

## **Appendix 1**

### **Torbay's Response to the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy**

**Report 191/2006**

## TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **191/2006**

Title: **Representations on the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy**

To: Overview and Scrutiny Board on 17 July 2006  
Cabinet on 18 July 2006  
Council on 27 July 2006

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### 1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to assist the Council in making its representations to the Regional Assembly on the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS].

### 2. **Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

The RSS has potentially far reaching effects for many aspects of the Council over a long time frame.

- 2.2 The RSS has a particularly close relationship with the following themes:
- Improving Torbay's economy
  - Valuing our environment
  - Improving access to good quality affordable homes
  - Creating sustainable communities

### 3. **Recommendation(s)**

**That Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the draft recommendations set out in paragraphs 7.8, 7.9, 7.11 – 7.16, 7.18 – 7.31, 7.33, 7.34, 7.36 – 7.44 and 7.47 of the report, taking into account any views expressed by the Local Development Framework Working Party.**

**That the Cabinet considers the draft recommendations, as set out in the paragraphs listed in paragraph 3.1 above, taking full account of any views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.**

**That the Council be recommended to approve the recommendations listed in paragraph 3.1 above, as the Council's formal representation on the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy to the Regional Assembly.**

### 4. **Reason for Recommendation(s)**

- 4.1 The RSS will be a major influence on the future development of Torbay, and in particular its prospects for economic regeneration.
- 4.2 The development strategy adopted in the emerging Torbay LDF [which will be the spatial expression of the new Community Plan] will be hugely influenced by the RSS. The LDF is required by law to be in conformity with the RSS.
- 4.3 Torbay Council as a unitary authority has a strategic planning role, and needs to

ensure that its strategic vision is taken on board in the RSS.

**5. Key Risks associated with the Recommendation(s)**

1.1.1 The risk of accepting the recommendation is that there could be a slight increase in the rate of development in Torbay, with the associated pressures on services and transport.

1.1.2 However, the overall impact of these pressures are not considered to be significant, and acceptance of the RSS provisions for Torbay are more likely to lever in Government funding for major infrastructure, e.g. the South Devon Link Road and funding for regeneration schemes, than if the provisions of the RSS were not accepted by the Council.

Likelihood	6	6	12	18	24
	5	5	10	15	20
	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	X4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		Impact			

Low risk
  Intermediate risk
  High risk

The "x" in the above matrix denotes where the author has assessed the level of final risk to fall

**6. Alternative Options (if any)**

6.1 The alternative option is non - involvement with the RSS process. This would remove Torbay’s ability to influence major decisions about its future. If this leads to attempting to plan for lower growth, the Council’s needs, such as key infrastructure, housing and economic requirements, may well not be included in the final version of the RSS, and there would be a strong chance of appeal-led development.

6.2 Non-involvement of a strategic planning authority with the development of the RSS would send the wrong messages to the Government and Regional Assembly, who determine levels of major infrastructure provision through the Regional Funding Allocation.

**7. Background**

7.1 Members will be aware that the Development Plan for Torbay is in two parts – the Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS], covering the entire South West, and the Local Development Framework [LDF], which translates the regional planning framework into more detailed policies and proposals for Torbay. ***The RSS, which is legally binding, sets the overall level of growth for Torbay over a 20 year period, including housing numbers, employment land and strategic transport schemes, and is therefore a critical strategic document.*** In addition to land use

and transport planning, the document is likely to impact on most of the Council's corporate objectives. The Torbay LDF has to be in conformity with the RSS, and the RSS will play a major part in shaping future LTPs.

