

WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON STRUCTURE PLAN 2016

A Joint Structure Plan Alteration covering the
Administrative Areas of
Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire County Council

**ADOPTED
Explanatory Memorandum
&
Written Statement**

April 2006



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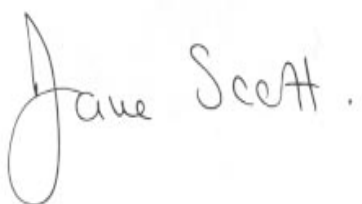
FOREWORD

The Structure Plan provides a strategic policy framework for land use planning, development and transport across the administrative areas of Wiltshire (incorporating Wiltshire County and Swindon Borough) up to 2016. This framework is used to inform the more detailed Local Development Frameworks produced by the Borough and District Councils against which decisions on development are made.

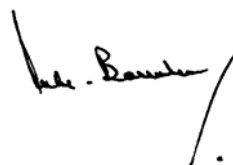
The Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan 2016 is an Alteration to the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011. This means that the majority of policies have remained the same, with alterations to other policies to ensure the Plan is consistent with national and regional planning guidance to guide development across Wiltshire up to 2016.

The Structure Plan 2016 has passed through a number of formal, public stages on its way to adoption by the two Strategic Planning Authorities. A Deposit Draft Alteration was placed on deposit for public consultation in October 2003. This was followed by an Examination in Public (EIP) in June and July 2004. The EIP Panel's recommendations were published in October 2004 and, following consideration of these, the Strategic Planning Authorities published Proposed Modifications for public consultation in August 2005. The Structure Plan was agreed for adoption by Swindon Borough Council on 26 January 2006 and Wiltshire County Council on 7 February 2006. The Structure Plan was formally Adopted on 1 April 2006.

The Plan forms part of the development plan for Wiltshire for a period of three years or until it is replaced by the new Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West.



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CONTENTS

Foreword

Explanatory Memorandum

| | Page No. |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Introduction | 6 |
| 2. Issues, Aim & Objectives | 13 |
| 3. The Strategy | 23 |
| 4. Development Pattern | 29 |
| 5. Transport | 64 |
| 6. The Natural Environment and the Countryside | 77 |
| 7. Historic Environment | 94 |
| 8. Recreation, Leisure and Tourism | 102 |
| 9. Renewable Energy | 113 |
| 10. Minerals | 118 |
| 11. Waste Management | 128 |
| 12. Telecommunications | 134 |
| Appendices A and B | 135 |
| Written Statement | 138 |
| Key Diagram | 170 |

Figures and Tables

Page No.

FIGURES

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 1.1 | Structure Plan Area and Local Authority and Community Areas | 8 |
| 1.2 | The Structure Plan Process | 11 |
| 2.1 | Regional Context | 12 |

TABLES

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 2.1 | Housing Growth in the Plan Area's Districts and Towns 1978 - 2003 | 14 |
| 3.1 | Proposed Housing 1996-2016 | 26 |
| 3.2 | Proposed Employment Land 1996-2016 | 27 |
| 4.1 | Housing Land Supply 1996-2016 | 38 |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Structure Plan sets out strategic planning policies for the area of Wiltshire County and Swindon Borough for the period up to 2016, in support of a strategy for their future development and the conservation of their heritage.
- 1.2 This Structure Plan has been prepared jointly by Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991). This requires a single Structure Plan to be prepared for the whole of the former County area of Wiltshire. **Figure 1.1** shows the Plan Area and its constituent local authorities, plus community areas used for service planning purposes.
- 1.3 The previous Structure Plan (Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011) has been altered and rolled forward to cover the period to 2016. This means that the majority of policies in the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 remain the same and have been carried forward into this Plan but that a small number of policies have been altered. Only limited alterations to the previous Plan were considered necessary instead of a major review because the Plan was regarded as broadly compatible with national and regional planning guidance.
- 1.4 The policies are set out in bold **CAPITAL** type. The accompanying text explains, qualifies and interprets the policies. Together, these form the Explanatory Memorandum. The policies are also set out separately at the end of the document, together with the Key Diagram, to form the Written Statement. The Key Diagram acts as a geographical index to the policies.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

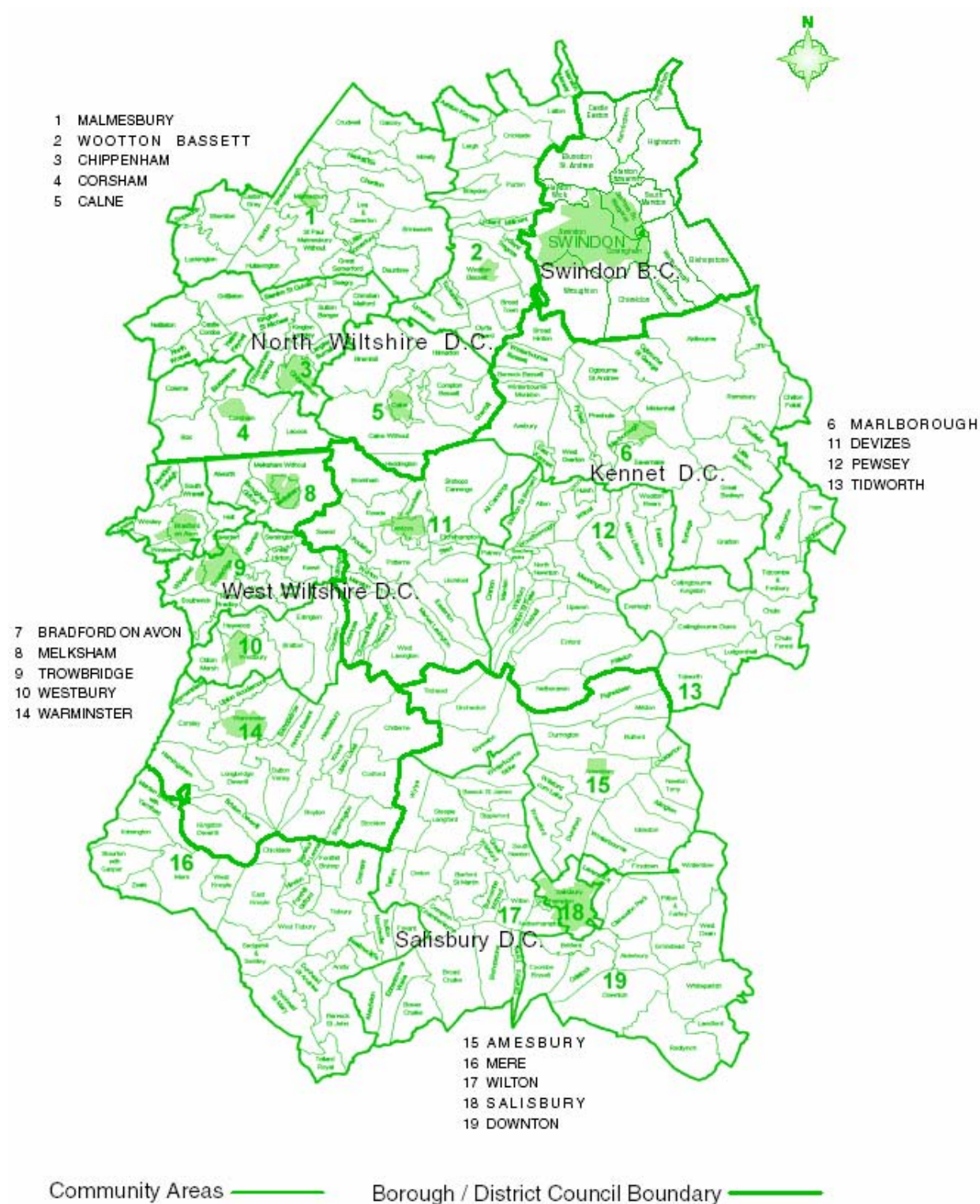
- 1.5 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 strengthens the role of regional planning by replacing Regional Planning Guidance with statutory Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and making RSS, which also replaces the Structure Plan, part of the development plan. The Act also replaces Local Plans with Local Development Frameworks (LDF). An LDF contains Local Development Documents (LDDs) including Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that together with RSS will form the Development Plan.
- 1.6 Under the transitional arrangements of the Act, this Plan is “saved” for a period of 3 years from the date of adoption or until RSS revisions are published by the Secretary of State that replaces its policies in whole or in part. The South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) as Regional Planning Body is responsible for preparation of RSS for the South West. The timetable for preparation of RSS indicates that an examination in public of the draft RSS will take place during spring 2007 and the Secretary of State will issue the new RSS early 2008. The adoption of this Plan will ensure that a strategic policy framework is in place for this interim period providing a context for Local Transport Plans and new Local Development Documents, as well as any Local Plans

being completed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. All Local Plans will be assessed for conformity against this Structure Plan. Although the Plan in places refers to Local Development Documents, in appropriate circumstances, this should be interpreted as Local Plans where they have not been superseded by Local Development Documents.

The Role of the Structure Plan

- 1.7 The Structure Plan has three main functions:
 - i) To provide a framework of strategic policies for local planning and development control decisions;
 - ii) To ensure that provision for development is realistic and consistent with national and regional policy; and
 - iii) To secure consistency between development plans at the local level for neighbouring areas.
- 1.8 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires all relevant planning decisions to be "plan led", that is in accordance with Development Plans, unless material considerations indicate otherwise: thus the need for up-to-date and relevant Structure Plans is of paramount importance.
- 1.9 Together with Local Plans or the new Local Development Documents (where these supersede policies in Local Plans), the Structure Plan will form the Development Plan for Wiltshire and Swindon in the period until it is superseded by a new Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 1.10 The role of the Structure Plan within the planning process will therefore be to provide an up-to-date statement of strategic planning policy. Local Plans or the new Local Development Documents will act as the detailed basis for day-to-day development control decisions.
- 1.11 The Structure Plan is a broad land use and transport strategy which establishes the main principles and priorities for the future development of the area. It provides a measure of certainty about the medium-term to long-term time scale within which the new Local Development Documents should be prepared and decisions on planning applications taken, and hence sets a framework for co-ordinating action.
- 1.12 For the County and Borough Councils, the Structure Plan establishes a common basis, in terms of the overall scale and distribution of development and land uses, for a range of plans and programmes for the services they provide. These include Local Transport Plans (LTPs), Economic Development Strategies and investment programmes for education and social services. The Structure Plan also complements many of the County and Borough Councils' other strategies and initiatives, together with those of other agencies such as the Environment Agency and Countryside Agency. The Plan will help guide and influence the work of public and private bodies in the Plan Area.

Figure 1.1 Wiltshire Structure Plan Area and Local Authority and Community Areas



The European, National and Regional Planning Context

- 1.13 It is important to recognise that national and regional planning must also be seen in the wider European perspective. Increasingly the policies of the European Union are having an influence on strategic planning policies and funding programmes.
- 1.14 The Government issues Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) on a range of land use planning topics. There are also a number of circulars, other Government policies and statements such as the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. These have been taken into account in preparing the Structure Plan. Of particular relevance is the requirement to contribute to sustainable development, which is a key feature in PPGs and more recently in PPSs produced by the Government. Preparation of this Plan has followed the guidance in the Planning Policy Guidance Note - Development Plans (PPG12).
- 1.15 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) was issued in September 2001 by the then Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions following the submission of advice from the South West Regional Planning Conference in July 1999. The Vision of RPG10, "Developing the Region, in a sustainable way, as a national and European region of quality and diversity, where the quality of life for residents, the business community and visitors will be maintained and enhanced", highlights the need for development plans to secure a sustainable level of growth and distribution of development. Thus, while seeking to safeguard and enhance the distinctiveness and diversity of the South West's environment, plans should encourage and maintain a healthy economy.
- 1.16 RPG10 provides an overall growth context for this Plan, setting out a figure of 3,000 additional new dwellings per annum for Wiltshire and Swindon for the period 1996 to 2016. Distributing the housing provision and taking forward the regional development strategy appropriate to the Wiltshire context have been key issues during preparation of this Plan, particularly in the context of securing sustainable development.
- 1.17 Having regard to the Plan Area's geographical position, it is also essential to take account of the important relationships with other counties in the South West and adjoining counties of the South East, both individually and in the context of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9).

The Structure Plan Process

- 1.18 The process of preparing the Structure Plan is set out in **Figure 1.2**. The entire process is the responsibility of the Strategic Planning Authorities, including adoption of the Plan. However, the Secretary of State retains powers to intervene in the process, in order to ensure that national and regional policies are upheld.
- 1.19 A pre-deposit consultation document 'Shaping the Future Development of Wiltshire and Swindon' was published for public comment in April 2003 and a formal Deposit Draft Alteration in October 2003. An Examination in Public took place in June and July 2004 and the EIP Panel report published in October of that year. The County and

Borough Councils then published Proposed Modifications in August 2005 to take account of recommendations made in the Panel report and other objections made at the formal Deposit stage. Following consideration of responses to the Proposed Modifications minor changes were made to the Plan and the Alteration to the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 was agreed for adoption by Swindon Borough Council on 26th January 2006 and Wiltshire County Council on 7th February 2006. The Structure Plan was formally adopted on 1st April 2006. The previous approved Structure Plan has been repealed with effect from the date that this plan became operative following Adoption on 1st April 2006.

Figure 1.2

The Structure Plan Process

Preparation of Draft Plan for Publication



CONSULTATION – DRAFT PLAN



Re-assessment and Revision



DRAFT PLAN ON PUBLIC DEPOSIT



Selection of Matters/Issues for E.I.P



EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC



Reconsideration in the light of E.I.P
Panel's Recommendations



PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS



ADOPTION

Figure 2.1 Regional Context



CHAPTER TWO

ISSUES, AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 In preparing the Structure Plan, the County and Borough Councils have taken into account the changing national and regional context and the role that Wiltshire and Swindon plays. The Plan Area is diverse. It exhibits a number of problems and opportunities, which need to be addressed in developing a strategy for the longer term.

Issues

- 2.2 Although Wiltshire and Swindon are part of the South West Region, they adjoin the South East Region and the counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Hampshire. Parts of the South East Region, including the M4 corridor, have been subjected to major development pressures in recent years. Increasingly during the 1970s and 1980s these pressures have expanded into adjoining areas. Consequently Wiltshire plus Swindon is one of the ten fastest growing counties in the country, for both population and employment. The areas of fastest growth are located predominantly on the fringes of the South East Region. Over the period 1978 to 2003, some 83,642 new homes have been built in Wiltshire and Swindon, at an average rate of some 3,345 per annum. Details are shown in **Table 2.1**, which gives totals for the periods before and since 1996 and the balance of development between urban and rural areas.
- 2.3 Much of this house building has been on new, or "greenfield" sites. Monitoring carried out by the Wiltshire and Swindon local authorities shows that, between 1991 and 2003, about 42% of new dwellings have been provided on previously developed land. The relatively high use of new sites results from the location of rapid housing development in an area where most settlements are market towns or smaller and where much of the urban fabric has been built in the last fifty years. There are limited opportunities for urban redevelopment.
- 2.4 Outside Swindon, the Plan Area is generally rural in character. Much of the Plan Area has an outstanding landscape (see Key Diagram). About 70 per cent is designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Special Landscape Area (SLA) or Green Belt. The West Wiltshire Green Belt which surrounds historic Bradford on Avon is part of the much wider Bristol/Bath Green Belt. A small part of the New Forest National Park extends into Salisbury District. In addition, large parts of the Plan Area are recognised for their nature conservation value at international and national levels. There are also many areas of archaeological interest, including the World Heritage Site of Stonehenge and Avebury. Wiltshire and Swindon contribute significantly to the distinctiveness, quality and diversity of the South West's environment.
- 2.5 Swindon, with an urban population of about 158,000 out of a Plan Area total of about 627,500 (2004) is the largest urban area and has experienced rapid growth for several decades. In the south of Wiltshire lies the historic cathedral city of Salisbury, with an urban population of about 44,500 (2004). The city serves a large surrounding rural area. To the west of the County, there are a number of market and industrial towns, the largest of which are Trowbridge (population about 35,500 in 2004) and

Chippenham (population about 33,500 in 2004). Smaller towns are dispersed across the rest of the Plan Area, providing important service functions for their surrounding areas. Like Swindon, most of the towns in the Plan Area have grown rapidly in recent years.

TABLE 2.1 Housing Growth¹ in the Plan Area's Districts & Towns 1978-2003

| District / Borough | New Housing Completions 1978 to 1996 | | | New Housing Completions 1996 to 2003 | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| | Total Built | Share of Plan Area Total | Share of Total in Towns and Other Main Settlements | Total Built | Share of Plan Area Total | Share of Total in Towns and Other Main Settlements |
| Kennet | 6835 | 10.9% | 55% | 2401 | 11.6% | 70% |
| North Wiltshire | 12972 | 20.6% | 77% | 3898 | 18.8% | 75% |
| Salisbury | 9236 | 14.7% | 67% | 3259 | 15.7% | 79% |
| West Wiltshire | 12365 | 19.7% | 82% | 5251 | 25.4% | 88% |
| Swindon ² | 21521 | 34.1% | 96% | 5904 | 28.5% | 96% |
| Plan Area ² | 62929 | 100% | 81% | 20713 | 100% | 84% |

Note: ¹ Completions are gross.

² Land areas:- Swindon Borough = 23,099 ha (7%),
Plan Area = 348,557 ha.

- 2.6 Swindon, which has a strategic location on the M4 and the Inter-City rail corridor between London and Bristol, has been well placed to accommodate much of the pressure for development. Development has secured a wider and sounder base for the town's economy and its position as a regional centre has been confirmed, with the number working in the Borough increasing from around 96,000 in 1991 to around 108,000 in 2001 (an increase of 13%). The buoyancy of the local economy has resulted in substantial net in-commuting flows, which increased from around 10,000 in 1991, to around 14,000 in 2001. The Northern Development Area, the last of the major areas identified for growth during formal town expansion, will accommodate some 9,000 to 10,000 houses and is likely to be completed before 2014.
- 2.7 Economic growth pressures have not been so significant further west along the M4 corridor. Indeed, there has been concern about the economic fortunes of parts of the western area, particularly with structural changes in the economies of the main towns.
- 2.8 North Wiltshire District, and particularly the Chippenham area, has also benefited from an M4 Corridor location, with employment in the District increasing from around

47,000 in 1991, to around 58,000 in 2001. This increase of 22% is well above both the national rate of increase over this period (10%) and the rate of increase in the Plan area as a whole (14%).

- 2.9 In contrast, in West Wiltshire District, where the traditional manufacturing base remains important, the local economy is less buoyant. The population of the District is concentrated in the closely-spaced market towns of Trowbridge, Melksham, Westbury, Warminster and Bradford-on-Avon, which together had a population of around 95,000 in 2004. However, although the workforce of the District – at around 60,000 – is similar to that of North Wiltshire, the rate of employment increase has been much lower, with the number of workers in the District increasing from around 48,000 in 1991, to around 51,000 in 2001, an increase of 7%. Furthermore, there are particular concerns about the viability and vitality of several town centres, and it is considered that the economies of all the towns remain vulnerable to structural change. In consequence, the improvement of the A350 route through the area, and through to the M4 has been, and remains, a priority.
- 2.10 In spite of the contrasts in their economic fortunes, both North and West Wiltshire Districts experienced significant increases in net out-commuting between 1991 and 2001. In the case of North Wiltshire, however, the District's location, in addition to benefiting economic growth, also provides ready access to employment opportunities in Bath and Swindon, in addition to Bristol, where the number of jobs in the "North Fringe" increased greatly in the 1990s. It is against this background of an increase in jobs within the "commuting hinterland" of the District, together with the high rate of housing completions, particularly at Chippenham, that net out-commuting from the District increased from around 6,800 in 1991, to around 9,200 in 2001.
- 2.11 In the case of West Wiltshire, the District's residents have long looked to the centres within the former County of Avon, and particularly to Bath, for employment. Nevertheless, in 1991, at around 1,600, the scale of net outflow was far less than that from North Wiltshire. However, by 2001, this had increased greatly – to 7,000. The explanation for this is in part to be sought in the escalating price of housing in Bath, and the increasing differential in prices between Bath and West Wiltshire. Nonetheless, it is likely that this increase in net out-commuting is in part a consequence of the relatively modest rate of employment increase in the District.
- 2.12 Elsewhere in the County, Kennet and Salisbury Districts have experienced rates of employment increase a little above those of the Plan area as a whole. Both Districts are essentially rural in character, and a large part of each is within the Salisbury Plain MOD Training area, the use of which is set to intensify.
- 2.13 Kennet District has the smallest population base of any of the Wiltshire Districts but the dearth of employment opportunities in the District gave rise to a net outflow of workers of around 5,000 in 1991, although this remained little changed in 2001.
- 2.14 In addition to its rural hinterland, Salisbury District includes the cathedral city of Salisbury, which is an important retail and employment centre, and the Plan Area's second largest urban area. The District's employment base is almost twice as large

as that of Kennet, and similar in size to that of North Wiltshire; while, exceptionally for the Wiltshire Districts, in both 1991 and 2001 there was minimal out-commuting from the District as a whole. Salisbury looks to the south, beyond the New Forest to Southampton and Bournemouth. The city has an attractive landscape setting, made up of the river valleys and chalk downlands. Here there is a need to balance the opportunities created by pressures for development with the long-standing policy emphasis on environmental protection.

- 2.15 The extensive rural parts of the Plan Area have undergone significant changes in balancing the competing demands of conservation and development. The agricultural industry has changed and diversified. There have been increasing demands on the countryside for general recreational enjoyment and leisure. The role of many small towns and villages has changed, particularly with increased use of the private car to travel to larger centres for employment and other purposes. Despite considerable rural house building many villages have also, therefore, seen significant decline in local shops and other services. County Council surveys of villages have identified a loss of more than one half of the general food shops and one third of post offices since the mid 1970s. There has also been growing concern about the availability of affordable housing for local people.
- 2.16 There are other demands on the countryside, including mineral extraction and waste disposal. These can conflict with protection and enhancement of the countryside and its environmental and historic assets. Many of these are of national importance and are also a basis for the Plan Area's developing tourist industry.
- 2.17 The White Paper "Rural England" set the scene for a wide debate on the future of the country's rural areas. This was followed by a Good Practice Guide on Rural Diversification and a revision of PPG7 on the Countryside and the Rural Economy, published in 1997. This has since been replaced with Planning Policy Statement 7 "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas". This Structure Plan has an important role in enabling development to take place in ways that ensure the economic vitality of the countryside, whilst preserving the quality of its environment.

Accommodating development in a sustainable way

- 2.18 Development Plans have always had a role in protecting the environment. To a great extent, this has reflected concerns with protecting amenity and attractive landscape or townscape, and areas of special nature conservation and archaeological importance. Policies promoting public transport and renewable energy have reflected the growing awareness of more global environmental concerns, in particular global warming and air pollution. In recent years, the increasing importance of these has been demonstrated by many conferences and publications. During the 1980s, the United Nations' World Commission on Environment and Development (The Brundtland Commission) worked on the concept of "sustainable development". The Commission's Report, "Our Common Future" (1987) proved highly influential. The most commonly quoted definition of sustainable development emanates from this Report - "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". It led to the U.N.

Conference on Environment and Development (the "Earth Summit") at Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and the publication of advice on how "sustainable development" can be pursued at all levels.

- 2.19 The Earth Summit's action programme, "Agenda 21", the European Union's 5th Environmental Action Programme "Towards Sustainability" and the U.K. Government's White Paper "This Common Inheritance" (1990) all focused attention upon the role of local authorities in working towards a healthier, more "sustainable" approach to accommodating development in the environment. This is now reflected in updated Planning Policy Guidance and Statements, and in initiatives such as Best Value programme for local authorities.
- 2.20 The term "sustainable development" has been taken up because it reflects the desire to continue economic growth, whilst reducing its impact on the environment. This is seen as a unifying issue by many nations. Indeed, an economy with good long term prospects and an environment which is healthy are increasingly seen as interdependent. In the United Kingdom, the White Paper "This Common Inheritance" recognised the role of the planning system in pursuing "sustainable development". It also stressed that this role is not limited to preventing development from taking place. "New buildings and other changes in land use are essential to help the economy grow and to provide people with jobs and homes. But, without some control, the myriad of proposed new developments would produce haphazard results which could damage the environment. In Britain, the framework for land use is largely provided by the long established town and country planning system."
- 2.21 PPG12 "Development Plans" (2000) requires that all development plan policies should reflect environmental considerations and embraces sustainable development principles. At the core of this is the relationship between land-use and transport, because the latter is the fastest growing form of fossil energy use and pollution. This concern is reflected in such revised guidance as PPG3 "Housing" (2000), PPG13 "Transport" (2001) and PPS6 "Planning for Town Centres" (2005). The ability of Development Plans to play a key role in the pursuit of "sustainable development" is strengthened by Central Government's requirement that these policy documents should be given prime consideration in decisions on development proposals.
- 2.22 The issue of sustainable development is therefore central to the Structure Plan. It needs to be addressed in a number of inter-related ways, in particular through the pattern of development and land uses, the transport system connecting these, and environmental protection. These matters are increasingly the subject of further Government research and advice, as illustrated by Planning Policy Guidance Notes and other Government Statements. The emphasis is placed on reducing the amount of travel, and dependence on the private car. This necessitates a greater provision of opportunities for employment and services locally, thereby minimising the need to travel.

Aim of the Structure Plan

2.23 The Aim of the Structure Plan is : -

To support a sustainable pattern of development in Wiltshire, meeting the needs of the County's current and future population for:-

- (a) a prosperous and robust economy**
- (b) an attractive and suitably protected environment**
- (c) good housing and community facilities**

through the strategic planning of land-use and transport.

- 2.24 This recognises that development must continue to provide for the needs of the population. A "sustainable pattern of development" does not therefore mean "no development". But it does mean that very careful consideration should be given to the broad environmental consequences of the scale of development proposed for Wiltshire and Swindon, and to the strategy for accommodating it. Full account must be taken of existing development in securing an overall pattern, resolving existing problems and realising new opportunities as appropriate. Development will be needed to provide jobs, homes, shops, services, recreation and leisure opportunities and an adequate infrastructure, including transport for the County's population and visitors.
- 2.25 Wiltshire and Swindon will be expected to play their part in achieving a healthy national and regional economy. In many parts of the Plan Area, away from Swindon, there is a need to give much greater emphasis to job creation. This will avoid the need for residents to travel long distances to work, help sustain the regeneration of the Plan Area's other towns, and improve the economy.
- 2.26 The integration of land use and transport is central to this approach by achieving a pattern of development which significantly reduces the need to travel, particularly by private car. In the main towns this should also enable a greater emphasis on public transport, whilst in rural areas there is a need to maintain and improve local facilities, including employment opportunities, to reduce the need to travel.
- 2.27 In providing for all these forms of development, the Aim of the Structure Plan is to support options which offer most safeguards to the environment, from the local to the global scale. But it is recognised that the wording of the Aim and indeed the term "sustainable development" do not by themselves resolve the conflict between development and environment that must arise in some cases. Not enough is known about the environmental impact of development to be sure in every case whether an important threshold is being crossed or not. However, it is clear that a "precautionary" approach should be supported in instances where a national or regional priority is at stake. Development proposals which threaten these priorities will therefore be resisted. Conversely, however, the need to accommodate development in sustainable locations is unlikely to always be accepted by those living nearby.

Objectives of the Structure Plan

- 2.28 Objectives have been developed from this Aim, in order to provide a more detailed basis for preparing the Plan Area Strategy and Policies, for criteria used in their appraisal and for monitoring their future effectiveness, in the light of the issues facing the Plan Area.

a) **Community Development**

To ensure that the needs of all groups in the community, including people with disabilities and others with special needs, are taken into account in planning new development and transport improvements, with particular reference to affordable and special-needs housing, employment, transport, access and mobility.

b) **Integration of Land-Use and Transport**

To reduce overall reliance upon private motorised transport, particularly on roads, by supporting:-

- a better balance between housing and employment in all the Plan Area's communities
- greater provision of public transport and rail freight services, and increased scope for walking
- the provision of cycleways in new and existing developments
- parking policies which reflect the need to reduce car use as well as the need for access to facilities and to maintain the vitality and viability of service centres.

c) **Energy Efficient Land-Uses**

To encourage land-use changes needed to reduce energy use, absorb carbon dioxide, provide renewable energy and increase recycling of resources, in both settlements and transport systems, provided that their impact on the environment and amenity of the Plan Area is minimised.

d) **Rural Communities**

To support the economic diversification, social life, facilities and regeneration of rural communities, to enable them to meet more of their needs locally.

e) **Industry and Employment**

To provide scope to existing employers and those moving into Wiltshire and Swindon to evolve and grow, to create sufficient jobs for the Plan Area's growing population.

f) **Quality of Employment**

To encourage choice and variety of high quality employment opportunities in towns throughout the Plan Area.

g) **Regeneration of Small Towns**

To encourage the regeneration of small towns through new investment and community improvements.

h) **Re-use of Developed Land and Buildings**

To secure the effective and appropriate re-use of developed land and buildings, including land which is derelict or has been previously contaminated, for economic and/or community purposes.

i) **Amenity of Settlements**

To protect and improve the amenity of settlements, including their built and natural environment.

j) **The Countryside**

To protect and maintain the quality of the Plan Area's rural environment and biodiversity and support management of the countryside, including by agriculture, forestry, new enterprises and the control of traffic, to achieve:-

- a strong and diverse rural economy
- environmental improvements, including more sustainable development and land use practices.
- protection and improvement of vegetation cover, wildlife species and their habitats, watercourses and the landscape
- protection of the best agricultural land and mineral resources, and
- acceptable forms of public access

k) **The Regional Balance of Development**

To support a scale of development for Wiltshire and Swindon, adjoining counties, the South West Region, the South East Region and the counties of the outer South

East (ROSE) which will allow each area to fulfil its role in meeting national needs, as defined in Regional Planning Guidance, and which will not increase pressures upon the Plan Area.

l) Efficient and Safe Use of Roads

To improve safety and control congestion on the Plan Area's roads.

m) Infrastructure and Services

To ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure and services, including health care and hospital services, to support development, protect the amenity of existing settlements and reflect agreed standards.

n) Water

To protect the Plan Area's water resources by encouraging and supporting measures by the water industry and regulatory bodies to:-

- improve the quality and quantity of the water supply and the quality of the water environment
- maintain acceptable river flows
- prevent increases in flood risk
- reduce mains leakage and wasteful use of water
- improve waste water treatment standards
- reduce pollution by water users and adjacent land uses

provided that any adverse impact on the environment and amenity of the Plan Area is minimised.

o) Minerals

To provide for the extraction of minerals according to national and regional strategies and assessments of need, where the use of secondary aggregates cannot meet assessed need, to achieve environmentally acceptable extraction and to encourage sensitive restoration and after-use of sites.

p) Waste Management

To encourage waste minimisation, reuse, recycling and recovery to reduce reliance on landfill/land-raising and minimise the risks of pollution and other impacts on the natural and built environment.

q) Recreation and Leisure

To provide for the development of environmentally acceptable recreation and leisure activities, to meet the needs of the Plan Area's population and visitors and to help provide employment.

r) Hazard Noise and Light Pollution

To contribute to the minimisation of hazard, noise and light pollution by strategic decisions on the location of development and transport improvements.

- 2.29 The Structure Plan only provides a strategic framework, and it will be necessary for the Borough and District Councils in preparing their new Local Development Document policies and proposals to develop sustainable solutions at the local level. Much can be achieved at the local level to ensure an appropriate mix and integration of land-uses, of housing, education, health and sporting facilities, shops, as well as employment, in order to minimise travel needs. The form, layout and design of development can also play an important part in reducing energy use, for example by supporting district heating schemes, making use of sunlight to reduce heating needs and encouraging low energy transport. At the same time it will be important to protect open spaces / green areas within settlements by utilising "brownfield" sites where appropriate. Such measures will help to protect and enhance the amenity of settlements and their environments. Structure Plan policies for other forms of development, such as shopping, renewable energy, recreation and tourism and development in the countryside will also need to be taken up in the new Local Development Documents. Clearly it will be important for development to be well related to existing and proposed public transport networks to avoid dependence on the private car.

CHAPTER THREE

THE STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Aim and Objectives of the Structure Plan are set out in **Chapter 2**. They seek a sustainable pattern of land-use and transport, whilst meeting the needs of the Plan Area's current and future population by providing for a prosperous and robust economy, an attractive and suitably protected environment, and good housing and community facilities.
- 3.2 The Adopted Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 has been altered and rolled forward for an additional five years to cover the period to 2016. While the overall Plan Area Strategy of the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 is considered to be broadly compatible with more recent national and regional planning guidance, this has been updated to better reflect Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) that was published following the adoption of the Structure Plan to 2011 (**paragraph 3.4**). In particular, Policy SS2 of RPG10 that seeks to achieve more sustainable patterns of development.
- 3.3 The altered Development Strategy policy (**Policy DP3**) has been developed in accordance with RPG10 and places emphasis on focusing growth towards the Swindon Principal Urban Area (PUA) and three Strategic Service Centres of Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge. Outside these settlements, Local Development Documents are required to identify towns that function as local service centres to accommodate smaller scale development to meet local needs and make services available to the wider rural area, and small towns and villages to meet local needs only. This is discussed in more detail in **paragraphs 4.8 to 4.23**.

The Plan Area Strategy

- 3.4 The County and Borough Councils consider that the key elements of the Plan Area Strategy should be:-
- **concentration of development at the Swindon Principal Urban Area and Strategic Service Centres of Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge**
 - **reducing the need to travel, with an increased emphasis on public transport, cycling and walking**
 - **providing scope in towns and villages to facilitate local job creation and economic and social regeneration, and provide for local housing needs**
 - **in particular, to regenerate the economies of the towns in the western part of Wiltshire, and**
 - **in the open countryside, balancing economic diversification with the conservation of a wide range of environmental assets.**

- 3.5 This Plan Area Strategy fully reflects that of the Structure Plan to 2011 with the exception of the first bullet point that has been altered and previously read - "continued concentration of development in the main towns including Swindon", and third bullet point that has also been altered to include reference to the need to "provide for local housing needs".
- 3.6 Sustainable development is more likely to be secured by urban concentration than by dispersed development, with Swindon and the Strategic Service Centres playing a major role. Other towns will continue to play an important role as centres of employment and local services for the wider rural area and development will be necessary to ensure the vitality and viability of these centres is supported and enhanced. Some development in rural areas is inevitable and, indeed necessary to enable diversification of the rural economy, and to permit local needs housing. The Strategy needs to support and sustain rural communities, by affording scope for increased local employment opportunities and the development of low cost housing at settlements throughout the rural areas of the County.
- 3.7 The Structure Plan therefore seeks to secure a sustainable pattern of development by concentrating development at the main urban areas, but also provides some scope for limited development in smaller towns and villages. The specific distribution within each area will be a matter for the Borough and District Councils to determine in preparing their Local Development Documents. The scale and nature of development at each settlement should reflect a range of considerations, namely, its role and function, location within or adjoining areas of protected countryside, the scope for links to major employment centres by public transport, the availability of necessary infrastructure and the need to achieve balanced growth in population, job opportunities and access to services.

Other Main Elements of the Strategy

- 3.8 The distribution of the 60,000 net additional dwellings required by RPG10 to be provided in Wiltshire over the period 1996 to 2016 is shown in **Table 3.1**. For the Plan Area as a whole, the average building rate in the period from 1978 to 2003 was about 3,350 a year. About 20,700 dwellings were built between 1996 and 2003, although the net increase in the housing stock over this same period was only about 18,650 dwellings. However, losses over this period were exceptionally high (due to the demolition of married quarters in Bulford and Tidworth¹ and the Precast Reinforced Concrete replacement housing programme in West Wiltshire), and it is expected that they will now revert to their long-term level of around 100 dwellings a year. Consequently, a build rate of about 3,280 will be required over the remainder of the Plan period to reach the policy total of 60,000 net additional dwellings by 2016.
- 3.9 In Swindon, the Strategy proposes 26,000 dwellings (**Table 3.1**). The average building rate in the period from 1978 to 2003 was about 1,100 a year, a total which is strongly influenced by the high build-rates which prevailed through most of the 1980s. Since that time, however, build-rates have been affected, firstly by the

¹ Although MOD married quarters housing is monitored and counts towards the overall build rate for Wiltshire, it does not count towards meeting the Structure Plan quantum.

housing-market collapse of the late 1980s, and then by the recessionary conditions of the early 1990s. Although rates have since recovered, the number of dwellings completed in the Borough remains relatively modest, with about 5,900 dwellings having been built between 1996 and 2003, resulting in a net increase to the stock of about 5,800 dwellings. From 2003, a build rate of over 1,500 dwellings a year will need to be sustained to reach the policy total of 26,000 net additional dwellings by 2016.

