

RSS

The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy
for the South West 2006 - 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*South West
England*



2012

Affix Spot

Bristol Chan

BARNSTA

Bideford

Bodmin

Newquay

St Austell

PLYMOUTH

CAMBORNE-POOL-REDRUTH TRURO

Penzance FALMOUTH-PENRYN

Atlantic Ocean

Isles of Scilly





INTRODUCTION

This Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West has been produced by the South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) - a partnership of Councillors from all local authorities in the region, and representatives of various sectors with a role in the region's economic, social and environmental well-being. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body (RPB) and, as such has worked with a wide range of partners and stakeholders including several stages of consultation, to prepare the Draft RSS. This is set out in full in the Pre-Submission Consultation Statement.

The Draft RSS is a new approach to planning for the South West. It will influence how we live, work and travel in the region for the next 20 years. The overall purpose of the plan is to manage the nature, location, scope and pace of development from 2006 to 2026, in the interests of current and future residents.

The RSS influences the future planning of the region in a number of ways:

- ***as part of the development plan system it provides guidance on the location and scale of development for interpretation in Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)***
- ***it guides investment in transport and provides a framework for the preparation of Local Transport Plans (LTPs)***
- ***it provides a spatial context for the plans, programmes and investment of other agencies and organisations in the South West***

When the RSS is finally published (likely to be in 2008), it will replace County-wide Structure Plans. Until that time, Structure Plan Policies are 'saved'.

The South West is a popular and attractive place to live, work and visit. Producing a strategic plan for the region is a real challenge given its geographic size and diversity, and special environment. The region is continuing to grow, and the scale of change which is likely over the next 20 years means that the most sustainable way of dealing with it is to plan for development positively and creatively at the 21 larger cities and towns. This will allow 'economies of scale' to be achieved and will link homes and jobs in a way which might reduce the need to travel so much by car in future. The Draft RSS recognises that the South West has a great variety of towns and villages, with a large proportion of the population living in these smaller communities. The Strategy is positive about the future of these places, and makes provision for sufficient development to maintain the vitality of the large part of the region which is rural, focussing, in particular, on the role of market towns.

The Draft RSS shows commitment to policy and action to make the region sustainable. This will inevitably take time to have an effect. Key to achieving this is access to sufficient resources to make sure important infrastructure can be put in place before, or at the same time as, development occurs.

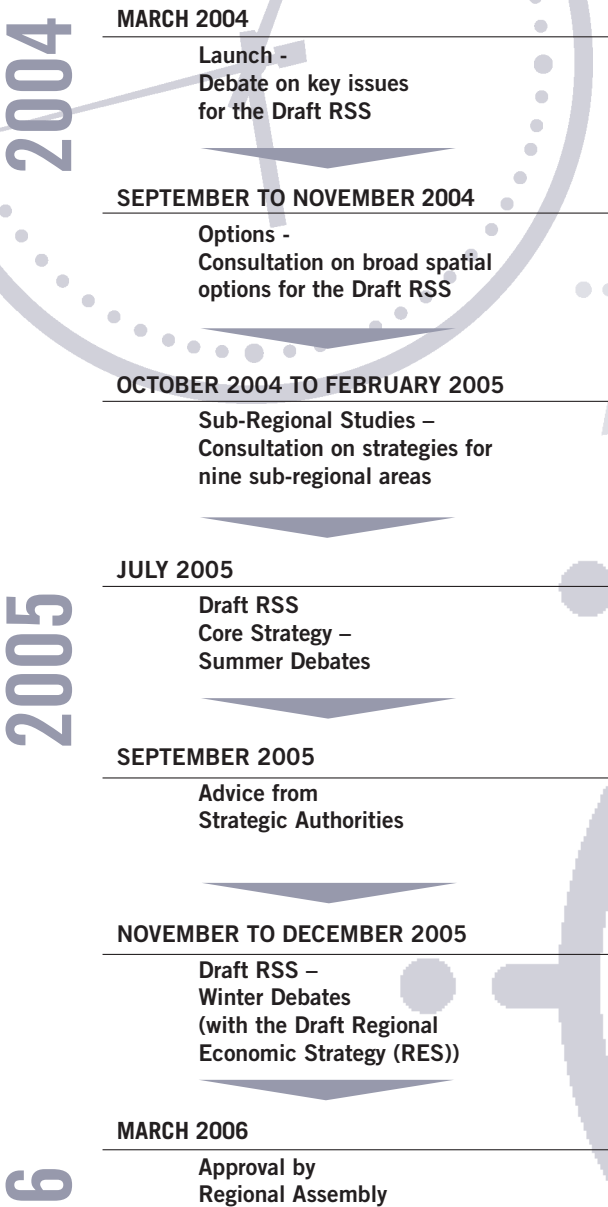
This Executive Summary is a non-statutory document, and only gives a general outline of the principles and policies set out in the Draft RSS. For full details of the Spatial Strategy, policies and priorities, please refer to the main document and supporting material on the CD that accompanies this Summary, or on the Assembly's website, or at one of many points around the region. The structure of the Executive Summary follows the structure of the main Draft RSS.



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Steps in Producing the Draft RSS

The Draft RSS was not developed from scratch. Its starting point was the existing Regional Planning Guidance 10 (RPG 10). It has been developed over the last two years, and an outline of the process is given below:



Preparing the RSS was informed by research, consultation and technical work. This included forecasts of economic and population change, analysis of the role and function of key settlements and rural areas, review of the region’s green belts, and a large number of studies on particular themes including housing, transport, environment, and the economy. More detailed sub-regional studies were also carried out by groups of local authorities, who provided advice to the Assembly. Copies of the technical reports are available on the SWRA website:

www.southwest-ra.gov.uk

Throughout the process, the emerging Strategy and Policies were tested against sustainability objectives, as reported through the Strategic Sustainability Assessment (SSA), prepared by independent consultants for the Assembly.



The Draft RSS Pack

The Draft RSS

The main policy document setting out the Spatial Strategy for growth and development in the region, and the strategic policies which will shape this.

Details of how to obtain copies of all these documents are given on the back page. These documents are all on the CD that accompanies this Executive Summary. The detailed technical reports are available on the Assembly website www.southwest-ra.gov.uk.

Implementation Plan

Sets out how the Spatial Strategy and policies will be delivered. Work on implementation will continue after submission of the Draft RSS. Key delivery mechanisms include:

- co-ordinating coherent and timely delivery with key partners
- recognising funding opportunities and helping to manage identified investment priorities
- identifying delivery mechanisms and overcoming barriers to successful delivery
- measuring how well the Strategy is being implemented, acting as an evidence base and providing an effective response

The Implementation Plan closely aligns with the RSS Annual Monitoring Report.

Strategic Sustainability Assessment (SSA)

The development of the Draft RSS has been tested against regional sustainability objectives (incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive). The SSA recognises that there is much to commend in sustainability terms in the Draft RSS. It highlights sustainability strengths and weaknesses of the Strategy and Policies. A particular strength is the focussed approach to development. It raises concerns over the implications for climate change, particularly the potential increase in travel, reflecting the region's strong economic and population growth.

Pre-Submission Consultation Statement

This explains the consultation processes undertaken during development of the Draft RSS, and highlights key issues raised and how these have been addressed.





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A Sustainable Future for the South West

The Draft RSS plays a key role in delivering *'Just Connect!'* – an overarching document which regional partners have agreed will be the focus for regional policy and delivery. *'Just Connect!'* endorses the vision for the region set out in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework:

"The South West must remain a region with a beautiful and diverse environment. By working together and applying the principles of sustainability we can achieve lasting economic prosperity and social justice whilst protecting the environment. This approach will secure a higher quality of life now and for future generations."

'Just Connect!' includes five headline aims:



Sections 6 to 10 of the Draft RSS set out how the Spatial Strategy will help deliver each of these aims.



Sustainability Principles and Policies to Guide the Spatial Strategy

The Draft RSS has four policies to support sustainable development:

- SD1-** The Ecological Footprint
(measures to stabilise and then reduce the region's ecological footprint)
- SD2-** Climate Change
(measures to reduce the region's contribution to climate change and how the region will adapt to changes in climate)
- SD3-** The Environment and Natural Resources
(measures to protect and enhance the region's environment and natural resources)
- SD4-** Sustainable Communities
(measures to plan for and manage growth in the region positively to support sustainable communities)

These four Sustainable Development (SD) Policies provide the overall context for the Draft RSS and its Spatial Strategy, aiming to make future development and lifestyle choices for the region more sustainable. The Draft RSS provides a sustainable way to accommodate the potential growth and change expected, and achieve the 'best fit' against the range of sustainability objectives as tested through the SSA. Local authorities will need to undertake more detailed assessments as they develop their Local Development Document (LDDs), in the context of these principles and the Draft RSS and policies that follow. However, it is recognised that there are many things outside the sphere of influence of the RSS which will have a profound effect on how sustainably the region develops, including:

- *individual behaviour*
- *technological development*
- *investment*
- *national policy*



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The Spatial Context for Change for the South West

The geography of the South West, and its links with neighbouring areas and the continent, have set the physical or 'spatial' context for the Draft RSS. Transport links, business, social requirements and environmental concerns, as well as the way different areas and places function, all have a significant influence on the region.

An important spatial context for the South West region is provided by the relations it has with adjacent regions, the South East, West Midlands and Wales, and its links with the European mainland. Studies have shown that the most significant linkages between the South West and the wider United Kingdom are those with London and the South East, particularly for the business community. The northern part of the region also has close links with the West Midlands including commuting and housing markets. These linkages are highlighted in the relevant sub-regional parts of Section 4 and transport policies in Section 5.



Within the region there are pronounced differences between the generally more prosperous east, and the far south west.

The Quality of Environmental and Cultural Assets

The quality and diversity of environmental and cultural assets is a key strength of the South West. The recent levels of growth in the region have raised concerns about the impact on environmental and cultural assets. The Draft RSS sets out policies which ensure that the quality of these assets is enhanced, and not seriously undermined by future development - see Section 7.

Providing for Expected Economic and Population Change

As the Draft RSS looks forward over the next 20 years, it has to plan for expected change during that period. Forecasting over a 20 year period is not an exact science, but it is necessary to make estimates of economic and population change so that the best way of managing consequential development can be found.

Economy

Since 1996, economic activity, in terms of job numbers and Gross Value Added (GVA) has exceeded the highest forecasts made at the time of RPG 10. Most of the job growth is centred on the region's major cities and towns, and that is likely to continue. The Draft RSS is aligned with the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) which seeks to sustain regional economic performance, improve the quality of skills across the region, encourage regeneration of deprived areas and address inequalities within the region. Policies to support sustainable economic growth are set out in Section 8 of the Draft RSS.

Population

Since 1991, the population of the South West has increased by over 400,000, largely through people moving into the region, and the speed of growth is increasing at a higher rate than other regions. By 2026, the region could have a population of about 5.85 million. The general population is older than the average for England, and this trend is set to continue. However, the number of school-age and young adult residents has tended to stay static. Population changes will have significant impacts on planning for provision of services, transport, employment and training. Policies to address the impacts of population change are explained in Sections 3, 4, 9 and 10.



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Regional Housing Requirement

Taking all the factors above into account, a number of assumptions have been made about the scale and distribution of development to help set the practical context for the policies in the Draft RSS:

- ***plan for economic growth at or above the current rate of 2.8% per annum – an increase in the total number of jobs of about 365,000 to 465,000 by 2026***
- ***different approaches are needed to provide the right policies for different parts of the region, addressing the issues outlined above***
- ***the benefits of economic growth can only be supported by appropriate growth in adequate housing provision. The emphasis must be on aligning jobs, homes, services and facilities, and directing growth to locations where infrastructure exists to support it***
- ***continued support for economically disadvantaged areas is essential***
- ***housing provision must keep pace with demand, requiring an increased and accelerated programme of building in some areas***
- ***forecasts suggest that levels of around 25,000 new dwellings a year could be required, however these forecasts are based on assumptions of economic growth and decreasing household size, which will need to be closely monitored and reviewed during the plan period. The provision being made against these forecasts is set out in Sections 3 and 4***

Resources and Infrastructure Availability

A fundamental requirement for the Draft RSS, and its delivery, is the likely availability of resources to enable the key elements of transport infrastructure and social/community facilities to be provided as development proceeds. This is emphasised in the region's contribution to the National Sustainable Communities Plan – 'The Way Ahead', and the Government 'New Growth Points Initiative'. Without necessary investment, regional partners are concerned that substantial growth will either fail to happen, or will have an adverse effect on quality of life and desire to live in the main centres of the South West. Both the private and public sectors will be expected to play their part. Priorities for investment, and proposals for the use of various approaches to fund infrastructure, are contained in Section 3 and more detailed sub-regional links between development and infrastructure are set out in Section 4.

