Developing the Regional Transport Strategy in the South West:

Investment Priorities for the South West

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INTRODUCTION

1.0   This strategy (the DRTS) develops and updates the current Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) in RPG10 adopted in 2001. It identifies the key issues that are relevant to the South West and what interventions or investments are required to deliver the region's priorities and longer term objectives; the strategy also takes the opportunity to co-ordinate existing approaches to freight through the preparation of a Regional Freight map (Appendix 1).

1.1   The DRTS has been prepared ahead of a full review of the RTS which is currently underway as part of the Assembly's role as Regional Planning Body preparing the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the region, due for completion in 2005. The Regional Assembly is required to produce guidance for Local Transport Plans (LTPs), produced by Local Authorities and currently being prepared for the second LTP round to be submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2005. **The DRTS does not replace or amend the policies set out in RPG10 but does update the priorities included in Table 6** (in Appendix 1). It aims to provide an important context for the investment programmes of the Highways Agency (HA), the relevant Rail Authority; currently the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA); other national agencies and LTPs.

1.2   A key role for the DRTS will be to state the region's case for transport investment within the national context, and to give the region a voice at the national level as well as giving guidance to local authorities for the preparation of Local Transport Plans.

THE WIDER POLICY CONTEXT

2.0   **European** and **National** Policy have been designed to achieve broad objectives outlined by central government and the European Union (EU). The DRTS works within this context but applies these aims to the specific South West regional issues and agenda. There are some key policy agendas which the DRTS is framed within:

- EU's 'European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide'
- 1998 Transport White Paper 'A new Deal for Transport: Better for everyone'
- The 2000 'Ten Year Transport Plan'
- Governments Regions White Paper 'Your Region, Your Choice'
- DfT's 2003 White Paper 'The Future of Air Transport'
- DfT's 2004 'The Future of Transport: a network for 2030'

2.1   The region has benefited from significant levels of European Union investment in the past, although with the accession countries of Eastern Europe becoming the priority for the EU the South West is unlikely to maintain these levels in the future. However the Objective One status of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is likely to be retained. The 'Trans European Network' (TEN) encompasses parts of the South West's road and Rail network, and the European Commission has recently developed the concept of 'Sea Motorways' to increase market efficiency and reduce the impact of land based transport. The opportunities this may provide for the ports and trade of the South West are being considered by the region with Gloucestershire County Council leading a research project.

2.2   The DRTS must take account of key pieces of national policy such as the Transport White Paper and Ten Year Plan. The Department for Transport (DfT) has recently reviewed the 10 Year Transport Plan and published "The Future of Transport: a network for 2030". This will influence the formal review of the RTS but has been taken into account where appropriate in this document. **Page 14 demonstrates the relationship between the national shared priorities and the priorities set out in the DRTS.**

2.3   The Department for Transport has also identified key national priorities derived from its Public Service Agreements (PSA) made with the Treasury and Shared Priorities agreed with the Local Government Association:

-     Reduce urban congestion and inter urban congestion
-     Improve punctuality and reliability of rail services
-     To increase the use of public transport
-     Increase access to public transport
-     Reduce the number of accidents and improve safety
-     Improve air quality, tackle climate change and reduce air pollution

2.4   The Government's White Paper "Your Region-Your Choice" has given the Assembly a role to achieve better regional policy co-ordination. To achieve this Assembly has prepared an Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS). This is the framework for regional strategies in the South West and has the following aims:

-     to harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change
-     to enhance our distinctive environment 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

Page 11 explains the relationship between the IRS and the DRTS objectives and how the transport priorities will help to deliver the IRS.

2.5   The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) produced by the Regional Development Agency (RDA) and the Regional Environment Strategy (REnvS) produced by the Assembly for the Region are also key to the development of the regional transport strategy. The RES aims *"to increase sustainable prosperity and productivity for the region and all our people"* by boosting business productivity to allow all sections of the population to share and benefit from economic prosperity. The RES recognises the importance of communications in one of only three 'strategic aims'. This includes improving transport infrastructure as well as the coverage of broadband communications technology.

2.6   The Government Office for the South West has outlined its key transport objectives for the region in a letter to the Assembly these are:

-     Inter-regional connectivity
-     Development and focus of investment in the PUAs
-     Deprivation, social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal
-     The rural economy
-     Sustainability and the environment

2.7   The region has submitted a "marker" document to Government under the Sustainable Communities Plan. This identifies four areas of the region for potential growth and/or regeneration: Bristol, Swindon, Plymouth, and the Five Cornish Towns. At the time of producing this strategy the future progress of this initiative is unclear. The proposals in the marker document will be tested further over the coming months and need to be reviewed in the context of the developing RSS.

2.8   The Assembly reiterates its support for the package of proposals set out in the SWARMMS Study, which emphasises that, while accepting the need for improvements to the Strategic Road Network and the Strategic Rail Network, these must be complemented by effective measures to reduce the need to travel (in accordance with RPG10) to manage more local road traffic by providing for complementary investment in the rail network, public transport including bus priority lanes, park and ride, and appropriate demand management and significant soft measures.
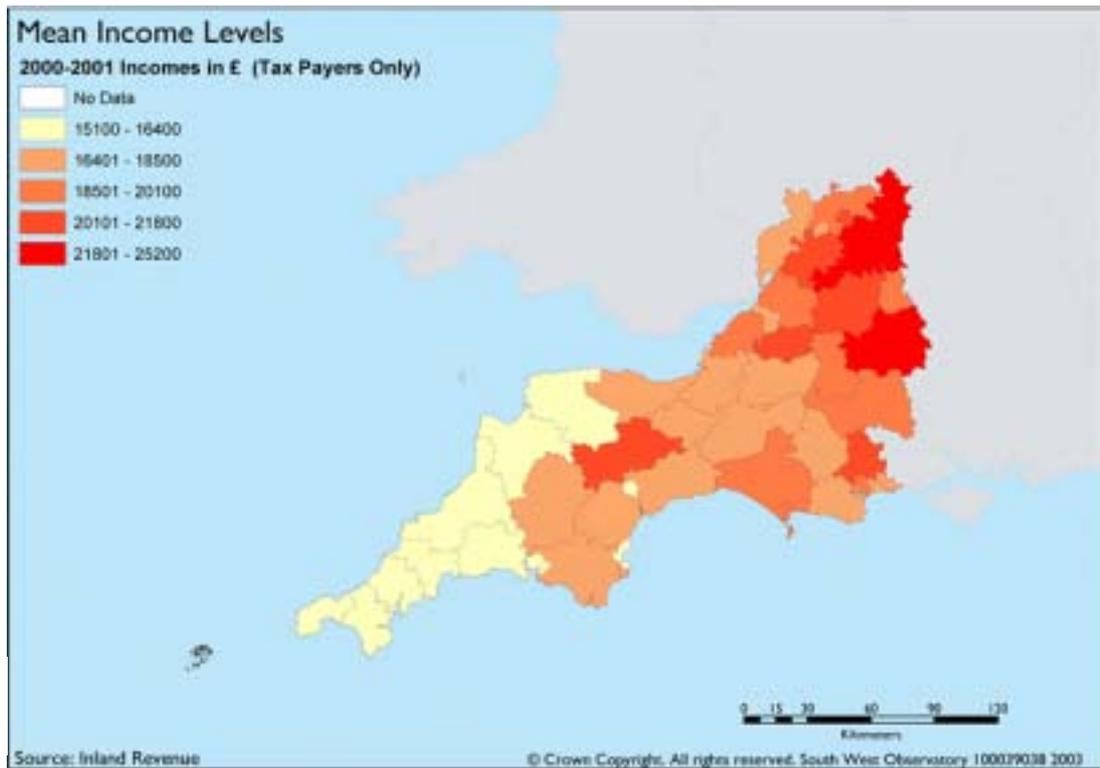

KEY TRANSPORT ISSUES IN THE SOUTH WEST

3.0   The key transport issues for the region have been identified through extensive consultation and partnership working as well as derived from factual evidence and studies. The key issues identified are:

-    Peripherality
-    Sustainable Transport in the Principal Urban Areas
-    Accessibility and social exclusion
-    Reducing the impact of transport on the environment
-    Inter-urban routes
-    Regeneration and Objective One

3.1   Appendix 4 sets out a list of transport studies and factual sources which have been used in the determination of the regional priorities.

Peripherality

3.2   Peripherality is a function of distance and ease of travel. The 'South Wales and South West Multi Modal Study' (SWARMMS) final report and RES identify peripherality as a key issue affecting the region. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and economic figures clearly show that the more peripheral parts of the region have lower levels of productivity with productivity highest in the eastern part of the region and lowest in the west. There are also parts of the north of the region which have accessibility problems resulting in regeneration requirements. Wage levels are highest around Swindon and lowest in Torbay, Plymouth and Cornwall.

3.3   As the SWARMMS report identifies, accessibility tends to decline westwards within the region. SWARMMS concluded that without investment, accessibility will decline further due to congestion on the existing routes and this will widen regional disparities. The far south west of the region relies on only one major rail and road route; there is no motorway west of Exeter and the rail links beyond the city are slow with track speeds below 75mph[1].

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1 Network Rail 'Strategic Plan' 2003

Mean Income Levels
2000-2001 Incomes in £ (Tax Payers Only)

No Data
15100 - 16400
16401 - 18500
18501 - 20100
20101 - 21800
21801 - 25200

Source: Inland Revenue

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The Principal Urban Areas

3.4   RPG10 concentrates most development at the PUAs as the major engines for economic growth. They play an important economic and social role and they tend to be the best performing areas for economic productivity. Figures show that the PUAs account for the majority of the region's GVA, with the West of England City Region (WoE) accounting for a quarter alone[2]. Congestion and capacity constraints will impinge on their future growth: unreliable journey times, scheduling and delivery of public transport and health, safety and environmental problems will all impact on future performance. In many parts of the region's urban areas investment in the transport networks has not kept up with economic and housing growth giving rise to a 'deficit' in investment.   The Developing the Regional Transport Strategy has identified specific problems evident in each PUA which need to be addressed. Delivery of the strategies will require new mechanisms including joint working and LTPs. Appendix 5 sets out a summary table of the relevant issues for each of the PUAs.

