



**DRAFT REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY  
PUBLIC EXAMINATION**

**WRITTEN SUBMISSION  
FOR**

**SESSION D: HUBS AND SPOKES**

## Question 9

**Are the concepts of Hubs and Spokes, and Transport Interchanges:**

- **well integrated with the overall spatial strategy of RPG9?**
- **clear in terms of implications for transport improvements and development, and application at more local levels?**

1. In revising the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) it was clear that as a partial review of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), the spatial strategy and associated policies remain unaltered. The focus of RPG9 is on delivering an urban renaissance within the region, through concentration of development, better economy in the use of land and greater integration between land use and transport provision. Accordingly, the draft RTS is the transport articulation of these spatial priorities for the region. At the heart of this is the need to plan the management and development of the transport system in association with implementation of planning framework.
2. The focus on delivering an urban renaissance will encourage and support a rebalancing of both the structure and the use of the transport system. The transport hub is the one of the basic building blocks underpinning the draft RTS, providing the opportunity to focus on the development of quality transport services in a way that supports urban communities and urban renaissance. The concept of hubs and spokes encourages more sustainable patterns of development and activity, particularly in allowing work, retail, community, leisure, and cultural services to be placed in closer proximity, in doing so improving the overall level of accessibility to services and facilities. The concept relates particularly strongly to policies Q1 to Q3 of RPG9 (Chapter 5 – Quality of Life in Town and Country).
3. As well as being important in helping to deliver urban renaissance, the hubs and spokes concept also relates well to other policies in RPG9, specifically Q5 (Ensuring Vitality and Viability of Town and Local Centres), Q7 (Rural Development) and Q8 (Sustaining Rural Communities). This is because the concept of hubs as centres of economic activity and transport services is one that is applicable at all levels of the planning framework. Overall, RPG9 policies are seeking more equitable, and locally based services to support the local economy and the meet the economic and social needs of these communities. In supporting this spatial requirement greater encouragement needs to be given to the development of innovative public transport and local access measures by foot or bicycle.
4. In many ways the hub and spokes approach has a parallel with the settlement hierarchy that naturally exists across the region. The larger settlements tend to support higher order economic activity and should form a focus for urban renaissance. By their very nature these settlements tend to have a higher level of accessibility. The level of economic activity and accessibility tend to be mutually reinforcing. The hub and spokes approach therefore seeks to start from an understanding of the existing settlement hierarchy, on to which the spatial priorities

of RPG9 can then be overlaid. In this respect the hub and spoke concept is extremely well integrated with the overall spatial strategy of RPG9.

5. In some circumstances settlements have a higher level of accessibility than their size might suggest would be appropriate. Typically these settlements are locations that are interchange points on the railway network. While the spatial strategy might not support that these locations should form the focus for economic activity (at the regional level) their role as an interchange point in the transport system is regionally significant. It is on this basis that the draft RTS designates them as Transport Interchanges. At the local level their high level of accessibility may offer the opportunity to focus some economic activity in their immediate vicinity, this would be an issue that would need to be considered in greater detail at the local level. The transport interchange concept can also be applied at the local level.
6. The following definitions are submitted for the purposes of clarification:

**A. TRANSPORT HUB:**

‘Regional Transport Hubs are those settlements where the provision of (or potential to provide) a range of multi-modal transport services supports the concentration of higher order economic activity. As highly accessible settlements of regional significance they should be the focus for development and investment in the transport system that leads to an increase in the overall level of accessibility by all modes between regional, sub-regional and local hubs along transport spokes. They should aspire to accommodate higher density development, the economic and social needs of the settlement, and links to the local economic area’.

The idea of Transport Development Areas (TDAs) promoted by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), referred to as ‘Living Centres’ in policy T5 of the draft RTS, is consistent with the hub and spoke concept. Living Centres should be viewed as the focused application of the concentration of development at locations with a high level of accessibility. By way of illustration, within the Southampton transport hub there may be a number of locations (focusing on railway stations and bus interchange points) at which the Living Centre approach could be successfully applied.

**B. TRANSPORT SPOKE:**

‘Transport Spokes are transport corridors designed to support the transport hubs, through appropriate linkages that enhance accessibility. They should provide linkages both to/from transport hubs and also to/from the local economic area’.

