REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH WEST 2006-2026: FROM ISSUES TO OPTIONS

Report for Consultation Summer 2004
The Regional Assembly as Regional Planning Body, wants to hear your views to make sure the new Regional Spatial Strategy can best provide for the future needs of the South West, its people and its environment.

This is a major opportunity to influence the future development of the region.

The South West Regional Assembly is responsible for producing a new regional plan which will look forward over the 20 year period to 2026.

We already have a plan called Regional Planning Guidance (RPG10) which although relatively new needs to be updated.

Over the next year, the Regional Assembly, with partners, will be developing the new plan which will be known as the Regional Spatial Strategy or RSS for the South West and will be much more comprehensive. Work has already started and the RSS when finalised will contain important policies and information which will shape the development of the region.

The new RSS is at a crucial stage in its development. The core Strategy of the RSS has to be decided upon and in order to do so a number of options need to be considered. This document sets out three possible options for the future development of the region as well as three which the Regional Assembly thinks are less realistic. During the latter part of 2004, the Assembly will have to decide on its preferred option for the spatial strategy. Your comments will help reach that decision.

Please consider carefully the contents of this report and the merits of the strategy options put forward. We are not asking you to choose between the options but to indicate how, from your perspective, the different strategic approaches, or elements of them, might help the region deal with the challenges of the next 20 years and beyond.

A form for your response can be found on the back pages of this report. Please send your views by Monday 15th November 2004 to the contact addresses given on the form at the back of this document.
SECTION 1: Regional Strategic Planning and the RSS

“Planning shapes the places where people live and work, and the country we live in. It plays a key role in supporting the Government’s wider economic, social and environmental objectives and for sustainable communities”

ODPM, Consultation Paper on Planning Policy Statement 1: Creating Sustainable Communities February 2004

Think what the South West will be like in 2026. How will residents live their lives then? How will most people be spending their time in 2026? What will the region look like? Will climate change have had any noticeable effects? Will most cars still be petrol based? Will public transport be more available and reliable? Will houses look like those being built now, using the same materials?...using more or less energy? Will the average person be working more or fewer hours than now? Finally, what developments in technology will have the same impact on our lives as those which have occurred during the last 20 years.....mobile phones, the internet etc? It is a good opportunity to think through what kind of future do we want for the region.

If you are interested in the answers to these questions then you are interested in strategic planning. Regional Strategic Planning gives us an opportunity to shape the future of the South West. It needs to be visionary as well as practical, taking account of developing thinking about future scenarios for the region but also providing clear pointers to ensure development happens where and when and how it is needed.

What will the RSS deal with?

The RSS, is a new type of plan which is being introduced by the Government as part of its reforms to the Planning system, contained in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The South West RSS will replace Regional Planning Guidance (RPG10) which looks forward to 2016. The RSS will be a statutory development plan which sits between national and local policy, only containing policy which adds value at the regional level. It will deal with broad development strategy for the region and its major settlements. Not every issue can be covered in the RSS.

The RSS will be one of the main 'delivery mechanisms' for the region’s Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) and needs to link to other plans and strategies (e.g. health, education, culture, economy) helping to achieve their objectives. (the main purpose and aims of the IRS are set out below). The RSS for the South West will be used when individual decisions about development are made and local plans will have to conform to the principles and policies it contains. It will signal to the development industry where development is needed; it will also indicate where it is not appropriate.
The RSS will provide:

- the strategic planning context for Local Development Frameworks including how much new housing is required in the region's 35 Districts, 9 Unitary authorities and 2 National Parks.
- a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) to guide investment in transport facilities and services to be proposed in Local Transport Programmes (LTP's)
- policy guidance on issues ranging from minerals extraction and waste treatment to economic development and housing, health, culture, environment.
- a clear implementation plan to ensure that the proposals are delivered.

The new RSS will have a strong sub regional dimension because County Structure Plans will no longer be produced. It will identify places in the region capable of achieving economic growth and regionally significant levels or types of new business premises, housing and other facilities. It will also identify places, again of regional significance, where regeneration activity is needed. A number of places in the region have been identified where there are strong 'functional' relationships between areas and where 'strategic policy deficits' might arise without sub regional policy. The main areas for sub regional study were identified in 2003 following consultation and are mainly the larger urban areas where strategic planning issues may cross administrative boundaries. Joint studies led by the local authorities have been set up to test different growth assumptions and strategic development options for:

- **The West of England area** (including Bristol/Bath/Weston-super-Mare),
- Gloucester/Cheltenham,
- Swindon,
- SE Dorset conurbation (including Bournemouth and Poole)
- Exeter
- Plymouth and SE Cornwall,
- Taunton and the towns of central Cornwall.

In addition, work is underway with stakeholders to look carefully at the best way to deal with rural development issues in the emerging RSS. In all cases, whatever is included in the RSS should add value and recognise the role of other plans.

This work will feed into the emerging RSS and will help test the regional spatial strategy options contained in this report.
SECTION 2: From RPG10 to RSS

Planning for the South West: Issues to be dealt with

Having an up-to-date spatial strategy is an important step for the region in tackling some of the region’s stated issues of concern. At first look, the South West is successful and dynamic. Economically, socially and environmentally the region compares well with other regions in the UK, outside London and the South East England. For many people a high quality of life is enjoyed and the obvious attractions of living in the South West have encouraged people (and businesses) to move from other regions. The best estimates suggest that this trend will continue, and the population of the region, which was the fastest growing over the last 20 years, is set to continue to increase.

Work on the region’s Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) has emphasised however, that a number of deep seated issues need to be addressed if all residents are to enjoy the benefits of living in the South West. Publication of ‘Trends and Challenges for the South West. Key Issues for the future of the Region’ in late 2003 has provided a detailed evidence based account of the issues causing concern, many of which are long standing and have a clear spatial dimension. For example:

- Wide variations in economic and social well-being between different localities in the region are evident.
- Access to affordable housing and, in many areas an insufficient choice of quality employment opportunities, has become an increasingly urgent problem.
- Traffic congestion has increased as population, particularly in the more rural parts of the region, has grown
- The local natural and man-made environment is often under pressure, and the South West is one of the biggest producers of waste per head
- Public transport use has declined and costs have risen
- Many jobs, and commercial and public services, such as shopping and banking, healthcare and education, have become more centralised in the main towns and cities.
- The economic role of the countryside is changing and is uncertain.
- In addition, the region needs to nurture its precious environmental assets and take account of the possible effects of climate change.

This is the backdrop to the work which has taken place over the last year to assess whether the spatial development strategy in RPG10 is still the most appropriate choice for the region.
The Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS): A Regional Context for RSS

The purpose of the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) for the South West is to provide an 'umbrella' for a number of more specific regional strategies, each of which will contribute to achieving the high level aims and priorities agreed. It sits alongside the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF) which ensures coordinated support for economic, social and environmental aims.

Regional Strategy Linkages

Following extensive stakeholder consultation in late 2003/early 2004 five broad aims for the region have been identified and adopted by the Regional Assembly:
Key aims for our Region

| to harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change |
| to enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life |
| to enhance our economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity |
| to address deprivation and disadvantage to reduce significant intra-regional inequalities |
| to make sure that people are treated fairly and can participate fully in society |

The RSS will need to respond to these aims through its core spatial strategy, the Regional Transport Strategy and other topic policies. The strategy options which follow need to be judged in terms of how effectively they meet these aims.

(For a more detailed account of the aims and objectives in the IRS reference should be made to the 'Just Connect' document published on the Assembly's website – www.southwest-ra.gov.uk).