The Role and Function of Places

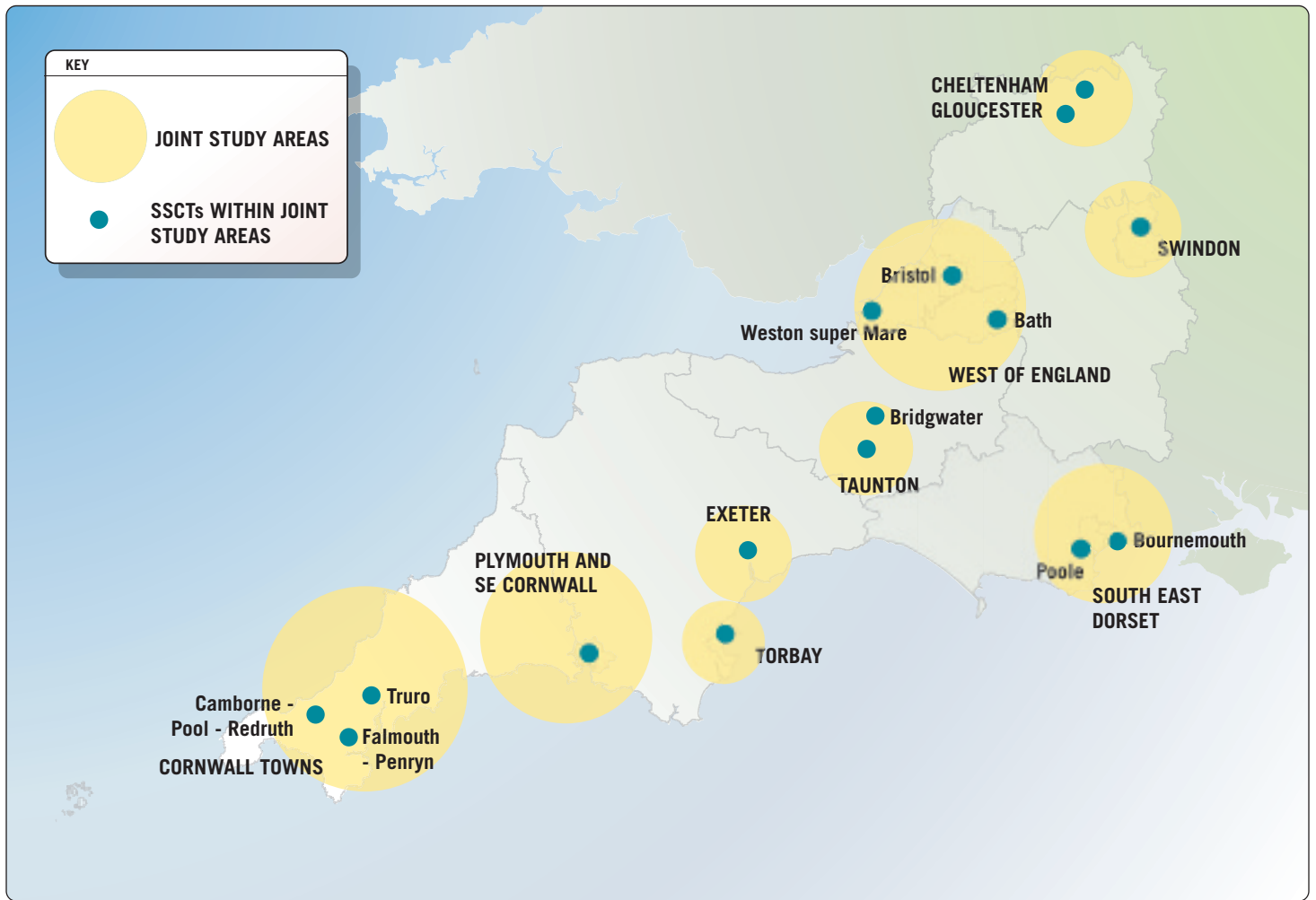
Spatial planning means taking into account how people use places for work, leisure or living, and how those places influence each other. The way we live our lives has changed over the years, so 'functional' areas and their linkages often cut across administrative boundaries. This has implications for service delivery at all levels. Taking the 'functional' approach meets the needs of different parts of the region, and acknowledges that the historic distinction between rural and urban areas has become less clear. To enable sub-regional strategy to be developed, nine 'Joint Study Areas' (JSA) studies were carried out by the strategic and local authorities. These studies, along with formal advice from the strategic authorities¹, form the basis of Section 4.



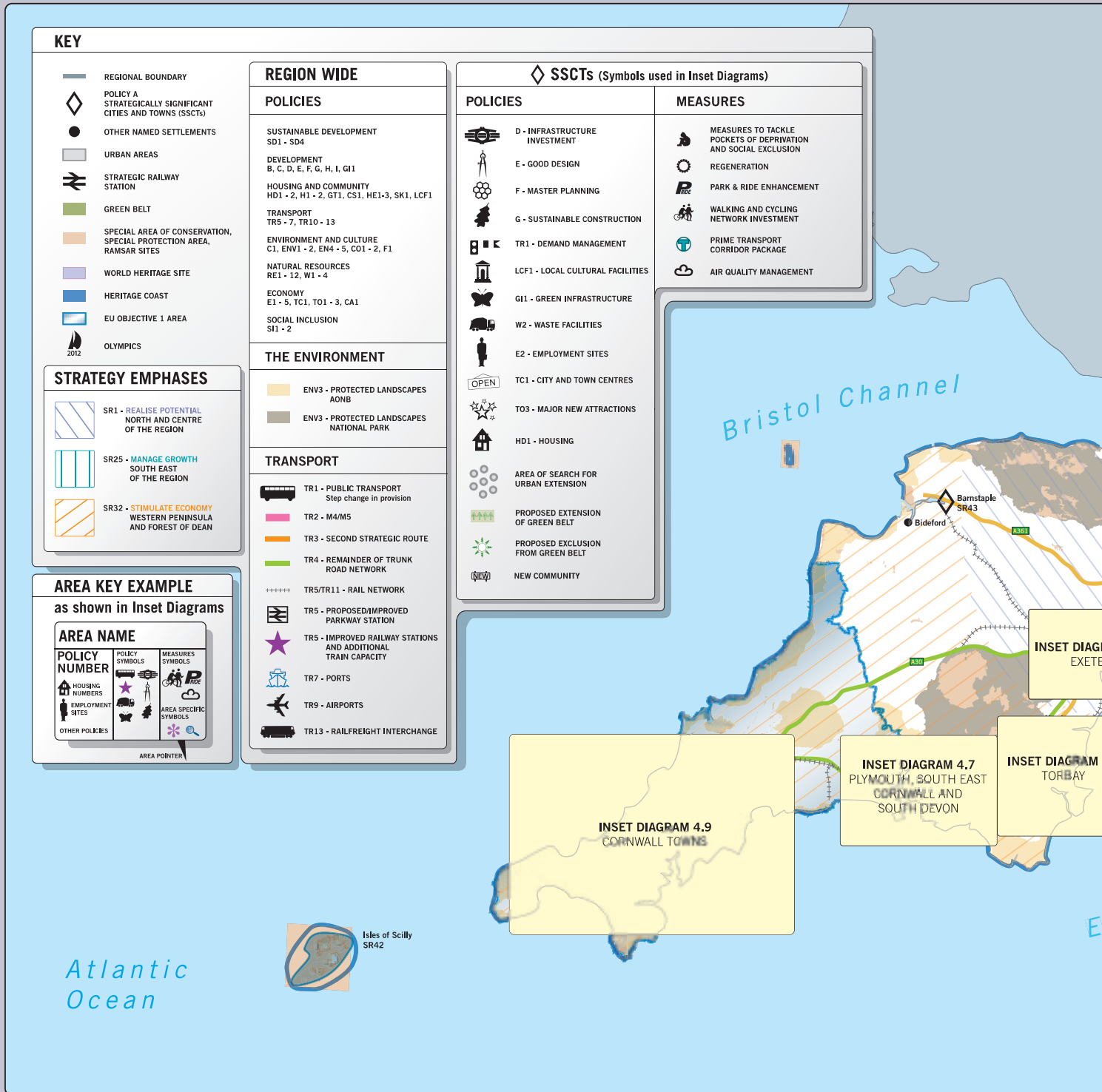
¹ County, Unitary and National Park Authority.



RSS Studies for Sub-Regional Planning



South West Region Key Diagram



KEY

- REGIONAL BOUNDARY
- POLICY A STRATEGICALLY SIGNIFICANT CITIES AND TOWNS (SSCTs)
- OTHER NAMED SETTLEMENTS
- URBAN AREAS
- STRATEGIC RAILWAY STATION
- GREEN BELT
- SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION, SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA, RAMSAR SITES
- WORLD HERITAGE SITE
- HERITAGE COAST
- EU OBJECTIVE 1 AREA
- OLYMPICS

STRATEGY EMPHASES

- SR1 - REALISE POTENTIAL NORTH AND CENTRE OF THE REGION
- SR25 - MANAGE GROWTH SOUTH EAST OF THE REGION
- SR32 - STIMULATE ECONOMY WESTERN PENINSULA AND FOREST OF DEAN

AREA KEY EXAMPLE

as shown in Inset Diagrams

AREA NAME	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY SYMBOLS	MEASURES SYMBOLS
	HOUSING NUMBERS		
	EMPLOYMENT SITES		
	OTHER POLICIES		

AREA POINTER

REGION WIDE

POLICIES

- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SD1 - SD4
- DEVELOPMENT B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, GI1
- HOUSING AND COMMUNITY HD1 - 2, H1 - 2, GT1, CS1, HE1-3, SK1, LCF1
- TRANSPORT TR5 - 7, TR10 - 13
- ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE C1, ENV1 - 2, EN4 - 5, CO1 - 2, F1
- NATURAL RESOURCES RE1 - 12, W1 - 4
- ECONOMY E1 - 5, TC1, T01 - 3, CA1
- SOCIAL INCLUSION SI1 - 2

THE ENVIRONMENT

- ENV3 - PROTECTED LANDSCAPES AONB
- ENV3 - PROTECTED LANDSCAPES NATIONAL PARK

TRANSPORT

- TR1 - PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Step change in provision
- TR2 - M4/M5
- TR3 - SECOND STRATEGIC ROUTE
- TR4 - REMAINDER OF TRUNK ROAD NETWORK
- TR5/TR11 - RAIL NETWORK
- TR5 - PROPOSED/IMPROVED PARKWAY STATION
- TR5 - IMPROVED RAILWAY STATIONS AND ADDITIONAL TRAIN CAPACITY
- TR7 - PORTS
- TR9 - AIRPORTS
- TR13 - RAILFREIGHT INTERCHANGE

SSCTs (Symbols used in Inset Diagrams)

POLICIES

- D - INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT
- E - GOOD DESIGN
- F - MASTER PLANNING
- G - SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION
- TR1 - DEMAND MANAGEMENT
- LCF1 - LOCAL CULTURAL FACILITIES
- GI1 - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- W2 - WASTE FACILITIES
- E2 - EMPLOYMENT SITES
- TC1 - CITY AND TOWN CENTRES
- T03 - MAJOR NEW ATTRACTIONS
- HD1 - HOUSING
- AREA OF SEARCH FOR URBAN EXTENSION
- PROPOSED EXTENSION OF GREEN BELT
- PROPOSED EXCLUSION FROM GREEN BELT
- NEW COMMUNITY

MEASURES

- MEASURES TO TACKLE POCKETS OF DEPRIVATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION
- REGENERATION
- PARK & RIDE ENHANCEMENT
- WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORK INVESTMENT
- PRIME TRANSPORT CORRIDOR PACKAGE
- AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

STRATEGICALLY SIGNIFICANT CITIES AND TOWNS

Barnstaple, Bath, Bournemouth, Bridgwater, Bristol, Camborne/Pool/Redruth - Falmouth-Penry



Spatial Strategy Statement

The Draft RSS for the South West is based on a recognition of the diverse needs and potential for change of different places and parts of the region. Development will be planned to meet the needs of all communities and to realise their potential within environmental limits. To deliver more sustainable communities and a more sustainable region there will be:

- *significant change at 21 Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCTs) in order to support their economic and service role and regeneration*
- *smaller scale change outside of those places to achieve more self contained, balanced communities and a better local environment*

The role and well-being of communities in all settlements and groups of settlements is of great importance to the quality of life enjoyed by residents across the region. The development of new economic activity, services and housing will be provided to enhance the future role and function of these settlements.

In recognition of the diversity of the region, this core Draft RSS has been given different emphases:

- *realising the economic and other potential, particularly of the SSCTs, to add to general regional prosperity and address local regeneration, particularly in the north and centre of the region*
- *stimulating economic activity and development to help achieve regeneration and reduce disparities, particularly in the western part of the peninsula and the Forest of Dean*
- *managing growth within identified environmental limits, particularly in the south eastern part of the region where development pressures are high, and future outward expansion and development of the South East Dorset conurbation is heavily constrained by environmental designations*

The three broad sub-regional areas, with their different Strategic Emphases, are shown on the South West Region Key Diagram. This provides the context for the more detailed consideration of sub-regional spatial matters in Section 4.

The Scale and Location of Development

There is a need for the region to plan for continued economic and population growth. Technical projections suggest that around 25,000 new homes per year could be needed. However, more detailed assessments taking account of environmental limits to delivery, leads to the level of provision in this plan for just over 23,000 new homes per year. Careful monitoring of change, and the consequences of making this level of housing provision, will need to take place to ensure basic needs for accommodation are met over the plan period. With this in mind, the Draft RSS is set firmly within the approach of 'Plan, Monitor, Manage' rather than 'Predict and Provide'. What is of particular importance, in terms of satisfying anticipated needs for housing, is that the annual rate of provision increases from about 20,000 per annum to about 23,000 relatively quickly.

