

**Summary report on responses in
relation to the Sub Regional
Spatial Strategy for Gloucester
and Cheltenham**

**Prepared for Gloucestershire
County Council and the Joint
Steering Group
by
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February 2005

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I. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1.1. LUC and Resources for Change were commissioned to act as facilitators for Gloucestershire County Council and the Joint Steering Group in relation to a Joint Study Area Forum. The work aimed to generate a constructive and balanced debate on future spatial planning in and around the Gloucestershire and Cheltenham Principal Urban Areas through two separate forum events. The conclusions of both forum debates will inform the South West Regional Spatial Strategy.

Context

- 1.2. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a statutory basis for the preparation of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). The RSS is a broad development strategy, setting out how much development should take place over the next 20 years and where development should occur. The RSS will include policies covering transport, economic development as well as policies relating to minerals, waste and the protection and enhancement of the environment. It is the responsibility of the Regional Assembly; South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) to formulate the RSS in consultation with local authorities and the public community.
- 1.3. The SWRA has engaged Gloucestershire County Council in partnership with six district councils and invited organisations (a Joint Steering Group) to carry out the Joint Study Area work. Gloucestershire County Council is charged with the responsibility of being the “Lead Authority”. The work will affect the future role of Cheltenham and Gloucester and their immediate catchment area within the wider region, and will assist SWRA in formulating a RSS which will include a sub regional strategy for the development of the Gloucester and Cheltenham area.
- 1.4. Technical work was undertaken by officers and the Joint Steering Group to form a vision for the area, to consider potential levels of growth as well as identifying possible options for continued development in the Gloucester and Cheltenham for the period up to 2026. The work did not consider the development of rural areas in Gloucestershire as a further study will be undertaken to review the needs of more rural parts of the region.

The Purpose of the Forum Events

- 1.5. In order to explore the development options at a local level, two forum events were held, assisted by the consultants in their capacity as independent facilitators. The purpose of the events was to consult with local people and stakeholders to:
 - generate an understanding of the new planning system and changes in local Government responsibilities, and to
 - determine whether a consensus could be reached on which if any of the options put forward by the Joint Steering Group might be preferred and to identify any other practical alternatives.

- I.6. This report presents the findings for the forum events, which have run alongside other consultation exercises from the 17th of January to 18th February 2005. This report will be submitted to the Regional Assembly for consideration in relation to the emerging draft RSS. It is anticipated that the final RSS will be approved and submitted to the Secretary of State in 2007, following further consultations in autumn 2005.

2. FORUM ATTENDEES

Attendees

- 2.1. Approximately 200 people were invited to attend one or other of the two forum events held in Gloucester or Cheltenham on the 31st January and the 4th of February 2005 respectively. Twenty nine people attended the Gloucester forum event held at Gloucester Guild Hall, whilst over 100 stakeholders attended the Cheltenham forum event held at the Pump Rooms in Cheltenham. Details of attendees are listed in Appendix I.

Identification of Attendees

- 2.2. Potential stakeholders were identified from existing local authority databases drawn from previous representations in relation to the structure plan, community plan and from data held by other departments. A rapid review of the databases was undertaken by the consultants with the aim of ensuring that all “hard to reach groups” were represented, such as ethnic minorities, single parent families, the infirm and the elderly. The review identified that representatives from the following sections of the community were lacking:

- Black/Afro Caribbean and ethnic minorities (muslim groups appeared to be well covered).
- Disability groups.
- A wider range of voluntary sector and community groups.¹

- 2.2. Potential stakeholders were then categorised under the following headings to ensure that there was equal representation from all subject areas. The consultants suggested a number of recommendations to Gloucestershire County Council in relation to the development of stakeholder mapping and the engagement process which would continue beyond this series of consultation events. Recommendations included updating databases on a regular basis; ensuring that all sectors of community interests were represented and that people were targeted according to their specific interests rather than being invited to a number of unrelated events. In addition, the consultants recommended that a wider community consultation event should be held in due course to discuss the results of the Forum Events and to generate public feedback/ opinion. To initiate this process the Council circulated a consultee response form with each forum invitation, asking potential stakeholders to specify their interests from the list below:

Education
Economy/Employment
Landscape/Biodiversity
Transport/Airport
Green belt
Historic/Culture

¹ Although attempts were made to contact the above groups, Gloucestershire County Council was limited by the tight timescale of the consultation period.

Tourism/Leisure
Waste/Health/LA 21
Affordable Housing
Nature Resources (Minerals/Farming/Forestry)
Local Governance

Preparation of Forum Events

- 2.3. Various methods and techniques were considered in the preparation of the forum events to ensure that they were open, transparent and beneficial to the Joint Steering Group, Lead Authority and attendees. Key speakers from various levels of Government were invited by the Council to attend.
- 2.4. It was agreed the forum events should be split into two locations covering Gloucester and Cheltenham, and that all parties should be invited to one or other event. Due to the complex nature of the information being discussed and the need to engage with stakeholders and ascertain their views at a more analytical level, it was agreed that the events should be held during the day rather than evening. It was considered that the time available in an evening discussion would not generate the feedback necessary to influence the sub regional spatial strategy.
- 2.5. The consultants held meetings with Council officers to review the content of the Joint Steering Group working papers and associated national and regional documents in order to finalise the content of the stakeholder's packs, circulated in advance of the forum events. The aim was to ensure that invited attendees received sufficient information to encourage attendance and to engage their interest. A concise publication, background material, stakeholder's terms of reference and a draft agenda were included within the packs. It was agreed that detailed working papers covering transport modelling etc would not be circulated, but would be available on the Council's website.

Format of the Events

- 2.6. Each forum event lasted from 10am to 4 pm and was divided into two parts; covering a morning and afternoon session (see Appendix 2). The morning session was split into the following sections:

Introductory presentations covering:

- Purpose of the forum event
- National Guidance Context and Background
- Regional Planning Context
- Local Planning Context and Background

A Question and Answer Session

Introductory presentations

- 2.7. Peter Nelson, (Land Use Consultants) opened the forum events and welcomed attendees. He stressed that the importance of the day was to generate feedback on development options and confirmed that stakeholders views would be reported back to the Regional Assembly.
- 2.8. Government Office for the South West gave presentations at the respective events (Neal Whitehouse, Gloucester, and Tom King, Cheltenham) outlining changes to national planning guidance, the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004, the revised National Planning Guidance in the form of PPS 11 and 12 and the approach to future growth in the South West.
- 2.9. A presentation was then made on behalf of SWRA by Keith Woodhead (Gloucester) and Peter Brown (Cheltenham) covering the changes to regional and local planning, the development of the RSS, its programme, timescale and relationship with the sub regional spatial strategy. The presentation also described the brief for the Joint Study Area Groups and the links to Local Development Frameworks.
- 2.10. The last presentation was covered by representatives of the Joint Steering Group (Richard Lloyd, Gloucester, and Tony Burley, Cheltenham) who described the role of the Joint Steering Group, its relationship with the lead authority: Gloucestershire County Council, and the Regional Assembly, the constraints and opportunities facing future growth in the Cheltenham and Gloucester Principal Urban Areas, future growth options and alternatives.

Questions and Answer Session

- 2.11. Delegates were invited to seek clarification on the information provided in a question and answer session which followed the presentations. A summary of the main points raised from the discussions is detailed in Appendix 3 and 4 respectively.

Lunchtime Exercise

- 2.12. Text and maps describing each of the four options was posted on display boards in the dining area and during the lunch break attendees were invited to use 'post-it slips to comment on the options, stating whether they disagreed or agreed with the proposal with their reasons. Consultees were also invited to note any general comments where they had including variations/alternatives on the options presented (see Appendix 3 and 4).

Afternoon Workshops

- 2.13. The afternoon was split into two workshop sessions. Attendees were divided into three / five workshop groups for Gloucester and Cheltenham covering approximately 10 to 20 attendees in each group. Where possible each group comprised of a mix of attendees to ensure that a variety of interests, responsibilities and backgrounds could be shared. The groupings of the workshop groups are listed in Appendix 3 and 4.

Session 1: Discussion on spatial planning

- 2.14. At the first forum groups were established and each was asked to focus on three of the themes from the list below:

Transport
Employment areas
Green belt and greenspace
Landscape and Biodiversity
Education
History and culture
Health
Housing
Natural resources (forestry, agriculture, water use, mineral and extraction)
Waste and sustainable development

As the group sizes were larger for the second forum event, groups were invited to vote first on which theme they wished to discuss. Most groups managed to discuss all themes.

- 2.15. Participants were asked to concentrate on the Cheltenham and Gloucester area and focus on spatial rather than general issues. Groups were reminded that spatial issues cover wider land use issues, including how land use relates and connects. The discussions explored the principal opportunities/ threats associated with each theme and how these could be addressed in the future. A summary of the main findings is detailed in Appendix 3 and 4.

Session 2: Spatial Option

- 2.16. The second session in the afternoon centred on the four development options considered by the Joint Steering Group:

Option 1: Growth to the north west of Gloucester
Option 2: Growth to the north west of Cheltenham
Option 3: Growth between Gloucester and Cheltenham
Option 4: Dispersed growth within surrounding PUA settlements

- 2.17. Groups were invited to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each option and determine whether a consensus view could be achieved over a preferred option or an alternative. At the first forum event, in Gloucester, stakeholders were asked to focus on a matrix providing a rating as to whether the option would have a negative, positive or neutral effect on the themes discussed earlier. A score of 5 was very positive, whilst a score of 1 was very negative. Many of the groups experienced difficulties in giving a score against each option and theme, their main concern being the lack of information available on which to base their judgements. As such consultants revised the format of the second forum event and rather than focusing on a matrix, stakeholders were invited to write their views on each option breaking their views down into a number of themes. Once this exercise was complete, stakeholders were asked to mark which comments they considered to be the most

important. Each stakeholder had three “ticks” which they could either allocate to one comment or spread over three comments.

- 2.18. Each group was facilitated by a representative from either Land Use Consultants or Resources for Change, with officers from Gloucestershire County Council acting as scribes. More detailed arrangements for the workshops are detailed in Appendix 5.

Feedback plenary session and wrap up

- 2.19. The final session was coordinated by Peter Nelson and comprised feedback from each facilitator on key points arising from each of the sessions, focusing on recommendations relating to the development options, potential variations and the method of approach.
- 2.20. Stakeholders were also given the opportunity to respond in writing with any further comments either in general or specifically in relation to the options.
- 2.21. Steve Evison, from Resources for Change briefly summarised the main issues that the consultants noted on the day, and the event was concluded by Peter Nelson, who thanked everyone for their contributions and reiterated the next steps in the consultation process.

3. KEY FINDINGS FROM THE FORUM EVENTS

Introduction

- 3.1. This section of the report summarises the key findings of the forum events in relation to the themes and options. Both forum events were successful in explaining the commitments of the Joint Steering Group and associated authority and in generating feedback from stakeholders. Although the groups attending Gloucester and Cheltenham were different sizes, their conclusions were similar and the responses from both forum events have therefore been merged under the headings below

Key Findings

Theme discussions

- 3.2. Below is a brief summary of the comments on key themes relating to spatial planning (a detailed breakdown of individuals' responses is in Appendix 3 and 4). The fact that similar responses were recorded at both meetings is in itself significant, and suggests that delegates were able to participate in an open manner without allowing local prejudices to dictate responses to the options closest to their own areas.

Greenbelt

- 3.3. Although Gloucestershire Country Council explained that a green belt review was available as a background paper as part of this consultation exercise, concern was expressed by many stakeholders that the green belt review should be undertaken in consultation with the public.
- 3.4. Whilst many stakeholders accepted that the number of urban brownfield sites is finite, several stated that development on the green belt should be considered as a last resort. Many added that the coalescence of Cheltenham and Gloucester should be avoided, as both settlements have individual and distinctive identities which should be retained. A loss of greenbelt in certain locations would erode these separate characters. Development on "white land" should be explored, as well as increasing the density of housing stock within both Cheltenham and Gloucester. A few stakeholders argued that there were advantages in joining Cheltenham and Gloucester; *"where the sum of the two would be greater than the two parts"*.
- 3.5. Many stakeholders stated that the green belt was important not merely for preventing the sprawl of development but also as open space for recreation, visual amenity and in retaining the separate identities of Cheltenham and Gloucester. A few stakeholders disagreed, arguing that it was more important to retain local urban green spaces within settlements than prevent development on the fringes of urban areas which are not used by local people. There was however recognition that in some locations the green belt was of greater value in landscape and nature conservation than elsewhere. If green belt land was lost, it should be replaced somewhere else, e.g. south of Gloucester.

Transport

- 3.6. Many stakeholders were critical of the existing public transport network stating that there is no integration, it is inflexible and does not reflect people's changing lifestyles (such as flexi time and shift working). In addition the location of park and ride facilities still encourages car use. Recognition was given to the need to provide good quality, flexible and reliable public transport, accessible to all, covering both urban and rural locations especially at peak times. Stakeholders added that there is a need for a partnership approach, working with bus operators, developers and the public and public incentives to encourage a modal shift. In addition there needs to be improvements in connectivity between the PUAs and surrounding areas, and more innovative options (such as dial a ride and car share schemes) in rural areas.
- 3.7. Many stakeholders stressed that it was important to put in place the transport infrastructure before development occurs, considering opportunities for cycling and walking routes. They emphasised that a "critical mass" of housing is needed to make public transport work. This is particularly pertinent to rural areas where a lack of affordable housing has a knock on effect on levels of public transport usage.
- 3.8. There was also recognition of the need for a long term vision and strategy towards rationalising transport including considering options for a railway station, light rail and trams as well as further investment in the airport. Many stakeholders agreed that the RSS provided the opportunity to consider how to resolve transport problems, and local transport plans are the vehicle for resolving issues.

Housing

- 3.9. Stakeholders stated that a recent housing needs survey indicated that there was an existing latent demand for affordable housing. A detailed analysis needs to be undertaken considering need, demographics and dwelling size. It was considered important that that large scale developments should have a high percentage of affordable housing, and some participants questioned whether this could be achieved through legal obligations with developers. They added that Government should be more proactive in encouraging people to purchase homes, presenting a variety of options to meet people's needs. Some stakeholders suggested that it would be beneficial if the Regional Spatial Strategy could provide some firm guidance on how to ensure the delivery of affordable housing as well as exploring a wider range of mechanisms to maintain the affordability of housing..
- 3.10. Many stakeholders emphasised that careful consideration should be given to the question of who will benefit from new housing. Will this meet the needs of the local community or will it be for people commuting to Swindon, London and Bristol? An increase in housing stock may merely increase commuting. It is important to create sustainable communities with well established infrastructure (education, health, public transport and emergency service facilities) and a wide variety of housing stock.

Landscape and biodiversity

- 3.11. Many stakeholders considered that the land within the Cheltenham and Gloucester PUA was important both in terms of local landscape character and biodiversity. Some attendees suggested that SSSIs should have a larger envelope of protection,

than currently provided, and that land bordering the Cotswolds AONB should be protected.