- 3.10 In the towns of the western part of Wiltshire, the local authorities have pursued regeneration for some time. These towns have suffered major losses to their traditional employment base and much effort has been needed to encourage new employment. There remains a need for regeneration to address existing economic problems, and improvements to transport links, in particular the A350, are seen as vital to this process. The regeneration of this area remains an important part of the Structure Plan Strategy
- 3.11 After allowing for further windfall developments (potential for redevelopment of brownfield sites) and existing commitments, **Table 3.1** also provides an indicative assessment of the estimated capacity of new greenfield sites required to be allocated in Local Development Documents. This indicates that there is little or no potential to identify additional greenfield sites over and above those provided for in current and emerging Plans to 2011. The reasons for this are set out in more detail in **Paragraphs 4.30 to 4.34**. However, within the guidelines of the Structure Plan, and as part of the development plan process, it will be the responsibility of the Borough and District Councils to determine the location of development by means of urban capacity studies and the assessment of other potential for development. As part of the review of Local Plans (as Local Development Documents), the Councils should reappraise any outstanding allocations to determine whether they are needed within the period to 2016 and whether there are any alternative sites where development would be more sustainable.

TABLE 3.1 : Proposed Housing 1996-2016

| District / Borough | Housing (no. of net additional dwellings) | | | | Development rates per annum (rounded) | |
|--------------------|---|--------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Total Proposed | Share of Plan Area Total | Est. scope of dwellings built, committed and further windfall development (2003) ¹ | Estimated Capacity of New Greenfield Sites Required to be allocated in Development Plan Documents | 1978 to 1996 (Gross rates achieved) | 1996 to 2016 (Net to be provided) |
| Kennet | 5,250 | 9% | 5370 | 0 | 380 | 262.5 |
| N.Wilts | 9,000 | 15% | 9,780 | 0 | 720 | 450 |
| Salisbury | 8,000 | 13% | 7,650 | 350 | 510 | 400 |
| W.Wilts | 11,750 | 20% | 12,470 | -720 | 690 | 587.5 |
| Swindon | 26,000 | 43% | 25,065 | 1,000 | 1,200 | 1300 |
| TOTAL | 60,000 | 100% | 60,335 | | 3,500 | 3,000 |

Notes : ¹ Kennet, Salisbury and West Wiltshire Districts include allocations in adopted Local Plans. North Wiltshire District and Swindon Borough take account of draft local plan allocations for the period to 2011.

- 3.12 The development of adequate employment opportunities is fundamental to this strategy. **Table 3.2** refers to the strategic provision which should be made available at the PUA, Strategic Service Centres and other settlements where there is the need to redress the imbalance of housing and employment locally to maximise self-containment. Such settlements are generally those settlements with populations in excess of 3,000. However, this excludes those settlements that have a substantially military population and small civilian population including Bulford, Durrington Larkhill and Lyneham. Other policies in the Structure Plan should facilitate appropriate additional developments at the remaining towns, and in villages and the rural areas.

TABLE 3.2: Proposed Employment Land 1996-2016

| Area | Employment Land (ha) | | | | Development rates per annum (ha) | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Total Proposed | Share of Plan Area total | Estimated area of sites built and committed (2003) | Estimated scale of new strategic sites required | Recorded , 1978 to 1996 | Possible , 1996 to 2016 |
| Kennet District | 55 | 8% | 45 | 10 | 1.3 | 2.8 |
| North Wiltshire District | 160 | 22% | 145 | 15 | 5.5 | 8.0 |
| Chippenham | 45 | 6% | 48 | -3 | | 2.3 |
| Remainder | 115 | 16% | 97 | 18 | | 5.8 |
| Salisbury District | 80 | 11% | 57 | 23 | 1.0 | 4.0 |
| Salisbury | 35 | 5% | 14 | 21 | | 1.8 |
| Remainder | 45 | 6% | 43 | 2 | | 2.3 |
| West Wiltshire District | 150 | 21% | 149 | 1 | 3.4 | 7.5 |
| Trowbridge | 35 | 5% | 31 | 4 | | 1.8 |
| Remainder | 115 | 16% | 118 | -3 | | 5.8 |
| Swindon Borough | 280 | 39% | 232 | 48 | 17.2 | 14.0 |
| Swindon | 280 | 39% | 227 | 53 | | 14.0 |
| Remainder | 0 | 0% | 4 | -4 | | 0.0 |
| Total | 725 | 100% | 627 | 98 | 28.4 | 36.3 |

- 3.13 In most areas, compared to past rates of development, a liberal scale of employment land provision is proposed. This is considered necessary to provide a choice of sites, and to allow for possible variations in employment densities, or in the proportion of future employment growth located on employment land. It is recognised that the allocation of land in itself is seldom sufficient to actually achieve development.

Transport

- 3.14 The Strategy of concentrating development in the larger urban areas will facilitate the development of public transport systems. The Strategy also recognises that, in some areas, the emphasis needs to be on developing more local job opportunities, and retaining services and facilities, to avoid the need to travel long distances to major towns.
- 3.15 Greater emphasis is being placed on policies for the development of integrated transportation plans for urban areas, encouraging the use of more efficient and environmentally friendly forms of transport, and promoting the effective management of the existing highway network to meet local travel needs. The importance of maintaining and improving a strategic highway network for regional and national economic reasons is recognised. It is also necessary to support the economic promotion of the towns outside the Swindon area. In particular, the existing strategy to regenerate the economies of the towns in the western part of Wiltshire will be maintained to deal with continuing problems.

- 3.16 The main national primary routes serving this area are the A350 and the A36. Difficulties of access to the towns by these routes, in particular the A350, have contributed to slow economic development and the build up of employment problems. The County Council has completed the Chippenham Western Bypass and Semington-Melksham Diversion, and has proposals for a Westbury Bypass and improvements at Yarnbrook/West Ashton and Melksham, all on the A350. Other improvements to the A350 should be given a high priority as funds become available. There are known problems with the A36 that the County Council is seeking to resolve with the Highways Agency.

Environmental Protection

- 3.17 The Strategy recognises that large parts of the Plan Area are of considerable archaeological, ecological and landscape importance, and that such areas need to be protected and maintained as part of the package for sustainability. Apart from designated areas, there is the need to protect the countryside for its own sake, in accordance with PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas). Nevertheless, the County and Borough Councils recognise the importance of maintaining the vitality and viability of the countryside and therefore an appropriate balance needs to be struck between conservation and development. Thus the Strategy affords these major environmental assets continued protection whilst encouraging their selective use for tourism to diversify the rural economy and improve job prospects. At the same time, other activities, such as minerals extraction need to be carefully controlled.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

4.1 The Strategy described in **Chapter 3** establishes a broad framework for all the strategic planning policies. This Chapter sets out policies for:-

- sustainable development priorities
- infrastructure
- the scale of housing and employment development and its distribution to the Plan area's local authorities, towns and villages.

Priorities for Sustainable Development

4.2 In planning the strategic development of land use and transport, the County and Borough Councils attach great importance to the concept of sustainable development, maintaining and enhancing the quality of life and the environment for existing and future generations. **Policy DP1** reflects guidance at the national and regional level about when Local Authorities should exercise the "precautionary principle", rejecting development which is clearly not sustainable and supporting new forms of development which will enable a more sustainable pattern of land-use, transport and use of resources.

DP1 IN PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULAR PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO:-

1. **MEETING LOCAL NEEDS FOR JOBS, SERVICES AND AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING IN ALL SETTLEMENTS**
2. **MEETING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**
3. **ACHIEVING A PATTERN OF LAND-USES AND ASSOCIATED TRANSPORT LINKS WHICH MINIMISE THE NEED TO TRAVEL AND SUPPORT THE INCREASED USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING AND WALKING**
4. **MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION AND ACCOMMODATING PROPOSALS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY**
5. **IMPROVING THE AMENITY OF SETTLEMENTS**
6. **MINIMISING THE LOSS OF COUNTRYSIDE AND PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE PLAN AREA'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS.**

4.3 Where necessary, the sustainable development priorities in **Policy DP1** are expanded upon in more specific policies in the remainder of the Plan. However these cannot anticipate all forms of strategic development proposal with which the Planning Authorities may be faced. **Policy DP1** provides a "baseline" against which proposals not anticipated in specific policies will be assessed. The priorities listed are a mixture of traditional planning themes and subjects that more recent work on sustainable

development has brought to the fore. The latter include access to jobs, housing and facilities by all sections of society and reduction of the demand for energy, by minimising the need to travel, by conservation measures and by the use of renewable sources.

Infrastructure

- 4.4 It is an Objective of the Structure Plan to ensure that adequate infrastructure and services should be provided in support of development. It is also an Objective that the amenity of settlements should be protected and improved.

DP2 DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT PROCEED UNLESS THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND AMENITIES MADE NECESSARY BY THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE PROVIDED AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME.

- 4.5 The development of the strategy has taken into account the availability and likely provision of basic infrastructure, including water services and transport infrastructure. The acceptability of development proposals will depend upon the existing availability or new provision of a wide range of appropriate community services and facilities. In the past, significant delays have taken place in providing facilities for development areas in Wiltshire. It is apparent that areas of rapid growth have experienced particular difficulties. Severe restrictions on public expenditure are likely to continue, causing difficulties in funding highways, transport services, schools, recreation facilities and other community services needed to support new areas of housing development in particular. The Environment Agency has expressed concern about the environmental impact of increased demand for water from some rivers in the Plan Area, namely the Bristol Avon (Malmesbury area), the Kennet and the Wylfe. Water supply from these areas is limited and may need to be augmented from other areas. Other services, such as community health centres are also likely to be affected. Developers and landowners will therefore need to provide the means to realise the infrastructure, services and amenities necessitated by their development in an environmentally sustainable way.
- 4.6 Local Development Document policies will provide the more detailed framework for establishing such requirements through their proposed allocations for development. They will also consider whether development on major sites will need to be phased, to match provision of infrastructure, services and amenities. Arrangements are likely to be finalised when planning permission is sought. In some cases, it may be appropriate to attach conditions to planning permissions to ensure that development does not take place before infrastructure, services and amenities are provided. In most cases, however, planning obligations are likely to be the principal mechanism. These will usually be drawn up under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, (as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991) while Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 and other powers may also be appropriate. Developers may assist this process by offering voluntary obligations to provide infrastructure, as described in Circular 05/2005.

- 4.7 Infrastructure, services and amenities will need to be provided in an environmentally sustainable manner, to comply with **Policy DP1**. This includes facilities that are accessible to all members of the community.

Development Strategy

- DP3 DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PRIMARILY BE FOCUSED AT THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE ITS ROLE AND FUNCTION AND THE REGENERATION OF THE CENTRAL AREA.**

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD IDENTIFY SALISBURY, CHIPPENHAM AND TROWBRIDGE AS STRATEGIC SERVICE CENTRES FOR SMALLER SCALE GROWTH TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE RURAL AREA BEYOND THE HINTERLAND OF THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREAS. PROVISION SHOULD ONLY BE MADE FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT SUSTAINS THEIR STRATEGIC SERVICE CENTRE ROLE AND IMPROVES THE BALANCE OF LAND USES WITHOUT ENCOURAGING CAR-BORNE COMMUTING TO THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREAS. PARTICULAR EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON THE PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT LAND TO ATTRACT NEW ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND MEET THE NEEDS OF EXISTING EMPLOYERS, AND ALSO AT TROWBRIDGE, THE REGENERATION OF THE TOWN CENTRE.

ELSEWHERE, LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD:

- 1. IDENTIFY TOWNS AS LOCAL SERVICE CENTRES TO ACCOMMODATE SMALLER SCALE DEVELOPMENT TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS AND TO MAKE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THE WIDER RURAL AREAS; AND**
- 2. IDENTIFY SMALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS ONLY.**

DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LIMITED IN SCALE AND WELL INTEGRATED WITH THE EXISTING FORM OF THE SETTLEMENT. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO SETTLEMENTS THAT HAVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES SATISFYING LOCAL NEED, FACILITIES AND SERVICES, AND ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

IN LOCATING DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS STRATEGY PRIORITY WILL BE AFFORDED TO MAKING PROVISION ON PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH LAND IN SUSTAINABLE LOCATIONS SHOULD NOT BE INHIBITED SOLELY ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT IS MET ON OTHER SITES. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD SET OUT THE TESTS OF SUSTAINABILITY WHICH WILL BE APPLIED TO SUCH PROPOSALS INCLUDING THE NEED TO RETAIN AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE OF LAND USES AT SETTLEMENTS. DEVELOPMENT WILL BE OF A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND PROTECT OR ENHANCE LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY.

- 4.8 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) provides the overall framework for Wiltshire's development strategy. The regional development strategy states that:
- The Principal Urban Areas (PUAs) offer the best opportunity for accommodating the majority of development in the most sustainable way;
 - Other designated centres for growth can provide for sustainable and balanced growth to meet other identified sub-regional growth needs;
 - Elsewhere, towns should be designated to act as local service centres for the wider rural area;
 - Other small towns and villages in rural areas should provide for local needs; and
 - Substantial planned expansion of small dormitory towns within easy commuting distance of the PUAs should be resisted.
- 4.9 In taking forward the regional development strategy appropriate to the Wiltshire context, the strategy seeks to achieve a greater concentration of housing development than the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 while providing for housing to meet the needs of the rural areas. The strategy also aims to achieve a better balance of employment and housing, and provide for a range of facilities and services in all settlements to promote more sustainable communities and minimise the need to travel. The extent to which this can be achieved will depend on the role and function, and location of the settlement.
- 4.10 RPG10 identifies Swindon as the only PUA in Wiltshire. The development strategy seeks to accommodate a significant part of the growth that takes place in Wiltshire at Swindon. Development at Swindon will also need to reflect **Policies DP10A, DP10B, DP10C and DP10D**. The Swindon PUA is defined in **paragraph 4.80**. Outside the Swindon PUA, the development strategy focuses new development towards settlements that are able to function as Strategic Service Centres for the wider rural area beyond the hinterland of the nearest PUAs. Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge are Wiltshire's largest settlements in terms of population outside Swindon and have significant employment opportunities with potential for growth and a good range of facilities and services including public transport. They offer the greatest potential for self-contained growth outside the PUA and function as important centres serving the needs of their surrounding areas.
- 4.11 Salisbury is Wiltshire's largest settlement outside Swindon with a population of 44,450 (2004). It is relatively self contained and has a level of retail provision that is second only to Swindon. Salisbury is an historic town with an important landscape setting and its proximity to Stonehenge alongside Salisbury's own historic environment make it an attractive tourist destination. Despite Salisbury's relative self containment it will be particularly important to allow the town to become more self-contained through further economic growth to help minimise out-commuting to major towns on the south coast such as Bournemouth and Southampton. Salisbury's role as an important employment, retail and tourist centre should be enhanced.
- 4.12 Chippenham and Trowbridge have similar populations, of around 33,500 and 35,500 respectively (2004). Chippenham benefits from its location in the M4 corridor and on the Bristol to London main rail line. It is an important employment and service centre
-

with significant potential for economic development that should be realised. Continued economic growth will enable the town to become more self-contained and reduce the need to commute to the nearby PUAs of Swindon, Bath and Bristol.

- 4.13 Trowbridge is Wiltshire's County Town, an important administrative centre that does not enjoy the status it should. Significant potential exists for urban renewal within and around the town centre providing the opportunity to develop a strong and vibrant commercial centre for the town. Trowbridge is a significant employment centre that has a good level of self containment. The promotion of greater self containment through economic growth will enable the town to become more self-contained helping reduce the propensity to commute to the Bath and Bristol PUAs. The opportunities for urban renewal and town centre regeneration should play a key role in achieving the town's economic potential.
- 4.14 To improve the balance of land uses at Strategic Service Centres, an overall focus on employment provision will be of particular importance to ensure that housing does not take place without the local employment opportunities required by an increased workforce. Housing growth without employment provision could lead to increased car-borne commuting to the PUAs that have greater opportunities for employment. In order to sustain the Strategic Service Centre roles of Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge it will be important to maintain and enhance the level and quality of services and facilities commensurate with that required by the town's population and wider rural area to encourage leisure and shopping trips to be made locally.
- 4.15 **Policy DP3** proposes that most new development should take place in Swindon, Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge. However, appropriate opportunities are also needed for the growth of local employment and services in other towns and villages to help reduce the need to travel to more distant locations and further assist in diversifying the rural economy.
- 4.16 The Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 identified the Plan Area's main towns and settlements as:

Kennet District:

Devizes, Ludgershall, Marlborough, Pewsey and Tidworth

North Wiltshire District:

Chippenham, Calne, Corsham, Cricklade, Malmesbury and Wootton Bassett

Salisbury District:

Salisbury, Amesbury, Downton, Durrington, Mere, Tisbury and Wilton

West Wiltshire District:

Trowbridge, Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury.

Swindon Borough:

Swindon, Highworth and Wroughton.

While the roles of Swindon, Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge have been defined, it is recognised that some of the other settlements will continue to play an important role in meeting Wiltshire's needs and where appropriate these should be identified in accordance with **Policy DP3** in Local Development Documents.

- 4.17 Outside the PUA and Strategic Service Centres, Wiltshire's settlements have less potential to become self-contained because of their size, physical constraints and/or location in relation to larger settlements. Some of these nevertheless have a reasonable level of employment opportunities, services and facilities and are well located to play an important role as Local Service Centres in providing for the wider needs of the rural area alongside Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge. Other towns within Wiltshire should therefore be identified in Local Development Documents where these can provide for services and facilities of a more local nature than the Strategic Service Centres. These settlements should complement the Strategic Service Centres.
- 4.18 In identifying Local Service Centres to meet the needs of the wider rural area, consideration should be taken of their location relative to other settlements to ensure that another settlement does not have greater ability to meet the needs of the rural area. Local Service Centres should be well placed to provide a wide range of services for their surrounding communities and provide a focus for meeting the development needs of the areas in which they are located. Although development should be limited, the scale and type of development required to meet local needs will vary depending on the settlement's size; its particular role and function; availability of previously developed land; and need to accommodate employment, service and local housing development.
- 4.19 Access to jobs and services in most rural areas can be limited, and efforts are needed to provide for services and to accommodate employment uses that may wish to locate in these areas. Sites for small new employment areas or new community facilities may therefore also need to be allocated at villages and smaller towns where it is required to help support their communities and improve self-containment. The scale of development at these should be limited to meet local economic and social needs only.
- 4.20 In order to promote sustainable development outside the PUA and Strategic Service Centres and reduce the need to travel by car, housing should be restricted to towns and villages that have access to: employment opportunities; public transport; and services and facilities. Small towns and villages where limited additional housing development may be appropriate, as a minimum, should possess or have good access to a range of services and facilities, including most of the following:
- primary school, church, hall where community activities can take place,
 - food shop, post office, pub, and
 - recreation field.
- 4.21 Most of these facilities are provided by the private sector and all of them are subject to change. For this reason, the absence of some facilities should not be seen as a block to development in an otherwise well-provided village, particularly where the local community is running organisations which provide support for its members. Closely grouped villages that together have good access to facilities should also be considered

and be identified in Local Development Documents. An important aspect of accessibility is safety for pedestrians and the availability of footways.

- 4.22 Many of the Plan Area's villages lie in undeveloped countryside. Much of this has special protection because of its landscape quality or importance for nature conservation or archaeology. Many villages are attractive in form and layout, with high quality buildings. These factors will also influence the scale and location of development. Development of villages in those areas protected by - the Western Wiltshire Green Belt (**Policy DP12**) and the Swindon Rural Buffer (**Policy DP13**) - will need to reflect the intentions of these policies. In many villages there would be advantages in encouraging the construction of smaller houses, affordable by a wider range of residents, on sites identified as suitable in Local Development Documents. Specific Proposals to provide affordable housing may be pursued separately under **Policy DP8**.
- 4.23 The strategy of regenerating the economies of the Western Wiltshire towns (Chippenham, Corsham, Melksham, Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury and Warminster) still remains a central part of the Plan's strategy and includes the need to improve the A350 (**Policy T12**). The Strategy to meet local needs outside of the Principal Urban Areas and Strategic Service Centres will be particularly relevant for any of the Western Wiltshire towns identified in Local Development Documents. In these settlements, the overall emphasis should be on increasing opportunities for local employment and improving service provision to help improve the balance of housing and jobs locally, promote self-containment and minimise the need to travel. This should help redress existing imbalances.
- 4.24 In many of Wiltshire's settlements significant potential exists to redevelop brownfield sites and improve the quality of the urban environment through regeneration. Where such sites are available at settlements, highest priority should be given to locating the development needs of the settlement on suitable land and buildings. Specific policy on the re-use of land and buildings is set out in **Policy DP9**. At all settlements the redevelopment of previously developed land for housing should not take place at the expense of the supply or range and choice of employment sites locally, particularly where they are well integrated within the urban area. Local Development Documents should therefore ensure that important employment land is retained. This will be important to retain an overall balance of land uses and ensure that sufficient employment opportunities can be made available to meet the needs of the resident workforce and not encourage out-commuting.
- 4.25 The EIP Panel (2004) introduced flexibility into the Development Strategy to ensure that the development of well-located previously developed sites would not be inhibited by housing requirement figures set out in **Policy DP4**. This change was made to recognise the potential oversupply of housing that could arise in the Districts of North Wiltshire and Kennet, particularly in North Wiltshire due to higher levels of windfall developments coming forward than had originally been estimated. However, in making the recommendation, the Panel were clear that local planning authorities should be rigorous in their assessment of the sustainability of the location of any site that is considered under this policy. Local Developments Documents should set out policy tests that should be applied to proposals that would result in the District housing supply
-

being exceeded with particular reference to the need to retain important employment land to ensure that an overall balance of land uses is retained, as discussed in **paragraph 4.24**.

- 4.26 The need to secure high standards of design and protection or enhancement of the urban or rural landscape and biodiversity is an integral part of the Plan's Objectives to protect and improve the amenity of settlements. The maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity is also essential to achieving the overall aim of sustainable development.

Housing and Employment Proposals

- DP4 IN THE PLAN AREA PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR 60,000 NET ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS AND 725 HECTARES OF ADDITIONAL STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT LAND BETWEEN 1996 AND 2016, DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:**

| | DWELLINGS | EMPLOYMENT LAND (HA.) |
|---|------------------|----------------------------------|
| KENNET DISTRICT | 5,250 | 55 |
| NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT: | | |
| • CHIPPENHAM | 3,000 | 45 |
| • REST OF DISTRICT | 6,000 | 115 |
| SALISBURY DISTRICT | | |
| • SALISBURY | 3,900 | 35 |
| • REST OF DISTRICT | 4,100 | 45 |
| WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT | | |
| • TROWBRIDGE | 5,000 | 35 |
| • REST OF DISTRICT | 6,750 | 115 |
| SWINDON BOROUGH | | |
| • SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA | 24,000 | 280 |
| • REST OF BOROUGH | 1,000 | 0 |

PROVISION SHOULD ALSO BE MADE FOR 1,000 DWELLINGS AT THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA AT THE WESTERN SIDE OF SWINDON IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY DP10B.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD PROVIDE MECHANISMS TO MANAGE AND REVIEW THE RELEASE OF SITES AND PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT OVER THE PLAN PERIOD.

- 4.27 Housing and employment proposals are made in the light of RPG10, and technical work on growth forecasts and constraints. The recommendations of the Panel who conducted the Examination in Public into the draft Structure Plan (2016) have also been taken into account.

- 4.28 The housing and employment distribution for the Borough and District Councils are explained in the Housing Background Paper (2003). Together with other development pattern and transportation policies, **Policy DP4** provides the appropriate level of guidance for the preparation of Local Development Documents by the Borough and District Councils.
- 4.29 Government Guidance is placing increasing emphasis on the monitoring and review of planned development provision, particularly housing, to ensure that development needs are being met in the most sustainable way. In particular, phasing and regular monitoring of housing on an annual basis should be used to ensure that priority is given to the development of previously developed sites, while ensuring that a continuous supply of housing is available. Account will need to be taken of the levels of windfall developments coming forward that are contributing to the housing requirement and any other changes in supply.

Housing

- 4.30 The house building proposal of 60,000 net additional dwellings between 1996 and 2016 conforms to Regional Planning Guidance. This figure excludes new houses provided by the Ministry of Defence for occupation solely by military personnel including married quarters accommodation. However, it includes existing dwellings transferred from dedicated military use to either the commercial or social housing sectors, as well as all new dwellings (including those arising through redevelopment and conversions) provided by the commercial or social housing sectors.
- 4.31 The scope for influencing the pattern of house building, even when looking more than ten years ahead, is limited by the need to allow for new windfall developments that come forward (development potential on previously developed land). Urban capacity studies produced by the Borough and District Councils have been used to estimate the level of additional housing likely to come forward on new windfall sites and it is estimated that around 8,250 dwellings could be provided from this source between 2003 and 2016. In total, taking into account all forms of housing supply (outstanding planning permissions including sites where there is a Council resolution to grant permission, local plan allocations and windfall sites) and provision that has already been made, it is anticipated that around 46% of the 60,000 net additional dwellings provided between 1996 and 2016 will be on previously developed land.
- 4.32 The overall aim of the Development Strategy (**Policy DP3**) is to achieve a greater concentration of development than the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 while providing for housing to meet the needs of the rural areas in the most sustainable way. In particular, this focuses housing towards Swindon and the three Strategic Service Centres of Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge. The Plan's housing distribution is constrained by the significant level of development that has taken place since 1996 and by existing commitments as well as future windfall development. These have been developed or committed in line with Local Plan strategies that have been prepared in accordance with earlier Structure Plans. The potential to ensure that development provision is consistent with any new development strategy is therefore limited. **Table 4.1** sets out the housing supply position at 1 April 2003.

TABLE 4.1: Housing Land Supply 1996-2016

| District /Borough | Completions 1996-2003 | Planning Permissions at 1 April 2003 ¹ | Local Plan Allocations to 2011 ² | Windfall Allowance 2003-2016 | Total Supply |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|------------------------------|---------------|
| Net Additional Dwellings | | | | | |
| Kennet | 1,545 | 1,560 | 1,130 | 1,135 | 5,370 |
| N.Wilts | 3,675 | 2,910 | 1,600 | 1,595 | 9,780 |
| Salisbury | 2,965 | 1,055 | 1,850 | 1,780 | 7,650 |
| W.Wilts | 4,690 | 2,670 | 3,725 | 1,385 | 12,470 |
| Swindon | 5,780 | 8,630 | 8,305 | 2,350 | 25,065 |
| TOTAL | 18,655 | 16,825 | 16,610 | 8,245 | 60,335 |

Notes:

¹ Includes sites with a Council resolution to grant planning permission² Outstanding allocations that have not been completed or have planning permission

- 4.33 In determining the distribution in the Plan Area, the Strategic Planning Authorities (SPAs) undertook an exercise to determine whether there was any potential to reassess existing commitments. The context for this exercise was to ensure that the housing distribution would achieve provision that is as far as possible consistent with the Development Strategy that has been prepared in line with RPG10. The SPAs concluded that the only real potential existed at West Wiltshire District where a number of Greenfield allocations in the West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration were identified for development during the second phase of the Plan period (1 April 2006 to 31 March 2011). Potential therefore existed through plan, monitor and manage to reappraise the need for these sites against any new emerging Structure Plan provision. The EIP Panel supported the SPAs conclusions that provision at West Wiltshire District should be reduced to allow the reallocation of some housing towards Swindon.
- 4.34 The housing supply position and potential for redistribution has only been used by the SPAs to inform the distribution of housing provision. If any under provision arises as a result of non-implementation then this should be addressed through plan, monitor and manage by the relevant local planning authority and alternative provision made. Equally over provision could occur as a result of windfall coming forward at a higher level than anticipated. It will be a matter for the local authorities to address this through plan, monitor and manage. **Paragraph 4.25** clarifies that there is some flexibility in the housing provision to allow the development of previously developed land in sustainable locations if the housing provision has been met. Where opportunities arise to reappraise housing supply within a local authority area, alternative provision should be made in accordance with **Policy DP3**. In the case of West Wiltshire, in the interim period before the Local Plan is reviewed it will be a matter for West Wiltshire District Council to manage their provision against **Policy DP4** to ensure that provision is not exceeded.

- 4.35 The distribution for the Swindon Principal Urban Area is 25,000 dwellings (definition of the Swindon PUA is provided at **paragraph 4.80**). This comprises 24,000 dwellings to be found within Swindon and a further 1,000 dwellings that should be provided as an urban extension or extensions to Swindon on its western edge. The western edge of Swindon falls within the jurisdiction of both North Wiltshire District Council and Swindon Borough Council and until the outcome of the joint study required to be undertaken by **Policy DP10B** is known it will be unclear which local authority area provision should be made in. It is possible that the provision may be split between both areas rather than provision being made in just one.
- 4.36 It is important that housing developments provide a range of housing, including dwellings suitable for people with special needs. A broad mix of housing will help meet the needs of a range of groups in a community, and allow a community to evolve. The mix of housing should also include affordable housing, (defined in Circular 06/98: Planning and Affordable Housing, paragraph 4 as including both low cost market housing and subsidised housing). A policy for affordable housing has therefore been included in the Structure Plan (**Policy DP8**).

Employment

- 4.37 During most of the post-war period, the Plan Area has fared relatively well in economic terms with job-growth significantly above rates at the national level. Data compiled by Cambridge Econometrics (Cambridge Econometrics, Regional Economic Prospects, February 2005) suggest that, over the period 1981-2003, the Plan Area was in ninth place in terms of employment growth out of the 64 former British county areas. Projections prepared for the Structure Plan anticipated that, over the Plan period (1996-2016), employment within the Plan Area would increase by around 61,000, while the Area's workforce was forecast to increase by around 49,000. Between 2003 and 2016, it was anticipated that both employment and the workforce would grow by around 27,500.
- 4.38 Given the strengths of the local economy, and the locational and quality-of-life advantages that the Plan Area presents for inward investment, a high level of job growth seems likely to continue. However, it is not assured, and, as events continue to demonstrate, the continued presence of existing employers or jobs cannot be taken for granted. Continuing promotion and other measures will be necessary, particularly away from the M4 Corridor, to ensure that adequate job opportunities exist throughout the County. Improvements to the A350 in the west of the county will contribute towards this. However, it is important to ensure that an adequate supply of employment land will be available throughout the Plan period and across the Plan Area.
- 4.39 As a first step towards estimating employment land requirements, employment change and workforce-based projections were prepared for each of the Wiltshire Districts and Swindon Borough. The employment projections are based on Plan Area projections produced by Cambridge Econometrics, with the proportions of change attributed to each sub-area reflecting those of past employment growth. The workforce projections, were based on the projected scale of workforce increase associated with the proposed scale of housing increase within Swindon Borough and each of the Wiltshire Districts.

These initial figures were then refined to ensure that sufficient land is made available to allow unemployment to reduce to a nominal level of 1% by 2016, and to take account of likely trends in double jobbing. At Plan Area level, this exercise suggested that the number of jobs could increase by 66,000 over the Plan period (although, as stated, the projected increase in the number employed is put at 61,000, with the increase in the workforce itself put at 49,000). It was then necessary to translate these projections of employment and workforce-based growth into estimates of employment land requirements.

- 4.40 Both Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council have carried out research into patterns of job growth and employment densities. Within the County Council area, it was estimated that between 1991 and 2001 less than a fifth of the net increase in employment had taken place on employment land. In contrast, the Swindon study suggested that almost half of the employment within the Borough was located on employment land. With respect to employment densities, the overall picture was more uniform, although in both areas densities varied markedly between employment areas. The County Council study found that densities within areas counting towards the policy quanta averaged 55 workers per hectare; while the Swindon study found that densities averaged 56 workers per hectare.
- 4.41 Taking into account these studies, in converting the workforce-based and job-based projections (represented as persons) to an employment-land requirement (in terms of hectares), it has been assumed that employment densities would average 55 persons per hectare, in the case of the Wiltshire Districts, a significantly higher ratio than that which emerged from the studies cited above. It has also been assumed that every other new job would be located on employment land; while the highest estimate of employment land requirements has been selected, irrespective of whether this is derived from the job-based or workforce-based projections. This approach should provide a safeguard against employment-land densities being lower than has been the case historically, and allow more employment to be located on employment-land. It should also provide a buffer against more land going out of employment use than has been the case historically, and allow for the job change or workforce-based projections being exceeded. Additionally, it is also important to provide prospective occupiers with a choice of location, and to provide sufficient land to allow for decreased out-commuting from the Wiltshire Districts.
- 4.42 With the exception of Kennet District, the policy quanta contained in **Policy DP4**, have been derived directly from this process. In the case of Kennet District, however, the quantum has been raised to permit the development of the whole of the RDA site at Ludgershall, in recognition of the special needs of this area.
- 4.43 Provision made in **Policy DP4** should be realised in the form of strategic employment land, defined as employment provision located at the PUA, Strategic Service Centres and settlements where there is the need to address the imbalance of housing and employment locally to maximise self containment (see **paragraph 3.12**). Strategic employment land at these settlements should also be capable of being well served by public transport. There is no quantified requirement for the development of existing employment sites or smaller, non-strategic developments in other settlements, where a

criteria-based approach will apply (**Policies DP3, 9 and 15**). This will give flexibility to Local Development Documents to increase the range of local opportunities. However, in the exceptional event of development being permitted in these locations which does not meet the policy criteria, it would count against the provision made in **Policy DP4**.

- 4.44 Land provision in **Policy DP4** and proposals in other policies reflect the demand for a range of employment activities, namely:

- offices (other than those providing professional and other services to visiting members of the public)
- research and development
- industry
- storage and distribution warehouses (including wholesale cash and carry, but excluding retail warehouses selling directly to the public).

This classification of employment uses reflects the Use Classes B definitions in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and subsequent amendments.

- 4.45 It is likely that there will continue to be demands to locate other activities within employment areas, for example shopping and retail warehouses, which fall outside the above "Use Classes Order" classifications, while some other uses may be best located on employment estates, due to their characteristics and traffic generated. An example is waste processing uses, such as recycling. It is an Objective of the Structure Plan that recycling, energy saving and power generating plant, which will contribute to a more sustainable pattern of energy use, should be encouraged. However, the land area taken by such uses will not be counted against provision in **Policy DP4**. Similarly, other developments which do not fall within the classification of employment uses identified above should not count towards provision.

Town Centres, District Centres and Employment Areas

- 4.46 The general pattern of new development in and on the edges of settlements needs to support the Objectives of the Structure Plan. The principles set out in **Policy DP5** reflect Objectives seeking reduced car use, balanced development of settlements, protection of amenity and protection of high quality environments. In developing the Objectives, analysis of emerging Central Government advice on sustainable development found that there was a strong emphasis on these matters. This has since been reinforced, in particular by "Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport" (2001).

DP5 THOSE EMPLOYMENT, SHOPPING, LEISURE AND OTHER SERVICE USES WHICH ATTRACT LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED AT EXISTING TOWN CENTRES, CENTRES OF OTHER MAIN SETTLEMENTS AND DISTRICT CENTRES OR NEW CENTRES BUILT TO SERVE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, WHERE THERE IS MOST POTENTIAL FOR ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING OR WALKING.

PROVISION SHOULD ALSO BE MADE FOR THOSE EMPLOYMENT USES WHICH ATTRACT SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENTS OF FREIGHT, IN LOCATIONS AWAY FROM CENTRAL AREAS WITH GOOD ACCESS TO THE RAIL AND ROAD NETWORKS AND ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING OR WALKING.

- 4.47 For the purpose of **Policy DP5**, the Plan Area's towns and other main settlements identified in **paragraph 4.16** apply. Nearly all have well developed centres, which act as foci for a variety of activities and access by all modes of transport. In Swindon, a network of District centres performs a similar function. These are listed in **paragraph 4.54**. The allocation in Local Development Documents of necessary additional sites for commercial development attracting large numbers of people should give first consideration to opportunities within existing centres, before considering adjoining sites. **Policy DP6** gives further strategic guidance on shopping development.
- 4.48 Several towns in the Plan Area have developed or allocated employment sites in peripheral locations. These have proved attractive to incoming firms. Government planning guidance now requires caution to be exercised about this form of development, with its emphasis on locations "well served by public transport or otherwise readily accessible to a significant local residential workforce" (PPG13: Transport). However, it does require that employment uses which attract "significant movements of freight (such as large scale warehousing/distribution depots and some forms of manufacturing) should be located away from congested central areas, but with direct access to the local, rather than the trunk network" and with good access to the rail network.
- 4.49 Some services, such as intensive sport and recreation, rely on the towns for most of their support, but may seek more rural locations, on the grounds that they could be reached by largely car-borne customers. Many journeys are made to use such services. Consequently, the County and Borough Councils are concerned that their dispersal would undermine the pursuit of a more sustainable pattern of development and transport. The policy therefore seeks general location of these developments in town centres, other main centres and district centres.
- 4.50 Whilst most of the Plan Area's towns have experienced significant growth, their centres have not necessarily prospered. There has been widespread concern about the impact of out-of-centre superstores and other forms of retailing. **Policies DP5 and DP6** will give additional support to growth and development in centres. But there are other ways in which renewal and prosperity can be achieved. Much depends upon the energy and aspiration of the local community. The Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) is a community based regeneration programme for market towns and their

surrounding area. The initiative aims to support the development of vibrant, healthy and sustainable towns. The MCTi Initiative is being advanced in Wiltshire through the Wiltshire Market Towns Partnership. A number of towns have applied for MCTi status. In 2002 an Urban Regeneration Company was established for Swindon, the New Swindon Company, to regenerate the central area of the town. **Policy DP10D** sets out a specific policy to support the revitalisation of Swindon's central area.