The future development of the region is guided by three linked **Development Policies A, B and C**. These, respectively, deal with development at SSCTs, in towns which play an important functional role locally often called 'market towns', which LDDs will need to identify, and in other smaller settlements and the countryside.

Delivering Quality Development

Development Policies D, E, F, G, H, I and J set out guidelines for the implementation of this approach to development, placing emphasis on the quality of development including good design, master planning, sustainable construction, re-using land, the necessity of linking infrastructure to development, and the importance of joint working. The provision of resources for key infrastructure through development and Government funding is highlighted, as is the need to ensure all development meets high standards. Together, these policies provide a

framework for the preparation of LDDs, and help to guide the work of a wide range of other agencies and organisations responsible for development delivery, service provision and infrastructure investment within the South West.

Green Belt

One of the issues the Draft RSS deals with is the general extent of the three green belts in the region, and proposals are made for additions of new areas of green belt, as well as removal of certain areas from the green belts to allow necessary development to happen over the next 20 years.

The Region's Priorities for Investment to Support the Spatial Strategy

Section 3 concludes with a statement of the region's main priorities for investment to enable the RSS to be realised. A more detailed Implementation Plan accompanies the Draft RSS – indicating how the strategic priorities and policies of the RSS will be achieved and an integrated programme for the phased delivery of the development strategies contained in Section 4.

The region's main priorities for investment over the longer-term of the Strategy are:

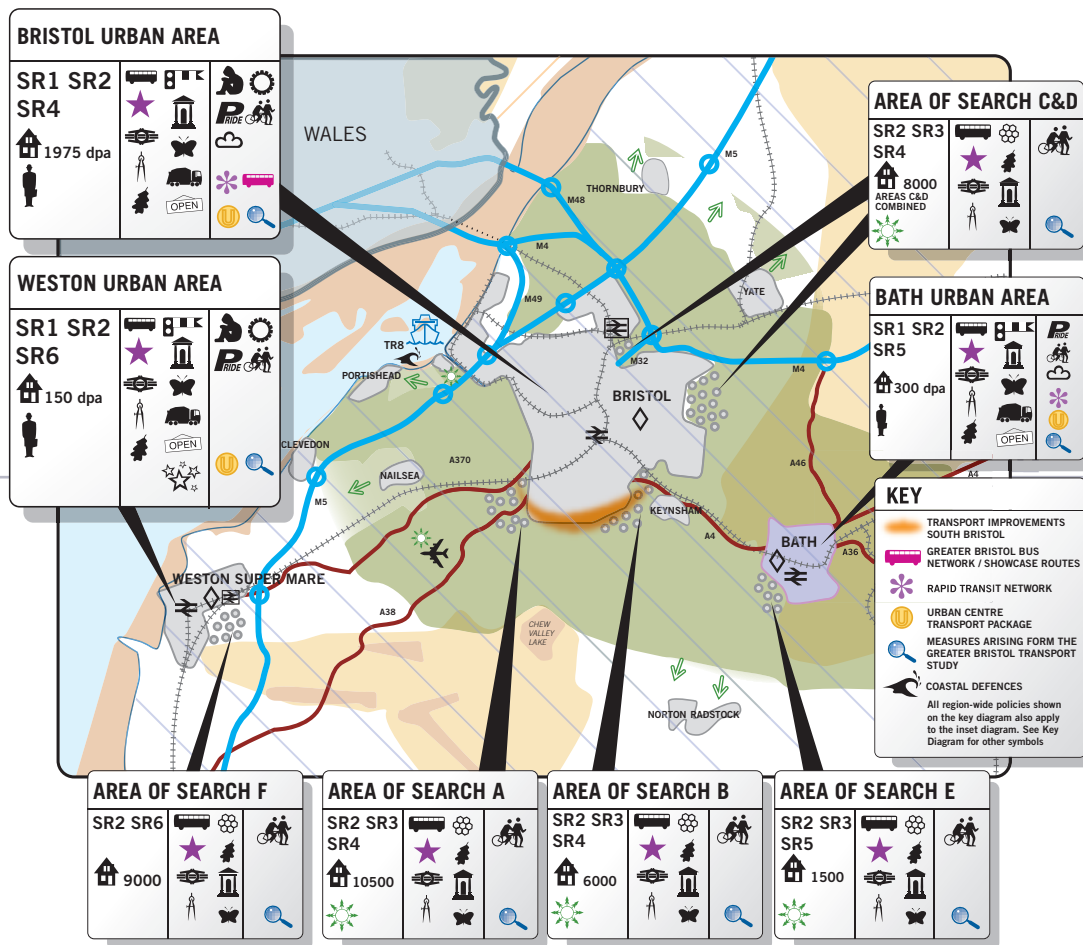
- ***resilient and reliable inter-regional transport, particularly with London and the South East, with the second strategic route as a priority***
- ***investment in urban transport systems and demand management***
- ***improved rural accessibility and reduction in congestion in small towns***
- ***a South West Regional Infrastructure Fund to forward fund development***
- ***maximise contributions from development – proceeds to be pooled across immediately affected authorities***
- ***a regional carbon offset fund to finance actions to reduce climate change emissions***

Swindon, Taunton, Torbay, Trowbridge, Weston-super-Mare, Weymouth, Yeovil



Sub-Regional Strategy Statements and Housing Distribution

The Draft RSS recognises that different parts of the region need different policy emphases to address their problems and maximise their opportunities. Housing needs and distribution will reflect these emphases. In Section 4, more locationally specific policies are loosely grouped within each of these broad sub-divisions of the region, which have 'fuzzy boundaries'. For each of the nine JSAs, a Spatial Strategy has been produced to cater for the development of the core urban area(s). Details of infrastructure needed are also included.

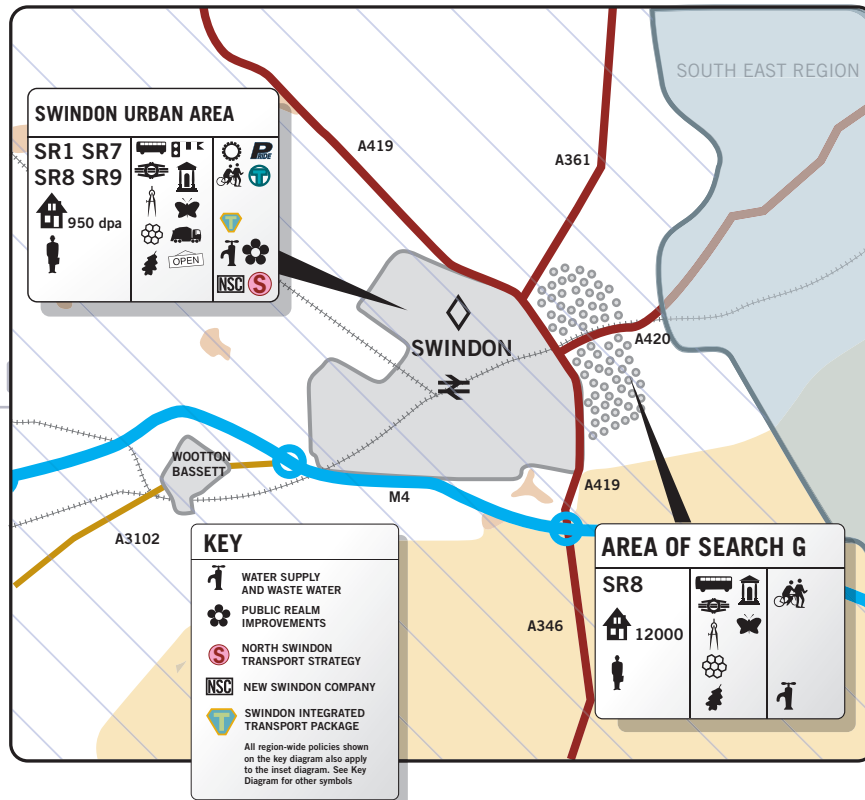


West of England Spatial Strategy

The West of England Spatial Strategy covers Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare and associated towns. Realising their economic potential, individually and collectively benefiting from universities, airport and port, whilst also seeking to achieve a high quality lifestyle for all members of the community, is not only critical to their future success, but also to the success of the regional and national economy. The Strategy accommodates a relatively high rate of future economic activity and housing, realising the potential for redevelopment in the 'Core City' of Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare. To deliver this Strategy will require the four Unitary Authorities to work together, particularly where there are cross-administrative

boundary issues that require resolution. Investment in critical transport infrastructure and services in this part of the region will have important implications for the delivery of other aspects of the Draft RSS, including redressing long-term imbalances in prosperity and improving connectivity of the peninsula. Urban extensions to Bath, Bristol and Weston-super-Mare will be required to accommodate future growth. This requires revision of the green belt boundaries which will also provide for extensions to the green belt area. The sub-regional policies for the West of England are **Policies SR1 to SR6**. About 3,200 dwellings a year are planned for Bristol, 375 dwellings a year for Bath, and 600 dwellings a year for Weston-super-Mare.

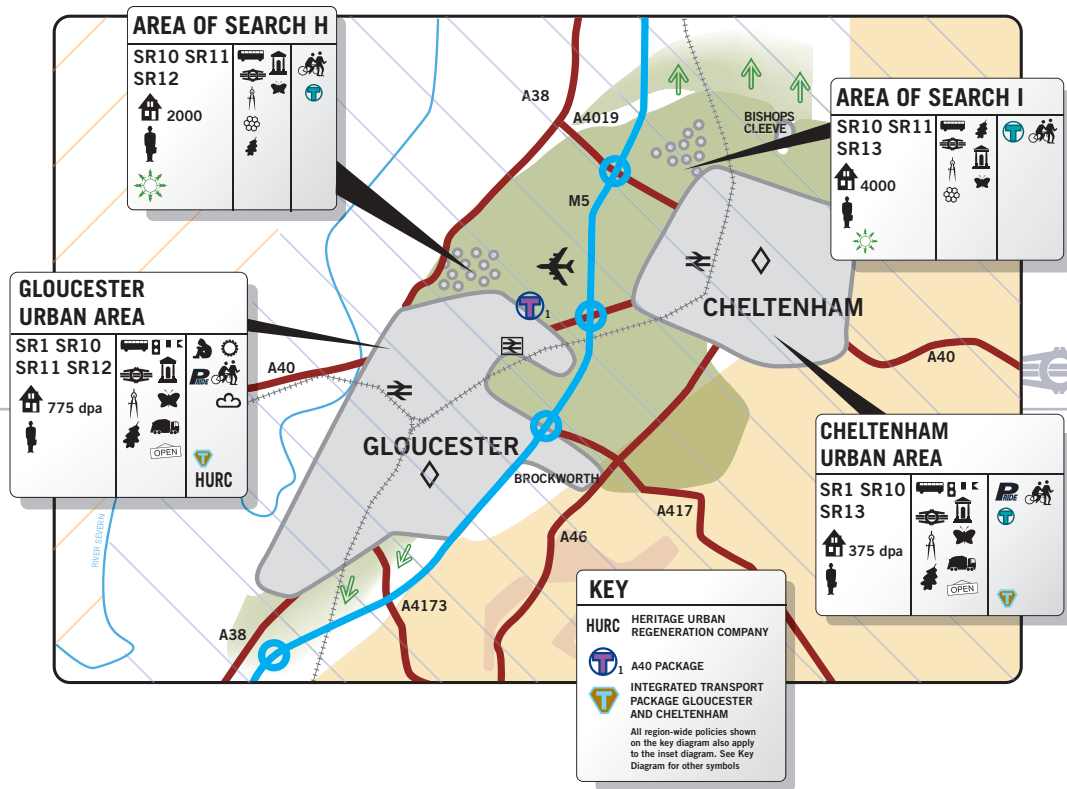




Swindon Spatial Strategy

Swindon has good accessibility to London and the South East and Bristol, resulting in strong economic, skill and knowledge flows benefiting the area immensely. There is a critical need for Swindon to complement its economic potential with social, cultural and environmental improvements, redressing past negative perceptions of the town. In this context, the town has aspirations to establish a university presence. The primary focus for development will be at Swindon, with specific priority for regeneration and renewal of the urban area, supplemented by other urban and housing renewal programmes outside of Swindon’s central area. The regeneration of previously developed land and buildings, increased density of development, and high quality design are key in delivering the vision for Swindon. Urban extensions will be required to accommodate future growth. The sub-regional policies for Swindon are **Policies SR1, SR7, SR8 and SR9**. The role of Cirencester in relation to Swindon and Cheltenham is also addressed. About 1,700 dwellings a year are planned for Swindon.