As corridors of movement transport spokes should be considered on a multi-modal basis. Each spoke will need to be maintained, and if appropriate enhanced, to meet

its own objectives and standards, with a balance between modes that reflects sub-regional and local circumstances. With the focus of the draft RTS on rebalancing the transport system and the need to provide mode choice, development of public transport services should be a high priority. The investment requirements for the spokes included in the draft RTS has been informed by the outputs from the multi-modal study (MMS) programme. Investment requirements should also be informed by package of more local measures from the MMSs, for example, development of local bus networks.

### C. TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE:

‘Transport Interchanges should be identified where present and future public transport interchange opportunities of regional significance exist. Transport Interchanges should seek to maximise travel opportunities and be predominantly based around public transport access (bus/rail/coach/taxi).’

Although unlikely to support economic development of regional or sub-regional significance, transport interchanges offer a good opportunity to apply the ‘Living Centres’ (policy T5) or TDA concept for more localised development. By way of illustration, Havant railway station provides a high level of interchange between the Waterloo-Portsmouth line and Coastal services between Southampton and Brighton. This interchange facility must be protected and, if appropriate, enhanced in order to support delivery of the spatial strategy along the South Coast.

7. The characteristics of the various hubs, spokes and interchanges identified in the draft RTS vary (Annex A) and it is not the intention that through the implementation of the RTS that this distinctiveness should be reduced. If the potential of the transport hubs as centres of economic and social activity is to be realised as part of the development of a more polycentric structure across the region, local and sub-regional objectives will influence how each hub, spoke and transport interchange will develop. Accordingly detailed development of the hubs, spokes and interchanges should be at a sub-regional and local level through sub-regional working, the Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and the Local Development Frameworks (LDFs).
8. Realising the full potential of the hub and spoke concept to rebalance the transport system requires the concept of mobility management framework, outlined in policy T11, to be fully integrated with the rest of the draft RTS. A key focus for the draft RTS is the effective use of the transport system and therefore the allocation and management of highway space along the spokes and car parking at the hubs are important interventions. Careful consideration will be required on the balance between modes in seeking to increase provision for alternative modes. Results from the Strategic Transport Model (STM) have shown that combining a policy approach which puts some level of restraint in the form of car parking supply and costs coupled with improvements to public transport has a positive impact on reducing the growth in trips and enhancing accessibility which in turn has a positive impact in reducing social exclusion.

9. In the absence of clear guidance from the Government it has not been possible within the draft RTS to set out a regional perspective on public transport accessibility required by Policy Planning Guidance 11 (PPG11): Regional Planning. However, the Regional Assembly will use the promised guidance from the Department on accessibility planning as a basis for taking this work forward as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

## Question 10

### Are the right hubs and spokes identified?

10. The identification of hubs and spokes within the draft RTS has been deliberately set at the Regional level, as the document should be tasked with identifying regional priorities and policies. The basis for including the hubs selected is outlined in the extract from the draft RTS Supporting Statement (Annex A). The selection of these is based on both their current function and future development, given the spatial strategy for the region set out in RPG9.
11. Some of the hubs, for example Reading, are more developed in terms of their transport linkages than others, for example as Ebbsfleet and Aylesbury. This must not preclude further development of transport infrastructure serving hubs like Reading where it is required in order to support the spatial strategy. Equally though priority must be given to ensuring that the infrastructure required to support the less well developed hubs is better understood. For example, work associated with the Milton Keynes Growth Area has led to the identification of additional transport infrastructure requirements for Aylesbury which in turn is reflected in the investment frameworks in the draft RTS.
12. The RSS, LDFs, LTPs and sub-regional working should also identify sub-regional and local hubs. The draft RTS will and should not be this specific, leaving local circumstances to identify sub-regional and local networks, drawing on the regional frameworks set out in the draft RTS.
13. The transport spokes identified within the draft RTS (Map 1) support the transport hubs. They reflect both national linkages and also linkages of regional significance. In doing so the draft RTS draws on a number of information points, such as from the Highways Agency, the SRA Strategic Plan, LTPs and the multi-modal studies. Access to the regional gateways has also been included, reflecting the important influence that these have on the regional transport system.

14. The spokes are not route specific but rather broad corridors of movement. While priority for investment in the corridors should be given to enhancing the overall levels of accessibility by public transport, investment in the highway network is likely to remain a part of the overall package of measures for the development of the transport spokes. The need to improve accessibility within the region and between regions has been a key input in the selection of spokes at the regional level.