Assessment of RPG10 Strategy

Monitoring evidence suggests that in the late 1990s and early this century, regardless of the emerging RPG, development happened in places not fully in accord with the core principles of the RPG. Recent evidence revealed by annual monitoring (Appendix 1) and the most recent round of Structure Plans suggest this is being rectified. The fact that a strategy has not been fully implemented does not of course mean it is flawed. During early 2004, a 'fitness for purpose' review of RPG10 was carried out, the main conclusions of which are contained in Appendix 2.

Based on this work the Assembly assessment is that the RPG10 core spatial strategy of focussing most new development at 11 Principal Urban Areas (PUA’s) and Other Centres for Growth, with development elsewhere meeting local need, is broadly correct.
However, there are concerns that:

- the needs of smaller communities are not sufficiently well expressed in RPG10;
- that variation in needs across the region cannot always be accommodated in a single approach which tends to be applied as “one size fits all”;
- basic questions also arise about the choice of centres designated as Principal Urban Areas and the extent to which some of them may be capable of accepting further significant growth.
- In addition housing affordability has become a major issue in the South West and there are questions about whether RPG10 has been sufficiently effective in terms of housing delivery.
- the RSS should say 'more on less' and not repeat national policy

These factors need to be taken account of when evaluating the Spatial Strategy Options.

The RSS will need to deal with a major contradiction between strategic planning principles and popular perceptions. Individual choice of residential type and location in the region still favours traditional dwellings in more rural locations. However recent public opinion survey work has also indicated that the preference of people living in the region now is that new development should be located at larger urban centres rather than dispersed around the countryside. The Principal Urban Areas named in RPG10 still offer the best opportunity to deliver sustainable development. A key challenge for the RSS and for private developers and implementation agencies is to find ways of transforming urban living environments to make it a more acceptable choice for a larger proportion of residents in future.

Although less than 50% of residents currently live in the PUAs, the RPG10 plan is to ensure that a higher proportion of new development (largely the development of new housing) occurs at the PUAs, so that over time more than 50% of residents will live in these centres.

**Producing the Regional Spatial Strategy**

The core spatial strategy of RPG10, which applies to the period up to 2016, is the starting point for this review. Although RPG10 is recently published (issued by the Secretary of State in late 2001) its policies are only just starting to take noticeable effect, it is in need of review and revision, given:

- the demands of the reformed planning system;
- the need to take account of changes which have occurred in the region since it was issued in 2001;
- and the need to update estimates of development required to support the region’s economy and housing supply.
The Region is not starting with a 'blank sheet of paper'; but, the RSS cannot be just a simple “roll forward” of RPG10. This review is an opportunity to think about the development of the region positively and ensure clear connections with other strategies, such as the Regional Economic and Housing Strategies in the context of the IRS.

The diagram below shows the revised RSS will take shape over an 18 month period. The Regional Assembly is committed to making a submission to the Deputy Prime Minister in the autumn of 2005. As well as this public consultation on the Options for strategy, there will be a stakeholder consultation on the emerging RSS and once submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister, a full public consultation on the draft RSS preparatory to a formal Examination in Public of the key features of the RSS.

The preparation of the RSS has reached an important point where different spatial strategy Options need to be compared to identify the most sustainable way forward for the region. These Options have been assessed against the objectives of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework as set out in Appendix 5.
SECTION 3: Developing the Spatial Strategy

A Spatial Strategy for the Region

The core spatial strategy of the RSS is about establishing the best pattern for future development of land and buildings (for homes and business), and of the transport and other significant infrastructure needed to support it. The existing pattern will be a major influence on this strategy. It needs to respond to the aims of the IRS and be sustainable long term. The core spatial strategy will need to reflect:

- the varying economic potential of the region;
- the ways in which different housing markets operate;
- the varied dwelling needs of the changing (and ageing) population;
- the impact of development on the region's transport systems;
- the way in which transport investment can affect movement patterns and enable development to happen;
- the use development makes of resources within the region and the potential for reuse;
- and the importance of the natural environment to people living, working and visiting.

The RSS and Levels of Growth and Change

We know that the population of the region has been on a growth trend for at least the last 30 years, largely resulting from the desire of people to move into the region from London and the South East for work or retirement. There is no sign of this trend abating in the period of the RSS. Government plans for growth centres in the South East may have some effect, but the basic ingredients which induce people to move will still be in place; the attractive environment, relative economic prosperity and, generally lower house prices than the South East (in some areas).

The recent review of housing affordability by Kate Barker (the “Barker” Review) suggests housing supply levels need to be increased to deal with current pressures let alone trying to tackle those of the future. Translated into a regional figures this could mean providing possibly 50% above the RPG10 figure of about 20,000 to over 30,000 units per annum, over the next 20 – 25 years. This is of course speculative at this stage but needs to be considered when thinking about Strategy Options. In addition, all Strategy Options need to provide a context for taking forward the draft submission made by the region for consideration under the Sustainable Communities Plan which proposes that three urban areas, the West of England (Bristol ‘core city’), Plymouth and Swindon are capable of accelerated growth under current RPG10 policy.
The Regional Assembly is not consulting separately on 'levels of growth' for the region, although possible growth scenarios have been used by consultants in carrying out the Strategic Sustainability Assessment of the Options and are included in Appendix 5. The bulk of new development, under any of the 3 strategy Options will be provided in the larger towns and cities of the region. The Joint Studies of these areas have been asked to test whether higher rates of new dwelling provision, up to 50% higher than RPG10, can be achieved with acceptable environmental consequences. In all cases housing provision needs to relate clearly to economic prospects and likely demographic change. The findings of these studies will influence the eventual choice of core Spatial Strategy for the RSS and the levels of growth proposed in each of the areas and Districts.

**The RSS and Broad Locations of Growth and Change**

The main towns and cities of the region (the Principal Urban Areas) are the locations of generally highest economic potential and the focus for retail, leisure and cultural activity. They are also the main transport 'nodes'. Their future growth and development will be central to any strategy option and to the overall prosperity and competitiveness of the region. The Spatial Strategy needs to be based on an understanding of how these larger urban areas 'work', how they function as complex economic and social systems and how the residents of the South West use these centres for work and business, for shopping and for recreation.

A number of other towns (Other Centres for Growth) acting as significant service and employment bases for their surrounding areas, may offer a similar combination of opportunities and future potential as the Principal Urban Area. These circumstances vary around the region. The RSS strategy needs to focus development on the mix of settlements which best serves the needs of different parts of the region and enables economic potential to be unlocked.

The RSS must also provide sufficient strategic guidance for development to meet the changing needs of the more rural parts of the region recognising the important local service and employment role of the region's many 'market and coastal towns'. The rural landscapes are the strongest defining features of the region and need to be protected from creeping suburbanisation, loss of tranquility and light pollution. Over 50% of residents live in the many smaller towns and villages, another defining feature of the region, and the RSS needs to cater for accommodation, jobs and services need to be catered for. Under any of the development strategy Options, new development in the more rural areas should be limited to that for which there is a clear need to be and focussed where possible on strategically important centres.

The South West is a geographically large and diverse region. There are significant differences between broad sub regional areas which are borne out by research findings and must be reflected in any spatial strategy. In all Options the special conditions of Cornwall as an Objective 1 area are recognised and regeneration of that part of the region will be a priority common to all.
The geography of the region is an important influence on business competitiveness and general prosperity of the region. The RSS and the Regional Transport Strategy need to take account of the needs of business for easy access to customers and suppliers. It also needs to reflect how residents move around within the region on a daily basis; journeys to work, to shop and for cultural and recreational purposes are fundamental to an understanding of ‘functional’ links between places. It is a basic principle of sustainable development that planning should seek to reduce the need to travel but in a large region with many towns and villages this is difficult to achieve.
SECTION 4: Spatial Strategy Options

The RSS provides the opportunity to think through a new approach for the region. Theoretically, a number of spatial strategies can be put forward, but, in practice, choice is limited by the effects of existing patterns of development, and by established strategy which is being carried through by Structure and Local Plans. Also, the principle of reducing the need to travel for work or recreation is one of the key drivers of strategic thinking. In a region such as the South West this leads to concentration of development on a relatively small number of large centres as the most sustainable choice.