Shopping

- 4.51 Significant growth in the Plan Area's population is forecast by 2016. Also some continued increase in personal spending seems likely. These factors will combine to produce a requirement for additional shopping provision in the Plan Area. The Strategy seeks to concentrate development at the larger towns, so these will also need to accommodate most new shopping floorspace. However, opportunities to enhance town centre shopping facilities will also occur in some smaller towns and main settlements. This will enable them to compete more effectively with other centres and other forms of retailing, because stronger centres will reduce the need for shoppers to travel elsewhere. Growth will also provide the opportunity to widen the range of shopping and to maintain an efficient and innovative retail sector. Retailing is an important source of jobs and economic enhancement. Leisure or tourism-related shopping will also help to provide a wider range of shopping and employment opportunities.
- 4.52 Village shopping has been reduced by strong economic forces favouring centralisation in the towns. Since 1976, a third of village food shops and post offices have been lost from the Plan area. Whilst many rural residents have the mobility to cope with this, others are dependent on local shops and services for a reasonable quality of life. **Policy DP6** therefore acknowledges the importance of village shopping and the need to consider its viability when planning new developments.
- 4.53 **Policy DP6** emphasises the future role of town and other shopping centres in meeting Government and Structure Plan objectives for efficient and innovative shopping, together with a more sustainable pattern of development and transport. It is impossible to predict how shopping trends might change in the period to 2016. But the fortunes of various centres will inevitably vary, due to such factors as population growth, competition or changing economic conditions. For these reasons, it is not desirable to promote the development of particular centres. Rather, **Policy DP6** provides a framework for considering new shopping proposals in the circumstances prevailing.

DP6 THE HIERARCHY OF SHOPPING CENTRES IN THE PLAN AREA COMPRISES:-

- 1. SUB REGIONAL CENTRES - SWINDON AND SALISBURY**
- 2. OTHER TOWN AND MAIN SETTLEMENT CENTRES**
- 3. DISTRICT CENTRES IN SWINDON**
- 4. OTHER LOCAL SHOPPING, INCLUDING NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES AND VILLAGE SHOPS.**

THE ROLE OF EACH CENTRE SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED BY PROVISION FOR SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ROLE OF EACH CENTRE AND WHICH WILL PROMOTE ITS VITALITY AND VIABILITY.

PROVISION FOR OUT OF CENTRE SHOPPING SHOULD BE MADE ONLY IF PROVISION IS NEEDED AND CANNOT BE MADE IN A CENTRE OR, FAILING THAT, ADJOINING A CENTRE, IF IT WOULD NOT AFFECT THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY CENTRES (EITHER BY ITSELF OR WITH OTHER PROVISION) AND ACCESS IS READILY AVAILABLE OR CAN BE PROVIDED FOR MEANS OF TRANSPORT OTHER THAN THE PRIVATE CAR.

- 4.54 The policy aims to ensure that existing shopping facilities are maintained or enhanced. The shopping hierarchy ranges from the sub-regional centres of Swindon and Salisbury, through the major town centres of Chippenham and Trowbridge, to smaller centres such as Marlborough, Melksham and Mere and other local shopping, including neighbourhood centres and village shops. The full list of town and other main settlements covered by sub-clauses 1 and 2 of the policy is given in **paragraph 4.16**. Although Durrington and Downton do not have identifiable shopping centres, they may have the potential for centres to evolve later in the Plan period. In the Swindon urban area, the district centres currently considered to be of strategic significance are Old Town, West Swindon Centre, Gorse Hill, Cavendish Square and Orbital.
- 4.55 Previously much shopping development in the Plan Area has taken place outside town centres and other centres. However, for the past decade Central Government policy and Structure Plan objectives have placed emphasis on the need to enhance the vitality and viability of existing centres, now encompassed in Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6). **Policy DP6** emphasises the role of shopping centres and should provide confidence in their future, by resisting development which would threaten their future, or future enhancement. This should enable the steady attraction of new private and public investment. The County and Borough Councils will support the use of the sequential approach contained in PPS6 for the allocation of necessary additional sites for shopping in Local Development Documents.
- 4.56 However, it may not always be appropriate for development to take place in existing centres. There may be local needs in urban areas which cannot be met in established centres or, it may be difficult to fit needed shopping into small and historic centres. In the future, perhaps, a major increase in spending power might mean that not all requirements could be satisfactorily met in existing centres. Where development is needed and it cannot be accommodated on sites in or adjoining centres, the policy gives scope for sites outside centres to be used. PPS6 gives emphasis to the

assessment of quantifiable need but there may also be instances where qualitative need is of some relevance. However, in all cases it is essential that development would not adversely affect other existing shopping, or the implementation of beneficial shopping proposals. Sporadic comparison (i.e. non food) goods shopping development would increase the need to travel. Out-of-centre shopping should also be accessible by public transport, by bicycle or on foot, so that it can be used by all members of the community.

- 4.57 Enhancement of shopping centres requires more than the addition of retail floorspace. The quality of development is an important consideration, particularly in the many town and other main centres which have historic street patterns and high concentrations of historic buildings. Shopping centres will also continue to require good access by the private car, so that they can meet needs and compete effectively with more dispersed retailing. However, they can also be enhanced by improving accessibility and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and those using public transport and by offering car-free areas. Management initiatives may need to be taken to enhance the environment and attractiveness of shopping centres, to underpin their key role in the revitalisation of urban areas.

Housing in Towns and Main Settlements

- 4.58 The desirability of achieving good links between housing, employment opportunities and other facilities has been reinforced by Central Government guidance seeking reduction in the need for residents to use cars. The general strategy of concentrating house building at settlements with a good range of services and facilities and employment is proposed in **Policy DP3**. The Strategy identifies the Swindon Principal Urban Area and Strategic Service Centres of Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge as the main foci for growth. Local Development Documents are also required to identify other settlements as Local Service Centres to provide for the needs of the wider rural area. At these settlements, where housing is required in accordance with **Policy DP3**, there is a need to provide land for housing in locations well served or capable of being served by public transport. Higher density housing and mixed-use schemes can provide further opportunities to reduce transport needs and, in the case of the former, more support for public transport. Also, locations close to other uses can provide more opportunities for short journeys on foot or by bicycle. The promotion of good links will also improve the amenity of housing areas, meeting another of the Structure Plan's Objectives.

DP7 NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AT TOWNS AND MAIN SETTLEMENTS SHOULD HAVE GOOD ACCESS TO NEARBY EMPLOYMENT AREAS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, OTHER SERVICES AND OPEN SPACE, INCLUDING PROVISION FOR SAFE MOVEMENT BY CYCLING OR WALKING. THEY SHOULD ALSO HAVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS TO TOWN OR SUB CENTRES AND OTHER MAJOR EMPLOYMENT AREAS.

HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING AND MIXED-USE SCHEMES SHOULD BE PROVIDED, PARTICULARLY IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS CLOSE TO MAIN PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES, TOWN AND OTHER CENTRES.

- 4.59 For the purposes of **Policy DP7**, “towns and main settlements” should generally be regarded as the Swindon Principal Urban Area, the Strategic Service Centres and Local Service Centres identified in Local Development Documents. The Structure Plan also proposes limited development of smaller towns and villages. Whilst the scale of development will be much smaller and the scale of integration sought by **Policy DP7** may not be feasible, accessibility to local facilities, services and public transport links to towns will still be desirable.
- 4.60 Some aspects of the policy will require careful consideration of the layout of housing developments, as well as their location. This may achieve better access to public transport and improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists. These and other considerations will be taken up during the preparation of Local Development Documents, which includes environmental appraisal and allocation of major sites. Planning briefs may also be useful in developing ideas about layout. An Environmental Assessment (EA) may be required at the planning application stage if the impact of development is considered likely to be significant.
- 4.61 Proposals for mobile homes or residential caravans should be subject to the same considerations as permanent housing. However, they may not be environmentally acceptable in residential areas. **Policy DP15** provides guidance for gypsy caravan sites.

Affordable Housing

- 4.62 Affordable housing is an important issue in Wiltshire. The scale of Local Housing Authority waiting lists and the findings of surveys commissioned by the Borough and District Councils, show that there is a strong need across the County in both towns and the rural area.
- 4.63 Central Government policy for affordable housing includes use of the planning system. "Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)3 : Housing" 2000, and Circular 06/98 "Planning and Affordable Housing" include three measures aimed at increasing supply :
- (1) the identification by the Local Planning Authority of targets for large sites, based on District-wide assessments of need for affordable housing. Circular 06/98 recommends that targets should normally be set for sites of more than 25 dwellings (or 1 hectare) but proposes the inclusion of smaller sites in settlements of 3,000 population or less or in areas with "exceptional local conditions".
 - (2) the granting of "exceptional" planning permissions on land outside villages, where the resulting housing would be affordable
 - (3) continued general development of low-cost market housing, as well as that subsidised by the above mechanisms.

Guidance also encourages Local Development Documents to increase the supply of suitable sites by supporting re-use of vacant property, sub-division of large houses, conversion of redundant buildings and re-use of land within settlements.

- 4.64 These measures are being used by the Borough and District Councils to encourage provision. However, schemes have met only a small proportion of needs so far. Their future yield may also be modest, due to limitations in the supply of sites, in the construction of low-cost market housing and in the public funding of Housing Associations, which have replaced Local Authorities as the main providers of affordable housing.
- 4.65 **Policy DP8** gives scope for development of these and other possible measures to increase the supply of affordable housing, which is essential in meeting the overall Aim and Objectives of the Plan for all communities.

DP8 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON APPROPRIATE SITES AT TOWNS AND VILLAGES, TO MEET IDENTIFIED LOCAL NEEDS FOR LOW COST ACCOMMODATION FOR SUCCESSIVE OCCUPANTS.

- 4.66 The County and Borough Councils recognise that what constitutes affordable housing will vary with local market conditions and incomes. However, the constant need is for housing at costs significantly below those in the open market at the time that any proposal is considered. Also, in most cases, the incomes of those in need of affordable housing are likely to be sufficient only for renting. Some people who require affordable housing also have special housing needs, due to such factors as age and frailty or disability.
- 4.67 The Borough and District Councils will consider proposals for affordable housing in the light of policies in Local Development Documents, their policies as Local Housing Authorities and information on need. As strategic planning authorities, the County and Borough Councils will use **Policy DP8** to guide land disposal programmes, discussions with other landowners, responses to any proposed changes to Central Government policy and, in the case of the County Council, its responses to District Council consultations on planning applications. Current measures outlined in "Planning Policy Guidance (PPG3) : Housing" 2000 and Circular 06/98 are not expected to meet a large proportion of identified need for low cost housing. Other measures may be introduced.

Reuse of Land and Buildings

- 4.68 The re-use of previously developed land and buildings within settlements means some reduction in need for greenfield sites. One of the Objectives of the Plan, in moving towards sustainability, is to make use of such sites, i.e. to recycle urban land. Sites are often well linked to employment areas, shopping and recreation, reducing the need for residents to travel. Conversion of buildings can provide a greater variety of new dwellings and other premises. Finally, re-use of land and buildings can improve the amenity of settlements, by removing eyesores or restoring attractive buildings. Some buildings are only partly used; for example commercial premises with vacant upper

floors. Programmes such as "Living Over the Shop (LOTS)" have created flats in many town centres.

- 4.69 The reuse of redundant sites in the open countryside raises additional issues. The Plan Area has many large sites in active use in relatively remote locations, including numerous MOD establishments. All three of the Armed Services are well represented and their land ownership takes many forms, including the extensive training area on Salisbury Plain, airfields, housing, underground storage and administration blocks. Currently, the Armed Forces are undergoing many changes. Some are leading to greater use of sites, whilst others cause various establishments or bases to become surplus to requirements.
- 4.70 Some sites contain resources which may be put to new use, yielding general benefits. For example, sites in or adjoining towns may be redeveloped, reducing the need to release greenfield sites for new housing and jobs. The re-use of former military airfields for aviation may also reduce pressures on undeveloped land (**see Policy RLT7**). However, many establishments are in open countryside, at some distance from towns and other main centres, and some are in prominent locations in attractive landscape.

DP9 WITHIN OR ADJOINING SETTLEMENTS, SUITABLE PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND AND BUILDINGS SHOULD BE REUSED IN PREFERENCE TO THE USE OF UNDEVELOPED LAND.

IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE THE APPROPRIATE REUSE OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND AND BUILDINGS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

- 4.71 A sequential approach to the release of sites for development should be adopted, to give greater priority to urban regeneration objectives and to secure the best prospects for development of previously developed land and buildings. Planning Policy Guidance 3: Housing (2000) proposes that such an approach should be adopted for the identification of sites for housing. Local Development Documents will need to be based on "urban housing capacity studies" and will need to demonstrate that a sequence has been followed to identify sites, "starting with the re-use of previously developed land and buildings within urban areas identified by the housing capacity study, then urban extensions, and finally new development around nodes in good public transport corridors."
- 4.72 The national target for the proportion of new housing to be provided on previously developed land and by conversion of existing buildings is 60 per cent by the year 2008 (PPG3: Housing 2000, paragraph 23). RPG10 includes a target of at least 50% of new housing to be provided on previously developed land. The Strategic Planning Authorities have not yet adopted a target for the Plan Area. However, they and the Wiltshire District Councils have been monitoring these forms of housing development. The latest of their annual monitoring reports, Housing Land Availability April 2005, shows that 46 per cent of housing development since 1996 has taken place on previously developed land or by conversion of existing buildings. In the light of this

information and policies in the Structure Plan, the Regional target of at least 50 per cent is considered to be a challenging level to aim for in the Plan Area.

- 4.73 Re-use of land and buildings within settlements needs to be subject to safeguards, in particular the need to protect the amenity of their surroundings. Proposals will need to be considered against **Policy DP1** and other policies in the Structure Plan, plus detailed policies in Local Development Documents. Re-use for housing can increase the number of residents and cars to levels which people perceive to be unacceptable. "Town cramming", leading to visual intrusion and over-use of streets and open spaces, needs to be avoided.
- 4.74 Within settlements, there is a particular need to encourage re-use of land and buildings and extensions to existing buildings to accommodate new forms of employment. This will help meet job needs and provide a wider choice of development options for local and incoming firms. Many existing employment sites are well integrated with public transport routes or accessible by walking or cycling. Their continued use may reduce the need for greenfield development. Development on these sites will therefore be likely to support the sustainability objectives of the Structure Plan, and help to maintain local job opportunities. In monitoring the take up of employment land, redevelopment of existing sites will not be counted against provision in **Policy DP4** unless significant development takes place on new land.
- 4.75 Appropriate use should be made of redundant MOD sites, which are in or adjoining urban areas and well related to the existing form of development.
- 4.76 Previously developed sites in the open countryside may have important infrastructure and special advantages which should be beneficially used rather than left to decay and become unsightly. Re-use may also reduce pressures elsewhere in the open countryside for development which necessitates a countryside location, or may take advantage of the existing specialised facilities, for example for aircraft (see also **Policy RLT7**). However, re-use should not accommodate activities at a scale or intensity which would cause an unacceptable environmental impact on the site or surrounding rural area. An employment use requiring a workforce significantly greater than could be provided in the vicinity of a site in the open countryside would be likely to encourage relatively long distance commuting by car. Similarly, whilst re-use of existing housing would make use of an existing asset, new housing development would only be acceptable as an appropriate addition to an adjoining settlement. On the other hand certain recreational facilities such as those covered by **Policies RLT2** (informal recreation), **RLT7** (airfields), **RLT8** (tourist attractions), and **RLT10** (holiday accommodation) may be more appropriate, again subject to their scale and intensity. Major recreation uses which would generate undesirable traffic flows to locations poorly served by public transport should not, however, be encouraged.
- 4.77 Proposals for redundant sites in the open countryside should seek to make as much use of existing assets as possible and should not involve extensive new construction on open land. Many sites are prominent in areas of protected landscape and are important for their archaeology, history and natural environment. However, there may be an opportunity to use limited redevelopment as a catalyst to enable the re-use of

major existing assets, or to make existing buildings less visually intrusive. Buildings which are already beyond re-use or whose appearance is not in keeping with the landscape should be removed. The Strategic Planning Authorities will encourage the preparation of feasibility studies and overall management schemes, working jointly with the owners, such as the MOD, and the District Councils. These should ensure that an appropriate range of alternative uses, or package of uses, has been fully examined and that due regard has been paid to the site's importance in landscape, archaeological, historical, architectural and nature conservation (biodiversity) terms.

- 4.78 **Policy C13** gives additional guidance on derelict or spoiled land in the open countryside. Some previously developed land is contaminated and the Environment Agency will advise on necessary actions to ensure safe disposal of contaminating material.

Development of the Swindon Principal Urban Area

DP10A WITHIN THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA, NEW HOUSING WILL BE PROVIDED BETWEEN APRIL 2003 AND APRIL 2016 AT :

| | NO. OF DWELLINGS (NET) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A) THE NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AREA | 5,260 |
| B) THE SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT AREA | 4,100 |
| C) CENTRAL AREA | 3,000 |
| D) REMAINDER OF URBAN AREA | 4,400 |

- 4.79 **Policy DP4** proposes that 25,000 dwellings should be built at the Swindon Principal Urban Area between 1996 and 2016. By April 2003, some 5400 of these had been built, leaving about 19,600 dwellings to be constructed over the rest of the plan period. In addition to the provision set out in **Policy DP10A**, **Policy DP10B** provides for 1000 dwellings on the western side of the Principal Urban Area and **Policy DP10C** makes provision for up to 1800 dwellings in conjunction with a university campus at Commonhead. It is proposed that the remaining dwellings should be provided for within the urban area and at two urban extensions; the Northern Development Area, where building is already well advanced, and at the Southern Development Area, where construction is expected to start in 2006.
- 4.80 **Policy SS5** of **RPG10** states that Structure Plans should define the general geographic extent of the PUA. The Swindon Principal Urban Area comprises the existing built up area of Swindon together with the committed strategic urban extensions of the Northern Development Area and the Southern Development Area. The built up area and the two strategic urban extensions are indicated on the Swindon Inset Key Diagram. It would be inappropriate for the Structure Plan, at the strategic planning level, to precisely define the PUA boundary as this will be a matter for Local Development Documents. However, development that directly adjoins the PUA, particularly that proposed by **Policies DP10B** and **DP10C**, is regarded as development at the PUA and once it has received planning permission or has been defined in an adopted Local Development Document should form part of the PUA.

- 4.81 In accordance with **Policy DP3**, the priority for future housing in Swindon is for the use of previously developed land within the urban area. Most of these sites have already been identified in the draft Swindon Local Plan 2011. For the period between 2011 and 2016 additional potential sites have been identified in the Swindon Urban Capacity Study. The average annual rate proposed, 570 per year, is higher than the average completion rate of 270 per year from 1991 to 2003, but is considered to be achievable in the light of recent rates of completion and the continuing supply of such sites. Recycled land accounts for 38% of the overall supply between 2003 and 2016, compared with 35% of dwelling completions since 1991. Many of the identified sites are within the central area, and will contribute to the regeneration being driven by the New Swindon Company.
- 4.82 The Northern Development Area (NDA) of Swindon has capacity for about 9,100 dwellings. The area was the subject of a major planning inquiry during the late 1980s, which led to the decision in 1989 to grant consent, subject to the signing of legal agreements. Outline permission was granted in 1991 and the allocated area is subject to a comprehensive Master Plan and Local Plan policies, in which land is allocated for housing, employment, retail, community, open space and transport development. Construction of the NDA commenced in 1994 and by April 2003 almost 3,900 dwellings had been completed, of which 3,495 dwellings were built between 1996 and 2003.
- 4.83 The Southern Development Area (SDA) of Swindon has capacity for about 4,500 dwellings. Potential therefore exists beyond this Plan period to provide an additional 400 dwellings on this site. This area was identified as a strategic greenfield development area at Swindon in the previous Structure Plan as a result of the Swindon Development Appraisal Study (1999). The identification of this area as the most sustainable location to meet the Borough's outstanding development requirements to 2011 was endorsed in the Panel Report of the second Examination in Public (March 2000). Outline planning permission for the SDA was granted in May 2005 and construction is expected to start in 2006.
- 4.84 It is anticipated that the NDA should be substantially completed by 2011. However, as construction at the SDA is not now expected to commence until 2006 its completion, originally considered to be within the Structure Plan period to 2011, will now run to beyond 2016. This has meant that, in addition to the proposed provision at Commonhead (**Policy DP10C**), the development proposed by **Policy DP10B** now needs to be brought forward to meet the short-term shortfall in provision.

DP10BAT THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR 1,000 DWELLINGS TO BE IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS FOLLOWING A JOINT STUDY BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES. POLICIES IN THESE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS WILL ENSURE:

- A) THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS FROM THE FIRST PHASE OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT;**
- B) THE PROTECTION OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS; AND**
- C) PROTECTION OF THE STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE.**

- 4.85 After taking into account the sources of housing land supply identified in **Policies DP10A** and **DP10C**, there is a shortfall of about 1,000 dwellings. The EIP Panel considered that locating this at a new strategic urban extension as the first phase of a long term development would be premature prior to the identification of the scale and direction of long term growth through the review of RPG10 in a Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026. The Panel recommended that provision should be made on land on the western side of the Principal Urban Area to meet the shortfall of growth. The Panel have clarified that the western side of Swindon relates to land within Areas G and H as defined by the Swindon Principal Urban Area Study (September 2003). The area has good potential for road connections to Swindon and the potential to provide for growth without having a major impact on landscape or biodiversity.
- 4.86 The land to the west of Swindon is well related to the built up area in terms of existing road links, and it will be important to utilise these at an early stage of the development by providing good public transport links, particularly to the town centre. This will maximise the potential of the area for sustainable transport. It will also be important to protect known nature conservation interests in the area and to have regard to the principles set out in **Policy DP13** (The Swindon Rural Buffer) in assessing urban extension sites at Swindon.
- 4.87 Whilst it is possible that the required level of development could be accommodated on one urban extension it may be preferable, in sustainability terms, to locate it on more than one site. A study is needed to identify the most sustainable location(s), which should be adjacent to Swindon forming an urban extension or extensions. As much of the land on the western side of the Swindon PUA is within North Wiltshire District, it will be necessary for a joint study to be carried out by the local planning authorities. This will determine where development could be located without adversely compromising interests of acknowledged importance, including protecting the separate identities of the settlements to the west of Swindon. The results of the urban extension study should be identified in the authorities' Local Development Documents or in a joint Local Development Document.

University Campus and Mixed Use Development

DP10CAT THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA A STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AT COMMONHEAD, WEST OF THE A419, WILL BE SUPPORTED COMMENSURATE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY, AND SHOULD PROVIDE FOR:

- A) A UNIVERSITY CAMPUS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES OF APPROXIMATELY 60 HA.; AND**
- B) HOSPITAL EXPANSION COMMENSURATE WITH GROWTH IN ITS CATCHMENT AREA UP TO 2016 AND BEYOND; AND**
- C) A STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION OF ABOUT 23 HA. WITH LINKAGES TO THE UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- D) DWELLINGS UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 1,800, COMMENSURATE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY.**

THESE PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DEFINED IN DETAIL WITHIN A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT AND ENSURE:

- A) THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND ITS BIODIVERSITY AND INCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE BUFFER ZONE TO THE COATE SSSI;**
- B) THE PROVISION OF A DETAILED STRATEGIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY TO INFORM THE MASTER PLANNING OF THE SITE;**
- C) THAT NO DIRECT ACCESS FROM THE SITE ONTO THE A419 SHOULD BE PROVIDED, AND AN ALTERNATIVE LINK IDENTIFIED;**
- D) THAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS; AND**
- E) THAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR STRATEGIC LANDSCAPING THAT RECOGNISES THAT THE SITE IS VISIBLE FROM THE AONB TO THE SOUTH AND EAST.**

4.88 Wiltshire and Swindon presently have few higher education opportunities at degree level and above. Universities are not only seats of academic research but also contribute to the local economy through partnerships with local businesses and from the multiplier effect of spending by staff and students. Presently Wiltshire and Swindon have a net loss of people in their late teens and early twenties to other parts of the country. The presence of a university in the area would help redress the balance.

4.89 The prestige, academic opportunities, positive image and improvement in labour skill levels associated with the development of a university will have major benefits to the local economy akin to a major strategic employment site. It is anticipated that an establishment capable of admitting undergraduates from all over the country would

have an intake of up to 10,000 full time and part time students. Not only will a university presence in the area encourage an increase in higher education participation among the local population, it will provide support to the growing knowledge-based economy, contribute to the local economy through increased spending by students and staff, support the Borough's urban regeneration programme, and increase social and recreational facilities available to the local community. The university will therefore bring benefits to the economic and regeneration aims of the Structure Plan, which will be beneficial to Swindon and Wiltshire as a whole.

- 4.90 The University of Bath has defined a campus style university as their preferred business model, with an overall site requirement of about 60 hectares. Whilst Government guidance would favour a location in the central area of Swindon, there are insufficient sites available that could accommodate the type and scale of development required. Problems of land assembly and the logistics of operating a university on several sites rules out the possibility of locating the development on fragmented sites in the central area or elsewhere within the urban area. However, it would be beneficial to the regeneration of the central area to have an element of the university in the town centre, and Local Development Documents should promote the benefits of a university presence in the central area.
- 4.91 The results of the Swindon Principal Urban Area Study indicated that the area to the southeast of the Swindon built-up area, west of the A419 at Commonhead, is the most sustainable location for development. The site has intrinsic advantages including good public transport links to the central area and performed best in the overall sustainability assessment. It also provides an opportunity for the university to form links with the Great Western Hospital, for instance in the field of research and development. Development of the site will need to provide a high level of sustainable transport alternatives, particularly good transport links to the central area to facilitate access and support its regeneration.
- 4.92 As an identified sustainable location, the Commonhead area is also appropriate for a range of other uses providing the opportunity for linkages to the university. It can contribute to housing land supply by providing for up to 1,800 dwellings, which is considered to be the maximum in terms of environmental capacity. If further work on environmental capacity indicates that fewer dwellings should be accommodated, the balance will need to be provided for elsewhere within the urban area or through further provision at urban extensions. Employment provision on this site will count towards the overall employment land quantum, and should take advantage of the proximity of the university by forming functional as well as physical linkages with the university, for example related to creative industries, biotechnology and environmental technologies. The uses included within the development should not be detrimental to the regeneration efforts within the central area and should therefore accord with **Policy DP10D** and should be set out in the master plan for the development. Land should also be reserved to allow for the expected long term expansion of the Great Western Hospital, to meet the needs of the growing population within its catchment area, and particularly resulting from the future long term development of Swindon.

- 4.93 The area to the west of the proposed development is environmentally sensitive, particularly around the Coate Water Country Park that includes an area designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The nature conservation concerns of the area will need to be protected by means of sympathetic design and appropriate mitigation to ensure development does not adversely affect the integrity of the site. Although Coate Water is a SSSI, government guidance does not preclude development adjacent to these sites if there are no detrimental impacts on them. Therefore, a buffer zone adjoining Coate Water Country Park of a sufficient size to protect the integrity of the site and maintain the setting will be required. In addition there will be a need for the provision of strategic landscaping to take account of the views from and to the AONB, particularly at Liddington Hill. A stone circle and other known archaeological features, including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, are included within the development area, and measures for their protection will need to be in place prior to the start of development. The Local Development Document and the Master Plan to be produced in association with a future planning application will need to satisfactorily meet these environmental concerns. It will also need to identify appropriate road links to the site that ensures that there is no direct access to the A419, which is intended for long-distance rather than local traffic.
- 4.94 Development at Commonhead will also need to address water supply and sewerage issues. Modelling will be required to fully understand the effects that the development will have on water resources and supply. This may require the Wanborough Sewage Treatment Works to be expanded and some reinforcement of the sewerage network to be completed.
- 4.95 The Commonhead proposal is a comprehensive mixed-use development with strong linkages between the different elements to promote sustainable development. The employment uses should take advantage of the proximity to the university, and the housing will give the opportunity for staff to live in proximity to the university thereby reducing the need for car-based commuting. The opportunities for functional linkages between the university and the Great Western Hospital should be maximised. All of the uses should be included in a Local Development Document or a comprehensive Master Plan approved by the local planning authority.

Swindon Central Area

DP10D SWINDON CENTRAL AREA WILL BE THE PRIME LOCATION FOR OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS NOT ANCILLARY TO OTHER COMMERCIAL USES, AND WILL BE THE PREFERRED LOCATION FOR MAJOR SHOPPING AND OTHER COMMERCIAL USES, HEALTH, EDUCATION, LEISURE, RECREATION, ENTERTAINMENT, CULTURAL AND PUBLIC SERVICES AND ANY OTHER HIGH TRIP-GENERATING USES.

PROPOSALS FOR NON-ANCILLARY OFFICE DEVELOPMENT AND MAJOR SERVICE SECTOR USES WILL ONLY BE CONSIDERED AT OTHER PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA LOCATIONS IF IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT;

- A) THEY CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED IN SWINDON CENTRAL AREA; AND**
- B) THEY WILL NOT HARM FUTURE INVESTMENT IN SWINDON CENTRAL AREA.**

- 4.96 The regeneration of the central area is a key part of the strategy for Swindon. There is a range of uses that give the town centre its vitality by attracting people to work, shop and live there. In addition, a central location with a diverse mix of uses maximises the ability for people to use sustainable transport modes due to the centrally located bus and railway stations. It will also reduce the number of journeys made, and increase the viability of bus routes, which are focused on the central area. The central area's unique role as a location for higher order retail and leisure uses therefore needs to be protected.
- 4.97 The regeneration of the central area up to 2016 is being promoted by an urban regeneration company, The New Swindon Company (TNSC). In 2005, TNSC published a Regeneration Framework setting out its proposals for the central area. Swindon Borough Council is working closely with TNSC to ensure that the principles of the Regeneration Framework are incorporated at an early stage into an Area Action Plan (AAP). This will give statutory backing to the regeneration strategy for the central area, and development proposals of the types referred to in **Policy DP10D** will need to meet the requirements of the AAP. Until that time it will be necessary for proposals to meet a sequential test to demonstrate that the development cannot be accommodated in the central area and will not prevent appropriate future development there.
- 4.98 The New Swindon Company proposes to promote an additional 90,000 square metres of new office floorspace in the central area. This should all be 'pure' offices, which are those not ancillary to other commercial uses, and which only the central area is able to concentrate together. The dispersal of these types of offices in low density developments can lead to the unnecessary development of greenfield sites. It uses land that could be better put to other employment uses and lead to unsustainable travel patterns. In accordance with national planning guidance, therefore, a sequential approach to proposals for 'pure' office and other higher order uses should be adopted, with a preference for the central area unless the scale of development proposed cannot satisfactorily be accommodated in the centre. Even in

that event proposals would only be acceptable if it is demonstrated that there is no adverse impact on future investment in the central area. The views of the New Swindon Company will be sought on proposals for these uses at the PUA, both within and outside Swindon central area, to ensure that future significant developments in the town do not conflict with the regeneration strategy.

The Role of New Settlements

- 4.99 Planning Policy Guidance 3: Housing (2000) identifies the circumstances in which provision should be made for a new settlement. In effect, new settlements are seen as appropriate only in special circumstances, where a combination of a shortfall in urban capacity to accommodate proposed housing combines with opportunity in the form of a large previously developed site with good public transport connections (PPG3: Housing (2000) paragraphs 72 to 75). Two broad types of new settlement can be identified. Firstly, New villages typically of at least 750 dwellings have been regarded as the minimum viable settlement, largely because they should be able to support a primary school. In view of their limited range of facilities they can only be regarded as satellite developments. Secondly, Strategic new settlements of at least 3,000 dwellings should be large enough to support a mix of uses, in particular a secondary school. This scale of development is so named because it would have a widespread impact on the settlement pattern and traffic flows. However, to provide the opportunity for residents to pursue more sustainable lifestyles by minimising the need for car travel, a significantly larger minimum settlement size of about 10,000 dwellings has been suggested.
- 4.100 The appraisals of development options for the Plan Area as a whole and for Swindon, undertaken for the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011, concluded that the pattern of development to 2011 should be predominantly urban and that scope existed at Swindon and other towns to accommodate the necessary housing. This view was supported by the two Panels who conducted the Examinations in Public into the Structure Plan in 1997 and 1999. The high level of growth already planned for through the Structure Plan 2011, urban capacity potential and potential for urban extensions at the Swindon Principal Urban Area meant that there was no need to consider a new settlement to accommodate growth for the period to 2016. Furthermore, in economic terms the Strategic Planning Authorities were anxious to secure and maintain the economic base of the existing towns in the A350 corridor, which could be diluted by the creation of a major focus of development.

DP11 THERE WILL BE NO PROVISION FOR A NEW SETTLEMENT TO MEET THE ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS AND EMPLOYMENT LAND REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY DP4.

- 4.101 The distinction between strategic new settlements and new villages was used in the County Council's appraisal of alternative strategies for accommodating new development in the 2011 Plan. The appraisal showed clearly that the option of a strategic new settlement in the Western M4 Corridor would be a less sustainable distribution of development than continued urban growth.

The Western Wiltshire Green Belt

4.102 An area of Green Belt in western Wiltshire was approved in 1966, forming part of the Green Belt around Bristol and Bath. Its purpose is to check the expansion of towns in the area, principally Bristol and Bath, and to safeguard surrounding countryside. The Green Belt lies partly in North Wiltshire District and partly in West Wiltshire District.

DP12 A WESTERN WILTSHIRE GREEN BELT WILL BE MAINTAINED AS PART OF THE BRISTOL AND BATH GREEN BELT, TO MAINTAIN THE OPEN CHARACTER OF LAND BETWEEN BATH, TROWBRIDGE AND CORSHAM AND TO PROTECT THE SETTING AND HISTORIC CHARACTER OF BRADFORD-ON-AVON.

4.103 The precise boundaries of the Green Belt are defined in the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan 2001 (to be superseded shortly by a new Local Plan for the period to 2011) and the adopted West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration (2004). These Plans also contain policies for the control of development in the Green Belt. Development in the open countryside should only be allowed in the exceptional circumstances specified in "PPG2: Green Belts" and the appropriate scale of development in settlements should be determined in Local Plans.

4.104 The Green Belt's particular objectives are : -

- to maintain the open character of undeveloped land adjacent to Bath, Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon
- to prevent the coalescence of Bradford on Avon with Trowbridge or the villages to the east of Bath
- to limit the spread of development along the A4 between Batheaston and Corsham
- to protect the setting and historic character of Bradford on Avon.

The Swindon Rural Buffer

4.105 The concept of the Swindon Rural Buffer was first included in the North East Structure Plan at its First Alteration in 1990. Its original extent and role was reviewed as part of the Swindon Development Appraisal Study, required after the first Examination in Public, of the Structure Plan Review to 2011. The Panel Report of the second Examination in Public (1999) concluded that its purpose was to protect the separate identity of Swindon's towns and villages and to prevent their coalescence with Swindon.

4.106 The protection of the countryside and landscape for its own sake is covered by other policies in this plan, in particular **Policy DP14**.

DP13 RURAL BUFFERS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED TO PROTECT THE SEPARATE IDENTITIES OF THE FOLLOWING TOWNS AND VILLAGES AND PREVENT THEIR COALESCENCE WITH SWINDON:

**BROAD BLUNSDON
CHISELDON
CRICKLADE
HIGHWORTH
LIDDINGTON
LYDIARD MILLICENT**

**PURTON
SOUTH MARSTON
STANTON FITZWARREN
WANBOROUGH
WOOTTON BASSETT
WROUGHTON**

- 4.107 The 1999 Panel Report also concluded that the list of identified towns and villages should be extended to include those settlements to the east of Swindon that are equally at risk from coalescence. The actual extent of the Rural Buffer appropriate to each settlement will need to be defined and detailed during the review of the North Wiltshire District and Swindon Local Plans to 2011, and in subsequent Local Development Documents. These plans will need to define an area for each settlement that is essential to maintaining its physical separate identity and distinctive character. The extent of the area will be limited to only identifying land that would be essential to protect the named settlements from the continued growth of Swindon.
- 4.108 The extent of a settlement's buffer will need to allow for the completion of the Northern Development Area, the Southern Development Area, University development at Commonhead and urban extension(s) proposed on the western side of Swindon as required in **Policies DP10A, DP10B and DP10C**. Where settlements are in close proximity it may be appropriate to identify a combined buffer.
- 4.109 Local Plans and subsequently Local Development Documents will define in policy, for the purposes of Development Control, those uses that may be appropriate within a settlement's rural buffer.

Housing, Employment and Related Development in the Open Countryside

- 4.110 Strategic policies for towns and villages are based on the principle that development should take place in settlements, rather than the open countryside. This remains fundamental to Central Government planning policy. However, there are certain forms of development that need to take place, to allow the countryside and the rural economy to evolve. The Structure Plan sets out the overall policy within which they should be considered.

DP14 DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE SHOULD BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED. ISOLATED NEW HOUSES SHOULD REQUIRE SPECIAL JUSTIFICATION.

PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OR CONVERSION OF SUITABLE EXISTING BUILDINGS, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON ACCOMMODATING NEW USES WHICH DIVERSIFY THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND PROVIDE JOBS.

- 4.111 Development in the open countryside, that is on land unrelated to any town or village, needs to be carefully controlled. However, the housing needs of people engaged in agriculture, horticulture and forestry must be recognised. Whilst the fall in agricultural employment and increased personal mobility have reduced the need for farm workers to live on the farm, the rural economy is constantly changing and cases will arise where efficient working of the land will justify a new dwelling. Measures to reduce travel to work and to encourage more sustainable forms of agriculture could bring about a more general shift towards living and working in the countryside. There is also an increased interest in diversifying the rural economy. Much of this should be done by location of new development at towns and villages, where it is most accessible. However there is also scope for diversification of farms by small scale enterprises such as farm-based food processing and packing, rural sports, energy crops, farm-tourism, workshops and services. Also, whilst established rural businesses may not be well-sited by today's standards, their reasonable expansion on site needs to be accommodated.
- 4.112 Conversions and changes of use are ways of making efficient use of buildings constructed to meet economic and social needs which have since changed. They provide a way of allowing necessary or desirable changes without too great an impact on the open countryside. Government Guidance emphasises the need to use suitable converted buildings for additional employment. However, over-intensive development, unsightly external storage, the use of unsuitable, ruinous buildings or the perpetuation of rural eyesores need to be avoided. For employment developments, permissions granted in conformity with **Policy DP14** will not be counted against provision in **Policy DP4**.
- 4.113 Conversions to create dwellings raise similar considerations. In addition, central government has given higher priority to conversion for employment uses and newly occupied scattered dwellings can have a very damaging effect on the rural scene, particularly if they are significantly larger than traditional buildings or of an unsympathetic appearance. In some cases, particularly if the building is listed, no conversion scheme will be appropriate.
- 4.114 In Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the New Forest National Park (formerly known as the New Forest Heritage Area), provision should reflect the particular need to protect the landscape. There are reduced rights to development without planning permission in the AONBs and National Park. Provision should take account of countryside policies for these and other protected areas, such as the Western Wiltshire Green Belt and the Swindon Rural Buffer (**Policies DP12, DP13, C2, C3, C5, C6, C7, C8 C9, C10, C12 and HE1-7**).

Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers

- 4.115 Proposals for gypsy caravan sites cannot be assessed using policies for settlements. They have particular needs, which are recognised in Central Government policy. The Plan area is well provided for "gypsies residing in or resorting to" it. The January 2005 ODPM Gypsy and Traveller Count recorded 283 pitches on public and private sites within Wiltshire and Swindon Borough. The Local Authorities were all designated

under the Caravan Sites Act 1968, as making adequate provision. However, the relevant parts of the Act were repealed, ending the duty placed on County Councils to provide sites, removing designated status, and ending Central Government grant for new pitches. The previous Structure Plan placed emphasis on the provision of sites by private individuals. Although the level of unauthorised encampments indicates that the needs of Gypsy and Travellers has not been met (January 2005 ODPM Gypsy and Traveller Count recorded 54 unauthorised caravans across Wiltshire and Swindon Borough).

4.116 There is still a need for some additional caravan pitches. Some allowance needs to be made for growth in the gypsy population, for a way of life which is not confined by administrative boundaries, for a mix of sites suitable for transit, short stay and semi-permanent occupation, and for choice of standards and privacy. Proper sites need to be provided so that Local Authorities and other bodies can meet their responsibilities towards gypsies, by providing education, necessary social services, housing, health and other services. In the Plan area, a small but steady increase in the number of pitches is likely to meet these needs.

4.117 Structure Plans are expected to provide strategic guidelines and a framework for site provision in development plans at the local level (Circular 1/94 Gypsy Sites and Planning). Circular 1/94 is currently being revised. The revised circular is likely to place greater emphasis on the allocation of sites to meet identified needs. The Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to include Gypsies and Travellers in their local housing needs assessments. Data from these assessments will be important to inform Local Development Documents to ensure that pitch requirements can be met. Detailed guidance in the form of criteria-based policies should also be set out in Local Development Documents to meet need that may arise during the Plan period that hasn't been provided for.

DP15 SPECIAL CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO BONA FIDE PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE CARAVAN SITES FOR GYPSIES. SUCH PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AGAINST OTHER POLICIES FOR TOWNS AND VILLAGES, DUE TO THEIR PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS. SUITABLE SITES MAY BE FOUND BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE SETTLEMENTS. THEY WILL NEED TO HAVE A MINIMUM IMPACT ON ADJOINING LAND USES AND THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT, BE WELL LOCATED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OCCUPANTS AND PERMITTED BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDE ACCEPTABLE ACCESS AND SERVICES.

4.118 The question of the bona fides of proposals to provide sites for gypsies has been clarified by a judgement summarised in Circular 18/94 "Gypsy Sites Policy and Unauthorised Camping" (paragraph 3). This emphasises the need for evidence of a travelling lifestyle pursued for the purposes of making a living.

4.119 Provision in towns and villages should have a minimum impact on adjoining land uses. However, gypsy sites have special needs, which are sometimes best met by locations outside settlements. Again, consideration needs to be given to impact of development on adjoining land uses and businesses. Also much of the Wiltshire countryside is

subject to various forms of protection. In particular, provision should avoid the Western Wiltshire Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Areas of High Ecological Value. It may be difficult to find suitable sites in areas of scenic value. However, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Special Landscape Areas are extensive and small sites may be required to meet an agreed local need.

- 4.120 Highway safety standards, pedestrian safety and the impact of traffic on local roads also need to be considered. Transit sites, providing for short stops by gypsies who may be travelling long distances, are best located close to a major road. Occupants of long stay sites may need access to a public transport service, including school transport where appropriate. They will also need access to a range of facilities, including food shops and medical services. Sites will need adequate drainage, connection to mains water and connection to the sewerage system or on-site treatment or storage of effluent. Connection to mains electricity is also desirable.

Monitoring and Performance Indicators

- 4.121 The Strategic Planning Authorities have established monitoring activities to keep track of key development trends in the Plan Area, in response to guidance on the monitoring of Structure Plans. PPG12: Development Plans 1999 (paragraph 2.17) requires local planning authorities to "keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area. The explanatory memorandum should include an indication of how monitoring and review are to be carried out, emphasising the critical features upon which the plan is based". PPG3: Housing 2000 (paragraph 77) identifies a number of housing data that should be monitored, to provide performance indicators for plans. These include indicators applicable to either Structure Plan or Annual Monitoring Reports for Local Development Documents, or, in some cases both.
- 4.122 Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council will monitor the following matters to provide performance indicators for the Structure Plan:-
- the number of dwellings provided in the Plan Area and its constituent local authority areas (**Policy DP4**)
 - the scale and location of new employment development (**Policy DP4**)
 - the proportion of dwellings provided in the Principal Urban Area, Strategic Service Centres and Local Service Centres (**Policy DP3**)
 - the scale and distribution of retail floorspace (**Policy DP6**)
 - the density of new housing development on large sites (10 or more dwellings) (**Policy DP7**)
 - the number of dwellings provided on small and windfall sites ² (**Policy DP7** and **DP9**)
 - the proportion of dwellings provided on previously-developed land or by re-use of existing buildings (**Policy DP9** and **paragraph 4.71**).

2 Small sites are defined as those of less than 10 dwellings. Windfall sites are defined as non allocated sites that form previously developed land.

- 4.123 In addition, information on changes in the number of affordable housing will be monitored by the Borough Council and will be sought by the County Council from the Wiltshire District Councils as providers of housing services.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRANSPORT

- 5.1 In determining the Structure Plan policies on transport, particular emphasis has been placed on the need to promote sustainable patterns of land use and transport, as outlined in national and regional planning guidance. One of the major influences in determining present guidance has been the increasing concerns about environmental and energy issues at global, national and local levels.
- 5.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 on Transport (PPG13, March 2001), in particular, aims to integrate planning and transport to promote more sustainable transport choices, promote accessibility to jobs and services by public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel, especially by car.
- 5.3 The financial resources likely to be available during the Structure Plan period have been duly considered in the preparation of the transport policies. In pursuance of a more sustainable transport system, in support of both the proposed development strategy for the Plan Area and national policy to reduce the effects of environmentally harmful forms of transport, a shift in the allocation of resources away from highway schemes towards integrated transport plans, other public transport and cycling initiatives, has been assumed for the Plan period.

Integrated Transport Plans

- 5.4 In compliance with the land use and transport sustainable objectives defined within PPG13, the Structure Plan advocates settlement growth, primarily in the larger urban areas. The scope for modal transfer is greatest in these areas, because of the higher levels of public transport provision which currently exist and the shorter distances travelled in general to local amenities, thereby providing more opportunities for cycling and walking.
- 5.5 Developing integrated land use / transport plans, which primarily support environmentally friendly forms of transport to cater for both existing and future populations, is the most appropriate means of combating the detrimental effects of the private car and will assist in determining development patterns which reduce the need for car use. Consideration will be given to public transport improvements, bus priority measures, park and ride, the movement of freight, facilities to promote cycling and walking, possible pedestrianisation schemes, the needs of the disabled, traffic management, parking provision, traffic restraint measures, highway improvements and other means of transport where appropriate.
- T1 COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT PLANS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS OF THE PLAN AREA WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE EXISTING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND REDUCING THE NEED TO TRAVEL BY PRIVATE CAR.**
- 5.6 This approach has already been adopted in the Plan Area, through Government support for the Swindon Transport Plan, the Salisbury Transport Plan, the Western

Wiltshire Sustainable Transport Strategy and the Devizes Community Area Transport Plan. These will be supported and implemented through Central Government funding. Nevertheless, priorities may change and plans may be developed for other urban and rural areas of the Plan Area. There is a complementary need to raise awareness of issues of car dependency and encourage a change of attitude to travel decisions. The Councils are therefore committed to the Travel Wise Initiative which seeks to encourage more environmentally aware travel behaviour amongst the residents, businesses and schools in the Plan Area.

Swindon Principal Urban Area Transportation Package

T2 AT THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA A PACKAGE OF TRANSPORTATION MEASURES WILL BE IDENTIFIED TO ENABLE GROWTH IN DEVELOPMENT WITHIN (AND BEYOND) THE PLAN PERIOD, SO AS TO ASSIST WITH REALISING THE ECONOMIC AND REGENERATION POTENTIAL OF THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA.

THE PACKAGE WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE THE RELIANCE ON THE PRIVATE CAR BY INCREASING AND IMPROVING THE CHOICES AVAILABLE TO MEET TRANSPORT NEEDS AND WILL BE STRONGLY BIASED TOWARDS PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS.

THE PACKAGE WILL CONSIDER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF:

- DEDICATED BUS CORRIDORS AND FACILITIES (WITH PRIORITY SECURED BY LOCAL ACCESS RESTRICTIONS) PROMOTING A CONVENIENT, RELIABLE, SECURE AND HIGH STANDARD SERVICE**
- PARK AND RIDE SCHEMES**
- DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEASURES**
- NEW ROAD PROPOSALS - CROFT ROAD TO HAY LANE LINK AND NORTHERN ORBITAL ROAD (PURTON ROAD TO GREAT WESTERN WAY)**
- NEW AND IMPROVED NETWORKS OF ROUTES FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS**
- IMPROVEMENTS THAT ENHANCE THE INTEGRATION OF THE ROAD, RAIL AND BUS NETWORKS THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE BY ALL**

THE MECHANISM FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF THE PACKAGE WILL BE IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS, WITH SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING AVAILABLE FROM CONTRIBUTIONS SECURED FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT.

5.7 The overall package of measures is intended to secure a balanced approach to transport provision in Swindon through the provision of measures that will promote

opportunities for modal change, reduce the impacts of traffic in the central area, and make provision for the inevitable new car travel demands that flow from expansive development.

- 5.8 The Swindon Transportation Package will address the shared priorities for transport, of improving accessibility with public transport, and reducing the problems of congestion, pollution and safety. It will also address the local objectives outlined in Swindon's Local Transport Plan, including those of supporting regeneration, managing the impact of Swindon's growth and making best use of the existing infrastructure. Co-ordination of Swindon and Wiltshire's Local Transport Plans will be important to ensure the delivery of the package across the PUA including for that part of the PUA that falls in North Wiltshire District.
- 5.9 The package will be delivered through the implementation of the Local Transport Plan programmes, initially that covering the five year period 2006-7 to 2010-11, in addition to measures implemented by developers as a result of planning conditions or obligations secured in accordance with Circular 05/2005. Where appropriate, measures should be reflected in Local Development Documents.
- 5.10 The Croft Road to Hay Lane Link will provide access to Swindon's Southern Development Area and provide some relief to the other roads in the town including Swindon's Old Town. It received outline planning permission in May 2005 and construction is expected to commence in 2006. The Northern Orbital Road (Purton Road to Great Western Way) will accommodate the extra traffic generated by Swindon's Northern Development Area, improve links to the rest of the town, and provide congestion relief on other through routes. Implementation of the scheme is expected to take place towards the end of the Plan period.

Public Passenger Transport

T3 AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF ACCESSIBLE, SAFE AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES SHOULD BE SECURED TO:

- **MEET THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITHOUT ACCESS TO PRIVATE TRANSPORT;**
- **REDUCE RELIANCE UPON THE CAR;**
- **SERVE THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS ARISING FROM EXISTING AND PROPOSED MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS; AND**
- **CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

- 5.11 A key element in reducing reliance on the private car for travel is maintaining and enhancing public passenger transport networks. Additionally, for people without the use of a car, improvements in public transport provision can enhance access to a wide range of goods, services, facilities and opportunities.

- 5.12 The Government's Social Exclusion Unit report 'Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion', published in 2003, identifies the strong links between social exclusion, transport and the location of services. To reduce social exclusion, accessibility is to be given greater weight in land-use planning decisions and accessibility planning is to be incorporated into the next round of Local Transport Plans covering the period 2006-07 to 2010-11. The Councils are taking a pro-active approach to these new responsibilities.
- 5.13 In the past, new developments have not always catered or provided for the adequate provision of public transport. With the more prominent role sought for public transport, this is no longer acceptable. It is therefore important that the Interim Transport Accessibility Criteria, which forms part of the Regional Transport Strategy, are met by major developments. **Policy DP3** sets out the Structure Plan's development strategy.
- 5.14 The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan and Swindon Local Transport Plan set out the Councils' public transport policies and strategies for the period up to 2010-11. Both have the key aims of assisting in the promotion of sustainable development and tackling the problems of social exclusion and access.
- 5.15 As road public passenger transport in Great Britain is deregulated, bus services in the Plan Area are provided by a number of bus and coach operators. The Councils have a statutory involvement in providing bus services and this will continue, in cooperation with the District Councils and adjacent Local Authorities, through the subsidy of those services that are not provided commercially by the operators. In addition, the Councils will, in conjunction with bus operators and other agencies, work to achieve improvements in bus services, implement bus priority measures, improve passenger waiting facilities and information provision, and encourage and support community and innovative public transport measures.
- 5.16 Proposals for the improvement of the rail network are referred to under **Policy T12**.

Transport Interchanges

- 5.17 Public transport patronage can also be increased by the provision of good interchange facilities from other modes. Bus Park and Ride offering high frequency services from locations on the edge of towns can contribute to reducing the environmental disbenefits of motorised vehicles in urban areas, whilst also reducing distances travelled by private cars. Secure cycle parking can also facilitate modal interchange.
- T4 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR NEW OR IMPROVED INTERCHANGE FACILITIES BETWEEN ALL MODES OF TRANSPORT. LAND REQUIRED FOR REALISTIC RAIL PROPOSALS, AND BUS PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES, SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.**

Cycling and Walking

- 5.18 Cycling and walking are environmentally friendly and healthy methods of travelling. Whilst cycle ownership rates are high, cycles are predominantly used for leisure

purposes. Over half the journeys made in the country are under 5 miles(8 kms), so the potential for increased cycle use in both urban and rural areas is extensive. However, safety is of paramount importance if cycling is to be encouraged. Plans for comprehensive cycle networks have already been developed for all towns in the Plan Area above 10,000 population and cycle facilities have also been identified elsewhere, in particular on routes to schools.

T5 MEASURES SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO ENCOURAGE CYCLING AND WALKING, AND IMPROVE SAFETY OF THESE MODES IN ORDER TO OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO PRIVATE CAR USE.

- 5.19 Cycleways, secure parking facilities, pedestrian priority areas, and cycle and pedestrian crossings should therefore form an intrinsic element of transport plans, and local planning authorities should ensure that new developments provide additional measures to complement and facilitate the provision of comprehensive cycle and pedestrian networks.

Demand Management

T6 DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEASURES WILL BE PROMOTED WHERE APPROPRIATE TO REDUCE RELIANCE UPON THE CAR AND TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT MODES. THESE MEASURES INCLUDE:

- **MAXIMUM CAR PARKING STANDARDS – THE PROVISION OF PARKING ASSOCIATED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE LIMITED TO MAXIMUM PARKING STANDARDS. THESE MAXIMUM STANDARDS, AND EXISTING PARKING STOCK, WILL BE MANAGED OR REDUCED TO REFLECT LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE RELATIVE ACCESSIBILITY BY OTHER MODES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN ACCESSIBILITY FRAMEWORK AND CRITERIA;**
- **PUBLIC CAR PARKING CHARGES - TO AVOID WASTEFUL COMPETITION BETWEEN ADJACENT AREAS WITHIN WILTSHIRE AND OUTSIDE, PARKING CHARGES SHOULD BE SET TO REFLECT THE AVAILABILITY OF PARKING SPACES, LOCAL TRAVEL PATTERNS AND THE AVAILABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL MODES;**
- **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES - WHERE THERE ARE IDENTIFIED SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT DEMANDS, TRAFFIC CONGESTION, ROAD SAFETY OR AIR QUALITY ISSUES, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WILL BE DEVELOPED TO PROMOTE WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT, REDUCE RELIANCE ON THE CAR, REDUCE THE RISK OF ACCIDENTS AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- **CHARGING MEASURES - OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHARGING MEASURES, SUCH AS ROAD USER CHARGING AND THE WORKPLACE LEVY, WILL BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW.**

- 5.20 Demand management measures can influence the level of traffic in towns and can be an effective tool in encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.21 A Parking Study, commissioned by the Strategic Planning Authorities and District Councils of Wiltshire in January 2000, included a comprehensive review of parking standards, charges, enforcement policy and approaches taken to development contributions to transport infrastructure both within the Plan Area and in neighbouring areas. The Study made recommendations on the introduction of maximum parking standards for new development, revised parking standards reflecting accessibility by other modes, new enforcement measures and a common approach to seeking development contributions to transport infrastructure. The Study was agreed by the Strategic Planning Authorities as the basis for the development of supplementary planning guidance. The policy on maximum car parking standards has been adopted to manage the future provision and operation of car parking across the Plan Area. Further interpretation to suit local circumstances will be achieved through the preparation of Local Development Documents, which may also embody policies aimed to influence car demand management.
- 5.22 In towns served by adequate sustainable transport alternatives, public car parking management and pricing policies should seek to maintain the vitality and viability of the centre by reducing long-stay parking and increasing short stay parking for shoppers and visitors. The shared use of parking, particularly in town centres and as part of major developments, should also be encouraged to reduce the overall amount of parking provision and to increase building densities and reduce land take.
- 5.23 Disabled people need special provision in many locations. "Blue Badge" holders must have an adequate number of properly designed, conveniently located and reserved car parking spaces.
- 5.24 Along with parking, traffic management measures are a key component of any integrated approach to transport planning. They can enhance the management and efficiency of the highway network through a variety of measures such as the re-allocation of road space, speed controls, pedestrian crossing facilities and intelligent transport systems. In appropriate rural areas, the County Council supports the Quiet Lanes initiative promoted by the Countryside Agency. The implementation of any traffic management scheme will only be made after its effect on the surrounding highway network has been considered.
- 5.25 Charging measures, such as road user charging and the workplace levy, are likely to become important tools in reducing traffic growth and encouraging the use of sustainable transport modes over the Plan period. However, given the predominantly rural nature of Wiltshire, it is unlikely that these types of measures would have a significant impact on traffic levels outside of the main urban areas.

Heavy Goods Vehicle Parking

- 5.26 Overnight parking facilities are often required to meet the needs of long distance commercial traffic travelling through the Plan Area. In the absence of such facilities, indiscriminate parking may occur in towns and villages close to major routes. To

reduce the undesirable effects of heavy goods vehicles on local communities, overnight parking should be provided adjacent to the strategic highway network.

- T7 OVERNIGHT LORRY PARKS FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES SHOULD BE PROVIDED IN THE VICINITY OF THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK, EITHER WHERE DEMAND CAN BE DEMONSTRATED, OR TO ALLEVIATE NUISANCE CAUSED IN LOCAL SETTLEMENTS.**

Transport Provision for New Developments

- 5.27 The provision of adequate transport infrastructure is an important development issue. However, to maintain the strategic role of the National Primary Route Network, direct highway access to new developments which generate traffic of a local nature should be resisted. Local Planning Authorities, in conjunction with the Highway Authorities, should place emphasis on good access by public transport, cycling and walking, and reduce the need to travel by car by minimising parking provision. Developments will be expected to contribute to the provision of transport facilities, and cater for the needs of the mobility impaired.
- T8 PROPOSALS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD NOT BE ACCESSED DIRECTLY FROM THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK OUTSIDE BUILT-UP AREAS, UNLESS AN OVER-RIDING NEED CAN BE DEMONSTRATED. DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD PROVIDE APPROPRIATE MITIGATING MEASURES TO OFFSET ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE TRANSPORT NETWORK ARISING FROM TRAFFIC GENERATED AT BOTH CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL STAGES.**

Freight Transport

- 5.28 PPG13 states that local authorities should encourage the carriage of freight by rail or water, rather than by road, wherever it can provide a viable alternative. This can be achieved through policies which promote intermodal freight facilities, or the location of sites for industry, warehousing and distribution, particularly for bulk goods, with potential rail access facilities.
- T9 THE PROVISION OF INTERMODAL AND OTHER RAIL FREIGHT TERMINALS IN SUITABLE AREAS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED, AND LAND REQUIRED FOR REALISTIC PROPOSALS SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.**

SPECIFICALLY, LAND AT SOUTH MARSTON SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FOR PROVISION OF AN INTERMODAL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE WITH ASSOCIATED RAIL LINKS TO THE ADJACENT EMPLOYMENT AREA.

- 5.29 Planning permission has been granted for a European Freight Interchange at South Marston near Swindon (known as Keypoint). This facility is now partly completed and will cater for rail freight movements locally, regionally and nationally. The locational aspects of this site offer an important opportunity which should not be lost. Further provision will be actively encouraged in the Plan Area, although this is likely to be

smaller in scale. Continued support will be given to rail freight grant applications under Section 211 of the Transport Act 2000.

T10 WHERE CARRIAGE OF FREIGHT BY RAIL IS NOT APPROPRIATE, ENCOURAGEMENT WILL BE GIVEN FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE TRAFFIC TO USE THOSE ROADS WHERE A MINIMUM OF ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE WILL OCCUR, PRINCIPALLY THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK OR ADVISORY LORRY ROUTES, ACCESSED VIA THE MOST SUITABLE LINK FOR SUCH TRAFFIC. WHERE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES MAKING UNNECESSARY AND UNDESIRABLE USE OF ROUTES OTHER THAN NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTES OR SECONDARY ROUTES ARE IDENTIFIED, AREA WIDE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WILL BE CONSIDERED.

5.30 Generally, by concentrating improvements and facilities on National Primary Routes and providing adequate direction signing, heavy goods vehicles will be encouraged to use routes where environmental damage will be minimised. This will be supplemented by local traffic management measures to ensure the removal of extraneous lorry traffic from unsuitable routes and by actively pursuing the transfer of freight passing through or originating in the Plan Area, from road to rail. In encouraging heavy goods vehicles to make use of the most appropriate routes, measures restricting their use in clearly defined, usually rural, areas will be considered.

The Strategic Transport Network

T11 THE COUNCILS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY, THE STRATEGIC RAIL AUTHORITY, TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND OTHER AGENCIES, WILL SEEK TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT NETWORK. EACH CATEGORY OF THE NETWORK, INCLUDING THE TRANS-EUROPEAN ROAD AND RAIL NETWORKS, IS SHOWN ON THE KEY DIAGRAM:

(1) THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK: ROUTES OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR THROUGH AND LONG DISTANCE TRAFFIC

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|---|
| M4 | MOTORWAY | A4 | (West of Chippenham) |
| A303 | TRUNK ROAD | A30 | (St. Thomas's Bridge to Salisbury) |
| A419 | TRUNK ROAD | A338 | (South of Burbage) |
| A36 | PROPOSED | A346 | (M4 Junction 15 to Burbage) |
| | DETRUNKED ROAD | A350 | |
| A420 | (East of A419) | A354 | |
| | | A361 | (West of Semington) |
| | | A429 | |

(2) RAIL NETWORK

**BERKS & HANTS LINE
GREAT WESTERN MAIN LINE
HEART OF WESSEX LINE
WATERLOO-EXETER LINE
WESSEX MAIN LINE**

(3) THE WILTSHIRE KEY BUS NETWORK

- 5.31 The Strategic Transport Network, identified in **Policy T11** and on the Key Diagram, is primarily intended to efficiently cater for through and inter-urban movements (movements by Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic are referred to under **Policy T10**). In doing so, the Strategic Transport Network can support the vision and aims of RPG10 and the Structure Plan.

T12 IMPROVEMENTS TO ENHANCE THE STRATEGIC NETWORK WILL BE PROGRESSED TO SUPPORT OTHER POLICIES IN THE STRUCTURE PLAN AND THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS.

(1) THE FOLLOWING TRUNK ROAD SCHEMES ARE PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION:

A303 STONEHENGE (TO INCLUDE THE WINTERBOURNE STOKE BYPASS AND A FLYOVER AT COUNTESS ROUNDABOUT)

A419 COMMONHEAD ROUNDABOUT OVERPASS

A419 BLUNSDON BYPASS

(2) THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE THE NON-TRUNK ROAD NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK IS INCLUDED IN THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN:

A350 WESTBURY BYPASS

(3) THE A350 NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE AT YARNBROOK/WEST ASHTON AND MELKSHAM WILL BE IMPROVED. THE IMPROVEMENT WORKS NECESSARY WILL BE IDENTIFIED THROUGH FURTHER STUDY WORK.

(4) THE FOLLOWING ROAD PROPOSAL WILL BE SUPPORTED:

SALISBURY: HARNHAM RELIEF ROAD AND BRUNEL LINK

THE A350 NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE WILL BE MAINTAINED, MANAGED AND SELECTIVELY IMPROVED TO ASSIST THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

REGENERATION OF WESTERN WILTSHIRE BY IMPROVING JOURNEY TIME RELIABILITY WHERE ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS ON OTHER NON-TRUNK ROAD NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTES WILL BE RESTRICTED TO SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE ROAD SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS, UNLESS THERE IS A NEED TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY WITH EXISTING STANDARDS AND THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

- (5) THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOLLOWING NEW RAIL STATIONS WILL BE PROMOTED AND ENCOURAGED:**

**CORSHAM RAIL STATION
RELOCATION OF MELKSHAM STATION
PORTON RAIL STATION
WILTON RAIL STATION
WOOTTON BASSETT RAIL STATION**

THE LAND REQUIRED FOR THE ABOVE RAIL PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.

- (6) THE FOLLOWING TRACK AND SIGNALLING WORKS TO PROVIDE CAPACITY IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE PROMOTED AND ENCOURAGED:**

WOOTTON BASSETT JUNCTION

- 5.32 The policies relating to the National Primary Route Network have been reviewed in the light of Government guidance (PPG13) which recognises that catering for predicted future traffic flows may have severe environmental consequences and is likely to be contrary to sustainable transport objectives. However, it is important to maintain and improve a strategic highway network for local, regional and national economic reasons.
- 5.33 In formulating the National Primary Route Network highway improvements to be included in the Structure Plan, schemes are required to be considered against clearly defined objective criteria, availability of resources, and compatibility with the strategies of neighbouring authorities. As part of the review process, all potential schemes on the National Primary Route Network were independently assessed against national and local transport policies and objectives, using both economic and environmental indicators. The schemes named in **Policy T12** proved to have positive benefits, and were consistent with the then County, Regional and National strategies. This limited programme is considered realistic in respect of the public sector funds likely to be available.
- 5.34 The A303 Stonehenge Scheme, included in the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvements, is fully supported by the County Council, in accordance with **Policy HE1**. The scheme, as formally presented to the Public

Inquiry (February to May 2004), involves the construction of a 2.1 km bored tunnel, a bypass for Winterbourne Stoke and a flyover at Countess Roundabout, Amesbury. The flyover was identified by Government as the preferred solution for coping with congestion, improving safety and addressing the impacts of nearby developments, including a proposed visitor centre for Stonehenge. The overall proposal provides for the closure of the A344, which will be supported by the County Council. Owing to rising scheme costs, in October 2005 the Government announced a review of the proposal, and, following consultation, further options will be presented to Ministers in summer 2006 for consideration.

- 5.35 Two further schemes on the A303, the Wylde-Stockton Wood Improvement and the Chicklade Bottom-Mere Improvement were remitted to the London to South West and South Wales Multi-Modal Study (SWARMMS). The Secretary of State has subsequently instructed the Highways Agency to progress these schemes to the point where they can be added to the Targeted Programme of Improvements.
- 5.36 To resolve congestion and accident issues, the A419 schemes at Commonhead Roundabout and Blunsdon Bypass have been included in the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvements. The A419 Commonhead Roundabout commenced construction in 2005.
- 5.37 The Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study (February 2004) recommended that the Westbury Bypass and the A36 Codford to Heytesbury Improvements were schemes that should be proceeded. The A36 Wylde Valley Relief Road is a scheme identified in the Salisbury Transport Plan. Bids were submitted for the three schemes as part of the Local Transport Plan process in 2003, but funding was subsequently rejected for the latter two schemes, and as such they have not been included in this Plan. A decision on funding for Westbury Bypass, however, was deferred. Work has been progressing towards planning permission for this scheme, but implementation will be contingent on the grant of planning permission, and successful outcomes to the funding processes evolving through the regional devolved decision making arrangements, and CPO inquiry. The County Council will continue to work with the Highways Agency to address issues of road safety, traffic speed and community severance on the A36 in the best alternative manner, given the demise of the major scheme proposals.
- 5.38 The Harnham Relief Road and Brunel Link schemes form part of the Salisbury Transport Plan. The schemes would remove through traffic from Harnham and improve links to the Churchfields Industrial Estate, especially for heavy goods vehicles, and also have the wider benefits of reducing traffic congestion on Churchill Way. The economic case for the roads has been reviewed, and a planning application submitted.
- 5.39 The proposed Harnham Relief Road and Brunel Link crosses the River Avon, designated as a Special Area of Conservation under the EC Habitats Directive, an internationally important nature conservation site. **Policies C1, C2, C3 and C5**, Plan Policies relating to nature conservation and development in the floodplain will be particularly relevant in determining any planning application for this scheme. In

particular, determination of the scheme will be dependent upon an Appropriate Assessment (**paragraph 6.9**) being carried out as part of the planning application in order to fully comply with the Habitats Regulations 1994. If planning permission is deemed appropriate by the Strategic Planning Authority, the Secretary of State will then have an opportunity to consider whether or not any application should be called in for his determination.

- 5.40 RPG10 states that selective infrastructure proposals should be supported to improve the safety and efficiency of the road network, reduce congestion and achieve environmental improvements. The A350 north/south route to the west of the Plan Area carries the highest volume of traffic and heavy goods vehicle movements on the County's non-Trunk Road Primary Routes. It links five major towns in the west of the Plan Area, and acts as a route of regional and national importance for longer distance traffic between the Bournemouth/Poole area, and Wales and the North. Because of its strategic importance, and the significant traffic growth that has occurred in the last ten years, the route will be selectively improved to maintain and enhance journey time reliability. The proposed improvements to the A350 National Primary Route Network, including those at Yarnbrook/West Ashton and Melksham, where journey times are unreliable, will provide significant relief and environmental benefits, particularly for local residents, and the improved standard of provision of this road will aid the economic and social regeneration of the West Wiltshire towns. Improvements at Melksham will be prioritised below those to secure the Westbury Bypass and a Yarnbrook/West Ashton scheme.
- 5.41 Wiltshire County Council will, in conjunction with the Department of Transport, Train Operating Companies and other agencies, support the opening and improvement of local rail stations and the provision of additional rail services where these facilitate short distance passenger journeys such as those wholly within Wiltshire or to destinations in adjacent areas. Where appropriate, the Council will consider financially supporting such initiatives. Priority will be given to new stations at Corsham, Wootton Bassett and Wilton and an improved service in Melksham. SWARMMS recommended the Wootton Bassett proposal and identified the proposals at Wilton and Porton as providing a strong case for further study. Developments that would prevent realistic rail proposals such as these should be refused planning permission.

T13 ROADS WILL BE MAINTAINED AND WILL BE IMPROVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR FUNCTIONAL IMPORTANCE.

- 5.42 The principle of maintaining roads according to their functional importance is given legal sanction under Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 and is based on the Association of County councils 'Highway Maintenance Code of Good Practice'. This provides a road hierarchy consisting of three groups of roads (Group I, II and III) against which maintenance policies are described, priorities decided and resources allocated.

Roadside Service Facilities

- T14 ROADSIDE FACILITIES, INCLUDING MOTORWAY SERVICE AREAS, ON THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK SHOULD ONLY BE PROVIDED COMMENSURATE WITH A DEMONSTRABLE NEED, AND IF THERE IS A MINIMAL IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.**
- 5.43 National and Regional guidance requires strategic planning authorities to pay due regard to the need for adequate provision of roadside facilities on motorways, trunk roads and other major through routes, i.e. the National Primary Route Network. Local Planning Authorities should provide additional guidance on the location and scale of such developments to minimise any environmental or landscape impact.

CHAPTER SIX

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 6.1 Protection and enhancement of the natural environment is a fundamental aspect of the Structure Plan Strategy for sustainable development. This is important throughout the County, in both urban and rural areas. The Plan Area is predominantly rural, with extensive areas of open countryside much valued for its wildlife and landscape interest. Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements identify a number of ways in which particular parts of the countryside should be protected. PPS7 "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas" - provides guidance on planning for rural areas. This includes the treatment of agriculture and other land uses, plus the protection of designated areas. It explains that the Government's sustainable development objectives for rural areas are to:-

- Raise the quality of life and environment in the rural areas;
- Promote more sustainable patterns of development;
- Promote the development of the English Regions by improving economic performance so that all are able to reach their full potential; and
- Promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agricultural sectors.

PPS7 states that "planning authorities should continue to ensure that the quality and character of the wider countryside is protected and where possible enhanced". Agriculture is the dominant land use, and the vast majority of the rural area is managed and created by agricultural activities. This management process is fundamental to the maintenance of the landscape. The influence of history on the landscape is also important in providing an environment for many to enjoy and appreciate. It is nevertheless important to recognise the role of the countryside as a place where people live and work. It is a productive area for agriculture and forestry and its social and economic well-being needs to be protected and, where possible enhanced.

- 6.2 Other rural issues, including the development of settlements, are covered by policies for the Development Pattern, Historic Environment, Recreation, Leisure and Tourism, Minerals, Waste and Renewable Energy and Telecommunications.

Nature Conservation

- C1 THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE COUNTY'S NATURE CONSERVATION RESOURCES SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED, THROUGH THE CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT, AND BY POSITIVE ACTION SUCH AS SYMPATHETIC LAND MANAGEMENT.**

- 6.3 As stated in Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9, August 2005), the Government's objectives for planning are to ensure

biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of development, to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance by enhancing biodiversity in green spaces and among developments. The 1990 White Paper 'This Common Inheritance', for signing of the Biodiversity Convention at the Rio Summit in 1992, and the response to that in the form of the publication of 'Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan' in 1994 are notable milestones in the process of linking, at national level, the concepts of sustainability and biodiversity (or biological diversity). Recently, the Government has set out its vision for conserving and enhancing biological diversity in England within the document 'Working with the Grain of Nature: a Biodiversity Strategy for England' (DEFRA, 2002).

- 6.4 **Policy C1** recognises the need to link nature conservation with the use and development of land. Local Planning Authorities will need to examine applications for development, to determine whether nature conservation is a material consideration. In all development proposals, there are ways to protect, or even enhance nature conservation interests. Protection may require use of planning conditions or obligations. Some forms of development will require a formal Environmental Impact Assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.
- 6.5 Whilst control of development will have some part to play in the process of encouraging diversity, it is much more likely to result from land management which is sympathetic to nature conservation. Hence the importance of work by such local voluntary organisations as the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. These bodies, together with Wiltshire local authorities and many other organisations co-operated to produce the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan in 2002. This includes coordinated proposals for action by the many partners in the County. A number of Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and a Species Action Plan (SAP) for bats have been prepared to establish targets for biodiversity within the Plan Area. In addition, a Swindon Biodiversity Action Plan is currently under production by a partnership of organisations.
- 6.6 The role of national organisations should also be recognised. Together, the National Trust, the Forestry Commission and the Ministry of Defence manage large areas of countryside. English Nature is the Government Agency with particular responsibility for wildlife and geology and has special responsibilities for the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs. The Environment Agency is the Government's watchdog for rivers and streams and is responsible for ensuring the proper management of rivers. DEFRA are involved in administering agri-environment schemes, which were relaunched in early 2005. The new agri-environment scheme now comprises a tiered system of Entry Level and Higher Level Schemes to replace the old Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Area Schemes. When combined with the requirement for cross-compliance associated with the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), these schemes have the potential to deliver large biodiversity gains on farmland.