Accessibility and Social Exclusion

3.5   Both urban and rural communities suffer from poor access to services and jobs. The index of multiple deprivation and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) document 'Making the Connections: Transport and Social Inclusion' highlights the role of transport in ensuring access to services and reducing social exclusion. An evaluation of New Deal for Young People gave 'no local jobs' and 'lack of personal transport' as the two most common problems in securing employment.

3.6   In rural areas communities face particular problems because of increased distances to shops, schools, healthcare and other facilities. Geographical isolation can be

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[2] SWRDA – primary source

compounded by other indicators of disadvantage such as low incomes and poor access to training, resulting in pockets of deprivation and social exclusion.

3.7 In urban areas, transport services are generally better, but tend to focus on routes in and out of towns, with limited links to many other areas. This tends to impact most on the elderly, young families and the disabled. In some urban areas employment sites are located where they are poorly served by public transport. Urban children from deprived wards are up to 8 times more likely to be killed or injured in road accidents than those from richer or rural households[3].

3.8 Remoteness combined with poor transport and communication links have increased disparities across the region and created severe economic and social problems in the far South West. This has been recognised by the funding programmes Objective One and Objective Two but more needs to be done if accessibility and social exclusion issues are to be addressed.
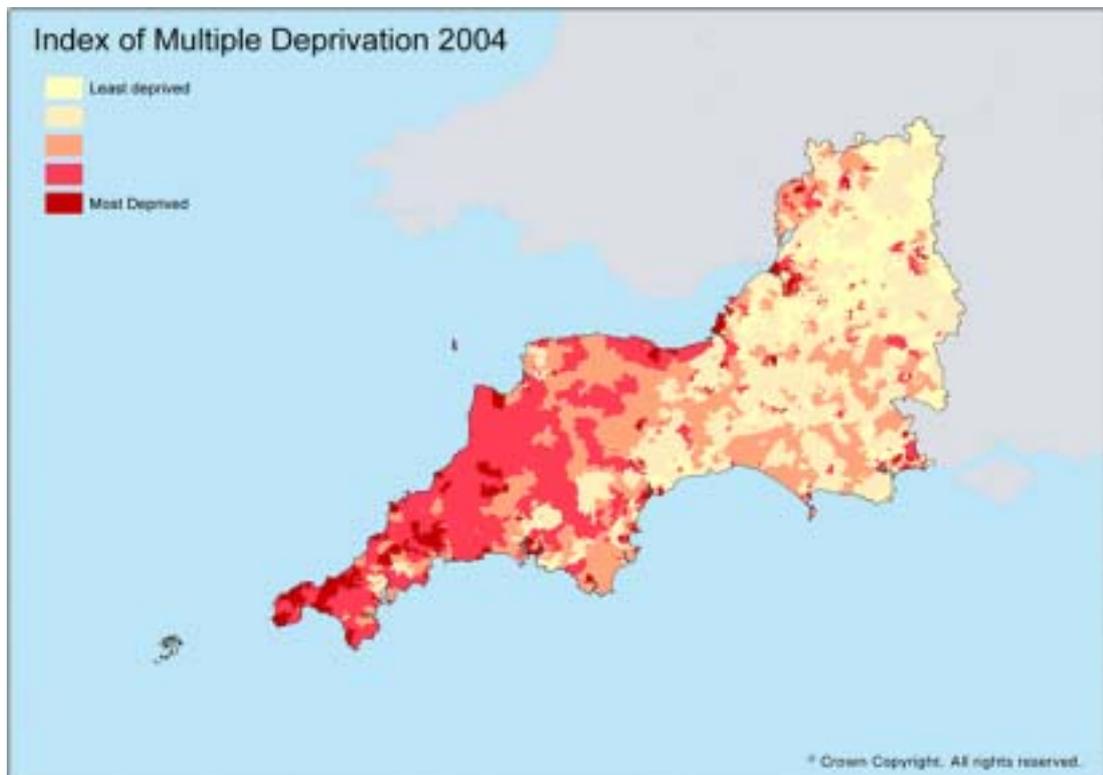
Reducing the Impact of Transport on the Environment

3.9 Environmental sustainability is an important aspect of the DRTS and national government transport policy. The Regional Environment Strategy (REnvS) outlines how transport effects the local, national and global environments. The immediate environment of local communities can be severely damaged by high volumes of traffic especially where high levels of strategic HGV traffic pass through villages and urban communities. Thirteen 'Air Quality Management Areas' have been set up in the region, mainly in urban areas. The effects of road traffic on the built environment through noise, vibration and soot can damage buildings and areas of high conservation value.

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[3] Transport for London, DfT, & Institute for Public Policy and Research

3.10   Almost 40% of the region's land area merits some form of landscape or environmental designation and protection. The environment of the region has been identified by the RDA and other bodies as a major asset in encouraging tourism and inward investment, the IRS identified it as a significant reason why people wish to live and work in the South West. The effects of transport infrastructure in valued landscape areas can have a negative effect on enjoyment of the countryside. The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England have produced a 'Tranquillity' map which shows how the amount of 'tranquil' areas in the countryside have reduced over time, mainly because of transport infrastructure[4]. Transport impacts on areas of high environmental quality.

3.11   Transport is a major contributor to global climate change with carbon dioxide emissions from transport growing nationally by 98% between 1971 and 2001[5] Reducing the need to travel in the interests of the local and global environment is an objective of the Government's transport and planning policies. Encouraging travel by more sustainable means such as walking and cycling for local journeys and public transport for longer journeys is a key priority of the DRTS.

Inter-Urban Routes

3.12   DfT, LTP and HA data shows that traffic is increasing on the region's roads. The region relies heavily on one major East-West route: the M4/M5/A30. This is becoming increasingly congested around Bristol, Exeter and Swindon when peak time local traffic mixes with more long distance strategic flows. SWARMMS predicted that unless investment is made, congestion will increase and journey time reliability will decline affecting the economic competitiveness of the region.

3.13   The rail network is largely reliant on the Great Western Main Line where the growth of passenger numbers is significant. Overcrowding of trains and infrastructure bottlenecks are apparent, affecting service quality and reliability. Some services are vulnerable to delay and disruption due to single line sections such as on the Exeter to Waterloo and Swindon to Gloucester.   There are also capacity problems on the cross country and the North-South routes[6].

3.14   The Assembly has highlighted the need to look further at the North-South routes and the A37/A35/A303/A358 in particular dependent on the decision of the Secretary of State on options for improving the A303 or A358.

Regeneration & Objective One

3.15   EU structural funding is one mechanism used to redress disparities between member states and regions. Between 2000 and 2006, the South West region will receive significant amounts of funding from the European Union through structural funds (Objective one & two). Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are designated as Objective one and this status is likely to continue after 2006 despite the enlargement of the European Union. Parts of Bristol, Plymouth, Torbay and rural Devon are currently designated as Objective two, although it is unlikely that these areas will retain this status after 2006.

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[4] Available from CPRE or in the REnvS – www.cpre.org.uk

[5] REnvS, page 98

[6] Rail Passengers Committee 'The Mainline they Shouldn't Ignore' available from the SWRA

3.16   The RES identifies the need to focus regeneration activity in the areas of greatest need – the concentrations of multiple deprivation in:

-       Plymouth
-       Torbay
-       Bournemouth
-       Bristol
-       Gloucester

3.17   In addition, the RES identifies the Urban Regeneration Company (URC) areas of:

-       Camborne, Pool and Redruth
-       Swindon
-       Gloucester

3.18   The Objective Two area of Bristol has a population of nearly 70,000 and covers 1,260 hectares about 16.5% of the population of the city. It comprises of five disadvantaged inner-city wards extending outwards from the City Centre: Ashley, Easton, Filwood, Lawrence Hill, and Windmill Hill; Lawrence Hill is also a New Deal for Communities Area.

3.19   The Assembly recognises the need to address the problems and to provide a framework to facilitate successful regeneration.   The transport infrastructure requirements relating to the main urban areas listed in paragraph 3.7 are addressed in the priorities chapter under making the PUAs work. Transport investment will also be required to facilitate regeneration in the Cornish towns and in some of the market and coastal towns. The emphasis set out in this document is on local solutions and unless levels of resource are increased for the region it is unlikely that the market towns will receive funds for major transport investment unless matched by European funding.

TRANSPORT OBJECTIVES: WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

4.0   The Regional Transport Objectives set out in RPG10 were developed in line with national policy objectives set out in the Transport White Paper and the Ten Year Plan and are:

(1)   To support the spatial strategy of RPG10

-    to help deliver the spatial strategy and service existing and new development efficiently and with an integrated approach
-    helping PUAs and other designated centres for growth function to enable them to maximise their potential as locations for sustainable growth
-    supporting regeneration and access to services and facilities
-    assisting the economy of peripheral parts of the region by reducing journey times and increasing the reliability of journey times

(2)   To reduce the impact of transport on the environment

-    improve the range of travel alternatives to the private car
-    reduce noise, pollution and impacts of congestion
-    introduce measures to encourage behavioural change

(3)   To secure improved accessibility to work, education, shopping leisure and services by public transport, walking and cycling

-    locating development at accessible locations with the potential to develop sustainable transport linkages
-    considering the impact of transport decisions on social inclusion

(4)   To create a modern, efficient and integrated transport system that will meet the demands of a dynamic regional economy, help overcome regional peripherality and meet all travel needs

The Integrated Regional Strategy

4.1   Transport does not operate in isolation but must seek to achieve wider objectives for the region. The Assembly has worked with regional partners to define regional aims which are set out in the **Integrated Regional Strategy – 'Just Connect'**. The table opposite demonstrates how the transport objectives above relate to the achievement of the overall regional objectives set out in the IRS. A '+' indicates a positive effect or supporting role; '++' a strong positive effect and '0' a neutral effect. There are no negative effects or objectives that detract from the IRS. The numbers represent the aims above (1, 2, 3, and 4).

