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# Report

**Report subject** : Regional Spatial Strategy – Formal Comment on the Submission Draft

**Report to** : The Cabinet

**Date** : 06 September, 2006

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**Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development** : Cllr Mrs Peach

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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) are one of the new components of the development planning system. Their principal role is to manage change and promote the integration of development and strategic service delivery in a more consistent manner across regions and replace county level Structure Plans in forming part of the statutory Development Plan (for the purposes of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act). As is the case with the Local Development Framework (to be devised at district/borough level), RSSs are intended to go beyond pure land use issues bringing together topic based strategies for transport, culture, tourism, healthcare and education. The South West RSS relates to the geographical area covering Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and the former Avon.

This report seeks member endorsement of formal comments on the Draft RSS which was published for formal consultation on 6<sup>th</sup> June for 12 weeks. Comments made at this stage will be referred to a panel of Inspectors who will conduct an Examination in Public (EiP) of the document early in 2007 prior to adoption of the document (with changes required as a result of the Examination) in early 2008.

Given the timing of the consultation, comments set out in the recommendation were submitted to the Inspectorate in a holding form prior to 30<sup>th</sup> August (the end of the formal consultation period). The Inspectorate have made it clear that further comments or issues raised by members may still be appended to the council's submission.

A copy of the Executive Summary of the RSS is attached at Appendix A for those viewing this in paper format. An electronic version can be viewed online at

[www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/media/SWRA/RSS%20Documents/Final%20Draft/execsummary.pdf](http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/media/SWRA/RSS%20Documents/Final%20Draft/execsummary.pdf)

## 2. BACKGROUND

In November 2004, Cabinet was informed about the emerging RSS process and was asked to comment upon three options which had been put forward by the South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) regarding the overall distribution of development across the region as a starting point for the strategy. The view relayed to the region by this Council was that the overwhelming focus of development and resources on larger cities (e.g. Bristol, Plymouth, Swindon) did not adequately reflect the needs of local centres and rural areas.



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In January 2006, a further report to cabinet informed members of the emerging policies and proposals contained within a first draft of the RSS. The report gave a broad appraisal of the overall policy direction as well as some detailed analysis of the development strategy proposed. Members accepted that the policy framework was emerging at that stage, but that there did not appear to be any obvious areas of omission. On the matter of proposed development levels for the RSS period (2006-2021), members were made aware that Salisbury District would be required to accommodate between 360 and 450 new dwellings per year with the implication that at least half of this supply would be located at Salisbury.

### **3. THE DRAFT RSS – ANALYSIS AND COMMENT**

The following section outlines and analyses the key areas of the RSS and where appropriate provides specific areas of commentary on policy areas which would appear to raise issues or opportunities to support the proposals. Areas where officers have identified detailed amendments to wording are not addressed in detail, however Appendix B sets out the full extent of the Council's representations which members are requested to approve in the recommendation.

#### **3.1 Overarching Principles**

The Draft RSS is fundamentally underpinned by the principles of Sustainable Development and is based upon the premise that,

*The South West's ecological footprint is unsustainable as it stands. If everyone on the planet consumed such a quantity of natural resources and energy as an average South West resident, three planets would be needed to support life on Earth. Consequently, a shift is needed towards 'one planet', lower consumption, with lifestyles which are more resource efficient. This should include a move towards locally produced, replaceable natural resources, more efficient usage of energy, better waste re-use/recycling, and more efficient use of scarce natural resources such as minerals.*

The opening section of the document then focuses on 4 key policies related to this premise

- SD1 : The Ecological Footprint – stabilisation and reduction of demands on our environment.
- SD2 : Climate Change – managing the challenges it may bring and being prepared for future impacts.
- SD3 : The Environment and Natural Resources – protection and enhancement.
- SD4 : Sustainable Communities – improving the quality and equality of communities whilst reducing the on  
the environment, particularly the impact of travelling of these resources.