- 3.12. It was also argued that consideration should be given to the impact of global warming, changes in land use and farming practice. All new developments should be assessed for flood risk considering opportunities to reduce the rate of runoff through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs), as well as maximising the use of the natural environment.

Employment and the economy

- 3.13. A detailed review needs to be undertaken of the availability of employment land and where employment opportunities should be targeted; focusing on the nature of work and the workplace. Consideration should be given not only to large and medium sized employers within the PUAs but also to smaller businesses in urban and rural locations.
- 3.14. A holistic approach should be taken, matching jobs with locations, reducing commuting and ensuring that there is the availability of affordable housing to attract and retain key workers. Consideration should be given to providing appropriate levels of employment use in rural areas. In addition consideration should be given to more flexible working patterns and lifestyle changes, e.g. working from home and use of IT.

Natural Resources

- 3.15. At both events, groups mentioned the importance of retaining the surrounding countryside to both settlements and the need to protect Grade I agricultural land. Some stakeholders mentioned the need to consider renewable energy, reduce water consumption through grey water management and explore how waste could be minimised. Proposals to reduce energy consumption should be considered at an early stage in the design of any large scale developments.

History and culture

- 3.16. There was recognition by all groups that Gloucester and Cheltenham have strong, unique characteristics and that the two settlements compliment each other. Whilst Cheltenham has been successful in promoting its cultural/Regency image with events such as the literature and three choirs festival and the Gold Cup, Gloucester has a strong association with the Romans and docks. Concern was however expressed that the character of Cheltenham was being eroded by development, whilst Gloucester failed to attract a significant tourism market because there are no centrally located high quality hotels with conference facilities. It was agreed that areas most sensitive to change included East Cheltenham because of its relationship with the Cotswolds escarpment and the river/floodplain west of Gloucester; which provides an important backdrop of the Cathedral.

Health

- 3.17. All groups agreed that access to health care facilities should be improved and there should be greater integration of facilities with different land uses. Careful

consideration should be given to the strategic planning of developments; poor design and siting of development could have a negative impact on health. In addition, developments should consider alternative modes of transport, cycling and walking routes and the creation of open space to encourage healthy lifestyles. Many emphasised that large scale developments should be in close proximity to a variety of services.

Waste

- 3.18. Stakeholders stressed the importance of coordinating waste strategies at a regional level. They questioned how waste was going to be processed and whether it was feasible to generate heat from waste incineration. There was a perception that district councils were not involved in the PFI project and more partnership working was required. Concern was also expressed over the need to import waste from outside the County in order to meet the capacity of incineration plants. Many participants questioned whether this was sustainable.
- 3.19. Many stakeholders agreed that it was important to ensure that if new development was taking place a carefully planned waste management strategy should accompany proposals. In addition, several emphasised the need to spread educational awareness over waste minimisation and suggested more should be done to provide recycling facilities which can take a wide range of waste products as well as placing a responsibility on industry to reduce packaging and encourage reuse.

Education

- 3.20. Stakeholders agreed that at a sub regional level more work could be undertaken to push the links between the economy and education especially between industry and HE/FE colleges. There was also an acknowledgement of the need to retrain people and ensure that the right jobs and homes were available to meet their needs. Stakeholders added that people moving into the area based decisions on where they lived on high league table results of primary and secondary schools.

General Comment

- 3.21. Many stakeholders agreed that the key challenge for the RSS lies in achieving spatial planning which links employment, transport, housing, health and education strategies. Several emphasised that all themes were interrelated and future development should aim to strive towards sustainable development in the long term, considering not only economic and environment issues but also the social implications of large scale development.

Preferred Options

- 3.22. Four options were discussed in depth covering a number of issues associated with the themes above. Where possible, groups were encouraged to reach a conclusion as to which option or alternative they preferred. Their conclusions were based on a number of caveats and these are detailed in the following section. It is important to stress that the statements recorded below represent comments made by specific individuals and would not necessarily have the agreement of the entire group. Group D at the Cheltenham Forum Event, approached the review of options in a slightly

different manner to other groups, as detailed in Appendix 3, although their conclusions did not differ.

Option 1:

3.23. Whilst none of the groups preferred this option, most groups (four out of seven) stated that a combination of this option and Option 2 was feasible so long as issues associated with flood risk, loss of green belt and difficulties with transport infrastructure were addressed. Key points raised from discussions over this option are summarised below:

- **Green belt:** Four stakeholders stated that this option had a relatively minor incursion into the green belt which could be achieved without causing the coalescence of Cheltenham and Gloucester, but like all the other options it should be subject to a green belt review. Two stakeholders disagreed arguing that the development did have a significant impact on the green belt as well as landscape and history.
- **Floodplain:** A number of stakeholders (14) expressed concern over the proximity of proposed development to the floodplain and emphasised that detailed flood risk assessments should be conducted to establish the level of risk of flooding.
- **Transport:** Five stakeholders stated that Option 1 has the potential for good transport links into the city centre, in addition it is close to the M5 and other major roads and would generate the necessary infrastructure improvements to the north. Five attendees queried whether the existing road infrastructure was good enough to support additional traffic. Many stakeholders (5) emphasised that the infrastructure should be in place prior to the development, whilst a further two stakeholders questioned whether new infrastructure works would be at the expense of works elsewhere. Nearly all stakeholders agreed that further information was required in relation to transport modelling reviewing, like all other options, traffic flows in and out of the PUA's and considering options for controlling traffic movements through congestion charges or tolls. Two attendees added that this option presented very good opportunities in relation to footpaths and cycle routes, provided they were built at the outset of the development.
- **Health/ Education:** Two stakeholders stated that the access to hospitals and schools would be good.
- **Employment:** Two stakeholders considered that this option would provide new employment opportunities, and in particular would enable the further development of Sunsworth Technology Park. However, a number of stakeholders stated that a detailed assessment of current and future employment growth should be undertaken in order to assess the potential impact of the development on the economic vitality of Gloucester city centre and Cheltenham. An economic strategy should be developed for both Option 1 and 2, exploring complementary economic growth for both PUAs.

- **Housing:** Many stakeholders stipulated that all options should seek to address affordable housing quotas through clear, proactive planning guidance.

Option 2:

3.24. Whilst Option 2 was the most popular option, most groups (four out of seven) stated that they preferred a combination of this Option and Option 1 subject to detailed assessments of potential impacts. Key points raised are summarised under the headings below:

- **Employment:** Seven stakeholders stated that this option would generate employment opportunities through the provision of the Business Park and they felt that it was the most sensible direction for Cheltenham to expand. However, like Option 1, an economic strategy should be undertaken exploring how to compliment economic growth within both settlements.
- **Green belt:** Six stakeholders considered that this option would not result in the coalescence of Cheltenham and Gloucester, adding that it was the least damaging to the green belt. A further four disagreed, arguing that it would result in the loss of green belt to the North West.
- **Landscape/Flooding/ History:** Two stakeholders stated that like all other options adequate protection should be given to low lying areas viewed from AONB and flood risk assessments should be undertaken. A further attendee suggested that a strategic landscape strategy should be considered, whilst another two emphasised the importance of the area in terms of its historic rural character. One group considered that this option was the most preferable in terms of landscape and biodiversity.
- **Natural Resources:** Three stakeholders expressed concern that the development would result in the loss of Grade I agricultural land.
- **Transport:** Mixed views were presented in relation to transport. Whilst seven stakeholders stated that this option had the opportunity to build on a well established infrastructure, close to the road network and in particular junction 10 of the M5, many (11) stressed that it was important to ensure that the transport infrastructure was established prior to the development going ahead. Infrastructure works should include the provision of the North West relief road and access both north and south bound from junction 10. In addition, opportunities for park and ride, light rail and an improved bus network must be considered. Two attendees stated that there were already good rail connections in Cheltenham and the area was well served by bus routes to nearby residential zones. Four attendees disagreed with this proposal, stating that it was dependent on the North West bypass which was an unacceptable option as it placed a heavy reliance on the car. A further attendee added that a full assessment of the impact on junction 10 should be undertaken.
- **Inappropriate location:** Three stakeholders argued that this option was in an inappropriate location with poor road links to the rest of the County and in the wrong district area for service provision and too remote. A further three added

that too much infrastructure was required and it could generate a dormitory settlement. Four attendees disagreed with this view, stating that there were good links to the Midlands, it was in close proximity to Cheltenham town centre and the M5. Further development would aid the economic viability and vitality of the town centre. One attendee added that there should be an effective working relationship between Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewksbury District Council in relation of further development growth.

- **Education/Health/ Community facilities:** One stakeholder questioned whether Cheltenham could provide facilities for this scale of development. A further two attendees added that access to hospital would be good and another suggested that new development of this scale would support existing facilities in Cheltenham.
- **Waste:** Two stakeholders expressed concern over the proximity of the development to a waste tip.

Option 3:

3.25. Option 3 was the least favoured option by all groups who considered that this was the most unsustainable option in terms of impact on the green belt and existing transport infrastructure. Specific points raised are summarised under the headings below:

- **Green belt:** Many stakeholders (17) felt that this option would result in the coalescence of the two settlements, and defeat the purpose of the green belt. Although one stakeholder argued that the land in the area was of little landscape value.
- **Airport:** Ten stakeholders stated that this proposal could conflict with the future of the airport, which is extremely important for training purposes; training over 60% of commercial pilots. It is also important in handling large local freight. If development were to occur it would have to take place around the airport. One stakeholder added that the future expansion of the airport as a regional base should be promoted. One stakeholder argued that the airport should not be expanded, as this would merely increase noise, traffic and air pollution.
- **Economy:** A number of stakeholders (7) considered that this option would be positive in attracting employment, with good transport links onto the M5. However the term “central business district” implies that other business districts would be less important and this option could draw employees from both Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- **Education/health:** Two stakeholders stated that a central location would be good in terms of access to schools and health facilities.
- **Housing:** To achieve a sustainable development option, many stakeholders (5) stressed that the development should achieve a mix of employment, housing, retail, services and leisure facilities. One stakeholder added that few people live

in this location. New development would displace existing communities and would not meet local housing needs.

- **Transport:** Whilst three stakeholders stated that this option would have excellent transport links to the M5, a number of stakeholders (4) felt that it would reinforce unsustainable travel patterns, using the M5 for short journeys, and asked whether the Highways Agency had a view on this option.

Three stakeholders suggested that this option could create the opportunity for a transport interchange or central rail parkway. However some argued (2) that a central rail station would be disastrous for both settlements and the development would not be within walking distance of either Cheltenham or Gloucester. Others (3) queried why this option was considered the best option in terms of public transport. Good public transport, walking and cycling routes would need to be constructed at the outset of the development if people were to be encouraged to make a modal shift. In addition, depending on the nature of the economic development and the type of housing, there could be an increase in traffic congestion as the development has the opportunity to draw in commuters. A number of site specific issues need to be addressed.

- **Natural resources:** One group considered that this option had a negative impact on natural resources.

Option 4:

3.26. Although this option was favoured by one group, all groups stated that further information was required on the capacity of settlements to absorb further development, and there was uncertainty over whether the dispersed proposal would realise the required numbers of growth and what the potential impact would be on the green belt. Two groups stated that the lack of information, made making a decision difficult. A number of issues were raised and these are summarised below:

- **Sustainability:** Mixed views were presented on whether this option was sustainable. Whilst some argued that this option would lead to uncoordinated planning and non sustainable communities (3), others felt that by providing economic opportunities and affordable housing, smaller communities would be sustainable (2).
- **Green belt:** Whilst two attendees felt that this option would offer the least incursion into the green belt, others (2) stated that the impact on the green belt could be high, eroding the landscape, history and culture of a number of settlements. A further two attendees stated that it was important to determine the capacity of the “well related settlements” bearing in mind the scale of development and the need to undertake a green belt review prior to any development proceeding. A further stakeholder added that if growth outside existing plans was really needed (which was debateable), this should be directed at more dispersed sites across the County.

- **Transport:** A number of stakeholders (9) stated that with this option there would be over reliance on the car, resulting in an increase in congestion. A dispersed approach would be unlikely to generate the 'critical mass' to secure strategic infrastructure or public transport improvements. However others (3) argued that if rural public transport was supported with strong financial contributions and the commitment of Government and transport operators, smaller communities would be sustainable. Proposals mentioned included a light rail system with numerous halts; encouraging small sustainable developments along the route, transport interchange points, shared use of schools and private buses and mini park and rides.
- **Housing:** One stakeholder argued that if housing figures were restricted to those wanting affordable housing then dispersed development in existing settlements would be the most attractive option. However others disagreed (5) stating that the scale of development would be too small to attract the critical mass and would not attract section 106 funding.
- **Identification of settlements:** Several stakeholders (8) stated that there was insufficient information to determine which sites were capable of absorbing further development.
- **Employment/Economy:** Many (4) felt that a dispersed pattern of employment would not generate significant jobs or opportunities. Others (2) disagreed arguing that employment areas could be much more diverse so long as the development was not reliant on one sole landowner/developer.
- **Health/Education/Health:** Concern was expressed by a number of stakeholders (3) over the lack of educational/retail/ health facilities in smaller settlements.
- **Waste:** One group stated that this option would have a negative impact on waste processing.
- **Flooding:** One stakeholder offered support for the proposal, providing developments did not occur within the floodplain.
- **Natural resources:** One group considered that this option would have a negative impact on natural resources.

Alternatives

3.27. A number of alternative options were considered during the course of the discussions, ranging from a new settlement to a more dispersed pattern of settlement. The most favoured option by four out of seven groups was a combination of Option 1 and 2.

- **Combined approach:** Four out of seven groups favoured combining option 1 and 2 subject to a more detailed survey being undertaken of key issues. A further group preferred a combination of option 1, 2 and 3, delivering options 1 and 2 first and then phasing in option 3 when necessary.

- **One PUA:** Three groups suggested that as an alternative Gloucestershire should be treated as one PUA, covering both rural and urban areas. Housing need would be met subject to a detailed review of local needs and opportunities for employment growth, encouraging organic growth and a good public transport network. They emphasised that the rest of the County should not be forgotten including the viability of market towns.
- **New Settlement:** Some individuals from groups preferred a new settlement to avoid piecemeal development of villages/towns.
- **Retain development within current settlement:** One group argued for the need to retain growth within settlements exploring all existing brownfield sites and reviewing density of housing without creating “extra growth by building for South-East refugees”.
- **Development land at Leckhampton:** A number of comments were made in relation to developing what was defined as “white land or safeguarded land” at Leckhampton. Specific comments covered waste management and transport by park and ride on the A46. Stakeholders stated that in this location the impact on landscape and biodiversity would be minimal.
- **Prevent development to the north of the region.** A few stakeholders at both forum events queried why development should take place in the north of the region and suggested that there should be greater emphasis on development further south.
- **Development throughout rural areas:** Some stakeholders said that it was important to ensure that sustainable communities are more effective in sparsely populated areas.

3.28. Additional points made from the lunch time flip charts covered:

- **Development of land south of Gloucester:** Two stakeholders stated that development south of Gloucester would form a medium sized development with infrastructure. This area should not be dismissed merely because of concerns over transport. It is highly accessible to employment areas such as Waterwells and Quedgeley.

