants comply with the detailed requirements in Sections 9 and 10 of the 'Notes for Participants' and observed the deadline. If Participants had any doubts they should contact the Panel Assistant for advice and guidance.

## **Examination in Public Library/Core Documents**

- 4.6 Guidance is to be found in Section 14 of the Notes. An Examination in Public Library Documents List is available on the Examination in Public web site and will be updated regularly.

## **Preliminary Work by Participants**

- 4.7 The Panel wished to encourage participants to reach agreement in advance of the Examination on as much of the factual background of their intended submissions on issues of contention as is possible to save time and unnecessary discussion at the Examination. The Panel Inspector reminded Participants of the importance the Panel attached to the need for Participants to talk to each other before the Examination in Public.

## **Linkages between Matters**

- 4.8 The Inspector said that the Matters for Discussion are inter-linked and it was likely that some issues may have relevance to a matter being discussed at another session (whilst avoiding repetition). This was likely to apply to the RSS Vision and Strategy – where there is an interrelationship between discussion of overall principles for the Spatial Strategy and the more detailed impact of strategy on particular areas i.e. the City Regions and the Rural Areas. Similarly, links exist between discussion of Spatial Strategy and the level and distribution of housing.

## **Recording of the Proceedings**

- 4.9 The Inspector stated that daily summaries will not be produced but the CDs of the Examination would be available after the close of the Examination in Public.

## **5 EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC TIMETABLE**

- 5.1 The Panel Assistant reported that the Final Programme containing the Timetable, and the Final List of Matters and Participants, which would be available on the Examination in Public website shortly, should be regarded as fixed. It was in everyone's interest to ensure that the Timetable now remained unchanged and every effort would be made to keep to the Programme.
- 5.2 The Panel would stress that, so far as possible, it was a firm timetable. Should any update be required in the light of any comments received from Participants (in the Open Session, which followed), it would be included in the aforementioned Final Programme.
- 5.3 Generally all sessions will start at 10.00 am promptly and finish by 5.00pm.

- 5.4 Participants should note that it is their responsibility to check the Examination in Public website [www.northeasteip.co.uk](http://www.northeasteip.co.uk) regularly for updates and new published documents. Any Participant unable to access the Examination in Public website, should contact the Panel Assistant to make alternative arrangements.
- 5.5 Should any participant require assistance because of poor eyesight, hearing or other disability could they please inform the Panel Assistant.
- 5.6 The Panel Assistant assured Participants they should not worry if they did not receive an immediate response to any communication made to the Panel Office – they would be dealt with as soon as possible.

## 6 UPDATED BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 The Chairman indicated that the North East Assembly had been requested to ensure that any new background papers were available by December 2005, before the preparation of Written Statements. The Chairman then requested a representative of the North East Assembly to update the Panel and Attendees regarding the Background Papers.
- 6.2 Malcolm Bowes reported that additional EiP information notes had been prepared by the North East Assembly. These documents were to be available on the EiP website [www.northeasteip.co.uk](http://www.northeasteip.co.uk). Also there was also ongoing work by the North East Assembly and others (including ONE NorthEast) which would be available next month.

### Information Notes

<a href="#">EiP Information Note 1 - Housing &amp; Replacement Figures</a>	Dec 2005
<a href="#">EiP Information Note 2 Population &amp; Housing Model Zero Net Migration</a>	Dec 2005
<a href="#">EiP Information Note 3 Revised Mid Year Estimates of Population</a>	Dec 2005
<a href="#">EiP Info Note 3 Annex A</a>	Dec 2005
<a href="#">EiP Information Note 4 Definition of Major Development Within the North East</a>	Dec 2005
<a href="#">EiP Information Note 5 Housing Market Assessments</a>	Dec 2005

### Ongoing Work

#### *(North East Regional Assembly)*

Integrated Regional Framework Monitoring Report  
 Waste Arising  
 Economic Projections  
 Retail and Leisure Development

Regional Employment Land Study  
Regional Funding Allocations

***(Non North East Regional Assembly)***

Economic Projections  
Housing/employment/commuting  
Where to put money on Infrastructure  
Housing Market Assessments  
Durham Restructuring  
Economic Strategy

- 6.3 The Chairman indicated that the Second Preliminary Meeting would be an opportunity to review progress on the availability of these documents. Participants should not necessarily wait for these documents before commencing drafting their Written Statements.
- 6.4 The Chairmen addressed a number of the points that had been made in the comments on the Preliminary Programme.

