

Key Transport Consultant Information Sheet

No: 5

Topic: South West Regional Spatial Strategy - Examination in Public

On the 10th January 2008 the Panel Report detailing the findings of the 2007 Examination in Public (EiP) of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was published.

This note has been prepared to highlight some of the more significant elements of the Panel Report which will affect development in the Bristol Sub-region.

Housing

The Draft RSS EIP has set the levels of new housing for the Bristol Housing Market Area at 126,950 to 2026. There is a desire for 44,000 (up from 40,000) of these to be built using land and buildings which have previously been developed. This is below the aspiration for 50% of new homes in the region to be built on previously developed land. The remaining 82,950 dwellings will be spread across the following areas;

- Urban extension to the south-west of Bristol 10,500
- Urban extension to the east of Bristol 6,000
- Urban extension to the north and north-east of Bristol 8,000 and
- Urban extension to Yate to the north-east of Bristol 5,000
- Additional development in South Gloucestershire 2,300
- Redevelopment of existing land and buildings in Bath, 6,000
- Urban extension to south/south-west Bath 1,500

- Urban extension to Keynsham, 3,000
- Additional development in Bath and North-East Somerset, 2,300
- Redevelopment of land and buildings within W-S-M, 3,000
- Urban extension to east of W-S-M, 9,000
- Additional development in North Somerset, 5,750
- Additional development in Trowbridge, 6,000
- Additional development in West Wiltshire, 6,300
- Additional development in Mendip, 8,300

Of the 28,000 dwellings to be constructed annually across the South-West, 10,000 should be affordable. Policy H1 suggests a need for 35% of new dwellings in each authority to be affordable, increasing to 60% where the greatest need lies.

Policy H2 has been revised to exceed a minimum net density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph), with an aspiration to provide an average 40 dph across each Housing Market Area. Net densities of 40 – 50 dph should be promoted in each of the urban extensions and within Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCTs), with high densities sought in areas of good accessibility.

Employment

The RSS suggests that 137,200 jobs should be created, of these 92,000



will be created within the Bristol travel to work area, 16,000 – 20,200 in Bath and 10,000 jobs in W-S-M to help redress the out-commuting problem currently faced by the town.

At Cribbs Causeway further expansion of the major shopping centres will not be supported, however there will be an increase in local services at Cribbs to provide services for the local communities and planned developments in this area, but not to the level of a town centre.

Greenbelt

The greenbelt around Bristol and Bath is to remain relatively unchanged, except for where the major urban extensions are constructed.

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The green belt between Royal Portbury Docks and the M5 is to be removed.

The Greenbelt between Royal Portbury Docks and Portishead is to be expanded, and a green corridor to the coast will be safeguarded.

The Government has updated its Air Transport White Paper which provides the exceptional circumstances required to justify the RSS recommendation that land at Bristol International Airport be removed from the Greenbelt, with the detailed boundary to be decided by through the Local Development Framework.

Transportation

The transport infrastructure project details are very vague, but there is support for the development of the Greater Bristol Bus Network, showcase routes along strategic corridors and major park and ride improvements, no details are given on the location or scale of the latter.

The development of strategic rapid transit routes is highlighted, with routes between Hengrove and the North Fringe, Ashton Vale and Emerson's Green and a Bath to Cribbs Causeway route identified.

In terms of highway infrastructure the RSS supports the need for improvements to the roads in South Bristol, including the South Bristol Ring Road, improving access to the airport and facilitating investment for the regeneration of South Bristol and to open up economic opportunities in South Bristol.

Further study is required to look at the development of a new crossing of the River Avon and a new road link to Bristol Parkway Station. There are also proposals for an upgrade of M5 Junction 21 at W-S-M.

The RSS suggests several Rail improvements including;

- Upgrading of facilities at Worle and Tiverton to provide Parkway Stations;
- Investment in the Worle loop to improve the reliability of inter-regional services;
- Improvements to Greater Bristol Rail Network including the availability of a new development sponsored turn around facility at Yate;
- And increased platform capacity.

A new Policy TRANS2 sets out the need for demand management to be introduced in all SSCT where there is a need to reduce traffic levels and congestion. The document identifies Bristol, Plymouth, Bournemouth/Poole and Exeter as the most likely areas for demand management. Bristol is currently the only area to have received DfT Transport Innovation Funding for looking into the implementation of a scheme, Exeter also entered a bid for this money but was unsuccessful.

A range of measures should be considered to meet the demands of this policy including;

- Congestion Charging/Road Pricing;
- Parking Strategies including charging regimes and park and ride;
- Management of road space including the introduction of bus priority;
- Promotion of sustainable travel behaviour.

Parking standards will be set out by the Regional Assembly, and will be tailored to reflect the range of circumstances within the region.

The wider Bristol City Region should consider the establishment of a

Passenger Transport Authority. The role of which, will be to help provide for growth and regeneration, to address congestion, safety and pollution and to minimise the use of the motorway network and longer distance routes by commuters.

The RSS will not seek to achieve an overall reduction in traffic across the region, but it aims to reduce the rate of traffic growth by encouraging a shift towards more sustainable modes.

This will be achieved through public transport improvements, improved planning of developments to provide better alignment between jobs, homes and services and through the establishment of demand management regimes in the region's main centres.

The reduction in traffic growth will also be supported by developing settlements which can be self-contained, although not too much emphasis should be placed on this.

The RSS recognises that many households have two or more economically active persons it is very difficult for them to all have jobs close to where they live.

The creation of a second strategic link to the South-West at dual carriageway standard is not a major priority and it looks unlikely that the improvement scheme at Stonehenge or the A358 Ilminster to Taunton/A303 Ilminster Bypass will be supported in the RSS.

Instead the focus will be on introducing Intelligent Technology Measures (ITM) and Access Control Measures on the M4 and M5 and rail improvements between London and the South-West and between Bristol/Bath and the South Coast.