The strategic Options presented here, therefore all in varying degrees have embedded within them the RPG10 'urban focussed' strategy as the most sustainable way of accommodating the bulk of the region's growth over the next 20 years. Other strategy Options have been considered, but rejected at this stage. Descriptions of them are included in Appendix 3 and have been subjected to the same SSA as the three main Options.

Please consider the following Section on the three Strategy Options and let us know what features of them you think could provide a basis for the RSS.
A number of common threads run through all three strategy options:

- The need for adequate investment, as “up front” as possible on key infrastructure – for transport, utilities including water supply, sewerage etc, businesses generating employment, affordable housing and community services - will be required before substantial housing development is permitted.

- A consistently high standard of design, layout and use of sustainable materials will be required for development in all locations. This is essential to deliver the objective of developing attractive and dynamic urban areas.

- Development densities in the major growth PUAs will need to be much higher, in order to achieve the required volume of growth without causing unacceptable levels of suburban sprawl, and will need to be supported by improved public transport with reduced peak time car use.

- Development in more rural areas will continue but at a reduced pace. Most development will cater for local needs only and will normally be located only in centres with good communications and an adequate range of employment and local services. The rural economy will continue to change and rural areas will or may still be the preferred location for many small dynamic businesses.

- Increasing emphasis will be placed on the use of modern information and communications technology (broadband communication and its successors) to reduce economic and social isolation in rural areas and to maximise their economic potential without further encouraging avoidable (long-distance) car-based commuting.

- The Options follow a strategy of reducing the need to travel, particularly by car, but do not necessarily in themselves affect people’s desire to travel. This will be dealt with through transport demand management policies in the Regional Transport Strategy.

The three main strategy options are presented in a way which allows consideration of the main features of each Option, gives an impression of what might happen under each option, and allows some comparison in broad terms. This is not intended to be a full evaluation of the options. A more detailed evaluation will take place when the consultation phase concludes. Details of the basis on which an evaluation will be made are contained in Section 5 below.
Possible Strategy 1:
No change in basic strategy – continue with RPG10

Main features:

- Most new development at the eleven PUAs; Bath, Bristol, Bournemouth/Poole, Cheltenham, Exeter, Gloucester, Plymouth, Swindon, Taunton, Torbay, Weston-super-Mare. Currently about 40% of the region’s population lives in the PUAs. Over 50% of new physical development will happen at these centres under this strategy option.
- Some growth at “other designated centres” outside the influence of the PUAs in order to deter increasing commuting longer distances both to work and to access main urban services.
- Elsewhere - in the smaller towns and key centres in rural areas - development will cater for “local needs” only.
**What could the Region be Like under Option 1?**

By 2026, the majority of new development during the previous twenty years will have been at the 11 PUAs of the South West where economic potential is greatest, and where transport and other facilities can be delivered in a cost-effective and more environmentally and socially sustainable way than at present.

Each of the PUAs will experience some growth in economic activity over the period with certain PUAs more dynamic and better connected to the knowledge economy. Because of the number of centres competing as PUAs, resources to fund major infrastructure improvements in individuals PUAs may be limited by the need to spread investment over so many.

Transport priorities will be focussed on dealing with the urgent needs of the PUAs, in particular the areas where investment can best unlock the greatest potential. Transport and other improvements to the cities as places to live will often be dependent on economic development led growth. Outside the PUAs themselves, most major transport investment will be concentrated on the main transport corridors between the PUAs and to a lesser extent the small number of other centres for growth.

In 2026, the South West will still have many scattered settlements with people living much as today in small towns and villages where development, largely for local needs will have occurred. Focused development, particularly economic development in a number of centres away from the PUAs will enable more balance between housing and jobs to be introduced and possibly to reduce long distance commuting to larger centres.

The rural economy will continue to change and rural areas will still be the preferred location for many small dynamic businesses. There will be increasing emphasis on using modern information and communications technology (broadband communication and its successors) to reduce economic and social isolation in rural areas and to maximise their economic potential without further encouraging avoidable long-distance car-based commuting.

Away from the areas surrounding the PUAs and other large centres, new housing provision will reflect local economic potential and meeting local housing needs. This will require mechanisms to ensure that most of the provision will concentrate on affordable housing for rent, part-ownership or lower priced housing to buy in the more accessible, and economically diverse, smaller market and coastal towns rather than in every rural settlement.
Possible Strategy 2:
Strengthen RPG10 and concentrate more growth on a smaller number of PUAs and immediate catchments

Main features:

- Fewer urban centres capable of accepting significant new development are identified under this strategy option and investment is concentrated in these centres. This will focus a greater share of regional development on PUAs most able to accommodate and deliver growth, and with the greatest economic potential. Research on the “core” cities of the UK and Europe has demonstrated that large urban areas are key to national and regional economic success, cultural vibrancy and wealth creation. Requirements for success are dynamic economies, good ‘connectivity’ and access to University facilities. Large urban areas also often contain clusters of disadvantage.
- Other PUAs and Other important centres which have strategic potential are identified and will continue to develop but at a lower rate than the major growth centres.
- Some provision for development elsewhere will be made but this would be more controlled and some areas would have minimal new development only (i.e. strict local need, affordable housing only).
What could the Region be like under Option 2?

This Option aims to meet regional objectives by focussing most attention on a smaller number of the larger PUAs with particular potential and needs. By 2026, around a half of all new development in the South West during the previous twenty years will have taken place at the PUAs with the greatest strategic growth potential.

The major growth PUAs will aspire to become significant economic and cultural centres with an increasingly cosmopolitan lifestyle and thriving economies based on dynamic, knowledge based industries. Living standards in these centres in particular could see marked improvements under this strategy compared with 2004 and will help drive up regional pay and labour productivity. In the case of Plymouth this could have a marked beneficial effect on the far south west of the region as support from European sources diminishes through the plan period. Achievement of the economic activity needed in the major growth centres will require a concerted approach to investment and economic promotion, and significant improvements to communications, skills and other business infrastructure.

These major growth PUAs will need to receive considerable infrastructure investment “up front” and are likely to require a high proportion of regionally available public investment. More focussed investment will provide a basis for innovative transport solutions at these centres and the potential for lessening car journeys. Transport improvements elsewhere will be more reliant on the successful development of the other urban economies and locally generated funds.

This Option implies much higher overall densities in the major growth PUAs in order to achieve the required volume of growth without causing unacceptable levels of suburban sprawl, and encouraging high levels of car use. This Option in particular will require the very highest general standards of design to deliver the necessary “urban renaissance”.

Other PUAs will receive a level of growth lower than the main growth centres, which may mean committed development caters for a longer period. Their growth will be largely determined by their comparative economic advantages and their ability to generate and sustain economic activity. Elsewhere, new economic activity in identified market and coastal towns will be encouraged, and may be achieved through innovative and 'lifestyle' businesses. Development of residential property will be strictly controlled to ensure the urban focus is achieved but to cater for the employment needs of residents, economic development will continue.