- 7.2 The South West Regional Assembly published its Draft Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS] for the South West, covering the period 2006 – 2026, on 6 June 2006. **The consultation period extends to 30 August 2006, closing at 5pm.** The document is available on the South West Regional Assembly website at: [http://www.southwest-ra.gov/swra/ourwork/RSS/RSS final draft version.shtml](http://www.southwest-ra.gov/swra/ourwork/RSS/RSS%20final%20draft%20version.shtml). The Local Development Framework Working Party will be considering the recommendations set out below at its meeting on 7 July 2006 and the Overview and Scrutiny Board is recommended to take account of any views expressed by the Working Party.
- 7.3 **Torbay and South Devon Joint Study:** Torbay, together with other Principal Urban Areas, was invited to prepare a sub-regional study as input to the emerging RSS. This input was provided in the form of technical advice from the Torbay and South Devon Sub-Regional Study, which met several times in 2004 and 2005. The Study Area Working Group comprised Members and Officers from Torbay, South Hams, Teignbridge and Devon, with further input from the RDA, GOSW and the Regional Assembly. In June 2005, the Torbay and South Devon Joint Study submitted its technical advice, followed by Torbay Council's specific First Detailed Proposals in September 2005. In addition to public consultation, there was a stakeholder panel which met to inform the Joint Study Group, and the Torbay Strategic Partnership also had an 'away day' to provide input to the Council's response in September 2005.
- 7.4 **Detailed RSS Documentation:** The pack of RSS documents comprises:  
[1] The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy  
[2] The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Executive Summary  
[3] The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Implementation Plan  
[4] The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Strategic Sustainability Assessment Main Report  
[5] The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Strategic Sustainability Assessment Non-Technical Summary  
[6] The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Pre-Submission Consultation Statement
- 7.5 **Timescale and Final RSS Strategy:** These documents set out the strategic planning framework for the South West over a 20 year period. At this stage the RSS is for consultation and is not necessarily the final strategy to guide the amount and distribution of future development in the South West.
- 7.6 **Links between the RSS and the LDF:** The main link between the RSS and the Local Development Framework [LDF] is through the LDF Core Strategy, which was published in its Issues and Options stage in April 2006. In effect the 'Big Picture' for Torbay, as expressed in the RSS, will be reflected in the 'Detailed Picture' in the LDF, with the strategic options for interpreting the RSS into LDF proposals and policies being broached in the Core Strategy.
- 7.7 **RSS Policy Provisions:** The RSS policy framework contains a number of policy provisions which are of direct or general relevance to Torbay. The next few paragraphs outline these provisions of most relevance to Torbay and recommend a set of appropriate responses.

- 7.8 **Chapter 1 – A Sustainable Future for the South West:** Policies SD1 - 4 set out general principles on stabilising and reducing ecological impact; reducing and managing climate change [including a target for each local authority to reduce its CO2 emissions by 60% by 2050]; protecting and enhancing the environment and natural resources; and promoting sustainable communities in accordance with the Government's 'Securing the Future' Sustainable Communities Plan. The RSS sustainable development principles are comprehensive and sound, and are in line with the sustainability principles currently guiding the preparation of the Torbay LDF. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports these sustainability principles as a sound basis for the emerging RSS.
- 7.9 **Chapter 2 – Context for the Spatial Strategy:** This section sets out key environmental, economic and social aspects which the RSS needs to relate to if it is going to have a cutting edge. Key elements include:
- The South West is the fastest growing Region in the UK in population, and it is ageing at a faster rate than nationally.
  - Housing affordability is a key issue and the Barker Review of Housing Supply argues that providing housing that most households can afford will only be achieved through increasing the supply of new housing nationally. In the South West, new housing numbers alone will not solve the problem of affordability, and other measures to provide affordable homes to rent or buy should be supported.
  - The RSS states that around 25,000 new homes a year will be needed in the South West, i.e. at levels higher than the current plan [RPG 10]
  - In economic development, the RSS argues that “a differential approach ... is needed, recognising the variation in economic prospects across the region, addressing disadvantage and intra regional disparity.”
  - The South West Region's 'The Way Ahead' contribution to the national Sustainable Communities Plan will be a key driver for infrastructure resources. Torbay Council is in the process of engagement with the Way Ahead Group to try and draw down much needed resources for regeneration schemes.
  - The RSS emphasises the importance of the role and function of places, and the importance of cities and towns which are relatively self contained in terms of housing and jobs, in the interests of increasing community involvement and reducing the need to travel.
  - Finally, this chapter comments on the sub-regional studies around the main urban areas. Torbay is mentioned in a list of such studies, but disappointingly, the list only refers to 'Torbay' and not the 'Torbay area'.
- Recommendation:** That the Council [1] notes the strategic trends outlined in this chapter; [2] welcomes the RSS support for a “differential approach” to economic development in favour of disadvantaged area, such as Torbay, and [3] makes a representation that the reference to 'Torbay' in paragraph 2.5.9 be changed to 'Torbay area'.
- 7.10 **Chapter 3 The Spatial Strategy and Guidance for the Scale and Location of Development:** The basis of the RSS is to continue to place a strong emphasis on the main urban areas as drivers for sustainable growth.
- 7.11 **Development Policy A: Development at Strategically Significant Cities and Towns:** Torbay is classified in a list of 22 Strategically Significant Cities and Towns

[SSCTs], which will be “the primary focus for development in the South West.” This recognises the strategic importance of Torbay, but the length of the new list could dilute the serious need of Torbay for regeneration and prioritisation in the provision of resources from the Regional Funding Allocation for housing, economic development and infrastructure. The list is significantly longer than that of the existing list of Principal Urban Areas in the current RPG, and it is not clear why there needs to be a change from a terminology that is now being accepted and understood throughout the Region. **Recommendation:** That the Council make a representation that the RSS continues to designate urban areas such as Torbay as Principal Urban Areas, rather than introduce another new term, perhaps with the addition of a limited number of new urban areas.