IRS Aim	Integrated Regional Strategy 'crunch objective'	1	2	3	4
To harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change	- to provide sufficient housing to meet identified future needs, including housing that is affordable	++	0	++	+
	- to ensure that the long term effects of population growth and change are anticipated in the planning of the full range of public services,	++	+	+	+
	- to ensure that growth and development is sustainable – supporting environmental quality, optimising resource consumption and waste generation, promoting sustainable communities, and supporting economic prosperity	++	++	++	++
	- to use growth as an opportunity to provide adequate transport infrastructure and make the best use of existing and proposed investment	++	++	++	++
	- to adapt to unavoidable climate change impacts and minimise further impacts on a growing region	+	++	0	+
To enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life	- to maintain, and enhance access to, high quality environments and cultural activity	+	++	++	+
	- to ensure our natural resources are used much more sustainably by using land wisely, minimising waste and increasing recycling, using renewables, and promoting sustainable construction and good design	+	++	++	+
	- to fully understand and recognise the significance of, and make much better use of the social and economic benefits of, the region's high quality environment and the cultural distinctiveness of the South West	++	++	+	+
To enhance our economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity	- to ensure that housing development and the needs of the economy are planned for together	+	++	++	++
	- to improve regional communications and embrace new technological developments to improve access to labour and product markets whilst shifting towards a more sustainable transport policy which protects the environment and limits 'green house' gas emissions	++	+	++	++
	- to ensure that the competitive position of the South West economy is improved and that differences in economic performance within the region are addressed	+	+	++	+
	- to increase investment in the region's research base and develop the connections between universities, businesses and the economy of the South West	0	0	+	0
	- to focus on raising the attainment of skills at all levels, and at all ages to improve the life chances of individuals and the long term economic prosperity of the region	0	0	+	0
To address deprivation and disadvantage to reduce significant intra-regional inequalities	- to support those parts of the region that are in need	++	0	+	++
	- to ensure that policy and delivery actively seek to reduce inequality in the region on a variety of different measures integrating social economy and environmental factors	+	0	+	+
	- to ensure that resources are targeting areas at need	+	0	+	+
To make sure that people are treated fairly and can participate fully in society	- to ensure that in tackling intolerance and discrimination, the particular needs of individual people and communities are not overlooked in favour of a 'group' solution	0	0	0	+
	- to work alongside one another to ensure that co-ordinated, consistent education and communication is given about tackling discrimination and exclusion in the region	+	0	0	+
	- to ensure that everyone is able to access jobs, services, cultural facilities and activities and quality environments to enable them to participate in society	++	0	++	+
	- to ensure an active, inclusive and creative approach to consultation on policy and delivery in the region.	+	0	+	+

REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT

5.0   *"If regions do not identify priorities then central government ends up deciding priorities by default"*

        – Transport Minister Tony McNulty – March 2004.

5.1   Department for Transport guidance on the preparation of Regional Transport Strategies requires the identification of a clear set of transport **investment** and **management** priorities to guide the implementation of the RTS.

5.2   It is important that priorities are realistic, having regard to the likely level of resources available, and do not contain a long 'wish list' of schemes. The choice of priorities reflects a process based on values and judgements but must be selected to address the key problems and issues identified in this document. They must also be supported by a clearly researched analytical case.

Core Strategy

5.3   SWARMMS identified the need for a package of measures to ensure the competitiveness of the South West does not decline as a result of reducing accessibility because of congestion. It is recognised however that it is not possible or desirable to build sufficient capacity to meet all the needs of the region in the future given the environmental assets of the South West and limits to available funding. The policy emphasis is therefore to seek selective investments to tackle specific bottlenecks to ensure reliability of journey times. Measures will also be required to manage the demand for movement and encourage modal shift and a reduction in travel. The priorities set out below are based on a core strategy of **reliability** and **resilience** in the network and seek a balance of investment and management to meet the current and future needs of the South West.

Key Policy Outcomes/Principles

5.4   To help determine the region's priorities the Assembly has identified a number of **key policy outcomes** and **principles** which will ensure that delivery relates to the needs of the South West which have been derived from the problems and issues set out in Section 3. The relationship between the policy outcomes, problems and issues and priorities for investment and management is indicated in the table overleaf.

5.5   The key transport issues outlined in Section 3 are (not in hierarchical order):

1. Peripherality;
2. The Principal Urban Areas (PUAs);
3. Accessibility and social exclusion;
4. Reducing the impact of transport on the environment ;
5. Inter urban Routes;
6. Regeneration and Objective One areas.

Where the key principles have a clear positive correlation with the issues the corresponding box is shaded in blue.

Regional key principles and policy outcomes	Issues						Regional priorities for investment and management
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Improve journey time reliability on the South West region's 'Trunk' road, air and rail connections to UK and European centres (to improve competitiveness and reduce regional inequalities)	■	■	■		■	■	Second strategic road route. Great Western Mainline upgrade
Reduce congestion on the Trunk and local networks around Bristol as the gateway to the South West and Wales and the main urban centre in the South West	■	■	■		■	■	West of England/PUA priorities M4/M5 management - ITS[7]
Supporting the Spatial Strategy – making the PUAs work – making them attractive places to live and work (and visit). Facilitating future development without reliance on the strategic road network for commuting		■	■		■	■	PUA priorities
Making the south West a 'show case' region for addressing rural accessibility	■		■	■	■	■	Rural accessibility
Safety – tackling safety problems on the Inter Urban road network to meet national targets. Reducing accidents in PUAs especially in areas of social exclusion.	■	■	■		■	■	Trunk Road Improvements – 2nd Strategic Route. Route Management Strategies for Inter Urban routes. PUA priorities.
Pollution and Environment – Addressing hot spots of air pollution on the Trunk and local PUA road network. Environment – Meet the needs of the region for effective movement of goods and people with minimum impact on the environment		■	■	■	■	■	PUA Priorities Trunk Road Schemes and Route Management Strategies
Freight – Facilitating the effective movement of goods and services to meet the needs of the economy, including encouraging modal shift by identifying a location(s) for regional inter-modal freight facilities. Reducing conflicts between freight movements and the environment including impacts on communities	■	■		■	■	■	Trunk Road Priorities Route Management Strategies
Make best use of the existing network by establishing a Route Management approach for existing inter-urban corridors with route/corridor co-ordinating groups to ensure common standards/policies.	■	■		■	■	■	No regional priority for increased strategic capacity - Route Management Strategies for inter-urban routes to make the best use of the network and address impacts on local communities and environment.

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[7] Intelligent Transportation Systems

DfT National Shared Priorities

5.6   The regional priorities strongly relate to the Department for Transport's shared priorities and PSA targets to promote a joined up approach as the table below demonstrates.

DfT Shared Priorities	Problems & Issues	Priorities for the region
Tackling Congestion	- **Congestion in and around the PUAs affecting the delivery of the Spatial Strategy and the productivity of the region** - **Unreliable journey times due to variable standards and bottlenecks plus growth in traffic volumes affecting economic performance and perpetuating peripherality** - **Seasonal congestion on the trunk road network** - **Rail congestion and overcrowding on inter and intra-regional routes**	- **Essential investment in PUAs and PUA Transport Packages** - **Great Western Mainline renewal and regional rail improvements** - **M4 / M5 management and investment** - **The 2nd strategic route to the South West with consistent standard** - **Inter-urban routes – route management approach**
Delivering Accessibility	- **Rural accessibility to services and employment** - **Accessibility problems for urban communities in accessing jobs in PUAs** - **Poor access reinforces urban deprivation and renewal needs**	- **Essential investment in PUAs and step change in urban transport** - **Make the region a 'show case' in terms of rural transport with local solutions**
Safer Roads	- **Higher accident rates in urban areas with deprived communities including high pedestrian and cyclist accident rates** - **Higher than average accident rate on A303 / A30 (As highlighted in SWARMMS)**	- **PUA transport packages to reduce accidents of pedestrians and cyclists** - **A Route Management approach to inter-urban routes.** - **2nd Strategic route with consistent standards**
Better Air Quality	- **The region has 13 Air Quality Management Areas most of which are in PUAs** - **Deprived urban communities and urban communities near major roads are disproportionately affected by bad air quality** - **Rural communities affected by through HGV traffic**	- **The PUA packages aim to reduce car use and air pollution. Demand management and Park and Ride strategies to reduce inner city flows.** - **Inter and Intra railway network renewal and improvement** - **inter-urban route management approach**

The Regional Priorities

5.7   Current priorities for the region are derived from Table 6 in RPG10 (Appendix 2). This now needs to be updated to reflect the result of the recent transport studies and changes in national policy, e.g. Air White Paper. Decisions within the region have also been taken following more detailed analysis, e.g. Bristol Light Rail Transit project is not currently being progressed.

5.8   The priorities set out in this chapter update and develop Table 6 and should be taken into account in decisions affecting the allocation of resources for transport studies and schemes. The priorities were subject to public consultation in May/June 2004. In particular the document seeks to guide the preparation of Local Transport Plans which are due to be submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2005.