The concentration of better jobs, services and social and cultural facilities in fewer centres in the region, may result in increased difficulties of access for rural residents, (who will still constitute about 50% of the region's population), intensifying a long standing trend. Avoiding potential economic stagnation in these areas will require innovative action to prevent increasing economic and perhaps social isolation. Account will need to be taken of the potential social consequences of an increasing elderly population in many rural areas as younger people are increasingly attracted to the lifestyle offered by the major growth centres.
**Possible Strategy 3:**

**Differential approach recognising the varying needs and potential of different parts of the region**

This is the most complex option of the three and the detailed distribution of growth will depend on continued investigation of local requirements and opportunities, including the work commissioned on the PUA centred Joint Study Areas. Initial indications are that growth in the northern part of the region will be concentrated almost entirely at the PUAs, whereas in the south east area and in the “peninsular” the PUAs will account for perhaps a half or less of total new development. This approach recognises the diversity of the region and that 'one size does not fit all'; that different strategy emphases may well be appropriate in different parts of the region to deliver the IRS and respond to more localised needs.

Main features:

- Most growth in the region will remain at the PUAs with modest additional growth in other key centres identified at strategically significant locations in different parts of the region. Whilst there will be core principles within the RSS to guide development, which are common across the region, an approach which acknowledges the appropriateness of different emphases in different, broad parts of the region may lead to more effective strategy.

- The important contribution that can be made by some 'market' towns at key locations in the less accessible parts of the region will be recognised whilst not detracting from the role of major urban areas. However, this strategy does not imply a return to previous patterns of scattered development across rural areas.
What could the region be like under Option 3?

Almost 60% of the population of the north of the region lives in the PUAs. By 2026, a considerable proportion of the total South West growth will have occurred in this part of the region at these PUAs. By adopting a more directly targeted strategy for the three PUA “clusters” (West of England, Gloucester/Cheltenham and Swindon) further advantage may be taken of their relative proximity and dynamism, as well as their increasing scale, to deliver even more economic activity and employment growth, much of it based on the technology driven, knowledge based sectors of the economy, which are concentrated in the area already. Adopting a complementary, approach to development of the northern PUAs could open the potential for the northern area to become an economic and cultural zone of national and possibly European significance. Transport priorities would concentrate on improving urban communications and inter urban connectivity within the north of the region.

In the south-east of the region, about 40% of the population lives in the PUA. There will be a need, through the on-going work of the local joint study, to identify an appropriate level of growth for the Bournemouth/Poole PUA which acknowledges the effects of constant pressures from migration from the SE together with over-riding environmental constraints and consolidates the economic position of the area. Part of this approach will be to develop a clear role for the market towns of Dorset and southern Wiltshire. Transport priorities would be focussed on improving links within the conurbation, and on providing adequately for longer distance communications out of the PUA with areas to the north.

In the “Peninsular” part of the region, only about 25% of the population reside in PUAs. Growth would be focused at PUAs with economic development potential (Plymouth, Exeter and Taunton) together with a more positive role for a larger number of smaller centres which may provide a source of employment for residents of more rural areas. These centres will become more dominant in their immediate catchment areas than in 2004 and some of the smaller market and coastal towns in the more remote areas away from PUAs may find that competition in shopping and related facilities increases. As well as improvements in transport infrastructure in the PUAs, rural accessibility will require significant investment.

In the Peninsular, care will be taken to match employment growth with housing development in the strategic growth centres. As in the other Options, certain business may be attracted to these centres. This part of the region exhibits some of the most difficult social and economic disadvantage (Plymouth, Torbay, Cornwall), the effects of ‘peripherality’ in the far south west and rural remoteness along the northern fringes of the peninsular. A major component of the strategy emphasis in common with Option 1 an 2 will be to set in place a long term development strategy which will deal with these issues and prepare for the eventual withdrawal of European Objective 1 & 2 status.

This Option is not a recipe for a dispersed housing strategy and this will be controlled through housing allocations to rural Districts. Nevertheless, it is possible that the rather more decentralised pattern of growth likely to be followed in the Peninsular and to some extent the south-east area of the region will generate more travel than the other Options.
How do the Options perform against the Strategic Sustainability Assessment?

A preliminary Strategic Sustainability Assessment has been carried out independently on the Options by Consultants for the Regional Planning Body. The following table summarises the broad findings for the three Options, the full report may be accessed via [www.swra.gov.uk](http://www.swra.gov.uk) or viewed direct at the Regional Assembly’s offices.

### Sustainability Strengths and Weaknesses of RSS Options and Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RSS Spatial Strategy Options</th>
<th>Sustainability strengths</th>
<th>Sustainability weaknesses</th>
<th>Other comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘No change’ – continue with RPG10</td>
<td>High density urban living is relatively resource efficient (land, waste, water, etc.). Likely to encourage economic activity to be concentrated in PUAs. Should increase opportunities for easy access to services and jobs.</td>
<td>Could lead to pressure on habitats and landscapes close to PUAs. Quality of life in PUAs decreased, unless ‘liveability’ is addressed. Given increasingly urban lifestyles being adopted in rural locations, danger that rural services could be lost. Deprived areas outside PUAs will not benefit from economic activity.</td>
<td>‘Local needs’ is not defined.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthen RPG10/ concentrate on fewer PUAs</td>
<td>Likely to lead to highest densities and therefore most resource efficient. Economic activity even more concentrated in fewer PUAs.</td>
<td>More pressure on habitats and landscapes close to the PUAs. More pressure on quality of life within PUAs. More likelihood of loss of rural services, and reduced economic activity in deprived areas outside PUAs, leading to more isolation of those areas.</td>
<td>Similar to Option 1, but with the outcomes further reinforced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differential approach</td>
<td>Recognises the differences within the region and provides for local distinctiveness and services. More likely to lead to economic activity that matches local market strengths. Should spread the impact of development and reduce pressure on habitats, landscapes, historic environments in some areas.</td>
<td>Loss of more greenfield land and less efficient use of resources. Increased light pollution in rural areas. Could be some diseconomies of scale and effect on competitiveness.</td>
<td>Danger that this option will be “all things to all people” unless more guidance provided.</td>
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SECTION 5 : Testing the Strategy Options

An important stage in the process will follow this Consultation. The Regional Assembly will need to make a judgement about which of the Strategy Options best meets the needs of the region and should become the core of the emerging RSS. This will ensure that the views of stakeholders and residents are taken fully into account. Based on six key tests, Regional Assembly will be evaluating the strategy options presented in this report following the consultation period.

1) The Regional Spatial Strategy should help deliver the IRS Aims and objectives and should be tested against other regional strategies such as the RES.

2) The RSS should help move towards more sustainable patterns of change reflecting Government advice:

3) The RSS should reflect different needs and issues across the region. One of the main 'tests' for the regional spatial strategy options will be provided by the joint studies set in train for the larger urban centres.

4) The RSS should be Deliverable

- Capable of meeting broad requirements for economic, housing and infrastructure development within land capacity and other constraints.
- Realistic in delivering living environments that meet the broad preferences and reasonable aspirations of the bulk of consumers and do not depend on pushing people into unpopular locational choices.
- Affordable in terms of reasonable assessments of the availability of resources.

5) The RSS should meet other Government policy requirements for brown field land development, higher residential densities, public transport usage:

6) The RSS should be capable of dealing with the effects of likely alternative “futures” for the South West up to 2026

- Work has been commissioned from the consultants to help identify possible future social, environmental, social and technological contexts for the region based on analysis of current trends.

An important, independent assessment of the RSS in all its stages is being carried out by a consortium of consultants. A Strategic Sustainability Assessment based on the objectives set out in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework will be undertaken. Their assessment of the Strategy options is contained in Appendix 5. Following this evaluation, the Regional Planning Body will identify a 'preferred spatial strategy' which will form the core of the RSS. This will be towards the end of 2004. The RSS document will be developed around this core strategy.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1: *What monitoring is telling us*

The first two years’ monitoring of RPG10 has highlighted the following broad issues:

- The strategy has delivered broadly the planned annual number of 20,200 additional homes in the region between 1996 and 2003, but not necessarily in the places intended.

