

# RS2010

**REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR  
ENGLAND'S NORTHWEST**

## Part 1: The High Level Strategic Framework

Summary Document – January 2010

# Introduction

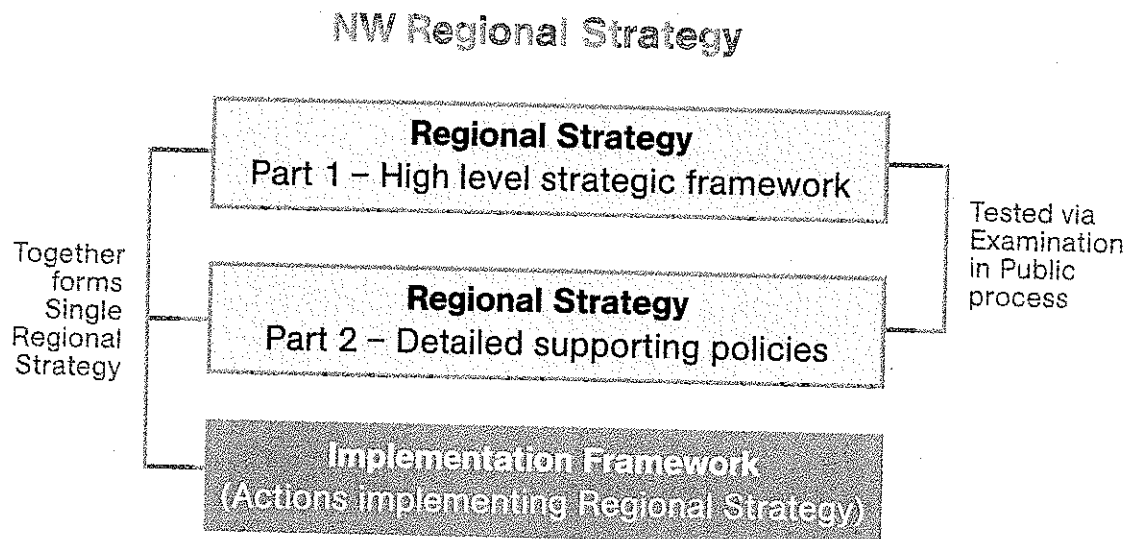
**The Northwest is the first region to prepare an integrated Regional Strategy (RS2010). It represents a new approach. For the first time, the issues of environmental, social and economic development will be combined in one strategy, which will replace the current regional economic, housing and spatial strategies.**

It presents the opportunity to agree a single regional vision, objectives, policies and actions behind which private, public and third sectors can unite, to drive investment and development in the Northwest over the next 20 years.

The overarching vision for RS2010 is to ensure that:

**“The quality of life for the people of the Northwest will be excellent and the region will become more prosperous, more equitable and produce less carbon: by 2030 it will be a better place to live, learn, work, visit and invest”**

RS2010 is being prepared in two parts:



A draft Part 1 consultation document has been prepared by 4NW and NWDA, in collaboration with partners from the private, public and third sectors, and is a vital step in realising that ambition. It proposes high-level strategic priorities where working together we can maximise opportunities and address challenges.

Part 1 will be followed later in 2010 by Part 2 and an accompanying Implementation Framework setting out the detailed policies and actions to make things happen. Taken together, these will provide the blueprint for guiding investment and development in the region over the next 20 years, an absolutely key reference point not just for us in the region but also central government departments.

Part 1 has been informed by the development of a substantial evidence base, as well as the Principles and Issues consultation in 2009 which agreed the headline vision, outcomes and values on which RS2010 should be based.

This leaflet summarises the key elements of the consultation document.

# The Strategy

**Rather than writing a strategy for “any region”, we have sought to focus on how we can use the Northwest’s major assets and opportunities to drive mutually reinforcing sustainable economic growth across all parts of the region. That is economic growth that can be sustained and is within environmental limits but also enhances the environment and social welfare, and which does not pursue growth in one part of the region at the expense of another part.**

## The four strands

The consultation document proposes that the Strategy is based on four strands. Please note that these strands are not in priority order and all are important to the successful delivery of the Strategy.

Responding to climate change is probably the biggest single challenge facing the world over the next twenty years and more. The first strand therefore sets the overall context in which we will be operating and highlights some specific opportunities and challenges.

### **Capitalise on the opportunities of moving to a low carbon economy and address climate change by:**

- a. positioning the region to take full advantage of the opportunities from low carbon energy and technologies;
- b. ensuring that the region understands and adapts to the implications of unavoidable climate change;
- c. ensuring that all sectors, including housing, transport and industry, are considering the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change and developing low carbon, resource efficient solutions and alternatives.

Within the overall context of climate change, the next three strands set out the region's Strategy for economic, environmental and social success.

### **Build on our sources of international competitive advantage and regional distinctiveness by:**

- a. developing our strengths in internationally competitive sectors in nuclear, advanced manufacturing, biomedical, digital & creative, chemicals and automotive;
- b. strengthening our concentration of knowledge-based assets driven by our universities and science and innovation base;
- c. improving our international connectivity through the Liverpool Superport, including John Lennon Airport, and Manchester Airport;
- d. developing our world class sporting/culture/quality of place offer and the attraction of Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District as international destinations.

### **Release the potential of our people and tackle poverty by:**

- a. increasing the potential of the workforce by improving employment opportunities, enterprise and skills;
- b. building on our strong tradition of social enterprise;
- c. regenerating areas with deep-seated economic and social challenges and building strong communities;
- d. tackling the serious challenges raised by social exclusion, deprivation, ill health and inequality;
- e. addressing the implications of demographic change for our workforce and services.