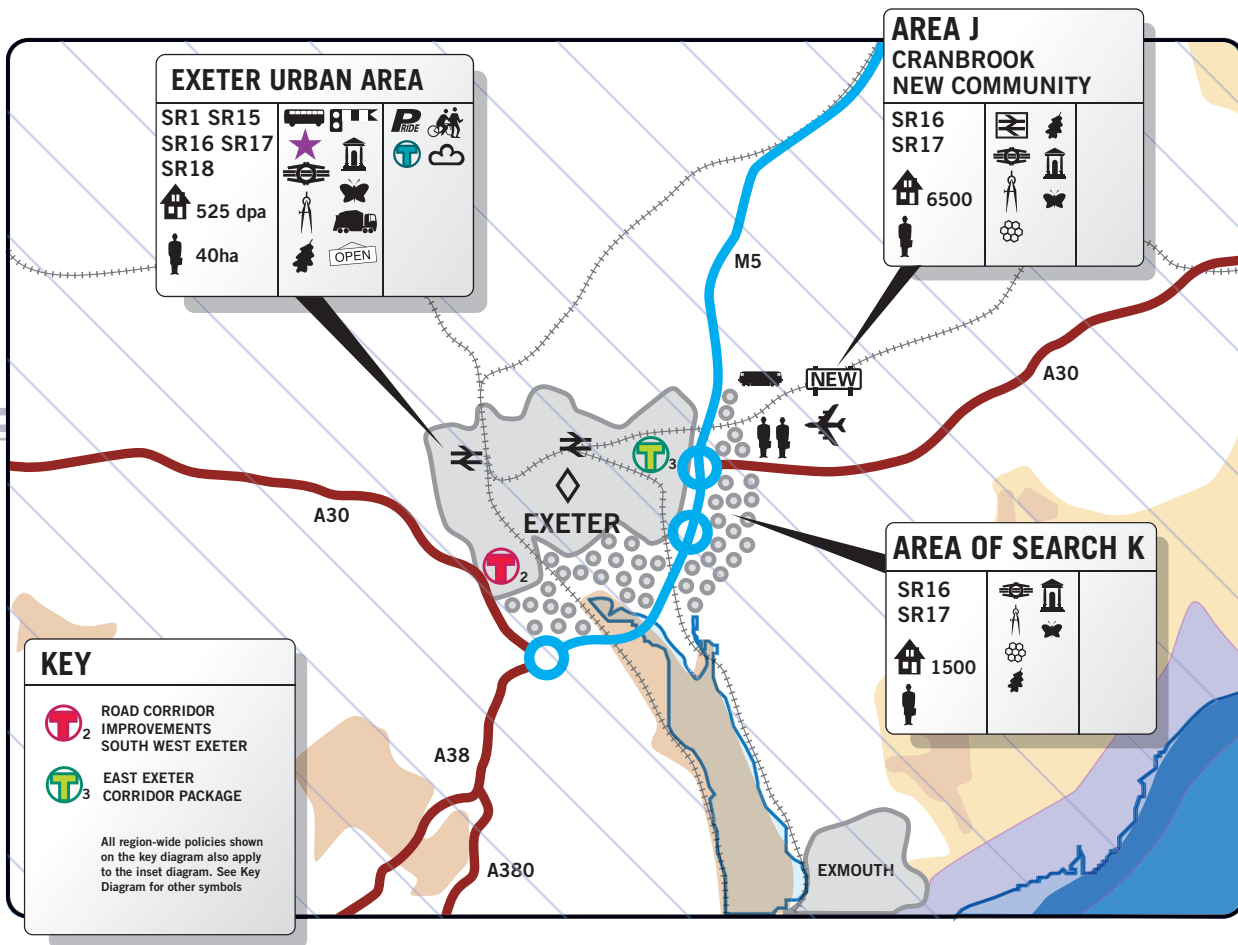


Gloucester and Cheltenham Spatial Strategy

Gloucester and Cheltenham, strategically located between Bristol and Birmingham on the M5 and strategic rail routes whilst sharing a university, have different and complementary roles, and distinctive qualities in relation to their economies, leisure, retail, cultural and tourist functions. The regeneration of Gloucester and reflection of Cheltenham’s heritage are crucial. Cheltenham is a major regional retail centre. Realising their economic potential in a complementary way is a key feature of the approach proposed, together with adequate provision of a range of housing opportunities. Extensions to both urban areas requiring revision of green belt boundaries will be required to accommodate future growth. Proposals for extension of the green belt are also made. The sub-regional policies for Gloucester and Cheltenham are **Policies SR1, SR10, SR11, SR12 and SR13**. About 875 dwellings a year are planned for Gloucester and 625 dwellings a year for Cheltenham. There are several other towns within the Cheltenham and Gloucester area of influence, and the development of Stroud, Tewkesbury and the Forest of Dean towns is covered in **Policies SR1 and SR14**.

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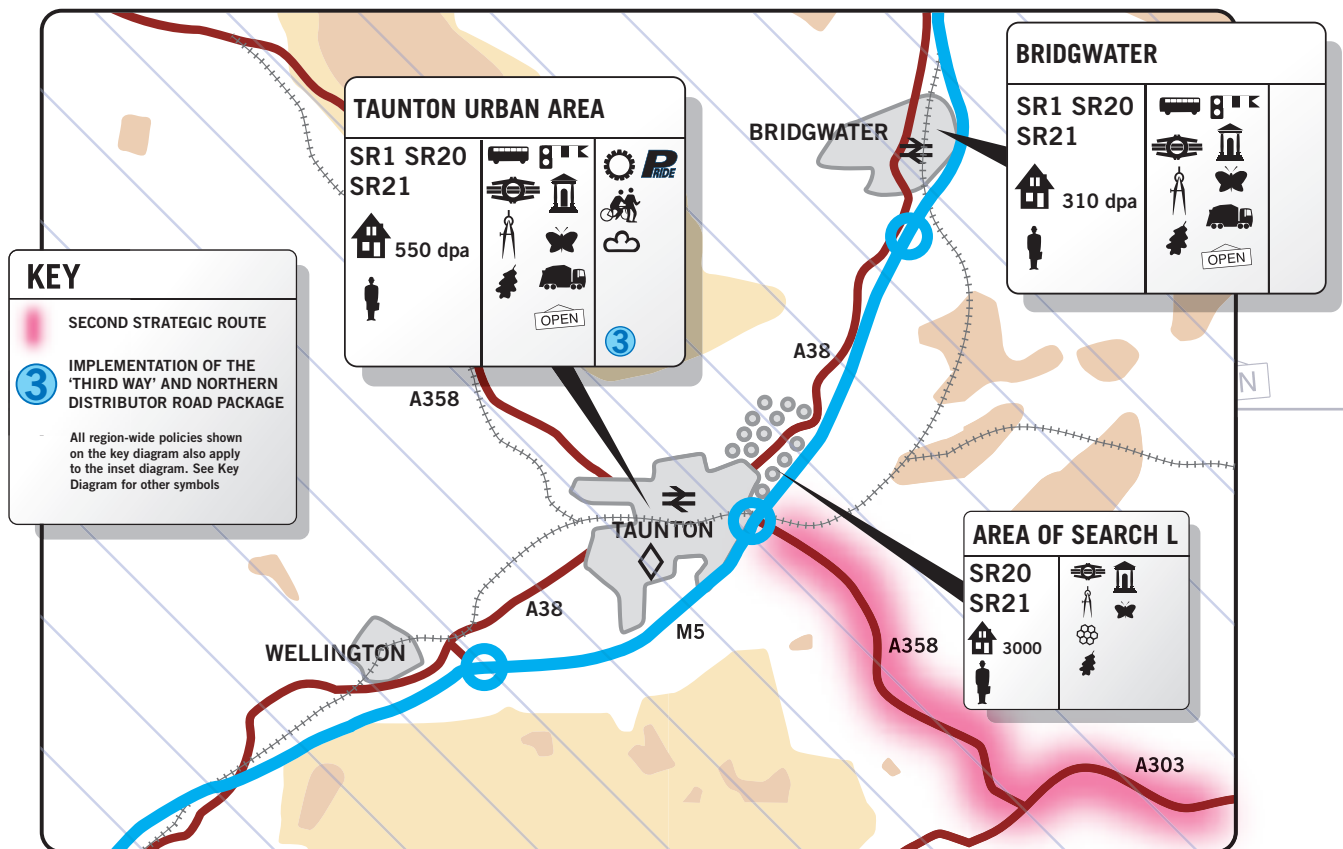


Exeter Spatial Strategy

Located centrally in the region, Exeter has good connectivity via the M5 and A30/A303, and via strategic rail links to the Midlands/North and London/South East. Exeter also benefits from an airport, university, cultural and retail strengths and this, together with its setting, has encouraged strong economic growth in the City over the past 20 years, which is set to continue. The Strategy for the Exeter area is to focus development within, and adjacent to, the urban area and ensure that population and workforce growth is commensurate with economic activity and growth in jobs. The Strategy provides for additional economic development and housing,

realising the potential for development within the existing urban area, without harming the urban environment or impacting on its historic heritage. To complement the urban focussed Strategy, an urban extension at Cranbrook New Community will be required to accommodate future growth, with a further focus for development needed in the longer-term. The sub-regional policies for Exeter are **Policies SR1, SR15, SR16 and SR17**. About 925 dwellings a year are planned for Exeter. There are several other towns within the Exeter area of influence, and the development of Newton Abbot and other towns associated with Exeter is covered in **Policies SR1, SR18 and SR19**.





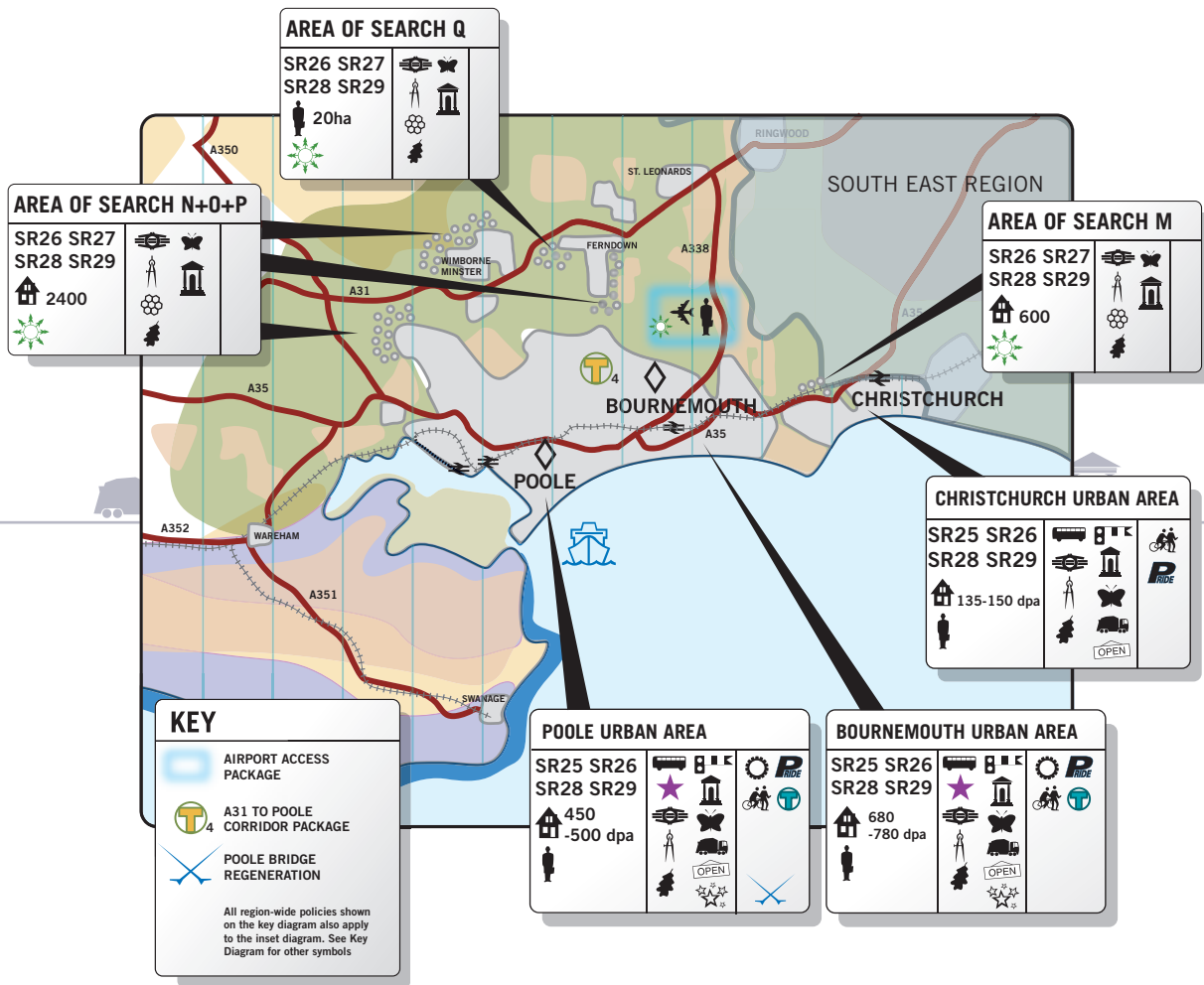
Taunton and Bridgewater Spatial Strategy

Taunton is the second most important commercial and retail centre in the central part of the region after Exeter, and on the main transport corridor through the spine of the region, well connected with London and other markets. A single strategy is proposed to realise the potential of Taunton, Bridgewater and Wellington and to act as a strategic planning framework for the three towns. Concentrating development primarily at Taunton, and particularly within the town centre, will provide the main focus for future growth and the rejuvenation and renaissance of the Taunton urban area. To complement the urban focussed strategy, a strategic urban extension to Taunton will be

required to accommodate future growth. The sub-regional policies for Taunton and Bridgewater are **Policies SR1, SR20 and SR21**. About 700 dwellings a year are planned for Taunton and about 310 dwellings a year are planned for Bridgewater.