- The objective of shifting development away from the former dispersed pattern of growth, much of it in rural areas, and towards a small number of Principal Urban Areas, is only slowly being achieved.

- Targets for building on previously developed (“brownfield”) housing and employment sites, however, are likely to be achieved earlier than expected.

- Huge pressures of demand for housing arising from both within and outside the South West, together with low average wage levels, are adding to a housing affordability problem second only to that of London.

- Commercial pressures meanwhile have steadily reduced the proportion of smaller dwellings being built since 1991 and social rented housing had been unable either to achieve the levels suggested in RPG10 or to keep up with the pace of sales under Right to Buy.

- Homelessness levels have grown considerably since 1996 and yet the current decade alone is expected to see a total population increase of around half a million, as well as a dramatic rise in the proportion of elderly residents.

- Past levels of population growth in rural areas had led to the South West possessing the highest proportion of residents located more than 4 kilometres (2.4 miles) from a range of important local services of any English region. A growing number of these are elderly.

- The South West economy grew at the fourth highest rate between 1995 and 2001 of any region. Much of this reflects the effects of population growth, however, as low average productivity levels continue to be a feature of the regional economy. Gross value added grew at the third slowest rate among English regions.

- Adoption of ICT and e-commerce is lower among South West businesses than the English average. Only 18% of South West businesses traded online during 2002 compared with 26% nationally.

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2 For a succinct guide see South West Regional Assembly, Regional Planning Guidance for the South West: Monitoring Summary Report 2004
• Car ownership levels are very high and bus use in general has shown a steady decline in spite of improving average access to frequent services in the region. Public transport use is lowest of all English regions.

• The average annual mileage of journeys undertaken by the region’s residents has changed very little since 1992 although there is a slight increase in the levels of car use at the expense of other modes. Walking still represents a high proportion of overall trips undertaken (25%) though obviously the total mileage is tiny. Nevertheless, the proportion of trips undertaken on foot is higher than any other English region.

• The region is affected by severe congestion “hotspots” which have high regional and national importance, such as the M4/ M5 in the Bristol area.

• The volume of freight transported by road rose only slightly between 1996 and 2002. Only 12% of freight in the region is transported by rail and 87% by road.

• Environmental pressures have been growing and, although there had been successes as well (for example regarding inland and coastal water quality improvements), there are clearly many challenges ahead.
APPENDIX 2: Is RPG10 Fit for Purpose?

A fitness for purpose study of RPG10 has been carried out by independent consultants for the Regional Assembly\(^3\) as a basis for developing the new RSS. Noting the mixed messages coming from monitoring, the consultants examined whether RPG fulfils the new requirements of “spatial planning”. The key issues relate to:

- What form should a regional spatial plan take?
- What are the needs of the region that can be addressed in a spatial plan?
- Has RPG10 done the job?
- How far can the RSS be developed from the RPG?

Discussion with local authorities, regional agencies, business organisations and other stakeholders emphasised two vital messages:

The regional plan has an important role in creating a context for other planning activities, and in giving confidence to work undertaken at a more local level. The plan needs to avoid over-generalising and should create a strategy sufficiently specific to enable the characteristics and needs of places in the region to be addressed.

RPG10 appeared to be reasonably specific in some of its policies, notable those dealing with the housing distribution elements of its spatial strategy, but not in other respects such as policies dealing with environmental protection which are too general to be effective. Often policies simply repeated national policy with little or “no value added”.

The RSS needs to reflect the changing requirements of the reformed planning system. The removal of Structure Plans from the system and their replacement, where required, with concise sub-regional strategies provides a particular challenge. In the South West six sub-regional study areas have been identified – Swindon, Gloucester/Cheltenham, Bournemouth/Poole, Exeter, Plymouth and the former Avon area. Additional work is also planned around Taunton and the “five towns” area of Cornwall, comprising Camborne/Pool/Redruth, Truro, Falmouth, St Austell and Newquay.

The new strategies are to be more focussed on the active delivery results than the previous development plan system. Annually monitored and reviewed implementation plans will play a very significant role in the RSS.

In summary, the RSS needs to be more positive, more explicit and more prescriptive on a smaller number of matters that need a strategic view. These are matters that do not fit administrative boundaries, which cannot be left for local determination and otherwise would not happen. The development of the RSS therefore has the difficult task of achieving “more on less”; that is, the Assembly to address a wider range of issues with fewer, more understandable policies and more readily implemented proposals, in a more compact strategy document.

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\(^3\) Baker Associates 2004, *Assessment of the Fitness for Purpose of Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10)*
APPENDIX 3 : Other Possible Strategies

This of course is not an exhaustive list of strategy options. Other approaches have already been considered but are not felt to be suitable to be put forward for detailed consideration because, at a relatively simple level of testing, they do not perform well against the criteria outlined below, these are:

- A strategy based on promoting a **substantial freestanding new town or towns**. This would require considerable and costly levels of land assembly, infrastructure investment – transport systems, water, power distribution, sewerage, waste treatment, social, local government and education facilities – well in advance of any substantial housing delivery even when compared with major extensions to existing major urban areas. Local environmental impacts could also be very significant, increasing pressure on habitats and landscapes. These are also issues around the economic development potential of new locations: development of a large new dormitory settlement would not be a sustainable response.

- Strategies based on **going with past development trends** which existed before the introduction of RPG10 allowing more scattered growth around the region, particularly in more rural areas, small country towns and rural fringes close to large urban areas. This approach would lead to poor sustainability including increasing levels of commuting and private car use, lower investment in the main urban areas which generate most of the region’s wealth, and poorer economic performance in the longer run.

- A strategy based on **low growth/ low net migration scenarios**. In the South West, more people are arriving than departing each year, leading to a significant net growth in the population. Net growth levels below those anticipated in RPG10 are felt to be unrealistic owing to the sheer scale of demand for additional housing in the region stimulated by pressure in London and the South East. This potentially put pressure on house prices throughout the region, increasing homelessness and the loss of younger people through outward migration. Severe losses in general regional productivity are likely due to this outflow. The effects of the proposed major expansion of development in parts of the neighbouring South East Region of England are unknown but could lead to some reduction of demand in the medium term. However, as much of the demand to move to the South West appears to be related to people wishing to leave existing intensively developed urban areas in the Home Counties, it is doubtful whether pressures will reduce. In addition, the creation of new and expanded population centres in areas such as Milton Keynes and around Northampton could conceivably also provide new sources of potential migrants to parts of the South West. Further research will however be commissioned by the Regional Assembly to test these issues.
The Assembly and its partners attach maximum importance to the need to evaluate thoroughly and critically the sustainability and overall performance of all of the options – including the options rejected for the reasons given above. The external sustainability consultants engaged by the Assembly have therefore been given maximum scope to carry out a thorough independent and completely objective assessment. An initial, provisional, **Sustainability Assessment is available on the Assembly website.** The Sustainability Assessment will also address the other options rejected above and the results will be made publicly available as the work proceeds.
APPENDIX 4: Reference Maps

The South West Region in Context

[Map showing regional context]

South West Regional Planning Guidance
Spatial Strategy Diagram

[Map showing regional planning strategy]

From Issues to Options Draft Vs 7.2

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APPENDIX 5 : SSA

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY ISSUES & OPTIONS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Introduction
Land Use Consultants in association with Collingwood Environmental Planning and Levett-Therivel Sustainability Consultants are carrying out a Strategic Sustainability Assessment (SSA) of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). This work has been commissioned by the South West Regional Assembly, and is being overseen by a SSA Steering Group, comprising stakeholders representing environmental, economic and social interests across the region.