The only criticism that could be levelled at this section is that the RSS seeks to promote a 28% reduction in Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions which is marginally lower than the 30% national target. It is suggested that the importance of the RSS in managing change should mean that the ambitious targets (e.g. "at least 30%") should be included to reinforce the importance of the issue in the region's long term planning strategy. Nevertheless, the section does make it clear that the primary means to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is to encourage lifestyle changes amongst the population and to this end the RSS is limited in its ability to encourage this.

Despite this issue, the four key policy permeate much of the rest of the RSS's approach to managing development and change across the region and should be supported.

#### **3.2 Development Strategy**

Paragraph 3.1.3 of the draft RSS sets out the overall spatial framework for the region, making it clear that the South West as a whole is quite diverse. The strategy divides the region into three broad zones and indicates the emphasis which is place on each

- The North and Central Area (and within the Strategically Significant Towns and Cities (SSCTs)) - Realising the economic and other potential to add to general regional prosperity and address local regeneration
- The Western Peninsula (and Forest of Dean) - Stimulating economic activity and development to help achieve regeneration and reduce disparities
- The South East - Managing growth within identified environmental limits

Policies then give a clear indication of the scale and level of development proposed at settlement scale, namely

	Settlement Type	Some Examples	Development Strategy
Policy A	Strategic Centres (SSCTs)	Bristol, Swindon, Dorchester, Salisbury	Development to support and maintain strategic role of the named places as centres serving a broader regional and sub-regional area.
Policy B	Local Centres	Devizes, Shaftesbury, Amesbury, Mere, <i>(To be defined locally)</i>	Development to support and maintain local service provision and employment roles of places which act as centres to a localised and typically rural catchment.
Policy C	Small Towns and Villages	<i>(To be defined locally)</i>	Development to address local needs - typically improving local employment and service provision and local needs housing to be identified in local housing market studies.

In terms of commenting upon the suitability of this policy framework, officers would support the stance now taken. It enables Salisbury to be recognised as an important centre within the sub-region, whilst delegating the pattern and scale of development in the remainder of the district to the Local Development Framework process drawing on a local perspective of the relative roles and functions of our settlements.

### **3.3 The Level of Development**

The RSS takes over the role of allocating levels of development to each district from the Structure Plan process, and in line with the Development Strategy discussed in the previous section also identifies the proportion which should be accommodated at the Strategic Centres. In the case of Salisbury District, the levels of development for the period 2006-2026 have been set out as follows, expressed as new homes completed per year

#### RSS Development Levels for Salisbury District (2006-2026)

Salisbury City	250	completed	new	homes	per	year.
Remainder of District	210	“	“	“	“	“
Salisbury District (Total)	460	“	“	“	“	“

This level of development represents a continuation of recent development levels which have stood at around 478 per year since 1991. Historically, the Wiltshire Structure Plan has required development at 458 per year and so this level of development does not represent a significant variation from expectations. The South Wiltshire Economic Partnership (SWEP) consider this level of housing to be inadequate to tackle the workforce shortages which exist in many sectors. This view is certainly acknowledged, however officers would consider that the level of development provides an adequate balance between need and is about right bearing in mind the available opportunities

Outside of Salisbury, the development level of 210 new homes per year (combined with the policy framework summarised in section 3.2 above) point towards a suppression of house building compared with the historic development rate which stands at about 260 per year. The more restrictive policies will particularly apply in villages where there is almost complete reliance on the car to satisfy even basic daily needs. In general, much of the housing supply in rural areas will be restricted to affordable/local needs as defined in Local Housing Market Assessments such as the one currently being undertaken for the Council by David Couttie Associates.

#### **3.31 Development at Salisbury**

The emphasis on providing 250 new homes per year at Salisbury will require more focus on finding sites in and around the city to increase the historic level of provision in the city which stands at 205 per year in the period from 1991-2005. Clearly, some of the sites allocated in the last Local Plan process will count towards this requirement as they have yet to be built, and there will continue to be a supply from redevelopment sites, however significant new sites will need to be found to accommodate around 2500 homes.