5.9   The paragraphs set out below are the transport investment and management priorities for the South West. The Assembly wishes to give guidance to the main delivery organisations and wishes to emphasise the need for effective co-ordination

between these organisations to deliver the regional agenda. Decisions by one organisation must not be seen in isolation from others. The Assembly also reiterates its support for a package of proposals, which while including selective investment in the road network emphasises the importance of measures to reduce the need to travel and manage traffic by providing complementary investment in public transport, Park and Ride and other appropriate demand management and 'soft' measures.

5.10   To achieve overall co-ordination and delivery of the RTS the Assembly intends establishing an RTS delivery group which would be given the task of regional co-ordination and monitoring of delivery. Where appropriate, corridor or route co-ordination arrangements will need to be established to ensure consistency between delivery agencies, including LTP submissions.

The Trunk Road Network

5.11   The Assembly as Regional Planning Body has been given a specific role in advising the Highways Agency on regional priorities for investment in the Trunk Road network.

5.12   The main priority in terms of the Trunk Road network is to address the issue of peripherality. The SWARMMS study concluded that investment in the Trunk Road network was essential just to maintain the competitiveness of the South West. This investment, together with a package of measures to reduce the need for and manage the growth in traffic, is essential if the Government's PSA target of reducing regional inequalities is to be met.

5.13   National research shows that the larger cities have the most productive economies and if regional disparities are not to increase and if the South West is to make its contribution to national growth, maintaining accessibility to the main economic centres is vital. The national priority given to the far South West in terms of addressing peripherality is confirmed by the designation of Cornwall as an Objective One area beyond 2007.

5.14   The Secretary of State for Transport has accepted the Assembly's case for a second strategic road route into the South West through his consideration of SWARMMS.

5.15   The Highways Agency 'Table of Programmed Improvements' (TPI) programme currently includes the following schemes which are supported by the Regional Assembly:

Schemes in the South West included in the 'Table of Programmed Improvements'	
A30/A382	Merrymeet Junction Improvements
A30	Bodmin to Indian Queens Improvements
A38	Dobwalls Bypass
A303	Stonehenge Bored Tunnel
A419	Blunsdon Bypass
A419	Commonhead Junction grade separation
M4	J18 East Bound diverge
M5	J17-18A Climbing Lane North
M5	J19-20 S/B climbing lane
M5	J19-20 N/B climbing lane
A30	Temple to Higher Carblake Improvements
A30	Carland to Chiverton Cross Improvements

<table>
<tr><td>

**Regional Priorities -
Trunk Road Network Priority**

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Establish a second strategic road route to consistent dual carriageway standard from the M3 to Exeter – addressing safety and capacity bottlenecks as identified through the SWARMMS study:
- A303 Chicklade Bottom to Mere
- A303 Sparkford to Ilminster
- A303 Wylie to Stockton Wood
- A303 Ilminster Bypass
- A303 Ilminster to Honiton

<u>Note</u>: The Assembly has recommended the dualling of the A303 Ilminster to Honiton but a decision by the Secretary of State on this solution or the alternative option of dualling the A358 from Ilminster to Taunton is awaited.

Implementation of Intelligent Traffic System and other measures to manage traffic flows on the M4/M5 especially in the Bristol area to improve journey time reliability, improve safety and relieve congestion.

Implementation of a package of measures as identified through SWARMMS to reduce the need to travel and to manage the use of the Trunk Road network in the vicinity of the PUAs by local traffic including investment in public transport, park and ride.

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The Inter Regional Railway Network

5.16   SWARMMS advocated significant improvements to the inter-regional rail network to improve accessibility to London and the South East. This was seen as essential to address increasing peripherality as a result of declining accessibility.   The recommendations set out in SWARMMS were referred to the SRA by the Secretary to State for Transport.

5.17   The SRA is preparing a Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) for the Great Western Mainline (GWML) to determine the nature and extent of current issues as well as identifying likely demand for future travel.

5.18   Passenger numbers on the GWML are growing and congestion on the M4 in the Thames Valley and near London is likely to increase. This is projected to give rise to increasing overcrowding and a declining quality of service on the GWML. Much of the infrastructure on the GWML is aged and needs replacing including the 'HST' (Intercity 125) train fleet, track and signalling.

5.19   Under capacity and ageing infrastructure have given rise to unreliable journey times leading to a worsening passenger perceptions. In turn this affects business investment and productivity levels increasing regional disparities and is likely to hamper the achievement of PSA targets to reduce regional inequality. Most of the route is running at above 70% capacity and east of Reading this rises to 90%[8]. The SRA has indicated that no major improvements are planned on the GWML within the next ten year period as resources are already committed to existing projects. The priority in the medium term is therefore to renew the infrastructure and make the best use of the network to improve reliability and certainty.

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[8] Network Rail, 2004

5.20   The Regional Spatial Strategy as currently contained in RPG10 focused development on the eleven PUAs. In order to prosper it is essential that these centres maintain and improve their accessibility to London and the South East. This will require the specification of minimum reliable journey times from the main urban centres to London as well as careful timetabling to ensure "business trains" are available that will enable business travellers to reach Birmingham or London and to carry out an effective days business and return.

5.21   Decisions on the future framework for Air Policy have been made with the Air White Paper published in December 2003. This advocates increased air capacity in the South East with London Heathrow remaining the main international "hub" airport for long haul intercontinental flights. While the region's air strategy seeks to meet more of the region's demand for flights in the region it is recognised that London Heathrow will continue to be the major airport for the South West. To support business investment and relieve pressure on the M4, improved accessibility by rail to Heathrow is seen as a priority for the region.

5.22   The Assembly supports in principle improvement to the Exeter and Waterloo line to create a second rail corridor to London. However within the current time horizon of RPG10 (2016) and given the level of resources available the Assembly has prioritised the GWML. Further study work should progress to determine the scope for and the cost of establishing an hourly service to Exeter. This work will inform the review of the RTS.

Regional Priority - Inter Regional Rail Network	
Great Western Main Line	- Infrastructure renewal programme to replace life-expired infrastructure and improve reliability of journey times - Improved services, including minimum journey times, to London from the PUAs - Selective investment to reduce bottlenecks and service vulnerability including investment outside the region, e.g. Reading - More effective use of the network to allow for growth - Direct rail access to Heathrow from the GWML - Adequate rolling stock to meet the demand for travel and make the best use of the network
Cross Country Inter-city network	- Maintain good rail connections from the South West to Birmingham, Midlands and the North - Adequate rolling stock to meet the demand for travel and make best use of the network

Making the PUAs work

5.23   RPG10 identifies eleven PUAs as the main centres for growth. It is recognised that it is the main urban centres that have the highest levels of productivity and investment. Making them work and prosper is key to the future prosperity of the region. A strong regional economy will be dependent on investment in the transport network and the role of transport is to facilitate improved productivity and competitiveness as well as quality of life and access to services.

5.24   If the South West is to be successful in making a contribution to the growth of the national economy and if Government Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets to reduce regional inequalities are to be met, it is likely that investment in the main urban areas will be the most successful strategy.

5.25   The region has carried out additional research and analysis since RPG10 was published and this suggests a more focused approach to investment is required. The Bristol area is the largest urban area in the South West and has a very successful economy with major growth forecasted (It has been identified as one of the "core" cities in the country). This is likely to continue given its good access to London, Birmingham and Cardiff, being at the confluence of the M4/M5. Bristol is the gateway to the region in transport terms and congestion in the Greater Bristol area currently impacts on the economic performance of the whole of the South West and Wales. Therefore if the region's competitiveness is to be maintained and PSA targets met, priority must be given to resolving congestion problems in the Bristol area.

5.26   Priority for the Bristol area would also fit with DfT shared objectives to address urban congestion and improve public transport as well as tackling air pollution and safety.

5.27   The other major urban area which has received significant growth is Swindon. Its strategic location on the Great Western Main Line and M4 gives it a strategic advantage to accommodate growth and contribute to the region's economic performance.

5.28   In contrast the economic performance of Plymouth has been poor with a 14% decline in full time employment. The performance of Plymouth, which is the largest urban area in the far South West, together with the difficulties facing the remote rural areas of Devon and Cornwall are the main reasons for continuing inter and intra-regional disparities. Output per head in the South West is estimated to be 87 of the English average.

5.29   It is therefore essential to regenerate Plymouth if regional disparities are to be addressed. Furthermore investment in Plymouth will address DfT shared priorities by addressing urban congestion, safety and pollution issues as well as seeking to relieve urban deprivation.

5.30   It is recognised that there is a need for the other PUAs in the South West to grow and regenerate and this will require investment in the transport network.

5.31   Within the South West there are a number of 'Market Towns' which have a role in supporting local economies and access to services as well as acting as the focus of regeneration initiatives. Although the focus of the investment will need to be modest it is recognised that they do have transport investment requirements which will need to be considered in the context of resource availability. However if resources are limited the emphasis will be on resolving the needs of Market Towns at the local level without the availability of major schemes which should be focused on the PUAs.

5.32   In order to address the key transport issues for the region there is a need for each of the PUAs to have a longer term vision and transport strategy. These area strategies will need to be jointly prepared and consistent within Local Transport Plans as well as Local Development Frameworks. They will need to identify the strategic investment and management measures needed to provide for growth, address congestion, safety and pollution problems to meet the DfT shared priority targets. They will also identify requirements to facilitate regeneration.

