



## Local Development Framework

### Core Strategy Development Plan Document

#### Issues and Options

### Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report Consultation Draft May 2008



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## How to Comment on this Report

If you think that the appraisal has missed anything, or if you would like to comment on any aspect of the report or its appendices, you can make your comments in the following ways:

- By emailing your comments to [planningLDF@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:planningLDF@southglos.gov.uk)
- By posting your comments to:

Spatial Planning Team  
Thornbury Council Offices  
Castle Street  
Thornbury  
South Gloucestershire  
BS35 1HF

Please ensure that we receive your comments by  
**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008.**

If you have any questions on this Initial SA Report, or the SA process in general, please telephone the Spatial Planning Team on 01454 863572, or email [planningLDF@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:planningLDF@southglos.gov.uk)

## **Non-Technical Summary**

1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA), the South Gloucestershire Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the South Gloucestershire Local Plan over time. The LDF will contain a portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs), one of which is the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD).

2 Under the PCPA, LDDs must undergo a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). SA involves the identification and evaluation of the LDD's impacts on economic, social and environmental objectives - the three dimensions of sustainable development. The SA process incorporates the requirements of a European law on the environmental assessment of plans (referred to as the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive').

### **Role and Function of the Core Strategy**

3 The Issues and Options document is the first stage in the production of the Core Strategy. The role of that document is to set out ideas about the issues and challenges facing South Gloucestershire and propose ways that the Core Strategy could address them. This includes work to develop visions for different areas of South Gloucestershire. As a spatial plan the Core Strategy will not just consider land use, but a comprehensive range of environmental, transport, economic and social issues as well. It will 'join-up' with plans and strategies of other organisations and agencies, as well as with those of South Gloucestershire Council, so that we are all working in the same direction. In particular, the Core Strategy will be closely integrated with the Sustainable Community Strategy and South Gloucestershire's Corporate Plan.

4 Government guidance in 2004 originally stated that Core Strategies should not allocate development sites. However, the Government has recently said that in some circumstances it would be desirable to allocate very large development sites in the Core Strategy. This has the advantage of bringing forward the delivery of these key sites quicker. Therefore South Gloucestershire's Core Strategy will allocate several major sites (the 'urban extensions'). The Issues and Options document sets out options for how these urban extensions could be developed and it is these options that have been appraised in this SA Report (see below for summary of findings).

5 Since the Core Strategy (Issues and Options) considers the broad spatial strategy at this stage, this initial appraisal is also broad in its findings and conclusions. This report appraised two of the main areas of work that the Issues and Options document contains. The findings are summarised below.

### **DPD Objectives Sustainability Appraisal**

6 The Issues and Options Document sets out a number of key 'themes' or issues to guide and inform the development of the future strategic policy framework of the Core Strategy. The Initial SA Report has appraised those themes (called objectives here for the purposes of this SA) for their

compatibility with the SA Objectives. It was found that in most cases the Core Strategy objectives were compatible with the SA Objectives, although in most cases the Core Strategy objectives are too broad in nature to appraise with any real accuracy and certainty. Their ultimate impact on sustainability will depend on the implementation of specific policies. Nevertheless, it is vital that objectives are able to lead to sustainable outcomes if the policies that follow them are to be sustainable. Some incompatibilities between the DPD objectives and several SA sub-objectives have been highlighted that will require careful policy formulation in order to mitigate or prevent possible negative future impacts on sustainability.

### **Urban Extensions options**

7 The Initial SA Report contains an appraisal of each of the two options set out for each of the Areas of Search as set out in the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the Examination in Public Panel Report:

1. North Fringe of Bristol (options for urban extensions at Cribbs Causeway/Filton and West of the M32)
2. The East Fringe of Bristol Urban Area (options for urban extension east of Kingswood)
3. Yate/Chipping Sodbury (options for urban extension)

8 The SA has found that given the scale of the development required by the Draft RSS Panel Report, the development of the urban extensions could have a large number of negative impacts on sustainability in the district and beyond, especially in terms of car usage, carbon emissions and impacts on landscape quality and biodiversity. Having said this, given the RSS requirements the SA cannot influence whether or not the urban extension development takes place or not, but it can help to decide which options are the most sustainable. A number of summarised advantages and disadvantages are set out for each of the options considered which will help to inform the drafting of the next stage of the Core Strategy.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment Requirements**

9 The Initial SA Report has appraised each of the options for the urban extensions, as well as the DPD objectives, as outlined above. However there are several other matters that are discussed in the Issues and Options document that have not yet been appraised as part of the SA process. This is because these matters, in their present state in the Issues and Options document, are too broad to allow them to be appraised with any worthwhile accuracy or certainty. These matters, such as the questions around development in rural areas, will be appraised later in the production of the Core Strategy when they have reached a more detailed stage in their drafting (i.e. the drafting of options), so that a more accurate appraisal can be made. Future SA Reports will ensure that all options have been adequately appraised in accord with SEA requirements.

# 1 Introduction

1.1 South Gloucestershire Council is preparing a set of planning policy documents for the District. These policies are being prepared in stages and, together, they will form the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF).

1.2 The first two key documents being prepared are the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Gypsy and Traveller DPD. Over time, it is intended that these documents will be complemented by additional documents, which will set out site allocations and policies for determining planning applications. Collectively, these DPDs will be the basis for decision-making on the use and management of land and the basis for delivery in accordance with Council Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy objectives.

1.3 Sustainability Appraisal has been introduced by the Government to ensure specific plans and policies (including those of the LDF) are prepared to accord with the principles of sustainable development. SAs incorporate the requirement of European Directive 2001/42/EC, to undergo a process known as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

1.4 The overall aim of the appraisal process is to ensure that the South Gloucestershire LDF, and the Local Development Documents (LDDs) it contains, makes an effective contribution to the pursuit of 'sustainable development'.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

### **Sustainable Development**

1.5 The term sustainable development originates from the Brundtland Commission Report of the World Commission of Environment and Development in 1987, which defined sustainable development as:

*"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".*

1.6 In order to promote sustainable development, the UK Government has developed a strategy for sustainable development that it uses to guide its own national policy development and implementation. This strategy, released in March 2005, sets out a number of guiding principles:

- Living within environmental limits;
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- Achieving a sustainable economy;
- Promoting good governance; and
- Using sound science responsibly

1.7 The UK Government's Sustainable Development Strategy further sets out a number of shared priorities for UK action. These are:

- Sustainable consumption and production;
- Climate change and energy;
- Natural resource protection and environmental management; and
- Sustainable communities.