As a final issue in respect of the Development Strategy, paragraph 4.3.15 sets out the region's policy steer with regard to Salisbury. The text set out in the document represents an initial broad summary of the issues and does raise concerns in its current form (e.g. There would need to be considerable development for the

city to impinge upon the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB). In light of the progressing work on the Salisbury Vision it is proposed that revised text is presented to give a more rounded understanding of the objectives which development can help to facilitate whilst maintaining the clear indications regarding the fluvial and landscape setting constraints.

A statement will be circulated to members at the meeting which sets out some draft text which is being drawn together from the Vision steering group.

One area of caution which needs to be relayed to Inspector is the implications of the emerging national policy in PPS3. The draft version, published in December last year seemed to indicate that LDF's should allocate land to meet their RSS requirements in full and only include a windfall allowance where land could not be identified. Should the guidance be retained in this form, there is the potential for around 160 additional homes per year to come forward in Salisbury District (based on recent annual supply from windfall sources). The Inspector should therefore be asked to assess the implications of this and if necessary revise down the district allocations to ensure windfall is a component of overall supply, not a supplemental element.

### **3.4 Implementation of Development**

#### **3.41 Infrastructure**

The provision of appropriate infrastructure to support increased population is recognised by the RSS to be a challenge in Development Policy D. The proposals point towards a coordinated approach to service delivery making use of shared facilities and linked investment, particularly in central and other locations which are accessible by modes of transport other than the car. Furthermore the proposals charge local authorities with drawing together guidance on the levels of infrastructure funding required. However, a key issue which has not been sufficiently highlighted is the delivery of infrastructure ahead or in phase with development. The RSS needs to send a clear signal that infrastructure investment must go ahead alongside new development, in some cases be put in place ahead of newly arising demand.

#### **3.42 Design**

Development Policies E and G are concerned with promoting good design in development with particular attention to sustainable construction. Given that around 30% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are derived from homes there is the opportunity to bring about significant change in both new building and refurbishment of existing properties. BREAAAM 'Very Good' standard is promoted as the norm for new house building and similar standards are set out for other projects which aim to suppress construction and occupant resource consumption.

(CR's minor amendments ref Secured by Design and Access)

Policy F (Masterplanning) seeks to promote comprehensive development of large and mixed use schemes through local consultation and coordination of stakeholders in the development process to create sustainable and liveable communities – particularly in and around the towns and cities of the region. However, the considerable emphasis in the policy on promoting higher densities (which is expanded further in policy H2 (see para 6.1.10)) is not countered by an acceptance that such development may not be in keeping with their surroundings – particularly in historic centres and in rural developments.

#### **3.43 Reuse of Land**

Policy H – Previously Developed Land – takes a welcome stance on the development of brownfield land by promoting its reuse where it is in a suitable location, and where it is suitably located, in a manner which contributes to improving the balance of land uses in a settlement. The policy aims to deliver a target of 50% of all new development on brownfield land across the region as a whole.

Policy I – Public Land aims to secure the most effective use of surplus public land in line with the aims of the RSS and to meet the objectives of local strategies.

### **3.5 Transport**

Taking advice from the Joint Transportation Team, the transport policies and proposals raise few concerns aside from variations to wording to ensure consistency between national and regional guidance.

In line with the key policies of the RSS the aim is towards an overall reduction in then need to travel and achieving a shift in travel modes away from the private car. Public Transport providers are charged with promoting a step change in the delivery of their services utilising best practice to integrate passenger movement in a more seamless manner. In contrast local authorities and highway authorities will be required to evaluate demand management measures, including congestion charging, alternative parking strategies, road space management and green travel planning, to vigorously reduce traffic levels.