The first stage of the SSA process was to develop a method for assessing how well the RSS is likely to perform in sustainability terms. Having studied a range of information about the region, including the South West Regional Sustainable Development Framework, it was decided that the basis for carrying out the SSA should be to determine the extent to which the RSS would be likely to achieve the following six objectives:

(i) Improve health.
(ii) Support communities that meet people’s needs.
(iii) Develop the economy in ways that meet people’s needs.
(iv) Provide access to meet people’s needs with least damage to communities and the environment.
(v) Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets.
(vi) Minimise consumption of natural resources.

Detailed criteria for each of the six objectives were developed to help in assessing the sustainability advantages and disadvantages of the options being considered for the RSS.

Options Considered by the SSA

The Issues and Options Paper presents three options for consultation, but the SSA has considered a wider range of options that have all been considered by SWRA in order to come to these three options. These can be grouped into two categories: spatial options, and growth options:

Spatial Options:
1. ‘No change’ – Continue with RPG10 focussed on 11 Principal Urban Areas (PUAs) and other centres for growth.
2. Variation on RPG 10 based on strengthening RPG10 / concentrate more growth on a smaller number of urban centres to maximise economies of scale.
3. Differential Approach recognising the role of strategically and functionally important settlements in different parts of the region.
4. Options including one or more substantial freestanding new towns.
5. Going with past development trends (i.e. ‘Going with past markets’).

The Growth Options:

A. Growth lower than planned for in RPG10 (c. 25% below current RPG10 Growth Rates i.e. 15,000 net new dwellings per annum).
B. Growth as planned for in RPG10 (20,000 net new dwellings per annum).
C. Growth higher than planned for in RPG10 (c. 25% above current RPG10 Growth Rates i.e. 25,000 net new dwellings per annum).
D. Growth substantially higher than planned for in RPG10 (c. 50% above current RPG10 Growth Rates i.e. 30,000 net new dwellings per annum).

It should be noted that the three Options presented in the Issues and Options Paper combine different elements of both spatial distribution and growth of development.

Assumptions

The SSA inevitability requires judgements and predictions to be made about how people’s patterns of behaviour will change as a result of development, and how the development itself will be implemented.

Past standards of development are not necessarily a guide to the quality of future development. The SSA assumes that whatever spatial and growth options are chosen, RSS10 will require much stricter sustainability constraints in the future, including protection of environmental assets; higher density development; lower energy/water usage; traffic restraint and demand management, designed with the intention of supporting/creating communities, rather than just delivering housing, etc. If such constraints are not applied vigorously and consistently, any growth is likely to have a range of negative consequences, and even the better spatial options will not deliver their potential for benefits.

We assume that, in line with the Regional Economic Strategy, the 11 PUAs will continue to be the main centres of economic, cultural and academic activity in the region, whilst regeneration of disadvantaged communities in both urban and rural areas will be supported (e.g. the rural economy will benefit from the Rural Renaissance, Market and Coastal Towns Initiatives).

Providing opportunities in urban areas for people to live close to where they work may help reduce the need to commute long distances, but not necessarily the desire. Similarly, providing services and facilities, including shops, schools, etc., in rural areas does not guarantee that local people will use them rather than travelling to larger urban areas to satisfy their needs.

Reducing the desire to travel could be encouraged by traffic restraint. Such restraints could apply equally to all options. However, the more population is concentrated in settlements offering a range of amenities, the easier it will be to reduce movement without reducing access.
We assume that there are some efficiencies of scale associated with size of development, such as the feasibility to provide community facilities (schools, health centres, green space, recycling facilities, etc.), and that it will not be feasible or viable for smaller settlements to be able to provide as wider range and choice of jobs and services as larger settlements.

These assumptions are inevitably open to challenge. The SSA team think it is better to make judgements than simply assume that past trends will continue, particularly if the RSS is aiming for a significant shift towards more sustainable patterns of development and lifestyles. The above assumptions will be kept under review throughout the SSA.

**Key Findings of the SSA**

- The more that development is concentrated towards the principal urban areas (Option 1 and even more so Option 2), the greater the opportunities for delivering resource efficient development in these locations, but the more difficult it will be to retain rural services and deliver affordable housing in more rural locations.

- Option 3 should provide additional support for rural services, and deliver affordable housing and jobs in rural locations, where they are most needed. The Differential Approach recognises that the relationship between PUAs, other centres, market towns and rural settlements varies across the region, and that their roles, functions and development needs vary accordingly. This Option has many sustainability advantages, so long as it is strictly applied and does not lead to scattered development more akin to Option 5 Going with Past Development Trends.

- Focusing development at the PUAs (Option 1 and even more so Option 2) may lead to the concentration of some environmental impacts in a smaller number of locations, but may offer greater opportunities for reducing other impacts (especially the many related to transport). Whilst focusing development at the PUAs should generally avoid wider landscape and biodiversity impacts, it could offer opportunities for investing in environmental improvements close to population concentrations (e.g. creation of country parks and high quality and wildlife rich open spaces).

- Higher housing growth rates (i.e. towards Option D and away from Option A) are more likely to lead to higher environmental impacts, for example in terms of land take, traffic generation, resource use, etc. However, higher growth rates are more likely to provide opportunities to deliver affordable housing.

- The higher the growth level of housing to be delivered, the more attractive the New town(s) options become (Option 4). New town(s) offer the opportunity to design a ‘sustainable’ settlement from scratch.

- The effects on travel patterns are difficult to determine. For example, under Option 1 and Option 2 concentrating development in the PUAs
should provide opportunities for a closer relationship between home and work, if as assumed above PUAs continue to be the main centres of economic activity. On the other hand, if this also leads to loss of rural services and economic activity, travel from rural to urban locations could increase. Option 3 could lead to reduced growth in rural traffic so long as people living in rural areas work locally, and use local shops and services, rather than travel to larger towns and cities. In general terms, the more dispersed development (e.g. Option 5 Going with Past Development Trends in particular), the greater the likelihood that traffic will increase.

A summary of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the options is provided in Annex 1.