1.8 In addition to the objectives set out in the Government's overarching Sustainable Development Strategy, Planning Policy Statement 1 ('PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development') also provides guidance on integrating sustainable development within the spatial planning system. In particular, PPS1 promotes urban and rural regeneration that:

- Promotes regional, sub-regional and local economies;
- Promotes communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free;
- Brings forward land of suitable quality in the right locations;
- Gives high priority to ensuring access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities; and
- Promotes a more efficient use of land.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

1.9 Under the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (known as the 'SEA Directive') Local Authorities are required to carry out, in almost all cases, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the LDDs that make up their LDF.

1.10 The purpose of SEA is to consider issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage and landscape, and to determine how the Council's policies and proposals in the LDF could influence each of these.

1.11 By considering these issues in detail, SEA seeks to ensure that environmental considerations are fully integrated in the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

1.12 Whilst SEA focuses on environmental issues, Sustainability Appraisal (SA) widens the approach to also include social and economic issues. The purpose of SA is to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are taken fully into account when preparing the LDDs that form the LDF.

1.13 The SA process has been designed so that, by carrying out one appraisal process, Local Authorities can also satisfy the requirements of the SEA Directive. Therefore, it should be taken that where this report refers to the SA process it also incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.

1.14 The process of SA requires an examination of the state of South Gloucestershire as it is today and the identification of key issues that could affect the future sustainability of the District. Using this information, sustainability objectives are then developed, against which the draft policies and proposals of the LDF will be assessed in order to ensure that they best achieve the sustainability objectives. The SA LDF Scoping Report (available separately), which was approved by the Council in March 2008, sets out this work and should therefore be read in conjunction with this Initial SA Report.

1.15 The SA will also put in place a framework to monitor such policies and proposals once in operation, in order to ensure that they are working in a way that accord with sustainability objectives. This will enable future amendments to be made to policies as necessary.

### **The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (the RSS)**

1.16 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS) will set out the broad development strategy for the region over the next 15-20 years. The Draft RSS was the subject of an Examination in Public in Spring/Summer 2007 and the report from the externally appointed examining panel was published in January 2008 (the EiP Panel Report). This has recommended that South Gloucestershire should accommodate 30,800 new dwellings over the period 2006-2026. South Gloucestershire Council does not agree with this level of growth and many of the other recommendations in the Panel's Report, which it is considered are not wholly in conformity with the Sustainable Community Strategy and our stakeholder concerns. The Council and many other organisations will be making formal representations to the emerging RSS when the Government publishes their Proposed Modifications later in 2008.

### **The South Gloucestershire Core Strategy**

1.17 The Core Strategy DPD, once adopted, will set out the overall strategy for the future development of South Gloucestershire. It will be set against the policy context of the RSS, South Gloucestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy and stakeholder input.

1.18 South Gloucestershire has seen a high level of development over the past twenty five years since the mid 1980s: between 1985 and 2008 approximately 29,600 dwellings have been built in the district; and between 1981 and 2005 the number of jobs has risen by approximately 83,000 (sources: South Gloucestershire Council, Avon County Council Statistics and the National on-line Manpower Information Service). The quantum of future development set out by the RSS for South Gloucestershire over the period up to 2026 is an approximate continuation of this level of growth.

1.19 The RSS's higher-level spatial policy framework has set out that approaching half of this development should be contained within urban extensions to the Bristol urban area, with the rest being located at existing settlements. The high level of growth identified cannot be met on previously developed land alone, therefore it is necessary for the urban extensions to be located on greenfield land.

1.20 The Core Strategy will therefore set out boundaries and general development requirements for the urban extensions and will identify those towns/villages where some further development will be sustainable.

1.21 The first stage of producing any DPD is to produce the 'Issues and Options' document. This document is not designed to put forward any firm proposals for development but instead sets out what the main issues are that face South Gloucestershire and what options might exist to tackle those issues. The Issues and Options document sets out options for the location and general form of the urban extensions, as well as options for the accommodation of growth at existing settlements.

## **Aim of this Initial SA Report**

1.22 This report constitutes an 'initial' SA Report for South Gloucestershire's Core Strategy DPD Issues and Options document. It is being published for consultation to provide the public and statutory bodies with an opportunity to express their opinions on it. This SA Report compliments the Issues and Options document.

1.23 This Initial SA Report appraises the DPD objectives (or 'themes') that are set out in the Issues and Options document as well as each of the options for the urban extensions.

1.24 It is important to note that many of the principles included in the Issues and Options document, such as the level of growth and broad locations for development, are set by the RSS. Therefore the SA process for the Core Strategy cannot re-visit nor appraise the sustainability of these principles. While South Gloucestershire Council does have grave concerns regarding the sustainability of many of the principles set out in the RSS and the Panel Report, the SA process is bound by these parameters.

1.25 Given the strategic nature of the Core Strategy and the initial stage of work that has thus far been reached, and consequently the strategic nature of the objectives and various approaches, the appraisal work is inevitably 'broad brush'. It has not, at this stage, taken into account the detailed implications of different possible policy approaches as these have not been formulated. However, the appraisal work is a useful tool in highlighting where more detailed work is required on the various options at the next stage of the development of the Core Strategy, as well as identifying the potential sustainability implications of the options that may need to be addressed through more detailed policy.

1.26 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is not to identify the best options. Sustainability Appraisal is a tool to be used during the preparation of a plan to inform the decision making process and ensure that sustainability considerations are taken fully into account.

1.27 Further Sustainability Appraisal work will be undertaken in conjunction with the development of the next stage of the Core Strategy, including predicting and evaluating the effects of the various issue approaches in more detail.

## 2 SA Methodology and SEA Requirements

2.1 The SA process is typically conducted in two stages: the first being the ‘Scoping’ stage (stage A); and the second (stage B) being the actual appraisal stage (see table below).

**Table 1: Stages of the SA process**

<b>Stages and Tasks of the SA process, as set out by ODPM SA Guidance, 2005</b>
<b>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding the scope</b>
A1: Identifying other relevant plans, programmes, and sustainability objectives
A2: Collecting baseline information
A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems
A4: Developing the SA Framework
A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA
<b>Stage B: Develop options and policies, taking account of assessed effects and developing the draft DPD</b>
B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA Framework
B2: Developing the DPD options
B3: Predicting the effects of the DPD
B4: Evaluating the effects of the DPD
B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects
B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPD
<b>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Report</b>
C1: Preparing the SA Report
<b>Stage D: Consulting on the Preferred Options of the DPD and the SA Report</b>
D1: Consulting on the Preferred Options and the SA Report

2.2 Stage A of the SA process was conducted by the Council in 2007 and early 2008. The output of Stage A is the production of a ‘Scoping Report’ that sets out the results of tasks A1 to A5 in the table above. South Gloucestershire’s Scoping Report was subject to statutory public consultation in November and December 2007 and was subsequently updated and approved by the Council on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008. As a result of the consultation some of the SA Objectives were refined, together with other parts of the Scoping Report.