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**Table I: Characteristics of regional ‘transport hubs’**

The identification of regional ‘transport hubs’ has been arrived at by undertaking a qualitative assessment of locations using the following criteria:

- political/administrative significance
- historical/cultural significance
- commercial/economic significance
- population
- transport connections
- strategic interchange opportunities
- proximity of major port, airport or rail terminal
- future growth potential

Settlement	Characteristics
Milton Keynes	A former New Town that has become a major administrative and commercial centre. High level of access to strategic rail and road networks. Key interchange point between inter-regional, intra-regional and local rail services, with the scope to improve opportunities for public transport through development of East-West rail corridor. Identified in RPG9 as one of two major growth areas in the region.
Aylesbury	The administrative centre and county town for Buckinghamshire. Output from Milton Keynes and South Midlands area growth study has identified the longer-term potential of the town to provide higher order functions and fulfil role of a regional transport hub, but dependent upon improved strategic transport connections.
Oxford	A historic and cultural city of international status. County town for Oxfordshire serving as the focus for administrative and higher order commercial and retail activities. Well related to strategic rail and road networks. Interchange point between intra and inter-regional rail services, including services connecting with London. Located on strategic north-south road corridor.
Slough	An administrative and commercial centre. Strong interaction with activities at Heathrow Airport. Interchange point on rail network between local and intra-regional rail services. Regeneration opportunities within the town centre could provide the catalyst for delivery of a long-term vision for the town that is consistent with its regional role.
Reading	The largest settlement in the Thames Valley and long-standing administrative centre. A focus for higher order commercial and retail activities. The location for European and international corporate headquarters. Second largest interchange on national rail network outside of London, with connections provided between inter-regional, intra-regional and local rail services. Well

Settlement	Characteristics
	related to strategic road corridors. Direct coach link with Heathrow Airport. Main rail station identified as the focus for major redevelopment opportunity that would maximise interchange opportunities between all modes.
Basingstoke	A former New Town that has become a major focus for commercial activity, in particular administrative and headquarter related functions. Well related to strategic rail and road networks. Interchange point for inter and intra-regional rail services.
Southampton	The largest settlement in the South Hampshire sub-region and long-standing administrative centre. A major employment centre that provides the focus for higher order commercial and retail activities and port related industries. Well related to strategic rail and road networks. Interchange point on rail network between inter and intra-regional rail services. Second largest deep-sea container port in the UK. Southampton International Airport is a regional airport of significance serving a large business community.
Portsmouth	A historic port and long-standing administrative centre. A major employment centre that provides a focus for retail activities. Well related to strategic rail and road networks. Major ferry terminal for services linking to Isle of Wight with direct interchange with passenger rail services. Second largest roll on-roll off ferry port in the region providing cross channel services.
Guildford	A historic town that is an increasingly important regionally administrative and commercial centre serving a wider area. Some interaction with activities and facilities available at Woking. Key interchange on rail network between inter-regional, intra-regional and local rail services. High level of access to the strategic road network.
Woking	An important centre of economic activity. Some interaction with activities and facilities available at Guildford. Key interchange on rail network between intra-regional and local rail services. Direct coach link with Heathrow Airport. Well related to the strategic road network.
Brighton	The largest settlement on the South Coast. A historic centre and a focus for media and cultural activity. An important commercial centre providing higher order and administrative functions. Key interchange for Coastway intra-regional services and inter-regional rail services. High level of access to the strategic road network.
Reigate/Redhill	Settlements that have a high level of access to the strategic rail network. Redhill provides a key interchange between intra-regional services, with the potential to develop orbital movements as an alternative to established radial links to London afforded a high priority.
Crawley/Gatwick	A former New Town that has become a commercial and administrative centre providing a wide range of higher order

Settlement	Characteristics
	functions. Proximity of London Gatwick Airport serves to attract organisations requiring good access to international and European markets. Rail station acts a key interchange between inter and intra regional rail services. High level of access to the strategic road network, with the coach station at Gatwick acting as a national hub for coach services.
Ebbsfleet	Key development node in the Thames Gateway sub-region that provides the opportunity to create a new transport hub of regional significance. Identified location for major business district in a mixed settlement. Development will be focused on the new international rail station located on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.
Rochester (Medway Towns)	An identified regeneration opportunity within the Thames Gateway sub-region, but the longer-term potential of the towns to provide higher order functions and fulfil role of a regional transport hub dependent upon improved strategic transport connections.
Maidstone	The county town of Kent serving as the focus for administrative, commercial and retail activities. Well related to strategic rail and road networks. Interchange point between intra and local rail services.
Ashford	Identified as a growth point over an extended period of time, with substantial housing and economic development. High level of access to strategic rail and road networks. Existing international rail station to be served by Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Interchange opportunities between international and local rail services. Identified in RPG9 as one of two major growth areas.