In terms of the strategic road network, the A303, A350 and A36 are recognised as important routes upon which journey times should be stabilized and corridor management techniques (e.g. promoting rail over road) should be applied. There is commitment to further work in seeking to upgrade the A303 as the regions second strategic route to the South East, however there is no guarantee that work will proceed in the period to 2026.

In terms of rail routes relevant to Salisbury District, there is ongoing commitment to providing more passing loops on the Exeter – Waterloo line to improve service frequency. One area where the policy is deficient is that it does not promote the development or reopening of stations which have the potential to promote greater patronage of rail for longer distance transport.

### **3.6 Sustainable Communities**

Section 6 of the RSS aims to provide the tools to manage the social delivery of population growth and change. The principal aim is to secure the right types of development to meet existing and predicted needs noting, for example, levels of in-migration, an aging demographic and the need to promote more active lifestyles. The policies in this section therefore aim to promote coordination of public services, the delivery of housing which is more aligned to local need and the contribution that new development should make in creating places in which people want to live – particularly in urban areas where the majority of new development is being directed.

#### **3.61 Affordable Housing**

Policy H1 sets out the regional stance on affordable housing which is based upon a broad appraisal of the issues. The policy sets out that planning authorities should seek at least 30% affordable housing provision on suitable sites and in areas of highest need levels could be raised to 60% where this is proven to be “deliverable over a sustained period. “ The proposal is supported by pointers for Local Development Frameworks, notably in the areas of appropriate tenure mixes and the publication of market assessments to encourage housing provision in line with need. Policy GT1 sets out requirements for Local Authorities to properly accommodate Gypsies and Travellers in light of needs assessments. North Wiltshire DC are currently coordinating a Wiltshire wide assessment to inform LDFs in coming years.

#### **3.62 Community Facilities**

Policies HE1-3 and SK1 deal specifically with health and education provision. As referred to in earlier parts of the document the principal aims are to promote timely provision in accessible locations and to coordinate provision through the full engagement of relevant organisations and communities in the preparation of LDFs. HE3 introduces the concept of Health Impact Assessments for large new developments, although there is little detail provided to understand the scope of these exercises.

Policies CS1, LCF1 and GI1 seek to ensure that Local Authorities, in association with Local Strategic Partnerships and other stakeholders, continually assess and improve the provision of community services, cultural facilities and access to green space. *(NB. Within the context of the RSS, cultural facilities is intended to include historic and built attractions, leisure and recreation facilities, performing arts venues, religious buildings and sites, sports venues, libraries, museums, etc.)* LDFs will need to use assessments of facilities and open space to bring together stakeholders to improve provision in areas where demands have exceeded the capacity of existing facilities. Furthermore, new developments will be expected provide these amenities or access to provision by sustainable modes in the nearby vicinity.

### **3.7 Culture, Environment and Natural Resources**

#### **3.71 Culture**

The cultural component is relatively concise and Policy C1 sets out a broadly positive approach to promoting and exploiting the opportunities offered by the regions cultural assets (i.e. the physical sites) and values (ie

the ways of life, customs, traditions, etc). In the most part the approach taken is supported, however the section could more strongly highlight the need to balance the negative impacts of attracting more visitors (particularly in respect of regional, national and international sites) such as travel demands, and visitor facilities. This matter is raised as an issue in respect of policy TO1 – see section 3.83 below.