Land Use Consultants
Collingwood Environmental Planning
Levett-Therivel Sustainability Consultants
23 July 2004
S:\3200\3299 SW RSS SA\RSS Options\Draft Report\Public Consultation Summary Final 23 July 04.doc
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability strengths</th>
<th>Option 1: ‘No change – continue with RPG10’</th>
<th>Option 2: Strengthen RPG10 &amp; concentrate on fewer PUAs</th>
<th>Option 3: Differential approach</th>
<th>Option 4: One or more freestanding new towns</th>
<th>Option 5: ‘Going with past development trends’</th>
<th>Towards Option A: Lower housing growth</th>
<th>Towards Option D: Higher housing growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High density urban living is relatively resource efficient (land, waste, water, etc.) and offers greater opportunities for investing in environmental improvements (e.g. country parks). Likely to encourage economic activity to be concentrated in PUAs. Should increase opportunities for easy access to services and jobs.</td>
<td>Likely to lead to highest densities, therefore most resource efficient, and greatest opportunities for investing in environmental improvements. Economic activity even more concentrated in fewer PUAs.</td>
<td>Recognises the differences within the region and provides for local distinctiveness and services. More likely to lead to economic activity that matches local market strengths and delivers affordable housing and jobs in rural locations. Should spread the impact of development and reduce pressure on habitats, landscapes, historic environments in some areas.</td>
<td>Opportunity to develop a sustainable community from scratch using sustainable construction, design and transport solutions. Could provide a long term response to climate change (by avoiding flood risk when locating new town). Could lead to differential economic performance, dependent on attracting investment to new town.</td>
<td>Likely to lead to greatest economic growth, particularly in north and east.</td>
<td>Less demand for resources, less waste, less congestion. Rural landscapes, habitats, greenfield land likely to benefit from reduced pressure from development.</td>
<td>More likely to provide opportunities to deliver sufficient numbers of the right types of housing for those who need it most. Increased investment, thus opportunity to deliver environmental improvements. Investment should also provide sufficient community infrastructure and services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability weaknesses</td>
<td>Could lead to pressure on habitats and landscapes close to PUAs. Quality of life in PUAs decreased, unless ‘liveability’ is addressed. Given increasingly urban lifestyles being adopted in rural locations, danger that rural services could be lost and affordable housing not delivered. Deprived areas outside PUAs will not benefit from economic activity.</td>
<td>More pressure on habitats and landscapes close to the PUAs. More pressure on quality of life within PUAs. More likelihood of loss of rural services, and reduced economic activity in deprived areas outside PUAs, leading to more isolation of those areas.</td>
<td>Loss of more greenfield land and less efficient use of resources. Increased light pollution in rural areas. Could be some diseconomies of scale and effect on competitiveness.</td>
<td>Increased pressure on greenfield land habitats and landscapes in location of new town. May lead to creation of a ‘dormitory’ town and would take time to build community spirit and vibrancy. May divert economic investment from elsewhere in the region.</td>
<td>Unplanned development would lead to increasingly urbanised character, greater environmental impact and increased demand for resources, reduced quality of life. Past development trends have not provided affordable housing, and urban regeneration within PUAs would be harder to achieve. Community vibrancy may be lost. Increases in traffic and congestion likely.</td>
<td>Less investment. Increase in house prices, reducing affordable housing delivery.</td>
<td>More demand for resources, and greater environmental impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar to Option 1, but with the outcomes further reinforced.</td>
<td>Danger that this option will be “all things to all people” unless more guidance provided.</td>
<td>Unless this option is combined with one of the other options, it would require a new city to provide the scale of growth needed (i.e. 100,000+).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX 6: Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing</td>
<td>Both low cost and social housing that will be available to people who cannot afford to compete for housing in the open market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocations</td>
<td>Land selected for development in local plans, but as yet without planning permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownfield</td>
<td>Development sites that have been previously built upon (&quot;previously developed land&quot;). A full definition of &quot;previously developed land&quot; can be found in Annex C of PPG3: Housing. PPG3 can be viewed through <a href="http://www.odpm.gov.uk">www.odpm.gov.uk</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand Management</td>
<td>Demand Management is a term used for a wide range of measures and policies designed to reduce the demand on the transport network, usually in terms of private car use specifically. Congestion Charging and use of Tolls is one extreme whilst increasing car parking charges and land use policy designed to locate places of work and residence close by is another. Demand management also includes Park and Ride, Car Sharing Initiatives, Travel Planning and improvements to walking and cycling facilitates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Plan</td>
<td>Structure Plans and Local Plans (including district wide plans, minerals and waste local plans) prepared by Local Authorities as a framework for development and land use decisions in their area. Under the new planning system, the statutory development plan will comprise the Regional Spatial Strategy and Development Plan Documents. The latter are prepared as part of the Local Development Framework by local planning authorities. Information on the changing planning system can be viewed through <a href="http://www.odpm.gov.uk">www.odpm.gov.uk</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield</td>
<td>Land that has not been previously used for development, most often land last used for agriculture and located outside the existing built up area of a settlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>The utilities, transport and other communication facilities required to support housing, industrial and commercial activity, including schools, shopping centres and other community and public transport services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Framework. LDFs will be replacing Local Plans as the key planning policy document produced by local planning authorities at the local level when changes to the planning system, detailed by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and accompanying guidance and Regulations, are implemented during 2004. Draft Government guidance (PPS12: Creating Local Development Frameworks) states that LDFs should be in place by March 2007. The guidance and other information on the changing planning system can be viewed through <a href="http://www.odpm.gov.uk">www.odpm.gov.uk</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local needs</td>
<td>“Local need” is taken to mean requirements for housing in the general locality in which it arises, but not necessarily in the same immediate neighbourhood, and would relate to factors such as locally available employment opportunities. Often, but not necessarily exclusively, local need will relate to affordable housing – i.e. social rented, co-ownership or low cost market housing. Economic development similarly would reflect existing functions and needs of the more accessible settlements (for example for regeneration). Usually these opportunities would lie in small towns, but small scale economic development, for example stemming from the need for farm diversification, might be appropriate elsewhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park</td>
<td>Countryside selected for its natural beauty and the opportunities afforded for open air recreation, designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. There are two national park authorities wholly within the south west region, Dartmoor and Exmoor. The new New Forest National Park, part of which falls within the south west region, is to be dealt with through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>regional spatial strategy for the south east, being prepared by the South East of England Regional Assembly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>A EU structural fund aimed at helping regions “lagging behind” whose per capita GDP is less than 75% of the community average. Further information on Objective 1 can be viewed through <a href="http://europa.eu.int/grants/grants/programmes_under_objective/programmes_under_objective_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/grants/grants/programmes_under_objective/programmes_under_objective_en.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODCG</td>
<td>Other Designated Centre for Growth are those settlements which are likely to be the most appropriate centres for locating sub-regional growth not accommodated at PUAs. Defined by policy SS6 of RPG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUA</td>
<td>Principal Urban Area (usually an urban area in excess of 50,000 population). Defined by policy SS5 in RPG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPG</td>
<td>Regional Planning Guidance. It can be viewed at <a href="http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/swra/ourwork/planningandtransport/rpg.shtml">http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/swra/ourwork/planningandtransport/rpg.shtml</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Development</td>
<td>Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987 – the Brundtland Commission).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTP</td>
<td>LTPs: Plans which outline a Local Authority’s strategy for dealing with transport in their area, designed to coordinate and improve local transport provision; they are used as the basis for allocating resources and transport capital expenditure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX 7 : Evidence Base
Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West: Summary of the Evidence Base for Strategic Issues and Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/ Topic</th>
<th>Relevant Strategic Options</th>
<th>Main Information Sources</th>
<th>Key Points</th>
<th>Other Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Key aims for the Region       | All                         | IRS Trends & Challenges for the South West: Key Issues for the future of the Region IRS Just Connect: Integrated Strategy for the South West | **Key aims for Region**  
To harness the benefits of population growth & manage the implications of population change;  
To enhance our distinctive environments & the quality & diversity of our cultural life;  
To enhance our economic prosperity & ensure quality of employment opportunity;  
To address deprivation & disadvantage to reduce significant intra-regional inequalities;  
To make sure that people are treated fairly & can participate fully in society. | Full issues research & consultation process completed 2003-04                                                                                                                                          |
| RPG10 – Fitness for Purpose of core Strategy and content as basis for developing RSS | All                         | Annual Monitoring Reports 2002 & 2003/  
Baker Associates Fitness for Purpose review of RPG 10  
SW Observatory State of the South West report  
Rowntree Foundation 2003 Can Work can’t buy.  
Local Futures Group 2004 Geographical analysis of the SW  
CACI 2002 study of housing | Evidence from:  
• Monitoring  
• IRS public consultation  
• National policy development (e.g. Communities Plan)  
• RPG10 Fit for Purpose Review  
• Initial debate with stakeholders  
**Indicate that RPG10 approach is broadly correct**  
**BUT:**  
• Build targets broadly achieved but still much in rural areas  
• Good progress on density and brownfield development  
• Deteriorating take-up of public transport & continued car use growth  
• Increasing commuting & continued migration | Continued monitoring and research programme: AMR 2004 process started  
Analysis of Census 2001 Travel to Work &  
Travel to Work &
### High employment/ low wage/ low productivity economy prevalent outside main PUAs – and increasingly further west in region

- More recognition of smaller communities’ needs required
- Regional variation needs more recognition
- Variation in role, function, economic potential of large and small settlements needs recognition
- Ability of different PUAs’ to deliver growth
- Responding to Barker could mean 50% or more houses (from 20,000 to 30,000+ overall)
- Insufficient affordable housing being delivered. Increasing homelessness. Declining affordability

Additional requirements placed on the RSS under the new planning system, including:

- the need to link more closely to other strategies
- producing a clear and effective programme to deliver on the plan’s sustainable development objectives, identifying District housing requirements, and giving a clear policy framework for Local Development Frameworks.