- 7.12 **Development Policy D: Infrastructure for Development:** The RSS argues that high quality environments, services and facilities should be delivered in step with major new developments, and not years after the dwellings are occupied. However, the RSS policy is not strong enough to ensure this, and refers to the importance of agencies working together in a joined up way to achieve important community infrastructure. In large growth areas, such as Milton Keynes, public loans, e.g. from English Partnerships, are used to provide infrastructure ‘up front’ before housing. The Regional Assembly, through the RSS, could consider the feasibility of such a mechanism in the South West. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the intentions of the RSS in terms of infrastructure; and [2] makes a representation that the policy is strengthened to make major new development conditional on the implementation of the necessary community infrastructure, as required in LDFs.
- 7.13 **Development Policies E: High Quality Design and F: Master Planning:** The RSS sets out high design expectations for new development and guidance on the planning of significant new development areas, although it does not define how big such a development should be to qualify. There is a specific reference to SSCTs, and the principles are generally acceptable. However, there is an expectation that all major new developments should achieve densities of at least 50 dwellings per hectare, which is at the upper end of PPS3 ‘Housing’. Whilst appropriate in many areas, a density of 50 dwellings per hectare could impact on Conservation Areas, such as the Warberries and the Lincombes. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports these policies in principle, apart from the 50 dwellings per hectare requirement across the board, and makes a representation that greater freedom of design be permitted within major scheme proposals, in order to secure a wide range of housing types, tenures and environments in the interest of attracting inward investment and associated key workers to ensure economic regeneration where this is needed.
- 7.14 **Development Policy G: Sustainable Construction:** The RSS is supporting ambitious sustainable construction targets across the South West, including ensuring carbon neutrality, sustainable drainage, improved energy efficiencies, and achieving relatively high building standards. These aims are important if we are to take sustainability seriously and reduce global warming. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports this policy.
- 7.15 **Development Policies H and I: Re-using Land and the Release, Redevelopment or Disposal of Land:** The RSS advocates taking the full potential of previously used [brownfield] land into account, and aims to achieve at least 50% of new development on previously used land, as well as applying the principles of sustainable development to the release, redevelopment or disposal of land owned and operated by public bodies. These are appropriate strategic policies, and Torbay’s brownfield

development rate is already considerably in excess of the RSS target.