5.33   The transport strategies will need to demonstrate how the following can be taken forward:

- The need to address the use of the motorway network and main longer distance routes by local commuter traffic at peak times.
- Development of major public transport systems including bus 'showcase' routes on congested corridors
- Park and Share Strategies (linked to other solutions)
- Network management measures to manage the demand for road space including investigation of road charging
- Parking strategy to provide access for retail and other functions but discouraging long stay commuters who are encouraged to switch to other modes of travel and/or park and ride
- Development of the heavy rail network in Exeter, Greater Bristol and Plymouth to serve the Joint Study Areas
- Adequate rolling stock to meet the demand for travel and make the best use of the network
- Improved access to and investment in Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth airports to meet more the region's air travel needs from within the South West
- Limited selective road investment to address specific regeneration problems
- Emphasis on investment in interchange hubs for public transport integration

Regional Priority – Making the PUAs work

West of England Joint Study Area – including Bath and Weston-super-Mare
- <u>Congestion</u>
- The WoE city region contains one of the 8 national 'core' cities
- A substantial increase in funding through the LTP system is required to address major congestion on the network
- Selective investment in the road network to relieve congestion
- Development of a strategic public transport network to reduce reliance on the car and reduce congestion and pollution and improve safety
- guided/concept bus & bus 'showcase' corridors and partnerships
- Network management measures to make the most affective use of the network including investigation of charging, parking policy and Park and Share strategy
- Development of the heavy rail network in the WoE area to reduce reliance on the car and make best use of infrastructure. Including the consideration of clockface timetables, rolling stock improvements and overcrowding, selected investment to address key causes of unreliability
- <u>Development</u>
- Investment will be required to facilitate major development as proposed in the regional spatial strategy
- Investment is also required to address an infrastructure deficit arising from past levels of growth
- <u>Safety and Air Quality</u>
- Package of measures to address the DfT shared priorities to improve safety and air quality, including education campaigns.
- Package of measures to address congestion and HGV flows in the World Heritage City of Bath, including demand management, Park and Share, car parking policy and possible A36/A46 link
- <u>Air Transport White Paper</u>
- Investigation and delivery of access improvements to Bristol Airport to facilitate the Air White Paper focus on Bristol as the main regional airport in the SW

Note: The Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Strategy is currently being carried out and this will update the investment and management priorities when it is published in 2005.

Regional Priority – Making the PUAs work

Swindon
- Congestion
- Park and Ride and network management strategy to reduce congestion on main arterial routes and in the town centre
- Public transport bus priority corridors to encourage modal shift
- Selected network investment to facilitate new development

Plymouth
- Package of measures to facilitate urban renaissance of the City Centre and Waterfront
- Package of measures to facilitate the Eastern Gateway Corridor and new settlement
- Northern Corridor A386 public transport package
- Development of the local rail network to reduce congestion and encourage modal shift.

Exeter
- Congestion
- Development of local rail network in Exeter to provide 'clockface' services and improved quality of service to reduce congestion and encourage modal shift.
- Package of measures to make the existing network within the urban area function more effectively and take account of urban renewal and development including park and ride strategy and bus priority measures.
- Eastern Development Area/ Air Transport White Paper
- Provision of Eastern Development Area corridor package to support the Eastern Development Area and integrate with city's transport system and improve access to the Airport and to facilitate the Air White Paper Strategy

Cheltenham and Gloucester
- Congestion
- Major public transport enhancement linking the urban areas together with a Park and Ride strategy
- Strategic Connections
- New sub-regional "Parkway" rail station for national connection to London/Midlands/South West
- Regeneration
- Network management including ITS and selected improvements to facilitate regeneration Gloucester, e.g. A40 Northern Bypass and South West Bypass

Bournemouth/Poole (SE Dorset)
- Air Transport White Paper
- Improvements to access to Bournemouth Airport to accommodate growth set out in the Airports White Paper
- Improvements to the A31 to Poole link to facilitate improved journey time reliability in the face of congestion – including access to the Port of Poole
- Capacity and safety issues on A31
- Park and Ride strategy
- 'Step-change' in public transport to facilitate further development in the urban area
- Local action to tackle congestion hot spots on the local network to maintain/improve journey reliability

Torbay
- Regeneration and Congestion
- Support economic regeneration through relief of congestion on A380

Taunton
- Regeneration and Congestion
- Package to support the regeneration of the town centre and North East Taunton urban extension area to met RPG10 requirements including Park and Ride strategy

Airports

5.34   Improved air services are essential to minimise the impact of peripherality on the South West and to support the development of the economy of the region.

5.35   The National Aviation White Paper published at the end of 2003, establishes the national policy framework for the RTS. This supports the development of Bristol as the main regional airport but also supports improved access and development at the region's other airports. No new airports are proposed.

5.36   The South West's main airports are required to produce Master Plans to guide the future development of the airports to meet the requirements of the White Paper. This will determine the requirements for new infrastructure such as improved or new terminals and runway capacity and length.

5.37   Arising from consideration of the National Air Transport White Paper, the Regional Assembly has established a medium strategy for Air Transport in the South West (to 2016) after consultation with regional stakeholders.

The Air Strategy

5.38   The aim of the strategy is to meet more of the region's demand for air services within the region to reduce leakage to the South East and congestion on the M4 corridor.

- The need to be met by using spare capacity and developing existing airports in the region, especially Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth. Other airports in important for niche markets, e.g. Newquay
- Air links to and from the region should be developed to meet the needs of the economy and reduce the impact of peripherality. A route development strategy may be required and is being considered by the RDA.
- Air links from the far west of the region to London Heathrow/Gatwick must be protected if necessary by the use of Public Service Orders
- Direct uninterrupted rail link to Heathrow to connect to the country's international hub airport
- Improved surface access to airports in the region in the most sustainable way
- Develop South West airports to support the growth of tourist visits to the region

Regional Priority
Improvements to the Access of Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth airports to meet future development requirements

Rural Accessibility

5.39   The South West is characterised as a rural region with a relatively low population density. The problems and issues Chapter identified rural accessibility as one of the key themes for the region. Much good work continues at local level to address the question of access to jobs and services. However, there is a need to address the issue at the regional level.

5.40   The Assembly working with regional stakeholders is in the process of commissioning work to look at the nature and extent of the issue with a particular reference to the

extent to which lack of transport is important in terms of employment. The results of this work will be used to develop the policy approach in the review of the RTS. The Assembly wishes to see a 'community partnership' approach to identifying local accessibility needs with more emphasis on facilitating ways of meeting needs in ways other than the use of conventional bus routes.

5.41   National guidance is to be issued by the Department for Transport on the question of accessibility mapping and through the consultation on this document regional priorities will need to be considered when it is published.

Regional Priority
Make the region a 'showcase' for good practice in dealing with rural accessibility. Develop the concept of the 'Community Partnership' approach to developing an understanding of local needs and facilitate a package of measures to address the needs including conventional bus community transport and other measures, e.g. car sharing/taxis etc.

Inter-Urban Routes – Regional Connectivity

5.42   The Regional Economic Strategy highlights the importance of the links between the main urban areas in terms of maintaining and improving the economic performance of the region. The RDA intends to commission further research to understand the economic importance of intra-regional connectivity. This issue will be reassessed through the review of the RTS following the availability of additional analysis.

5.55   The North-South routes in the east of the region were the subject of the Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study. This concluded that a number of routes fulfil an intra-regional function by facilitating movement within the region although only the A34 fulfilled an inter-regional function and is of national importance.

5.56   The Assembly has accepted the recommendations from the Study that the North-South routes should be subject to a Route Management Approach. Local Authorities will need to work with stakeholders and operators to define a consistent Route Management Strategy for the routes and ensure LTPs reflect the strategy approach.

5.57   It is recognised that within the Route Management Approach, which makes the best use of the network, there will be local issues which authorities will need to address such as safety and impacts on local communities. Measures to address these issues should be developed providing that individually or collectively they do not increase the strategic capacity of the routes and do not have an unacceptable impact on the national environmental character of the area. However it is unlikely that the solutions will receive major funding priority unless resources made available to the region are substantially increased.

Regional Priority – Inter - Urban Connectivity
Route Management Strategies should be prepared for inter-urban routes in the South West to make best use of the network. The strategies will need to consider a package of measures to manage the demand for and impact of travel as well as encouraging modal shift and the development of public transport. LTPs should reflect a common route strategy approach and where appropriate route co-ordination groups should be established to ensure a consistent approach.
Development of the Bristol/Bath to South Coast rail route to facilitate model shift, address overcrowding and improve the use of the network in line with the recommendations of the Bristol/Bath to South Coast study.

DELIVERY AND RESOURCES

Guiding Principles for LTPs

6.0   The RTS has a role in informing policies and programmes at a national, regional and local level. Delivery of the strategy involves a wide variety of agencies, authorities and operators. Appendix 3 sets out responsibilities for implementing the RTS.

6.1   The RTS has a specific role in setting out guidance for Local Authorities for the preparation of Local Transport Plans. The following guiding principles should be taken into account by authorities to ensure that LTPs are consistent with the RTS and specifically the regional priorities as amended by this document.

- LTP strategy should recognise the spatial strategy set out in RPG (in the future RSS) and focus plans and programmes to deliver regional priorities

- Major scheme bids should follow the identified regional infrastructure priorities as set out in the RTS

- The emphasis should be on 'demand management' reducing the need to travel and promoting alternatives to the car for shorter and more local trips

- LTPs should set out how programmes of 'softer measures' will be implemented to deliver the full range of RTS and SWARMMS objectives

- LTPs should demonstrate that effective partnership working has taken place between authorities on sub-regional and cross-boundary issues such as freight routing. The freight route network should form a basis for LTP strategies for maintenance and improvements

- It is likely that the level of financial resources available will be constrained in the next LTP period and LTPs should therefore demonstrate how schemes help deliver regional priorities and represent value for money

- LTPs should demonstrate that schemes are deliverable within the period to 2016.