General Conclusions

3.29. There was unanimous feedback from the majority of stakeholders attending both forum events that a combined option, based on Option 1 and 2 should be considered in greater depth. Many stakeholders stressed that it was important to retain the PUA’s separate identities, ensure that they complimented each other, building on their strengths. A number of specific comments were made:

- **Evidence:** Many stakeholders stressed that detailed information or evidence should be gathered for all options to ensure that that “the right development takes place in the right place”. Planning now has to be evidence-based using

information from Countryside Character, Biodiversity Action Plans, Housing Needs Assessments, transport and economic modelling.

- **Allocation of land:** Many participants questioned whether the proposed amount of development land for housing and employment was required, given a decline in birth rates and school populations and an increase in home working.
- **Design:** Many stakeholders stressed the importance of achieving a high quality design product which was locally distinctive and created a sustainable community.
- **Green belt:** Many stakeholders reiterated the importance of retaining the separate identities of Gloucester and Cheltenham, achieving this through a strong visual break in greenspace. Several stakeholders stated that the development of all options (1-4) must be first informed by a review of the green belt. Green belt planning should be longer than 20 years, should be comprehensive and consider additions as well as deletions.
- **Sustainable development:** Several stakeholders (5) stressed that all options should seek to achieve sustainable development and it was important to integrate all themes discussed previously. All development proposals should consider sustainable design and construction, reducing energy consumption, exploring innovative public transport solutions and alternative technology. In addition, some stakeholders added that the type of housing being built needs to be carefully considered. It is important to view new build as an opportunity to develop better environmentally friendly designs and not merely more inexpensive buildings. In addition, alternative building materials should be considered, given the large aggregate demands of current new build.
- **Transport:** Many stakeholders emphasised that it was important to achieve high quality, reliable, flexible and efficient alternatives to the car which were accessible to all, in discussion with transport operators. In addition, many agreed that prior to any further development taking place the existing transport infrastructure within and between the PUAs should be improved to reduce current problems with congestion. Several stakeholders from all groups stated that all options were difficult to assess without a clear understanding of the implications on the transport network. Further transport modelling was required to ensure that “new communities” were well connected by both the road and public transport network considering the movement of people to and from employment areas. At present all options did not resolve existing transport problems.
- **Landscape/History/Biodiversity:** Many stakeholders stated that whilst it was positive that flood plain issues were now being considered for new housing through techniques such as SUDs, it was also important to continue to invest and maintain the existing infrastructure. In addition, if development does take place it is essential that significant landscapes, nature conservation and historically important sites are protected and sensitively managed if incorporated within a development area.
- **Housing:** Many stakeholders stated that Government should address issues of in-migration, current housing stock and changing lifestyles; over 30% of housing is

in single occupancy. The area has become a magnet for in-migration, in particular for commuters to Swindon and Bristol; if more development takes place, this will merely increase a demand for more people to relocate to the area. Stakeholders stressed that what is important is to address local need and ensure that housing development is targeted at providing affordable housing for first time buyers, key workers and people in retirement. There is a need now which is currently not being addressed. One of the challenges facing Government is to take pressure off towns like Cheltenham and support less well off areas, ensuring that housing development takes place in areas most in need of employment opportunities. There also needs to be a sympathetic regeneration of small communities with “protected” affordable housing.

- **Education:** Many stakeholders stated that there was a need to expand and develop links between the local businesses and higher education in the area.

3.30. Whichever option or alternative is chosen, stakeholders stressed that there is a need for “joined up thinking” between new development and existing communities requirements. A bottom up approach should be taking to decision-making and the infrastructure must be in place before a development takes place considering transport, community, health and education facilities.

Method of Approach

- 3.31. A number of stakeholders made general points in relation to the tight timescale of the consultation period, and one of the forum events overlapped with another consultation exercise in relation to the Mineral Local Plan. In addition, concern was expressed over the lack of detail provided in relation to each option /alternative presented for discussion. As a result, many stakeholders were unwilling to form a judgement on which option or alternative they preferred.
- 3.32. Focusing specifically on the methods and techniques used by the consultants, there was some criticism over the format and complexity of the matrix used to determine the preferred option or alternative (session 2). This issue was resolved, through revisions to the exercise presented at the second forum event.

Appendix I
List of Attendees

Gloucester Guild Hall

M Dobson	Pegasus Planning
K Brauhnoltz	Leckhampton Green Land Association
N Gibbons	Forest of Dean District Council
Dr Cordwell	GCC
Mrs Martin	Hucclecote Parish Council
A Goldie	Glos Track
K Wise	Severn Wye Energy Agency
G Stanley	Vision 21
P Richards	Tewkesbury Borough Council
L Bexson	Gloucestershire Airport Limited
C Blundel	British Waterways
O Jones	Boyer Planning
M Thorpe	Gloucester City Council
T Clempsom	Tewkesbury Borough Council
M Oakley	RTPI SW
L Biddle	RPS
Cllr T Roberts	Forest of Dean District Council
C Kaye	Woodmancote Parish Council
N Whitehead	GOSW
B McInerney	Gloucestershire Hospitals Patients Involvement Forum
Cllr B Jones	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Mr Martin	Hucclecote Parish Council
S Birdseye	Savills
P Hardwicke	Hitchins
K Woodhead	SWRA
R Lloyd	CPRE
T Burley	GCC
S. Conners	Brockworth Residents Association
B Aldridge	Quedgeley Parish Council

Cheltenham Pump Rooms

M Howe	Badgeworth Parish Council
R Frewing	Badgeworth Parish Council
Mrs F Haidon	Badgeworth Parish Council
Mrs H Jones	Badgeworth Parish Council
Gareth Capner	Barton Willmore
Nick Groves	Boyer Planning
Cllr John Morris	Cheltenham Borough Council Deputy Built Environment
Marie Fallon	Cheltenham Borough Council
Jane Grunert	Cheltenham Borough Council
Richard Gibson	Cheltenham Borough Council
Tracey Birkinshaw	Cheltenham Borough Council
Holly Jones	Cheltenham Borough Council
Martin Quantock	Cheltenham Business Partnership
John Henry	Cheltenham Civic Society
Mr P Newcombe	Cheltenham Civic Society
Frances Robertson	Cheltenham Friends of the Earth
Richard Smith	Churchdown Parish Council
Cllr Derek Fisher	Churchdown Parish Council
Alison Rood	Countryside Agency
Diana Billingham	County LSP Manager
Ray Woolmore	CPRE (Director Gloucestershire Branch)
Mrs Neale	Elmstone Hardwicke Parish Council
Mike Wilkinson	English Nature
Laura Hackwood	Environment Agency
Ron Harrison	Glos Playing Fields Association
Ian Statham	Gloucestershire Airport Ltd
Lesley Bexson	Gloucestershire Airport Ltd
Mark Ryan	Gloucestershire Airport Ltd
John Cripps	Gloucestershire Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Cllr Deryck Nash	Gloucestershire County Council
Sarah Hamilton-Foy	Gloucestershire County Council
Evelyn Baggott	Gloucestershire County Council
Amanda Sutton	Gloucestershire County Council
David Oakhill	Gloucestershire County Council
Angela Newey	Gloucestershire County Council
Rob Niblett	Gloucestershire County Council
Simon Excell	Gloucestershire County Council
David Ingleby	Gloucestershire County Council
Caroline Anderton	Gloucestershire County Council
Alex Minshull	Gloucestershire Friends of the Earth
Mr Derek Harrison	Gloucestershire Police
Kate Forrest	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
Sinead Barker	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
Tom King	GOSW
Cllr David Ward	Gotherington Parish Council
Peter Wray	Highways Agency
Carol Muston	House Builders Federation
Paul Fong	Hunter Page
Jamie Lewis	Hunter Page

Martin Horwood	Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate Cheltenham
David Lynham	Longford Parish Council
Harold Symonds	NFB/FMB
Mark Fox	Pegasus Planning Group
Lesley Green	Percent for Art
John Oates	Pittville Area Residents Association
Gary Wilden	Pittville Area Residents Association
Heather McBeth	Planning and Countryside Advisers
Cllr Fuller	Prestbury Parish Council
Cllr Brichwell	Prestbury Parish Council
Mavis Roberts	Ramblers Association
Jill Bryne	Ramblers Association
Mavis Rear	Ramblers' Association
Simon Fitton	RPS
Kirsty O'Nion	Robert Hitchins Ltd
Linsey Thompson	Savills
Richard Shaw	Savills
Simon Fise	Savills
Mrs Chaplin	Shurdington Parish Council
Mr Gloyn	Shurdington Parish Council
Rupert Cox	Stagecoach West
Daniel Judge	Staverton Parish Council
Cllr B Tait	Stroud District Council
Cllr Graham Littleton	Stroud District Council
Peter Brown	SWRA
Cllr R Smith	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr M Sztymiak	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr P Richmond	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr M Beresford	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr Mrs M Levett	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr R Allen	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr A MacKinnon	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr Derek Davies	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Lisa Belfield	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Michael Reep	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr Brian Jones	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr P Brazil	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr B Stephens	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr S Connors	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Mr Pavey	Tewkesbury Traders Association
Christine Shine	Transport 2000 & Cotswold Conservation Board
M J Griffiths	Uckington Parish Council (Chairman)
Paul Drake	University of Gloucestershire
David Hall	Up Hatherley Parish Council
Michael Newman	Villages Action Group
David Ward	Villages Action Group
Mrs M Everett	Woodmancote Parish Council
Tony Burley	

Appendix 2

Agenda

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER TO 2026

STAKEHOLDER FORUM
31st January, Guildhall Gloucester
and
4th February Pump Rooms, Cheltenham
from 10.00am to 4.00pm

AGENDA

Welcome and introductions –
(Chair – Peter Nelson, Land Use Consultants)

- 10.10 **Purpose of the Forum Event – (Chair)**
- Aim of the Forum Event
 - Stakeholder Terms of Reference
 - How stakeholders will continue to be engaged
 - Implications of engaging in the process
- 10.30 Stakeholders vote/queries – (Chair)

National Guidance Context and background
(GOSW Representative)

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Revised National Planning Guidance
- Approach to future growth

- 11.00 **Regional Planning Context (SWRA Representative) -**
- Changes to regional and local planning
 - Development of the RSS - Programme and timescale of RSS and sub regional strategy
 - Brief for the Joint Study Area Steering Group
 - Links to Local Development Frameworks

Coffee Break

Local Planning Context and Background
(Steering Group Representative)

- Long-term Vision
- Constraints and Opportunities
- Summary of Spatial Options

- 12.00 Questions and Answer Session (Chair)

12.10 LUNCH

Informal feedback session

Stakeholders will be invited during the lunch break and coffee break to write their comments (both positive/negative) on the following flip sheets:

- Sheet 1: Option 1
- Sheet 2: Option 2
- Sheet 3 Option 3
- Sheet 4 Option 4
- Sheet 5 General Relevant Comments

Each flipsheet will be accompanied by a map on which stakeholders can also use post it notes to make comments.

Gathering Views

Stakeholders will be split into a maximum of 5 groups with approximately 20 stakeholders within each.

Discussion on spatial planning

- Each group should consider the main spatial issues following themes below:
- Transport
- Greenbelt and greenspace
- Education
- Health
- Employment areas
- Landscape and biodiversity
- Natural resources (forestry, agriculture, water use, mineral extraction, etc)
- History and culture
- Waste and sustainable development

Participants are asked to concentrate on the area being considered and focus on spatial rather than general issues.

2.10 ***b) Based on the discussions to date and all the responses around the room, please focus on the spatial options presented.***

- ***Discuss*** each option's advantages and disadvantages in turn
- ***Determine*** whether a consensus view can be achieved over a preferred option.

Both these exercises will be assisted by the use of maps and flip sheets

3.30 **Roundup of discussions (Chair)**

Summary of findings

4.00 **Finish**

In addition to all to the exercises above there will be a post-box at the back of the room for participants to make any comments they feel they would like to make in private.

There will also be a wider map of the whole County for more general comments to be made of wider relevance to this spatial strategy (for example you may feel some issues need to be considered which are not directly within the study area)

Appendix 3
Summary of Question and Answer Sessions
and Workshops for Cheltenham

**JSA Consultation Forum
Cheltenham Pump Rooms 4th February 2005**

Summary of Questions and Answer Session

- Alex Minshell, Gloucestershire Friends of the Earth questioned whether there would be a debate about the vision.
- Martin Horwood, Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate, expressed concern that the process was not participatory.
- Cllr John Morris stated that the presentations were misleading. Documents had been drawn up without any member input.
- Cllr Tewkesbury BC queried the housing allocations and questioned what the housing allocations were for the West Midlands and Wales.
- Peter Brown stated that the Regional Assembly was trying to determine through the RSS appropriate levels of growth and where future growth should occur, taking on board local concerns, people moving into the region, affordability and low cost housing. The RSS should tailor a response to fit the region.
- Alex Mitchel, Gloucestershire Friends of the Earth, questioned how Government intended to meet its deadline of 2050 to cut CO² emissions by 30%, if the predicted level of growth in housing was going to rise by 30%. He added that if development does take place, it should do so in a sustainable manner and this needs to be considered when discussing the options.
- Peter Nelson stated that he accepted that society needs to adjust and debate about what is meant by sustainable development is relevant to future growth.
- Shaun Conners, in response to Cllr J Morris view stated that councillors have had at least two years to test these options and all elected members have been involved in discussions. He added that the most pertinent issue is over the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of teachers and local service providers. He added that schools cannot hire teachers as none can afford to live in the area.
- A representative for Friends of the Earth, Cheltenham questioned the relationship of the current consultation exercise with the Statement of Community Intent and queried why the community had not been involved. She expressed concern over taking time off to attend the event and the timescale for consultation exercise.
- Peter Brown replied that the consultation was the maximum that could be built in at this stage. He stressed there would be a further 12 week consultation period in the autumn and in January 2006 to respond to the draft RSS, prior to public examination.
- Cllr Derek Fisher, Churchdown Parish Council expressed concern that an increase in housing development will increase the number of people relocating to the area and

demand. He added that the South East has built the most houses and it is the most expensive place to live.