2.3 South Gloucestershire’s Scoping Report (available separately) acts as the Scoping Report for all Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents being produced by the Council as part of the Local Development Framework. One of the main outcomes of the Scoping Report stage is the development of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. This is a set of SA Objectives that are linked to targets, the achievement of which can be measured by specified indicators. The SA Framework for South Gloucestershire is shown in Appendix 6: the objectives and sub-objectives in the table are what have been used to appraise and develop the options and objectives contained in the Issues and Options document.

## Next Stages beyond the Initial SA Report

2.4 The imminent new PPS12 has indicated that Local Authorities will not need to produce a SA Report until a DPD is submitted for examination, at which point the SA Report is also submitted. South Gloucestershire Council has however thought it helpful to produce this Initial SA Report so that the processes used in appraising the options for the Core Strategy DPD are open to public scrutiny at the very earliest opportunity. As only an early stage has been reached thus far in the production of the Core Strategy, this initial SA Report summarises that work completed so far: Stages B1 (testing the DPD objectives against the SA Framework) and B2 (developing the DPD options).

2.5 The reason for this is that the Core Strategy Issues and Options document, in terms of that which is appraisable, sets out the proposed DPD objectives and a number of initial non-detailed options for how growth identified by the RSS Panel Report could be achieved as sustainably as possible. Because the DPD work is still at an early stage, similarly the SA process has only reached an early stage of its production.

## SEA Requirements

2.6 The table below sets out how each of the SEA requirements, as set out in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations), have been satisfied so far in the SA process (including at the Scoping Report stage). Certain items in the schedule have not yet been fully satisfied due to the early stage in the production of the Core Strategy. Subsequent SA Reports (which when complete will cumulatively form the 'Environmental Report' as required under the SEA Regulations) will ensure that all SEA requirements are fulfilled.

<b>SEA Environmental Report requirement</b>	<b>Where complied with so far in the SA process</b>
Schedule 2, Item 1: <i>An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.</i>	An outline of the contents and purpose of the Core Strategy is given in the Scoping Report (approved March 2008, available separately) and in the Draft Initial SA Report.  The relationship with other plans and programmes was examined in the Scoping Report.
Schedule 2, Item 2: <i>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.</i>	Given in the Scoping Report in the form of baseline data and written description.
Schedule 2, Item 3:	As for item 2 above. In addition, the

<p><i>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.</i></p>	<p>Draft Initial SA Report sets out detailed constraints maps (including landscape, flooding and biodiversity constraints) of the Draft RSS Areas of Search as well as written description and photograph analysis of those areas.</p>
<p>Schedule 2, Item 4: <i>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds [10] and the Habitats Directive.</i></p>	<p>As for Item 3 above. Appropriate Assessment for Severnside area addressed in Scoping Report – any required AA will be reported through future SA Reports. The Council will also undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which will be reported through future SA Reports.</p>
<p>Schedule 2, Item 5: <i>The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.</i></p>	<p>See Item 1 re Scoping Report. The Scoping Report sets out the relevant objectives of the plans and programmes reviewed, which contributed to the formulation of the SA Framework, which in turn is used to appraise the options in the Draft Initial SA Report.</p>
<p>Schedule 2, Item 6: <i>The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as –</i> <i>(a) biodiversity;</i> <i>(b) population;</i> <i>(c) human health;</i> <i>(d) fauna;</i> <i>(e) flora;</i> <i>(f) soil;</i> <i>(g) water;</i> <i>(h) air;</i> <i>(i) climatic factors;</i> <i>(j) material assets;</i> <i>(k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage;</i> <i>(l) landscape; and</i> <i>(m) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l).</i></p>	<p>Present in the Draft Initial SA Report, where the DPD objectives and the I&amp;O urban extension options have been appraised against the SA Framework. The SA Framework is demonstrated to have covered each of the issues (a to l) in the Scoping Report. Work to support the Core Strategy, for example the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the open space, sport and recreation audit, will help inform the production of the Core Strategy and the SA/SEA process.</p>
<p>Schedule 2, Item 7: <i>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or</i></p>	<p>Not yet fully complied with. The appraisals of the urban extensions do include some envisaged measure. However this will receive more attention in later stages of the SA work as options</p>

<i>programme.</i>	become more detailed (this is in accordance with Article 3 (b, c and d) of the SEA regulations).
Schedule 2, Item 8: <i>An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.</i>	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with will be compiled with in the SA Reports produced at the Core Strategy Preferred Options and/or Submission stages.  The second part re difficulties is addressed in the Draft Initial SA Report, e.g. the early stage and broadness of the options has lead to commensurate broadness in the SA work undertaken thus far.
Schedule 2, Item 9: <i>A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.</i>	The SA Framework (as set out in the Scoping Report) sets out the indicators that will be used to measure progress against the SA objectives through future Council Annual Monitoring Reports.
Schedule 2, Item 10: <i>A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.</i>	Covered in the summaries of the Scoping Report and the Draft Initial SA Report.

### **Options in the Issues and Options document not appraised in the Initial SA Report**

2.7 This Initial SA Report appraises the draft DPD Objectives (referred to as 'themes' in the Issues and Options document) and each of the options for the urban extensions to the Bristol urban area and Yate/Chipping Sodbury as required by the Draft RSS and Panel Report. However there are other matters set out in the Issues and Options document, such as the questions relating to how policies for future development in rural areas could develop, which have not been appraised at this stage. This is due to the stage of production that these matters have reached so far in producing the Core Strategy. Article 12, Item 3, (b), (c) and (d) of the SEA Regulations refer to the Environmental Report containing (*inter alia*) suitable information taking into account the level of detail in the plan, the stage that the plan has reached in the decision-making process, as well as the extent to which certain items are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making (i.e. plan-making) process. On the basis of these requirements, any matters contained within the Issues and Options document that have not been appraised as part of this Initial SA Report, have not been included in the appraisal due to their broad nature at this stage, which makes effective and useful appraisal/assessment difficult. Subsequent DPD production stages will see these matters developing into options and it will be at these stages that those options are appraised in line with SEA regulations and the findings

detailed and subject to consultation in subsequent SA Reports at the Core Strategy Preferred Options and Submission stages.

### **Update to Baseline Data**

2.8 It is important that the Scoping Report should be reviewed and kept up to date on a regular basis. This can be achieved by new and updated relevant information being presented in SA Reports. This in effect acts as an update to the Scoping Report so it can be assured that the SA process is conducted with the most up to date baseline information available to inform the appraisal.

2.9 A set of 'settlement profiles' has been included at Appendix 7. The Council has produced these profiles in order to inform the future production of Core Strategy policies relating to existing settlements in the district and for justification for any subsequent policies. The profiles have been published as part of this SA Report in order to update current baseline data. Future SA Reports will conduct appraisals of policies and objectives that draw on these profiles.