**Recommendation:** That the Council supports these policies.

- 7.16 **Development Policy J: joint Working:** The RSS encourages local authorities to work together, with stakeholders, to prepare and develop co-ordinated strategies which cover the functional areas of SSCTs. The list includes Exeter/Newton Abbot, but there is no reference to Torbay/Newton Abbot, despite the Joint Sub-Regional input to the emerging RSS. This is one of several areas where the RSS fails to appreciate the urban geography of South Devon. **Recommendation:** That the Council makes a representation that Development Policy J is amended to include an additional line, viz Torbay/Newton Abbot.
- 7.17 **Chapter 4: Sub-Regional Strategy Statements and Housing Distribution:** The Draft RSS refers to the Joint Study Areas that were prepared as input to the emerging RSS. Map 4.1 shows the locations of the SSCTs and the Joint Study Areas. Torbay is shown on this map.
- 7.18 **The Exeter Area:** Exeter is covered in Policies SR15-18, and Newton Abbot is covered in Policy SR 19. Paragraph 4.2.55 refers to the need for Newton Abbot to reduce its growth in “long distance commuting to Exeter and nearby Torbay”, whilst paragraph 4.2.56 refers to the importance of improving public transport links to Torbay. Whilst it is clearly desirable to reduce commuting from Newton Abbot to Exeter, which is a distance of approximately 16 -18 miles, it is difficult to see why there should be a corresponding reduction of commuting between Newton Abbot and Torbay, a distance of approximately 4 miles to central Torquay and 8 miles to Paignton, where the main employment areas in Torbay are located. The Council’s Employment Land Review indicates that 50% of trips out of Torbay have their destination at Newton Abbot, with only 13% to Exeter. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the reference to improving public transport links between Torbay and Newton Abbot; and [2] makes a representation that the text in paragraph 4.2.55 is amended to show that there are close functional links between Newton Abbot and Torbay, which are geographically close, and that the RSS aim should be to limit commuting to within the sub-region.
- 7.19 **Policy SR 36: Qualitative Development Provision in Torbay:** The RSS indicates that there is a need to deliver a ‘step change’ in the performance of Torbay, in terms of a range of employment opportunities, affordable housing and retail performance. However, unlike parallel policies for Exeter and Plymouth, Torbay is considered in isolation, with no references to the nearby town of Newton Abbot and the rest of the Torbay/South Devon Sub-Region. [There is an acceptance in paragraph 4.4.11 that the ‘sphere of influence’ of Torbay extends beyond the administrative boundary, but the RSS stops short of stating where this is.] This lack of recognition flies in the face of the joint submission to the RSS, which was signed off by Teignbridge and South Hams Councils and Devon County Council. The situation on the ground, as recognised in the Joint Torbay/South Devon Sub-Regional Study, is that there is a considerable degree of overlap between the Exeter and Torbay/South Devon Sub-Regions. The Council’s Employment Land Review recognises this functional link and the forthcoming Housing Market Assessment looks at the cross-boundary relationships. It is considered to be important that this needs to be incorporated into the RSS text. The future of the sub-region needs to be planned for as a whole and the artificial separation of Torbay from the rest of the sub-region cannot be construed as ‘joined-up’ strategic planning. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the RSS provision for Torbay, whilst stressing the need to provide the necessary

Regional Funding Allocation to enable this step change to happen, and stating to the Regional Assembly and Government that Torbay merits inclusion in the Government's Growth Points Initiative in order to make this step change happen. However, it is also recommended [2] that the Council objects to the complete lack of recognition in this Torbay policy of any relationships with nearby settlements within the Torbay/South Devon Sub-Region, such as the Torbay Housing Market Area.

- 7.20 **Policy SR 37: Development Provision for Torbay - Economic Development:** The RSS indicates a need to stimulate economic development at Torbay, and makes provision for about 11,700 new jobs over the plan period [between 500-600 pa] within the Torbay Travel to Work Area. The Torbay Employment Land Review indicates that it is possible to achieve about 550 jobs pa in Torbay under its 'core forecast'. This important provision reflects the Mayor's vision and key theme in the emerging Community Plan for economic regeneration. However, the policy exhibits the same limited vision, isolating Torbay from the rest of its sub-region, as is found in Policy SR36. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the RSS employment land provision for Torbay, which is reflecting Torbay's economic priorities, as well as the input from the Torbay/South Devon Study, which in turn was co-ordinated by Torbay. However, it is recommended [2] that the Council objects to the complete lack of reference to job provision in the rest of the sub-region, as set out in the Joint Torbay/South Devon Sub-Regional Study. It is also recommended that [3] the Council confirms to the Regional Assembly that an up-to-date Employment Land Review indicates that this job target is achievable, provided the right policy framework and infrastructure are provided.
- 7.21 **Policy SR 37: Development Provision for Torbay – Dwelling Provision:** Housing is strongly linked to the economic development theme, and the Draft RSS makes provision for 500 new dwellings pa over the plan period [cf 1,575 for Plymouth and 925 for Exeter]. The aim is for about 360 pa of these [72%] to be on brownfield sites, with the remaining 140 pa [28%] on greenfield sites 'adjoining Torbay urban area in Torbay Borough'. This housing provision for Torbay is considered realistic in the light of the findings of the Torbay Urban Capacity Study and the necessity to attract and retain a strong working age population and a more balanced age structure than would be the case if a more limited housing provision were proposed for Torbay. The policy also states that urban extensions should be brought forward through the Torbay Local Development Framework. This is being done through the development of the LDF Core Strategy, which is looking at three options, one of which is for an urban extension to deliver the RSS in Torbay. However, the policy exhibits the same limited vision, isolating Torbay from the rest of its sub-region, as is found in Policy SR 36, with no references to housing provision in the rest of the sub-region. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the RSS housing provision for Torbay, which reflects the input from the Torbay/South Devon Study, which in turn was co-ordinated by Torbay. It is recommended that the Council [2] should state that the concept of an urban extension is being considered through the emerging LDF. However, it is also recommended that the Council [3] objects to the complete lack of reference to housing provision in the rest of the sub-region, as set out in the Joint Torbay/South Devon Sub-Regional Study.
- 7.22 **Inset diagram 4.8 Torbay:** The diagram does not indicate the three towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham and does not indicate an employment land total for Torbay. The location of Torquay Railway Station, although diagrammatic, is incorrect. The diagram does helpfully identify the location of the nearby settlement of Newton Abbot, which is in the same sub-region. However, the diagram excludes the housing

and employment land provision for the Teignbridge and South Hams parts of the sub-region, thus reinforcing the isolated picture of Torbay as set out in the RSS text.