- A representative from Vision 21 stated that it was important to understand the nature of an increase in need for development, adding that it was largely associated with a change in demographics. There are 11,000 fewer children, 60 care homes have closed and there is a demand for single occupancy houses. It has to be recognised that changing demographics is a slow process. It is important to encourage organic natural growth, explore not for profit housing, restrain high cost development and explore an increase in housing density.
- Peter Nelson agreed with the point raised over the need to revisit housing densities, and added that statistics indicate that 30% of people live in single occupancy dwellings.
- Rob Harris stated that there were gaps in the democratic framework, and the Regional Assembly was not elected. He added that all the options identified fell within Tewkesbury Borough Council's administrative area. The Regional Assembly determines the number of buildings, the Local Development Framework identifies where these will be built.
- Tom King responded by stating that the end result is determined by the elected Government and there is little difference between the process under the Regional Planning Guidance and the RSS. In relation to LA input, whilst the Act does not give District Councils a statutory duty, District Councils are responsible for taking land use planning forward. Councils will be able to comment on the draft RSS and express their views at public examination.
- Paul Fedton, Cheltenham Chamber of Business and Commerce, expressed concern over the current levels of congestion and welcomed sympathetic growth. He added that innovative transport techniques to ease congestion in towns need to be explored. He questioned who will pay for the infrastructure and what is happening in rural areas?
- Peter Brown replied that there is a common misunderstanding that the RSS merely concentrates on PUAs. The RSS recognises that development can take in other urban areas. Growth needs to be structured to meet employment and housing need, and what the RSS is trying to do is look at the functionality of each settlement, exploring how it works and its growth potential. Information on this work will feed into the RSS.
- Tom King stated that in response to this query, the Regional Transport Strategy will feed into the RSS, however he accepted that there had been in the past an element of disconnectivity and this should be addressed. Local Transport Plans are the mechanism for identifying local priorities and budgets, inevitably not all funding requirements will be met.
- John Webster added that the cost of funding transport infrastructure improvements is reliant on further development. He sought reassurance from Government that it was going to commit to a proper transport system in the Severn Vale.
- A representative from Transport 2000 added that a good transport system should be considered before further development takes place; more roads will result in more cars.

It is important to ensure that any future development links into the public transport network.

- Peter Nelson confirmed that the points raised would be explored further in the afternoon discussions.
- Carol Muston, House Builders Federation, expressed concern over the membership of the Joint Steering Group and questioned why there were no representatives from bodies/organisations responsible for implementing the sub regional strategy. She queried how the membership was defined, what the future role of the group was and whether there was scope for new members to join.
- Peter Brown replied that the membership of the Joint Steering Group mirrored the membership of the Regional Assembly, with representation from local authorities (70%) and members representing social, economic and environmental interests (30%). The choice of who represented the 30% was made at a local level.
- Tony Burley agreed with the comments made, adding that members covering social, economic and environmental interests included CPRE, the Voluntary Sector and Gloucestershire First.
- Martin Horwood, Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate, questioned why the consultation document had accepted that an increase in future housing building was inevitable with a rise in-migration and loss of greenfield sites. He added that rather than looking at urban areas, it was important to look to rural areas and provide more shops and post offices. He expressed concern that one of the options was located on Greenfield sites close to some of the most deprived areas of Gloucester. Further work needs to be undertaken to determine what communities need and want.
- Peter Nelson agreed that rural areas have similar issues which need to be addressed elsewhere in the RSS process.

Lunch Time Discussion Board on Options:

Option 1:

Agree

- Least impact on the M5.
- Most potential for improving non-car travel modes.
- Good connections into Gloucester Centre.
- Need to see any growth here as part of the Gloucester/Cheltenham/Bishop's Cleeve sub-region and not be deflected by the current and now out-dated notion of the PUA as per the Structure Plan.

Disagree

- Gives urban spread, no room for transport improvements. Adjacent to flood plan = agree! Removes the green belt without its advantages other than as a buffer (eg soaking up H₂O).

- Insufficient infrastructure already.
- No/little employment within the community.
- Too much emphasis on one growth location at Gloucester – a more balanced approach is needed recognising other, more sustainable locations for growth.
- Close to motorway – could encourage car use.
- Will not meet the dispersed pattern of affordable housing need across the PUA/sub-region.
- Can only work if done on a very large scale to pay for transport infrastructure.
- Would fail to address wider social and physical infrastructure needs and deficits of the PUA/sub-region.
- Question if the implied level of growth here is the most sustainable approach given that other sustainable locations exist.
- GNB? could possibly act as a natural barrier.

Option 2:

Agree

- Best option for keeping Cheltenham and Gloucester apart.
- Also, we need a North West bypass.
- Upgrade J10. Good position.
- OK, but new bypass will mean even more congestion in Bishop's Cleeve.
- Need to view Cheltenham as part of the sub-region of Gloucester/Cheltenham and Bishop's Cleeve and not focus on the outdated notion of the PUA as in the Structure Plan.

Disagree

- Too much emphasis on Cheltenham at the expense of other sustainable locations – there must be a more balanced approach.
- Affordable housing needs are spread throughout the PUA and elsewhere – one location at Cheltenham would not meet the needs profile of the central area.
- Question accessibility of this location for major growth – it's not in a transport corridor and would encourage car use.
- A limited bypass would encourage peripheral commuting and not support strong radical public transport.
- If not "sustainable", then no "special circumstances" to release green belt.
- Need to sort Transport Policy first!
- Does it account for possible long-term impact of global warming on flood plain?
- Removes green space further from some of Cheltenham's least well-off areas.
- Based on wrong assumption of need and desire for growth.
- The potential for sustainable growth at Bishop's Cleeve should be recognised as part of the wider sub-region, ie good public transport, potential rail route, accessible employment, access to services/village centre etc.

Option 3:

Agree

- Green belt of poor quality in this area.
- Agree, but still keep Cheltenham and Gloucester separate.

Disagree

- Creates a bridgehead for joining Gloucester and Cheltenham.

- Increases motorway congestion and will draw in people who live all across the M5.
- Significantly biased towards people with a car.
- There should be a presumption in favour of keeping Cheltenham and Gloucester separate.
- Encourage use of motorway for community.
- Divert investment from PUA.
- Fail to meet existing “local” housing needs where these arise.
- Fail to address existing social and physical infrastructure deficits, especially transport.
- Least attractive option in terms of encouraging less use of car and more walking and cycling.
- Already too many people complaining about the airport.

Option 4:

Agree

- Most sustainable option. Needs less infrastructure development.
- Allows for organic growth.
- Encourages more creative development solutions.
- Individual sites will be smaller.
- Has some merit provided it recognises the need to focus growth at the PUA and other well connected and sustainable locations such as Bishop’s Cleeve.

Disagree

- Keep the countryside uncluttered.
- Expensive to provide high quality public transport.
- Quality public transport needs volume to be commercially viable in the medium to long term.
- If you build in countryside, there will be no countryside!!
- Create a bigger problem. Definitely NOT!
- As above, there will be no countryside!
- Rural areas need affordable housing for their young people, but cannot sustain anything large scale.
- If this implies spreading the growth out and closing the advantages of “focused growth”, even this strategy is not supported.

Alternatives:

- Regrettable that other options are ruled out of consultation/consideration, eg south of Gloucester forming a mid-sized development with infrastructure in place first, between Cheltenham and Gloucester (particularly transport first) and an option of mixed PUA and rural developments.
- Future consultation must include the generations who are not represented here, but whom the strategy will directly affect (under 40’s).
- Include other essential services in consultation process. Health and social care, education – will any of the options result in a deficit in these provisions, particularly health and the needs of the older population?
- Difficult to fully compare and assess the options without some reasonably empirical projection of growth requirements based on demographic trends, economic outlook and assumptions about migration into the region.
- Not providing for people already here – this will be a magnet for more in-migration.

- Regret that a new settlement has been ruled out. This would stop piecemeal development.
- Develop prototype light rail – Toddington to Cheltenham High Street – using GWR. Move park and ride to station at Racecourse. Linear link relieving A435.
- Centre business and industrial business around airport – not housing.
- Planning for housing alone is not enough. What about the whole infrastructure?

Summary of Afternoon Plenary:

- If option 1 or 2 were considered then it would add a ribbon of development. It is important that the impact on infrastructure and floodplain is considered.
- CPRE requested if a copy of the report would be circulated to all attendees.
- Friends of the Earth expressed concern over the consultation process.
- Concern was expressed over the density of buildings. An increase in density could result in anti social behaviour, and a loss of leisure/recreational space.
- There is overwhelming scepticism over the consultation process.
- The response from Gloucester’s Forum event was that they preferred a mixture of option 1 and 2 and there appeared to be a general consensus from Cheltenham as well over this alternative option.
- There was general agreement that a review of the green belt needs to be undertaken before options are considered.
- The consultation document does not consider white land south of Cheltenham.

JSA Consultation Forum

Cheltenham Pump Rooms 4th February 2005

Group A

Facilitator: Maritta Boden

Scribe: Angela Newey

Attendees:

M Howe	Badgeworth Parish Council
Tracey Birkinshaw	Cheltenham Borough Council
Frances Robertson	Cheltenham Friends of the Earth
Alison Rood	Countryside Agency
Laura Hackwood	Environment Agency
Martin Horwood	Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate Cheltenham
Lesley Green	Percent for Art
Cllr Brichwell	Prestbury Parish Council
Mrs Chaplin	Shurdington Parish Council
Cllr Graham Littleton	Stroud District Council
Cllr B Jones	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Christine Shine	Transport & Cotswold Conservation Board
David Ward	Villages Action Group
Gareth Capner	Barton Wilmore
Richard Gibson	Cheltenham Borough Council
Chris Shaw	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Dr Beard	CPRE
Cllr Lynch	Gloucester County Council
Chris Hickey	Vision 21
Jackie Sallis	Cheltenham Disability Forum

Session 1: Discussion on Themes

The discussion opened with a general comment relating to the list of spatial issues identified on the Agenda. The reference to sustainable development applies to all the themes rather than just to Waste.

Transport

- Need better bus transport from rural areas – more housing in rural areas could support this.
- Better access required for disabled people and cheaper public transport.
- Provision of parking near bus stops in rural areas (mini park and rides).
- Cheltenham only has basic park and ride facilities.
- We can have better public transport without new houses in urban areas.
- Location of park and ride sites important – prefer rural hubs for public transport.
- Better provision needed for walking and cycling, including safe routes.
- Must recognise that not everybody can or wants to drive. Equal access to transport opportunities for all needed.
- Need car free developments.
- Should recognise the environmental impacts that the required new roads will have.
- There is a critical mass of housing needed to make public transport work.
- Flexible approach to public transport needed in rural area, e.g. dial a ride.

- Shared use for public transport should be considered.
- Lack of affordable housing in rural areas has a knock on effect on levels of public transport usage.
- Need to consider how we will move about post 2015.

Green Belt

- Consultation document does not distinguish between urban extensions in and outside the green belt and is therefore wrong. 'White Land' has not been adequately explored.
- The Structure Plan is being ignored. Overall picture of the green belt is needed. GCC explained that green belt review is available as background paper as part of this consultation exercise.
- 'White land' is 'green' land.
- Option 2 North of Cheltenham is close to deprived areas that have little other green open space.
- Green belt is important as green and open space for urban areas.
- Query number of houses needed. More information required about housing needs in terms of numbers and types.
- Will green field sites be used last after brown field sites?
- Changing the goal posts by now introducing review of the green belt.
- Staverton airport important economically for the County.
- Must look at long-term future and consider green belt as part of this process.
- Need to assess how green belt is used for recreation etc.
- Strengthen the green belt. Inspector (Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan) recommended houses in the green belt but should use urban brown field sites instead.
- Should recognise that there is not a never-ending supply of urban brownfield sites.

Landscape and Biodiversity

- 'White land' is important part of landscape and important for biodiversity as well as for local people.
- Protection of open spaces should be in the top 5 issues.
- Why is urban extension a preferred option? Need to preserve green space for urban areas.
- Green belt important for wildlife and visual amenity.
- Need to protect areas bordering AONB.
- All about relative choices – should use 'White Land' before the green belt.
- Should consider importance of tranquil areas.
- Should create landscapes first and then 'fit' new development into it.

Employment

- More flexible working patterns should be considered, e.g. local employment in rural areas, working from home, and use of IT. Should not just be about building factories.
- Example given of employment facilities in Shurdington which is close to main centres of population and is on a bus route but most employers commute by car.
- 'White Land' has potential for employment.
- Need to decide what Gloucestershire needs in terms of employment.
- Importance of small businesses should not be forgotten.
- Issue of out-commuting to Swindon and London. Are we providing housing for Swindon?

- Remember existing commitments for employment development e.g. at Brockworth. Gloucestershire has variety of employment opportunities.
- Stroud district has experienced problems of loss of major employers.
- We are not taking innovative approach – need to consider lifestyles.
- Business does not need more buildings and homes because of IT and home working.
- Compare South West to South East where they have same pressures.

Health

- Need more access to health care opportunities - e.g. local GP surgeries.
- Need better integration of facilities and different land uses, e.g. problems of housing near waste tip.
- The larger the communities the more difficult to reach services.

Natural Resources

- Must not destroy what Gloucestershire is famous for.
- Need to understand what natural resources are.
- Need to consider what proportion of natural resources is used for all parts of development.

General Points:

- Need for “bottom–up” approach to decision making rather than Government’s top down approach.
- Declining birth rates and school populations should be considered.
- Document does not place enough emphasis on the interrelationship between the different issues.
- Development proposals will exacerbate flooding.
- Illegal dumping - free collection of waste needed to help prevent this.

Session 2 – Proposed Options

Sticks marked (/) indicate agreement with the comments.

Option I:

- Agree with regard to transport, housing, health, employment and waste. Disagree with landscape, green belt and history.
- No such development outside existing areas – trends in household size and economic migration challenged to take pressure off towns like Cheltenham and support less well off areas. (Martin Horwood, LD Candidate, Cheltenham).
- No to it. No good on transport, green belt, housing adjacent to flood plain. ///
- Green belt to contain the ground of Gloucester – LAST RESORT. Unsustainable location (GCC view on 570 houses at Langford). Affected by floodplain.
- No – no infrastructure.
- Not preferred – effect on flood plain. /
- Located within and adjacent to the flood plain. Flood Risks Assessments need to be conducted to establish the level of risk. ////
- Transport – suggest transport improvements, but is this at the expense of improving transport infrastructure overall in Gloucester and Cheltenham?
- Flooding – Gloucester would be too large, ie upset the balance between Gloucester and Cheltenham.

Option 2:

- Need to protect lower lying areas viewed from AONB.
- Transport – looks car dependent = no good. /
- Flood risk issues again. Partially located within the flood plain. Flood Risk Assessments need to be undertaken. /
- Transport – public system possible and park and ride. Employment area/retail area on this edge of Cheltenham could serve new development. Need strategic landscape corridor/green space strategy. ////
- Dependent on NW bypass. Car dependent. Unacceptable. Approved green belt to constrain ground of Cheltenham – option is LAST RESORT. /
- Disagree with transport, housing, health, landscape, waste, green belt and history.
- Second preferred option going into green belt.
- Sort out improved transport system before consideration of housing needs.

Option 3:

- No good unless taken with another option to have – i) landscape around it, and ii) disposal (sustainably) in rural communities.
- In critical green belt gap so may not be followed – “Golden Valley” disappears.//
- Economy Transport – “central business district” implies other business districts would be of lesser importance and would draw workforce across both Gloucester and Cheltenham. /
- Much preferred option. Proper green belt land needs infrastructure.
- No virtue.
- Landscape – negative impact on landscape and Gloucester/Cheltenham divide.