2.10 In preparing this work, all Community Profiles have been consulted on with relevant Town and Parish Councils between October 2007 and April 2008. A total of 31 responses were received from Town and Parish Councils through this consultation process. A number of factual amendments have been made as a result, whilst other more subjective comments have been acknowledged and will be used to inform the main Core Strategy document. The profiles are now undergoing further consultation through the Core Strategy Issues and Options SA process.

## **Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects**

### **Difficulties encountered during the appraisal process**

2.11 The main difficulty encountered throughout the appraisal work conducted so far as part of this Initial SA Report has been the strategic nature and early stage of Core Strategy Issues and Options work that has been appraised. The options and objectives presented in the Issues and Options document are all relatively 'broad-brush' and strategic in approach (correctly so due to the early production stage), making it difficult to appraise in any detail the likely sustainability impacts. For the majority of the options/objectives presented, the impacts on sustainability will depend on the form of more specific policies that will be included in subsequent stages of the DPD production process, together with information contained in future Supplementary Planning Documents, Development Briefs, etc. The impacts on sustainability will also depend not just on the form of more specific policies, but on how those policies are implemented at the Development Control stage.

2.12 Much of the appraisal work presented here offers advice on the most sustainable form of future policy development. This appraisal work will be used to inform the production of the subsequent stages of the Core Strategy.

### **Defining significance of effects**

2.13 The SEA Directive requires that it is the likely significant effects of objectives and options that are appraised. In order to determine whether the effect of an option or objective is significant or not, a number of issues have been taken into account as detailed in the SEA Regulations:

- Whether the effect is likely to be permanent or temporary.
- The likelihood of the effect occurring.
- The scale of the effect (e.g. whether it will affect one location or a wide area).
- Whether it will combine with the effects of other policies and proposals to generate a cumulative effect greater than the effect of each individual policy or proposal.
- Whether there are policies elsewhere in the draft RSS, or at a national level, that will help to mitigate adverse effects occurring or support positive effects.
- The current status and trends in the environmental, social and economic baseline or characteristics of the area affected.
- Whether it is likely to affect particularly sensitive locations (e.g. landscapes, communities, habitats, historic buildings, particularly those that are designated at the international or national level) or mean that thresholds might be breached (e.g. air quality standards).
- The significance the pitch requirement would have on the future dwelling requirement for the authorities.

### **3 Task B1: Testing the DPD Objectives against the SA Framework**

3.1 The objectives of the DPD set out what it is aiming to achieve in spatial planning terms and set the context for development of policy framework options for the DPD. The objectives that are set out in the South Gloucestershire Issues and Options document are based around the issues facing the district. This means that the objectives are directly related to dealing with the individual needs of South Gloucestershire. The issues have been based on how the Council views what the main challenges are that are facing the district, together with community engagement/frontloading that has helped to shape them further. Through the Issues and Options consultation the objectives may be adapted/changed, in which case they will be re-appraised in the next SA stage.

3.2 It is important for the objectives of the DPD to be in accordance with sustainability principles and therefore the objectives should be tested for compatibility with the SA objectives.

3.3 The table on the following page shows an appraisal matrix of the DPD objectives set out in the Issues and Options document and how each objective impacts on another.

		Improve Health			Support Communities that meet people's needs				Develop the economy in ways that meet people's needs					Provide access to meet people's needs with least damage to communities and the environment					Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets					Minimise consumption of natural resources							
		1.1 Improve health	1.2 Reduce health inequalities	1.3 Promote healthy lifestyles	2.1 Housing availability and affordability	2.2 Access to learning, training, skills and knowledge	2.3 Reduce crime and fear of crime	2.4 Promote Stronger/vibrant communities	2.5 Cultural Activities	3.1 Access to satisfying work	3.2 Comfortable standard of living	3.3 Reduce poverty and income inequality	3.4 Meet needs locally	3.5 Increase the circulation of wealth in the area	3.6 Reduce the vulnerability of the economy to climate change	4.1 Increase choice of method of travel	4.2 Reduce need/desire to travel by air	4.3 Access to basic services	4.4 Promote sustainable transport	4.5 Transport freight by rail/water not road	5.1 Protect and enhance species and habitats	5.2 Promote the conservation and wise use of land	5.3 Protect and enhance landscape and townscape	5.4 Value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness	5.5 Maintain and enhance cultural and historical assets	5.6 Reduce vulnerability to flooding and sea level rise	6.1 Reduce non-renewable energy consumption and greenhouse emissions	6.2 Keep water consumption within local carrying capacity limits	6.3 Minimise consumption and extraction of minerals	6.4 Reduce waste not put to any use	6.5 Minimise all forms of pollution
DPD Objectives	Delivering growth	?	?	?	√√	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	x	?	?	?	?	?	x	?	?	?	?	?
	Improving existing communities	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	o	√	?	√	√	o	o	√	√	√	√	o	?	?	?	?	?	
	Tackling congestion and improve accessibility	√	√	√	o	√	√	√	√	?	?	?	√√	?	o	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√√	o	√	o	√√	
	Continued economic prosperity	√	?	?	√	√	√	√	√	√√	√√	√√	?	√√	√√	?	?	√	√	?	?	?	?	√	√	x	?	?	?	?	x
	Providing housing for all	√	√	o	√√	√	o	√	o	?	√	√	√	o	o	?	o	?	?	o	x	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Environmental protection and enhancement	√	√	√	o	o	√√	√√	√	√	o	o	√	o	√	√	√	√	o	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	o	√	√	
	Improve health and well-being	√√	√√	√√	o	o	o	√	o	o	o	√	√	o	o	√	o	√	√	o	o	o	√	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	√
	Reduce and adapt to climate change	√	o	√	?	?	√	√	o	?	?	?	√	o	√√	√	√	√	√	√	o	o	o	o	o	√	√	√	√	√	√

√√ = Major positive effect  
√ = Positive effect  
x = Negative effect

xx = Major negative effect  
o = not applicable

? = Effect unknown/depends on implementation of policy  
- = Both positive and negative effects

3.4 The matrix on the previous page gives a summary of the likely effects of the DPD objectives on the SA sub-objectives. The following table expands on that appraisal and gives an explanation of the likely effects and the reasoning for the scores given.