- LTPs should demonstrate how demand management measures are delivered including congestion charging and parking controls to manage the existing network, facilitating modal shift and reductions in the use of the car during peak times.

Resources

6.2   There is no current regional funding 'pot' identified at national level to deliver the RTS. However, the Transport White Paper (July 2004) states that there will be regional indicative budgets set out in the budget statement in 2005. Capital allocations are available to the Highways Agency and currently to the SRA but resources are identified through national programmes.

6.3   It is not therefore possible to say how much the region has available to implement the strategy. Instead, for example, it is up to the Assembly to give a steer to the Highways Agency on priorities for investment and management and to make the case based on sound analytical information. The Assembly as Regional Planning Body has been given an explicit role to advise the Highway Agency on priorities.

6.4   Chapter 5 establishes the priorities for the Trunk Road Network, but it is difficult to ascertain whether all or which parts of the investment identified can be achieved within the period to 2016.

6.5   It is possible to identify the implications if resources are not made available. SWARMMS highlighted the fact that without investment, accessibility to the South West will decline due to unreliable journey times and this will lead to a loss of competitiveness adversely affecting the Government's PSA target of reducing regional inequalities.

6.6   The national rail programme is set out in the SRA Strategic Plan, but resource issues and the need to address the backlog of renewals and tackle performance issues has reduced the industry's ability to invest further in the network in this region. The RTS sets out the priority for the inter-regional rail network but it is unclear what resources will be made available until the industry's rail planning frameworks: Regional Planning Assessments and Route Utilisation Strategies are complete.

6.7   The RTS provides guidance for Local Transport Plans and identifies the priorities for investment and management in particular. However the current funding mechanisms are limited in that the LTP only deals with capital funding. The RTS prioritises the need to make the PUAs work but measures necessary to address this issue will require a mixture of capital and revenue funding. Capital bids can be made through the LTP system but revenue is financed annually through Local Authority budgets. There is a danger that insufficient revenue resources can be found by Local Authorities to achieve truly integrated packages without a review of national funding mechanisms.

6.8   The document has highlighted the need to give priority to making the PUAs work but that means looking at the functional areas rather than administrative boundaries. Delivery of the regional priorities will therefore require new mechanisms to co-ordinate LTP submissions for the 'City Regions'.

6.9   Many of the routes identified in the document fulfil a regional role connecting the region's PUAs. New mechanisms to co-ordinate on a route or corridor basis will need to be identified to ensure consistency between LTPs dealing with part of the route.

6.10   In developing LTPs, Local Authorities should seek to show how the regional priorities can be delivered and this may well influence the allocation of resources for research and studies to ensure that resources are not utilised on developing schemes which have little chance of support at strategic level.

6.11   Currently the region has available approximately £60m per annum through the "Integrated Transport Block Allocation" to Local Authorities to deliver local and regional priorities. The document sets out the main "packages" of measures that are needed to make the PUAs work and deliver the Regional Spatial Strategy. This is seen as the priority arising from this document. At the current time it has not been possible to cost the packages of measures and ascertain how much resource is required to define and refine the measures needed. There is a need to continue to monitor the cost of implementing the strategy against the resource likely to be available.

6.12   A "package" of measures combines a variety of solutions. LTP2 Guidance suggests that these may be acceptable provided that the additional benefits deriving from the schemes being implemented as a package can be demonstrated – if not LA's will be expected to implement them through the integrated pot. In considering the ability of Councils to deliver the spatial strategy and in particular, making the PUAs work, the need for strategic allocations through the Integrated Package element of the LTP will need to be considered.

6.13   At the current time the region is receiving financial approval for one or two new major schemes per year on average. It is difficult to predict with certainty the level of resource likely to be made available within the period up to 2016 but it is probable that not all LTPs will have one major new scheme within the period of the next LTP up to 2011. This will mean that resources will be very tight and work will need to be focused to deliver the regional priorities.

6.14   Further assessment work will continue as part of the RSS preparation to improve the judgement about costs, and to measure likely delivery requirements against the level of resources that may realistically become available.

6.15   The Assembly will work with the Government Office for the South West and the RDA to establish a regional delivery group to monitor and take responsibility for the implementation of the RTS.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT NETWORK

The Regional Network Map included in this section aims to outline the present network and its functions in the South West context.

Because of the impact that HGV's have on the environment and communities as well as there importance to the regional economy the opportunity has been taken to produce a map which sets out the regional freight network. It has been produced by co-ordinating the existing freight maps produced by transport authorities. The map aims to give guidance to the haulage industry as to suitable routes, and Local Authorities should encourage the use of the appropriate strategic and regional routes shown. The map also aims to influence the Highways Agency and Department for Transport, which uses signing to determine the routes taken by HGV's through the National Primary Route Network.

The map defines routes as national, regional or local, with the definitions set out below:

- **National Routes** – Longer distance freight routes from other parts of the country. Given that many freight facilities are located adjacent to junctions on these routes, they are also likely to act as Regional Routes.
- **Regional Routes** – Routes used for inter-regional travel where national routes are not appropriate and to provide access to major distribution centres from the national routes.
- **Local Routes** – Routes used to provide access to freight facilities not served by either national or regional routes. Local routes will also form connections between the national and regional routes into these facilities.

The Assembly received a number of general and specific comments on the regional freight map. The vast majority of respondents were supportive of the freight map concept and the value of regional co-ordination. Many stakeholders however questioned the validity of the definitions used to designate the category of routes. Another point made during consultation was the value of including 'local' routes, when some stakeholders believed that these would be better left to local highway authorities who may have a better understanding of the specific routes. At this stage the Assembly feel that to change the designations and/or the routes on the map would be inappropriate given the lack of information on the flows and nature of the routes. The Assembly will commission consultants to carry out work to derive volume and flow data as well as trip length. The Assembly will then work with industry organisations, the business community and the Regional Environment Network in this task and revisit the freight map designations as part of the ongoing work to review the RTS.

All of the regions railways including those without passenger services are also shown. Loading gauge represents the physical dimensions of a railway vehicle and its load, governed by a series of height and width profiles. Loading gauge profiles vary by route, reflecting the constraints on rail vehicle size caused by lineside and overline structures. A loading gauge of 'W9' or 'W12' is necessary for modern standard 9' 6" inter-modal container wagons. 'W6a' and 'W8' can handle 8' 6" and 9' wagons respectively subject to deck height above rail level. The ports and airports are included. Airports shown have regular scheduled commercial passenger services. The ports are the region's major shipping ports included in DfT regional freight statistics.

Working Regional Freight Map

Version - August 2004

SOUTH WEST
Regional Assembly

KEY:

~~	National Route
~~	Regional Route
~~	Local Route
~~	Railway Line - Gauge W8
~~	Railway Line - Gauge W6A
🔲	'Trans European Network' Port
🔲	Other Port
▲	Road / Rail Freight Terminal
✈	Airport

Airports, Ports and Freight terminals are shown as indicative only and may not be in geographically accurate positions.

APPENDIX 2 - The Regional Transport Strategy Policies in Regional Planning Guidance 10

Policy TRAN 1: Reducing the Need to Travel

Local authorities, developers and other agencies should work towards reducing the need to travel by private motor vehicle through the appropriate location of new development. Development plans and LTPs should:

- *propose housing, employment and other uses in existing towns and propose a balanced mixture of uses in new developments, in accordance with Policy SS 5;*

- *propose major development in keeping with the roles of individual PUAs and larger towns on sites where there is a good choice of travel by sustainable transport, or where choice can be provided as part of the development, having regard to regional accessibility standards;*

- *propose the development of focused smaller scale retailing, housing, social facilities and services in market and coastal towns and key villages which are rural service centres to provide for the needs of the rural areas.*

Policy TRAN 2: Strategic Inter-Urban and Inter-Regional Transport Networks

Local authorities, the Highways Agency, the Strategic Rail Authority, transport operators and other agencies should work together to provide and maintain a strategic transport system to enhance the competitiveness of the region, reduce its peripherality and support the spatial strategy. In particular they should aim to:

- *optimise the use of existing infrastructure for all modes and determine the most appropriate improvements to strategic infrastructure on major transport corridors, through the multi-modal and other studies;*

- *support selective infrastructure proposals to improve the safety and operational efficiency of the road network, reduce congestion and achieve environmental improvements;*

- *encourage improvements to the rail network to improve safety, journey speed, service frequency, comfort and reliability and to help shift long-distance travel to rail.*

- *Rail links between the South West and other national and European destinations should be supported by:*

- *implementation of the EU TENs study,;*

- *improved access by rail to international destinations via the Channel Tunnel, links to international airports and to TENs ports;*

- *the development of through and connecting passenger and freight services from the region to Europe; subject to satisfactory appraisal, the completion of statutory processes and the availability of finance.*

Policy TRAN 3: The Urban Areas

Local authorities, transport operators and other agencies should work together to encourage more sustainable travel choices and reduce traffic congestion and pollution within the PUAs and other urban areas. In particular they should:

- *implement the measures set out in Policies TRAN 1, 5 and 10 for reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and public transport and managing demand;*

- use accessibility considerations to identify those locations within urban areas which will maximise opportunities for transport integration and use of sustainable transport modes;

- exploit the potential for heavy rail in accordance with Policy TRAN 10 to assist with urban movement in and around the Greater Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth and Bournemouth-Poole areas; support the development of light rapid transport in Bristol and other urban areas where studies establish feasibility, as part of a set of policies to deliver the spatial strategy, supported through mechanisms such as private non residential parking charges or road user charging.