Option 4:

- Least bad of the four, as long as rural public transport supported.
- Dispersal not sustainable.
- Not sustainable – will not mean that can deliver integrated successful new communities. May deliver a Shurdington bypass for example.
- Best option on all fronts. Do not agree that public transport must suffer. ////
- Agree with green belt, education, health, employment, biodiversity, history and housing. Disagree with transport.
- Need to define green belt clearly before agreeing any dispersed sites./
- Dispersed sites but not including green belt or extension sites.
- If growth outside existing plans is really needed (debateable), directed at more dispersed sites across country/regions which might actually want it, e.g. rural communities struggling for viability.
- Need disbursed additions settlements with strong financial contributions by developers and Government and commitment to public transport as a primary mode of transport and local shops etc./

Alternatives

- High housing density causes anti-social behaviour. Building on playing/sports fields should not be allowed nor buildings used for youth activities be taken and used for housing./
- Reconsider freestanding new town.//
- Employment areas much more diverse. Rural transport shared with schools and private. Mini park and ride.

- Should consider white land/safeguarded land.
- Could provide integrated mixed development on CBC/TBC land with public transport/park and ride.
- Waste Policy to reduce and much more available recycling facilities, especially cardboard, plastic milk containers and soft drinks. Pressure on industry to reduce packaging. Incentive to retail outlets to encourage reuse of plastic bags etc.
- Planning now has to achieve sustainable development, therefore this needs to underpin all options. This requires integration of all of these themes – none should be looked at in isolation. //
- Housing development in areas most in need of employment opportunities. Flexible public transport, sympathetic regeneration of small communities with “protected” affordable housing.
- Health – more access to open space. Local clinics especially for elderly.
- Multi-functionality of space, ie serves biodiversity, landscape, health education etc together, not separately.
- Retain relative size of both PUAs without creating “extra growth by building for South-East refugees”.
- Waste at Leckhampton dealt with by green tariff and green waste composting.
- Biodiversity retained at Leckhampton, eg hedgerows.
- Live work units, incubator units, home working and small scale BI units at Leckhampton.
- Leckhampton not Special Landscape area.
- Existing 200 houses at Leckhampton (allowed after rigorous inquiry) will benefit from public transport, community facilities and increased public access on white land.
- Community facilities supported and enhanced at Leckhampton white land.
- Public transport orientated. Development in SE Cheltenham on white land.
- Walk and ride park and ride on A46.
- Mixed use development at white land.
- White land at Leckhampton. /
- General – transport, all options, better access for disabled people.
- Small affordable where possible in rural communities, deprived areas in whole region. /

General Comments:

- As the policies are all based on assumptions, I cannot agree with them in their present presentation.
- All options – information/evidence to ensure right development in right place. /
- The development of all options (1-4) must be first informed by a review of the green belt. /
- Planning now has to be evidence-based. Use of information from Countryside Character, Biodiversity Action Plans, Housing Needs Assessments etc should be used to inform options.
- All options – sustainable design/construction.
- Check the figures based on economic growth.

Overall Rating:

Summary of Group A responses:

- Option 1: Generated greatest concern associated with flood risk, loss of green belt and difficulties with transport infrastructure.
- Option 2: Generated mixed views. Whilst the highest number of stakeholders were in agreement arguing that the siting of new development to the north west would create easy access off the motorway to serve new development, some expressed concern over this option being too car dependent.
- Option 3: Concern expressed over erosion/loss of green belt.
- Option 4: The spread of growth through dispersed settlements subject to adequate public transport provision was the most favoured option, subject to a green belt review.

**Cheltenham Workshop 4th February 2005
GROUP B**

GROUP B

Facilitators: Steve Evison

Scribe: Mike Reep

Attendees

R Frewing	Badgeworth Parish Council
Nick Groves	Boyer Planning
Cllr John Morris	Cheltenham Borough Council
Holly Jones	Cheltenham Borough Council
Richard Smith	Churchdown Parish Council
Diana Billingham	County LSP Manager
Ron Harrison	Glos Playing Fields Association
Alex Minshull	Gloucestershire Friends of the Earth
Cllr David Ward	Gotherington Parish Council
John Oates	Pittville Area Residents Association
Mavis Roberts	Ramblers Association
Mr Gloyn	Shurdington Parish Council
Peter Brown	SWRA
Cllr Mrs M Levett	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr P Brazil	Tewkesbury Borough Council
M J Griffiths	Uckington Parish Council
Mrs M Everett	Woodmancote Parish Council

Session I: Discussion on Themes

History and Culture

- Preserve in aspic?
- Character of Cheltenham being destroyed by development.
- CA protection – safeguards for whole of town needed – high density developments.
- More investment from developers.
- Approach to types of employment – big employers v home grown etc.

Transport

- Other options – LRT – missing.
- Emphasis on road.
- Transport built on back of development
- Up-front investment public transport needed
- Role of airport? serve needs of local area
- J10 not mentioned – full interchange?
- M5 capacity, transport statistics?
- New highway capacity should address public transport objectives.
- Integration.
- Start with transport options → development solutions
- Cycling/walking – sage routes.
- Change car culture.
- Lack of public transport in rural areas – links e.g. to park and ride.

Green Belt and Green Space

- Density issue - ↓ quality environment.
- More building doesn't lead to lower prices.
- Create attractive accessible green space = social inclusion issue and health.
- LA boundary issue – pressure on urban infrastructure.
- All options = green belt development
 - disperse development through Gloucestershire towns.
- Potential agreement between LAs – also health.
- Green belt important to visual character and appearance of Gloucestershire.
- Must resolve strategic green belt issue at outset – regional boundaries.
- Green belt review – need greater involvement/participation
 - More detailed review needed
 - Remote decision making
 - Need ↑ engagement
- Green belt is not sacrosanct:
 - May be sustainable
 - Question of priorities
- Social and historical capital in green belt
 - Danger of urban mediocrity
 - Can't leave it to the market
 - Urban cramming

Education/Health:

- Consider health in holistic way – e.g. building of tip at Bishop's Cleeve.
- Schools – current review – need joined up thinking.
- Primary health services?

- Population projections – national planning:
 - Put development where growth needed
 - Is RA a better judge of local issues?

Employment

- Cheltenham short of employment land.
- Mixed use important – integration with housing.
- Commuting into C&G, and between C&G.
- Employment areas should be accessible to existing residents/employees.
 - ↑ housing → ↑ commuting.
- Definition of employment shortage?
 - Where are jobs coming from?
 - Nature of work and workplace?

Landscape and Biodiversity

- Flooding – impact of global warming?
 - Wider catchment management.
 - Use of land/farming practice.
- Opportunity to reduce run-off:
 - Use of SUDS.
 - Maximise use of natural environment.

- Consider implications in relation to options.
- Inadequate level of analysis – background papers insufficient.
- SSSIs require larger envelope of protection.
- Importance of local sites to local community and quality local environment.

Natural Resources

- Development needs aggregates/materials – minimise waste.
- Cheltenham's natural resource is its countryside.
- Economic resource of tourism
- Green belt important in this respect – more than just to prevent sprawl.
- Grey water management.
- Constraints – distinction natural/artificial/e.g. green belt

Waste and Sustainable Development

- Dealing with and ↓ household waste
- Plan waste management facilities
- Recycling is critical.
- Design in waste structure.
- National population ↓ but ↑ locally – why?
 - Can it be reversed? Existing capital investment.
 - Challenge figures.

Housing

- Recent housing needs survey – existing latent demand.
- Need to ensure housing for rent for specific groups
 - Even at expense of total housing.
 - Identify specific housing requirements
 - Land values to reflect affordable housing.
- Demographics:
 - To reflect needs e.g. elderly
 - Dwelling size.
- Creation sustainable communities:
 - Balanced communities
 - Look across spectrum of housing market

General Comments

- Politically there is a fear of taking the first step towards green belt review and acceptance that some parts can be removed.
- Allocation and additional/replacement green belt is pointless – will not serve a green belt purpose.
- Green belts are an essential amenity. Without them, the very attractiveness of Gloucestershire is lost.//
- Ideal for linking C&G providing good transport links of road, rail, air.
- The pros of several options is the contribution to public transport yet we have seen very little investment in public transport from development in the past. Why can't we use development money more broadly than just for the specific development area?
- Integrated public transport system required: tram/light rail using old rail tracks linking with park and ride sites.

- Need to identify transport corridor at outset – at least a segregated bus route – could be upgraded to LRT in future if resources permit. /
- Invest in public transport first. ////
- Many houses in Cotswold villages date from the 15th century. They help constitute a living history. To build red brick in their gardens would be to destroy the character of the villages.
- Plant more trees. Trees replenish oxygen, through the process of photosynthesis. Trees take in CO₂ and give off oxygen. One reason why woodlands are necessary.
- It is very important to get the infrastructure in place before the building programme.
- I didn't tick the post it's because too many and it's a facile exercise given the complexity.
- Commentary on options is ill supported not referenced and often prejudiced.
- Density – High density reduces need to use green belt/space but too high a density creating very poor quality environment in towns
- Green belt – restricting urban expansion helps to ensure investment in urban areas, and is protected/reinforced quality.
- Protection of SSSIs will require wider area of land to prevent urban pressures on management/condition.
- Need to recognise importance of green space in urban environment and accessibility to people. Apply standards for access to protect existing and plan new.
- Need to look at patterns of run off from development land and opportunities to design SUDS into each option.
- Concern that process protects nationally important sites (SSSI, SAM) but not those of local importance/value – which are used/valued by people.
- Impact of increase in population on sites/countryside around G&C, e.g. increased numbers using honey pot sites Criddey Hill and Cots scarp. Need for management.
- Balance quality of built environment and existing urban areas v building on green belt. Pressure on urban green spaces.
- Best probably to spread to land around therefore mixture of 1,2 and 3 and some 4 where work units can be created.
- The rural nature of Gloucestershire is what promotes tourism.
- Need a more holistic view of development – including type and size of living units and associated infrastructure for health/leisure/work.
- Risk flood areas should look to the future, after more global warming.
- Rural house prices have risen so much that young couples from a village are forced to move into town to find accommodation.
- Current hospital situation. C&G often both full. Impact of new housing needs to be considered.
- How best do we meet the need of C&G?

Session 2 – Proposed Options

Option 1:

- Transport - Based on the information supplied within this doc, I believe non of the 4 options address movement in and out of the PUA's
- Green belt - Coalescence avoided.
- The 4 options refer to a green belt "review". This review lacks background info to support the graph within the report. //
- Employment - Takes investment from C&G, already has significant URC in place.
- Landscape Potential flood plain issues

- Natural Resources - Flood risk. Does harm to green belt function arise? /
- Housing - All options presume large numbers of houses will solve affordable housing.
- Housing - Clear planning rules/guidance to developers in LP will address affordable housing quotas.

Option 2:

- Transport - NW Cheltenham – potentially most sustainable option given proximity to retail/employment/principal road network.
- Transport Could deliver major highways improvement to advantage of NW Cheltenham.
- Transport - We don't want (ie Cheltenham people) new bypass, it was abandoned as an option so actually delivery is the wrong word. 200 would probably necessitate the building of the road. This is therefore a negative not a positive.
- Transport - Would really affect transport in North Cheltenham without much better roads.
- Transport - Worst option, very car based and road transport focused on the MS. ✓
- Transport - Increased pressure on A4019 – link from M5 to the site. Need to consider making J10 full interchange otherwise lead to unnecessary extra time on journeys.
- Green belt - Loss of green belt and green field areas.
- Green belt - Does harm to green belt function arise?
- Green belt - Coalescence avoided. Good employment links. Not fundamental to green belt principles. //
- Green belt - Fewer landscape biodiversity issues.
- History and culture - Area of rural character.

Option 3:

- Transport - A central SV station could be disastrous for C&G and draw usage in the whole area.
- Transport - Conflicts with future role for the airport by the loss of the airport – is a valuable facility with potential for public use rather than private flying schools.
- Transport - Could cast doubt over future of airport.
- Transport - Area around airport should be kept free from development so as to allow regional airport development – necessary to improve transport infra-structure.
- Transport - Don't want expansion of airport – noise, traffic and pollution and climate change. /
- Transport Coalescence/airport/access new infrastructure social/ physical.
- Green belt should be retained as the natural division between C&G. //
- Green belt - Compromises raison d'être for the green belt. /
- Should satisfy employment potential before allowing more houses here.

Option 4:

- Transport - Emphasis on dispersal at odds with reducing car use.
- Transport - Option 1-4 has not addressed the movement of people to and from employment areas and been too narrow in solving transport needs. ✓
- Transport - Unlikely to produce sufficient 'critical mass' to secure strategic infrastructure improvements.
- Green belt - What is the capacity of "well related" settlements bearing in mind the scale of development.
- Green belt - Least sustainable option. Opportunities for economy lost. /
- Health provision? Flying doctor? /

- Lack of local employment/ educational/retail/ health facilities in smaller settlements /
- Review green belt immediately. Use the green belt in a smarter fashion! ///
- No sites shown are misleading – need more information – likely to include elements of options 1 and 2.

Alternative Options

Bit of option 1 and option 2.

- Option 5 – treat Gloucestershire as one PUA. In that way rural and urban areas of Gloucester complement each other and housing need will be met. /
- A new settlement would still be my preferred option, to avoid piecemeal development of villages/towns.
- Option 5 – string of pearls; organic growth across Gloucestershire and good public transport. //
- Don't accept promises – invest in Scotland.
- Ration land for housing across tenure.
- Greater use of current housing stock – too many single people in big houses. More attractive house sharing options.
- Maintain urban quality.
- Invest in public transport first. /

Cheltenham Workshop 4th February 2005
GROUP C

GROUP C Participants

Facilitators: Joy Howell

Scribe: Sarah Foyn

Attendees

David Cook	Gloucestershire Airport
Derek Davies	Tewkesbury BC
Derek Harrison	Gloucester Police
Richard Fuller	Prestbury Parish Council
Bruce Stephens	Tewkesbury TBC
Daniel Judge	Staverton Parish Council
Don Glyn	Shardington PC
Tony Burley	on behalf of Gloucestershire First
Derek Fisher	Churchdown Parish Council
Sean Connor	Tewkesbury Borough Council
David Hall	Up Hatherley Parish Council
Garry Wilbind	Pittville Residents Association.
Peter Wray	Highways Agency
Rupert Cox	Stagecoach Buses
Richard Smith	Tewkesbury BC and Churchdown PC
Marie Fallow	Cheltenham BC
Martin Quantock	Cheltenham Business Partnership
Jill Byrne	Ramblers Association
Lindsay Thompson	Savills
Barbara Tait	Stroud DC
Ray Woolmore	CPRE Gloucester Branch

Session 1: Discussion on Themes

Housing

- Question proposed level of growth. It is necessary and what figures is it based on?
- Predict less economic growth to 2026.
- Homeless – how do we make provision?
- Not building enough affordable houses.
- Second homes are an issue.
- Many people commuting out of county.
- Should take into account property on market when assessing housing need.
- Tackle shortage of housing. District councils – what can they do?
- Need immigration so have people of working age, therefore need housing and employment.
- Need provision of infrastructure (fire, police, health).
- Housing for elderly – cost/price.

Transport

- Improve public transport provision, walking, cycling.