DPD Objective Vs SA Objective	Comments and Recommendations
<b>DPD Objective 1: Delivering Growth Vs. ...</b>	
Improve Health	Depends on specific policies and implementation. Risk of large amount of housing growth resulting in increased traffic congestion and localised levels of pollution increasing respiratory ill health. Developments will need to be designed to encourage active travel to reduce obesity. Housing will need to be properly integrated with health, leisure and other facilities, to enable vibrant neighbourhoods that reduce monotony and encourage walking and allow non-discriminatory access to healthcare.
Support communities that meet people's needs	Depends on specific policies and implementation. Provides an excellent opportunity to meet local housing need, however the proper planning and provision of all types of related infrastructure and facilities, together with good design and urban design, will determine true wider success against this SA Objective in the longer term.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people's needs	Housing growth will need to be well integrated with sources of employment if residents are to have easy access to work opportunities. A diverse range of employment opportunities combined with a well-planned infrastructure is also essential. Provide a balance between jobs and housing in all areas.
Provide access to meet people's needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Growth provides an opportunity for improving accessibility in South Gloucestershire but great care must be taken to ensure that delivering further growth does not exacerbate existing traffic problems, especially in the north and eastern fringes of the Bristol urban area where considerable congestion is already experienced, but is also where further growth is identified in the RSS. Heavy investment in public transport improvements and infrastructure will be required, together with discouragement of the use of the private car by increasing real choices of methods of travel for both residents and workers.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Probable conflict with SA sub-objective 5.1 due to urban extensions into areas of green space that are likely to be home to various natural habitats, which are not necessarily protected under designations. Careful planning, design and implementation will be required to realise sub-objectives 5.2-5.6. For example new development will need to relate well with its surroundings in order to complement, rather than conflict with, existing landscapes and townscapes. <b>SA Recommendation 1:</b> Revise DPD Objective 1 to read "Delivering Growth Sustainably".
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Probable conflict with SA sub-objective 6.1 unless unprecedented investment is seen in public transport provision and renewable energy production to power new homes and centres of employment, although this is unlikely, even with the implementation of RSS renewable energy

	<p>policies. SA Sub-objectives 6.2-6.5 will require good design in new developments and recycling of materials in order to realise their aims.</p> <p><b>SA Recommendation 1:</b> Revise DPD Objective 1 to read “Delivering Growth Sustainably”.</p>
<p><b>DPD Objective 2: Improving Existing Communities Vs. ...</b></p>	
Improve Health	<p>Positive impacts – the ethos behind improving existing communities is addressing all types of inequalities, including health.</p>
Support communities that meet people’s needs	<p>Very positive relationships between SA sub-objectives and this DPD objective. Ensure positive effects are maximised.</p>
Develop the economy in ways that meet people’s needs	<p>Positive effects through all SA sub-objectives, although care must be taken to ensure that both future/existing communities are considered so that all residents of South Gloucestershire see the benefits of the SA sub-objectives.</p>
Provide access to meet people’s needs with least damage to communities and the environment	<p>Policies should aim to make employment accessible to existing local communities by non-car transport.</p>
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	<p>Improving existing communities could involve improving surroundings, encouraging greater outdoor activity and encouraging more community cohesion. This scores very positively against the SA sub-objectives here.</p>
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	<p>There is potential for positive scores here, depending on the specific policies adopted and implemented.</p>
<p><b>DPD Objective 3: Tackling Congestion and Improve Accessibility Vs. ...</b></p>	
Improve Health	<p>Positive overall. Reducing congestion likely to reduce localised pollution.</p> <p>However ‘reducing congestion’ could give rise to interpretation of other methods of reducing congestion other than reducing car usage, such as road building. Care should be taken here to ensure that the reduction in overall car usage is the priority method by which congestion is addressed. The ‘spreading out’ of cars on more roads may ease congestion in the short term but will not encourage walking, cycling and active travel which all improve health.</p> <p><b>SA Recommendation:</b> Refocus DPD Objective: ‘Reduce Car Usage and Improve Accessibility’.</p>
Support communities that meet people’s needs	<p>Larger numbers of people travelling on foot, by bike or on public transport helps to foster community spirit, by reducing fear of crime and promoting more vibrant street areas.</p> <p>However ‘reducing congestion’ could give rise to interpretation of other methods of reducing congestion other than reducing car usage, such as road building. Care should be taken here to ensure that the reduction in overall car usage is the priority method by which congestion is addressed. The ‘spreading out’ of cars on more roads may ease congestion in the short term but will not encourage walking, cycling and active travel which can all improve communities directly or indirectly.</p> <p><b>SA Recommendation 2:</b> Refocus DPD Objective: ‘Reduce</p>

	Car Usage and Improve Accessibility’.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people’s needs	Positive overall. Congestion costs the economy money so reducing congestion could encourage further business investment in South Gloucestershire to increase work opportunities for residents. Careful planning will be needed to ensure that employment needs are met locally so that they can be easily accessed by means other than the private car.
Provide access to meet people’s needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Crosscutting SA and DPD objective – very positive overall.  However ‘reducing congestion’ could give rise to interpretation of other methods of reducing congestion other than reducing car usage, such as road building. Care should be taken here to ensure that the reduction in overall car usage is the priority method by which congestion is addressed as under SA sub-objective 4.1. The ‘spreading out’ of cars on more roads may ease congestion in the short term but will not encourage walking, cycling and active travel. <b>SA Recommendation 2:</b> Refocus DPD Objective: ‘Reduce Car Usage and Improve Accessibility’.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Positive overall, provided that reducing car usage is the primary method by which congestion is relieved, rather than by e.g. road building. Less cars will result in less pollution and disturbance which can impact upon ecology. Less car usage also lessens to need for road building that can impact upon habitats. <b>SA Recommendation 2:</b> Refocus DPD Objective: ‘Reduce Car Usage and Improve Accessibility’.
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Generally very positive overall, provided that reducing car usage is the primary method by which congestion is relieved, rather than by e.g. road building. While reducing congestion alone could improve localised air quality, unless car numbers are reduced, greenhouse gas emissions in totality will not be reduced. <b>SA Recommendation 2:</b> Refocus DPD Objective: ‘Reduce Car Usage and Improve Accessibility’.
<b>DPD Objective 4: Continued economic prosperity Vs. ...</b>	
Improve Health	Generally positive. There is a link between poverty and poor health so lessening poverty may help to increase the health of the population. However, risk of employment growth resulting in increased traffic congestion and localised levels of pollution increasing respiratory ill health. Developments will need to be designed and located to encourage active travel to reduce this risk.
Support communities that meet people’s needs	Continued economic prosperity will allow people to be better able to afford housing and healthier town centres will increase vibrancy and in turn help to reduce fear of crime.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people’s needs	Crosscutting objectives. Future DPD policies should ensure correlation with the SA sub-objectives.
Provide access to meet people’s needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Possible confliction between this DPD objective and SA sub-objectives 4.1 and 4.4 in that increased prosperity can encourage greater car ownership and usage. However, continued prosperity could also provide the funding for better public transport to increase travel choice. Healthy local centres can encourage walking due to vibrancy and a reduction in fear of crime. Policies needed to facilitate local