**Recommendation:** That the Council requests that the inset diagram is amended to a) identify the towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham; b) identify the correct location of Torquay Railway Station; c) include the employment land total for Torbay; and d) include the housing and employment land totals for the rest of the sub-region as set out in the Joint Torbay/South Devon Sub-Regional Study.

- 7.23 **Housing Market Areas:** The RSS strategy is based on a series of Housing Market Areas, and these are shown on Map 4.1. This map shows a considerable degree of overlap between the Torbay and Exeter Housing Market Areas in parts of Teignbridge and South Hams. Table 4.2 includes all the Teignbridge housing market totals within the Exeter Housing Market Area, and there is no recognition that much of this total is also within the Torbay area. **Recommendation:** That the Council makes a representation that table 4.1 is amended to reflect the reality on the ground that a proportion of the Teignbridge and South Hams totals fall within the Torbay Housing Market Area.
- 7.24 **Chapter 5: Regional Approach to Transport:** The RSS acknowledges the value of proper transport planning to assist the achievement of the RSS, and in particular address the need for stimulating economic activity in the west of the peninsular, realising the potential of the SSCTs in the centre and north of the region, and allowing carefully managed growth in the south-east of the region. The RSS does refer to the need to make selective improvements to the region's road and rail networks, and makes provision for improvements to key infrastructure, including investment in walking and cycling networks, and improved bus services and capacity. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports the RSS overall transport aims.
- 7.25 **Policy TR1 Transport Demand Management and Public Transport in the SSCTs:** The RSS sets a policy framework for progressively increasing demand management in the SCCTs, which includes Torbay. This is to be accompanied by a 'step change' in the prioritisation of public transport provision serving these places, including bus priority. This policy is reflected in the Torbay Local Transport Plan. **Recommendation:** That [1] the Council supports this policy, which is already being used to positive effect in increasing rates of bus use in Torbay, and [2] makes a representation that in order to implement this policy effectively, the Assembly lobbies the Government in relation to Planning Gain Supplements, for the continued use of Section 106 Agreements to promote bus improvements [as in Torbay].
- 7.26 **Policy TR3 Second Strategic Route:** The RSS proposes to improve the A358 between Ilminster and Taunton, as an alternative to improving the A303 westwards from Ilminster to Honiton. This policy is at odds with the Assembly decision, supported by Torbay Council, to support the improvement of the A303 westwards from Ilminster to Honiton. The A30/303 is the main road linking Devon and Cornwall with the South East. **Recommendation:** That the Council objects to this policy and continue to support the improvement of the A303 westwards from Ilminster to Honiton, in order to improve the accessibility of resorts such as Torbay for visitors from the south coast and the South East, as well as to secure a genuine alternative improved strategic route to the Far South West for operational reasons.
- 7.27 **Policy TR5 Inter-Regional Rail Network:** The RSS makes provision for a number of enhancements to the strategic inter-regional rail routes, including improved infrastructure at major stations and appropriate engineering measures to secure the

long term future of the Great Western route through Dawlish. It is unclear whether Torquay or Paignton Stations are classified as major stations, although the need for improvements in their facilities and integrating rail with other forms of public transport are critical. The strengthening of the sea wall at Dawlish is crucial for Torbay's accessibility by train. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports this policy, especially in relation to the Dawlish Sea Wall, whilst seeking clarification as to the status of Torquay and Paignton Stations.