- Key issue is provision of sustainable transport infrastructure before development takes place.
- LRT?
- Change expectations - not necessary to have a car, encourage cycling.
- Tank MOD site at Ashchurch.
- Transport solutions before development.
- Development fund.
- SWRA and SWRDA proposal to ODPM.
- Safety of existing cycle routes is questionable.
- Lack of provision of community facilities and services – ‘need wheels’.
- Impact on the M5 (purpose long distance travel – problem junction hopping).
- Should not build on airport – existing employment should remain.
- Airport needs to be retained for local business.
- Airport should feature in LTP.
- Developed as an airport supported.

Greenspace and Green belt

- Green belt should be extended south of Gloucester. Could be minor incursions into green belt (not a landscape designation). AONB on East – nature on West.
- Opposed to any incursions in green belt between Cheltenham and Gloucester. Should be kept as it is – not a dumping ground.
- Two towns don’t want to be merged. Retain identities and individual characters
- Green belt – 16000 acres. Build at PUA’s
- Add more green belt.
- Look at something totally different – e.g. a sustainable community with sustainable energy/transport/employment – requires a new way of thinking

Waste

- Where is it going to go?
- Incineration is only way to go.
- Will need to import waste to keep incinerator operating (to have sufficient quantities).
- Use heat generated from incinerator to power homes.

History and culture, landscape

- Two centres in such close proximity is unique.
- Prevent coalescence – agreement in group.
- AONB adds to attractiveness of area.

Agriculture and natural resources

- Protect high grade agricultural land.
- Affect on land value.
- Provision of ‘green lung’ – green belt. Look at ways of enhancing area, i.e. to provide green lung playing fields.
- Provision of housing elsewhere in the county – not sustainable but still 40%.
- Role of parks – recreation acceptable in green belt playing fields.

Five key points from discussions

- Separate two towns. Add more green belt south of Gloucester.
- Provision of infrastructure before building or at the same time.
- Housing key workers and those in need affordable housing. (Cannot separate key worker housing from affordable housing).
- Retention of airport – employment opportunities.
- Accessibility/sustainability (must sign up to this).

Session 2 – Proposed Options

Participants were asked to think about the advantages (+) and disadvantages (-) of each option:

Option 1 – North of Gloucester

Agree

- Good site, well situated, benefits as outlined.
- If it's Staverton, not elsewhere.
- Proximity to road and rail network and opportunities for enhanced public transport.
- Support existing infrastructure, i.e. health etc in town.
- Potential for good transport connection to Gloucester city.
- Transport, less impact on green belt, health, employment.
- Relatively minor incursion into the green belt can be achieved without causing the coalescence of Cheltenham and Gloucester.
- Does allow for the further development of Sunsworth technology park.

Disagree

- Inadequacy of single carriageway A40 westwards.
- Poor transport links.
- Land in wrong district area of services.
- Infrastructure first.
- Is network of roads good enough?
- Flooding.
- Education
- Potential flooding.
- Flood plain

Summary:

- Infrastructure must come first (applies to all options) – including business provision.
- Need control with provision, e.g. congestion charging/tolls.
- Flooding is an issue – implications of development on/near the flood plain.
- Some areas acceptable – technical advice required.

Option 2 – North West Cheltenham

Agree

- Already has massive infrastructure development – stores, roads.
- Easy access with junction 10 modification, plus North to west bypass.
- Support existing facilities in Cheltenham, i.e. health/education.
- Best option, clear of Gloucester.
- Minimal impact.
- Good opportunities for employment.

- Will aid the viability and vitality of Cheltenham town centre.
- Education.
- Close to road network – would need to consider impact on J10.
- Opportunities for park and ride and public transport issues.
- Could improve community connection to Cheltenham.
- Provides separation of two towns.
- Maintains airport.
- Would need to ensure effective working between Cheltenham and TDC in relation of development and impact on CBC.
- Least damaging to green belt.

Disagree

- Too much building already.
- Against too many benefits. Toxic waste dump 1½ miles away. Green belt, major incursion, M5 junction 10 unsuitable.
- Poor road links to rest of county.
- Land in wrong district area for service provision.
- Good agricultural land.
- Green belt, transport, health, employment areas.
- Need north relief road developed. Would not add to coalescence.
- Can Cheltenham provide facilities for this scale of development?

Summary:

- Proximity to waste tip.
- Green belt – negative in north west but less of a threat to coalescent of Cheltenham and Gloucester.
- Grade I agricultural land – negative (should be preserved).

Option 3 – Central green belt

Agree:

- Transport, education, health, employment.
- Develop as transport “node/interchange” not for housing.

Disagree:

- Avoid development that will merge the two towns.
- Airport should be expanded not lost to development.
- Poor road links, threat to the viability of Gloucestershire airport and its development.
- Impact on perceptions of distance between Cheltenham.
- Airport needed for transport of local large freight.
- Needed to separate Cheltenham and Gloucester and Aschurch.
- Infrastructure needed first.
- Worst option of all.
- Will lead to coalescence and loss of airport.
- Would encourage north/south commuting.
- Save airport facility (include in transport strategy).
- Avoid joining Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- Unsustainable need all new infrastructure requirements.

- Would destroy potential for minor expansion of high tech industrial node at Staverton, which would retain its airport.
- Could not support building in the green belt. Cheltenham and Gloucester must be kept separate.
- Most damaging to Gloucester/Cheltenham gap.

Summary

- Worst option of all.

Option 4 – dispersed smaller sites

Agree:

- Deliverable – not just reliant on one developer/land owner.
- Yes keep smaller communities sustainable.
- Using the rail link between Tewkesbury and Kemble, develop a light rail system with small halts encouraging small sustainable developments all along the route.
- If housing figures were restricted to those wanting affordable housing (ie including social housing+ key workers) then dispersed development at existing settlements would be the most attractive option.

Disagree:

- Second worst option leading to uncoordinated planning and non sustainable communities.
- Against – too much reliance on motor vehicle.
- Absolutely not. Too many houses for dispersal causing major transport problems. There is still room for some dispersal (40%) with options 1,2,and 3.
- Won't get as much SI06 funding from lots of small development.
- Would not attract funding for local housing.
- Less likely to put in transport links.

Summary:

- Depends on scale of development – may be acceptable if sites small.

Points relating to all options

- Infrastructure must come first.
- Review of green belt is essential to the achievement of any of the options. It will inform the process.
- Infrastructure before housing.
- Emphasis on sustainability.
- Developers cannot afford to build affordable housing/roads/community halls etc with the land prices as they are.
- Private traffic must be controlled by cost or restriction.
- Keep Cheltenham, Gloucester separate. Infrastructure important but not at expense of landscape value.
- Must be sustainable.
- Doubt real local need for this number of houses – could encourage much in migration.
- Deliverable? Focus for growth = probably 1 developer = slow build rates: might not meet demand.

- Discussion needs to involve transport operators. They will need to deliver an alternative to the car.
- General – all options consist of more of “the same” development. No option tries to provide truly sustainable housing including energy saving, local heating direct transportation system, wind power, alternative technology etc.
- Build on infrastructure that is in place – this is what should be doing option 1-3 suggesting almost ‘new communities’ not very well connected by current road network/public transport.
- Must be a presumption in favour of separation of the two towns – this is the no. 1 point.
- Must keep Gloucester and Cheltenham separate.
- Transport is key to all development but we need to reduce congestion of existing system first.
- Infrastructure must come first before housing.
- Housing Development should be targeted at providing affordable first time homes and retirement properties.
- Loss of green belt in one area should generate a replacement elsewhere.
- Majority of affordable housing would be in one location.
- Encroach into the green belt.
- More development would create more demand not meet it.
- Bus lanes = higher quality bus services.
- A real off road cycle network needed.
- Without changes in the infrastructure none of the options are viable.
- Transportation in and around Gloucester and Cheltenham is currently absolute rubbish – need to be vastly improved prior to any major development.

Alternative options proposed:

- Split between option 1 and 2.
- Spread around county.
- Need to look at detail of option 4.

Participants were asked to find consensus on a preferred option.

Participants were keen to stress that there is no agreement that the proposed amount of development is actually needed.

Preference

- More work on option 4 required – more information in order to make decision otherwise
- A combination of options 1 and 2.

Facilitators Note: Comments were not voted on, but summary points for each option were given instead.

**JSA Consultation Forum
Cheltenham Pump Rooms 4th February 2005**

Group D

Facilitator: Peter Nelson

Scribe: David Ingleby

Attendees:

Mrs H Jones

Jane Grunert

John Henry

Mr Hancock

Ross Symonds

Mr Cook

Kate Forrest

Sinead Barker

Mark Fox

Harold Symonds

Heather McBeth

Kirsty O’Nion

Simon Fife

Cllr M Sztymaik

Cllr A MacKinnon

Mr Pavay

David Hall

Badgeworth Parish Council

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cheltenham Civic Society

CPRE

English Heritage

Gloucestershire Airport Ltd

Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

Pegasus

NFB/FMB

Planning and Countryside Advisor

Robert Hitchins Ltd

Savills

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Up Hatherley Parish Council

Session 1: Discussion on Themes

- In order to ascertain the topics for discussion, a ‘vote’ was held. The main topics selected for debate by this process were:
- Transport (6 people selected this as their first priority)
- Green Belt (4 people selected this as their first priority)
- Housing (2 people selected this as their first priority)

Transport

The main issues for discussion were as follows:

- How will the transport requirements of an increasing population be met?
- 79% of the population in Gloucestershire own a car.
- Congestion is a real problem and is substantially degrading Cheltenham – there is a need to avoid car usage.
- There needs to be alternatives to car use – public transport.
- A choice of modes is important.
- There is a need for a culture change.
- There is a particular need for modes other than the car at peak times/Focus on ‘peak time reduction – the car is still important for uses such as leisure but public transport could be used for work/school.
- Schools cause a lot of congestion at peak times – combat by walking/cycling/buses.
- The geographic choice of schools causes transport problems – distance to schools from home.

- There is a need to improve services to the PUAs from surrounding areas.
- There is a need to improve connectivity in public transport.
- Transport Plans (LTPs) – Short horizons - needs to be more than just land use focused/enabling development – LDFs.
- Will new development draw traffic?
- Mixed use sites – combat the transport problems?
- Urban Design – build in walking/cycling.
- The RSS (Policy) – an opportunity to tackle transport problems.

Green Belt

The main issues for discussion were:

- A real issue for Cheltenham Borough Council members – loss of green belt/green space loss through development of gardens etc.
- Tension between building in towns and on the green belt.
- Some parts of the green belt are more sensitive than others.
- What parts are most sustainable? Is the green belt the most sustainable location for development? Are other locations outside of the green belt more sustainable – south of Gloucester?
- Where does development stop?
- Would joining Cheltenham and Gloucester create a place where the sum of the two would be greater than the two parts? EG – utilising road links, M5 junction an advantage
- Staverton Airport – well used.
- The M5 is a natural divider.
- The stars on the map – what scale are we talking about?
- PPG2/RPG10 – outlines the need for a green belt review – not a free for all
- The agenda has moved forward since the designation of the green belt and arguments about coalescence.
- Who are we providing development for?
- Is the South West predicted to continue to grow over the next 20 or so years?
- Something should be done nationally to encourage people and business to stay in and move to the North of the Country – the national picture needs to be looked at not just the South West. What are the implications for regeneration in the North
- There needs to be an emphasis on sustainable growth – not car based
- Will the scale of development under consideration make the area undesirable?

Housing

The main issues discussed were:

Affordability

- There are lots of houses in the Study area and in Gloucestershire for sale – counter argument was that this catered for population circulation within the area and not in-migrant need.
- The need to use the Gloucestershire Housing Needs survey was emphasised – there is a need to look at the type of housing needed – aging population – do we need flats or 3 bed starter homes?
- Will the housing need/requirements be the same in 20 years time
- Large scale development – will this secure high levels of affordable housing?
- New development – greater mix of housing and a balanced approach

- Do the options and levels of development meet the needs for housing in 20 years time:
- all areas need some development to provide for communities.
- large scale development provides more of a chance to provide for communities (as opposed to scattered development).
- Options 1, 2 and 3 create better opportunities to meet community needs.
- Securing legal obligations through developers.
- Pick and Mix of options – this is likely to provide for housing needs in several locations
- Need for all inclusive settlements.
- With 60% directed towards the PUAs – still leave 40% for other areas which is a big burden.

Other issues (of those highlighted originally) were then discussed.

Employment and the need to link it with transport

Local Distinctiveness – if this can be created, it can provide a feeling of community and sustainable development

Quality of Development – not just about basic provision of services – economies of scale on large scale development. Adding value to development

Waste – people do not necessarily mind local waste but do object to waste from without the County (e.g Wingmoor farm dealing with hazardous waste). Is importing waste sustainable?

The co-ordination of strategies at the regional level is very important – to draw together land-use/waste/transport.

Session 2 Preferred Options

Whichever option is chosen – joined up thinking between new development and existing communities is needed.

In terms of **Transport** Option 2 was most preferable (4 votes) and Option 1 was second (3 votes). All other stakeholders did not vote.

In terms of **Green Belt** Options 1 and 2 were equally supported (3 votes each) with options 3 and 4 receiving 1 vote each.

Floodplain: Option 1 is likely to have the greatest impact on the floodplain.

All options may be acceptable if managed properly – SUDs etc

PPG/S 25 – this will still be very important

In terms of **Education** there is little difference between options 1, 2 and 3. Option 4 is the least favoured. There is a need to expand and develop links between the local economy and businesses and higher education in the area. Options 1, 2 and 3 provide the bulk to enable the development of new schools.

In terms of **Health** Options 1 and 2 were equal first, Option 3 was second and Option 4 was the least preferable. Can we sustain Gloucester Royal? Options 1 and 2 could build on existing facilities. However, the differences between the options is marginal

In terms of **Employment** Option 3 received the most votes, with good transport links (M5) which employers will favour. There is an assumption that employment land will be needed – many jobs have been created in Cheltenham in recent years without the allocation of land for employment development. There has been an increase in working from home which may continue.

Option 3 may reinforce unsustainable travel patterns – using the M5 for short journeys. What is the Highways Agency's view on this?

Motorways have their role and this should be kept.

The airport has a valuable role – this should not be lost.

In terms of **Landscape** and **Biodiversity** Option 2 received the most votes (three) with options 1 and 3 receiving 2 votes each.

In terms of **Natural Resources** Options 1 and 2 were more acceptable, with options 3 and 4 having an equal and un-favoured impact on natural resources.

History and Local Culture

- Listed buildings/SAMS must be taken into consideration.
- The greatest concern was for option 4 – scatter gun approach.
- Significant sites can be incorporated into developments if managed correctly.
- The distinctive features of Cheltenham and Gloucester can be preserved irrespective of which option is considered.

Waste – options 1, 2 and 3 were equally weighted, with option 4 being the least favourable. Waste management issues should be equal across options. Option 4 is not good in terms of waste collection – scattered.

Housing – options 1 and 2 were the most preferable. Option 3 is not necessarily the worst, given that it is a 'clean sheet' to work on. The choice between options 1, 2 and 3 is marginal.

Overall there is a balance between Options 1 and 2. It is difficult to have an opinion on Option 4 due to the lack of locations.

