



Housing & Land Delivery Board

Date	2 November 2020
Report title	Advanced Manufacturing in Construction (AMC) Routemap
Portfolio Lead	Councillor Mike Bird, Leader, Walsall Council
Accountable Employee	Gareth Bradford, Director of Housing & Regeneration Patricia Willoughby, Head of Policy (Housing & Regeneration) Senior Reporting Officer Rachel-Ann Atterbury, Policy Advisor, Report Author
Report has been considered by	14 October 2020: Housing & Land Delivery Steering Group.

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Housing & Land Delivery Board is asked to:

- a) **Consider** the contents of Part 2 of the AMC routemap (Appendix 1)
- b) **Agree** the proposal to explore options for implementing the AMC routemap's recommendations in collaboration with the AMC Officer Working Group and Expert Advisory Group
- c) **Note** the intention to formally launch the AMC routemap in Winter 2020/21
- d) **Delegate** to the Director of Housing & Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Land, authority to agree the final versions of the AMC routemap (for publication).

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Housing & Land Delivery Board on the work undertaken by WMCA, the AMC Officer Working Group and Expert Advisory Group in producing a routemap for accelerating Advanced Manufacturing in Construction in the region as commissioned by the Housing and Land Board.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At its 15 January 2020 meeting, the Housing & Land Delivery Board received an update on the work on AMC in the region - a key programme outlined in the Board's Annual Business Plan and central to delivery of other programmes such as brownfield regeneration, inclusive growth and zero carbon homes. This included agreement to the development of a comprehensive AMC routemap and strategy. As a reminder, the

primary purpose of the routemap was to ensure that AMC delivers housing and job numbers, but also social value, inclusive growth and environmental benefits.

- 2.2 It is important to note that there are some differences between MMC and AMC. MMC is a term defined by MHCLG to cover a broad range of pre-manufacturing techniques in construction which aim to improve quality, programme efficiency and reduce material waste. AMC, describes a sub-set of MMC technologies which focus specifically on advanced construction techniques, typified by the fundamental use of digital technology throughout the design and construction process, automation, high quality materials and performance and potential for mass-customisation. Both of these terms are clarified on page 3 of the routemap.
- 2.3 To ensure that the routemap is accessible to those less familiar with the AMC sector, but robust enough to inform credible actions, a two-part structure was proposed and agreed by the Board in April 2020:
- Part 1 - An Executive Summary - which would be a standalone, focussed and accessible document. The summary would broadly address the opportunities and challenges provided by AMC, and the key strategic and policy drivers for the West Midlands. As well as this, it would suggest short, medium and long term actions, with recommended next steps. The Housing & Land Delivery Board agreed the structure and format of Part 1 at the September meeting.
 - Part 2 -A detailed report – which would underpin the summary, providing a comprehensive evidence base and analysis of the AMC sector in the West Midlands.
- 2.3 Part 2 of the routemap (Appendix 1) has now been produced and WMCA is seeking comments on the routemap in its entirety today. Part 2 is top and tailed by Part 1 and includes 3 additional chapters (p.7 – p. 37) based on the research pieces presented to the Steering Group in June 2020.
- 2.4 Alongside the routemap, AMC has also been identified as a core game changer in the Housing and Land Board's Covid19 recovery plan. An investment case for an AMC Acceleration Fund has been prepared and talks are ongoing with government to secure new investment into AMC. This funding would be used to increase uptake of AMC in the region by bridging the gap between the cost of AMC vs traditional methods of construction and providing the certainty business needs to invest and develop in new technologies and training in the region.

3.0 Next steps and Implementation

- 3.1 WMCA officers are requesting delegated authority from Housing & Land Delivery Board to make any amends necessary to finalise the routemap for publication. WMCA will look to formally launch the routemap in Winter 2020/21 with appropriate comms and publicity.
- 3.2 In the meantime, WMCA, in collaboration with the officer working group and expert advisory group, will begin to explore options for implementing the recommended short-term actions in Part 1.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from the information contained in the report. The Single Commissioning Framework provides a single set of criteria and governance systems that will be applied to all applications for available devolved WMCA Housing, Land and Property Development funds, together with a consistent process and timelines for decision.
- 4.2 WMCA investment in any proposed Advanced Manufacturing in Construction projects would be governed and administered through the Single Commissioning Framework, WMCA Assurance Framework and in line with the accounting and taxation policies of the WMCA and HMRC.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Section 113A(1)(a) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 gives WMCA a power of competence appropriate for the purposes of carrying out any of its functions. Part 4 of The West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016 (2016 No 653) confers that the functions relating to any economic development and regeneration in the constituent councils are exercisable by WMCA. Part 3 of The West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017 confers functions corresponding to the functions of the Homes and Communities Agency has in relation to the combined area. Paragraph 10 (2) (a) of the 2017 Order confers the function of improving the supply and quality of housing to the Combined Authority, 10 (2) (b) to secure the regeneration or development of land or infrastructure in the combined area, 10 (2)(c) to support in other ways the creation, regeneration or development of communities in the combined area or their continued well-being and 10 (2)(d) confers the function of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and good design.
- 5.2 It is noted that the purpose of this paper is to update the Housing & Land Delivery Board on the work undertaken by WMCA, the AMC Officer Working Group and Expert Advisory Group in producing a routemap for accelerating Advanced Manufacturing in Construction in the region. Legal advice should be sought as and when required in the development of the AMC strategy and routemap. Once the AMC requirements have been established the existing requirements for AMC in the Single Commissioning Framework would need to be strengthened and implemented through the funding agreements on a case by case basis.

6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 There is no equality impact in relation to this report.

7.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

- 7.1 The research presented at this meeting will be used to inform WMCA's approach to growing the AMC sector in an equitable way, maximising economic benefits, housing quality and job/skills opportunities across the region's communities.

8.0 Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 8.1 The research presented applies to the whole WMCA geography. The proposed AMC Charter and routemap would be used to guide WMCA investment decisions across the whole geography of the WMCA area.

9.0 Other Implications

9.1 There are no other implications.

10.0 Schedule of Background Papers

10.1 There are no background papers.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE APPENDIX IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM:

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