

PSM5

**South Gloucestershire
Core Strategy
Examination**

**Position Statement
for
Matter 5: Regional Strategy**

May 2012

Matter 5 – Regional Strategy

Q1 The Regional Strategy for the South west of England (RPG10) remains part of the development plan until the relevant part of the Localism Act is enacted. Is there any suggestion that the CS is not in [general] conformity with this plan?

Council response –.No

1.1 Until the appropriate section of the Localism Act is enacted, RPG10, the Interim RS, remains part of the development plan in accordance with S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, it is recognised that RPG10 is now quite dated. Notwithstanding this, as the extant higher level development plan covering the period up to 2016, the Council considers that the Core Strategy is in general conformity with RPG10 Sections 2-9 as set out below.

Section 2 -The Regional Vision and Principles for Development

1.2 RPG 10 Section 2 sets out the vision, aims and key objectives for the region with policies to express, implement and monitor the vision. The Core Strategy conforms with Policy VIS 1: Expressing the Vision of RPG, in that it promotes a sustainable pattern of development, it minimises the need to travel, it seeks better integration between urban and rural areas, it concentrates growth at the Principal Urban Area (PUA) and sets out visions and objections for towns and rural areas across the district. The policy objectives of Policy VIS2 Principles for Future Development Policy and VIS3 – Achieving the Vision are expressed throughout the policies of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 1 - Regional Vision and Principles for Development.

Section 3 - The Spatial Strategy

1.3 This section sets out a spatial strategy based on sub-regions, their principal urban areas, where most growth is to occur and policies for rural areas. The Core Strategy's overall development strategy accords with RPG10 Policy SS1 (Regional Spatial Strategy), Policy SS2: (Regional Development Strategy) and Policy TRAN 1 (Reducing the Need to Travel), through promoting economic prosperity and focusing future development in sustainable locations.

1.4 Further, the Core Strategy conforms with RPG Policy SS8: The Bristol Area, through the promotion of sustainable new neighbourhoods that incorporate the necessary infrastructure to ensure they are sustainable, pleasant and attractive places to live, work and visit. Outside of the PUA, the focus for development is the Market towns of Yate/Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury in line with RPG Policy SS19: Rural Areas

1.5 The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 3 – The Spatial Strategy in respect to the period covered by RPG10 up to 2016.

Section 4 - The Natural and Built Environment

1.6 This section recognises that the environment of the region is a key strength and that environmental protection must be integrated with other policy objectives. The Core Strategy contains a number of policies that are in accordance with the RPG policies on Landscape and Biodiversity, Air Quality, the Historic Environment and the Built

Environment at a strategic level. In addition some policy issues of a non-strategic nature will be addressed through the Policies Sites & Places DPD. The national policy context has to some extent moved on with the publication of the NPPF and as set out in the Council's response to Matter 15 Question 2 the Core Strategy is also in accordance with the NPPF.

- 1.7 The Core Strategy introduces new policies and contains a cross cutting theme of 'Improving health & well-being' that address the policy requirements set out in RPG Policy EN5: Health, Education, Safety and other Social Infrastructure.
- 1.8 The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 4 - The Natural and Built Environment

Section 5 - The Economy

- 1.9 The RPG approach to the economy of the northern sub-region as set out in Policy SS3: The Sub-Regional Strategy is to build on its economic strengths and foster economic growth. The Core Strategy vision that "The economy will be buoyant and prosperous and recognised internationally" accords with the RPG10 approach. The Core Strategy vision is supported by a number of evidence based policies relating to the review and safeguarding of areas for economic development, allocation of new economic development land and the promotion of economic regeneration opportunities. These are in accordance with RPG policies EC1: Economic Development and EC3: Employment Sites.
- 1.10 The Core strategy approach to the protection and enhancement of town centre and retail locations is generally in general conformity with EC6: Town Centres and Retailing. However, the Core Strategy approach to the regional shopping centre at Cribbs Causeway raises issues in relation to RPG 10 - Policy EC6 (4th bullet point). The Council's approach to this issue and the degree to which it can actually conform to this Policy is set out in its response to Matter 13 Question 2. Taking this into account the Council considers that the Core Strategy is in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 5 – The Economy.