The issue of the rest of the County was highlighted. It was emphasised that the rest of the County should not be forgotten and market towns need to remain viable. The point was made that these areas will still be receiving development.

Appendix 4
Summary of Question and Answer Sessions
and Workshops for Gloucester

JSA Consultation Forum

Gloucester Guildhall 31st January 2005

Summary of Questions and Answer Session

National Guidance Context and Background

- Shaun Conners, Tewkesbury Borough Council stated that the area was very rural with only 50% of the population based in the Cheltenham and Gloucester PUAs. It is important that the remaining 50% of the population who live in rural areas are not ignored. Recognition should be made that all communities are organic in growth and it is fundamental that this is acknowledged in any future planning proposals. What is important is to ensure that homes are provided now, not in the future.
- Richard Bellis, Gloucestershire Association of Parish Council, questioned how many parish councils were present and whether this process should comply with the Statement of Community Involvement? He expressed concern that parish councils were unable to respond to this subject within such a tight timescale.
- Peter Nelson stated that this exercise related to the RSS not the Statement of Community Involvement which linked to the Local Development Framework.
- Neal Whitehead added that the system was new and this was an early opportunity to engage with the public. Consultation will take place at a later date on the draft to the RSS.
- Keith Woodhead stated that SWRA was doing more than it was obliged to do statutorily and was encouraging greater engagement.
- Shaun Conners, Tewkesbury Borough Council noted that the level of predicted growth was high in the South West by comparison with the West Midlands which had very low growth forecasts. He queried whether it was appropriate for the SW growth figures to be applied to the Gloucester and Cheltenham area given its proximity to the West Midlands.
- Peter Nelson agreed that this was a very pertinent question which should be considered by the Regional Assembly when considering growth targets for settlements close to the regional boundaries.
- Tim Roberts, Forest of Dean District Council, stated that the Rural Communities Council's view was that growth levels had been imposed from the top down, and a bottom up approach should be taken. He added that interestingly the North East has experienced a loss of people, yet the perception is that the North East is getting substantial funding.
- Richard Lloyd added that planning authorities were working across regions to explore growth options and interrelationships. Discussions were taking place as to how to resolve cross regional disparities.
- Keith Woodhouse stated that the Regional Assembly was genuinely trying to generate dialogue at all levels.

Regional Planning Context

- An attendee stated that the principle of what the RSS was trying to achieve was positive, however there were concerns over how resources would be spent and the density of housing. Politicians have let people down in the past.

- Keith Woodhouse added that it was important that future growth is not encouraged where there was a likelihood of future instability. The Roundtree Foundation undertook a survey of whether most people would be interested in buying new houses. Out of the four groups surveyed only one group would consider high density housing. People's perceptions of high density housing could be overcome with good design standards.
- Graham Stanley, Vision 21, expressed concern over the support for rural communities, the need to increase employment in rural areas, support rural post offices and overcome issues associated with second homes. He added that there was a need to manage demand, control employment and ensure that youngsters have somewhere to live.
- Mike Oakley, RTPI SW, questioned whether the RSS would be subject to a public examination, what happened if the findings were unacceptable and would Government intervene? He added that it was important to focus on delivery, identify what was going to be done, by when, by whom and who was going to pay for it. He asked whether Government had approved possible budgets associated with infrastructure.
- Neal Whitehead responded stating that there would be a public examination during the course of this year and there will be a series of events and consultations to inform the draft RSS aiming for completion in 2007. He outlined a rough programme detailed below:
 - Comments submitted to an independent panel.
 - Panel will make a recommendation to Government.
 - Government will convey its view.
 - Possible changes may result.
 - Further consultation.
 - RSS will be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2007.

In terms of implementation and actions, GOSW is exploring ways of improving the identification of need targeting need to programmes through, for example, regional funding programmes. It is important that both a top down and bottom up approach is considered. Regions need to identify what is necessary and what budget is required to deliver/achieve satisfactory outcomes.

- Keith Woodhouse added that here was community engagement through statutory consultation.

Local Planning Context and Background

- Shaun Conners, Tewkesbury Borough Council stated that the options should not just focus on reducing vehicular miles but also on providing families with housing, employment and retaining families. The way in which the options are presented reflects a very close minded view.
- Richard Lloyd stated that the vision for Cheltenham and Gloucester covered the wider points associated with achieving sustainable development.
- Shaun Conner, Tewkesbury Borough Council added that if option 4 was developed it could allow bus companies to have viable bus routes and encourage people to make a modal switch.
- Peter Nelson added that current figures show that there were 45% population in urban areas as opposed to 55% in rural locations; with the predicted growth that these numbers would be reversed. He added that he understood there will be a forum set up to discuss rural issues.
- Pegasus Planning questioned whether the third draft of the structure plan considered the options looking at different capacities and alternative combinations.

- Richard Lloyd, responded stating that the third draft of the structure plan has yet to be finalised.
- Peter Nelson stated that all four options have the capacity to absorb 9-16,000 houses.
- Kit Banholt added that today there was also a conference on climate change and the danger of global warming. It is inevitable with more housing that there will be an increase in energy consumption especially considering the increase in demand for single occupancy dwellings. The congruity of increased housing in relation to climate change is significant.
- Richard Lloyd added that any development proposals should place an emphasis on sustainable construction techniques.
- A representative from Norford Action Group, emphasised the need for a bottom up approach as the proposals will hit people at a local level.
- Charles Gay queried how the predicted figures were reached. He added that he considered that it may be difficult to create 35,000 new jobs as he was unaware of a demand from major employers.
- Richard Lloyd stated that there were technical documents which had examined past trends and economic indicators. Predicted figures were based on past trends.
- Shaun Conners, Tewkesbury Borough Council, added that authorities were actually planning for less than what is indicated.
- Peter Nelson agreed that judgments had been made on existing baseline conditions.

Lunch Time Discussion Board on Options:

Option 1:

Agree

- Not in the floodplain at all – FRA completed! Tewkesbury L.P. Insp. Indicates sustainable locations – having reviewed all options around Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- *Disagree*
- The area is too close to the floodplain in view of climate change.

Option 2

Agree

- Best option.
- Provides good access to M5 and rail links.
- Preferred option.

Option 3

Agree

- Most sustainable and who needs the airport?
- Could be a good way of using the land currently wasted by the airport
- This is the best option provided airport is disbanded and land used for development. Otherwise Option 1 is preferred.
- The airport has only one scheduled service and that is summer only – hardly an economic cost

Disagree

- The airport has a future role as mentioned in the Government White Paper. Any development must not deter future development of the airport.

Option 4:*Agree*

- Already approved by existing “bottom up” system.

Disagree

- Not sustainable – leads to too much unnecessary driving.
- This option should have been presented with potential development locations shown. As shown it suggests that this is a “soft option” in terms of development impact.

General Comments

General comments were made below, attendees did not identify who they represented.

- How does current exercise develop towns like Stroud and Cirencester if the major investment is for the next 20+ years is targeted to Cheltenham and Gloucester.?
- I have no mandate from Parish Councils to represent their views, however my concern is that the “front loading” of involvement has been minimal. I understand that views expressed on these options will influence the draft RSS. What I am worried about is that if at draft stage the local opinions take a contrary view to the draft, that they will be told they had their chance in January 2005 but didn’t use it. They didn’t have an opportunity to react to this part of the process as they were only given less than four weeks in which to.
- OK, there are/have been factors leading to single/low number occupancy, but there are signs (eg students returning to parental home) which show a regression to the models of some generations ago – and why not?
- Area south of Gloucester should not be dismissed on transport grounds as highly accessible to employment areas at Waterwells and Quedgeley.
- Constraints Map incorrectly shows area south of Gloucester in the SLA. Not all of this area is SLA.

**JSA Consultation Forum
Gloucester Guildhall 31st January 2005**

GROUP I

Facilitators: Joy Howell

Scribe: Sarah Foyne

Attendees

M Dobson	Pegasus Planning
K Brauhnoltz	Leckhampton Green Land Association
N Gibbons	Forest of Dean District Council
Dr Cordwell	GCC
Mrs Martin	Hucclecote Parish Council
A Goldie	Glos Track
K Wise	Severn Wye Energy Agency
G Stanley	Vision 21
P Richards	Tewkesbury Borough Council

Session I Discussion on themes

What do you consider are the spatial issues for each of the following themes?

- Green belt & Greenspace
- Landscape & Biodiversity
- Natural Resources

Greenbelt/greenspace

- Green space – is valued.
- Debate re White land/safeguarded land.
- Need clearer guidance from Government in order to consider green belt.
- Back to first principles re review of green belt.
- Managed exercise of review of green belt needed.
- Purpose of green belt – main reason is to protect ‘the gap’.
- Different view of all parties ref green belt.
 - Political
 - GOSW
 - Inspectors views
 - Public/community
 - Rural communities
 - Employment/services

Landscape/biodiversity

- Wildlife corridors – most new development addresses biodiversity.
- Landscape character assessment.
- Ridge lines.
- AONB – new settlements.
- Who reviews AONB boundary in future?

- Development in AONB (should be last resort).
- Flooding – affects urban brown field as well as green field sites.
- Climate change is a major issue.
- 1 in 100 years flood.
- Flood risk assessment needed.

Natural Resources

- Renewable energy – should consider building this into the design of any new development from early stages.
- Suitability of sites and design at early stage – balance with topography.
- Wind power – potential?
- Water requirement of new development.
- Waste disposal requirement of new development.
- Minerals – if removed need back fill – weigh up costs – increase construction costs.
- SUDS.
- Agriculture – grade/quality - some grade 1 agric land within area.
- All options could be accommodated with no significant adverse affect on the landscape, natural resources and biodiversity.

Other Themes

Transport key issue is funding for infrastructure. Negative constraints. What are the public transport solutions? These need to be spelt out.

Employment

- Uncertainty over how much land
- Desirable locations for employers – where?
- Provision for range of employment.

Leisure facilities need to be provided.

- Quality of provision.

Education

- Provision primary schools
- Review of secondary schools in the county.

Health

- Negative impact on the provision of facilities.

Summary of Key Points

- 1 Happy for review of green belt to take place but must retain its key principles. Consider early review of green belt – but disagree re what constitutes the review of the green belt.
- 2 Options don't conflict with landscape/biodiversity/natural resources.
- 3 Taking flood issues seriously – what will flood plain be like in 2026.
- 4 Energy – need to look at alternative energy sources/energy saving early in design of developments.
- 5 Infrastructure needed in order to succeed (transport, health, education).

Session 2: Preferred Options

The facilitator read out the summary points from the lunchtime exercise:

Option 1 – No as in the floodplain.

Option 2 – Preferred option.

Option 3 – Felt to be good by those who feel the airport is inappropriate.

Option 4 – Mixed thoughts. Needs more location information.

General – Should not discount South Gloucester option because it is accessible to employment.

This helped to set the scheme for discussions about the proposed options:

Participants were asked to think about the advantages (+) and disadvantages (-) of each option:

Option 1 - North Gloucester

Agree:

- A good site for a modest urban extension, but care needed not to cause flooding.
- Close to Gloucester city centre. Close to M5 and good roads. Access to hospitals and schools good.
- Subject to it missing flood plain it seems worth considering – in combination with other option if scale is a problem.
- Outside flood plain! Even allowing for global warming.
- Close to Gloucester city facilities/jobs.
- Contributes to necessary infrastructure improvements (primarily transport) on north side of city.
- No adverse affect on coalescence.
- All within one authority's area, so easier to manage – particularly politically.

Disagree:

- Depending on size of development, could affect flood plain.
- Too close to flood plain – climate change. Especially at west side – Longford.
- Difficult to improve transport links to Gloucester.
- Would require improvement to already congested Gloucester bypass

Summary:

OK if avoid flood plain

Option 2 - North/West Cheltenham

Agree:

- This is the most sensible direction for Cheltenham to expand. There are good employment and transport opportunities. No reason for this land to be in green belt.
- Could help to deliver a greater level of development at Cheltenham, previously received lower levels of development due to physical/landscape constraints.
- Good links to Midlands.
- Good for employment opportunities.
- No effect on coalescence.
- Close to existing employment.
- Good rail connections in Cheltenham.

- Served by bus routes already serving nearby residential zones.
- Close to Cheltenham Town Centre and M5.
- Keeps away from space between Cheltenham and Gloucester.
- Access to hospital good (not sure about schools).

Disagree:

- Seems remote to PUA/being on edge.
- High quality agricultural land.
- Two authorities would have to work together – may be problematic politically

Summary:

Popular option

Option 3 - Central Green Belt

Agree:

- This makes an excellent mixed development site, employment and housing, with excellent transport links.
- The land in this area has little landscape value.
- Good potential transport links.
- Large enough to accommodate employment, schools, shops and leisure.
- Good access to roads.
- Good access to hospitals

Disagree:

- In the gap; contrary to original intentions of green belt, i.e. protecting the gap.
- Too close to motorway junction: will detract from central areas of both Cheltenham and Gloucester.
- None/few people live here already – new development will create displacement and will not necessarily meet local housing needs.
- Closes gap between Cheltenham and Gloucester.
- Potentially threatens airport use.
- Why is this the “best” public transport option?
 - what does it envisage?
 - where will routes go?
 - seems highly unlikely.
- Fewer walking and cycling options if working in town – more use of cars.
- Largest impact on green belt.
- In most crucial gap of green belt

Summary

Mind the Gap.

Option 4 - Dispersed smaller sites

Agree

- Could offer least incursion into green belt.
- Could spread impact of developments over several sites.

Disagree

- Smaller developments may not deliver sufficient developer/public funds for necessary infrastructure.
- Dispersed development is the worst option – it will lead to more driving to work and school

Uncertain

- Not enough information to form an opinion.
- Could be anything – so impossible to comment. However consultation says a combination of sites is likely.
- Need to know more about locations but could be possible if it includes part or all of options 1 and 2.

Summary

More information needed.

Alternatives:

Do nothing:

concern re building more houses
energy requirement of new developments
affordable housing – who provides?

Follow existing distribution of settlements:

Some growth in settlements below PUAs.
Extent of guidance in RSS.
Local needs provision.
What/which locations are favoured for employment growth.
Sites capable of expansion for employment.

Contribution of brown field sites needs to be explored more first.

If just the 4 proposed options were considered participants were asked to vote for their preferred option:

Option 1: 1 vote
Option 2: 4 votes
Option 3: 1 vote
Option 4: 1 vote

Option 2 was the clear favourite

If the 4 proposed options and the suggested alternatives were considered participants were asked to vote for their preferred option:

Option 1: no votes
Option 2: 3 votes
Option 3: no votes
Option 4: no votes
Do nothing: no votes
Distribution based on current settlements: 2 votes
Brownfield sites only: 1 vote

Option 2 remains the favourite, although there was some support for proposed alternatives

The **'Review of options'** matrix followed. Participants were asked to score in relation to how they felt about the impact each option would have on the 3 themes discussed. This was a difficult exercise not very willingly undertaken by participants - the usefulness and exact implications of the scoring was questioned (no attempt has therefore been made to analyse the results).