### **Ensure the right housing and infrastructure for sustainable growth by:**

- a. securing high quality housing in locations which support sustainable economic growth;
- b. ensuring high quality digital connectivity to stimulate enterprise, improve service delivery and reduce the need to travel;
- c. improving internal connectivity through a sustainable transport infrastructure which better connects opportunity and need;
- d. developing the critical infrastructure the region needs to support sustainable economic growth;
- e. developing the region's green infrastructure to provide economic, environmental and social benefits.

## Spatial issues

An integrated strategy will need to make judgements about the balance between economic, environmental and social elements, which in turn will influence delivery against the agreed outcomes as well as determine the spatial implications.

In moving forward, we therefore need to consider the role of places and the relationship between them. Based on the evidence, the key spatial issues for the region to address in RS2010 are seen as:

- the world class cities of Liverpool and Manchester, as the economic cores of substantial city regions, and the international potential of the Liverpool-Manchester corridor through the Atlantic Gateway concept;
- Preston's role as a driver of regional growth;
- Crewe, Chester, Warrington, Lancaster and Carlisle's role as key sub-regional hubs (and in the case of Chester and Carlisle, the substantial links with Wales and Scotland respectively);
- the role of the Lake District and other outstanding natural and built assets in contributing to the region's image and profile;
- those parts of Pennine Lancashire, Blackpool, Barrow and West Cumbria, as well as areas within the Manchester and Liverpool City Regions, which face substantial social and economic regeneration challenges;
- physical and digital connectivity between (i) Manchester and Liverpool City Regions, (ii) North Cheshire and the City Regions of Liverpool and Manchester, (iii) Pennine Lancashire and Preston and the Manchester City Region, (iv) Preston and the city regions of Liverpool and Manchester, and (v) rural areas and regional, sub-regional and local centres.

## Strategic options

We are also consulting on four strategic options we have developed to test the thematic and spatial implications of putting the emphasis in differing ways on economic, environmental and social outcomes respectively in order to deliver the strategic priorities identified. These are:

- Option 1** - Current position ('Business as usual').
- Option 2** - Focus on economic opportunity.
- Option 3** - Focus on protecting environmental resources and taking full advantage of environmental opportunities.
- Option 4** - Focus on regeneration and development to tackle social deprivation and inclusion.

The final Strategic Framework of RS2010 may be a combination of different elements of one or more options.

## Outstanding questions

We believe the proposed Strategy will set us on a clear course to developing a more sustainable economy based on growth within environmental limits whilst achieving social goals. However, we need to ensure we understand the full implications of the choices we have to make where there are potential conflicts within the Strategy, as well as the spatial and distribution issues which arise. We have therefore identified a number of outstanding cross-cutting questions which need to be addressed in taking the Strategy forward. These are:

### Spatial

- a. How can we deliver the scale of new critical infrastructure (particularly electricity, water and waste) that would be needed to drive growth in the regional centres of Liverpool and Manchester?
- b. What is the role of north Cheshire? To what extent should it focus on supporting the Manchester and Liverpool city regions?
- c. What is the role of Preston as a driver of regional growth?
- d. What is the role of Pennine Lancashire? What should be the balance between developing the local economy and linking it better to growth opportunities in Manchester and Preston?
- e. What is the future role of Blackpool and other coastal resorts?
- f. Given its assets in the nuclear and tourism sectors, how can we best ensure sustainable growth in Cumbria?

### Thematic

- g. How can we ensure that growth in priority sectors and increased trade via Manchester Airport and Liverpool Superport (which includes Liverpool John Lennon Airport) is consistent with the sustainable use of resources and moving to a low carbon economy?
- h. What should be the balance between creating jobs for all (employment focus) or creating higher skilled jobs (productivity focus)?
- i. What should be the balance between indigenous skills development and attracting and retaining new talent and skills to the region?
- j. How can we best tackle the underlying causes of worklessness which has blighted the region for the last 20 years? Should we be pursuing a strategy of creating jobs in local communities or allowing jobs to be created anywhere in the region and linking unemployed people to those jobs?
- k. To what extent should we be investing to tackle areas of need/deprivation and

supporting struggling companies as opposed to investing in areas of opportunity and supporting growth companies?

- l. Given that over the next 20 years:
  - sea levels and temperatures are likely to rise, with more extreme weather events, flooding and loss of land becoming more common;
  - the working age population as a percentage of the total population will fall;
  - public expenditure will fall substantially in the first part of this period;

how do we plan for these, all of which will put pressures on our use of resources?

### Sustainability Appraisal

The emerging Strategy is being subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal. It includes Strategic Environmental, Habitats Regulation, Health Impact, Equality Impact and Rural assessments. It aims to identify the likely significant effects and any mitigation measures required to ensure the effectiveness of RS2010 in meeting economic, environmental and social goals.

## How can I get involved?

We hope this leaflet has whet your appetite to find out more about RS2010 and become involved.

The consultation document is available via the RS2010 website:  
<http://consult.nwregionalstrategy.com/portal>

You can respond via the website (which we would encourage wherever possible) or in writing, by Friday 26 February 2010.

If you have any questions or need any further information please contact:

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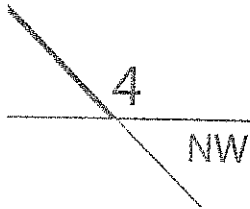
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4NW is the Regional Leaders Board for England's Northwest

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