### **3.72 The Natural Environment**

The RSS sets out 5 key policies addressing this matter

- ENV1 – Protecting and enhancing the region’s natural and historic environment – the policy seeks to preserve and enhance the quality, diversity and character of the natural and historic environment through management and stewardship whilst ensuring that the impacts of necessary development are mitigated against and compensated for by offsetting actions. The approach is entirely supported, however it is reasonable to comment that the RSS focuses upon national and international environmental assets and it will be important for distinctive local environments to be recognised for the value they hold for local communities.
- ENV2 and ENV3– Protected Landscapes and Landscape Character – The policy approaches seek ensure that development within protected landscapes (National Parks and AONBs) is restricted to that which conserves, enhances or promotes enjoyment of the natural beauty, heritage and wildlife of these areas whilst ensuring that the social and economic well-being of communities within these areas is supported. The policy also highlights the sensitivity of peripheral areas. On a broader level, local authorities (individually or collectively) are expected to ensure that there is full coverage of landscape character assessments to provide a clear guide to the prioritisation of landscape protection, enhancement and restoration. In broad terms the council and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB team would not highlight any fundamental concerns although there are some wording changes which the AONB team are pursuing in conjunction with the South West Protected Landscapes Forum.
- ENV4 - Nature Conservation – the policy approach requires that habitats and species be maintained an enhanced in line with national, regional and local biodiversity targets. The South West Nature Map is identified as the means by which stakeholders can prioritise habitat restoration. The policy also highlights the importance of linking habitat areas together to create areas which may be more resilient to climate change. For Salisbury District, the key natural habitat is the River Avon and its tributaries. This Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated river will require that the entire LDF programme must be subjected to the additional requirements of Appropriate Assessment under the EU Habitats Directive. There is no question that delivering change and accommodating new development within the district will require careful attention to the mitigation of impacts.
- ENV5 – Historic Environment - The policy provides a very broad commitment to protection and enhancement of the historic environment. The approach requires local authorities and statutory agencies, such as English Heritage, to deliver the policy approach whilst also assessing the capacity of such environments to absorb and accommodate change. Conservation Officers have highlighted no specific concerns with the approach set out.

### **3.73 Renewable Energy**

Renewable Energy is now a very prominent issue and the RSS, in common with national policy, sets out clear targets for each County in terms of new generating capacity in the periods to 2010 and 2020. Policies RE1 and RE3 require Local Development Frameworks to encourage renewable energy and heat schemes. For Wiltshire, the indicative breakdown set out in the RSS points towards the majority of renewable energy supply being from wind power, with small components being from energy crops, landfill gas and waste to energy. Whilst the council would welcome the challenge of promoting renewable energy supplies within its area, concern must be expressed in respect of the capacity of the district to absorb certain types of installations, most notably wind power. This concern is articulated in the RSS within policy RE4 and it will be essential for the district council to work with the county council, AONB Partnership and other stakeholders to ensure that impacts on landscape quality and local roads, for example, are carefully balanced.

Policies RE5 takes forward national guidance set out in PPS22 to introduce requirements for larger developments to include renewable energy capacity. The policy sets out that individual schemes should aim to offset at least 10% of lifetime CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The policy has a dual effect in that developers will be encouraged to improve the energy efficiency of new development in order that the on site renewable capacity they must provide is minimised. It will be for LDFs to define the qualifying thresholds for sites.

### **3.74 Water Resources and Flooding**

Policy RE6 addresses Water Resources, not only the quality of supply of water but also the balance that needs to be struck in maintaining the ecosystems which the water environment supports. With the River Avon, designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), extending across the majority of the district, the council, in exercising its planning role, will be required to assess development for its impact on the river basin taking advice from the Environment Agency (EA) and English Nature (EN)(or their successors).

In consultation prior to producing the draft RSS, the EA have confirmed that the water demands of the development proposed can be met, subject to water conservation measures being applied and further works (e.g. on leakage) being undertaken by water companies in coming years. In order for this requirement to become more binding it is suggested that the RSS is supplemented by SPD (drawn up in consultation with the EA), to ensure that consistent measures and techniques can be employed.

Flood Protection, set out in policy F1, draws heavily on national guidance in PPS25 in applying the precautionary principle to development in flood risk areas, but also highlights the additional risks imposed by climate change. The emphasis is to direct development away from areas of flood risk and use good design to minimise flooding risk in development schemes. The policy also highlights that in some circumstances areas might be set aside for managed flooding to reduce risk to property and be a positive measure in terms of habitat creation/restoration.