- 7.28 **Policy TR6 Inter-Regional Bus and Coach Network:** The RSS makes provision for the enhancement of bus and coach interchanges in SSCTs. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports this policy.
- 7.29 **Policy TR7 Improvements to Ports:** The RSS makes provision for the improvements to ports, including facilities to support the fishing industry and land for port growth, marine sectors and related uses. This policy supports the improvement of facilities at Brixham. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports this policy.
- 7.30 **Policy TR9 Improvements to Airports:** Exeter is named as one of three major airports in the South West where improvements are encouraged, and Torbay will benefit from improvements at Exeter Airport. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports this policy.
- 7.31 **Policy TR10 Regional Connectivity:** The A380 from Exeter to Torbay is listed as one of eight Regionally Significant Routes, where highway authorities should utilise a Corridor Management approach, to make the best use of the network, facilitate modal shift, and introduce other measures to improve the quality of life of communities, improve air quality, reduce accidents, severance and noise impact. This policy is silent on the impact of major transport measures on economic regeneration [although the explanatory text talks about the importance of roads for the economy], and does not specifically allude to road construction. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the classification of the A380 from Exeter to Torbay as a Regionally Significant Route; [2] makes a representation that RSS should include within this policy a clear statement that these roads are of strategic importance to the economy; and [3] makes a representation that the RSS includes a new policy which states clearly which on- and off-line road schemes are supported for inclusion in the Regional Funding Allocation.
- 7.32 **Chapter 6: Harnessing the Benefits of Population Growth and Managing the Implications of Population Change:** The RSS stresses the importance of meeting the Region's housing needs and draws attention to the house price to income ratio. The importance of balanced housing markets is stated.
- 7.33 **Policy H1 Affordable Housing:** The RSS makes provision for a minimum of 30% affordable housing across all local authorities, with higher targets for areas of greatest need. Torbay has a significant affordable housing requirement, as demonstrated clearly in its Housing Needs Study, and in the Joseph Rowntree finding [2004] that Torbay was the 13th most unaffordable authority in England for young first time buyers. Work is currently in progress as part of the emerging Local Development Framework to review the affordable housing provision in Torbay in response to the seriousness of the situation, and any changes in percentage affordable housing targets needs to be reflected in the RSS. It is unlikely that this important work will be completed before the end of the Draft RSS consultation period, although the policy as written is flexible enough to accommodate this. **Recommendation:** That the Council

supports the RSS affordable housing provision in general, whilst informing the Regional Assembly that the Torbay affordable housing percentage requirement for new development is to be reviewed as part of the emerging Local Development Framework.

- 7.34 **Chapter 7: Enhancing Distinctive Environments and Cultural Life:** The RSS aims to enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life. The RSS policies for environmental protection and enhancement are considered to be generally sound. However, there is no guidance on whether waste management should be carried out on a sub-regional basis, perhaps in partnership, or whether it is more sustainable for each area/authority to be self contained in its collection and processing of waste. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports these policies, including renewable energy targets and the waste management hierarchy; and [2] makes representations to request more guidance on the sustainable considerations of waste management.
- 7.35 **Chapter 8: Enhancing Economic Prosperity and Quality of Employment Opportunity:** The RSS makes it clear that the economy is important in achieving strong and inclusive communities. It states that economic productivity declines with distance from London and other key economic hubs, highlighting the issue of connectivity.
- 7.36 **Policy E1 Assessing Employment Land Provision:** Local authorities are to assess the supply of, and demand for, employment land for their area and maintain a ready supply of sites and premises to meet local requirements for a wide range of employment. The RSS is silent on the role of gap funding through non-employment uses to open the remainder of a site allocated for employment. Guidance on 'pump-priming' would be useful to many authorities, where the employment land values make other land use options more attractive for land owners and developers. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the policy and [2] makes a representation asking for the policy to also include advice on pump-priming.
- 7.37 **Policy E2 Identification of Employment Sites:** The RSS requires SSCTs to provide sufficient sites to accompany the numbers of jobs identified for each SSCT. This is considered to be appropriate, although the issue of land values raised in paragraph 7.36 above is also relevant here. **Recommendation:** that the Council [1] supports the policy and [2] makes a representation asking for the policy to also include advice on pump-priming.
- 7.38 **Policy TC1 City and Town Centres:** The emphasis on maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres is in accordance with Government policy. Reference is made to the need to ensure that such centres are not adversely affected by inappropriate development elsewhere. Mixed uses within centres are supported. The main focus for new investment in retail and other major facilities requiring high levels of accessibility will be the central areas of the SSCTs identified in Development Policy A [which includes Torbay]. The scale of new retail investment within town centres is required to take account of changing patterns of behaviour and future levels of population growth. However, as Development Policy A refers to Torbay as a whole, no differentiation is made between the differing retail roles of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports this policy in principle, and [2] requests clarification as to the way in which this policy is intended to impact on the three towns within Torbay.

