



# Questionnaire on: Spatial Options – Housing

Please note: Complete the “Yes” “No” “Comment” boxes with an “X”

## YOUR DETAILS

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To be completed and returned by 5th March 2007. **MAIL:** WMRSS Revision, West Midlands Regional Assembly, Albert House, Quay Place, 92 -93 Edward Street, Birmingham, B1 2RA

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If you need more space, please attach extra sheets and refer to the question numbers.

### H1: What overall level of new housing development do you think is appropriate to plan for across the Region?

Options	Level of Demand 2001-2006 (gross) (please tick)	Yes (please tick)	No (please tick)	Comment
One	381,000			
Two	491,200			
Three	575,000			

### H2: Can you suggest another level? There needs to be robust evidence to support it.

Level	Evidence Base

### H3: For each of the Options do you think that the balance of development between the MUAs and other areas is acceptable? Please see Table One on page 24 and the section on housing distribution for a more detailed breakdown of the numbers to Local Authority level.

Options	Balance of development in MUAs	Comment
One	53% MUAs 47% other areas	
Two	51% MUAs 49% other areas	
Three	50% MUAs 50% other areas	

**H4: Do you think that the capacity of the construction industry, including housebuilding, will be sufficient to meet the levels of housebuilding set out in the housing Options?**

Options	Level of Demand 2001-2006		Yes (please tick)	Comment
	gross	p.a.		
One	381,000	15,200		
Two	491,200	19,600		
Three	575,000	23,000		

**H5: What measures could be included in WMRSS policy to minimise these impacts?**

**Comments:**

**H6: Table One and Table Two on page 24+25 show new housing development across all local authorities in the Region. What do you think about the overall balance of proposals under each of the Options?**

**Comments:**

**H7: You may wish to consider specific parts of the Region, please set out below any comments you wish to make on any part of the Region. Please specify the area in which you are commenting.**

**Comments:**

**H8: In particular, do you think that Burton upon Trent should be a foci settlement, accommodating significant development on greenfield land?**

**Comments:**

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**H9: Do you think that the currently identified sub-regional foci of Worcester, Telford, Shrewsbury, Hereford and Rugby should fulfil this role, accommodating significant development on greenfield land?**

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Comment <input type="checkbox"/>

## **Affordable Housing & Housing Mix**

**H10: Do you think that the proposed approach where the WMRSS provides a Regional target and where Local Planning Authorities provide local targets through the Local Development Frameworks process is appropriate?**

<b>Comments:</b>
<p>It is not accepted that substantially increasing the level of new housing building (options 2 and 3) will automatically improve the general affordability of housing to the level required, it is therefore vital that whatever option is taken forward that affordable housing targets are set, and progress against these targets is monitored. The WMRSS and the WMRA need to take a strong lead on this issue. The region in the past failed to deliver and early action to address the issue is required. We therefore strongly support the establishment of a regional target in terms of both the overall number of affordable homes delivered and the housing mix. The housing mix targets should include: tenure (social rented, intermediate housing) and property types / sizes.</p> <p>If the WMRSS does not set LPA level targets it should provide guidance and require LPAS to set local targets which together will meet regional targets and address local needs. We would support the WMRSS setting sub-regional housing market targets for the delivery of affordable homes. These targets would assist delivery in terms of: highlighting the key areas in the region where affordable housing is an issue; directing public investment; ensuring and monitoring delivery, and encouraging LPAs to address this issue. We also feel that consideration should be given to setting sub-regional housing market level targets in relation to housing mix (size of property, tenure etc) in order to provide pathways of choice and address housing needs and aspirations.</p>

**H11: What would the implications be of having a District level affordable housing target (as a minima) in the WMRSS?**

<b>Comments:</b>
<p>If LPA level targets are set they need to be sensitive to local needs, and flexible enough to ensure appropriate delivery.</p>

**H12: Do you have any other ideas on how levels of affordable housing delivery can be better directed by the WMRSS?**

<b>Comments:</b>
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A number of ideas are outlined below on how the WMRSS or the WMRA may better direct affordable housing delivery:

- Through setting sub-regional affordable housing targets and setting out arrangements for monitoring delivery against these targets.
- By encouraging public sector bodies to release land for affordable housing
- Through promoting the concept of Rural Housing Enablers
- By encouraging LPAS to maximise the use of planning powers to secure affordable housing and ensure it remains affordable in perpetuity.
- Through ensuring clear links between the WMRSS and the Regional Housing Board's Investment Programme
- Through considering new initiatives to increase affordable housing provision,(including investigating new tenure options) along with disseminating good practice in releasing affordable homes through reducing under occupation
- By on Rural exception sites capping land plot values (see page 17 of the WMRA 'Guide to the Delivery of Affordable Housing') and encouraging LPAS to remove developer contributions towards other facilities and by reducing/ removing planning fees for such developments
- Reviewing the potential/ advantages of standardising housing need surveys.

**H13: Evidence from monitoring suggests that no more than 3,000 affordable houses, with subsidy, are likely to be built each year across the Region. Do you have robust evidence to support or contradict this view?**

**Comments:**

**H14: Should the WMRSS identify those parts of the Region with a relatively high need for social housing where a lower threshold for negotiating Section 106 agreements with the private sector should be considered in LDDs?**

**No  Yes – which parts of the Region**

Yes: The areas identified should be those with high demand for affordable housing but with a shortage of supply of good quality affordable housing, and a shortage of sites in public sector ownership. In addition, priority might be attached to areas where there are particular problems with delivery.

The areas should be identified through the sub-regional housing market work, and through local authorities housing strategies and surveys.

Where a high need is identified local authorities should provide a strong strategic direction. This will, for example, help the Rural Housing Enablers to deliver schemes which meet the needs of local communities and overcome nimbysm.

**H15: Do you have any robust evidence on an appropriate housing mix within new developments that are needed in different parts of the Region?**

**Evidence:**

**Area:**

This should form part of the work of the sub-Regional Housing Market Partnerships.

## Managing Housing Development

**H16: Options Two and Three imply release of land in the foci and other urban areas earlier than anticipated in the WMRSS – do you agree with this approach?**

**Yes**  **No**  **Comment**

**H17: It could be considered that the Government's growth agenda implies that the use of maxima targets for areas outside the MUAs is inappropriate – do you agree with this approach?**

**Yes**  **No**  **Comment**

**H18: Do you think the use of minima targets for the MUAs is still appropriate?**

**Yes**  **No**  **Comment**