	goods and services provision.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Potential for positive relationship, however this may depend on the specific policies to be included in the final DPD and how they are implemented. Safeguarding existing employment land could help to reduce the need for further development, especially in out of town locations that would encourage greater car use and the development of greenfield land. Economic prosperity could also help to gain revenue needed for the upkeep of cultural/historical/ecological assets.
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Possible conflict with SA sub-objectives 5.1 and 5.2 as there can be a link between prosperity and energy consumption. While an increase in the proportion of energy coming from renewable sources will help to negate this it is open to question whether or not it will offset overall rises in energy consumption. This is similar for minerals and waste – the more is bought by the population and the more buildings are built the stricter policies for re-use, recycling and pollution prevention will need to be to cope. Many of these policies will not, however, be in the remit of the Local Development Framework.
<b>DPD Objective 5: Providing Housing for all Vs. ...</b>	
Improve Health	Positive overall. Living in poor conditions can lead to various health problems so ensuring people on lower incomes have access to decent housing may prevent this. Appropriate housing densities and good design can encourage well being through providing adequate open space, play areas and avoiding ‘town cramming’ and encouraging walking.
Support communities that meet people’s needs	Crosscuts with SA sub-objective 2.1 – very positive. Appropriate densities and the re-use of derelict land can ensure stronger more vibrant communities. Housing/all new development should ‘design out crime’.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people’s needs	Generally positive in that economic prosperity will encourage the development of needed homes and will help people to afford them. Whether residents will have access to satisfying work will depend on successful methods of reducing congestion by e.g. locating housing near to sources of employment, i.e. meeting needs locally.
Provide access to meet people’s needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Housing location and design is vital here. Dealt with under the ‘Delivering Growth’ objective.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Housing location and design is vital here, which is dealt with under the ‘Delivering Growth’ objective. Likely conflict with SA sub-objective 5.1. Positive that Brownfield sites should be used, but not at the expense of diverse neighbourhoods or important biodiversity that may have settled there. Suitable densities can help determine success in maintaining cultural/historical assets and local distinctive. New housing should not be located in areas at risk from flooding.
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Success will depend on inclusion of specific policies in the final DPD and their proper implementation. Good design of dwellings and provision of on-site renewables will be required.

<b>DPD Objective 6: Environmental Protection and Enhancement (Design) Vs. ...</b>	
Improve Health	Generally very positive in terms of good design lessening emissions and reducing illness. Attractive, permeable well-designed neighbourhoods will also encourage exercise and active travel.
Support communities that meet people's needs	Generally very positive. Good design will 'design-out' crime, and will encourage more vibrant neighbourhoods with more people choosing to walk to local shops/facilities, further enhancing feelings of safety.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people's needs	Positive where applicable. Good design and permeability of neighbourhoods can increase accessibility to employment which can also help to meet needs locally if people feel that they can walk safely to local places of work. Conservation/protection of heritage can encourage tourism.
Provide access to meet people's needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Generally very positive at the neighbourhood scale as good design entails permeability, legibility, etc for cyclists and pedestrians. At wider scales the link is perhaps not so relevant as locational strategies have greater impact rather than design.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Crosscutting objective. Very positive overall.
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Generally positive. Good design and urban design will help reduce emissions, energy/resource consumption and therefore pollution.
<b>DPD Objective 7: Improve Health and Wellbeing Vs. ...</b>	
Improve Health	Crosscutting objectives. Very positive throughout.
Support communities that meet people's needs	Very positive where applicable. The issues identified under the DPD objective state that the creation/maintenance of strong communities is important here which is a crosscutting theme. Meeting place provision can encourage cultural activities.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people's needs	Positive where applicable. Reducing poverty can lead to improved health and more local employment and services can encourage walking can also improve health.
Provide access to meet people's needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Very positive where applicable. Walking/active travel increases activity and fitness, reduces obesity, etc.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Largely not applicable, except where pleasant environments can encourage exercise.
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Reduction of pollution can improve health.
<b>DPD Objective 8: Reduce and Adapt to Climate Change Vs. ...</b>	
Improve Health	Generally positive where applicable. Reducing energy consumption through e.g. encouraging active travel over the private car will help improve health through exercise and lessening air pollution.
Support communities that meet people's needs	Stronger/more vibrant communities and the reduction of fear of crime will encourage reduction in the use of the car, lessening emissions. Housing provision will need to

	incorporate sustainable design.
Develop the economy in ways that meet people's needs	New employment should be in sustainable locations to discourage car use. Employment new builds will need to incorporate principles of sustainable design to reduce energy usage.
Provide access to meet people's needs with least damage to communities and the environment	Positive throughout. Reduction in car usage is a key facet of reducing climate change.
Maintain and improve environmental quality and assets	Crosscutting issue regarding reducing vulnerability to flooding.
Minimise pollution and consumption of natural resources	Positive throughout. The reduction of emissions is key to reducing climate change. Dealing with (i.e. extraction, processing, transportation, disposing, etc) minerals and waste results in emissions so the less minerals that are extracted and the less waste (of any sort, including water treatment) that is created the better for reducing overall emissions rates.

## **4 Task B2: Developing the DPD Options – the Urban Extensions**

### **Consideration of Alternatives**

4.1 The consideration of alternatives as part of the development of the Plan complies with the SEA Directive which states that the Environmental Report should consider “*reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme*” and give “*an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with*” (Article 5.1 and Article 1 (h)). Two options are presented in the Issues and Options document for each urban extension, each of which have been appraised and contrasted in Appendices 1 to 4 of this initial SA Report (the results of which are summarised below). The SA that will be conducted and then published at the Preferred Options stage of the Core Strategy will appraise and contrast the urban extension options presented by the Council at this stage, the options submitted by external parties as part of the Issues and Options public consultation and the preferred option for each that will be presented in the Preferred Options document.

4.2 Section 4 of this Initial SA Report is split into four sub-sections that reflect the three major sets of options set out in the Issues and Options document:

- Options for urban extension at Cribbs Causeway/Filton
- Options for urban extension west of the M32
- Options for urban extension east of Kingswood
- Options for urban extension Yate/Chipping Sodbury

## **Cribbs Causeway (Appendix 1)**

4.3 When appraising the options a number of sustainability constraints present in the Area of Search were factored:

- Biodiversity interests at; Haw Wood Site of Nature Conservation Interest, species rich hedgerows and, potentially, species which are identified in the UK or local Biodiversity Action Plans.
- The area has high archaeological interest
- The requirements of Filton Airfield to continue to operate as a significant local employer in the long term.
- Health & safety and noise issues resulting from the operation of Filton Airfield (*details yet to be confirmed*).
- Potential noise and air quality issues associated with the M5

### **Option 1**

4.4 Option 1 comprises the following main land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 1500
- Average density – 50 dphn
- Employment land – 8 hectares
- Total land developed – 59 hectares

4.5 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- Existing public transport network could be extended to serve the urban extension.
- Little or no new major infrastructure will be required.
- Provides homes in an area that has higher-end retail and leisure opportunities within cycling distance. Careful masterplanning required to promote walking to retail and leisure opportunities.
- Provides homes within a short public transport trip to the employment areas in the North Fringe
- Good accessibility to Southmead hospital
- Due to number of units, will have minimal impact of the future operation of Filton airfield, when compared with Option 2.
- Option provides a compact neighbourhood where the majority of future residents will be within a reasonable walking/cycling distance of public transport routes and a local centre.
- Impact of Filton Airfield on future residents (noise and health and safety) and on the future operation of the airfield less than in higher capacity option.