- 7.39 **Policies TO1 – TO3 Sustainable Tourism and High Profile Attractions:** Torbay is listed as one of the region's major resorts, which is to be maintained and enhanced. The RSS makes provision for safeguarding existing high quality accommodation and facilities and investing in new facilities where these would be viable and of an appropriate scale. Torbay is also considered to be an appropriate location for a major new tourism attraction, and this is considered to be appropriate and perhaps challenging. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports these policies.
- 7.40 **Policy CA1 Regional and Large Casinos:** Criteria for these major casinos are set out in this policy. **Recommendation:** That the Council supports this policy.
- 7.41 **Chapter 9: Addressing Deprivation and Disadvantage to reduce Intra-Regional Inequalities:** Torbay is one of seven local authorities in the South West which feature in the 100 most deprived local authority areas in England. **Recommendation:** That the Council notes the need to secure regeneration and neighbourhood renewal, as stated in this chapter.
- 7.42 **Chapter 10: Ensuring People are treated fairly and can participate in Society: Policy SI 1 Equality Impact Assessment:** The RSS mentions the need for Equality Impact Assessments, although there is no detailed guidance on how to implement them. **Recommendation:** That the Council notes this policy and awaits detailed guidance.
- 7.43 **Implementation Plan – Torbay Section:** The Table summarising RSS provision for Torbay [page 40] refers to the Sub-Regional Study arrangement, with South Hams, Teignbridge and Devon County Councils referred to as lead organisations, and supports the continuation of the existing joint working to ensure appropriate balanced spatial planning and management of growth and change through LDDs and LTPs; key infrastructure requirements include:
- Investment in walking and cycling networks linking key areas of employment, education and other key facilities with housing
  - Progressive implementation of bus priority measures and improving bus services, in the context of the Torbay Bus Quality Partnership
  - Improving rail facilities and capacity
  - Improvements to the Torbay – Newton Abbot corridor – public transport, rail and road
- Recommendation:** That the Council supports this implementation table, with the addition of addressing the difficult funding issue for employment land assembly and regeneration schemes.
- 7.44 **Implementation Plan – Regional Funding Allocation Schemes: The Region's Submitted Transport Advice to Government:** The RSS sets out in Appendix 3 [Page 86f] the three tables of submitted transport schemes for inclusion in the Regional Funding Allocation. Table 1 identifies schemes where the region has concluded that there is a strong case for inclusion within an RFA programme to 2016; Table 2 lists schemes which require further work but where there appears, on current evidence, to be a likelihood that the region would want to include them in a programme, subject to relevant appraisals; Table 3 identifies a range of projects which may well prove to be longer term priorities for the region, but which at present are either under-developed or not sufficiently focused on top level priorities to be included in the proposed RFA programme to 2016. The A380 South Devon Link Road

[SDLR] is included within Table 2, with an estimated cost of £108 million. The revised scheme, which now has planning permission, is for a scheme costing £96.5 million. Table 2A indicates that the SDLR could be implemented from 2010 onwards, in three tranches of £36 million. Table 3 includes reference to a Torbay Integrated Transport Package, which will be assessed separately against a provision of funding for smaller scale schemes. **Recommendation:** That the Council [1] supports the inclusion of the SDLR within Table 2; [2] makes a representation that the framework for the relevant scheme appraisals be communicated as a matter of urgency; and [3] Table 2B should indicate £2 million within year 2009/2010 to cover further scheme preparation, procurement, advanced ecological work, advanced statutory undertaker diversions and other necessary works.

- 7.45 **Strategic Sustainability Assessment [SSA]:** The preparation of an SSA is now mandatory. The Regional Assembly commissioned consultants to carry out the SSA, which identified nine key sustainability issues for the South West. These can be summarised as: Income levels, educational qualifications, skills and wealth all tend to reduce significantly as distances from London and the South West increase. Levels of deprivation and social exclusion are proving very persistent. Many people cannot afford to buy a home on the open market. Traffic continues to increase as car ownership rises. Continued loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitats and species. Some historic assets are at risk from development or general lack of care. Parts of the region are becoming more urbanised, leading to a loss of tranquillity and dark skies. The amount of materials consumed continues to increase, as does the amount of waste, despite improvements in recycling. The region's greenhouse gas emissions are too high, and climate change is likely to lead to a range of challenges, such as increased risk of flooding from rivers and along the coast, especially where sea level is rising, and there may be water shortages in parts of the region.
- 7.46 The SSA has been closely integrated with the preparation of the RSS. It concludes that there are a number of areas where the Draft RSS was improved in sustainability, including: Ambitious policies which could reduce carbon dioxide emissions.  
Acknowledgement of environmental limits  
High urban focus for new development  
Emphasis on 'quality of development'  
Recognition that different parts of the region have different characteristics, constraints and opportunities.  
Improved alignment of homes with jobs, which should help to reduce travel  
Strong attempt to deal with housing need  
Emphasis on well-being and reducing inequality  
Recognition that the economy needs to be made more environmentally sustainable  
Support given to improvement of workforce skills  
Acknowledgement that there needs to be significant improvement in public transport and demand management  
The aim to improve environmental infrastructure within the region.
- 7.47 **Recommendation:** That the Council supports the findings of the SSA