### **3.75 Other relevant matters**

Policies RE7 and RE8 address issues of land management and woodlands, again balancing the needs of the economic use of land with that of stewardship. In the case of woodlands and forestry, the policy makes clear reference to the Regional Woodlands and Forestry Framework (RWFF) which seeks to maintain the estimated 9% regional coverage and expand this where opportunities exist. Both policies focus on ensuring that the indigenous character of the land is maintained and enhanced, giving support to proposals that bring about multiple benefits .

The section also addresses the matters of mineral and waste, upon which the county council has prepared a response. However, of relevance to the district council, policy W2 provides a locational guide for waste facilities – including local recycling measures - in urban and rural areas, and Policy W4 requires that development proposals are subjected to a Waste Audit (in line with current provisions set out in existing WCC guidance on this matter) .

## **3.8 Economic Development and Employment**

Section 8 of the RSS begins by painting a broad portrait of the regions economy then goes on to set out policies in 3 main areas – Employment Land, Town Centres and Tourism.

### **3.81 Employment Land**

Policy E1 & E3 – Assessment of Employment Land - requires Local Authorities to keep up to date information about the scale and nature of employment land supply ranging across the whole spectrum of uses as well as the local context within which decisions should be made. This approach is supported and SDC has already commenced work on this important element of the LDF evidence base. Policy E3 seeks to ensure that sites, including allocated sites are reviewed on a 3 yearly basis.

Policy E2 – Location of employment sites at SSCTs – requires LDFs to allocate sufficient land at the identified major centres to meet the job growth targets set out in the RSS within section 4. In respect of Salisbury, section 4 (within policy SR30) suggests that 11,000-13,500 new jobs should be accommodated in the Salisbury Travel to Work Area (TTWA) in the period to 2026. In this area, there is some confusion in that one view of this is that the job numbers identified can be spread across the TTWA whilst the overall intention appears to be for the jobs, alongside the housing, to be provided at Salisbury to improve self containment of the city. It is suggested that the wording or supporting text of policy E2 is improved to make this more explicit, and also to make clear that employment development in other settlements will be based upon employment land studies (as required under policy E1) which will aim to balance opportunities for local job creation at an appropriate scale.

Policy E4 – Redevelopment of employment sites – requires that a sequential test is applied. Where a site is no longer needed for an employment use, alternatives must be sought out in the following sequence – non-B class employment; mixed use development; pure residential. It is also linked to Development Policy H (see section 3.4) which is concerned with promoting the right balance of uses in any given settlement. The policy is supported, although there is the potential for grey areas within ‘non B class employment’ as retail uses, for example, may act to undermine wider objectives for town/local centres.

### **3.82 Town and City Centre Development**

**Town Centres** are addressed in policy TC1 which maintains a “centres first” approach to retail, leisure and office uses, again drawing on the sustainable transport choices that can be utilised. Major town centre development, namely large scale retail growth and leisure facilities will be encouraged within the SSCTs, although it is essential that such developments are of a high quality and do not adversely undermine the role of other centres. The policy also highlights the need to support local centres, typically market towns, which act as important local service centres in turn reducing reliance on travel to main centres (SSCTs). Out of town development is not completely ruled out as a policy direction however, in line with PPS6, the sequential test will be stringently applied with the primary focus being upon the impact that development in such a location will have on patterns of movement, and the vitality and viability of existing centres

### **3.83 Tourism**

Policies TO1-TO3 provide a suite of measures to encourage tourism. As highlighted in policy C1 (see section 3.7) much is made of the potential to sustainably exploit the natural and historic assets of the region of the region, with the emphasis on quality and economic potential. There is specific focus on maintaining and enhancing the existing role of tourist destinations with specific mention of a number of key resorts. The key areas of emphasis are on improving the quality of tourism, reducing seasonality and promoting development which is sustainable, particularly in terms of accessibility. Collaborative approaches, are advocated to promote cohesive schemes within an area which can bring about multiple benefits – most notably in terms of urban and rural regeneration.