Other SSCTs in the North and Centre of the Region

Chippenham, Trowbridge and Yeovil have also been identified as SSCTs in the Draft, and their development is covered in **Policies SR1, SR22, SR23 and SR24**. About 225 dwellings a year are planned for Chippenham, about 250 dwellings a year are planned for Trowbridge and about 320 dwellings a year are planned for Yeovil.



South East Dorset Spatial Strategy

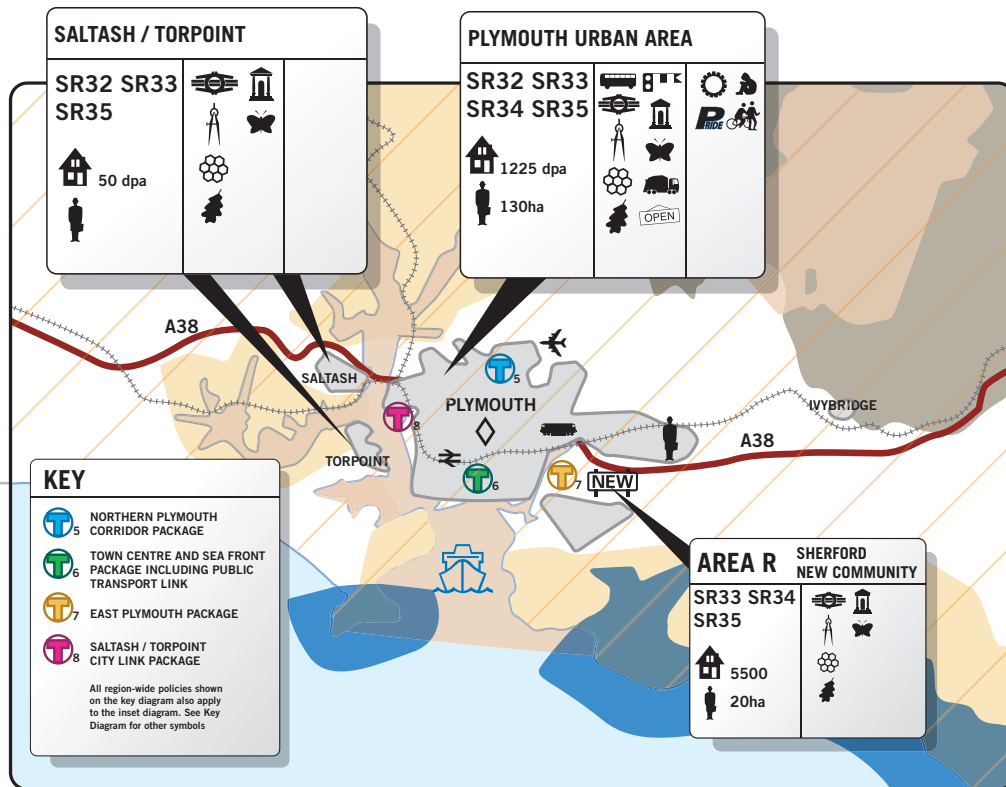
The south eastern part of the region has strong connections with areas further east, and this has a major effect on economic performance and the demand for residential accommodation. The South East Dorset Conurbation (Bournemouth-Christchurch-Poole), and the towns in the immediate hinterland, is the second largest urban concentration in the South West with university, airport and port facilities, and has witnessed significant growth in economic activity and housing provision over the last 20 years, although there are also serious shortages of affordable housing. Future change and growth of the conurbation is constrained by internationally important environmental assets which affect the scope for significant outward expansion of the urban area. The emphasis in this part of the region is upon managing growth carefully, maximising the potential

for development within the existing urban area by redevelopment, and using urban extensions where sustainable, bearing in mind the high level of constraint. The sub-regional policies for South East Dorset are **Policies SR25 to SR29**. About 680 to 780 dwellings a year are planned for Bournemouth, and about 485 to 535 dwellings a year are planned for Poole.

Other SSCTs in the South East of the Region

The role of other key centres such as Salisbury, Dorchester and Weymouth, and locally important market towns, needs to be maintained through balanced development, without increasing the need to travel for jobs and services. Their needs are covered in **Policies SR25, SR30 and SR31**.

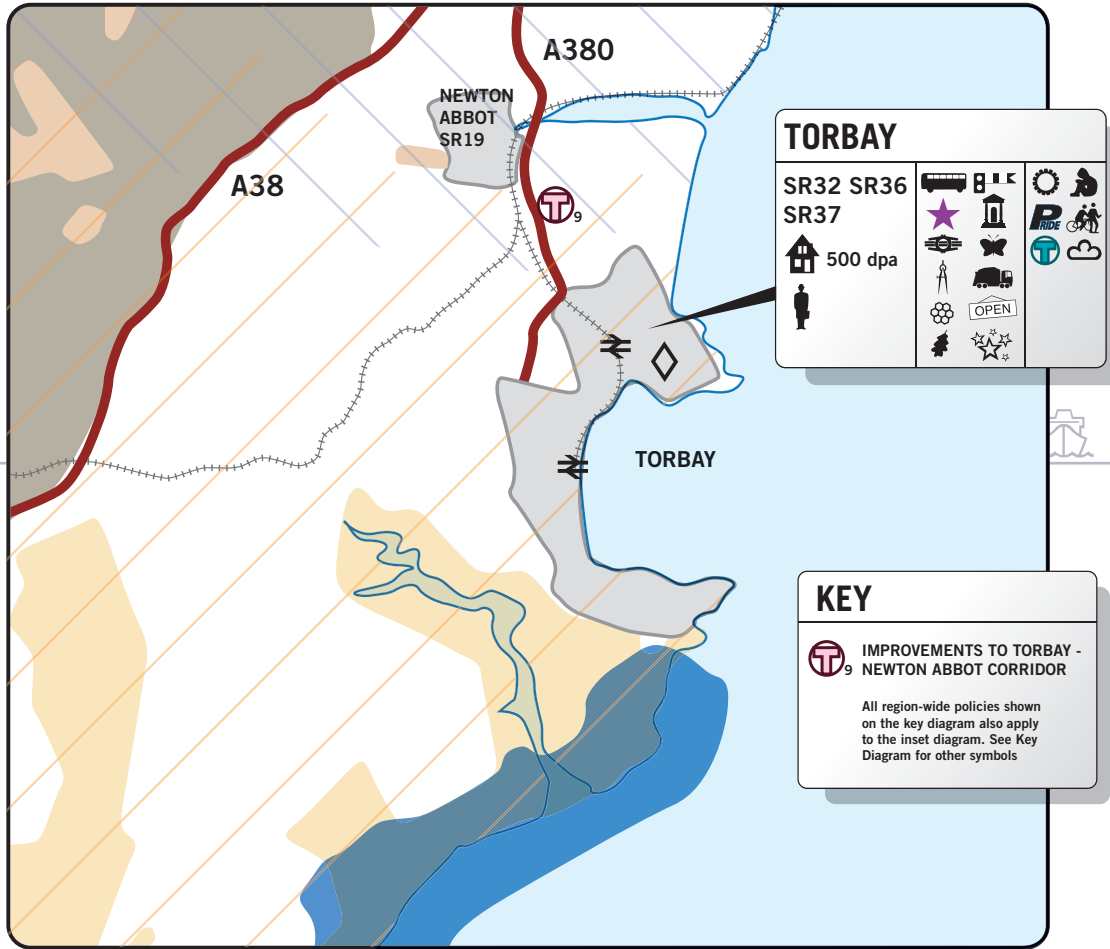




Plymouth, South East Cornwall and South West Devon Spatial Strategy

The Plymouth, South East Cornwall and South West Devon area is strategically located at the centre of the far South West, straddling the border between Devon and Cornwall. Plymouth, the region’s second city with university, port and airport facilities, lies at the heart of this area, being the main destination for employment opportunities, services, comparison shopping and leisure. The vision for Plymouth sees the City transformed into one of Europe’s finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, providing the highest order of educational, cultural, health and leisure services. The main strategic planning issue for the City is how best to stimulate economic potential, deliver a step change in employment, and bring about an improved quality of life for all residents. Plymouth has the potential to accommodate the majority of development within the existing urban area. However, it will not be possible to realise the full potential of the existing urban area until the latter part of the period to 2026, but additional housing and economic development can be provided for early in the plan period through an already planned urban extension to the east of the City at Sherford. The sub-regional policies for Plymouth, South East Cornwall and South West Devon are **Policies SR32 to SR35**. About 1,575 dwellings a year are planned for Plymouth.

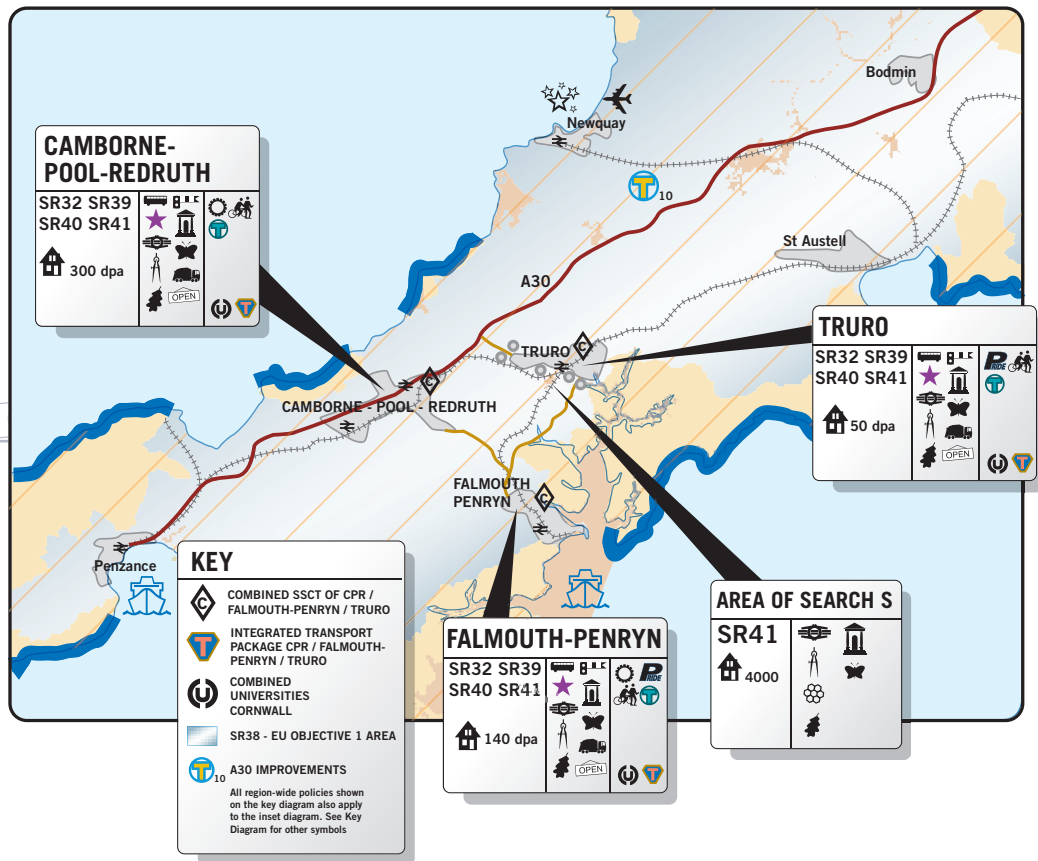
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Torbay Spatial Strategy

Torquay, Paignton and Brixham – collectively described as Torbay - and its sphere of influence, extends beyond the administrative boundary of Torbay itself. The strategy for Torbay is to provide for economic development within the urban area, stimulating economic performance, attracting a younger population to address the imbalance in existing demographics, and encourage greater investment in the physical fabric. Proposals to reduce deprivation and disparities, increase income levels, deliver affordable housing and a retail performance that reflects the size of the population, are all essential to deliver a step change in performance. The sub-regional policies for Torbay are **Policies SR32, SR36 and SR37**. About 500 dwellings a year are planned for Torbay.





Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Spatial Strategy

Most of Cornwall, unlike anywhere else in the region, is beyond the influence of a larger urban area with all the main towns making an important contribution to sustainable development, including those not named directly in the Draft RSS. The Cornwall Towns Study recognised this issue and concluded that, although there are strong inter-relationships between many of the settlements across Cornwall, Camborne-Pool-Redruth, Truro and Falmouth-Penryn are functionally the most significant, providing the largest employment, retail and housing capacity opportunities, and the ‘Combined Universities’ in Cornwall. These towns are the main focus for growth in this part of the region, and there is a need to plan for their complementary development in an integrated way. It will be important that development focussed on these main towns enables sustainable prosperity and growth to be achieved through this

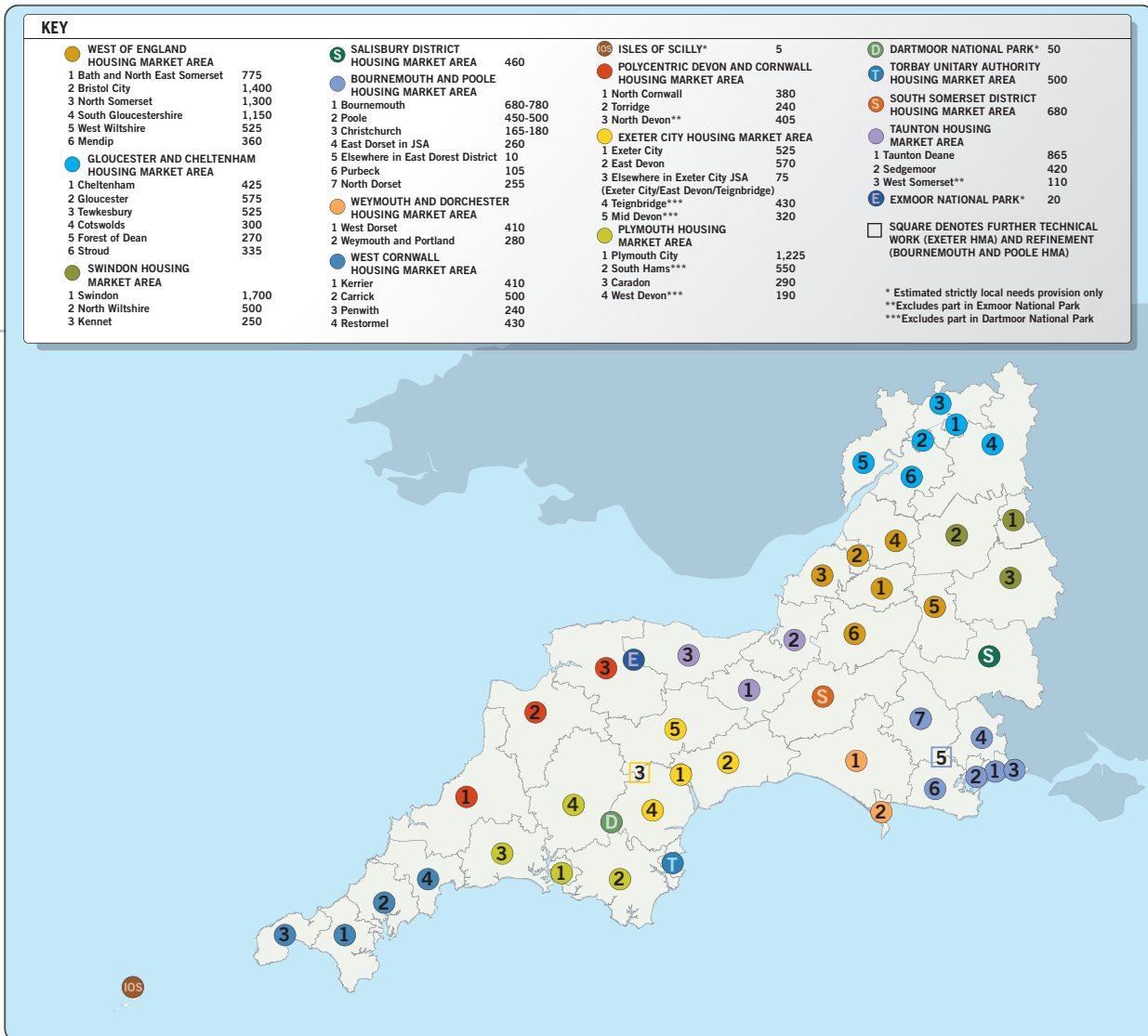
part of the region, building on the benefits of European funding and Objective 1 status. In the longer-term, the availability of external support is less certain, and the development approach should aim to result in an economy which is self-sustaining in the longer-term. An urban extension to Truro will be required. The sub-regional policies for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are **Policies SR32, SR38, SR39, SR40, SR41 and SR42**. About 690 dwellings a year are planned for Camborne-Pool-Redruth, Falmouth-Penryn and Truro.

Other Places of Significance in the West of the Peninsula

Barnstaple has also been identified as an SSCT, and its future development is covered in **Policy SR43**. About 240 dwellings a year are planned for Barnstaple.



Housing Distribution - Housing Market Areas, Unitary Authorities and Districts



The Draft RSS sets out the broad distribution of housing for the region. Forecasts suggest that over the period 2020 to 2026, about 80% of new jobs will be created in the SSCTs, so a high percentage of new accommodation will be provided there. Affordable housing requires urgent attention across the region, and targets for provision will be set after local housing market assessments have been made. **Policies HD1 and HD2** cover the allocation and distribution of housing provision, and require joint working on the basis of Housing Market Areas (HMAs) to ensure delivery.

Regional Approach to Transport

The Draft RSS includes the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and a set of transport policies to deliver the overall Strategy. Transport related policies are not confined to Section 5, but are integrated into other Sections of the document. The region's overall priorities for investment to secure transport outcomes are included in Section 3, with more specific priorities set out in Section 4 and the Implementation Plan.

Supporting the Spatial Strategy

Transport is a key component of delivering the new Spatial Strategy and its main development proposals. Planning development carefully can have a noticeable effect on movement in the region, particularly by car and, in turn, can help reduce the rate of increase in greenhouse gas emissions, so reducing regional contributions to climate change as outlined in Section 1. Actually reducing the need to travel in the South West is a significant challenge given the geography of the region, its rural nature, and the predicted growth in both population and the economy.

To achieve the climate change targets in Section 1 will require investment in new technologies, as well as behavioural change. Improvements to network management will be required, as well as measures to encourage increased use of public transport, walking and cycling.

One of the key priorities to achieve sustainability, is to manage demand for travel in the SSCTs, in conjunction with public transport improvements, as set out in **Policy TR1**.



Providing Reliable Connections to the UK, European and International Markets

Reliable connections to London and the South East (and international markets beyond) have been identified as the most important transport factor affecting the performance of the regional economy. Selective investment in the strategic transport routes and networks serving the region, particularly the main links between the South West and the London area and the South East, is needed if the objectives of the Draft RSS and the strategy emphases are to be achieved. In particular, measures to maintain the reliability of journey times on the M4 and M5, including demand management, are required. The creation of a 'second strategic route', using the A303/A358, has already been identified as a priority.

The remainder of the trunk road network will be managed with targeted investment to ensure it provides safe, efficient operations, with reliable journey times in and out of the region. **Policies TR2 to TR4** deal with these issues.

To be consistent with regional and national climate change targets, long-term ambitions to reduce road traffic need to be achieved. Improvements in public transport services between the region and the rest of the UK will be important, since they can reduce the need to make long journeys by car. **Policies TR5 to TR6** address enhancement of the inter-regional rail, bus and coach networks.

Ports and Airports

Bristol is the largest of the ports in the South West. Plymouth and Poole are the main ferry ports, but others offer opportunities to develop specific freight markets. Opportunities to develop the markets of these ports are supported, especially where measures include improved rail access to enable more sustainable distribution.

Policies TR7 and TR8 deal with ports.

Airports within the region also support the regional economy, but the SSA highlights concerns about the broad sustainability implications of growth in air travel. In the context of national policy, the aim of the region's air strategy is to meet more of the South West's demand for air services within the region. Reduced journeys to airports outside the region, particularly road traffic to Heathrow and Gatwick, should deliver some sustainability benefits.

Policy TR9 deals with airports.

Regional Connectivity

Though reliable journey times within the region are important, better intra-regional links may sometimes lead to a growth in long distance commuting. This is one reason why the SSCTs all suffer, to varying degrees, from congestion. If the Draft RSS is to succeed, then the SSCTs need to function more efficiently and effectively, regardless of administrative boundaries. To secure travel reliability and improve sustainability, the Draft RSS identifies regionally significant road routes which provide vital transport corridors connecting the main urban centres. **Policy TR10** addresses regional connectivity, and **Policy TR11** supports improved intra-regional public transport.

Freight Transport

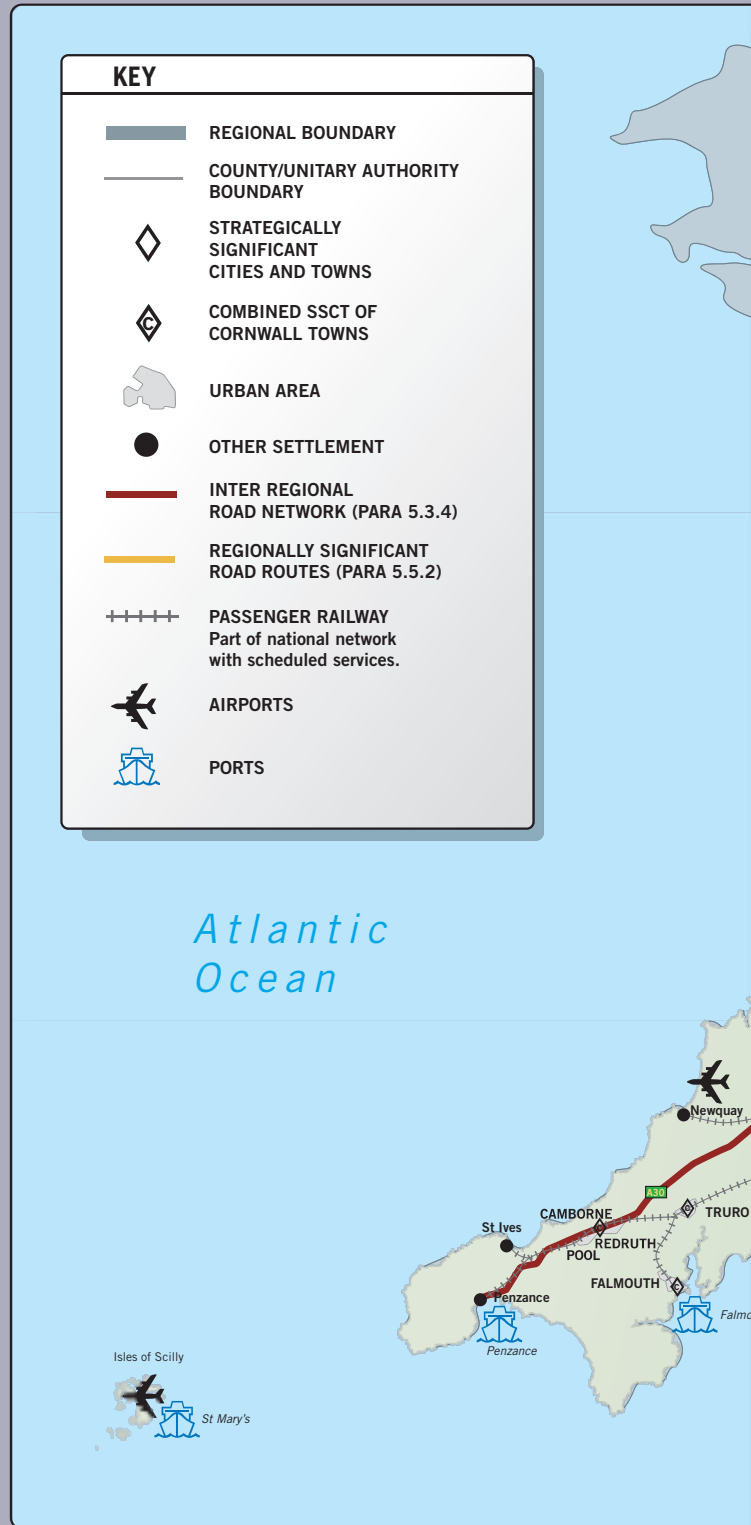
Much of the freight moved into and within the region is for distribution, rather than the result of manufacturing within the region. Mineral extraction and agriculture are, however, important features of the regional economy, both of which give rise to significant volumes of freight traffic. The Regional Freight Map (**Policy TR12**) identifies the strategic network for use by HGV vehicles. **Policy TR13** covers the provision of rail freight interchange facilities.

Parking

Local Transport Planning Authorities are required to develop and deliver accessibility strategies to suit their own areas. These should set out parking policies and standards.