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## IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

### Part 1

These sections may have been completed by the Report author but must have been agreed by the named officers in the Legal, Finance, Human Resources, Estates and Property and Procurement.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues? If "Yes" - give details.	Name of responsible officer	
<i>delete as appropriate</i>		
Legal	<b>Yes:</b> The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 came into force on 4 September 2004. It heralded the replacement of the development plan system of structure plans and local plans with a system of Regional Spatial Strategies [RSSs] and Local Development Frameworks [LDFs]. The Act is accompanied by interim arrangements and Regulations, which prescribe in detail the way the process is implemented. Government policy and guidance is set out in Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Planning [2004].	Bill Norman
Financial – Revenue	<b>Yes:</b> Direct cost implications relating to the implementation of any publicity and supporting documents, including printing. Costs are within current and projected Torbay Council budget allocations, which will include future Planning Delivery Grant allocation.	Adrian O'Rourke
Financial – Capital Plan	<b>No direct implications from the RSS itself</b> , but the policies emerging from the RSS may affect asset values and permitted uses, which may have implications for the Council's Capital Strategy and Capital Plan Budget.	Richard Thorpe
Human resources	<b>No direct implications from the RSS itself</b> , but possible staffing requirements in order to meet requirements of the consultation, specialist input and inquiry process.	Caroline Taylor
Property	<b>No direct implications from the RSS itself</b> , but the policies emerging through the RSS will be taken on board in the LDF and will have implications for all land and property owned by the Council. RSS policies will have an impact on proposed uses and values of Council assets.	Sam Partridge
Procurement and Efficiency	<b>No direct implications from the RSS itself</b> , but the new development plan process reflected in both the RSS and LDF may have procurement implications relating to the selection of consultants and other services, such as printers.	Steve Parrock

Part 2

The author of the report must complete these sections.

Could this proposal realistically be achieved in a manner that would more effectively:		
		<i>delete as appropriate</i>
(i)	promote environmental sustainability?	No
(ii)	reduce crime and disorder?	No
(iii)	promote good community relations?	No
(iv)	promote equality of opportunity on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief?	No
(v)	reduce (or eliminate) unlawful discrimination (including indirect discrimination)?	No

If the answer to any of the above questions is "Yes" the author must have addressed the relevant issue/s in the main report and have included a full justification and, where appropriate, an impact assessment.

Part 3

The author of the report must complete this section.

	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes", give details
Does the proposal have implications for any other Business Units?	Yes	The implementation of the RSS has will require work to be undertaken on a corporate basis, reflecting the Council's corporate priorities and also providing the spatial expression of the Community Plan. It is likely that this work will impact on nearly all of the Council's Business Units to some degree, and in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and Performance</li> <li>Housing Services</li> <li>Torbay Development Agency</li> <li>Highways and Street Services</li> <li>Children's Services</li> <li>Cultural Services</li> </ul>

Part 4

Is this proposal in accordance with (i.e. not contrary to) the Council's budget or its Policy Framework?		<i>delete as appropriate</i>
		Yes
1.	If "No" - give details of the nature and extent of consultation with stakeholders and the relevant overview and scrutiny body.	
2.	If "Yes" - details and outcome of consultation, if appropriate. The Regional Assembly is currently consulting on the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy.	

Part 5

Is the proposal a Key Decision?	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes" - give Reference Number
	Yes	X31/2006

Part 6

**Wards**

All Wards

**Appendices**

None

**Documents available in Members' Room**

The Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy [6 parts as identified in paragraph 7.3]

**Background Papers:**

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

- Torbay Urban Capacity Study, August 2005
- Torbay Employment Land Study
- Torbay Retail Study
- South West Regional Spatial Strategy: Report of the Torbay and South Devon Joint Sub-Regional Study, June 2005
- South West Regional Spatial Strategy: Torbay Council First Detailed Proposals, September 2005