The section concludes with policy CA1 which addresses the topical matter of Casinos.

### **3.9 Reducing Inequality and Promoting Inclusion**

Section 9 of the RSS seeks to highlight the priority areas for action within the region drawing on evidence set out in the indices of deprivation. Deprivation varies locally and this is borne out within Salisbury District, which on face value would appear to be relatively affluent Identified area, but in fact includes a number of the 20 most deprived local areas in the county. Action proposed is focused upon for attention under 4 broad initiatives, with named areas urban and rural, being singled out as priorities.

The RSS concludes, in section 10, with two policies which are aimed at ensuring development and transport proposals are inclusive for all and respect the diversity of society.

## **4. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

Broadly speaking, the Draft RSS for the South West has emerged from its lengthy preparation stages as a balanced and acceptable policy document. Without being overly prescriptive, which could never be achieved on a regional basis, it appears to successfully transpose the former Regional Planning Guidance and Structure Planning roles into one document in a safe and comprehensive manner. The previous section does highlight a number of areas where additional amendments are suggested, most notably in defining the way forward for Salisbury in the period to 2026 (and these are formally set out in Appendix B), however there is no basis to make any fundamental objection.

Overall, the policy framework does set out challenges in the 4 key areas set out in policies SD1-SD4 (see section 3.1 above) and the acid test for the new planning regime will be to see whether LDFs can deliver to a regional agenda bearing in mind the many differing priorities and realities of the region’s component authority areas. If there was one area of criticism, it could be said that the radicalism of the opening policies is not fully carried forward into the rest of the document. The result is that there are a number of bland policies which do not greatly add to what is already set out in national guidance.



## **5. NEXT STEPS**

At the end of the 12 week consultation period, the Planning Inspectorate will draw together all the responses received and collate these into a series of issues which an Examination in Public (EiP) can explore. It is likely that the EiP will be held in the spring of 2007 and a report will be produced by the middle of the year. It will then be for the Secretary of State to consider changes to the draft RSS which will be published for 8 weeks of consultation at the end of 2007. Subject to there being no significant challenge to the changes proposed, the RSS should be adopted at the start of 2008.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That members

- a) Note the content of the report.
- b) Confirm that the representations in respect of the draft RSS in Appendix B – as submitted on 30<sup>th</sup> August – are supported (or, *where necessary, require retractions or insertions of representations*)
- c) That the Forward Planning Service be authorised to take forward the representations through the EiP process.

### **Background Papers:**

Planning Policy Guidance Note 11 – Regional Spatial Strategies – ODPM 2004  
Draft RSS – SWRA – June 2006  
Just Connect – Integrated Regional Strategy – SWRA - 2004

Report to Cabinet January 2006 – “Regional Spatial Strategy – update”

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### **Appendices**

A – Executive Summary of the Draft RSS for the South West  
B – Formal representations lodged with the Planning Inspectorate on 30/8/06 in respect of the Draft RSS

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### **Implications:**

- **Financial:** None
- **Legal** : The RSS, when adopted will form part of the statutory Development Plan and will therefore its policies will be a central key consideration in the determination of planning applications. The RSS also provides guidance which the emerging Salisbury District Local Development Framework will need to be in conformity with.
- **Human Rights** : The RSS process provides for the views of individuals are taken into account. Within that process, the view of the council is one amongst many.
- **Personnel** : Officer time may need to be set aside for statements to be prepared should the council be invited to participate at the EiP
- **Community Safety:** None
- **Environmental** : The RSS has the potential to introduce a range of policies which will act to tackle a range of environmental concerns, most notably transportation and the manner in which residents use natural resources.
- **Council's Core Values:** Communicating with the Public, Being Environmentally Conscientious, Being Fair & Equitable, Open, Learning Council and Willing partner
- **Wards Affected:** All Wards