South West Region Transport Network



2012



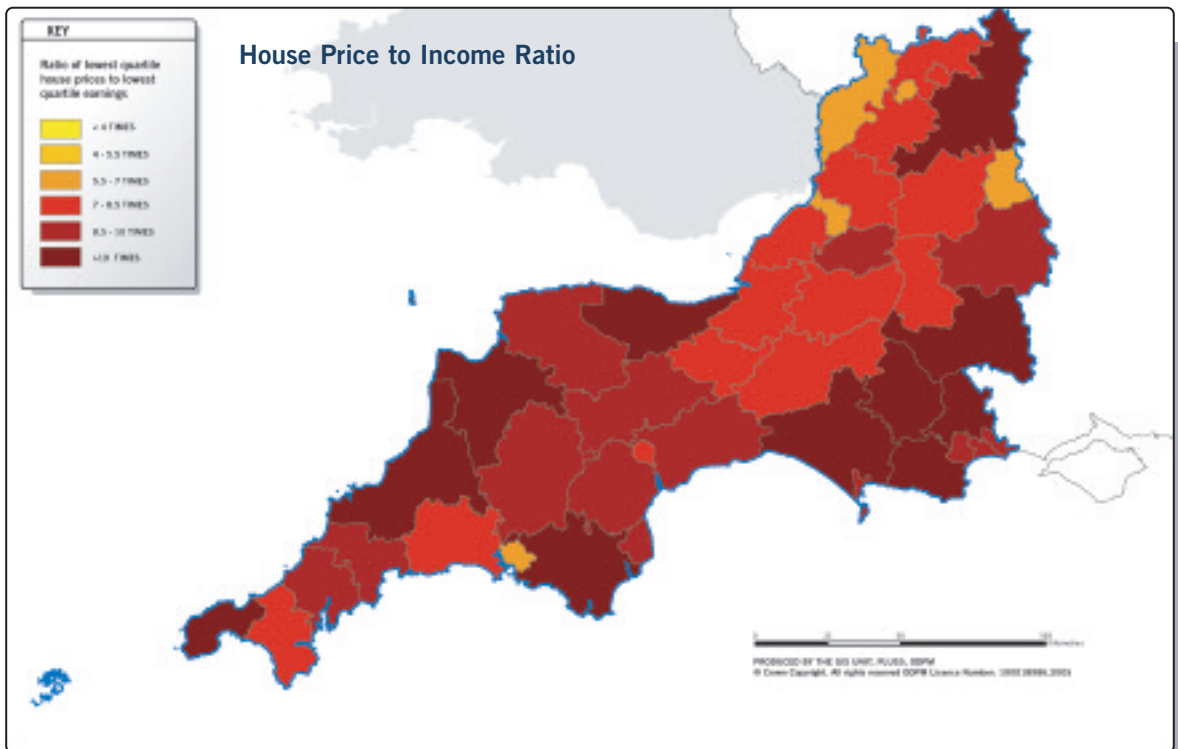


2012



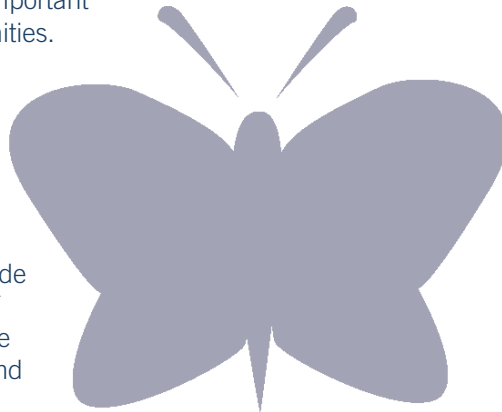
Harnessing The Benefits of Population Growth and Managing the Implications of Population Change

The Draft RSS supports the *'Just Connect!'* aim to harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change. Two key factors for this are plentiful and affordable housing, and good quality public services with



community infrastructure. This Section sets out an approach to delivering these two important ingredients of sustainable communities.

The Draft RSS reflects the *'South West Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) 2005-2016'*, which aims to improve the balance of the housing markets, achieve good quality homes and support sustainable communities. To provide a plentiful and affordable supply of housing there must be an adequate choice and mix of housing types and tenures in sustainable locations.





Affordable Housing and Housing Densities

Development values must be used effectively to deliver sufficient levels of affordable housing in addition to dwellings built, largely through public subsidy. Within the anticipated 23,000 new dwellings provided for each year, at least 7,500 should be affordable. Affordable housing includes all non-market housing provided to those whose needs are not met by the market. Authorities should aim to achieve at least 30%, and up to 60% or higher, of affordable units. Housing policy applied locally should include provision for homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households. To reduce impact on the environment, and help achieve more sustainable communities, housing densities should exceed 30 dwellings per hectare in all areas. Within SSCTs, this figure should be at least 50 dwellings per hectare and higher in well planned mixed-use developments. **Policies H1 and H2** define these requirements in detail.



Gypsies and Travellers

Transitional arrangements are set out in the Draft RSS to address the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, including the provision of an additional 1,100 pitches. More work is required to gather sufficient evidence to define the requirement for suitable pitches at a district level across the region. Indicative regional figures will serve as a monitoring basis during the interim stage until local authorities have completed their needs assessments. **Policy GT1** identifies the need for these detailed assessments to be carried out. An early review of the RSS on this topic will be carried out.

Providing Community Services

Services will need to be planned to accommodate growth, taking into account age, ethnicity and ability, as well as access to health, education, cultural

facilities and 'green infrastructure'². Local authorities will need to undertake assessments of need to ensure timely and sufficient provision. Services provided must be designed and constructed to the highest standards. **Policy CS1** sets out the specific requirements.

Planning for Healthcare

Adequate healthcare must continue to be made available to everyone in the region, regardless of where they live, or of their particular circumstances. Local authorities will need to work with healthcare providers to ensure plans for healthcare will complement plans for long-term development. Healthcare facilities should be accessible by public transport, by bicycle or on foot. All major development proposals should be subject to a Health Impact Assessment so as to clearly quantify the potential impacts on healthcare. **Policies HE1 to HE3** cover planning for healthcare.

Skills

LDDs and Local Transport Plans (LTPs) should be proactive in providing facilities and public transport links for skills training. **Policy SK1** deals with this issue.

Local Cultural Facilities and 'Green Infrastructure'

Locally important cultural facilities should be protected and enhanced with new provision delivered in response to local need. Additional cultural facilities will also need to be provided in step with major new development, particularly in mixed-use areas and large urban extensions at the SSCTs. Networks of 'green infrastructure' including parks, woodland and informal open spaces should be planned, protected, enhanced or extended to enhance the quality of life in the region. **Policies LCF1 and G11** set out the particular requirements for such vitally important infrastructure.

² Networks of green spaces such as parks, woodland, informal open spaces, nature reserves and historic sites.

Enhancing Distinctive Environments and Cultural Life

The Draft RSS supports the ‘Just Connect!’ aim to enhance our distinctive environments, and the quality and diversity of our cultural life. This includes cultural activity and infrastructure, natural environment (landscape, nature conservation, historic environment), the coast, flood risk, energy, water resources, land management, woodlands and forests, air quality, minerals and waste management.

Enhancing Cultural Activity and Developing the Regional Cultural Infrastructure

Culture has a ‘material’ aspect, which includes museums, parks and the built environment, but it also embraces a wide variety of activities, places, values and beliefs. It is primarily about people and the quality of life they enjoy. It has strong connections with economic innovation, renaissance, community well-being, health and learning. It also helps bind local communities together. There are a number of important cultural attractions in the region, but as important is the collective value of local cultural facilities and the critical role they can play in creating, maintaining and enhancing sustainable communities.

Policy C1 encourages increased participation in cultural activity in the region, and the enhancement of regional and sub-regional cultural infrastructure.

Protecting and Enhancing the Region’s Distinctive Environments

The South West has a wealth of natural and historic environmental assets which are key to providing the high quality of life that many of the region’s residents and visitors enjoy. The region has National Parks, World Heritage Sites, important listed buildings, protected wildlife sites, landscapes and coastlines, and a wide range of locally distinctive features. Whilst the growth and development proposed will result in changes to the environment, **Policy ENV1** aims to minimise negative impacts, setting priorities for preservation and enhancement of important sites. Where possible, development can contribute in a positive way to enhancing these assets.

Landscapes

The South West contains many well known landscapes that help to define the region. These, together with more locally distinctive examples are

identified using Landscape Character Assessments. **Policy ENV2** requires that the distinctive qualities and features of South West landscapes are sustained and enhanced and **Policy ENV3** deals specifically with Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks and the 14 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the region.

Nature Conservation

Many important species exist in the South West, from global to local significance. Whilst the extent of habitats has declined, there is much that can be done to maintain and enhance distinctive habitats and protect these sites and features from harmful development. **Policy ENV4** provides the framework for this protection and enhancement using Nature Map and Biodiversity Action Plans.

Historic Environment

The rich and distinctive historic environment of the South West is a key asset. **Policy ENV5** sets out the way in which local authorities and other partners will be expected to manage the historic environments in their areas sensitively.

The Coast

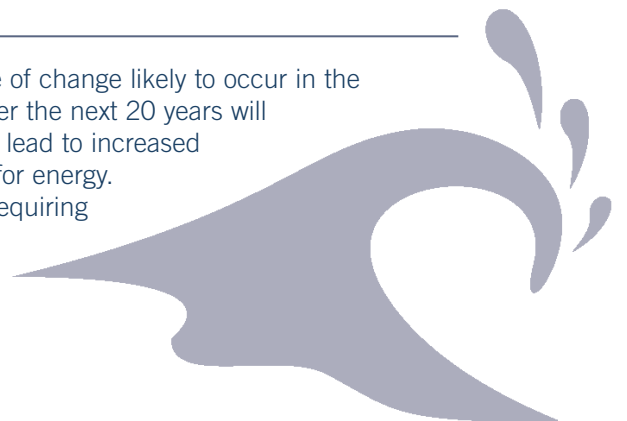
Policies CO1 and CO2 deal with planning in the coastal zone, particularly protection of the undeveloped coast. The risk of coastal and river floods will increase significantly over the plan period, and towns and cities around the region will need to adapt to this through appropriate coastal planning.

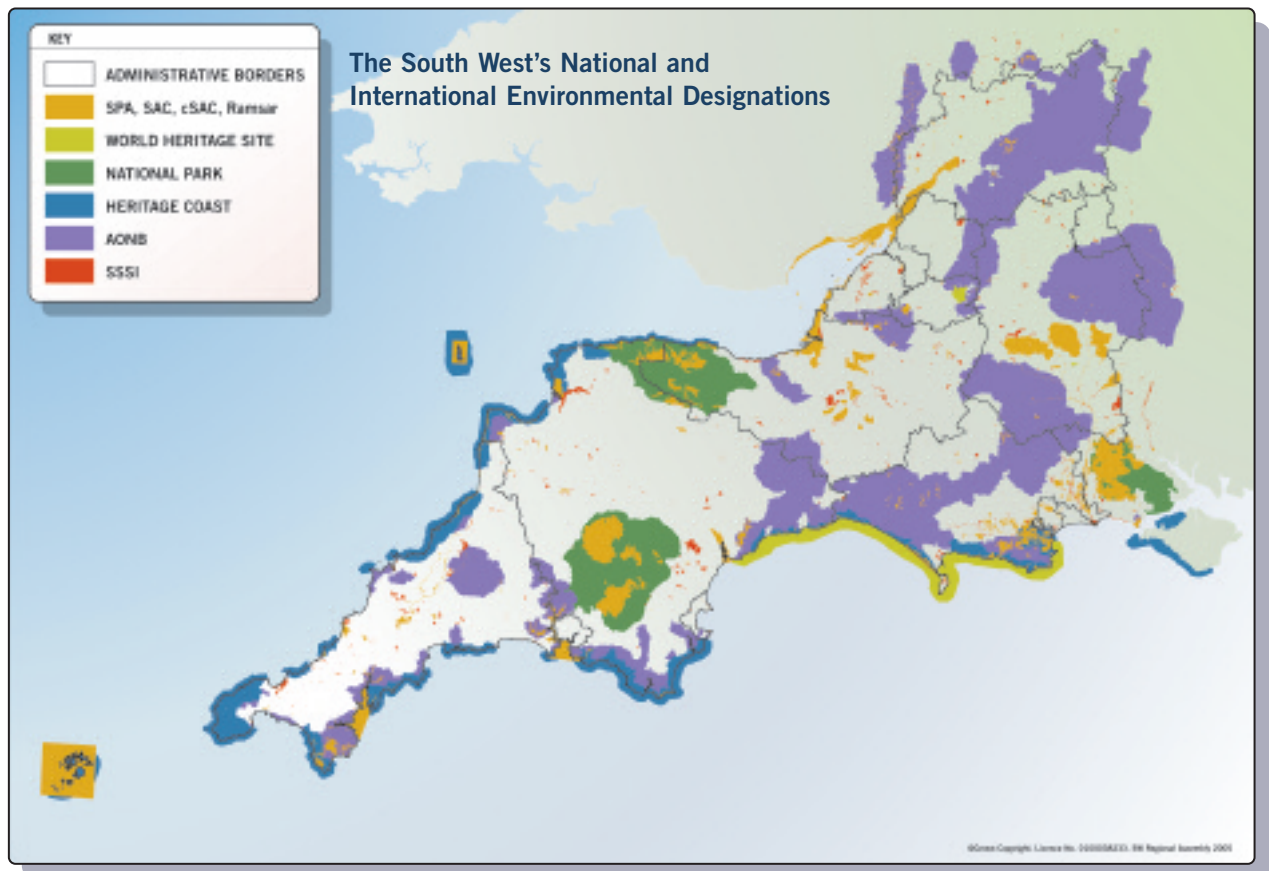
Flood Risk

The particular issues associated with existing and increasing flood risk are dealt with in **Policy F1**, which sets out specific priorities in terms of minimising the risk of increased flood risk arising from new development.