C2 SITES IDENTIFIED FOR THEIR WILDLIFE OR EARTH SCIENCE IMPORTANCE AT INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND COUNTY LEVEL SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT UNLESS THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTWEIGHS THE ADVERSE IMPACT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DESIGNATION.

- 6.7 One means of carrying out the Government's commitments on biodiversity is by designating and protecting the most important areas of semi-natural habitat or geological / physiographic features. The hierarchy of designations ranges from the internationally to the locally important, and is set out in **Appendices A and B**.
- 6.8 A number of extensive sites in the Plan Area are of international and national importance for nature conservation and/ or geodiversity, as shown in **Appendix A**. The most extensive is the chalk downland on Salisbury Plain. This and Porton Down have been recognised by the European Union (EU) as Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The River Avon system converging upon Salisbury is also an extensive area considered to be of international importance, showing a greater range of habitat diversity than any other chalk river system in Britain. It is one of the ten sites designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the EC Habitats Directive, in recognition of its international importance.
- 6.9 The EC Habitats Directive has been transposed into UK law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and provides stringent legal protection for these internationally designated sites. The integrity of these sites should not be prejudiced by development, unless there are overriding exceptional circumstances. Any development proposal that is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, including developments some distance from the designated site, must therefore be subject to an Appropriate Assessment by the Competent Authority. In making such an assessment, advice must be taken from English Nature. The Appropriate Assessment process must include an assessment of effects on the international site in combination with other plans and projects. The assessment of in-combination effects is particularly complex for the River Avon as the effects of pollution and water abstraction can occur over long stretches of the river. Consequently, the River Avon SAC Planning Forum has been established to strengthen planning liaison in relation to the SAC and to provide guidance to planners where appropriate.
- 6.10 136 sites in Wiltshire are of national importance for nature conservation and/ or geodiversity and are therefore designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserves (see **Appendix A**). These sites are notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act by reason of their flora, fauna, geographical or physiographical features. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000) provides additional legal protection for these sites. The CROW Act also places a duty on local authorities to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs, both in carrying out their operations and exercising their decision-making functions.
- 6.11 It is recognised that the scientific features of national and international sites cannot readily be replaced once destroyed, and that only the most valuable wildlife habitats or

geological exposures are offered statutory protection as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or National Nature Reserves (NNRs). In order to secure biodiversity and/ or geodiversity, it is therefore essential that all valuable sites are protected by planning policies from inappropriate development.

- 6.12 Sites which are not statutorily defined, but which are of recognised importance for wildlife or geology, should also be offered protection from development. These are identified on the County Wildlife Sites Map (CWSM), which is produced and maintained by the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC). This shows all sites, including those with statutory protection, Local Nature Reserves, County Wildlife Sites, Regionally Important Geological Sites and Protected Road Verges. County Wildlife Sites in Wiltshire are designated according to a set of scientific criteria. These sites are surveyed regularly by the Wiltshire Wildlife Sites Project based at the Wildlife Trust, who subsequently provide management recommendations to landowners.
- 6.13 Consideration should also be given to the establishment of further areas of wildlife or geological value as statutory Local Nature Reserves. Sites which are endangered by activities outside planning control and/or which could provide a useful educational function would be particularly appropriate. Such sites are often on the edge of towns or easily accessible from them (e.g. Seven Fields at Swindon and Smallbrook Meadows at Warminster).

C3 THE NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE OF HABITATS LISTED WITHIN THE WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS, HABITATS FOR PROTECTED SPECIES AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS SHOULD BE PROTECTED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENHANCED. WHERE SIGNIFICANT HARM WOULD RESULT TO THESE BIODIVERSITY INTERESTS, ADEQUATE MITIGATION SHOULD BE PUT IN PLACE. IF MITIGATION IS NOT POSSIBLE, APPROPRIATE COMPENSATORY MEASURES SHOULD BE SOUGHT.

- 6.14 The biodiversity value of the Structure Plan area has been reduced in recent decades. It is now recognised that biodiversity cannot effectively be sustained if it is an objective only when managing designated areas. This Policy therefore seeks to ensure protection and enhancement of the wider countryside and not to limit protection to designated sites. This Policy is also in line with Policy EN1 within RPG 10 which requires development plans to encourage the maintenance and enhancement of existing biodiversity resources and the restoration and expansion of depleted biodiversity resources.
- 6.15 The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan was published in 2002 and the Swindon Biodiversity Action Plan is currently under production (**paragraph 6.5**). Priority will be given to conserving and enhancing habitats and species which have been identified in these Biodiversity Action Plans, including the following:
- Woodland
 - Wood pasture, parkland and ancient trees
 - Rivers, streams and associated habitats

- Standing open water
 - Arable land
 - Hedgerows
 - Calcareous grassland
 - Unimproved neutral grassland
 - Urban habitats
 - Bats
- 6.16 Targets and actions within the Wiltshire and Swindon Biodiversity Action Plans are material considerations within the planning process. Developers are expected to establish the biodiversity resource within a development site and its environs and subsequently assess the ecological effects of the development proposal. If required, there should be a programme of avoidance, mitigation and management that results in at least no net loss for biodiversity and a net gain where possible. Where a development would result in significant harm to biodiversity that cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated against, appropriate compensation measures should be sought. Opportunities for biodiversity gain should generally be sought by developers, for example by the provision of land for creation of habitats such as wetlands. Where new planting is involved, species both of native origin and of local provenance should generally be favoured. If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against, or compensated for, then planning permission for development should be refused.
- 6.17 Woodlands possess a greater range of ecological variation than any other type of habitat. Ancient semi natural woodland which has survived from medieval times is especially important as once lost, it cannot be recreated. A variety of flora and fauna depends upon this ancient habitat and is not found elsewhere. Examples include the fragmented remnants of Braydon Forest, and the large woodland blocks of Savernake Forest and Bentley Wood, which are SSSIs. English Nature published a provisional inventory of ancient woodland in Wiltshire in 1987, but not all examples of surviving ancient woodland have been included. Threats to such areas include development and the lack of proper management. The Councils will, therefore, seek to retain and enhance ancient semi natural woodland in their planning decisions and in their response to notifications and consultations from the Forestry Commission on felling licence applications and proposals under the English Woodland Grant Scheme.
- 6.18 The policy also acknowledges the strategic importance of wildlife corridors. This policy therefore relates to Regulation 37 of the Habitats Regulations 1994 which requires development plans to have policies which promote "the management of landscape features which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna." Landscape features that are considered particularly important are continuous linear features or regularly distributed features that act as corridors or stepping stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wildlife. Wildlife Corridors are routes important to birds and animals, due to the availability of cover, food and water. They may be found within settlements as well as in the open countryside. They may link designated areas such as SSSIs and be vital to their success as habitats. In Wiltshire, examples of landscape features important for wildlife include chalk

downland, rivers, streams, canals, old stone walls, ponds, species-rich road verges and copses. The protection of rivers and canals as wildlife corridors is also supported by **Policy C5**. Hedgerows are also particularly important wildlife corridors. Many hedgerows are now protected under the Hedgerow Regulations, which came into force in June 1997. They can also be important for visual reasons and are therefore referred to under **Policy C10** (green spaces and corridors - **paragraph 6.38**).

- 6.19 **Policy C3** recognises that protected species are a material planning consideration when determining development proposals. The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (1994) give legal protection to certain species. European protected species are listed in Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations. Nationally protected species are listed in Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. This policy also covers species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England which have been listed under Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). Development which would have an adverse impact on these legally protected species and is incapable of satisfactory mitigation, should not be permitted. Development affecting European-protected species such as great crested newts, otters and dormice, must satisfy the three specific tests in the Habitats Regulations (1994) before planning permission can be granted. In order to assess whether protected species are present on a development site, relevant surveys must be undertaken by the applicant and submitted with the planning application. It is important to note that many protected species surveys are seasonally constrained. Where surveys demonstrate that protected species would be affected by development, the applicant must also submit a detailed and comprehensive mitigation strategy with the planning application.
- 6.20 There are two main mechanisms for ensuring ecological policy is applied during the development control process. The County Ecologist provides advice on planning applications determined by Wiltshire County Council. Arrangements exist for English Nature and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to be aware of all relevant planning applications through the Wiltshire Biological Records Centre, so that they can provide advice to the local planning authorities. The protection of hedgerows is administered by the Borough and District Councils.
- 6.21 It is important that habitats are managed for their wildlife interest in addition to protection from development. Changing agricultural practices may enable nature conservation to be given a higher priority. Future reviews of the Common Agricultural Policy may lead to a better balance between crop production and nature conservation. Land may be taken out of agricultural production as a result of set-aside, it may be cropped and sprayed less intensively or it may incorporate conservation areas such as headlands and hedge banks. The County and Borough Councils will support the use of initiatives encouraging a more conservation-based approach to agriculture, such as the Environmental Stewardship scheme administered by DEFRA.

Salisbury Plain Training Area

- C4 DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO THE USE OF SALISBURY PLAIN FOR MILITARY TRAINING PURPOSES SHOULD PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUED PROTECTION OF THE INTEGRITY AND VALUE OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION, ARCHAEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES OF THE PLAIN AND SHOULD, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

- 6.22 The Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) extends over some 40,000 ha and is rich in nature conservation and archaeological interest, mainly because it has not been subjected to modern agricultural practices. It comprises some of the most undisturbed and beautiful chalklands in Western Europe. Salisbury Plain is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Protection Area for birds (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Its archaeology is also of exceptional condition and diversity. However, use of the area for military training purposes can cause problems, and it is important that appropriate management measures are agreed between the Ministry of Defence (MOD), English Nature, English Heritage, the County Archaeologist and the County Ecologist. The vital role of the MOD in protecting the national interest and its importance to the local economy are recognised. But major concerns have arisen from increased MOD demands on this established training area. These have led to increases in hardened tracks for vehicles, more use of high powered artillery and extensive combined operations training exercises. **Policy C4** provides a strategic context for the consideration of such matters.

The Water Environment

- C5 THE WATER ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING SURFACE WATERS, FLOODPLAINS AND GROUNDWATER RESOURCES, SHOULD BE PROTECTED BY THE CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL SUPPORT INITIATIVES WHICH SEEK TO PROTECT, RESTORE OR ENHANCE THE NATURAL ELEMENTS OF THE RIVER OR WATERWAY ENVIRONMENT, AND WHICH IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENT USE OF WATER.**

- 6.23 Flooding is a natural process but it can put life and property at risk. It is therefore important to protect the role of flood plains and ensure that development does not increase risk. Any proposals in areas of flood risk should be assessed in accordance with a risk-based sequential approach guided by the Environment Agency. District and Borough Local Development Documents should provide detailed policies on flood risk, including the identification of flood plain boundaries and the requirements of flood risk assessments. Such policies should be in accordance with Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMPs) produced by the Environment Agency and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to provide catchment scale strategic planning frameworks for integrated management of flood risks to people and the developed and natural environment in a sustainable manner. Policies also need to take account of Water Level Management Plans produced by the Environment Agency, which aim to provide a means by which the requirement for

water levels of rivers, reservoirs and other surface water bodies for a range of activities in a particular area, including agriculture, flood defence and conservation can be integrated and balanced. Development not located on land at risk from flooding can also impact on flooding by increasing run off. Local Development Documents should encourage the use of sustainable drainage systems to control surface water run-off to reduce the risk of flooding to river flows downstream.

- 6.24 Rivers and canals are an important part of the County's eco-systems. Concerns have been expressed at various times by different bodies that low river flows have their origins in excessive abstraction of water. The Environment Agency (EA) has published Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) to provide a consistent approach to local water resources management, recognising the reasonable needs of water users and the environment. CAMS propose a strategy for dealing with applications for new abstraction licences and variations, and for managing existing licences for each catchment area. In Wiltshire, CAMS have been published for the Hampshire Avon, Kennet and Pang, the Bristol Avon and the Thames Corridor catchments. In addition, a Low Flows Project has been established for the period 2005 to 2010. Fifteen rivers and wetlands in the south west region will be reviewed to determine whether water abstraction is having a damaging environmental effect. The findings of this review will contribute to the Environment Agency's Review of Abstraction Consents required under the Habitats Regulations (1994). Where abstractions are found to be damaging European nature conservation sites, including the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC), there is likely to be a requirement to reduce the amount of water abstracted, or for other improvements to be made.
- 6.25 The protection of water resources and their conservation is controlled by the EA under the Water Resources Act 1991. However, the new Water Framework Directive is a major opportunity to improve the whole water environment and promote the sustainable use of water for the benefit of people and wildlife alike. The Directive rewrites existing water legislation into a new overarching programme to deliver long-term protection of the water environment and improve the quality of all waters – groundwaters and surface waters – and associated wetlands. The Water Framework Directive requires River Basin Management Planning, including statutory River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and Programmes of Measures to achieve good ecological status for water bodies. Programmes of Measures must be prepared setting out implementation mechanisms to meet with the environmental objectives identified within the RBMPs. The planning system has a significant role to play in achieving the implementation of the Water Framework Directive through appropriate control of development. The County and Borough Councils will co-operate with the EA in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, by means of their strategic planning and other functions, including Local Development Frameworks and control of mineral and waste development.

The Cotswold Water Park - Wildlife Importance

C6 THE WILDLIFE VALUE OF THE COTSWOLD WATER PARK AS A WHOLE IS RECOGNISED TO BE OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE. WILDLIFE AND THE FEATURES UPON WHICH IT IS BASED SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENHANCED.

6.26 The Cotswold Water Park is important for nature conservation because of its large areas of open water supporting nationally important populations of wintering and breeding birds, marl water plant communities and dragonfly populations. Extensive sand and gravel extraction in the area, plus appropriate restoration, has created new water habitats. The Cotswold Water Park Biodiversity Action Plan was produced in 1997 and aims to focus resources on the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the Water Park by means of local partnerships. Other important habitats within the Water Park include marshes and swamps, unimproved neutral grassland, rivers and streams, canals, woodlands and hedgerows and cereal field margins.

6.27 English Nature's Position Statement on nature conservation in the Cotswold Water Park (1994) recognises that sustainability requires the safeguarding of irreplaceable wildlife and natural features, and the maintenance of their total sum. Inappropriate development, or other activities which would damage the ecological and hydrological balance need to be avoided. However, nature conservation and development need not conflict if proposals can conserve important wildlife and natural features by, for example, creating new habitats to help compensate for loss or reduction of others. **Policy RLT5** deals with use of the Water Park for sport, recreation and tourism.

The New Forest

6.28 In September 1999 the Government asked the Countryside Agency to consider designation of the New Forest as a National Park. In October 1999, the Countryside Agency confirmed that the New Forest meets the criteria for designation under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1947, and that designation is necessary to address the needs of this area. In June 2004, following a lengthy consultation and a public inquiry, the Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality announced that the New Forest would become a National Park. It was also stated that the National Park Authority would be created under the Environment Act 1995. The New Forest National Park (Designation) Order 2002 was confirmed on 1 March 2005. The New Forest National Park Authority was established from 1 April 2005 although it acquires full statutory powers, functions and responsibilities in 2006. **Policy C7** sets out the Policy for the New Forest Heritage Area, this now applies to the area designated as the New Forest National Park.

- C7 THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA WILL BE PROTECTED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE ENHANCED AS AN AREA OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE FOR ITS LANDSCAPE AND SCENIC BEAUTY.**

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT HARM THE NEW FOREST'S LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OR TRADITIONAL COMMONING REGIME, GRAZING AND FARMING. THEY SHOULD HELP MAINTAIN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE AREA AND/OR PROMOTE ITS ENJOYMENT AND UNDERSTANDING BY THE PUBLIC.

PROVISION SHOULD NOT BE MADE FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT UNLESS IT IS PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND IS NOT CAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THE AREA.

REGARD SHOULD BE PAID TO THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCALITY.

- 6.29 Development control measures will have a limited effect in achieving conservation objectives in the New Forest. The County Council will therefore co-operate with other bodies in formulating positive planning and management policies, which also take account of the economic and social needs of local inhabitants. The County Council has supported the production and implementation of the "Strategy for the New Forest – 2003" produced by the New Forest Committee. This strategy will provide the basis for New Forest National Park Management Plan that the New Forest National Park Authority will have to produce, review and implement.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 6.30 Parts of three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) fall in Wiltshire. These are :-
- the Cotswolds
 - the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs
 - the North Wessex Downs.

- C8 IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED HAVING PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE NATIONAL DESIGNATION OF THEIR LANDSCAPE QUALITY, AND THE NEED TO PROTECT, CONSERVE AND WHERE POSSIBLE ENHANCE BY POSITIVE MEASURES, THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE LANDSCAPE.**

IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS, REGARD SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE AREA. PROVISION FOR MAJOR INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT BE MADE UNLESS PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND INCAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THESE AREAS.

- 6.31 The designation of an area as an AONB indicates that the quality of its landscape is of national significance. The prime reason for designation is conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape. National and Regional Planning Guidance clearly states that such landscapes should be protected from inappropriate development. The maintenance and enhancement of all aspects of the landscape, including built and rural environment, wildlife habitats and historic and archaeological features, needs to be considered. There is a close inter-relationship between landscape quality and value as wildlife habitats. For example, many concentrations of sites designated for their ecological value lie within AONBs.
- 6.32 Major development proposals which would be likely to seriously intrude into AONBs will be directed to other areas unless they are justified in the national interest. Special considerations must apply to proposals for minerals extraction, since they can only take place where minerals occur. However, national planning guidance requires that new proposals should be subjected to the most rigorous examination and should only take place in exceptional circumstances (PPS7 "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas". See also **Policy MSP2**). Similarly, it is expected that any proposals for new trunk roads will avoid AONBs, although improvements to existing routes, such as the A36 and A303, may well be sought.
- 6.33 Nevertheless, it is necessary to maintain the social and economic interests of rural areas. Opportunities for small scale housing and employment at towns and villages within the AONBs should not be inhibited. Appropriate agricultural changes will also be encouraged, for example via the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan.
- 6.34 In examining development proposals which are acceptable in principle in an AONB, special emphasis should be placed upon their scale, location and traffic implications. The maintenance of high design standards, which reflect the character of the area, is imperative if their designation as a national asset is not to be undermined. Any recreational/tourism development should be compatible with the aims of AONB designation and should not be allowed if it would threaten the area's natural beauty.
- 6.35 As with the New Forest National Park, control of development will only achieve some of the conservation objectives for designated AONBs. The County and Borough Councils will therefore continue to support the work of the Cotswold Countryside Service and the Cotswolds AONB Partnership, as far as resources permit.

Special Landscape Areas

- 6.36 The boundaries of the Special Landscape Areas are indicated on the Key Diagram. They were first defined in the adopted Wiltshire Landscape Local Plan (1986) and subsequently in adopted District Council Local Plans, which show the current boundaries. Whilst new work, such as that by the Countryside Agency and English Nature on landscape character and natural areas, may lead to a review of the naming, number and extent of the SLAs, they remain areas of high quality landscape.

- C9 WITHIN SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS ANY PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEED TO PROTECT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND SCENIC QUALITY. THE AREAS ARE:-**
- 1. THE MAJORITY OF SALISBURY PLAIN EXCLUDING TWO AREAS AROUND NETHERAVON, LARKHILL, BULFORD AND AMESBURY, AND LUDGERSHALL AND TIDWORTH**
 - 2. THOSE PARTS OF SALISBURY DISTRICT TO THE NORTH AND EAST OF THE CRANBORNE CHASE AND WEST WILTSHIRE DOWNS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, EXCLUDING AN AREA AROUND SALISBURY AND WILTON**
 - 3. THE BLACKMORE VALE FROM ZEALS TO SEDGEHILL, AND A SMALL AREA TO THE EAST OF SHAFTESBURY**
 - 4. THE CHAPMANSLADE GREENSAND RIDGE**
 - 5. THE HIGHER LAND OF THE SPYE AND BOWOOD PARKLANDS**
 - 6. THE RIVER FROME VALLEY AT VAGGS HILL; AND**
 - 7. THE SOUTHERN FRINGES OF THE COTSWOLDS, NOT COVERED BY DESIGNATION AS AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY.**

- 6.37 The emphasis given to landscape conservation in the AONBs does not lessen the importance of conserving the remainder of the countryside. Other parts of the County are also of high landscape quality. Whilst the Countryside Agency does not recognise this as sufficient for designation as an AONB, these are areas of attractive and vulnerable landscape, most of which adjoin AONBs. The prime reason for their identification as Special Landscape Areas is conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and the impact of development upon this should be considered very carefully. As with AONBs, there is a need to maintain and enhance all aspects of the landscape. For example, SLAs support many habitats and species of biodiversity value. To protect SLAs, all non-essential development in the open countryside should be avoided. However, it is acknowledged that road schemes, other infrastructure development and minerals extraction may need to be accommodated. Also, as in AONBs, development is needed to maintain the social and economic interests of the SLAs, including their settlements and agriculture. Where development is acceptable, the siting, design and scale of proposals should be sympathetic with the landscape; materials appropriate to the locality should be used and appropriate restoration and or amelioration works should be carried out.

Green Space at Settlements

- 6.38 The development strategy of the Structure Plan emphasises urban concentration. This is intended to achieve a sustainable pattern of development, by minimising the need to travel. However, "town cramming" - the over-intensive development of settlements - must be avoided. There is a need to prevent the loss of valuable areas of open space, in particular those easily accessible by local people on foot, bicycle or horseback. A report published by English Nature, "A framework for the future: green networks with multiple uses in and around towns and cities" (1997) emphasises the importance of

such features. River and canal corridors are areas deserving particular attention. Many hedgerows are now protected for their value to wildlife (**Policy C3** and **paragraph 6.18**), but they also are important to visual amenity. Where possible, such areas should be linked, to create areas of continuity for wildlife and recreational use.

C10 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT AREAS OF GREEN SPACE WITHIN AND ADJOINING TOWNS AND VILLAGES, AND CORRIDORS WHICH PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE.

- 6.39 It is therefore important that open areas in and around the towns and villages, which are accessible for recreation, are protected from development. Key areas may need to be identified in Local Development Documents, particularly where they complement the allocation of adjacent land for housing development. Some areas will need to be enhanced by positive measures under other policies, for example those for watercourses and canals (**Policies C5, RLT3 and RLT4**), countryside management for recreation (**Policy RLT2**) and the creation of community woodland (**Policy C11**). In particular, the County and Borough Councils support the establishment of the Great Western Community Forest around Swindon as a means of integrating landscape, recreation, conservation, education and other objectives. Swindon Borough Council, in partnership with the Countryside Agency, is working on a Greenways project to establish green corridors for sustainable transport across the town and into the countryside. Such initiatives could provide a framework for the protection of important green spaces within and adjoining towns.
- 6.40 Throughout the countryside the County and Borough Councils will continue to encourage amenity tree planting and other landscape conservation measures, such as the renovation of ponds and, in the Cotswolds AONB, the reconstruction of dry-stone walls. Grant aid will be given where resources permit.
- 6.41 The Councils will also continue to consider the need for planting on their own land, in the interests of landscape enhancement. Highway vegetation will be maintained in the interests of road safety, amenity and conservation, and new planting carried out where appropriate. In addition, the Councils liaise with other public bodies which have influence on land management so that their proposals are as compatible as possible with the protection and enhancement of landscape quality. For example, because of the visual and wildlife importance of riverside vegetation and its contribution to landscape quality, liaison with the Environment Agency will continue where river and drainage improvement schemes are envisaged. Where appropriate the County and Borough Councils will work with the Agency to protect, enhance and / or restore river corridors. Canals and their tow-paths fulfil a similar role for some towns and villages and liaison with the British Waterways Board will continue to be important.
- 6.42 The Councils work closely with other countryside agencies such as the Countryside Agency and the Forestry Commission. When resources permit, financial support is given to the work of voluntary bodies such as the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. The Councils will also continue to make their limited resources of specialist advice available to the District Councils and to the public.

- 6.43 Where valuable natural or historic features are in danger of being lost, management agreements with the landowner will be considered by the authorities, subject to availability of finance.
- 6.44 The Environmental Stewardship scheme, comprising Entry Level, Organic Entry Level and Higher Level Scheme, replaced Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Area schemes in March 2005. The new schemes will also provide financial incentives for landowners to manage or re-create landscape and wildlife habitats in key areas of the countryside, notably chalk/limestone grasslands, old meadows or pasture and historic landscapes, at the same time providing for public enjoyment of the countryside. All of these schemes are administered by DEFRA. The County and Borough Councils will support these schemes, where resources permit.

Forestry and Woodlands

- 6.45 Although currently in a depressed state, forestry and associated activities provide an important commercial crop and have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the rural economy. Like agriculture, forestry needs to diversify to meet new markets whilst meeting sustainability standards. Currently, there is considerable interest in the potential for growing trees as an energy crop. This is supported in principle by Structure Plan Objective C (**Paragraph 2.28**) for Energy Efficient Land-Uses. The wider environmental benefits of increased forestry and woodland cover in terms of reducing carbon dioxide levels should also be recognised. The Government's strategic priorities have been set out in the England Forestry Strategy. These are:-
- the sustainable management of existing woods and forests
 - a continued steady expansion of woodland area to provide more benefits for society and the environment.

There are four key programmes, focusing on forestry and :-

- rural development
- economic regeneration
- recreation, access and tourism
- environment and conservation.

The Government has adopted the UK Forestry Standard, which incorporates good practice for sustainable forestry and the need to monitor the condition of woodlands. The Forestry Commission uses the standard in its work. The South West Regional Woodland and Forestry Framework (2005) identifies further identify priorities at a regional level.

- C11 THE PLANTING OF NEW WOODLANDS AND THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING WOODLAND AREAS WILL BE ENCOURAGED, PARTICULARLY WHERE THIS RETAINS OR ENHANCES AMENITY, PROVIDES RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES, IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, AND WILL NOT LEAD TO LOSS OF AN EXISTING WILDLIFE RESOURCE OR DAMAGE TO AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE.**

THE CONSERVATION OF BROADLEAVED WOODLANDS AND THE RETENTION OF SMALL WOODS WILL BE GIVEN SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.

ALL OF THE ABOVE WILL BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY WITHIN THE AREA DEFINED AS THE GREAT WESTERN COMMUNITY FOREST, BRAYDON FOREST AND AREAS WHICH ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE FROM OTHER URBAN CENTRES IN THE COUNTY.

- 6.46 Whilst conifer planting is a key component of commercial forestry and, at its best, can make a positive contribution to the landscape, national forestry policy emphasises broadleaved woodlands and their value for nature conservation, sport and recreation. The Government's English Forestry Strategy is reflected in Forestry Commission grants, which particularly encourage the planting of broadleaved woodlands.
- 6.47 Structure Plan policy supports the development of appropriate broadleaved woodland, for the benefits it can bring to the areas surrounding our major urban centres, as in the case of the Great Western Community Forest around Swindon. Like agriculture, forestry is not generally subject to planning control. Nevertheless, this policy is included to encourage planting and management of woodlands for their visual amenity, landscape, nature conservation and recreation value (see also **paragraph 6.17**). It is also important to avoid conflict between new planting and existing wildlife resources, particularly semi-natural habitats, and archaeological sites. The policy also seeks the retention of small woods, in support of the England Forestry Strategy. The Forestry Commission encourages landowners to link and extend small woodlands, as well as protect them, particularly where these are considered to be Ancient Woodlands.
- 6.48 The County and Borough Councils will implement this policy when consulted under the Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant Scheme and Felling Licence System. There are also controls over forestry operations under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations for England and Wales. The County and Borough Councils support the existing Forestry Strategy for the Great Western Community Forest, as approved by the former Department of Environment Transport and Regions (DETR). This covers some 200 square kilometres around Swindon. However, in the remainder of the Plan Area, the County and Borough Councils have consulted with landowners and organisations involved in the forestry industry and concluded that such a strategy is unwarranted. Instead, they have set up the Wiltshire Woodland Forum, with the support of the Forestry Commission, to involve all those involved in forestry and foster a strategic approach. The Wiltshire Woodland Forum has contributed to the preparation of the South West Regional Woodland and Forestry Framework (2005).

Agriculture

- 6.49 The "best and most versatile" agricultural land is defined as land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) classification. The Plan Area has extensive areas of Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land, concentrated on chalk and limestone uplands and in river valleys. The distribution of Grade 3a land is not fully known. However, Grade 3 land is extensive and there are known to be tracts of 3a land around areas of higher quality. The quality of areas subject to major development proposals is investigated in detail by DEFRA.

C12 LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL PROTECT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND FROM NON-AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

EXCEPTIONALLY, WHERE THERE IS AN OVERRIDING NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT ON BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND WHICH CANNOT BE MET ELSEWHERE, DEVELOPMENT SHALL BE DIRECTED TOWARDS LAND OF THE LOWEST GRADE.

- 6.50 Whilst farming practices sometimes conflict with conservation objectives, most of the countryside owes its character to agriculture. The loss of agricultural land to development means a reduction in the area of open countryside and in the resources available to grow food. Development plans and proposals therefore need to take account of the quality of any agricultural land that would be lost. The "best and most versatile" land - defined as land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the MAFF Classification - should be protected as a national resource. Any proposals which would prevent a return of land to best quality agricultural use - including open land uses such as golf courses - should be resisted.
- 6.51 Land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a should only be considered for development if there is an overriding need that cannot be met elsewhere. Some of Wiltshire's towns and main settlements have adjoining areas of such land, but will be required to accommodate development as Local Development Documents interpret the Structure Plan Strategy. Land of a lower grade should be used, unless it is subject to a statutory designation for its environmental quality (e.g. New Forest National Park, AONB, SSSI, Scheduled Ancient Monument), or where farming practices make a special contribution to the quality of the environment or the local economy. Where "best and most versatile" agricultural land has to be considered for development, the lowest available grade should be used.
- 6.52 These considerations apply to development for uses such as mineral extraction and waste disposal. **Policies MSP3 and W4** give guidance on these forms of development.

Land Restoration

- 6.53 **Policy DP9** deals with the re-use of previously developed sites in all locations. **Policy C13** deals specifically with land in the open countryside which has been made derelict or has been spoiled by a previous use.
- C13 THE RESTORATION AND RECLAMATION OF DERELICT OR SPOILED LAND IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE TO APPROPRIATE RURAL USES WILL BE SOUGHT WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY WHERE THIS ENHANCES THE LANDSCAPE QUALITY OF AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA, THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE GREAT WESTERN COMMUNITY FOREST, THE WESTERN WILTSHIRE GREEN BELT AND SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS.**
- 6.54 Activities such as mineral working or refuse tipping alter the character of rural land and could leave it derelict, unless reinstatement is required as a condition of planning permission. Where land is in the open countryside - that is, physically separate from towns and other settlements - reinstatement for agriculture, forestry, nature conservation and countryside recreation will normally be sought. The England Forestry Strategy programme for Economic Regeneration may support restoration to woodland (**paragraph 6.45**). However, there may be overriding reasons for seeking a change to another use, for example in order to maintain the economic life of buildings, to accommodate a use in the countryside not environmentally acceptable in other areas or to site visitor facilities for adjacent attractions whose archaeological, nature conservation or other value requires protection.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 Areas, landscapes and buildings of archaeological, architectural or historic interest represent physical survivals of our past to be valued and protected for their own sake as a central part of our cultural heritage and our essential sense of national identity. Their protection also represents a practical demonstration of society's commitment to the wider concept of environmental stewardship. Through study and in many other ways these irreplaceable records contribute to our understanding of our past and present. On a more local level their presence adds to the quality of our lives by enhancing familiar and cherished local scenes. These sustain the sense of distinctiveness which is such an important aspect of the character and appearance of the Plan Area's towns, villages and countryside. The historic environment and heritage of the Plan Area is also of considerable importance for leisure and recreation. It therefore needs to be conserved and enhanced.

Archaeology

- 7.2 The Plan Area is exceptionally rich in the wealth of its archaeological features. These vary from isolated visible remains, such as earthworks, to broad tracts of countryside where the range of ancient features creates the impression of an archaeological landscape. South Wiltshire contains some of the richest concentrations of prehistoric and Romano-British sites in Southern Britain. It constitutes the core of the Wessex Chalkland, considered by many as the heartland of prehistoric Britain. Stonehenge, one of the most celebrated monuments, is but one relic in a vast landscape of antiquity. Avebury, with its famous stone circle, is the centre of a rich complex of archaeological features in the North Wessex Downs. The international value of the Stonehenge / Avebury complex is recognised by UNESCO by inscription on the list of World Heritage Sites. Other important features in the County include barrow groups, such as Winterbourne Stoke, ancient trackways like the Ridgeway and numerous Iron Age hill-forts, such as Bratton Camp and Yarnbury Castle.
- 7.3 Although the Plan Area is most famous for its ancient landscape, it also has many features representing later periods. Saxon and medieval settlements and their field systems and post-medieval features such as water meadows, parliamentary enclosures and chalk carvings, including the famous white horses, are but a few. In the field of industrial archaeology there are a number of important features, such as the Kennet and Avon Canal which has now been restored as a navigable waterway. The Plan Area also has a large number of historic buildings and structures which make an important contribution to the landscape heritage. The pattern of roads, fields and settlements is all part of the legacy of Wiltshire and Swindon's historic past.
- 7.4 The pressures which threaten the continued survival of the archaeological heritage are largely man-made and reflect competitive and changing uses for land over the years. The obliteration of archaeological monuments has reached an intensive level during the last forty years, particularly on the chalklands, with many sites now only discernible from the air as soil or crop marks. The pressures of change which are eroding and in some cases destroying archaeological evidence in the Plan Area include processes of development, the provision of services and urban renewal, road construction and

improvement, agriculture and forestry, particularly ploughing, recreation and tourism, which may lead to unrestricted access and over use, and military training.

- 7.5 The Local Planning Authorities are able to influence proposals for land uses liable to damage or destroy archaeological features, by the control of development and through the administration of grant-aided tree planting schemes. However, no such influence normally exists over ploughing or most other agricultural activities which can cause the loss of features. In many cases, landowners and farmers are not aware of the wealth of archaeology on their land. They need to be informed about such sites and encouraged to take positive action to conserve them. In practice, voluntary preservation may be as effective as statutory constraint. The importance of management is now more widely recognised. For example the County Council's Archaeology Service has been involved with the Ministry of Defence in the establishment and implementation of an Integrated Land Management Plan for the Salisbury Plain Training Area and gives advice on Environmental Stewardship schemes and AONBs.
- 7.6 The following policies set out under their appropriate subject headings recognise Wiltshire and Swindon's outstanding archaeological heritage and reflect the advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Notes: 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG 15), and 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG 16).

World Heritage Site - Stonehenge / Avebury

- 7.7 The World Heritage List of cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value was established under the auspices of an intergovernmental World Heritage Committee. Stonehenge, Avebury and associated monuments are included as a World Heritage Site on this list. No additional statutory controls follow from the inscription of a site on the World Heritage List. Inclusion does, however, highlight the outstanding international importance of the site as a key material consideration to be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities in determining planning and listed building consent applications, and by the Secretary of State in determining cases on appeal or following call-in. Policies should reflect the fact that all these sites have been designated for their outstanding universal value, and they should place great weight on the need to protect them for the benefit of future generations as well as our own. Significant development proposals affecting the World Heritage Site will generally require formal environmental assessment, to ensure that their immediate impact and their implications for the longer term are fully evaluated.

HE1 THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE OF STONEHENGE AND AVEBURY, TOGETHER WITH ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING, SHOULD BE AFFORDED PROTECTION FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, TO REFLECT ITS OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL VALUE. NO DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE WHICH BY REASON OF ITS SCALE, SITING AND DESIGN WOULD PREJUDICE THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND ITS SETTING IN THE LANDSCAPE.

- 7.8 Local Planning Authorities are also encouraged to work with owners and managers of the World Heritage Sites in their areas and with other agencies, to ensure that comprehensive management plans are in place. Such plans should appraise the significance and condition of the site; ensure the physical conservation of the site to the

highest standards; protect the site and its setting from damaging development; and provide clear policies for managing the impact of tourism. It is important that this logical and disciplined approach is followed.

Avebury

- 7.9 This advice is reflected in the setting up by English Heritage with Kennet District Council, Wiltshire County Council and the National Trust of a World Heritage Site Working Party for the Avebury area of the site. The Working Party's objectives are to improve the management of the cultural heritage resources of the Avebury area, to increase public appreciation and to improve public access. A Management Plan for the Avebury area of the World Heritage Site was first published in August 1998 and reviewed in 2005.