Policy TRAN 4: Transport Infrastructure Investment Priorities

Development plans, LTPs policies, operators and agencies should deliver the investment detailed in the following table in accordance with the following priorities, subject to successful feasibility testing, satisfaction of statutory processes and availability of finance:

- Sustainable transport systems in and around the PUAs that both enable the management of congestion and release the potential for development.

- Inter-urban transport networks, infrastructure to reduce peripherality and to aid economic growth and regeneration in areas of special need and measures to improve national and international linkages in order to achieve economic, efficient, safe and integrated accessibility for people and freight.

- Infrastructure and services in urban areas other than PUAs and rural areas that reduce the need to travel by private car and improve access to services.

- Investment in facilities that enable modal shift from road to rail or water for people and freight.

- Investment in passenger interchange facilities and information systems.

Table 6: Infrastructure and investment for encouraging sustainable transport systems within and between PUAs to support inter-regional movement to aid economic growth and regeneration and reduce peripherality.

Measures/Project	Timing (Indicative 5 year periods)
Greater Bristol LRT Line 1	1
Greater Bristol LRT Network	2, 3
South Gloucestershire – Bristol - Weston Urban Rail Improvement	1, 2
Exeter Rail Network Improvement (including capacity increase at Exeter St. Davids / Central and Barnstaple Line)	1, 2
Plymouth Rail Network Improvement	1, 2
Management of Traffic on Motorway/Trunk Road Network and Junctions, to give priority to strategic long distance and commercial traffic – M4/M5/M32 Bristol, M5 Junctions 25 and 29/30.	Possible period 1(?) 2, 3
Improvements to the Waterloo - Salisbury - Exeter Railway to provide enhanced frequencies and adequate capacity.	1 or 2
Improvements to services on the London – Swindon – Gloucester – Cheltenham railway to provide enhanced frequencies and adequate capacity.	1
Improvements to the long distance, high speed train services to the west of the region (through implementing the recommendations of the GW TENS Study and the Railtrack/Cross Country Project)	1
Improvements to other cross-country and branch line railway services to provide enhanced frequencies and adequate capacity.	1, 2
Programmed improvements to the A30/A303/A38 corridor from London to Cornwall, (Stonehenge, Dobwalls and Bodmin – Indian Queens).	1

Further improvements on A30/A303 corridor to achieve high safety standards and adequate capacity	2, 3
Improvements to north-south transport links from the Bristol/Wiltshire and Bath and North East Somerset District area to Southampton/Bournemouth/Poole, which address in particular the World Heritage City status of Bath	1,2
Improvements to the A417/A419 Swindon-Gloucester route, particularly at Blunsdon	2
Improved public transport surface links to key regional airports, particularly Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth.	1, 2
Improved access to ports for road and rail.	2, 3
Upgrade of the gauge on the Great Western main line via Bristol W10w to enable the carriage of 9'6" containers and SWAP bodies, plus the development of a series of strategic inter-modal terminals.	1, 2

Policy TRAN 5: Demand Management

Highway authorities, local authorities and other agencies should actively manage urban car parking and make more efficient use of highway space in order to achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable transport. In particular, they should:

- *adopt car parking, management and charging policies, including private non-residential parking charges where appropriate, which take into account accessibility criteria and avoid destructive competition between competing centres;*

- *ensure that parking provision in new development does not exceed the regional maximum parking standards as set out in the RTS;*

- *manage highway space safely and efficiently, on urban roads give appropriate priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and take measures where necessary to discourage car use, including road user charging.*

Policy TRAN 6: Movement of Goods

Local authorities, the business community, transport operators and other agencies should work together to achieve more sustainable patterns of distribution. In particular they should aim to:

- *locate major freight generating development close to the regional rail and road networks;*

- *support investment in rail gauge enhancements;*

- *in liaison with the Strategic Rail Authority encourage the development of rail freight terminals and transfer facilities in locations close to PUAs and at key locations where there is good access to the regional rail network and the inter-urban road network, including terminals at Swindon, Avonmouth, Exeter, Plymouth and other centres and, subject to feasibility, to meet the needs of Cornwall;*

- *reduce the impact of large vehicles on the environment through traffic management measures and freight quality partnerships, whilst maintaining adequate access for delivery of goods.*

Policy TRAN 7: The Rural Areas

Local authorities, transport operators and other agencies should work together to encourage more sustainable travel choices and reduce travel distances in rural areas. In particular they should:

- *support the development of public and community transport and maximise the potential for walking, cycling and bus use, in accordance with Policy TRAN 10;*

-   *develop parking standards to reflect the size and role of rural settlements, within the context set by the regional parking standards;*

-   *encourage partnerships working to deliver sustainable transport solutions in rural areas and the maintenance of public transport at a reasonable level;*

-   *support the retention of local retail, education, healthcare and leisure facilities so as to minimise the need to travel by vehicle and to foster the integrated delivery of services at the local level;*

-   *encourage the development of rural transport strategies and management measures to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users and, while recognising the need for local rural access for freight, to move heavy traffic wherever possible to more appropriate strategic routes;*

-   *in accordance with policy, support investment in appropriate telecommunications and information technology that will facilitate business and social interaction whilst reducing the need to travel.*

Policy TRAN 8: Ports and Inland Waterways

Local authorities, ports and transport operators and other agencies should work together to encourage the development of waterborne services and facilities. In particular they should:

-   *support the development of each port in its individual role by safeguarding land for economically beneficial port use that can occur without significant environmental damage;*

-   *support the improvement of land based links to the region's ports, subject to the outcome of multi-modal studies, with the emphasis on the most sustainable means of transport;*

-   *support the maintenance and enhancement of reliable services to the Isles of Scilly;*

-   *support the use of inland waterways for commerce and recreation, as appropriate.*

Policy TRAN 9: Airports

Local authorities, airports and transport operators and other agencies should work together to encourage the sustainable development of the region's airports and their associated facilities. In particular they should:

-   *support the existing airports and airfields in the region to develop their respective roles to serve air travel needs;*

-   *improve surface links and public transport to airports, particularly at Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth, taking into account the results of the surface access strategies prepared by the Air Transport Forums;*

-   *protect land (including through Public Safety Zones) around airports to secure operational integrity.*

Policy TRAN 10: Walking, Cycling and Public Transport

Local authorities, transport operators and other agencies should have regard to the sustainable transport hierarchy, giving priority to walking, cycling and public transport. They should aim to increase the share of total travel by these modes and ensure that they provide attractive and reliable alternatives to the private car by:

- *developing attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle networks linking residential areas, employment centres, town centres, schools, colleges and universities and other key destinations and linking smaller settlements and district centres to main town centres;*

- *developing bus networks in accordance with regional accessibility criteria which provide access to all major employment, retail, tourism and leisure sites and aim to provide adequate access to most residential areas;*

- *encouraging the efficiency of public transport and reducing the impact of traffic congestion on bus and coach services by promoting bus priority measures, rail services into urban areas and park and ride facilities in appropriate locations;*

- *developing passenger information and fare systems and enhanced interchange facilities and taking into account the needs of disadvantaged groups;*

- *seeking transport assessments and travel plans for all new major developments and encouraging major organisations to prepare and implement such plans, having regard to sustainable transport objectives set by local authorities in the local transport plan;*

- *ensuring that major new development delivers (or sets out a clear and realistic strategy to deliver) a realistic choice of access by public transport, walking and cycling;*

- *developing improved public transport services through quality partnerships and encourage rail and coach operatives to provide rural towns with a transport system that meets the communities' needs;*

- *supporting community transport, especially in remote areas and to serve disadvantaged groups.*

APPENDIX 3 – Implementation Framework delivery responsibility for the RTS

Implementation Framework

The RTS has a role in informing policies and programmes at a national, regional and local level and therefore delivery of the strategy involves a wide variety of agencies, authorities and stakeholders.

Delivery Agencies

Key delivery agencies are listed below, along with their broad responsibilities and key strategic plans and programmes.

National

Highways Agency (HA)

The HA is responsible for the network management of Motorways and Trunk Roads. Plans for new infrastructure improvements on these routes are contained in the '**Targeted Programme of Improvements'** (T.P.I.), and operational management plans are set out in a series of '**Route Management Strategies**' (R.M.S.) for various sections of the network.

Rail

The DfT will become responsible for planning the development of the rail network following the demise of the SRA and are the strategic specifies for use of the network. Network Rail is responsible for the operation of the network. Plans for new infrastructure improvements on the rail network are set out in **the Strategic Plan**. Operational management plans are set out in a series of 'Rail Utilisation Strategies' for various sections of the network. The Regional Assembly will work with the rail industry to understand and evaluate the case for investment in the rail network.

Regional

Regional Assembly (RA)

The RA is the Regional Planning Body and is responsible for determining the regional pattern of land use and supporting infrastructure through **the Regional Spatial Strategy** (RSS), and the **Regional Transport Strategy** (RTS). The RA's role as a 'delivery agency' is to work with all parties to determine regional investment priorities and to co-ordinate and focus the efforts of a multitude of organisations to ensure effective delivery.

Regional Development Agency (RDA)

The RDA is responsible for the economic development of the region and channels a variety of Government funding streams into regional economic priorities.

Local Authorities (LAs)

County Councils, District Councils, Unitary Authorities.

LAs are responsible for a wide range of issues in their respective areas. As the Highway Authority, County Councils are primarily responsible for the delivery of transport improvements, set out in **Local Transport Plans.** District Councils also have a key role as the Local Planning Authority as they ultimately determine applications for new developments and have responsibility for public car parking, both of which have a fundamental impact on traffic movements. Unitary Authorities have a dual role as Highways and Planning Authority.

Other stakeholders with key delivery roles

Airports, Ports, Transport Operators, Freight Quality Partnerships (FQPs).