#### 4.6 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- Potential impact of Filton airfield in terms of noise and the health and safety of future residents.
- Development in proximity to M5 and railway line, which may affect health of future residents (noise, air quality).
- Impact on the future operation of Filton airfield and associated local employment opportunities.
- Encroachment onto visually important hillsides and ridge lines (but less than in higher capacity option).
- Surface water management will require a large land take.
- Close proximity to Junction 17 of M5 may increase opportunities for commuting.
- Loss of open land between Bristol and Cribbs Causeway
- Number of units is unlikely to provide population large enough to sustain and viable and vibrant mixed-use local centre.
- Shortfall in number of units required by RSS in this area will result in more housing allocated in other parts of South Gloucestershire.

#### **Option 2**

#### 4.7 Option 2 comprises the following main land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 2600
- Average density – 50 dphn
- Employment land – 13 hectares
- Total land developed – 95 hectares

#### 4.8 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- Existing public transport network could be extended to serve the urban extension.
- Little or no new major infrastructure will be required.
- Provides homes in an area that has higher-end retail and leisure opportunities within cycling distance. Careful masterplanning required to promote walking to retail and leisure opportunities.
- Provides homes within a short public transport trip to the employment areas in the North Fringe
- Good accessibility to Southmead hospital
- Number of units is likely to provide population large enough to sustain and viable and vibrant mixed-use local centre.
- Option provides a compact neighbourhood where the majority of future residents will be within a reasonable walking/cycling distance of public transport routes and a local centre. However, development to the east may result in the future residents being too remote from public transport and local centre.

#### 4.9 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- Potential impact of Filton airfield in terms of noise and the health and safety of future residents.
- Development in proximity to M5 and railway line, which may affect health of future residents (noise, air quality).
- Impact on the future operation of Filton airfield and associated local employment opportunities.
- Encroachment onto visually important hillsides and ridge lines.
- Surface water management will require a large land take.
- Development next to HSE consultation zone(s).
- Close proximity to Junction 17 of M5 may increase opportunities for commuting.
- Loss of open land between Bristol and Cribbs Causeway

## **M32 Corridor (Appendix 2)**

When appraising the options a number of sustainability constraints present in the Area of Search were factored:

- Role of area as key entrance to Bristol
- Role of area as a setting for the historic Stoke Park to the south and Hambrook Conservation Area to the east
- Highly visible wooded ridgelines and slopes to the west of the area
- Areas of Grade 1 Agricultural Land within the area of search
- Potential species or habitats of biodiversity interest and areas of archaeological potential
- Poor air quality and noise with proximity to Avon Ring Road, M4 and M32
- Major power lines cross the area
- Flooding issues
- Land is currently in the Green Belt

### **Option 1**

4.10 Option 1 comprises of the following land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 2700
- Average density – 55 dphn
- Employment land – 13 hectares
- Total land developed – 103 hectares

4.11 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- close proximity to existing public transport infrastructure
- close proximity to opportunities for higher education.
- minimal development on valuable slopes and ridges
- likely to provide a population that will support a viable and vibrant mixed-use local centre (provided master plan can ensure the local centre is accessible to all residents)
- lower density will reduce impact of development on valuable slopes and ridges; as well as reduce the impact of the development on the 'green corridor' gateway to Bristol.
- protects land south of the ring road, which will help to maintain the setting of Stoke Park and help to ensure a cohesive community.
- provides a buffer along the M32 and ring road, which will help to protect future residents from amenity/health problems (eg noise, air quality etc).

#### 4.12 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- development may not be viable because of utility/infrastructure costs and delivery (further evidence needed).
- does not provide as much housing within the area of search as Option 2. Therefore additional land for housing will have to be allocated elsewhere in South Gloucestershire, which may be less sustainable.

### **Option 2**

#### 4.13 Option 2 comprises of the following main land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 3300
- Average housing density - 55 dphn
- Employment land – 16 hectares
- Total land developed – 122 hectare

#### 4.14 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- amount of development may help viability and delivery of local infrastructure more than Option 1.
- close proximity to public transport infrastructure
- close proximity to opportunities for higher education
- largest amount of housing within the area of search, which currently has more jobs than resident workers, when compared to Option 1.
- likely to provide a population that will support a viable and vibrant mixed-use local centre, (providing master planning ensures the local centre is accessible to all residents)

#### 4.15 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- ring road will act as a barrier between existing and proposed communities, but there is not a significant amount of development south of the ring road.
- development south of the ring road will erode the green gateway to Bristol and the setting of Stoke Park, development in this area can be set some distance from the M32.
- proximity to M32 and ring road may effect health (air quality, noise etc).

## **Bristol East Fringe (Appendix 3)**

4.16 When appraising the options a number of sustainability constraints present in the Area of Search were factored:

- The strong hillside/scarp that runs south from the M4 through Shortwood. This decreases in height and prominence as it moves south and is interrupted by the valley of the Siston Brook. The scarp becomes prominent again south of the A420 down to Bitton. This makes a strongly defined edge to the current urban area and screens Oldland and Warmley in longer views. Much of the area is prominent in views from the existing urban area as well as having ecological and archaeological interests
- Open hill tops associated with the scarp are considered unsuitable for development due to their prominence in the wider landscape and particularly from the Cotswold AONB
- New areas of woodland planting around Siston village and at Warmley Forest Park as part of the Forest of Avon
- Landscape features and important recreational and ecological areas of Siston, Rodway, Webbs Heath, Goose Green and Bridge Yate Commons
- Ecologically important Siston and Warmley Brook corridors
- Siston Conservation Area – an extensive conservation area that includes Siston village and its landscape setting
- The area has a lack of sufficient, easily accessible employment opportunities and services

### **Option 1**

4.17 Option 1 comprises of the following main land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 5000
- Average housing density - 45 dphn
- Employment land – 37 hectares
- Total land developed – 209 hectare