A Review of Options – Group 2 Response					
Themes	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Comments
Transport					
Green belt	2 2 2 3 3 2	2 2 2 2 2 3 2	1 1 1 1 1 1/5 2	3 2 ? ? 2 2 ?	
Education					
Health					
Employment areas					
Landscape	2 3 2 3 3 3 3	3 3 4 3 3 3 3	2 2 2 2 3 4 3	3 3 ? ? ? 2 ?	
Natural resources	2 3 4 4 4 3 3	3 3 4 3 3 3 2	2 2 4 4 4 3 3	2 ? ? ? 2 3 ?	
History and Culture					
Housing					

**JSA Consultation Forum
Gloucester Guildhall 31st January 2005**

Group 2

Facilitator: Maritta Boden

Scribe: Amanda Sutton

Attendees:

L Bexson	Gloucestershire Airport Limited
C Blundel	British Water Ways
O Jones	Boyer Planning
M Thorpe	Gloucester City Council
T Clempson	Tewkesbury Borough Council
M Oakley	RTPI SW
L Biddle	RPS
Cllr T Roberts	Forest of Dean District Council
C Kaye	Woodmancote Parish Council
N Whitehead	GOSW

Session I Discussion on themes

Economic Issues

General

- There is too much emphasis placed on housing - we need to take a holistic view - matching jobs with locations.
- Important to avoid commuting.
- Can't view this issue in isolation.
- Need to make provision for affordable housing to attract workers.
- Need to consider the employment split between rural areas and the PUAs.
- develop a strategy which acknowledges the need to provide appropriate levels of employment use in rural areas.

Where are the main economic/employment areas?

- Gloucester Docks/Quays – approval for mixed development (retail/hotel/housing etc)
- Waterwells – Gloucester

What are the main employers in the area:

- Engineering.
- Public Service.
- Finance sector (although it is recognised to be a fragile sector).
- GCHQ.
- Tourism.

How do we maintain these?

- Provide training - link to education.
- Provide adequate affordable and range of housing.

Is there a balance between Gloucester and Cheltenham?

- Gloucester has fared well due to the availability of attractive sites (Waterwells mainly)
- Cheltenham will lose out there is a shortfall of employment sites in the local plan and there are few large attractive sites.

What are the key issues about Gloucester and Cheltenham's economy?

- Gloucestershire's economy traditionally based on engineering – this remains an important industry.
- There are strong economic links between this area, Swindon and Bristol.
- If attractive employment sites are not made available this area may lose out to Swindon and Bristol.
- Gloucester Airport provides an important national role training commercial pilots – airport wishes to expand this business.

How should the RSS deal with this issue?

- Key challenge for the RSS is achieving spatial planning linking employment strategies, transport, housing, health, education etc.
- RSS must indicate % of affordable housing -clear statement which is enforceable.

Education

General

- Employment gurus make the link between economy and education – there may be more scope to have stronger links between industry and HE/FE colleges.
- Need to retain trained people - by making jobs and homes available.

Are Education Facilities Adequate?

- School league tables good – attractive to incomers and impact on where people want to live.
- Good state schools.

Education provision in Gloucester and Cheltenham

- Gloucestershire as a County is good but areas within Gloucester don't perform well
- Adequate HE/FE college campuses' located in Cheltenham and Gloucester (Docks, Oxstalls, Park etc).

How should the RSS deal with the issue?

- Sub regional level should steer the links with HE/FE – it would be useful to include a statement re approach/strategy to education.

History and Culture

General

- Gloucester and Cheltenham have strong unique characters.
- Cheltenham has been successful promoting the cultural/regency image however Gloucester has a history dating back to the Romans.
- Gloucester misses out on a significant market as there is no centrally located high quality hotels with conference facilities.
- The 2 areas complement each other.

Where are the most sensitive areas?

- West Gloucester – river/floodplain provides important historical setting with views of the Cathedral.
- East Cheltenham – the Cotswold Escarpment

Main Cultural Events

- Gold Cup – has a County wide economic impact
- Literature festival.
- Three Choirs Festival.
- Gloucester Docks Water Festival (needs better promotion).

Green Belt

- 10% loss
- More important to retain local urban green spaces than prevent development on the fringes of urban areas which are not used by local people.
- Pressure to use urban brownfield sites and increase density can result in loss of important areas - we need a strategy to prevent this occurring.

Transport

- Must make proper provision for infrastructure.
- Railway station (Parkway) needs to be more fully explored and better related to spatial planning through this process.
- Commuting between PUA should be prevented.
- Need to recognise job flexibility and that people may move jobs frequently.
- Long-term strategy/vision is essential.

Session 2 – Preferred Options

This was based on a matrix approach with key comments outlined below:

Option 1:

- Further information is required in relation to employment and transport modelling.
- There are very good opportunities in relation to alternative modes of transport in particular footpaths and cycle routes, provided these are built in at the outset of the design.
- It has the potential to draw employment away from the City Centre – however this depends on what is offered within the new employment areas – will they be complementary or opposing? It could be an attractive environment for some employees?
- What would be the impact on Cheltenham if this area drew new employees.
- A economic strategy needs to be developed for both option 1 and 2 exploring complementary economic growth.
- Employment due east at North Gloucester would not assist with economic needs of Cheltenham – leads to need to consider strategic growth at both PUAs.

Option 2:

- This area is in close proximity to other major land uses.
- It has the opportunity to build on a well established infrastructure.
- Generate positive opportunities for employment through the Business Park.

- An economic strategy needs to be developed for both option 1 and 2 exploring complementary economic growth.

Option 3:

- What are the benefits in relation to public transport for this option?
- There could be an increase in traffic congestion as the development has the opportunity to draw in commuters – depends on the type of economic development being pushed and the type of housing.
- There are a number of site specific issues which need to be addressed.
- The development needs to work round the existing airport – which is extremely important for training purposes – training over 60% of all commercial pilots.

Option 4:

- This is a non starter – there is no information on the location of development within disperse settlements.
- It could increase congestion.
- The sites may not generate significant jobs.
- Could create more impact on the landscape, history and culture through erosion of landscape character in a number of settlements.

General Points:

- Community forest.
- Complementary issues need to be considered for both option 1 and 2.
- Site specific issues – consider the location of unfriendly facilities.
- Prefer a mix of Option 1 and 2.
- All options – speed of public transport is a key issue if we want to reduce car dependency.
- Difficult to assess the transport assumptions without understanding the transport model and public transport infrastructure proposals – true for all options.

A Review of Options – Group 2 response					
Themes	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Comments
Transport	?? 5 4 4	44444	3 5 3 4 4 4	2	Need quick system Need to know detailed assumptions used in transport model
Green Belt	3 3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3 3		?	
Education					Site specific issues Not problematic Need to link to transport strategy
Health	4 4 4 4 4	4 4 4 4 4	2 2 2 2 2	? 5 3	
Employment areas	4 4 4 4 4 4 -	4 4 4 4 4	4 5 2 2 2 2 3	2	Can't make a judgement need detail
Landscape	3 3 3 2	3 3 3 3	2 2 3 3		
Natural resources					Community forest may be a good idea
History and Culture					Separation of town and city might not be compromised
Housing					Range and affordable housing key issues Good design is essential
Summary: option 1 and 2 as a combination is favoured however it was difficult to provide an informed view on these themes without the consideration of detailed information.					

**Joint Study Area Consultation
31st January 2005, Guildhall Gloucester**

GROUP 3

Facilitators: Caroline Anderton

Scribe: David Oakhill

Attendees

B McInerney	Gloucestershire Hospitals Patients Involvement Forum
Cllr B Jones	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Mr Martin	Hucclecote Parish Council
S Birdseye	Savills
P Hardwicke	Hitchins
K Woodhead	SWRA
R Lloyd	CPRE
T Burley	Gloucestershire First
S. Conners	Brockworth Residents Association
B Aldridge	Quedgeley Parish Council

Session A – Discussion on Themes

What do you consider are the spatial issues for each of the following themes?

- Transport
- Health
- Waste and Sustainable Development

Transport

Current infrastructure

- Weak compared to other counties for example:
- Worst road condition.
- No integrated transport system.
- hours of public transport operation bear no resemblance to working hours eg shift work, part time work etc.
- Location of park and ride sites are currently inappropriate (ie have to drive into Gloucester to pick up park and ride).

- Need more of a partnership approach with bus operators, developers and the public.
- Need to give the public incentives and address image problems of using public transport.
- Frequency of bus services poor, as is ability to journey plan.
- Deregulation of public transport means that only profitable journeys provided.
- We often provide the ‘easy’ cycle routes rather than the ones that are needed and more difficult to provide (right place/route).
- Should be considering more long term planning and investment in things like trams.

For the future:

- Must seriously consider cost/benefit of tram/light rail options.
- Consider best practice in areas like Oxford and Sheffield.
- Bear in mind the varying social demographics and cultures in different towns.

Waste

- Perceived lack of District Council involvement in GCC PFI project, rather that they have been told what they will get and do. More partnership working wanted.
- The group recognised that contractors will bring in waste from other counties in order to be profitable.
- More education needed about how to recycle.

Sustainability

- This is more than just about the car. Need to consider social implications. Is housing in the right location to be socially beneficial to communities?
- Longer-term considerations of building communities rather than 'dormitories' that have no local centre.
- Must consider:
 - Whether starter homes will become slums in years to come.
 - Whether home owners will buy a start home and develop rather than move (which means less starter homes, less provision for parking provided etc).
- Community development rather than just housing development.

This means longer-term planning rather than planning for what we think we need now.

Health

- The unseen impacts of poor quality housing, badly designed housing, homelessness and flooding.
- Acknowledge that the health service is now a business rather than a community facility (economies of scale).
- Are we developing certain areas to the detriment of others (centralised health services for the majority, to the detriment of rural residents)? Transport and congestion issues too.
- Cycling brings opportunities for the promotion of healthy life styles and far outweighs the perceived dangers of cycling.
- What about emergency health care, particularly at a time when the emergency services will be regionalised?

Biodiversity

- The group recognised the conflict and balance needed between progress for people and communities versus the environmental impact of progress.
- One commented that 97% of the British population live on 6% of the land.
- We need prudent use of resources, effective use of the land.
- We can build improvements to landscaping into any development.

Economic Development

- Is it possible to even out economic growth nationally?
- Can we expand other parts of the county economically?

Session 2: Preferred Options

Firstly the group discussed whether the steering group were right in ruling out RPG +50% option. Three members of the group wanted the steering group to look again at RPG +50%

option rather than ruling it out because large investment is needed (minimum RPG+25% if not +50%). Four additional members of the group did not agree with this point. One person abstained.

Scorings

- The group tried to look at each theme in turn and score and discuss the pros and cons in more detail.
- There was some useful feedback from the group, when looking at the transport theme but we established very quickly through the process of scoring and establishing why high and low scores was going to take too long.
- The transport scores were as follows but time did not allow the group to consider in detail the other themes on the table.
- Option 1 scored the most (4) with two 5s with the proviso that transport infrastructure was put in place before not after build.
- Option 2 scored all 5s again, providing transport infrastructure was put in place BEFORE plus North West Relief Road, Light Rail and Junction 10 opened all ways.

Other comments include:

Score 5 because it offers possibility of using rail.

Score 5 but infrastructure must be there already.

Score 4 needs infrastructure up front.

Score 5 needs infrastructure up front.

Score 4 update Junction 10 to be four-way before housing.

Score 4 subject to required transport structure.

Score 5 assuming that junction 10 is 4-way prior to build.

Score 2 too much infrastructure needed and very prone to being a dormitory settlement.

Option 3

- Gives opportunity for transport interchange/rail/motorway.
- Very good business location.
- Good connections and cycling routes would need implementing, exploit the rail corridor for local trips.
- But not within walking distance of anything which will maximise distances travelled either by car or bus.

Review of all 3 options

- Green belt planning should be longer than 20 years and should be comprehensive and consider additions as well as deletions.
- Consensus view was that options 1, 2 and 3 are all needed, although options 1 and 2 would be politically more sensible/acceptable, particularly for housing.
- Options 1 and 2 could be delivered first providing the transport and health infrastructure was put in place first.
- Option 3 would be best for business although not necessarily for housing in the shorter term. Gloucester/Cheltenham shared Rail Parkway would be beneficial under option 3.

- Option 3 would be very unpopular publicly.
- We could designate as white land in case it was needed.
- Could we justify economically that options 1, 2 and 3 should happen at once rather than phased?
- Local councils are not able to provide services and housing facilities – we need large housing numbers to develop.
- It is good that flood plain issues are now considered for new housing (SUDs) but need to also consider investment and maintenance not just new build.
- Finally, development does not have to mean the end of biodiversity.

Option 4

The group started to evaluate this option and made the following comments:

- Score 1 very difficult to evaluate without sites being identified.
- Score 1 looks as though it would avoid problems but would cause them in many places, especially car dependency due to lack of services.
- Score 3 more likely to disperse investment – water down effect. Could develop doing nodal transport points ‘ring of pearls’.
- As long as no building was on flood plain.
- Not going to happen – too small - need a critical mass.

Appendix 5

Arrangements for the Workshop Discussions

Workshop Session:

The workshop sessions were split into two stages, session 1 and 2. Below is a brief summary of each stage:

Session 1 – Discussion on Themes

Tasks:

1. Facilitator introduces the discussion and explains the purpose of the themes (these are the themes for which the Spatial Plan asks for guidance). *5 mins*
2. The group then tries to work through the following questions around each theme.
3. What do you think are the spatial issues that relate to this theme (i.e. Where are they / should they be located; are there shortages / issues in certain areas; are there sufficient geographic links; etc)?
4. Do the group have any ideas how the problems and opportunities raised could be addressed? *20 mins*
5. The group then needs to consider the inter-relationships between the themes. *10 mins*
6. Finally, we would like each group to summarise the main issues arising in the discussion as five key issues to be considered. *5 mins*

The scribe will record in bullet point form as the discussion progresses.

There is only a limited time. To cover both themes you will only have:

20 minutes per theme and

20 minutes to discuss inter-relationships and summarise your thoughts

Session 2 - Discussion on options

Tasks:

Information during the lunch break will be collated by GCC and a brief summary of each option presented to the facilitator prior to the second group session covering options.

1. The facilitator will read out the summary of views from the lunch time break when reviewing each of the options. The scribe will make a bullet point summary of these for the group as it is presented. *10 mins*
2. Group then takes each option in turn and discuss the pros and cons in more detail (supported by the work done during the earlier phases of the day). During this process the scribe captures the main points as bullet points under the option number. *15 mins per option (45 mins total)*
3. The facilitator then introduces the attached table (blown up to A1). Group participants are asked to indicate their thoughts (on an individual basis) by writing the appropriate score in each box (see the key at the bottom of the table).

4. *This exercise provides a final summary opportunity for the group members but will be presented in the report along with the rest on the discussion to ensure it is interpreted in context. 10 mins*
5. The scribes are also asked to record any alternative options identified by the group on a separate sheet of flip chart paper.
6. The facilitator should aim to try to reach a consensus conclusion/view on the most suitable option based on the themes where possible.