Implementation Framework

RTS Policy	Scheme/ Initiative	Delivery Agency	Plan/Programme
TRAN1: Reducing the need to travel	- More sustainable location of new development - Provision of associated sustainable travel choices	- Regional Assembly - County/Unitary Authority - District/Unitary Authority - County/Unitary Authority	- Regional Spatial Strategy - Local Development Framework[9] - Site specific development briefs - Local Transport Plan
TRAN2: Strategic inter-urban and inter-regional transport networks	Optimise use of existing networks; and implement selective infrastructure improvements: - Motorways and Trunk Roads - Other regionally significant roads[10] - Rail	- Highways Agency - County/Unitary Authority - DfT	- Route Management Strategies and - Targeted Programme of Improvements - Local Transport Plan - Route Utilisation Strategies - Strategic plan
TRAN3: The urban areas	- Reduce the need to travel - Encourage walking cycling and public transport - Manage demand - Heavy Rail (Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth and Bournemouth/Poole) - Light rapid transport	- (See TRAN1) - (See TRAN10) - (See TRAN5) - Rail –DfT/Network Rail - County/Unitary Authority and transport operators	- Route Utilisation Strategies - strategic plan - Local Transport Plan - Transport Operators business plans
TRAN4: Transport infrastructure investment priorities	- Identification of priorities - Schemes on Motorways and Trunk Roads - Schemes on other roads - Rail schemes - Other public transport infrastructure schemes	- Regional Assembly - Highways Agency - County/Unitary Authority - DfT/Network Rail - County/Unitary Authority and public transport operator	- Regional Transport Strategy - Targeted Programme of Improvements - Local Transport Plan - Rail Strategic Plan - Local Transport Plan - Operators Business Plans
TRAN5: Demand management	- Management of car parks - Management of on-street parking - Parking provision in new development - Management of highway space	- District/Unitary Authority - District/Unitary Authority and County - District/Unitary Authority and County - County/Unitary Authority	- Corporate Plan and - Car parking strategy within Local Transport Plan - Corporate Plan and - Local Transport Plan - Local Development Framework, Supplementary planning Guidance and Local Transport Plan

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[9] Local Development Frameworks

[10] As defined in Freight Map

RTS Policy	Scheme/ Initiative	Delivery Agency	Plan/Programme
TRAN 6: Movement of goods	- Rail gauge enhancements - Rail freight terminals/ transfer facilities - Reduce impact of large vehicles on the environment	- District/Unitary Authority - DfT - DfT - District and County/Unitary Authority - County/Unitary Authority and Freight Quality Partnership	- Local Development Framework and Planning Applications - Strategic Plan - Strategic Plan, Local Plan and - Local Transport Plan - Local Transport Plan
TRAN 7: The rural areas	- Public and community transport - Walking and cycling - Parking standards - Retention of local facilities - Investment in telecommunications and information technology	- County Council and public/ community transport operators - County Council - District and County Council - County and - District Council - Primary Care Trusts Regional Development Agency - Private sector and - Regional Development Agency	- Passenger transport strategy in Local Transport Plan - Local Transport Plan - Local Development Framework, supplementary planning guidance and Local Transport Plan - School Organisation Plan - District Council corporate plan - Local Plan - Community Transport Business plans - RDA investment programmes - Private sector business plans
TRAN 8: Ports and inland waterways	- Safeguarding land for port development - Land based links to the regions ports - Services to the Isles of Scilly - Use of inland waterways	- District / Unitary Authority - Highways Agency and - County/Unitary Authority - Operator/RDA/Council - County/Unitary Authority and British Waterways	- Local Development Framework - Targeted Programme of Improvements - Local Transport Plans - Operator's business plan - Local Transport Plan - British Waterways business plan
TRAN 9: Airports	- Develop role of the airports - Improve surface links - Protect land to secure operational integrity	- Airports - Government Air Transport Forum - County/ unitary Authority and Public Transport Operators - District/Unitary Authority	- Airports Strategy - Surface Access Strategies - Local Transport Plan - Operators business plans. - Local Plan
TRAN 10: Walking, cycling and public transport	- Develop pedestrian and cycle networks - Develop bus networks / Bus priority & Park and ride - Passenger information, fare systems and interchange Rail services into urban areas - Transport assessments/travel plans - Choice of access for major new developments - Improved public transport services - Community transport	- County/Unitary Authority - County/Unitary Authority and Transport Operators - DfT/Network Rail and Train Operating Companies - All Local Authorities - All Local Authorities - All Local Authorities - Community transport groups	- Local Transport Plan (Land safeguarded in Local Plan) - Local Transport Plan and Operators business plans - Strategic plan and franchise arrangements - Supplementary planning guidance. - Local Development Framework, site specific development briefs and Local Transport Plan - Local Transport Plan, district corporate plans and operators Business Plans

APPENDIX 4 – Sources of Information

The studies and information sources which have been used to derive the key transport issues for the South West:

- London to South West and South Wales Area Multi-Modal Study (SWARMMS).
- Bristol and Bath to South Coast Study (BB2SCS)
- South West Air Services Study and Air White Paper.
- SRA Strategic Plans and other publications, including Capacity Utilisation Strategy
- European Union review of the Trans European Network (TENS).
- Regional Economic Strategy (RES).
- Regional Environment Strategy
- Public Opinion Survey and consultation carried out as part of the development of the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) "Just Connect".
- The consultation responses to the draft DRTS document including the Regional Transport Forum (26 May 2004), (www.southwest-ra.gov.uk)
- RPG10.
- 'State of the South West' published by the South West Regional Observatory. www.swo.org.uk
- The SWRA Annual Monitoring Reports of RPG10. www.southwest-ra.gov.uk
- 2001 Census
- Department for Transport and Office of National Statistics published data sources.

APPENDIX 5 – Key issues affecting the regions PUAs.

Key Issues affecting the region's PUAs	
West of England Joint Study Area	- The WoE is one of the eight 'Core' cities of national/ European Importance and is the 'gateway' to the South West and Wales at the confluence of the M4/M5. - The WoE area has seen large scale housing and economic growth particularly north of Bristol which has lead to major congestion. Traffic levels have grown three times the national average[11]. - Investment in transport infrastructure has not kept pace with development resulting in an infrastructure 'deficit'. - The public transport network is not as good as other core cities with congestion causing major disruption to bus services and the heavy rail network is not developed to serve the rapidly growing demand. - Bus usage has fallen by 9% since 1996. High income and low unemployment makes it difficult to recruit bus drivers[3]. - The WoE city region including Bristol, Bath and Weston-Super-Mare represents 20% of the region's population and 24% of the region's GDP[12]. - The WoE city region has objective two areas and some of the most deprived wards in the country. - Communities along arterial routes suffer from the effects of traffic including poor air quality. The WoE has 6 of the region's 13 air quality management zones. - Congestion is estimated to cost £50m a year to businesses in Bristol alone and 23% of travelling time at peak periods is spent stationary[13]. - Dispersed development patterns north of Bristol have created complex travel patterns, which are difficult to serve by public transport. - Planned urban extensions to the north of Bristol will require investment to avoid car dependency. - Conflicts between strategic and local traffic on the motorway network reduce journey time reliability – 50% of motorway traffic at peak times is local in origin and destination[3]. - The Bath World Heritage Site is at risk from damage by traffic movements through its historic core. - Regeneration of Weston will include 7-13k new homes[3]. - Major development of Bristol Airport as advocated by the Air White Paper, will require improved surface transport connections and add considerably to growth pressures.
Bournemouth & Poole	- Connections and access to the port, airport and conurbation from trunk road network is congested and unreliable. - Flows between the urban centres exceed 100,000 vehicles per day leading to congestion with poor public transport links. - East – West movements through the conurbation are heavily trafficked and suffer from low capacity[14]. - Heavy rail through the conurbation may have the potential to provide a significant service, but this may conflict with longer distance trains. - Commuting patterns from the East put strain on the network. - Exceptional surrounding landscape makes park and ride and similar initiatives difficult to implement.
Plymouth	- Road congestion on arterial and radial routes, and the city centre caused by limited modal choice. - Poorly integrated public transport. - Capacity constraints at key locations e.g. river crossings. - Strategic development opportunities to the east of the city requiring high quality public transport infrastructure. - Low use of heavy rail network for local journey to work and other trips with poor rolling stock and facilities
Swindon	- Significant levels of growth will require increased investment - Congestion at key motorway junctions - Bus services increasingly affected by traffic congestion. - Need to support expansion of Swindon

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[11] JSPTU consultation response
[12] RDA
[13] Bristol City LTP
[14] Bournemouth BC

Key Issues affecting the region's PUAs	
Cheltenham & Gloucester	- Limited direct connections from Gloucester by rail to the Midlands, the South West and London as station is not located on the main line. - Poor public transport connectivity between and within the two urban areas – long journey times are common. - Gloucester regeneration initiatives at risk unless access is improved. - Congested arterial and radial routes around Gloucester deter investment.
Exeter	- Road congestion caused by capacity constraints relating to main junctions and approach roads to the east and south east of the city[15]. - Conflicts between local and long distance traffic on the strategic road network. - Lack of direct access from the trunk road network to the southwest of the city to major employment areas, leading to use of unsuitable suburban roads. - Continued strategic development opportunities to the east of the city require integration with public transport and high quality transport link to city. - Rail network not used to full potential and poor perceptions of rolling stock
Taunton	- Congestion through the town centre caused by 7000 vehicles entering Taunton in the am peak and nearly 6,500 leaving in the afternoon[16]. - The A358/M5 link road which carries between 30-40% of all traffic entering and leaving the PUA

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[15] Exeter City Council's consultation response
[16] Taunton BC consultation submission