Extended Written Statement Deadline

- *The period prior to the start of the EiP was vital in reading Participants Written Statements so the deadlines would remain as indicated.*

Matter Rephrasing to Widen Scope

- *This is not necessary to allow the raising of related issues.*

More Neutral Phrasing

- *The phrasing does not imply a presumption.*

Agreement on Data

- *If agreements on the data cannot be reached with the North East Regional Assembly then it might be necessary to use an independent organisation (for instance, the Regional Observatory) on, for example, travel to work information.*

Expansion of Matters

- *Some of the Matters have been expanded to provide a better foundation for the preparation of the written statements. Further supplementary guidance notes are likely to be prepared for the topics covering housing markets and climate change.*

## 7 OPEN SESSION FOR QUESTIONS

7.1 The Chairman invited questions from the attendees and stated that it was not appropriate to make specific requests to participate at the Examination in Public.

1. John Lowther: Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

Q: With regard to the work TVJSU has done that is relevant to the submission, what arrangements does the Panel want us to make in terms of critical reports which we will rely on to complete our statements?

A: *The Chairman explained that it would be helpful to provide the Panel Assistant with hard copies and an electronic copy as well as supply a web link if there is one, so everyone can take a look at them.*

2. Alistair Grills: Alistair Grills Associates

Q: Will the second Preliminary Meeting be for helping with the preparation of written statements?

A: *The Chairman responded by explaining that this would not be the case as written statements should be almost complete by that time.*

3. Keith Lowes: Sunderland City Council

Q: Will the Panel include Sunderland in the programme of visits to gain a proper picture of the character and geography, particularly central Sunderland and the programme being carried out by Sunderland Arc and the former mining settlements

A: *The Chairman explained that the Panel had already been there but did intend to return to look more closely at the city centre.*

4. Joan Sanderson: Northumberland County Council

Q Is the limit of 2000 words per statement a limit for the whole statement or for each sub matter within the statement.

A: *The Chairman stated it was for the whole statement. This was to facilitate ease of reading as we only have four weeks to read all the statements.*

Q. Northumberland County Council will be representing regional partners. In terms of supporting people behind is there an opportunity to have more than one person behind?

A. *The Chairman confirmed that as many people as needed may be present.*

Q. With regard to supplementary questions does the Panel anticipate more questions coming out throughout the programme?

A. *The Chairman explained that if they are issued they would be coming relatively soon.*

#### 5. Harvey Emms: Newcastle City Council

Q. Will the Panel be reviewing the programme week by week and letting Participants know if there is a slippage in programme?

A. *The Chairman replied that he would be managing the programme to keep slippage to a minimum but of course participants would be notified of any slippage should it occur.*

#### 6. Peter Biggers: Alnwick District Council

Q. Could "hot seating" be explained more fully?

A. *The Chairman explained that the discussion would be unmanageable if all local authorities were around the table for all the sessions they expressed an interest in. So a sub-regional organization will be nominated to be the main conduit for comment but this does not exclude others being there to support them.*

*For example there is no reason why a County Council at a point in the discussion cannot step aside and allow the relevant authority to speak. That way the numbers stay the same and the discussion remains manageable.*

*The Panel has endeavoured to identify separate authorities which have an absolute relevancy to particular sessions.*

#### 7. Anthony Rae: Friends of the Earth

Q. Can I ask about the treatment of airports? There doesn't appear to be a question about airports.

A. *The Chairman replied there was a sub heading under transport for airports.*

#### 8. Martin Coleclough: Middlesbrough Borough Council

Q. The representations are not currently available so we can see what other parties have commented on. These may well raise issues we want to attend. Will there be an opportunity to do that?

A. *The Chairman advised that a judgement should be made on what is wanted to be said on the basis of the issues the Panel has put forward and not on what is said by others. A lot of work is being done to summarise the comments so they can be made available.*

Q. When will the summary of the representations be made available on the website?

A. *The Chairman explained that was still an issue and a date could not be given.*

#### 9. Anthony Rae: Friends of the Earth

Q. When is the library going to be available for consultation of previous comments?

A. *The Chairman explained anyone wanting to see representations could ring the Panel Assistant and make an appointment to go into the panel office and view the documents.*

### **8 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN**

8.1 The chairman informed everyone that it was hoped the Final List of Matters and Participants would be prepared shortly. Although the Panel would send letters to those who had responded with comments on the Preliminary List, however, time constraints, especially with Christmas approaching, were making this difficult to achieve quickly. It was felt that participants should get sight of the Final List as soon as possible so the List would be sent out with a compliment slip at the earliest possible moment and letters would be sent out at a later date.

8.2 The Chairman apologised if anyone felt this was unsatisfactory but it was felt that getting sight of the Final List as early as possible was most important for participants.

### **9 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

9.1 The Chairman reminded all persons attending to please sign the Attendance List at the entrance to the room. A Note of the First Preliminary Meeting would be put on the Examination in Public website as soon as possible. A paper copy will only be sent to Participants, if it is specifically requested.

9.2 The Chairman thanked all those who had attended this First Preliminary Meeting.

9.3 The Chairman reminded everyone that the Second Preliminary Meeting would be held on Tuesday 31 January 2006 at 2.00 pm in this room. The Meeting closed at 3.00 pm.