4.18 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- Provides land for single use employment within an area that has a low proportion of jobs:resident workers
- Close proximity of Bath – Bristol cycle route
- Good potential to integrate urban extensions with existing communities
- Grade I listed building and conservation areas protected.
- Visually important hillsides and ridgeline are protected, which can form a settlement edge.
- Respectful of commons and recreation land

#### 4.19 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- Development adjacent to A4174 (ring road) will suffer from poor health (noise air quality).
- Proposed downgrading of Frenchay hospital reduces accessibility to higher-end healthcare facilities.
- Limited access to higher education opportunities
- Close proximity of A4174 (ring road) may increase desire to commute to distant employment.
- Requires significant improvements in public transport infrastructure.
- Development on visually important hillsides and ridgelines.
- Development on land with ecological, recreational value and well as common land (e.g. SNCI, Warmley Forest Park)
- Limited access to higher-end retail and leisure facilities.
- Dispersed development may reduce public transport viability.
- Large are of development will not define a neighbourhood, which may reduce community identity.
- Development in close proximity to Grade I listed building and the extensive landscape setting of Siston Conservation Area.
- Provides partial amount (5000 dwellings) of housing required by RSS in area of Search C and D (total 8000 dwellings). Therefore approx 3000 dwellings will need to be allocated at Area of Search C.
- Shortwood will lose its identity as a separate place.

#### **Option 2**

#### 4.20 Option 2 comprises of the following main land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 5000
- Average housing density - 45 dphn
- Employment land – 37 hectares
- Total land developed – 209 hectare

#### 4.21 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- Provides land for single use employment within an area that has a low proportion of jobs:resident workers
- Close proximity of Bath – Bristol cycle route
- Good potential to integrate urban extensions with existing communities
- Grade I listed building and conservation areas protected.
- Visually important hillsides and ridgeline are protected, which can form a settlement edge.
- Respectful of commons and recreation land
- Slopes and ridges are given more protection at Shortwood than in Option 1.

#### 4.22 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- Development adjacent to A4174 (ring road) will suffer from poor health (noise air quality).
- Proposed downgrading of Frenchay hospital reduces accessibility to higher-end healthcare facilities.
- Limited access to higher education opportunities
- Close proximity of A4174 (ring road) may increase desire to commute to distant employment.
- Requires significant improvements in public transport infrastructure.
- Development on visually important hillsides and ridgelines.
- Development on land with ecological, recreational value and well as common land (e.g. SNCI, Warmley Forest Park)
- Limited access to higher-end retail and leisure facilities.
- Dispersed development may reduce public transport viability.
- Large are of development will not define a neighbourhood, which may reduce community identity.
- Development in close proximity to Grade I listed building and the extensive landscape setting of Siston Conservation Area.
- Provides partial amount (5000 dwellings) of housing required by RSS in area of Search C and D (total 8000 dwellings). Therefore approx 3000 dwellings will need to be allocated at Area of Search C.

## **Yate/Chipping Sodbury (Appendix 4)**

4.23 When appraising the options a number of sustainability constraints present in the Area of Search were factored:

- Green Belt and common land to the south and east (Yate Common (formerly known as Westerleigh Common), Kingrove Common, Colts Green and Wapley Bushes and Common)
- The working quarry to the north of Chipping Sodbury
- Areas of common land to the north east of Chipping Sodbury (Sodbury Common)
- The historic town centre of Chipping Sodbury is a designated Conservation Area
- The area to the east of Chipping Sodbury forms part of the setting of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- The highly visible ridgeline at Yate Rocks to the north of Yate
- Engine Common contains a rich network of hedgerows and small fields with biodiversity interest as well as locally important historic buildings
- Drainage/flooding issues in the area to the north of Brimsham Park

### **Option 1**

4.24 Option 1 comprises of the following land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 2500
- Average density – 45 dphn
- Employment land – 15 hectares
- Total land developed – 96.3 hectares

4.25 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- Population of community is likely to support a viable and vibrant local centre.
- Existing public transport services available and have potential to be extended into new development.
- Heavily constrained land at Engine Common and Chipping Sodbury not developed.
- Does not compromise Green Belt.
- Protects environmental assets

4.26 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- Yate/Chipping Sodbury may not be a sustainable location for this amount of development.
- Noise from railway line may affect health.
- Due to limitation of local economy unlikely to deliver the amount of jobs required for new population. This will further increase long distance

outward commuting from Yate, congestion and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, although to a lesser extent than the 5000 quantum option.

- Access to higher-end shopping and leisure facilities in Yate Town Centre, but development is too remote for walking and cycling. Therefore public transport service must be provided.
- Does not provide full amount of housing required by Draft RSS Panel Report. Therefore additional land for housing will have to be allocated elsewhere in South Gloucestershire if overall district amount is not reduced.

## **Option 2**

4.27 Option 2 comprises of the following main land uses:

- Number of dwellings – 5000
- Average housing density - 45 dphn
- Employment land – 30 hectares
- Total land developed – 199.7 hectare

4.28 Summary of main sustainability advantages:

- Provides the full amount of housing required by Draft RSS Panel Report (5000 units).
- Population of community is likely to support a viable and vibrant local centre.
- Existing public transport services available and have potential to be extended into new development
- Does not compromise Green Belt.

4.29 Summary of main sustainability disadvantages:

- Yate/Chipping Sodbury may not be a sustainable location for this amount of development.
- Noise from railway line may affect health.
- Due to limitation of local economy unlikely to deliver the amount of jobs required for new population. This will further increase long distance outward commuting from Yate, congestion and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Potential flooding, settlement patterns, ecology and history of coal mining at Engine Common will affect delivery and place making.
- Development east of Chipping Sodbury may affect character of Chipping Sodbury and AONB.
- Access to higher-end shopping and leisure facilities in Yate Town Centre, but development is too remote for walking and cycling. Therefore public transport service must be provided.

## 5 Conclusion

5.1 This initial SA Report has been produced in accord with best practice, although it is not required by Strategic Environmental Assessment regulations or English Sustainability Appraisal guidance. Further SA Reports will be published at future stages of producing the Core Strategy (i.e. Preferred Options and Submission), where levels of detail and technicality will be increased. It will be in these following stages that the baseline data presented in the Scoping Report (and as updated in Appendix 7 of this initial SA Report) and the SA Framework can be used in detail to ensure that the most sustainable policies and options for future development emerge, within the boundaries set by other plans and programmes.

5.2 The two recommendations of this initial SA Report that have emerged as a result of appraising the DPD objectives against the SA Framework are:

- 1) To consider revising DPD Objective 1 from '*Delivering Growth*' to '*Delivering Growth Sustainably*'.
- 2) To consider revising DPD Objective 2 from '*Tackling Congestion and Improve Accessibility*' to '*Reduce Car Usage and Improve Accessibility*'.

5.3 Comments on this initial SA Report should be received by South Gloucestershire Council by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008.