Stonehenge

- 7.10 The Stonehenge part of the World Heritage Site is largely managed by English Heritage and the National Trust, with other land owning interests. In June 2000, English Heritage published a Management Plan for the site which has been adopted by Salisbury District council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The County Council would welcome proposals that acknowledge the provisions of **Policies HE1 and HE2** to safeguard the site's archaeological value, whilst providing appropriately designed and located facilities to enable visitors to experience a full appreciation of the site's heritage. More specifically proposals should seek to:-

- (i) minimise the effects of road traffic upon the site, setting and historic landscape
- (ii) provide adequate visitor facilities in locations with least effect upon the site, setting(s) and historic landscape, and
- (iii) develop access links between sites within and outside of the designated World Heritage Site.

Other Sites of Archaeological or Historic Interest

- 7.11 The existence of an up-to-date catalogue of sites of archaeological and historic importance is essential to the identification and protection of the Plan Area's heritage. The County and Borough Councils' Archaeology Service maintains the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), a database of over 21,000 sites of archaeological, historical and industrial archaeological significance. Scheduled Monuments are protected under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Ancient Archaeological Areas Act (1979), and it is an offence to damage or disturb such sites or structures without first gaining the consent of the appropriate Secretary of State.

- HE2 FEATURES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST AND THEIR SETTINGS SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT. WHERE NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR HISTORIC REMAINS, WHETHER SCHEDULED SITES OR NOT, ARE AFFECTED BY PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THERE SHOULD BE A PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF THEIR PHYSICAL PRESERVATION "IN SITU".**

- 7.12 Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation. The desirability of preserving archaeological sites and their setting is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications involving such sites.
- 7.13 Where there is reason to believe that significant archaeological remains exist on a development site, but where their extent and importance are uncertain, it will normally be appropriate for the developer to arrange for a field evaluation to be carried out to furnish the information on which to base a planning decision. The Libraries and Heritage Archaeological Service should be consulted on proposals that might affect sites and areas of archaeological and historic value.
- 7.14 The key to the future of the great majority of sites lies with local authorities, acting within the framework set by central government, in their various capacities as planning, education and recreational authorities, as well as with the owners of sites themselves. Appropriate planning policies in Local Development Documents and their implementation through development control will be especially important.
- 7.15 To cover the potential situation where the preservation "in situ" of archaeological remains cannot be justified and disturbances by development is unavoidable, local planning authorities should consider the need for policies in Local Development Documents to cover the investigation and recording of discoveries before damage or destruction occurs.
- 7.16 In the formulation of planning policies for the wider historic and archaeological landscape, authorities should take account of the historical dimension of the landscape as a whole, including historical evidence afforded by the existence of ancient trackways such as the Ridgeway, rather than concentrate on selected sites. Adequate understanding is an essential preliminary and authorities should assess the wider historic landscape at an early stage in development plan preparation. Plans should protect its most important components and encourage development that is consistent with maintaining its overall historic character.

Parks and Gardens

- 7.17 Parks and Gardens included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest are not subject to additional statutory controls. However, planning authorities should protect registered parks and gardens in preparing Local Development Documents and in determining planning applications, and encourage their protection and enhancement. There are about 40 such locations identified on the Register in the Plan Area. Amongst the most significant are Bowood, Iford Manor, Longleat, Stourhead and Wilton. In addition, there are many other parks and gardens of local or county value that have been identified by the strategic planning authorities. The Wiltshire Gardens Trust may be able to advise on such sites.

- HE3 REGISTERED HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS AND THEIR SETTINGS SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, HAVING REGARD TO THE SCALE AND LOCATION OF ANY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF THESE SITES.**

Historic Battlefields

- 7.18 English Heritage's Register of Historic Battlefields, is comparable in status with the Parks and Gardens Register. The register identifies a limited number of areas of historic significance where important battles are sufficiently documented to be located on the ground. Battlefields are not graded and the Register will be periodically reviewed by English Heritage. Again the inclusion on the Register affords no additional statutory protection but the same considerations apply to determining development proposals affecting these sites as apply to Parks and Gardens. Roundway Down, near Devizes, is currently the only battlefield in the Plan Area on the Register.

- HE4 THE REGISTERED HISTORIC ROUNDWAY BATTLEFIELD AND ITS SETTING SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, HAVING REGARD TO THE SCALE AND LOCATION OF ANY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE TO THE BATTLEFIELD.**

Use of Historic Monuments and Sites

- 7.19 As well as protecting the historic environment for its own sake, consideration needs to be given to its role in education, leisure and tourism. This in turn can further enhance understanding and appreciation of the heritage, and help towards its protection and enhancement.

- HE5 WORLD HERITAGE SITES, SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS, REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS, REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS AND OTHER HISTORIC SITES SHOULD BE ENHANCED, AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE, THROUGH APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT, INTERPRETATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, HAVING REGARD TO THE IMPACT OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.**

Built Environment

- 7.20 The Plan Area has an extremely rich and varied historic and architectural heritage. Its historic towns and villages have distinctive characters and attractive built environments, sometimes enhanced by their landscape setting. Apart from the special character of the central area of Salisbury, which is a fine example of a thirteenth century planned town, there are many settlements, individual buildings and groups of buildings of architectural or historic importance. Almost all of the towns and villages have valuable Saxon or Medieval archaeological remains. Thirty-five of the historic towns of Wiltshire have been subject to an intensive study, known as the Extensive Urban Survey, which examined the archaeological evidence in each town and used the information to map their extent through the historic periods. The high quality and attractiveness of much of the built environment is illustrated by the large

number of listed buildings and Conservation Areas. There are now, for example, almost 300 designated Conservation Areas in the Plan Area and 18,000 Listed Buildings.

Landscape Settings

- 7.21 There is a definite visual relationship between certain historic towns and topographical features, such as escarpments, hills and valleys which provide important views. These 'landscape settings' are fundamental to the historic character of each settlement and clearly reveal its origins. Together, they contribute significantly to the history of the Plan Area. Inappropriate development would have a detrimental effect on this relationship. Careful consideration of development proposals within these areas is needed in order to conserve the historic character of the towns, which is due in part to their fine landscape settings.

HE6 PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE FOLLOWING HISTORIC TOWNS: BRADFORD ON AVON, DEVIZES, HIGHWORTH, MALMESBURY, MARLBOROUGH, SALISBURY, WARMINSTER, WILTON AND WOOTTON BASSETT.

- 7.22 Landscape settings for these towns were originally defined in work for the former Wiltshire Landscape Local Plan and have been established for some time. The key elements within the landscape settings are as follows:-

| | |
|--|---|
| Salisbury and Wilton | river valley, flood meadows and surrounding chalk slopes |
| Devizes, Highworth and Wootton Bassett | on high ground, with adjoining steep slopes cut into chalk, limestone or associated rock. |
| Bradford on Avon, Malmesbury and Marlborough | on prominent valley slopes and high ground (chalk and limestone) |
| Warminster | gap site between chalk hills, greensand and chert-capped ridges. |

The landscape settings should be defined in detail in Local Development Documents, prepared by the Borough and District Councils. In the case of Malmesbury the relevant policy covers the river valleys.

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

- 7.23 Policies for conservation and enhancement of the environment must seek both to protect existing buildings and areas of architectural and historic importance and to ensure high design standards and compatibility of new development. A programme of positive measures, for example, both by public and private means, is necessary to support the controls which can be applied through legislation.

HE7 THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC HERITAGE OF THE PLAN AREA WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS.

DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING LISTED BUILDINGS SHOULD HAVE SPECIAL REGARD TO THE DESIRABILITY OF PRESERVING THE BUILDING, ITS SETTING AND ANY FEATURES OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST WHICH IT POSSESSES.

- 7.24 The conservation of old buildings and sustainable economic growth are usually complementary objectives and should not generally be seen in opposition to one another. Historic buildings can often be sympathetically adapted to economic use as for example, commercial or residential occupation. Their loss through neglect or avoidable demolition or destruction is a waste of valuable economic and environmental resources. Sympathetic adaptation for an appropriate use of these buildings will not only safeguard the buildings' future but can encourage and even enhance the continued vitality of Conservation Areas in which they may be located. The characteristics of historic buildings are usually related to their past functions and such characteristics should be respected when proposals for alteration or change of use are put forward. Development proposals should also attempt to retain the characteristics of distinct types of building, especially those which are particular to their area.
- 7.25 The designation of Conservation Areas by the Borough and District Councils helps to provide an essential safeguard of their character and appearance, against ill-considered development and the demolition of buildings of group value which may not be statutorily listed. Architectural or historic character is rarely limited to one building but usually relates more to a general group or area. For example, the historic centres of towns and villages have evolved over a long period of time and each retains its own distinct character to a greater or lesser degree. The planning authorities have a greater opportunity to preserve this character within a Conservation Area. This designation may attract public investment from national and local sources, and preservation or enhancement work may qualify for grant aid.
- 7.26 In considering development proposals within Conservation Areas, the form, scale and design of new buildings and the use of materials should respect the character of the surrounding area and will need to be in harmony with the existing scene. Regard should also be had to the historic street patterns of urban areas. The provision of car parking, traffic management schemes, and the control of advertisements are other aspects requiring special treatment in such areas, which should be in sympathy with the area and result in positive enhancement.
- 7.27 Positive conservation can be encouraged by the use of financial incentives for historic buildings' repair and conservation area enhancement. Discretionary Grants from the Local Authorities will continue to be made in their respective areas towards the cost of restoring Listed Buildings, although the finance available will inevitably be limited.
- 7.28 Conservation Area Partnerships have been used to direct effort and funding from English Heritage and from some local authorities or others into programmes of work

aimed at the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Bids are now being made for National Lottery funding. A partnership provides a framework for identifying problems and opportunities, for channelling resources to the necessary remedial work, and for appropriate management and development controls.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RECREATION, LEISURE AND TOURISM

- 8.1 Recreation, leisure and tourism are increasingly important activities in everyday life. Also, tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy and employment prospects of the County. The objectives of the policies are to maintain and increase where possible recreation and leisure facilities, for the benefit of residents and visitors, and to encourage tourism opportunities, whilst conserving the County's heritage assets and ensuring that only sustainable development is allowed. All recreation, leisure and tourism proposals should have regard to access for persons with disabilities under the provisions of the Disabled Discrimination Act 2005.

Recreation, Sport and Leisure

- RLT1 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR A WIDE RANGE OF FACILITIES FOR SPORT, RECREATION, LEISURE AND THE ARTS TO MEET LOCAL, COUNTY AND SUB-REGIONAL NEEDS, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, AND THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK, PROVIDED THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

ADEQUATE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE SHOULD BE MADE AND RETAINED TO CATER FOR THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

ALL SUCH FACILITIES SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

- 8.2 This policy is consistent with the overall strategy of developing recreational opportunities in an environmentally sustainable way. Recreation development should avoid damage to the environment and local communities, for example by changes to landscape or ecology, visual intrusion - including lighting at night - and traffic. The need for access by public transport, by walking or cycling needs to be considered, to help reduce dependency upon the car.
- 8.3 General financial restrictions make it imperative that resources are used in the most cost-effective way possible, through better co-ordination and management. The South Western Council for Sport and Recreation has prepared a Regional Strategy for Sport and Recreation which gives guidance on the achievement of this aim and identifies deficiencies in major recreational provision. The regional strategy also identifies the need for various outdoor sporting facilities. In the case of golf, for example, proposals already approved would, if implemented, more than satisfy the need identified by the Sports Council.
- 8.4 There is a relative lack of opportunities for those in the more remote rural areas, where public transport is less satisfactory, compared with those for people within easy reach of large towns. In some areas, recreation provision has benefited from joint action between authorities. The remedying of local deficiencies, such as the provision of village playing fields or children's play areas and village halls, is an important part of the recreation strategy.

- 8.5 Local voluntary effort is an essential adjunct to the provision of recreation, leisure and arts facilities by local authorities. The County and Borough Councils will continue to encourage such action by financial support, to supplement grants that may be available from other local, regional or national sources. Investment in recreation by private developers is also recognised as an essential element, especially where it is consistent with the overall needs of the community.
- 8.6 Development pressures, particularly in the towns, have placed some recreation provision such as sports grounds at risk. Many facilities have been lost. The local planning authorities will need to be assured that satisfactory alternative arrangements can be made before agreeing to the loss of important local facilities. The County and Borough Councils welcome initiatives from those providing recreation facilities to co-operate in order to achieve economies in the use of land and resources. Such joint provision is particularly appropriate between the public and private sectors in developing opportunities for urban recreation, for example, sports centres. Further economies are possible through the adaptation of suitable buildings to leisure use and special opportunities exist to convert disused railway lines into recreational resources, e.g. the use of the former Chiseldon-Marlborough railway as a cycle route.
- 8.7 The County Council makes available to the community those recreation facilities on school sites under its control that are suitable for outside use. In particular, community use of major facilities such as swimming pools and sports centres at secondary school sites will continue, subject to the local management arrangements which exist. The County Council will consider joint provision of future major schemes with the District Councils, particularly to serve those areas currently deficient. The County and Borough Councils welcome the opportunities currently provided by the Ministry of Defence for the use of its recreation facilities by the community and would wish such arrangements to be continued where possible.
- 8.8 It is important that existing recreational and other informal open space areas, which help to provide the 'greening' of built environments, are not lost to development in both urban and rural settlements.
- 8.9 Adequate play and other open space areas should be provided, not only for games and other activities, but for their amenity value. It is often the smaller areas for children's play or "kick-about" areas which are deficient, particularly in areas of private housing, where children's play space is at present almost completely lacking. Developers of housing will, therefore, be encouraged to provide areas for recreational space in all housing schemes, to the standards identified in Local Development Documents by the Borough and District Councils. Local Development Documents should make provision at least to the standards proposed by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA), which are regarded as the minimum acceptable.
- 8.10 Access to open spaces in both town and country is a fundamental part of recreation provision. In towns the provision of new open spaces, particularly for sports and games, tends to depend on such factors as the size of population served, the demand for new facilities and the proportion of public and private provision. Public access in the countryside depends largely on the availability of a suitable natural resource coupled with a willingness and financial capability to make it available to the public. In both cases accessibility is the key to providing a high degree of use. In the Swindon

area, for example, advantage has been taken of the opportunity to develop a hierarchy of open spaces to combine activities with amenities. These range from leisure areas, such as Coate Water or Lydiard Park, through well-distributed playing fields to the formal parks in the Town Centre. This principle should continue to guide the future development of open spaces in the town, with further amenity areas linking urban space with the open countryside. This concept could be extended to other towns. The realisation of the Great Western Community Forest Plan should also help to reinforce the principle of integrating recreational open space with other land uses, including areas of high biodiversity which are sometimes appropriate open space resources.

- 8.11 The scale and location of open spaces to serve urban areas and villages should reflect locally determined needs. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 states that it would not be helpful to prescribe national standards of recreational provision, and that local standards should be drawn up, based on assessment of need. Notwithstanding this advice, it is likely that local authorities will continue to recommend as a target for the standard of provision of outdoor playing spaces that recommended by the National Playing Fields Association. The Sports Council published a Playing Pitch Strategy in 1991 for this purpose and has set up a register of playing fields to assist in the process of planning and managing recreational facilities. This publication also includes a method for local studies to assess playing pitch needs.

Informal Countryside Recreation

RLT2 THE PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFORMAL COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION WILL BE ACHIEVED BY POSITIVE MEASURES SUCH AS:

- 1. IMPROVING, SIGNPOSTING AND WAYMARKING THE NETWORK OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND PERMISSIVE PATHS;**
- 2. PROVIDING SMALL CAR PARKS AND PICNIC SITES IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS;**
- 3. INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATER BASED CONSERVATION AND RECREATION;**
- 4. PROVIDING PUBLIC ACCESS WHERE PRACTICABLE TO SUITABLE AREAS INCLUDING WOODLAND AND HISTORIC MONUMENTS; AND**
- 5. MAKING USE FOR CONSERVATION AND RECREATIONAL PURPOSES, WHERE POSSIBLE, OF LENGTHS OF DISUSED RAILWAY LINE OR CANAL, OR OTHER DERELICT LAND**

EXCEPT WHERE THERE WOULD BE AN UNACCEPTABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES CLOSE TO TOWNS AND MAIN SETTLEMENTS, AND WELL SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT. ACCESS BY CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS SHOULD ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR. SUCH PROVISION SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

- 8.12 Whilst the protection of existing recreation resources is as relevant to the countryside as it is to towns and villages, the improvement of opportunities is an important part of

the recreation strategy. This will be achieved by an increase in public access to areas capable of absorbing it, and having regard to the need for quiet recreational access to sites of land and water-based conservation value. The development of new opportunities will play a role in supporting tourism. To be sustainable, new developments will need to avoid unacceptable environmental impact and should be accessible to those travelling by public transport, bicycle or on foot, plus people with disabilities. For this reason and to avoid the need to travel, sites close to towns will offer advantages, particularly if they are linked by "recreational" routes for cyclists and pedestrians. Proposals which make use of disused canals and railway lines should not prevent their restoration, where this is proposed under **Policies T4 and RLT4**.

- 8.13 The County and Borough Councils provide and manage land for public access at a number of locations³. As an example of sustainable tourism within the North Wessex Downs AONB, the Wiltshire Downs Project acts as a catalyst to integrate visitor pressures and economic opportunities for local people, whilst respecting the downland heritage. Many other sites have been opened to the public by the District Councils, the Forestry Commission, the National Trust, nature conservation bodies and other organisations and landowners. The Councils believe that there is a need to seek further opportunities, particularly by relatively inexpensive schemes which make use of existing physical resources and the use of access agreements where appropriate. There may be opportunities for utilising appropriate sites owned by conservation interests, particularly for access by foot, cycle and horse. In the AONBs and the New Forest it will be particularly important to keep such schemes at a level consistent with the conservation of the landscape.
- 8.14 To implement measures identified in the Policy, the County Council has developed a Framework for Managing the Rights of Way Network 2004-2009, which is being developed into the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This has the overall aim of improving opportunities for the public to enjoy access to the countryside whilst maintaining, and where possible enhancing its ecological, archaeological, historical and landscape value, the rural economy and the amenity for local people. It sets out how the County Council proposes to meet its statutory requirement of having the entire rights of way network legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised, subject to the availability of resources.

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| Barbury Castle Country Park (near Wroughton) | Oakfrith Wood |
| Barton Farm Country Park (Bradford on Avon) | Riverside (Lechlade) |
| Bratton Camp Open Space | Seven Fields Nature Reserve (North Swindon) |
| Coate Water Country Park (South Swindon) | Stanton Park (Stanton Fitzwarren) |
| Cotswold Water Park - a number of sites including Keynes | The Lawn (Swindon) |
| Country Park and Neigh Bridge Country Park (all managed on | Smallgrain Picnic Area (near Calne) |
| behalf of constituent authorities by the Cotswold Water Park | Urchfont Picnic Area |
| Society) | Westbury White Horse Viewing Area |
| Figsbury Rings Car Park | Wilton Windmill |
| Lydiard Park (West Swindon) | Woodhenge Picnic Area |
| Moulden Hill Country Park (North Swindon) | |

- 8.15 Swindon Borough Council has shown its commitment to both promoting and increasing access to the countryside at large through its objectives in respect of Rights of Way management and maintenance and its support for the Great Western Community Forest strategy. In addition, the Greenways project being developed by the Borough Council, in partnership with the Countryside Agency, offers the opportunity to increase access to the countryside close to towns, for cyclists, walkers and horse riders.
- 8.16 The Borough Council is committed to the preparation of an access strategy for Swindon and to adopt the national Milestones initiative as a quality management tool for its implementation. In conjunction with this, the Borough is working in partnership with Parish councils and the local Ramblers Association to monitor and audit its progress in having the entire Rights of Way network legally defined and properly maintained by the end of the Century. The Borough also recognises the importance and strategic effect of both the Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails running through the Borough and actively participates in their management, both at local and national level.
- 8.17 These strategies will involve co-ordination of action between the County and Borough Councils, the District Councils and other appropriate organisations.

The Recreational Use of Water

- 8.18 The Plan Area, with its canal and river systems, together with the Cotswold Water Park, offers significant potential for water based recreation to meet future demand for inland water recreation from a wide catchment area.

The Kennet and Avon Canal

RLT3 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR RECREATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE KENNET AND AVON CANAL, HAVING REGARD TO NAVIGATIONAL INTERESTS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

- 8.19 The re-opening of the Kennet and Avon Canal has created new opportunities for recreation and tourism. The County Council continues to work with British Waterways, the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust and others to see how the potential of the Kennet and Avon Canal can be realised for water recreation, appropriate canal-side recreation and as a resource for conservation and education. The County Council supports the policies set out in British Waterways' Kennet and Avon Canal Conservation Plan. Developing the potential of the Kennet and Avon Canal depends upon attracting sufficient moorings in appropriate locations along with associated support facilities, and linked with other facilities for tourism. It also requires a careful balance between the encouragement of development and the conservation of the environmental qualities of the areas through which the canal flows, which include two AONBs. In addition, it is necessary for the use of the waterway itself to be controlled to avoid navigational difficulties and mitigate water supply problems. Maintenance of the Canal for navigation depends on the continuity of funding agreements between British Waterways and the local authorities and the ability to draw down external funding. A Steering Group was set up to negotiate these and to agree a programme of capital investment that will secure the long term future of the Canal. Heritage Lottery funding

of £25 million was awarded for this purpose in late 1996 and agreement was reached between members of the Steering Group in September 1997. However, control over the use of the waterway itself is the sole responsibility of British Waterways.

- 8.20 Any problems arising from the increased use of the Canal are most likely to be related to the scale, type and location of facilities provided, especially moorings, and siting of fuelling and sewage disposal facilities. The high quality landscape through which the Canal flows, the importance of nature conservation interests locally, difficulties of vehicular access and water supply problems combine to suggest the need for some restraint in the development of facilities.
- 8.21 Only small scale moorings and associated developments will be appropriate in the countryside and special care will be exercised to avoid the possibility of intrusion into areas of high landscape quality within the AONBs. The retention and enhancement of the value of the canal as a wildlife corridor through the countryside will depend not only upon sensitive management of the waterway and its environs, but also upon the planned location of boating developments so as to minimise disturbance to wildlife habitats. Encouragement will be given to locating moorings in basins adjacent to the Canal.

Other Canals

RLT4 THE HISTORIC ALIGNMENTS OF THE WILTS & BERKS CANAL, THE NORTH WILTSHIRE AND THAMES & SEVERN CANALS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED WITH A VIEW TO THEIR LONG-TERM RE-ESTABLISHMENT AS NAVIGABLE WATERWAYS.

- 8.22 The potential of other parts of the old canal network for recreation, tourism and nature conservation is also recognised. Local Development Documents should take appropriate account of the possibilities of restoring and reconstructing various canals in the County. Unfortunately, considerable lengths of redundant canal have been developed for other uses or returned to agriculture. Navigation rights were abandoned many years ago, and there is multiple land ownership. District Councils should examine ways and means of re-establishing, through their Local Development Documents, practicable links to replace lost sections of these canals. It is likely that it will take considerable time to restore navigation to the whole system. Nevertheless, there will be benefits to recreation, tourism and nature conservation from each phase of restoration. Where works to restore old lengths of canal are at an advanced stage, care will be taken to ensure that these works are not frustrated by allowing alternative land use proposals. The County Council has already given a lead with conditions attached to mineral extraction permissions to safeguard and protect the alignment of the Thames and Severn Canal. The County and Borough Councils will continue to liaise with the Cotswolds Canals Trust, the Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group and the Wilts and Berks Canals Trust and will assist, where possible, in the process of canal restoration (e.g. in the role of landowner).

The Cotswold Water Park - Sport, Recreation and Tourism

- 8.23 The Cotswold Water Park comprises a large area of lakes that have, and are being formed as a result of gravel extraction in both Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Where extraction has been completed a variety of recreational activities and facilities are being developed by private owners and Local Authorities. The future recreation development of the Water Park will depend on:
1. the availability of water areas of sufficient size and depth for different recreational activities;
 2. a steady demand for water recreation;
 3. the need to take account of the nature conservation importance of the Water Park and specific use of major areas for this purpose, plus the need to integrate other uses and the interests of local communities;
 4. the availability of public and private investment to sustain appropriate after-uses;
 5. satisfactory access and other traffic implications.
- 8.24 Provision should be made for water-based sport, recreation and tourism only where these can be shown to cause no damage to nature conservation in the Cotswold Water Park in the Upper Thames Valley, having regard to the impact on local communities and the environment.

RLT5 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR WATER BASED SPORT, RECREATION AND TOURISM IN THE COTSWOLD WATER PARK IN THE UPPER THAMES VALLEY, HAVING REGARD TO THE IMPACT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE OF THE WATER PARK.

- 8.25 Through the activities of the Cotswold Water Park Joint Committee the County Council will continue to co-operate with the other constituent local authorities to ensure the satisfactory development of the Water Park. In addition to improving facilities such as country parks, picnic sites, viewpoints and car parks, the Joint Committee has an important role to play in acting as a catalyst to stimulate private sector development initiatives. Statutory Local Development Documents covering the area in both Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, together with the strategy prepared by the Joint Committee, will provide a balanced framework for the development of the Water Park as a centre for sport, recreation and tourism and as an outstanding wetland habitat of national and potentially international biodiversity importance, whilst protecting the interests of those who live and work within the Park. Reference should also be made to **Policy C6**, which seeks to protect the wildlife value of the Cotswold Water Park as a whole.

The River Thames

- 8.26 The character of the riverside environment is fundamental to its attraction as a recreational area and will therefore be conserved. As an example of a recreational resource entirely appropriate to the River Thames, the Thames Path has been welcomed by the County and Borough Councils who will support and implement this

project and seek ways of linking this National Trail with the existing rights of way network.

RLT6 PROPOSALS FOR RECREATION AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE RIVER THAMES SHOULD MAINTAIN THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE RIVER ENVIRONMENT.

8.27 To conserve the present character of the river and its environs in the uppermost reaches, including amenity and wildlife interests, it is necessary to avoid development that would generate river traffic above the present practical limit for river cruiser navigation in normal conditions, i.e. in the vicinity of Inglesham. This is the policy of the Environment Agency, which is now the navigation authority for the River Thames. **Policy RLT6** is entirely consistent with the Environment Agency's policy and the Recreational Strategy for the River Thames (published by the National Rivers Authority, predecessor of the Environment Agency in 1995.) However, it is not the intention of the policy to prevent the restoration of disused sections of canal in the Upper Thames area, or the development of the Cotswold Water Park, whose future does not depend upon physical connection with the River Thames.

8.28 The control of development implied by the policy cannot affect or override the statutory right of navigation which exists as far as Cricklade. If this right were to be exercised by river cruisers at some future date, as a result of action to widen and deepen the river by works which do not require planning permission, such circumstances would require a review of the policy. In such a case changes to the present character of the river and its environs would inevitably occur.

Airfields

RLT7 PROPOSALS FOR THE RETENTION AND RE-USE OF MOD AIRFIELDS FOR GENERAL AVIATION PURPOSES TO SATISFY LOCAL NEEDS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, PROVIDED THAT THERE ARE NO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

PROVISION FOR ANY NEW AIRFIELD, EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING AIRFIELD OR AIRCRAFT LANDING SITE FOR LOCAL RECREATIONAL PURPOSES SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, PARTICULARLY ON LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITY.

8.29 The area does not have any commercial airports, being well served by national and regional facilities in adjoining areas, at London (Heathrow and Gatwick) and Bristol (Lulsgate) respectively. Apart from the military, local aviation activities are based on limited commercial, private and recreational flying, which do not require major facilities. However, there is concern that the proliferation of local recreational flying activity is causing disturbance over wide areas of countryside and in particular to residential areas and businesses, including agriculture, located close to airfields. This policy seeks to address this issue, to recognise the benefits of the appropriate re-use of Ministry of Defence airfields for local needs, including limited specialist freight operations and commercial private flying, and provide a context for Local Development Document considerations. The former MOD airfields represent significant public

assets, with existing infrastructure, and may well be more environmentally acceptable given their long standing airfield use.

Tourism

- 8.30 The tourist industry in Wiltshire is based on its historical and natural heritage. As outlined in Chapter 7 (Historic Environment), the County has an outstanding heritage, with the Stonehenge / Avebury World Heritage Site, the cathedral city of Salisbury, and many other historic towns, as well as a number of important historic houses. To this can be added the Kennet and Avon Canal, together with extensive areas of the countryside, with over 60% either designated as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or defined as Special Landscape Area (SLA). Visitors from home and abroad are demanding better standards of accommodation, particularly in attractive and historic towns with good shopping and other facilities.

RLT8 PROPOSALS FOR NEW OR IMPROVED TOURIST ATTRACTIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON THE NATURAL OR HISTORIC HERITAGE, PROVIDED THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THEY ARE WELL RELATED TO THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK.

- 8.31 New and improved facilities which help to extend the tourist season will be of prime importance. However, the threat to sensitive areas caused by visitor pressures is of growing concern. This is particularly relevant to The New Forest National Park. Considerable scope exists in the Plan Area for the development of alternative attractions based on the County's heritage, and these will be encouraged. In some areas, such as the World Heritage Sites at Stonehenge / Avebury, greater attention needs to be paid to site management in order to enhance visitor enjoyment of the heritage. These issues are being addressed by the Avebury World Heritage Site Working Party, on which the Council has representation. As mentioned in **paragraph 8.13**, Avebury forms the core area of the green tourism initiative known as the Wiltshire Downs Project, demonstrating how low key tourism may be promoted in harmony with the environment, yet benefiting local communities.

Hotels and Camping Sites

- 8.32 In order to build on the potential of the County's heritage for tourism it is important to generally extend the availability of tourist accommodation. An exception is made in the case of the New Forest National Park (**Policy RLT10**), in view of excessive visitor numbers, but elsewhere there are a number of opportunities. In March 2005 the New Forest Heritage Area was designated a National Park. The principle embodied in **Policy RLT10** relating to the New Forest Heritage Area should therefore continue to apply to the New Forest National Park.

RLT9 PROVISION FOR HOTEL, CONFERENCE AND OTHER SERVICED ACCOMMODATION SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED WITHIN TOWNS AND VILLAGES. ELSEWHERE DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS OR BE RELATED IN SCALE, CHARACTER AND STYLE TO APPROPRIATE EXISTING BUILDINGS.

RLT10 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL CAMPING AND TOURING CARAVAN OR CHALET / STATIC HOLIDAY HOMES SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE. PROVISION FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT BE MADE IN THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA AND THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE. IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY ANY DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSE OF SUCH DESIGNATION.

- 8.33 **Policy RLT9** gives scope for more new hotel development and improvements and extensions to existing hotels. This would help to meet demand and provide the higher standards now sought by the public, particularly in the larger towns. However, in the interests of minimising sporadic development in the countryside, new buildings need to be either physically associated with, but subordinate in scale to, existing hotels or large country houses (which could include farmhouses and other appropriate buildings), so that the open character of the countryside is not compromised by sporadic new development.
- 8.34 During the latter part of the 1980s there was a substantial increase to the amount of hotel accommodation available in the County in response to increases in the volume of tourists. Many further proposals have been granted planning permission. Where possible, hotel development should include conference facilities to realise the County's potential for business tourism. Opportunities should also be taken where available to meet the increasing demands for sports, recreation and leisure facilities as part of hotel development. These additional facilities should, in particular, assist in extending the tourist season to the economic benefit of the County.
- 8.35 The Plan Area lends itself to developing holiday accommodation through the conversion of existing buildings. In particular, opportunities have arisen for the conversion of redundant farm buildings. Structure Plan policy militates against converting old farm buildings to residential use in isolated country locations away from public services such as schools, health and other social services (**Policy DP14**). However, these facilities are not normally required by tourists. Thus, **Policy RLT9** provides that such conversions for tourist and holiday accommodation may generally take place. It will, however, be necessary to control such developments by legally enforceable agreements to ensure that holiday use does not turn into full residential use, which would conflict with housing policy. It should also be recognised that in certain limited instances, particularly where listed buildings are involved, conversion schemes may not be appropriate.
- 8.36 **Policy RLT10** deals with the strategic aim of increasing accommodation through the development of caravan/camping and chalet/static holiday homes. However, there is a need to comply with other strategic priorities, in particular protection of the environmental assets of the New Forest National Park and the World Heritage Site. Indeed, their value to tourism depends upon their quality being protected. Landscape conservation strategy requires the satisfactory assimilation into the countryside of all appropriate sites. Priority for the conservation of the landscape in the AONBs means that sites in the countryside of the AONBs should generally be small in scale. Also, the impact of proposals on sites of nature conservation importance needs to be considered. However, the careful development of tourism in the countryside could do

much to improve the economy of rural areas. Elsewhere major developments would need to provide or be well related to appropriate recreational facilities. Such developments should also be controlled by legally enforceable agreements to ensure that holiday home use does not turn into permanent residential use, and conflict with general settlement and housing policies.

CHAPTER NINE

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 9.1 Renewable Energy can help the pursuit of sustainable development, by reducing the use of fossil fuels. The combustion of fossil fuels for power produces harmful gases which contribute to atmospheric pollution. One of the gases, carbon dioxide, constitutes the largest single contributor to global warming. As a result of this, the Government is encouraging the development of renewable energy generation which avoids the use of fossil fuels.
- 9.2 Renewable energy is defined as those continuous energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment from the sun, the wind, oceans and from plants and the fall of water. Also included is the energy available in wastes and from the earth itself. The development of renewable energy would reduce harmful emissions and cut down on the production of carbon dioxide and thus contribute to a slow down in global warming. It would also help to husband finite fossil fuel resources, increase the diversity and security of national energy supplies and reduce the impact of the volatility in the world energy markets on the United Kingdom economy.
- 9.3 Most of the United Kingdom's electricity is generated in power stations burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, together with nuclear power. Wiltshire's electricity is from such sources and is supplied to the county via the national and regional grid.
- 9.4 The Government's current target is to have 10% of UK electricity requirements met by renewable energy sources by 2010. Latest figures on renewable energy projects (June 2005) from The Department of Trade and Industry-show that that there are 933 schemes contracted under the Non Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) and the Scots and Irish equivalents, with a generating capacity of 3639 MW. However, there are many other renewable energy schemes outside the NFFO and the situation is changing rapidly.
- 9.5 The target of meeting 10% of UK electricity needs by 2010 is forecast to require the installation of about 10,000 MW of renewables capacity. This would include hydro-electric power stations, which have a capacity of about 2000 MW. Figures therefore indicate that a 10% target would require many more small-scale renewable energy projects. Planning Policy Statement 22 "Renewable Energy" (PPS22, August 2004) clearly expects local planning authorities to include appropriate policies in their Development Plans and to consider the contribution their area can make to renewable energy needs, whilst having due regard to environmental factors.
- 9.6 In 2001, Terence O'Rourke and ETSU, funded by the Government Office for the South West (GOSW), published the report 'Renewable Energy Assessments and Targets for the South West'. The report indicated that it is feasible for the South West to seek a 597MW target for renewable electricity capacity by 2010. This target is included in the RPG10. Policy RE6 of RPG10 requires that a minimum of 11-15% of electricity generating capacity (597MW) in the region should be from renewable sources by 2010.
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- 9.7 RPG10 also requires the identification of county / sub-regional targets to progress the development of renewable energy within the region. The Government Office for the South West (GOSW), in partnership with the South West Regional Assembly, funded the REvision 2010 project, to develop county or sub-regional targets for renewable electricity up to 2010. The project identified a target range for the Plan Area of 65-85MW of renewable electricity generation by 2010. Wind energy, energy crops and forest residue, energy from waste and landfill gas were identified as the sources with the most potential within the Plan Area.
- 9.8 The target range of 65-85MW has been incorporated in to the Wiltshire and Swindon Renewable Energy Action Plan, which promotes the development of renewable energy projects within the Plan Area and outlines the actions required to achieve the target.

Renewable Energy

- 9.9 The Borough and County Councils support the development of renewable energy resources. However, it is necessary to balance their benefits against the environmental impacts such development may have on the Plan Area. The following renewable energy policies therefore incorporate national and regional guidance, whilst acknowledging the broad intent of other established Structure Plan policies to conserve and enhance the environment. It is recognised that approval of insensitive and inappropriate development would harm the pursuit of acceptable renewable energy projects where environmental aspects have been fully considered.

RE1 RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES WILL BE SUPPORTED IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS. IN EXAMINING PROPOSALS, REGARD SHOULD BE PAID TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO THE POTENTIALLY CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCALITY.

- 9.10 **Policy RE1** applies to all forms of renewable energy including those identified by REvision 2010. However, the planning issues of the different technologies are likely to vary significantly. Wind power, and energy crops, such as Miscanthus or short rotation coppice and forest residues offer most potential in the Plan Area and are considered in more detail later. Energy from waste is referred to in **Policy W2 (Chapter 11 - Waste Management)**.
- 9.11 In the development and elaboration of Structure Plan renewable energy policies, Local Development Document policies would need to address, inter alia, the following issues arising from renewable energy proposals, or those involving more efficient use of energy:
- i). the scale, location and siting of proposals
 - ii). the need to protect areas and features of landscape, ecological and archaeological interest
 - iii). the scope for transportation of renewable energy resources to generating plants by rail, rather than by road

- iv). the environmental and visual impact of associated ancillary developments including new access roads, buildings and power lines, etc. and particularly the effect on residential areas or settlements in the locality
- v). the capacity, fabric and safety of the existing highway network in the vicinity of the proposal to accommodate the volumes of vehicular traffic generated by the operation of the proposal(s)
- vi). the potential of the various forms of renewable energy to give rise to air and water pollution, noise and vibration
- vii). the management and disposal of residuals, by-products and effluents
- viii). the provision for removal of apparatus and reinstatement of the site should it cease to be operative and
- ix). the scope for improvements to energy efficiency, for example by combined heat and power, district heating or type, orientation and location of housing.

