

Matter 7: Locational Strategy

- 1) Subject to detailed policy wording matters raised in our original representations RPS does not raise issues that seek to contradict or query the overall strategic approach to development.
- 2) RPS is broadly supportive of the Vision and Objectives for South Gloucestershire during the plan period; they can be considered to be achievable and deliverable. In particular we support the identified need at paragraph 4.8 of seeking to redress the imbalance of jobs and homes in the North Fringe of Bristol, which in turn is reflected in the Vision. This has been a long stated objective dating back to the Local Plan and remains highly relevant for the remainder of the plan period.
- 3) We support the SGC objectives for strategic provision at Yate and Thornbury, and a reasonable provision in the rural areas to protect (at every level of settlement size) the vitality of the place and meeting need. To that end, the spatial choices made conform to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. We do not consider that alternative Green Belt locations would result in a more sustainable or appropriate strategy. The two Green Belt releases in the North Fringe are essential to meet the policy objective of redressing the balance between jobs and homes in the North Fringe; diverting development from these locations elsewhere in the district (in particular to the East Fringe) will have the polar opposite effect and result in unsustainable and undesirable consequences. Reasonable alternatives are considered (and dismissed) in the SA.
- 4) The issues of delivery and flexibility are considered in our submission on Matter 8 insofar as they relate to the quantum and location of housing. The Core Strategy relies on a number of strategic developments being delivered in full over the next 15 year period. It is the responsibility of the Council to work positively with the development industry to ensure those sites are able to start at the earliest practicable opportunity. It is only through the AMR that progress can be effectively monitored; the majority of the major Local Plan sites now have implementable planning permissions and will be delivering in the next five years whilst planning permissions are resolved for the new neighbourhoods.
- 5) In terms of cross-boundary implications then both the North and East Fringes are inextricably linked with Bristol City. The CS proposes significant growth in the North Fringe which includes major investment in infrastructure (North Fringe to Hengrove Package for example) that will deliver genuine improvements to links to the City Centre. The rapid transit will be extended to Emersons Green which will provide similar benefits in that locality. Undoubtedly a proportion of the homes that are identified to be built in the North and East Fringes will be brought/rented by migrant Bristol City households. Nevertheless the Bristol City Core Strategy does not suggest growth beyond its own administrative boundary is necessary to meet its needs but

**South Gloucestershire Core Strategy Examination
ID: 347713 RPS on behalf of Crest Strategic Projects**

has identified a contingency option within its own Green Belt to cater if the need arises.

- 6) In the context of further Green Belt releases then it is imperative that the Duty to Cooperate is dealt with responsibly by the four UAs but this can only realistically be achieved through CS or Local Plan reviews. In the meantime it is imperative that this CS does proceed to adoption to give the necessary certainty that will allow the development industry to invest in the planning and delivery of the new neighbourhoods. A withdrawn CS is of benefit to no-one.