### Migration data current

| PUA/ large urban areas concentration of development Economies of Scale – and maximise economic competitiveness | Options 1-3, also new town scenario | ODPM 2003 Polycentricity Scoping Study
Urban Taskforce 1999 Towards an Urban Renaissance
ODPM 2004 Competitive European Cities: where do the core cities stand?
ODPM 2003 Cities, Regions & Competitiveness
DfT Transport & City Competitiveness
SWRA AMR 2003
Local Futures Group 2004
Geographical analysis of the SW Barker Review of Housing supply:securing our future housing needs – interim report 2003, final report 2004
CACI 2004 Baseline retail assessment of regional/ sub regional centres in SW DTZ SW Urban Economic Study 2001 |
| Major cities & urban areas key to national wealth creation. The key characteristics of economic competitiveness identified in the Core Cities work are: |
| Economic diversity |
| Skilled workforce |
| Connectivity – internal and external |
| Strategic capacity to mobilise and implement long term development strategies |
| Innovation in firms and organisations |
| Quality of life – social, cultural and environmental |
| Increasing economies of scale ensuring employment and service provision is focused on the main urban centres as locations in smaller settlements become uneconomic. In a modern economy many of the factors which are required for economic prosperity are concentrated in cities. |
| In SW two thirds of employment is at PUAs but less than half the population. Meanwhile even growing rural populations have declining access to services. Increasing car use and dependency, rural isolation of young, elderly and poorer groups potentially increasing problem. |
| Meanwhile cities suffering from under investment and slow Reality of needing to deal with the phenomenon and consequences of decentralising modern mobility and residential preferences versus economic process of increasing competitiveness. |
### Reducing the need to travel

**Options 1-3**

1. SWARMMS
2. DfT Ten year transport plan 2000
3. Commission for integrated Transport
   Aug 2000 European best Practice in transport
4. Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution 23rd Report – Environmental Planning
5. UCL Sustainable Cities research programme – J Williams 2000/2001
6. LUC for Countryside Agency 2004 Role of Rural Settlements as service centres

- Rapid and continuing rise in car use – one of major growing elements of green house gases, air & other pollution (water, light, noise); severance of communities in urban areas
- In all settlements the car is the dominant mode of travel, although car use increases as settlement size decreases. Settlements with populations of over 250k have the lowest dependency on cars. Whereas settlements with a resident population of 100k-250k have a slightly higher use of the car than one would expect. Optimal urban unit sizes for public transport – 250000+
- Walking – up to 20000
- Low use of market towns as service centres by village dwellers promotes longer work, social, shopping trips by car

### Reducing development pressure in the countryside

**Option 1-3, + low growth scenarios & Dispersed development scenario**

1. CPRE 2003 Housing & Urban Sprawl
2. CPRE Countryside monitor
3. State of the South West 2004
4. Urban Taskforce 1999 Towards an Urban Renaissance
5. English Nature research reports – various
6. CA State of Countryside 2004

- Urban intrusion into countryside causing loss of tranquillity with an estimated reduction of 21% in tranquil areas in the South West since the 1960s. The CPRE have estimated that light pollution has increased by almost one-fifth between 1993 to 2000.
- Rural affordable housing development can sometimes sustain community life but at the cost of low incomes & poorer life chances
- More people would be able to take advantage of affordable housing provided in rural areas if they also had access to a wider range of jobs were they to live in the area. This points to the need for integrated rural development.

   'A...significant effect of the shortage of affordable housing in rural areas is involuntary out-migration. There is evidence of significant out-migration from the case study areas. Across all the case study areas, around 15% of households report that a member of the household has moved out of that household in the last 5 years. However, between two thirds and three quarters of this out-migration is voluntary and reflects the natural tendency, particularly of young people, to leave home for a variety of educational, job related and personal reasons.' (DTZ, Para 21)

   Though the majority of out-migration is voluntary, between a quarter and a third of out-migration is involuntary in that the individual concerned would have liked to stay living in the rural area in which they had lived previously. However, as with other...
out-movers, the majority of this group move for economic or personal reasons. Housing factors are regarded as the most important reason for leaving be at most four in ten involuntary out-movers. (DTZ)

The most obvious role that the social housing fulfilled for tenants was to enable them to remain within established networks of family and friends within a village. The support provided by these networks was often very important to them, and most especially for single parents. (Bevan et al)

Less evidence was found for the possible function of social housing in allowing workers on lower-incomes to live and work within a village. One reason was simply that many tenants were not economically active. There was also widespread acceptance that the realities of the modern labour markets in rural areas involve extensive commuting, so few people expect to live and work within the same settlement or small locality. The quantitative analysis also cast doubt on any assumption that the availability of affordable housing will, of itself, reduce the migration of young workers in rural areas. Availability of employment opportunities seems to be much the more important issue, and few of the jobs young people get in urban areas will pay well enough for them to be able to commute and so remain within rural areas. (Bevan et al)

The evidence tends to undermine the rationale most often cited in favour of ‘local connection’ for rural social housing – to help local people to live and work within the same village. In fact, there were some people in the study areas for whom local connection requirements had actually inhibited employment-related allocations or transfers. (Bevan et al)

• reducing the trend in real house prices to 1.8 per cent, would require an additional 70,000 private sector homes per annum nationally; and
• more ambitiously, to reduce the trend in real house prices to 1.1 per cent, an additional 120,000 private sector homes per annum nationally would be required.

Arguments for increases in building rates - up to 75% nationally SW issues of affordability and increasing homelessness Difficulty of delivering sufficient affordable housing via S106 The Barker Review highlighted the following concerns about the current housing supply situation: |
- Reduced labour mobility, as high housing costs make moving more difficult;
- Increased costs for businesses relative to other countries where real housing costs are growing more slowly (if at all);
- Reduced affordability over time, leading to more people being constrained in their choice of place to live and therefore having a poorer quality of life. This may result in increased commuting and overcrowding;
- Increasing societal and inter-generational divisions between those who are home owners and those who are not; and
- Macroeconomic instability as volatile house prices threaten the broader economic environment.

| Urban capacity – “densification” vs “town cramming” | Options 1-3 + New town and low growth scenarios | Rowntree Foundation 2004 Preferences quality & choice in new build housing. Public views of development options in SE MrUK Household survey IRS issues (for SWRA) | Importance of consumer behaviour and choice in setting limits to implementability of planning policy

Many new-build house buyers have a strong preference for suburban or out-of-town locations and low-density property types. Based on the findings, the researchers suggest that more larger properties could be built at higher densities. The challenge for the government and the house building industry might be to create the conditions in which fewer of these buyers will tend towards a suburban, rather than an urban, housing choice.

MrUK Household Survey found that of those (122 urban respondents; 137 market town respondents) who would prefer to live in an alternative type of area, the majority claimed they would prefer to live in a rural area (74% urban respondents; 71% market town respondents).

Public views of development options in the South East – no single development option was favoured. Three development options were marginally more liked than disliked ‘densification’, ‘urban extension’ and ‘new town’. Two options – village growth and new settlement – were less liked.

Most first time buyers (68%) liked detached and semi-detached homes, but a significant proportion would be prepared to live in terraces (49%) and high density flats (30%).