9.12 In some circumstances, however, it will be necessary to seek an appropriate environmental assessment for major proposals of a strategic scale, particularly for possible wind farms and major processing or generating plant. The Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988 address the circumstances surrounding the possible need for an Environmental Assessment. Small-scale developments, including non-commercial projects for individual establishments such as a farm, may not give rise to any strategic issues. These should be encouraged where there is no detrimental environmental impact.

9.13 Structure Plan employment land proposals are derived from the forecast needs of Class B type industry, for example manufacturing and offices (1987 Use Classes Order). Renewable energy generating plants can create limited on-site employment. However, such proposals must be considered in their own right. They may not qualify for location on designated employment land on every occasion, particularly in locations with limited employment land.

Energy Crops and Forest Residues

9.14 The planting of energy crops such as *Miscanthus* and short rotation coppice has been identified as one of the most significant potential sources of renewable energy in the Plan Area. The REvision 2010 project has estimated that this could have a generation potential of about 7MW up to 2010. Currently the Plan Area has little coppice woodland. However, in the north of the Plan Area soil conditions are favourable for this crop. Increasing levels of support at European and National level may make this a significant resource for renewable energy generation.

9.15 Energy crop planting does not require planning permission. The County and Borough Councils would, however, wish to encourage the planting of energy crops and woodland management for the purpose of energy generation, provided there are no adverse impacts on areas of landscape, wildlife or archaeological importance. In

the Swindon area the encouragement of renewable energy based on arable coppice may have indirect benefits for the Great Western Community Forest. If a market for wood fuel could be established, it would help encourage the management of woodlands by providing a use for waste such as forest thinnings.

- 9.16 Proposals for generating plant would be considered against **Policy RE1**. Transport is likely to be a major factor and therefore plants should normally be located close to the resource. The relationship between the size of the plant and its catchment area will be an important consideration.

Wind Power

- 9.17 Wind speeds are high enough in parts of the Plan Area to make power generation viable based on current technology. Inevitably the windiest areas of the County and Borough are the more elevated and unspoilt areas already highly valued for their scenic qualities, biodiversity and archaeology. These designated areas cover approximately 70% of Wiltshire. Additionally much of the high ground is within the Salisbury Plain Military Training Area.
- 9.18 The REvision 2010 project estimates that the Plan area has a significant potential wind power resource of some 41-61MW. This figure is based on excluding nationally designated areas such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. In March 2005 the New Forest Heritage Area was designated a National Park. The principle embodied in **Policy RE2** relating to the New Forest Heritage Area should therefore continue to apply to the New Forest National Park.

- RE2 PROPOSALS FOR WIND TURBINE GENERATORS AND WIND FARMS, TOGETHER WITH ANY CONNECTIONS TO THE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION NETWORK, SHOULD NOT DETRACT FROM THE VALUE OR INTEREST OF AREAS AND FEATURES DESIGNATED FOR THEIR LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL CONSERVATION INTEREST.**

PROVISION OF MAJOR PROPOSALS WITHIN THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA AND AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY SHOULD NOT BE MADE UNLESS PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND INCAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THESE AREAS.

- 9.19 Wind generation developments may vary in scale from single turbines on farms, which may have limited impacts, to major commercial wind farms with transmission links to the local electricity distribution system, which have significant environmental impacts. The most significant effects are likely to be visual and sometimes noise related. Recognising the potential impact of wind generators the Government has added them to the categories of projects which may require Environmental Assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects by virtue of their nature, size or location.

- 9.20 Whilst the County and Borough Councils support the principle of renewable energy, they are concerned to ensure that wind farms do not seriously compromise established Structure Plan policies to protect the landscape of the Plan area. **Chapter 6 (The Natural Environment and the Countryside)** sets out the Councils' policies to protect important designated areas. Whilst these policies do not prohibit wind farms from such areas, it may be difficult to reconcile their development with long established principles to protect nationally designated landscapes.

Other Renewable Energy Sources

- 9.21 Other potential renewable energy sources identified by REvision 2010 include municipal solid waste, straw, landfill gas, poultry litter, anaerobic digestion, small-scale hydro and solar PV. As with all energy generation plants, careful consideration needs to be given to the local availability of sources, transport, landscape and other environmental issues which arise from their siting. Major plants would need to be strategically located with good rail and/or road access.
- 9.22 The recovery of energy from waste offers the opportunity to reduce the need for landfill. Depending on the technology used, waste to energy plants can vary significantly in nature and scale. Any proposal would also have to be assessed against the relevant policies, in particular **Policy W2 (Chapter 11 Waste Management)**. Policies relating to waste to energy have also been developed in the Waste Local Plan.
- 9.23 Opportunities should be taken to fully utilise other renewable energy resources subject to their planning impacts. Such proposals will need to be assessed in the context of **Policy RE1**.

CHAPTER TEN

MINERALS

10.1 Minerals are an important national resource. Virtually everything we use is made of minerals, requires minerals in its manufacture or depends on minerals for its operation. The construction and energy industries together with many manufacturing processes are dependent on the raw material provided by minerals. Their exploitation makes an essential contribution to the nation's prosperity and quality of life. Government guidance on mineral planning policy is currently contained in a series of Minerals Planning Guidance notes (MPGs) although these are being reviewed and will eventually be replaced by succinct statements of national policy (Minerals Policy Statements (MPSs)).

10.2 In broad terms, minerals fall into four categories:

- energy minerals
- construction materials
- industrial minerals and
- metalliferous minerals.

To date, mineral production in Wiltshire and Swindon Borough has been limited to the extraction of construction materials and industrial minerals. Both sharp sand and gravel (such as concreting aggregate) and soft sand (such as building sand) are extensively worked to provide aggregates for the construction industry. On a more limited scale, Bath Stone, Portland Stone and Greensand provide a valuable source of dimension⁴ or building stone. Chalk, clay and soft sand are worked for industrial purposes, including the manufacture of cement, whiteners and agricultural lime. There has also been considerable exploration activity for onshore oil and gas in the Plan Area, but to date, neither has been found.

10.3 The Government's objectives for minerals planning seek to provide a framework for meeting the nation's need for minerals in the most sustainable way by achieving the best practicable balance of social, environmental and economic considerations and a prudent use of natural resources (draft MPS1). Notwithstanding the cyclic nature of economic activity, the underlying demand for minerals is generally increasing. In the absence of any control over or management of demand for minerals this trend is forecast to continue, further increasing the pressure on mineral resources in the Plan Area, as operators seek to secure additional reserves in order to extend long-term production.

10.4 Although mineral production is essential to our way of life, the extraction, processing and transportation of minerals can be potentially damaging to the environment and the quality of life for local people.

⁴ Dimension stone is high quality building stone which can be cut into block shapes and sizes as required.

- 10.5 It is vitally important that these problems are kept to a minimum and a balance is struck between the need for minerals and the care and protection of the environment, both in the immediate future and in the long term. However, unlike most other forms of development, the choice of location of mineral working is limited by geological circumstances. Central Government has set out the objectives of sustainable development for minerals in draft MPS1 as being:
- i). to conserve and safeguard mineral resources as far as possible
 - ii). to protect nationally and internationally designated areas of landscape and sites of nature conservation value from minerals development, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is in the public interest
 - iii). to secure supplies of the material needed by society and the economy from environmentally acceptable sources
 - iv). to ensure, so far as practicable, that the outcomes for the minerals industry are consistent with the Government's aims for productivity growth and strong economic performance
 - v). to secure sound working practices so that the environmental impacts of extraction and transportation of minerals are kept to a minimum, unless there are exceptional overriding reasons to the contrary
 - vi). to minimise production of mineral waste
 - vii). to promote efficient use and recycling of suitable materials, thereby minimising the net requirement for new primary extraction
 - viii). to protect, and where possible, to enhance the overall quality of the environment once extraction has ceased through high standards of restoration and to safeguard the long-term potential of land for a wide range of after-uses.
- 10.6 The County Council is responsible for all aspects of land use planning related to minerals development in Wiltshire, while Swindon Borough Council has the same responsibility in Swindon Borough. These responsibilities include the formulation of planning policy for their areas, determining planning applications and the enforcement of planning control.
- 10.7 The operative Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Local Plan (2001) is being reviewed in line with the provisions of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The replacement, Minerals Local Development Documents will, in due course, form part of the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals and Waste Development Framework. However, as with the Structure Plan, the policies within the current Minerals Local Plan will be 'saved' for a period of time – in this case, until September 2007.
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Meeting the need for minerals

- 10.8 The Government recognises that in order to contribute to the development of the economy, and to secure social progress through the creation of sustainable communities, that there is an adequate supply of minerals to meet justifiable needs (draft MPS1). Until the Regional Spatial Strategy is adopted, the Structure Plan will continue to play a vital role in providing strategic guidance to the County and Borough Councils in terms of preparing policies for the long-term supply of minerals. **Policy MSP1** sets out a strategic commitment to the Government's objectives for minerals planning.

MSP1 A CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS FOR MINERALS WILL BE MAINTAINED AT A LEVEL WHICH IS APPROPRIATE TO THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PLAN AREA'S MINERAL RESOURCES AND WHICH WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS.

MINERAL DEVELOPMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE RESISTED, UNLESS THE NEED FOR THE PARTICULAR MINERAL IS OVERRIDING.

ENCOURAGEMENT WILL BE GIVEN TO THE EFFICIENT USE OF ALL MINERALS AND MAXIMISING THE USE OF SECONDARY AND RECYCLED AGGREGATES WHEREVER PRACTICABLE, TO REDUCE THE NEED FOR MINERAL EXTRACTION.

- 10.9 Mineral extraction sites tend to be large. Working may be physically disruptive, intrusive and last for many years. Meeting the need to secure continuing supplies of minerals can therefore give rise to a range of environmental conflicts, particularly about impact on landscape, nature conservation, amenity and the public highway. In order to provide a rational basis for reconciling these conflicts in the context of sustainable development, the need for an adequate supply of minerals must be considered against any adverse effects their extraction might have. Accordingly, any minerals developments which would have significant adverse impacts, either individually or cumulatively, can only be justified when the benefits of meeting the need for minerals outweigh these environmental impacts.
- 10.10 Sustainable development requires that efficient use is made of resources and materials wherever possible. In this context, higher quality minerals should not be used for purposes for which lower quality material would suffice. Similarly, in order to reduce the pressure for extraction of primary aggregates, greater use should be made of alternative sources of construction materials. This has long been encouraged by Central Government which recognises that there is a need to reduce the reliance on traditional land-won sources of aggregates. Indeed the published revised guidelines for the production of aggregate minerals over the period to 2016 assumes that in the South West Region there will be an approximate 50% increase in the tonnage of alternative aggregates being consumed by the construction industry (as compared with the assumptions set out in the 1994 version of MPG6).

- 10.11 As part of their commitment to sustainable development the County and Borough Councils consider that the increased use of substitute aggregate materials, particularly recycled aggregates (such as construction and demolition wastes), will reduce the need for primary aggregates and reduce the quantity of waste requiring disposal to landfill. This is most important, and, in the long term it should have a significant role to play in conserving primary aggregates resources and safeguarding the Plan Area's environment.

Protecting the Environment

- 10.12 One of the key aims of sustainable development is to afford an appropriate level of protection to areas of designated landscape, archaeological or nature conservation value. The protection of assets such as these has always been an important element of the County and Borough Councils' strategies to secure the conservation and enhancement of the countryside and protection of areas of special character or interest. Because the Plan Area is rich in sites and areas of ecological, landscape and historic interest, much of it is designated for the protection of these interests. A balance must be struck between the need for minerals and the protection of these critical interests. However, in accordance with Central Government policy, the greatest protection must be given to areas which are designated as being of national or international importance. Accordingly, minerals development will be controlled in line with **Policies C2 (Nature Conservation designations), C7 (New Forest), C8 (AONBs) and HE1 and HE2 (Archaeological and Historic designations)**.
- 10.13 Central Government Guidance states that Structure Plans should indicate those areas within which there will be a presumption against mineral working (RPG10). **Policy MSP2** defines, at strategic level, designated areas of the Plan Area within which the extraction of certain minerals will be subject to the most rigorous examination and will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

MSP2 WITHIN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY AND THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA, PROPOSALS FOR THE EXTRACTION OF SAND AND GRAVEL, CRUSHED ROCK, CLAY OR CHALK SHOULD BE ASSESSED AND DEMONSTRATED TO BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

- 10.14 In assessing whether proposals in these areas constitute an 'exceptional circumstance', they must be demonstrated to be in the public interest. In 2005, the New Forest Heritage Area became the New Forest National Park. The principle embodied in **Policy MSP2** relating to the New Forest Heritage Area should therefore continue to apply to the New Forest National Park. Accordingly, consideration of minerals applications in such areas should normally include an assessment of:
- i). the need for the development, in terms of national considerations of mineral supply, and the impact of permitting the development, or refusing it, on the local economy;
 - ii). whether alternative supplies can be made available at reasonable cost, and the scope for meeting the need some other way;

- iii). any detrimental effect of the proposals on the environment and landscape, and the extent to which that should be moderated; and
 - iv). in the case of extensions to existing quarries, the extent to which the proposal would achieve an enhancement to the local landscape.
- 10.15 Whilst nationally and internationally designated areas warrant the highest degree of protection, regard should also be paid to safeguarding sites and areas of recognised local environmental importance as well as other important aspects such as road safety, the water environment, the amenity of local areas and the quality of the environment generally. Sustainable development requires sensitive working practices during minerals exploration and extraction, to reduce adverse environmental impacts. The scale of working and related operations must be appropriate to, and capable of, being absorbed by the local environment. Operational working practices and landscaping must be to the highest standards, consistent with the need to reduce environmental impacts, the period of disturbance and the area of land disturbed at any time.
- 10.16 Accordingly, many of the non-minerals specific policies of this Plan apply to the control of minerals development. The following are of particular relevance: **T8 (Transport Provision), C3 (Nature Conservation), C5 (Water Environment), C6 (Cotswold Water Park), C7, C8 and C9 (Landscape), C12 (Agriculture), HE3 (Parks and Gardens), HE4 (Historic Battlefields), HE6 (Landscape Settings), HE7 (Conservation areas and listed buildings), and RLT4 (Canals)**. Detailed policies regarding the control of the location, scale, design and operation of mineral development with respect to all these interests will be developed through the preparation of the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

Restoration of Minerals Sites

- 10.17 Sustainable development requires that provision is made for phased working, restoration and aftercare of sites in order to ensure that the long term environmental quality of land worked for minerals is maintained, enhanced and returned to a condition suitable for a beneficial after-use at the earliest opportunity. Central Government requires that where the best and most versatile agricultural land is used for minerals extraction, the restoration and aftercare steps should enable the retention of its longer term potential as a high quality agricultural resource.
- 10.18 **Policy MSP3** sets out strategic principles for the restoration and aftercare of sites. Other relevant policies of this Plan include **C1 and C3 (Nature Conservation), C5 (Water Environment), C6 (Cotswold Water Park), C7, C8 and C9 (Landscape and Countryside) and C11 (Woodland)**.

MSP3 LAND USED FOR MINERALS EXPLORATION OR WORKING OR FOR ASSOCIATED PLANT OR BUILDINGS SHOULD BE RESTORED AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO A STATE WHICH WILL PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WHICH IS SUITABLE FOR A BENEFICIAL AFTER-USE APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCATION. IN PARTICULAR:

- i) THE AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL OF ANY AREA OF BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND SHOULD BE MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED BY RESTORATION OF THE SITE AND**
- ii) WHERE APPROPRIATE, RESTORED LAND SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO A PERIOD OF AFTERCARE.**

Minerals Resource Conservation

10.19 Minerals are a finite resource. In accordance with the principle of sustainable development, they should only be used when there is an unavoidable need for them, otherwise they should be conserved for use by future generations. It follows that significant mineral resources should, as far as possible, be safeguarded from development which could sterilise them by preventing or prejudicing their possible future extraction (draft MPS1 and RPG10). Such sterilisation reduces the overall extent of workable resources, thereby limiting the range of options for future mineral working sites, which may result in increased pressure to release resources in more sensitive areas. It is therefore important to safeguard significant, potentially economic mineral deposits from sterilisation by development proposals. In this respect the local planning authorities have a vital role in controlling the location of development so as to prevent, wherever possible, development which would sterilise known mineral resources. Significant, potentially economic, mineral deposits are identified in the Minerals Local Plan (2001) and will continue to be represented in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework and the Local Development Documents produced by the District Councils.

10.20 In some cases it may be necessary for essential development to be located on mineral bearing land. Where this happens, the mineral should, wherever practicable, be extracted in advance of the development unless this would give rise to unacceptable impacts or contravene other policies in the Plan.

MSP4 SIGNIFICANT WORKABLE MINERAL DEPOSITS SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED AGAINST OTHER FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND, WHENEVER PRACTICABLE, SHOULD BE EXTRACTED PRIOR TO ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD RESULT IN THEIR STERILISATION.

Provision of Aggregates

10.21 The principle mechanism for ensuring adequate supplies of minerals, particularly aggregates, is the maintenance of a landbank - that is a stock of planning permissions

for mineral extraction sufficient for a given number of years of production. Government policy (draft MPS1) requires the maintenance of a minimum seven year landbank for sand and gravel and crushed rock, measured against the relevant apportionment of the Regional forecast of aggregates production.

- 10.22 The new national and regional guidelines for aggregate production replace those set out in Annex A of MPG6 (1994). The guidelines state that the South West Region will need to produce 106 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 453 million tonnes of crushed rock over the period 2001 - 2016. The Mineral Planning Authorities of the Region are required to make provision for the production of their agreed sub-regional apportionment of these figures. The South West Regional Aggregates Working Party (RAWP) advises the South West Regional Planning Body on the sub-regional apportionment. Subject to final confirmation of the sub-regionally apportioned aggregates figures in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, Wiltshire has agreed, for the purposes of testing through the Minerals Local Development Document process, to an apportionment of 29.66 million tonnes of sand and gravel (at a rate of 1.85 million tonnes per annum), and no crushed rock, for the 16 year period 2001 - 2016. Landbanks are calculated with reference to an annualised expression of this apportioned forecast. **Policy MSP5** sets out the commitment to the maintenance of landbanks for sand and gravel. The Mineral Planning Authorities will seek to make a commitment to meeting their annualised provision requirements through the preparation of the Minerals Core Strategy Development Plan Document, and an Aggregate Minerals Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document. Sites for future mineral working will be identified to enable the production of sand and gravel at the best balance of social, environmental and economic cost, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

MSP5 THE MINERAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL SEEK TO:

1. **MAINTAIN A LANDBANK FOR SAND AND GRAVEL IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE. IN DOING SO, SEPARATE LANDBANKS WILL BE MAINTAINED FOR SOFT SAND AND SHARP SAND AND GRAVEL; AND,**
2. **IDENTIFY PREFERRED AREAS, AREAS OF SEARCH AND SITE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE EXTRACTION OF SOFT SAND AND SHARP SAND AND GRAVEL IN THE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN, BASED ON THE SUB-REGIONAL APPORTIONMENT AS AGREED BY THE REGIONAL AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY, TO ENSURE THE MAINTENANCE OF THESE LANDBANKS.**

- 10.23 **Policy MSP5** refers to the “Minerals Local Plan” and “sub-regional apportionment being agreed by the Regional Aggregates Working Party”. For the purposes of implementing this Policy, the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, now means that the Regional Planning Body is the responsible authority for agreeing sub-regional apportionment and Local Development Documents should be prepared instead of Local Plans.

- 10.24 Government policy (draft MPS1) states that the Regional Guidelines provide an indication of likely demand but the apportionment figure should not be regarded as inflexible. The preparation of Minerals Local Development Documents will provide an important opportunity to test the practicality and environmental acceptability of the Guidelines figure at the local level.

Raw Materials for Cement Manufacture

- 10.25 The cement industry is of major importance to the national economy as it supplies an essential product to the construction and civil engineering industries. It is therefore necessary to have an adequate and continuous supply of raw material to maintain cement production. The Government looks to mineral planning authorities to make provision for adequate supplies of these raw materials (chalk and clay) but not at the expense of important environmental, amenity, conservation, agricultural and other relevant interests.
- 10.26 The advice contained in MPG10 - "Provision of Raw Material for the Cement Industry", is that the Mineral Planning Authorities should seek to maintain a landbank of permitted reserves of chalk and clay sufficient for at least fifteen years production and to safeguard resources for Cement Works. Wiltshire has a major cement works at Westbury, with associated quarries for chalk and clay, but it is recognised that the chalk quarry, in particular, is located in an area which is of extreme environmental sensitivity.

MSP6 PROVISION FOR THE EXTRACTION OF CEMENT RAW MATERIALS WILL BE SOUGHT IN THE VICINITY OF WESTBURY CEMENT WORKS TO MAINTAIN LANDBANKS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE, SUBJECT TO SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT.

Transportation of Minerals

- 10.27 Transportation is a key issue for sustainable development because of the use of resources and the environmental impacts that it involves. In view of the problems caused by high levels of heavy traffic, it is Central Government policy that encouragement should be given to the transport of minerals by rail for long distance movements (draft MPS1 and RPG10). Much of the Plan Area's consumption of aggregates is met by imports of crushed rock from Somerset and Avon and some of this material is already moved by rail. Rail transport would also be the best way of bringing alternative secondary aggregates, such as china clay from Cornwall, into Wiltshire and Swindon. However, it will be necessary to ensure that any new rail aggregate depots (RADs) established in the Plan Area are appropriately located, to avoid unacceptable harm to the environment, to road safety or to the amenity of the area in which they are situated, in accordance with **Policy DP1**. In identifying sites for future mineral working regard should be paid to the benefits of reducing the need to transport minerals. This objective could also be met through industry signing up to the preparation of minerals site transport plans (draft MPS1).

- 10.28 The transport of minerals by road is likely to place a strain on the local road network. In rural areas, the road might be unable to cope with frequent use by heavy vehicles. Heavy lorries create a nuisance for local people in terms of noise, vibration and pollution and may also create traffic hazards. Preference will be given to the movement of minerals by pipeline or rail, although it is appreciated that this may not always be commercially feasible. **Policy MSP7** sets out a commitment to considering alternative means for the transportation of minerals.

MSP7 PROVISION SHOULD BE SOUGHT, WHERE APPROPRIATE, FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF MINERALS BY RAIL OR PIPELINE SUBJECT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS.

Ancillary Development

- 10.29 Some of the potential environmental, amenity and pollution problems at mineral working sites and rail aggregate depots are related to the ancillary developments that take place within most sites. These include processing plant and other buildings required for the operation of the site or depot.
- 10.30 In addition to processing activities, operators may wish to locate manufacturing plant on or adjacent to mineral working sites. There may be environmental benefits to this as it may avoid the need to transport raw materials to such plant elsewhere. However, such developments may generate excessive levels of lorry traffic and should be carefully sited and designed in order to minimise their visual impact on the local environment. Once the local supply of mineral at the site has been exhausted, the environmental advantage of having manufacturing or processing plant at mineral working sites is likely to be removed and such plant may effectively become an unjustifiable industrial development in the countryside. There is a need to ensure that this does not happen. Therefore, ancillary minerals development will be controlled in line with **Policies MSP1** and **MSP3**.

Onshore Oil and Gas

- 10.31 Successive Governments have sought to encourage the full exploration and appraisal of oil and gas resources and to ensure the maximum economic exploitation of reserves consistent with the protection of the environment.
- 10.32 There has been widespread exploration for onshore oil and gas in the Plan Area and, in the past, licences have been granted for exploration drilling over almost the whole area. Exploratory drilling activities can be disruptive but they are only carried out for a short period. In principle, the Mineral Planning Authorities are normally prepared to accept this disturbance in most locations. However, there are circumstances when this disturbance may not be acceptable. This could be when drilling would cause significant harm to areas of designated national or international importance or seriously affect amenity. Detailed policies regarding the control of exploration for oil and gas are set out in the Minerals Local Plan in accordance with **Policies MSP1** and **MSP3** of this Plan.

- 10.33 If an exploratory borehole discovers oil or gas it is necessary to delineate the extent of the oil or gas field and to assess its commercial viability by drilling additional appraisal wells, each of which will require planning permission. An appraisal scheme agreed with the Department of Trade and Industry is required and should enable the Mineral Planning Authorities to assess the context and the scale of future development prior to granting the necessary planning permissions.
- 10.34 Detailed policies for the control of the development of oil and gas appraisal and production facilities are set out in the adopted Minerals Local Plan in accordance with policies referred to in paragraph 10.11 and **Policies MSP1, MSP3, MSP7 and MSP8.**

MSP8 FACILITIES FOR THE APPRAISAL OR PRODUCTION OF OIL OR GAS WILL BE CONTROLLED SO AS TO ENSURE THAT REGARD IS PAID TO THEIR CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

- 10.35 In developing policy for the production of oil and gas, the Mineral Planning Authorities needs to balance the wishes of the oil industry to benefit from a find as rapidly as possible and to recoup the considerable costs of exploration and production, with the need to protect the environment. This balance is more likely to be achieved through an agreed overall development scheme for the oil or gas field. Progressing an overall development scheme will enable problems of locating the major industrial facilities like the gathering station, the rail terminal and routes for pipelines to be examined in a comprehensive way. This approach would also enable the public to comprehend the scale of the proposed development at an early stage, hopefully dismissing speculation and uncertainty. The oil companies are obliged to prepare a development scheme for the approval of the Department of Trade and Industry as a condition of the production licence. The licensee is committed to the development scheme once approval is given. Therefore, the approval of the development scheme and the necessary planning permissions should proceed in parallel.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 About 1.5 million tonnes of municipal, commercial, industrial and construction waste are currently managed annually in Wiltshire and Swindon. Approximately 50% of this is disposed of in landfill or landraise sites. Disposal to land has historically been favoured due to the relative cheapness and convenience of this method for the disposal of most types of waste. However, more and more waste is being diverted from landfill as these costs continue to rise and alternative waste management methods play an increasingly important role.
- 11.2 This increase in the amount of waste diverted from landfill is essential to the continued protection of the environment for current and future generations. Recent environmental legislation at both a European and National level is imposing higher standards, together with a requirement to consider more sustainable waste management techniques. Structure Plan policies have therefore been developed to reflect the implications of this legislation within the Plan area.

European Policy

- 11.3 EC Directives and Government guidance are encouraging a more sustainable approach to waste management. EC Directives include the Framework Directive on Waste, the Packaging Directive and the Landfill Directive. The Landfill Directive requires, amongst other objectives, a stepped reduction in the quantities of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill. The Government has negotiated a derogation (an agreed delay) of four years (indicated in brackets below) on the dates indicated in the Directive, on the basis that additional time is required to develop a range of alternative management techniques:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Requirement</u> |
|-------------|---|
| 2001 | Implementation date |
| 2006 (2010) | Reduce quantity of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill to 75% of 1995 levels. |
| 2009 (2013) | Reduce quantity of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill to 50% of 1995 levels. |
| 2016 (2020) | Reduce quantity of biodegradable municipal waste going to 35% of 1995 levels. |

National Policy

11.4 In taking the requirements of the Landfill Directive forward, the Government published its national “Waste Strategy 2000” in May 2000 which sets out the changes needed to deliver more sustainable waste development. Detailed Government Planning Policy regarding waste planning is contained in Planning Policy Statement 10 (PPS10, July 2005): Planning for Sustainable Waste Management. This note together with Waste Strategy 2000 sets out the Government views on how future waste management decisions should be made. This is based on the following principles :-

- The waste hierarchy:-
 1. Reduction
 2. Re-use
 3. Recovery (including recycling, composting and energy recovery)
 4. Safe and environmentally sound disposal.

In terms of recovery, waste incineration with energy recovery should not be considered before opportunities for recycling and composting have been explored.

The overall aim is to increase the proportion of waste managed by the various options at the top of the waste hierarchy.

- The proximity principle which requires waste to be managed as close to the place of production as possible.
- Regional self-sufficiency in managing waste, including the use of sub regional apportionments for the quantities of waste that should be managed in each local authority area.
- The identification of suitable sites and areas of land to work towards meeting this sub regional apportionment for waste management.

11.5 The Waste Strategy 2000 also introduces targets to assist in achieving the goal of sustainable waste management. The targets for the recovery of municipal waste are anticipated to be met through increased recycling, composting and energy recovery and have been expressly established to assist in compliance with the requirements of the Landfill Directive. These targets have now been supplemented by the more challenging requirements of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, which requires a stepwise reduction in the tonnage of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled in Wiltshire and Swindon every year.

11.6 To assist in achieving these waste targets and requirements the Government will continue to require statutory performance standards for increasing household waste recycling and composting to be met. There are different standards for different groups of authorities in recognition of differing local circumstances and in Wiltshire and Swindon the locally set statutory standards respectively are 27.5% and 30% by

2004/05 and 30% each by 2005/06. Future local standards will be produced as appropriate.

- 11.7 The operative Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan, adopted in March 2005, is being reviewed in line with the provisions of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The replacement, Waste Local Development Documents will, in due course, form part of the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals and Waste Development Framework. However, as with the Structure Plan, the policies within the current Waste Local Plan will be 'saved' for a period of time – in this case, until March 2008.

Reducing, Re-using and Recovering Waste

- 11.8 A reduction in the quantity of waste requiring disposal has obvious environmental benefits and is an important part of a strategy of sustainability. Although most encouragement has been given to the recycling of household waste, the recycling of construction waste and road building materials is of great importance as they constitute a large proportion of total waste and their use can reduce the need for primary aggregates. The government has set targets for increasing the use of secondary and recycled aggregates and **Policy MSP3** of the Structure Plan encourages their use to reduce the need for mineral extraction. Appropriate policies for reducing, re-using and recovering waste are included in the Waste Local Plan. In line with guidance in the National Waste Strategy, the Waste Local Plan also includes policies to address the waste management implications of major housing, industrial or commercial developments.
- 11.9 The County and Borough Councils welcome the efforts of businesses and the community to reduce waste and re-use materials and will seek to encourage initiatives for minimisation, re-use and recycling, via incentives, pilot schemes and partnerships with the private sector. The Waste Local Plan includes supportive policies. The proportion of waste that is recycled or composted is rising, with over 30% of household waste now being managed in this way.

W1 REDUCTION OF VOLUMES OF WASTE REQUIRING DISPOSAL WILL BE SOUGHT BY ENCOURAGING INITIATIVES TO MINIMISE THE PRODUCTION OF WASTE, AS WELL AS MAXIMISING THE RE-USE OF MATERIALS AND THE RECYCLING OF HOUSEHOLD, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND CONSTRUCTION WASTE.

Provision of Recycling and Recovery Facilities

- 11.10 In order to achieve a successful level of recycling it is essential to have adequate facilities for the collection, transfer and sorting of waste. These may include materials recycling facilities, small local recycling facilities, waste transfer stations and yards for sorting and processing construction waste. Similarly, the implementation of other methods of waste recovery depends upon there being adequate sites and facilities for such uses as composting, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste. **Chapter 9 (Renewable Energy)** deals with the recovery of

energy from waste. It is also recognised that scrap yards and activities such as car-boot sales play an important role in the re-use of materials.

- W2 IN ORDER TO INCREASE RECYCLING AND RECOVERY OF RESOURCES FROM WASTE, PROPOSALS FOR THE RECYCLING OR THE RECOVERY OF ENERGY FROM WASTE WILL BE FAVOURABLY CONSIDERED, SUBJECT TO THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.**

Provision of Adequate Waste Facilities

- 11.11 Managing waste will continue to be a necessary aspect of the economy. A key function of the planning system is to develop a framework which enables an adequate network of waste facilities to be provided, even though this can sometimes be unpopular and controversial. The following policy provides an appropriate framework for the more detailed policies in the Waste Local Plan, taking account of national policy and local circumstances.

- W3 PROVISION FOR AN ADEQUATE NETWORK OF WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES SHOULD BE MADE HAVING REGARD TO:**

- 1) MEETING THE WASTE MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF THE PLAN AREA**
- 2) THE PROXIMITY OF THE FACILITIES TO THE SOURCE OF THE WASTE**
- 3) MAKING A CONTRIBUTION, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TOWARDS ACHIEVING REGIONAL SELF SUFFICIENCY**
- 4) ACHIEVING THE BEST PRACTICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL OPTION.**

- 11.12 Establishing an adequate network of waste management sites in the Structure Plan Area should take into account a range of factors including the need for the facility, the proximity principle and regional self-sufficiency. The principle of the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) has now been removed from consideration in the planning process by PPS10. However, the principle of providing sustainable waste management, which the BPEO helped to work towards continues to be reflected in waste planning policy. It will be applied in the preparation of future waste planning framework in Wiltshire and Swindon through the use of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment. In the interim the local authorities will not apply any aspects of strategic or local planning policy that seeks to require applicants to demonstrate that their proposals are the BPEO. However, they will be tested against all other relevant sustainable development criteria of the Structure Plan and the relevant sustainable waste development criteria of the Waste Local Plan.

- 11.13 The County and Borough Council consider that provision should be made to address the waste management needs of the Plan area. The Waste Local Plan identifies a network of preferred areas for various types of waste management and includes criteria policies to deal with proposals in other locations. The Plan makes an overall assessment of need within the Plan area based on forecasts of waste arising, Municipal Waste Strategies and statutory performance targets for recycling. The Structure Plan Authorities do however recognise that certain types of waste, such as clinical and hazardous waste, are more effectively managed at a regional or national

level and therefore specific provision to meet the needs of the Plan area may not always be appropriate. Proposals for waste management facilities which give rise to significant adverse environmental impacts can only be justified when the benefits of meeting the need for waste management outweigh those environmental impacts.

- 11.14 A network of waste facilities should be established such that waste is managed as close as possible to where it is produced, taking into account environmental impacts and the requirements for different waste management options. This will help reduce the environmental impacts of transport and foster a sense of responsibility for the waste which communities create and is in line with Government Guidance. Provision should be made across the Plan area so as to avoid long distance transport of waste within the County. Conversely, in areas close to the edge of the Plan Area, waste will continue to be imported where facilities are close to population centres in other counties. Also, some industrial and commercial wastes produced in Wiltshire and Swindon are exported for treatment elsewhere. Information on waste movements is incomplete, but imports and exports of waste are believed to be broadly in balance.
- 11.15 Provision for waste facilities should take into account the principle of regional self sufficiency i.e. that each region should manage its own waste. However, as described above, some cross border flows are appropriate.
- 11.16 A regional assessment of the contribution which the Plan Area should make to the needs of the region has recently been completed by the Regional Technical Advisory Body on Waste. Liaison with adjacent South West authorities will be carried out in order to discuss issues relating to cross boundary movement of waste. The Plan Area is on the edge of the South West Region and it is also appropriate to consider relationships with the South East Region. Where appropriate the Waste Planning Authorities should also liaise with adjacent South East authorities.

General Environmental Criteria

- 11.17 One of the key aims of the County and Borough Councils' Strategy is the protection of the environment, communities and natural resources of the Plan area from the adverse impacts of development. Waste development can have significant impacts on the environment, which need to be taken into account. **Policy W4** sets the context for development control policies in the Waste Local Plan by highlighting the major issues likely to arise from waste developments.

W4 PROPOSALS FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO EFFECTS ON LOCAL AMENITIES, NEARBY LAND USES, LANDSCAPE, THE NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, TRAFFIC GENERATION, WATER RESOURCES, POLLUTION AND RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE OF THE SITE.

- 11.18 A balance needs to be struck between the need for waste management facilities and the protection of the environment. Waste development will need to be assessed in the context of **Policy W4** and also policies in other chapters of the Structure Plan. The greatest protection should be given to sites designated for their international and national importance. Accordingly, waste development should be assessed against

the following policies which give protection to these sites: - **C2 (Nature Conservation), C7 (New Forest), C8 (AONBs) and HE1 and HE2 (Archaeological and Historic Designations).**

- 11.19 As well as national and internationally important areas, consideration should be given to features of more local environmental interest and other important issues such as local amenity, water, traffic and pollution. Other policies in the following chapters of the plan are therefore also relevant: **Chapter 5 (Transport), Chapter 6 (The Natural Environment and the Countryside), Chapter 7 (The Historic Environment) and Chapter 8 (Recreation, Leisure and Tourism).**
- 11.20 The ability to secure provision for the restoration and aftercare of waste sites, particularly landfill, is extremely important. This ensures that once waste activity has ceased the land is restored to a high standard that is suitable for a beneficial after use. In the case of combined mineral and waste disposal sites **Policy MSP3** will apply. Restoration and aftercare of all waste sites has been addressed in the Waste Local Plan.