Energy

The scale of change likely to occur in the region over the next 20 years will inevitably lead to increased demand for energy. Policies requiring





sustainable construction in new development can make a major contribution to the challenge of minimising this increase in demand. **Policies RE1 to RE5** deal with renewable electricity, offshore energy, renewable heat and the development of new resources for renewable energy production.

Water Resources

The South West's consumption of water is not sustainable long-term at current levels. **Policy RE6** sets out how the region's networks of ground, surface and coastal waters will be protected and enhanced.

Sustainable Land Management and Woodlands and Forests

Policy RE7 requires an integrated approach to sustainable land management. The environmental, social and economic value of forests and their protection and enhancement is dealt with in **Policy RE8**.

Air Quality

The impact of development proposals on air quality is dealt with by **Policy RE9** which requires local authorities to take account of such impacts in their LDDs.

Minerals

Policies RE10 to RE12 set out details of the apportionment or proposed extraction of minerals, the safeguarding of mineral resources and maximising the use of recycled materials.

Waste Management

Policies W1 to W4 deal with the South West's approach to minimising the amount of waste produced in the region, making a shift away from landfill to more recycling and re-use and provides strategic guidance for the siting of new facilities. The issue of hazardous waste is also covered.



Enhancing Economic Prosperity and Quality of Employment Opportunity

The Draft RSS has been developed alongside the emerging Regional Economic Strategy (RES). Both documents reflect the '*Just Connect!*' aim of enhancing economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity, and have sustainable communities at their heart.

This Section of the Draft RSS will enable effective change on the ground, and guide and support implementation of RES priorities, including support of key business sectors, delivery of skills and support of business productivity.

Successful and competitive business organisations are an integral part of sustainable communities. The Draft RSS contains policies to enable all cities and towns to make the right level of contribution to the region's overall economic performance. The principal role of the Draft RSS is to ensure that there is a ready supply of suitable sites and buildings, that the transport system in the region is operating efficiently to reduce congestion levels, and that the supply of housing will enable the workforce to live closer to their place of work.

Assessing Provision and Identifying and Reviewing Employment Sites

Whatever the local requirements for business expansion and inward investment, local authorities will have to assess the need for an adequate and flexible supply of sites. The process of assessment and review needs to be carried out in partnership across administrative boundaries. **Policies E1 to E3** set out these requirements in detail. Detailed land requirements are not published for the region but, where advice has been given, it is included in Section 4.



Redevelopment of Employment Sites

A sequential test will be applied where sites no longer meet local or strategic economic needs. The test will require a number of development options to be considered, in order to determine the most appropriate alternative use. Waterside employment sites must be safeguarded for maritime industries, or other uses that require a waterside location. **Policies E4 and E5** establish these tests.

City and Town Centres

The South West has a number of cities and towns with nationally and regionally important centres. At present there is no requirement for further retail and office expansion in out-of-town locations. There is a need to improve accessibility to existing town centres and out-of-town facilities, especially by public transport, bicycle or on foot. Future development at SSCTs and larger towns should redress imbalances between service, employment and population, reflect their role and function, as well as the needs created by growth. Meeting the needs of local communities will need to be balanced with the need to ensure that the vitality and viability of town and city centres is maintained and enhanced. **Policy TC1** deals with these issues.

Tourism

Tourism is a key sector of the region’s economy. The region’s strategy for tourism identifies three priorities: sustainable tourism, increased quality and improved destination management. The South West’s

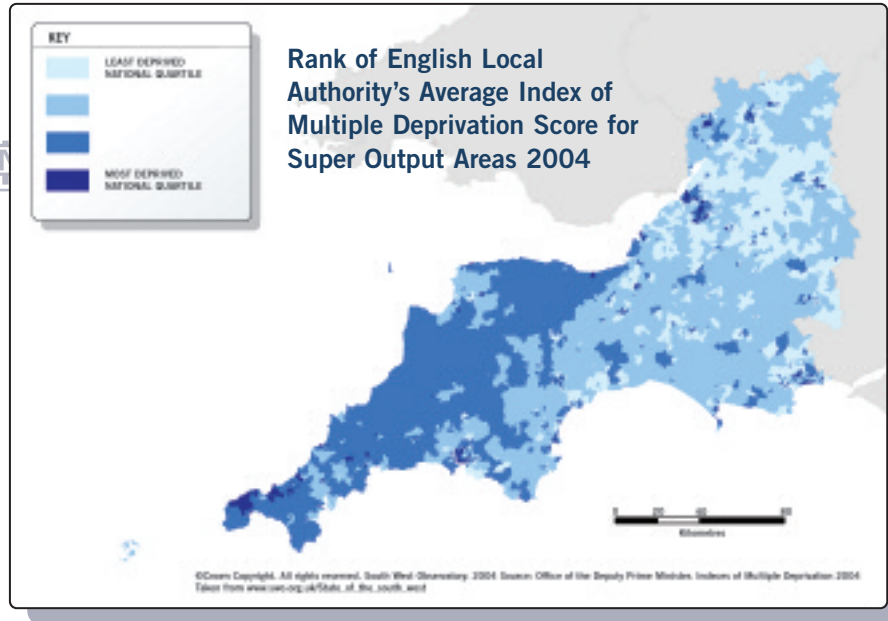
approach is to enhance the tourism ‘offer’ by investing in existing attractions and destinations, rather than investing in and promoting major new high profile (iconic) attractions. The Draft RSS aims to support the tourism strategy by encouraging investment in the provision, or improvement of tourism facilities where this leads to more sustainable tourism, and contributes to regeneration. Specific sites will need to be allocated for tourism-based uses and the necessary infrastructure provided in step with this development. **Policies T01 and T02** set out the approach to sustainable tourism.

Development of major new attractions will be supported where this will reduce pressure on other areas, ensure good accessibility, and allow complementary attractions to exist nearby, rather than creating competition. **Policy T03** covers such high quality, high profile attractions.

Casinos

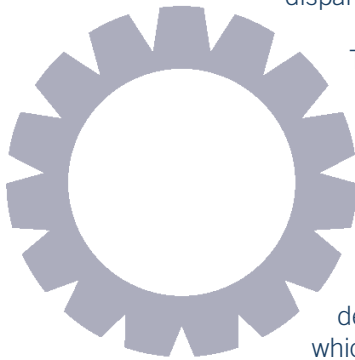
New casinos could be built in the region following introduction of the Gambling Act 2005. Regional and large casinos could become high profile visitor experiences and increase the region’s tourism offer. Recognising that there could be both positive and negative impacts of such facilities, new casinos should only be located in areas that have been identified through a thorough assessment of the impacts on local communities and the wider sub-region concerned. **Policy CA1** deals with casinos.





Addressing Deprivation and Disadvantage to Reduce Intra-Regional Inequalities

The Draft RSS supports the *'Just Connect!'* aim to tackle deprivation and disadvantage to reduce inequalities within the South West by setting out a Statement of Priorities that addresses economic disparity and inclusion.



The quality of life in the South West is generally high, but there are greater differences in living standards and quality of life between places within the region than there are between the South West as a whole and other UK regions. There are some locally significant pockets of deprivation and disadvantage, which may not register as significant in regional statistics. These smaller pockets should be identified and their problems addressed in LDDs. The South West performs relatively well in terms of overall deprivation, but seven local authorities are among the 100 most deprived in England.



Statement of Priorities

The Draft RSS sets out a Statement of Priorities for addressing deprivation and disadvantage which recognises that the problems must be tackled at many levels and by many different organisations working in partnership. The Statement concludes that investment and action must be focussed on economic development, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal, and urban and rural renaissance.



Ensuring People are Treated Fairly and can Participate in Society

In line with *'Just Connect!'*, the Draft RSS aims to ensure that people are treated fairly, and can participate fully in society, by addressing social exclusion and supporting equality and diversity.

Social Inclusion

Social exclusion can result when people or areas face a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor quality housing, high crime, poor health and family breakdown. The disparities described in Section 9 are felt disproportionately by groups that face discrimination. A key measure of success for the RSS will be to reduce the number of people in the South West suffering from deprivation and discrimination, and to improve the quality of life for those most vulnerable.

Consultation

Similarly, through consultation, the Draft RSS policies have been developed to be sensitive to the needs of different groups within the South West, so that all have the opportunity to benefit from rising prosperity and the benefits of change. This requires local authorities and other partners to promote and enhance understanding of the relationship between improving quality of life, social cohesion and

strengthening communities and economic performance in developing and implementing their plans and strategies. LDDs should set clear objectives, and determine priorities, to address equality and diversity issues, and to promote diversity of communities as a key regional asset.

Equality and Diversity

Policies in LDDs will need to recognise that various groups in society may be affected in different ways by development and change arising from them. One way to help ensure that steps are taken to mitigate the negative effects of this is to require policy makers to carry out Equality Impact Assessments at an early stage to try and ensure that all of society is able to benefit from improving prosperity and quality of life.

Policies SI1 and SI2 deal with these assessments and their implications.



Next Steps

Following consultation, there will be an Examination in Public (EiP) before an Independent Panel appointed by the Secretary of State. All consultation responses will be taken into account by the Panel and will be used to help determine the matters to be discussed at the EiP. Further details of the next steps and timetable are given on the SWRA's website (see back page).

Early June 2006

Publication of Draft RSS for consultation

Late August 2006

Closing date for consultation responses

Spring 2007

Examination in Public

Mid 2007

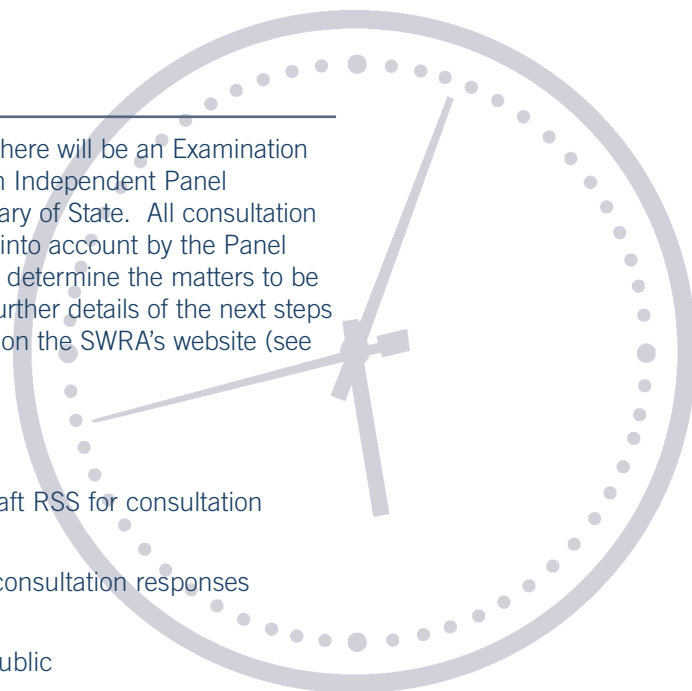
Publication of Panel Report

End 2007

Secretary of State issues proposed changes to the Draft RSS followed by an eight week consultation period

Early 2008

Revised RSS issued





Tewkesbury

CHELTENHAM

GLOUCESTER

Coleford Cinderford

Lydney

Stroud

Cirencester

SWINDON

BRISTOL

CHIPPENHAM

WESTON SUPER MARE

BATH

TROWBRIDGE

TAPLE

BRIDGWATER

SALISBURY

Wellington

TAUNTON

YEOVIL

Christchurch

EXETER

DORCHESTER

POOLE

BOURNEMOUTH

Newton Abbott

WEYMOUTH

TORBAY

English Channel

Consultation on the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West and Next Steps

The Draft RSS is open for a 12 week formal consultation period. Details of the consultation dates and how to respond are given in the letter accompanying this document. Please send your comments to the Panel Secretary, not the Regional Assembly.

Following consultation, there will be an Examination in Public (EiP) before an independent Panel appointed by the Secretary of State. All consultation responses will be taken into account and will be used to help determine the matters to be discussed at the EiP. It is the responsibility of the Panel to identify a list of matters and invite participants to attend the EiP. In general, the choice of participants will flow from the matters selected for examination. There is no automatic right to appear at the EiP. There will be an opportunity to comment on the list of matters and attendance at the EiP before these are finalised.

The Panel will prepare a report following the EiP, which will be sent to the Secretary of State and will be made publicly available. The Secretary of State will then issue proposed changes to the Draft RSS with a reasoned statement of the decisions. There will be a period of at least eight weeks to comment on the proposed changes. The Secretary of State will then approve and issue the revised RSS.

Getting your Copy

The full Draft RSS document, Implementation Plan, Strategic Sustainability Assessment Report, and Pre-submission Consultation Statement are available on the CD attached to this publication. They are also available from the South West Regional Assembly website: www.southwest-ra.gov.uk, along with the background technical documents.

Copies of the documents are available for inspection at the South West Regional Assembly's office during normal office hours, as well as main council offices and libraries across the region.

Further copies of the Executive Summary, including full copies of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy on CD, are available from the South West Regional Assembly. These can be requested from the Assembly at the contact details given below.

Additional copies of the full set of printed documents are available from the Assembly at the cost of £30.00 per set (plus p&p).

RSS Document Request
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Tel: 01823 270101

Fax: 01823 425200

Email: rss@southwest-ra.gov.uk

Online: www.southwest-ra.gov.uk



South West
England