Section 6 - Tourism, Culture, Leisure and Sport

- 1.11 This Section deals with the tourism industry and making provision for culture, leisure and sporting infrastructure. The parts of the section relating to tourism are of less relevance to this part of the region. However, Core Strategy policies relating to the provision and protection of valued community infrastructure, Policy CS2 – Green Infrastructure and Policy CS23 – Community Infrastructure and Cultural Activity, conform with Policy TCS2: Culture, Leisure and Sport.
- 1.12 The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 5 - Tourism, Culture, Leisure and Sport

Section 7 - Housing

- 1.13 This section sets out the RPG housing objectives with polices to achieve them. In this context Policy HO1: (Level of Housing Demand 1996 – 2016), of RPG10 requires the former county of Avon to deliver 3,700 dwellings per annum. The South Gloucestershire Local Plan, adopted 2006, transposes this RPG10 figure to a requirement for South Gloucestershire which amounted to 1,184 dwellings per annum. In effect uplifting the housing provision set for South Gloucestershire at Policy 33 of Joint Replacement

Structure Plan (Examination Library Ref: LR5) while maintaining the 30% apportionment of housing in line with JRSP requirement for South Gloucestershire in comparison with the other 3 unitary authorities. The December 2011 Core Strategy makes provision at Policy CS15 for 22,375 new homes over the period 2011-2027. This is higher than the equivalent RPG10 figure if projected forward over the same period ($1184 \times 16 = 18,944$). Both the CS and RPG10 reflect the importance of meeting housing need in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Despite therefore the fact that RPG10 is now quite dated, the sentiment and spirit of this plan as the extant higher tier development plan is transposed into the Core Strategy.

- 1.14 In addition Core Strategy Policy CS18 Affordable Housing is in accordance with the requirements of Policy HO 3: Affordable Housing, of RPG10. Core Strategy Chapter 10 also contains policies on housing accommodation, diversity and density in accordance with the Policy HO 6: Mix of Housing Types and Densities.
- 1.15 The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 7 – Housing.

Section 8 - Transport

- 1.16 This section sets out the Regional Transport Strategy which provides the framework for local transport plans and development plans. In line with the RPG transport policies, Core Strategy Policy CS7 sets out the implementation of strategic transport infrastructure whilst Policy CS8 seeks to improve accessibility. In addition the Core Strategy spatial strategy is in accordance with Policy TRAN 1 Reducing the need to travel as set out in Section 3 above.
- 1.17 The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 8 – Transport.

Section 9 - Infrastructure & Resources

- 1.18 This section of the RPG addresses issues relating to water, minerals and energy resources. Core Strategy Policy CS10 addresses the requirements of Policy RE 3: Mineral Planning and RE 4: Use and Supply of Aggregates. Core Strategy policy CS9 – Managing the Environment & Heritage is in general conformity with the policies contained in RPG10 relating to the water environment and flood risk. Policy CS3 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation is in line with RPG Policy RE6: Energy Generation and Use. Waste policies for South Gloucestershire are contained in the Joint Waste Core Strategy, adopted 2011.
- 1.19 The Core Strategy is therefore in general conformity with the RPG10 Section 9 – Infrastructure & Resources.
- 1.20 In summary the Council recognises that to comply with the NPPF the Core Strategy needs to be in general conformity with RPG10. The Council considers for the reasons set out above this can be suitably demonstrated for the period up to 2016 or until the Regional Strategy is formally revoked.

Q2 There is concern that references to the Regional Strategy have been removed from the CS in advance of its demise. How significant is this given the likelihood that the RS will no longer form part of the development plan by the end of the examination?

Council response – No significance and no impact on the soundness of the CS.

2.1 The Post Submission Changes (December 2011), which seek to remove references made to the Regional Strategy, cannot be considered to be significant and certainly do not affect the soundness of the CS. The Council recognises that the RS remains part of the development plan (see response to Question 1, above) and considers the CS to be in general conformity with it. The removal of references does not alter this fact. The Post Submission Changes are only suggestions by the Council to the Inspector for potential modifications to the submitted Core Strategy (31st March 2011). If during the course of the EIP the Inspector considers an alternative approach is needed this can be introduced in accordance with S112 and his ability to make main modifications. However, it is the Council's view that these changes are not significant and should be included in the 'additional modifications' it would wish to make to the submitted Core Strategy.