CHAPTER TWELVE

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- 12.1 Telecommunications are an essential part of our life and of the national economy. New technology is spreading rapidly to meet demands for better communications at work and at home. The Government's policy is set down in Planning Policy Guidance 8 - Telecommunications (PPG8, August 2001). It is to facilitate the growth of new and existing systems, whilst maintaining environmental objectives.
- TE1 PROPOSALS FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. MAJOR PROPOSALS IN THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA AND IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY SHOULD ONLY BE ALLOWED IF PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND INCAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THESE AREAS.**
- 12.2 Telecommunications infrastructure can vary in scale and number. Some do not require planning permission at all, since they may be permitted development under the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2001. Other developments associated with telecommunications should be the subject of more detailed Development Plan Document policies. Special consideration needs to be given to large masts and major satellite dishes which can have a significant impact on the landscape. There are locational constraints imposed on the operator by the nature of the telecommunications network and its technology, together with the condition attached to the operator's licence relating to the quality and coverage to be provided for the service users. However, major telecommunications infrastructure would not generally be appropriate in areas recognised at a national level for their landscape quality. In 2005, the New Forest Heritage Area became the New Forest National Park. The principle embodied in **Policy TE1** relating to the New Forest Heritage Area should therefore continue to apply to the New Forest National Park.

APPENDIX A

NATURE CONSERVATION SITE DESIGNATIONS

| Importance | Site Designation | Number and Location in Plan Area |
|---------------|---|--|
| International | Ramsar Sites (listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance) | none |
| | Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds) | 2 Salisbury Plain Porton Down |
| | Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) (EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive)) | 10 Salisbury Plain River Avon System New Forest Kennet and Lambourn Flood Plain North Meadow & Clattinger Farm Chilmark Quarries Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Great Yews Prescombe Down Pewsey Downs |
| National | National Nature Reserves (NNRs) (National Parks and Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) | 6 North Meadow Cricklade Fyfield Down Pewsey Downs Wylde Down Prescombe Down Parsonage Down Langley Down |
| | Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) | 131 including major sites at Cotswold Water Park, Savernake Forest, Salisbury Plain, River Avon System. Plus 5 SSSIs administered by other counties but with land in Wiltshire (see Appendix B) |

| Importance | Site Designation | Number and Location in Plan Area |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Regional / Local importance | Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) (National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949) | 11 Coate Water, Swindon Seven Fields, Swindon Smallbrook Meadows, Warminster Avon Valley, Salisbury Flouse Hole Oakfrith Wood Drews Pond Wood Scotchel Nature Reserve Barbury Castle Stanton Woodlands Conigre Mead, Malmesbury |
| | Nature Reserves (non statutory) | 36 Wiltshire Wildlife Trust 17 Woodland Trust |
| | Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Wildlife Sites • Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) | See Appendix B |

APPENDIX B

AREAS COVERED BY SSSI and SNCI DESIGNATIONS

| | Total Area (ha) | Percentage of Plan Area |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | 29,165 | 8.4 |
| 2. Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) | 20,650 | 5.9 |
| including :- | | |
| • County Wildlife sites (not designated SSSI) | 20,509 | |
| • Regionally Important Geological Sites and Geomorphological Sites (not designated SSSI) | 141 | |
| total SSSIs and SNCIs | 49,815 | 14.3 |

Note :-

The total area of **SSSIs** and **SNCIs** gives some idea of the extent to which the Plan Area is covered by Nature Conservation designations in general. Other designations shown in **Appendix A** largely – but not entirely – overlap one or other of these categories. For example, candidate **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)** under EC legislation are all already designated **SSSIs** under UK legislation. **National Nature Reserves** are also designated **SSSIs**, but are distinguished by being owned by English Nature. Many **SSSIs** are not owned by conservation bodies.

WRITTEN STATEMENT

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Priorities for Sustainable Development

- DP1 IN PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULAR PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO:-**
- 1. MEETING LOCAL NEEDS FOR JOBS, SERVICES AND AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING IN ALL SETTLEMENTS**
 - 2. MEETING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**
 - 3. ACHIEVING A PATTERN OF LAND-USES AND ASSOCIATED TRANSPORT LINKS WHICH MINIMISE THE NEED TO TRAVEL AND SUPPORT THE INCREASED USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING AND WALKING**
 - 4. MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION AND ACCOMMODATING PROPOSALS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY**
 - 5. IMPROVING THE AMENITY OF SETTLEMENTS**
 - 7. MINIMISING THE LOSS OF COUNTRYSIDE AND PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE PLAN AREA'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS.**

Infrastructure

- DP2 DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT PROCEED UNLESS THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND AMENITIES MADE NECESSARY BY THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE PROVIDED AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME.**

Development Strategy

DP3 DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PRIMARILY BE FOCUSED AT THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE ITS ROLE AND FUNCTION AND THE REGENERATION OF THE CENTRAL AREA.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD IDENTIFY SALISBURY, CHIPPENHAM AND TROWBRIDGE AS STRATEGIC SERVICE CENTRES FOR SMALLER SCALE GROWTH TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE RURAL AREA BEYOND THE HINTERLAND OF THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREAS. PROVISION SHOULD ONLY BE MADE FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT SUSTAINS THEIR STRATEGIC SERVICE CENTRE ROLE AND IMPROVES THE BALANCE OF LAND USES WITHOUT ENCOURAGING CAR-BORNE COMMUTING TO THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREAS. PARTICULAR EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON THE PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT LAND TO ATTRACT NEW ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND MEET THE NEEDS OF EXISTING EMPLOYERS, AND ALSO AT TROWBRIDGE, THE REGENERATION OF THE TOWN CENTRE.

ELSEWHERE, LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD:

- 3. IDENTIFY TOWNS AS LOCAL SERVICE CENTRES TO ACCOMMODATE SMALLER SCALE DEVELOPMENT TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS AND TO MAKE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THE WIDER RURAL AREAS; AND**
- 4. IDENTIFY SMALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS ONLY.**

DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LIMITED IN SCALE AND WELL INTEGRATED WITH THE EXISTING FORM OF THE SETTLEMENT. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO SETTLEMENTS THAT HAVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES SATISFYING LOCAL NEED, FACILITIES AND SERVICES, AND ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

IN LOCATING DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS STRATEGY PRIORITY WILL BE AFFORDED TO MAKING PROVISION ON PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH LAND IN SUSTAINABLE LOCATIONS SHOULD NOT BE INHIBITED SOLELY ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT IS MET ON OTHER SITES. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD SET OUT THE TESTS OF SUSTAINABILITY WHICH WILL BE APPLIED TO SUCH PROPOSALS INCLUDING THE NEED TO RETAIN AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE OF LAND USES AT SETTLEMENTS. DEVELOPMENT WILL BE OF A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND PROTECT OR ENHANCE LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY.

Housing and Employment Proposals

DP4 IN THE PLAN AREA PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR 60,000 NET ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS AND 725 HECTARES OF ADDITIONAL STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT LAND BETWEEN 1996 AND 2016, DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:

| | DWELLINGS | EMPLOYMENT LAND (HA.) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| KENNET DISTRICT | 5,250 | 55 |
| NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT: | | |
| • CHIPPENHAM | 3,000 | 45 |
| • REST OF DISTRICT | 6,000 | 115 |
| SALISBURY DISTRICT | | |
| • SALISBURY | 3,900 | 35 |
| • REST OF DISTRICT | 4,100 | 45 |
| WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT | | |
| • TROWBRIDGE | 5,000 | 35 |
| • REST OF DISTRICT | 6,750 | 115 |
| SWINDON BOROUGH | | |
| • SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA | 24,000 | 280 |
| • REST OF BOROUGH | 1,000 | 0 |

PROVISION SHOULD ALSO BE MADE FOR 1,000 DWELLINGS AT THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA AT THE WESTERN SIDE OF SWINDON IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY DP10B.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS SHOULD PROVIDE MECHANISMS TO MANAGE AND REVIEW THE RELEASE OF SITES AND PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT OVER THE PLAN PERIOD.

Town Centres, District Centres and Employment Areas

- DP5** THOSE EMPLOYMENT, SHOPPING, LEISURE AND OTHER SERVICE USES WHICH ATTRACT LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED AT EXISTING TOWN CENTRES, CENTRES OF OTHER MAIN SETTLEMENTS AND DISTRICT CENTRES OR NEW CENTRES BUILT TO SERVE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, WHERE THERE IS MOST POTENTIAL FOR ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING OR WALKING.

PROVISION SHOULD ALSO BE MADE FOR THOSE EMPLOYMENT USES WHICH ATTRACT SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENTS OF FREIGHT, IN LOCATIONS AWAY FROM CENTRAL AREAS WITH GOOD ACCESS TO THE RAIL AND ROAD NETWORKS AND ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING OR WALKING.

Shopping

- DP6** THE HIERARCHY OF SHOPPING CENTRES IN THE PLAN AREA COMPRISES:-
1. SUB REGIONAL CENTRES - SWINDON AND SALISBURY
 2. OTHER TOWN AND MAIN SETTLEMENT CENTRES
 3. DISTRICT CENTRES IN SWINDON
 4. OTHER LOCAL SHOPPING, INCLUDING NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES AND VILLAGE SHOPS.

THE ROLE OF EACH CENTRE SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED BY PROVISION FOR SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ROLE OF EACH CENTRE AND WHICH WILL PROMOTE ITS VITALITY AND VIABILITY.

PROVISION FOR OUT OF CENTRE SHOPPING SHOULD BE MADE ONLY IF PROVISION IS NEEDED AND CANNOT BE MADE IN A CENTRE OR, FAILING THAT, ADJOINING A CENTRE, IF IT WOULD NOT AFFECT THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY CENTRES (EITHER BY ITSELF OR WITH OTHER PROVISION) AND ACCESS IS READILY AVAILABLE OR CAN BE PROVIDED FOR MEANS OF TRANSPORT OTHER THAN THE PRIVATE CAR.

Housing in Towns and Main Settlements

- DP7 NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AT TOWNS AND MAIN SETTLEMENTS SHOULD HAVE GOOD ACCESS TO NEARBY EMPLOYMENT AREAS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, OTHER SERVICES AND OPEN SPACE, INCLUDING PROVISION FOR SAFE MOVEMENT BY CYCLING OR WALKING. THEY SHOULD ALSO HAVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS TO TOWN OR SUB CENTRES AND OTHER MAJOR EMPLOYMENT AREAS.**

HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING AND MIXED-USE SCHEMES SHOULD BE PROVIDED, PARTICULARLY IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS CLOSE TO MAIN PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES, TOWN AND OTHER CENTRES.

Affordable Housing

- DP8 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON APPROPRIATE SITES AT TOWNS AND VILLAGES, TO MEET IDENTIFIED LOCAL NEEDS FOR LOW COST ACCOMMODATION FOR SUCCESSIVE OCCUPANTS.**

Reuse of Land and Buildings

- DP9 WITHIN OR ADJOINING SETTLEMENTS, SUITABLE PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND AND BUILDINGS SHOULD BE REUSED IN PREFERENCE TO THE USE OF UNDEVELOPED LAND.**

IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE THE APPROPRIATE REUSE OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND AND BUILDINGS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

Development of the Swindon Principal Urban Area

DP10A WITHIN THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA, NEW HOUSING WILL BE PROVIDED BETWEEN APRIL 2003 AND APRIL 2016 AT :

| | NO. OF DWELLINGS (NET) |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| A) THE NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AREA | 5,260 |
| B) THE SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT AREA | 4,100 |
| C) CENTRAL AREA | 3,000 |
| D) REMAINDER OF URBAN AREA | 4,400 |

DP10B AT THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR 1,000 DWELLINGS TO BE IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS FOLLOWING A JOINT STUDY BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES. POLICIES IN THESE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS WILL ENSURE:

- A) THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS FROM THE FIRST PHASE OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT;**
- B) THE PROTECTION OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS; AND**
- C) PROTECTION OF THE STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE.**

University Campus and Mixed Use Development

DP10CAT THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA A STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AT COMMONHEAD, WEST OF THE A419, WILL BE SUPPORTED COMMENSURATE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY, AND SHOULD PROVIDE FOR:

- A) A UNIVERSITY CAMPUS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES OF APPROXIMATELY 60 HA.; AND**
- B) HOSPITAL EXPANSION COMMENSURATE WITH GROWTH IN ITS CATCHMENT AREA UP TO 2016 AND BEYOND; AND**
- C) A STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION OF ABOUT 23 HA. WITH LINKAGES TO THE UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- D) DWELLINGS UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 1,800, COMMENSURATE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY.**

THESE PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DEFINED IN DETAIL WITHIN A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT AND ENSURE:

- A) THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND ITS BIODIVERSITY AND INCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE BUFFER ZONE TO THE COATE SSSI;**
- B) THE PROVISION OF A DETAILED STRATEGIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY TO INFORM THE MASTER PLANNING OF THE SITE;**
- C) THAT NO DIRECT ACCESS FROM THE SITE ONTO THE A419 SHOULD BE PROVIDED, AND AN ALTERNATIVE LINK IDENTIFIED;**
- D) THAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS; AND**
- E) THAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR STRATEGIC LANDSCAPING THAT RECOGNISES THAT THE SITE IS VISIBLE FROM THE AONB TO THE SOUTH AND EAST.**

Swindon Central Area

DP10D SWINDON CENTRAL AREA WILL BE THE PRIME LOCATION FOR OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS NOT ANCILLARY TO OTHER COMMERCIAL USES, AND WILL BE THE PREFERRED LOCATION FOR MAJOR SHOPPING AND OTHER COMMERCIAL USES, HEALTH, EDUCATION, LEISURE, RECREATION, ENTERTAINMENT, CULTURAL AND PUBLIC SERVICES AND ANY OTHER HIGH TRIP-GENERATING USES.

PROPOSALS FOR NON-ANCILLARY OFFICE DEVELOPMENT AND MAJOR SERVICE SECTOR USES WILL ONLY BE CONSIDERED AT OTHER PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA LOCATIONS IF IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT;

- A) THEY CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED IN SWINDON CENTRAL AREA; AND**
- B) THEY WILL NOT HARM FUTURE INVESTMENT IN SWINDON CENTRAL AREA.**

The Role of New Settlements

DP11 THERE WILL BE NO PROVISION FOR A NEW SETTLEMENT TO MEET THE ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS AND EMPLOYMENT LAND REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY DP4.

The Western Wiltshire Green Belt

DP12 A WESTERN WILTSHIRE GREEN BELT WILL BE MAINTAINED AS PART OF THE BRISTOL AND BATH GREEN BELT, TO MAINTAIN THE OPEN CHARACTER OF LAND BETWEEN BATH, TROWBRIDGE AND CORSHAM AND TO PROTECT THE SETTING AND HISTORIC CHARACTER OF BRADFORD-ON-AVON.

The Swindon Rural Buffer

DP13 RURAL BUFFERS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED TO PROTECT THE SEPARATE IDENTITIES OF THE FOLLOWING TOWNS AND VILLAGES AND PREVENT THEIR COALESCENCE WITH SWINDON:

**BROAD BLUNSDON
CHISELDON
CRICKLADE
HIGHWORTH
LIDDINGTON
LYDIARD MILLICENT**

**PURTON
SOUTH MARSTON
STANTON FITZWARREN
WANBOROUGH
WOOTTON BASSETT
WROUGHTON**

Housing, Employment and Related Development in the Open Countryside

DP14 DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE SHOULD BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED. ISOLATED NEW HOUSES SHOULD REQUIRE SPECIAL JUSTIFICATION.

PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OR CONVERSION OF SUITABLE EXISTING BUILDINGS, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON ACCOMMODATING NEW USES WHICH DIVERSIFY THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND PROVIDE JOBS.

Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers

DP15 SPECIAL CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO BONA FIDE PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE CARAVAN SITES FOR GYPSIES. SUCH PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AGAINST OTHER POLICIES FOR TOWNS AND VILLAGES, DUE TO THEIR PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS. SUITABLE SITES MAY BE FOUND BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE SETTLEMENTS. THEY WILL NEED TO HAVE A MINIMUM IMPACT ON ADJOINING LAND USES AND THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT, BE WELL LOCATED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OCCUPANTS AND PERMITTED BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDE ACCEPTABLE ACCESS AND SERVICES.

TRANSPORT

Integrated Transport Plans

- T1 COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT PLANS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS OF THE PLAN AREA WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE EXISTING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND REDUCING THE NEED TO TRAVEL BY PRIVATE CAR.**

Swindon Principal Urban Area Transportation Package

- T2 AT THE SWINDON PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA A PACKAGE OF TRANSPORTATION MEASURES WILL BE IDENTIFIED TO ENABLE GROWTH IN DEVELOPMENT WITHIN (AND BEYOND) THE PLAN PERIOD, SO AS TO ASSIST WITH REALISING THE ECONOMIC AND REGENERATION POTENTIAL OF THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA.**

THE PACKAGE WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE THE RELIANCE ON THE PRIVATE CAR BY INCREASING AND IMPROVING THE CHOICES AVAILABLE TO MEET TRANSPORT NEEDS AND WILL BE STRONGLY BIASED TOWARDS PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS.

THE PACKAGE WILL CONSIDER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF:

- DEDICATED BUS CORRIDORS AND FACILITIES (WITH PRIORITY SECURED BY LOCAL ACCESS RESTRICTIONS) PROMOTING A CONVENIENT, RELIABLE, SECURE AND HIGH STANDARD SERVICE**
- PARK AND RIDE SCHEMES**
- DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEASURES**
- NEW ROAD PROPOSALS - CROFT ROAD TO HAY LANE LINK AND NORTHERN ORBITAL ROAD (PURTON ROAD TO GREAT WESTERN WAY)**
- NEW AND IMPROVED NETWORKS OF ROUTES FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS**
- IMPROVEMENTS THAT ENHANCE THE INTEGRATION OF THE ROAD, RAIL AND BUS NETWORKS THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE BY ALL**

THE MECHANISM FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF THE PACKAGE WILL BE IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS, WITH SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING AVAILABLE FROM CONTRIBUTIONS SECURED FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT.

Public Passenger Transport

- T3 AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF ACCESSIBLE, SAFE AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES SHOULD BE SECURED TO:**
- MEET THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITHOUT ACCESS TO PRIVATE TRANSPORT;**
 - REDUCE RELIANCE UPON THE CAR;**
 - SERVE THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS ARISING FROM EXISTING AND PROPOSED MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS; AND**
 - CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

Transport Interchanges

- T4 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR NEW OR IMPROVED INTERCHANGE FACILITIES BETWEEN ALL MODES OF TRANSPORT. LAND REQUIRED FOR REALISTIC RAIL PROPOSALS, AND BUS PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES, SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.**

Cycling and Walking

- T5 MEASURES SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO ENCOURAGE CYCLING AND WALKING, AND IMPROVE SAFETY OF THESE MODES IN ORDER TO OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO PRIVATE CAR USE.**

Demand Management

T6 DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEASURES WILL BE PROMOTED WHERE APPROPRIATE TO REDUCE RELIANCE UPON THE CAR AND TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT MODES. THESE MEASURES INCLUDE:

- MAXIMUM CAR PARKING STANDARDS – THE PROVISION OF PARKING ASSOCIATED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE LIMITED TO MAXIMUM PARKING STANDARDS. THESE MAXIMUM STANDARDS, AND EXISTING PARKING STOCK, WILL BE MANAGED OR REDUCED TO REFLECT LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE RELATIVE ACCESSIBILITY BY OTHER MODES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN ACCESSIBILITY FRAMEWORK AND CRITERIA;**
- PUBLIC CAR PARKING CHARGES - TO AVOID WASTEFUL COMPETITION BETWEEN ADJACENT AREAS WITHIN WILTSHIRE AND OUTSIDE, PARKING CHARGES SHOULD BE SET TO REFLECT THE AVAILABILITY OF PARKING SPACES, LOCAL TRAVEL PATTERNS AND THE AVAILABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL MODES;**
- TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES - WHERE THERE ARE IDENTIFIED SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT DEMANDS, TRAFFIC CONGESTION, ROAD SAFETY OR AIR QUALITY ISSUES, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WILL BE DEVELOPED TO PROMOTE WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT, REDUCE RELIANCE ON THE CAR, REDUCE THE RISK OF ACCIDENTS AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- CHARGING MEASURES - OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHARGING MEASURES, SUCH AS ROAD USER CHARGING AND THE WORKPLACE LEVY, WILL BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW.**

Heavy Goods Vehicle Parking

T7 OVERNIGHT LORRY PARKS FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES SHOULD BE PROVIDED IN THE VICINITY OF THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK, EITHER WHERE DEMAND CAN BE DEMONSTRATED, OR TO ALLEVIATE NUISANCE CAUSED IN LOCAL SETTLEMENTS.

Transport Provision for New Developments

- T8 PROPOSALS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD NOT BE ACCESSED DIRECTLY FROM THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK OUTSIDE BUILT-UP AREAS, UNLESS AN OVER-RIDING NEED CAN BE DEMONSTRATED. DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD PROVIDE APPROPRIATE MITIGATING MEASURES TO OFFSET ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE TRANSPORT NETWORK ARISING FROM TRAFFIC GENERATED AT BOTH CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL STAGES.**

Freight Transport

- T9 THE PROVISION OF INTERMODAL AND OTHER RAIL FREIGHT TERMINALS IN SUITABLE AREAS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED, AND LAND REQUIRED FOR REALISTIC PROPOSALS SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.**

SPECIFICALLY, LAND AT SOUTH MARSTON SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FOR PROVISION OF AN INTERMODAL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE WITH ASSOCIATED RAIL LINKS TO THE ADJACENT EMPLOYMENT AREA.

- T10 WHERE CARRIAGE OF FREIGHT BY RAIL IS NOT APPROPRIATE, ENCOURAGEMENT WILL BE GIVEN FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE TRAFFIC TO USE THOSE ROADS WHERE A MINIMUM OF ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE WILL OCCUR, PRINCIPALLY THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK OR ADVISORY LORRY ROUTES, ACCESSED VIA THE MOST SUITABLE LINK FOR SUCH TRAFFIC. WHERE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES MAKING UNNECESSARY AND UNDESIRABLE USE OF ROUTES OTHER THAN NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTES OR SECONDARY ROUTES ARE IDENTIFIED, AREA WIDE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WILL BE CONSIDERED.**

The Strategic Transport Network

T11 THE COUNCILS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY, THE STRATEGIC RAIL AUTHORITY, TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND OTHER AGENCIES, WILL SEEK TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT NETWORK. EACH CATEGORY OF THE NETWORK, INCLUDING THE TRANS-EUROPEAN ROAD AND RAIL NETWORKS, IS SHOWN ON THE KEY DIAGRAM:

- (1) THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK: ROUTES OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR THROUGH AND LONG DISTANCE TRAFFIC**

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|---|
| M4 | MOTORWAY | A4 | (West of Chippenham) |
| A303 | TRUNK ROAD | A30 | (St. Thomas's Bridge to Salisbury) |
| A419 | TRUNK ROAD | A338 | (South of Burbage) |
| A36 | PROPOSED DETRUNKED ROAD | A346 | (M4 Junction 15 to Burbage) |
| A420 | (East of A419) | A350 | |
| | | A354 | |
| | | A361 | (West of Semington) |
| | | A429 | |

- (5) RAIL NETWORK**

**BERKS & HANTS LINE
GREAT WESTERN MAIN LINE
HEART OF WESSEX LINE
WATERLOO-EXETER LINE
WESSEX MAIN LINE**

- (6) THE WILTSHIRE KEY BUS NETWORK**

T12 IMPROVEMENTS TO ENHANCE THE STRATEGIC NETWORK WILL BE PROGRESSED TO SUPPORT OTHER POLICIES IN THE STRUCTURE PLAN AND THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS.

- (1) THE FOLLOWING TRUNK ROAD SCHEMES ARE PROPOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION:**

A303 STONEHENGE (TO INCLUDE THE WINTERBOURNE STOKE BYPASS AND A FLYOVER AT COUNTESS ROUNDABOUT)

**A419 COMMONHEAD ROUNDABOUT OVERPASS
A419 BLUNSDON BYPASS**

- (2) THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE THE NON-TRUNK ROAD NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK IS INCLUDED IN THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN:
A350 WESTBURY BYPASS

- (3) THE A350 NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE AT YARNBROOK/WEST ASHTON AND MELKSHAM WILL BE IMPROVED. THE IMPROVEMENT WORKS NECESSARY WILL BE IDENTIFIED THROUGH FURTHER STUDY WORK.

- (4) THE FOLLOWING ROAD PROPOSAL WILL BE SUPPORTED:

SALISBURY: HARNHAM RELIEF ROAD AND BRUNEL LINK

THE A350 NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE WILL BE MAINTAINED, MANAGED AND SELECTIVELY IMPROVED TO ASSIST THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REGENERATION OF WESTERN WILTSHIRE BY IMPROVING JOURNEY TIME RELIABILITY WHERE ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS ON OTHER NON-TRUNK ROAD NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTES WILL BE RESTRICTED TO SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE ROAD SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS, UNLESS THERE IS A NEED TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY WITH EXISTING STANDARDS AND THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

- (5) THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOLLOWING NEW RAIL STATIONS WILL BE PROMOTED AND ENCOURAGED:

CORSHAM RAIL STATION
RELOCATION OF MELKSHAM STATION
PORTON RAIL STATION
WILTON RAIL STATION
WOOTTON BASSETT RAIL STATION

THE LAND REQUIRED FOR THE ABOVE RAIL PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.

- (6) THE FOLLOWING TRACK AND SIGNALLING WORKS TO PROVIDE CAPACITY IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE PROMOTED AND ENCOURAGED:

WOOTTON BASSETT JUNCTION

T13 ROADS WILL BE MAINTAINED AND WILL BE IMPROVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR FUNCTIONAL IMPORTANCE.

Roadside Service Facilities

- T14 ROADSIDE FACILITIES, INCLUDING MOTORWAY SERVICE AREAS, ON THE NATIONAL PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK SHOULD ONLY BE PROVIDED COMMENSURATE WITH A DEMONSTRABLE NEED, AND IF THERE IS A MINIMAL IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.**

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

Nature Conservation

- C1 THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE COUNTY'S NATURE CONSERVATION RESOURCES SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED, THROUGH THE CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT, AND BY POSITIVE ACTION SUCH AS SYMPATHETIC LAND MANAGEMENT.**
- C2 SITES IDENTIFIED FOR THEIR WILDLIFE OR EARTH SCIENCE IMPORTANCE AT INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND COUNTY LEVEL SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT UNLESS THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTWEIGHS THE ADVERSE IMPACT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DESIGNATION.**
- C3 THE NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE OF HABITATS LISTED WITHIN THE WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS, HABITATS FOR PROTECTED SPECIES AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS SHOULD BE PROTECTED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENHANCED. WHERE SIGNIFICANT HARM WOULD RESULT TO THESE BIODIVERSITY INTERESTS, ADEQUATE MITIGATION SHOULD BE PUT IN PLACE. IF MITIGATION IS NOT POSSIBLE, APPROPRIATE COMPENSATORY MEASURES SHOULD BE SOUGHT.**

Salisbury Plain Training Area

- C4 DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO THE USE OF SALISBURY PLAIN FOR MILITARY TRAINING PURPOSES SHOULD PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUED PROTECTION OF THE INTEGRITY AND VALUE OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION, ARCHAEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES OF THE PLAIN AND SHOULD, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

The Water Environment

- C5 THE WATER ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING SURFACE WATERS, FLOODPLAINS AND GROUNDWATER RESOURCES, SHOULD BE PROTECTED BY THE CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL SUPPORT INITIATIVES WHICH SEEK TO PROTECT, RESTORE OR ENHANCE THE NATURAL ELEMENTS OF THE RIVER OR WATERWAY ENVIRONMENT, AND WHICH IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENT USE OF WATER.**

The Cotswold Water Park - Wildlife Importance

- C6 THE WILDLIFE VALUE OF THE COTSWOLD WATER PARK AS A WHOLE IS RECOGNISED TO BE OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE. WILDLIFE AND THE FEATURES UPON WHICH IT IS BASED SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENHANCED.

The New Forest

- C7 THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA WILL BE PROTECTED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE ENHANCED AS AN AREA OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE FOR ITS LANDSCAPE AND SCENIC BEAUTY.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT HARM THE NEW FOREST'S LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OR TRADITIONAL COMMONING REGIME, GRAZING AND FARMING. THEY SHOULD HELP MAINTAIN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE AREA AND/OR PROMOTE ITS ENJOYMENT AND UNDERSTANDING BY THE PUBLIC.

PROVISION SHOULD NOT BE MADE FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT UNLESS IT IS PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND IS NOT CAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THE AREA.

REGARD SHOULD BE PAID TO THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCALITY.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- C8 IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED HAVING PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE NATIONAL DESIGNATION OF THEIR LANDSCAPE QUALITY, AND THE NEED TO PROTECT, CONSERVE AND WHERE POSSIBLE ENHANCE BY POSITIVE MEASURES, THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE LANDSCAPE.

IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS, REGARD SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE AREA. PROVISION FOR MAJOR INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT BE MADE UNLESS PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND INCAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THESE AREAS.

Special Landscape Areas

- C9 WITHIN SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS ANY PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEED TO PROTECT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND SCENIC QUALITY. THE AREAS ARE:-**
- 1. THE MAJORITY OF SALISBURY PLAIN EXCLUDING TWO AREAS AROUND NETHERAVON, LARKHILL, BULFORD AND AMESBURY, AND LUDGERSHALL AND TIDWORTH**
 - 2. THOSE PARTS OF SALISBURY DISTRICT TO THE NORTH AND EAST OF THE CRANBORNE CHASE AND WEST WILTSHIRE DOWNS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, EXCLUDING AN AREA AROUND SALISBURY AND WILTON**
 - 3. THE BLACKMORE VALE FROM ZEALS TO SEDGEHILL, AND A SMALL AREA TO THE EAST OF SHAFTESBURY**
 - 4. THE CHAPMANSLADE GREENSAND RIDGE**
 - 5. THE HIGHER LAND OF THE SPYE AND BOWOOD PARKLANDS**
 - 6. THE RIVER FROME VALLEY AT VAGGS HILL; AND**
 - 7. THE SOUTHERN FRINGES OF THE COTSWOLDS, NOT COVERED BY DESIGNATION AS AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY.**

Green Space at Settlements

- C10 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT AREAS OF GREEN SPACE WITHIN AND ADJOINING TOWNS AND VILLAGES, AND CORRIDORS WHICH PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

Forestry and Woodlands

- C11 THE PLANTING OF NEW WOODLANDS AND THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING WOODLAND AREAS WILL BE ENCOURAGED, PARTICULARLY WHERE THIS RETAINS OR ENHANCES AMENITY, PROVIDES RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES, IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, AND WILL NOT LEAD TO LOSS OF AN EXISTING WILDLIFE RESOURCE OR DAMAGE TO AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE.**

THE CONSERVATION OF BROADLEAVED WOODLANDS AND THE RETENTION OF SMALL WOODS WILL BE GIVEN SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.

ALL OF THE ABOVE WILL BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY WITHIN THE AREA DEFINED AS THE GREAT WESTERN COMMUNITY FOREST, BRAYDON FOREST AND AREAS WHICH ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE FROM OTHER URBAN CENTRES IN THE COUNTY.

Agriculture

- C12 LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL PROTECT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND FROM NON-AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.**

EXCEPTIONALLY, WHERE THERE IS AN OVERRIDING NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT ON BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND WHICH CANNOT BE MET ELSEWHERE, DEVELOPMENT SHALL BE DIRECTED TOWARDS LAND OF THE LOWEST GRADE.

Land Restoration

- C13 THE RESTORATION AND RECLAMATION OF DERELICT OR SPOILED LAND IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE TO APPROPRIATE RURAL USES WILL BE SOUGHT WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY WHERE THIS ENHANCES THE LANDSCAPE QUALITY OF AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA, THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE GREAT WESTERN COMMUNITY FOREST, THE WESTERN WILTSHIRE GREEN BELT AND SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS.**

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

World Heritage Site - Stonehenge / Avebury

- HE1 THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE OF STONEHENGE AND AVEBURY, TOGETHER WITH ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING, SHOULD BE AFFORDED PROTECTION FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, TO REFLECT ITS OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL VALUE. NO DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE WHICH BY REASON OF ITS SCALE, SITING AND DESIGN WOULD PREJUDICE THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND ITS SETTING IN THE LANDSCAPE.

Other Sites of Archaeological or Historic Interest

- HE2 FEATURES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST AND THEIR SETTINGS SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT. WHERE NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR HISTORIC REMAINS, WHETHER SCHEDULED SITES OR NOT, ARE AFFECTED BY PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THERE SHOULD BE A PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF THEIR PHYSICAL PRESERVATION "IN SITU".

Parks and Gardens

- HE3 REGISTERED HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS AND THEIR SETTINGS SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, HAVING REGARD TO THE SCALE AND LOCATION OF ANY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF THESE SITES.

Historic Battlefields

- HE4 THE REGISTERED HISTORIC ROUNDWAY BATTLEFIELD AND ITS SETTING SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, HAVING REGARD TO THE SCALE AND LOCATION OF ANY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE TO THE BATTLEFIELD.

Use of Historic Monuments and Sites

- HE5 WORLD HERITAGE SITES, SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS, REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS, REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS AND OTHER HISTORIC SITES SHOULD BE ENHANCED, AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE, THROUGH APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT, INTERPRETATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, HAVING REGARD TO THE IMPACT OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.

Landscape Settings

- HE6 PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE FOLLOWING HISTORIC TOWNS: BRADFORD ON AVON, DEVIZES, HIGHWORTH, MALMESBURY, MARLBOROUGH, SALISBURY, WARMINSTER, WILTON AND WOOTTON BASSETT.

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

- HE7 THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC HERITAGE OF THE PLAN AREA WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FROM INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS.

DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING LISTED BUILDINGS SHOULD HAVE SPECIAL REGARD TO THE DESIRABILITY OF PRESERVING THE BUILDING, ITS SETTING AND ANY FEATURES OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST WHICH IT POSSESSES.

RECREATION, LEISURE AND TOURISM

Recreation, Sport and Leisure

RLT1 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR A WIDE RANGE OF FACILITIES FOR SPORT, RECREATION, LEISURE AND THE ARTS TO MEET LOCAL, COUNTY AND SUB-REGIONAL NEEDS, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, AND THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK, PROVIDED THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

ADEQUATE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE SHOULD BE MADE AND RETAINED TO CATER FOR THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

ALL SUCH FACILITIES SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

Informal Countryside Recreation

RLT2 THE PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFORMAL COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION WILL BE ACHIEVED BY POSITIVE MEASURES SUCH AS:

- 1. IMPROVING, SIGNPOSTING AND WAYMARKING THE NETWORK OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND PERMISSIVE PATHS;**
- 2. PROVIDING SMALL CAR PARKS AND PICNIC SITES IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS;**
- 3. INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATER BASED CONSERVATION AND RECREATION;**
- 4. PROVIDING PUBLIC ACCESS WHERE PRACTICABLE TO SUITABLE AREAS INCLUDING WOODLAND AND HISTORIC MONUMENTS; AND**
- 5. MAKING USE FOR CONSERVATION AND RECREATIONAL PURPOSES, WHERE POSSIBLE, OF LENGTHS OF DISUSED RAILWAY LINE OR CANAL, OR OTHER DERELICT LAND**

EXCEPT WHERE THERE WOULD BE AN UNACCEPTABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES CLOSE TO TOWNS AND MAIN SETTLEMENTS, AND WELL SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT. ACCESS BY CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS SHOULD ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR. SUCH PROVISION SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

The Kennet and Avon Canal

RLT3 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR RECREATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE KENNET AND AVON CANAL, HAVING REGARD TO NAVIGATIONAL INTERESTS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

Other Canals

RLT4 THE HISTORIC ALIGNMENTS OF THE WILTS & BERKS CANAL, THE NORTH WILTSHIRE AND THAMES & SEVERN CANALS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED WITH A VIEW TO THEIR LONG-TERM RE-ESTABLISHMENT AS NAVIGABLE WATERWAYS.

The Cotswold Water Park - Sport, Recreation and Tourism

- RLT5 PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR WATER BASED SPORT, RECREATION AND TOURISM IN THE COTSWOLD WATER PARK IN THE UPPER THAMES VALLEY, HAVING REGARD TO THE IMPACT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE OF THE WATER PARK.

The River Thames

- RLT6 PROPOSALS FOR RECREATION AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE RIVER THAMES SHOULD MAINTAIN THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE RIVER ENVIRONMENT.

Airfields

- RLT7 PROPOSALS FOR THE RETENTION AND RE-USE OF MOD AIRFIELDS FOR GENERAL AVIATION PURPOSES TO SATISFY LOCAL NEEDS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, PROVIDED THAT THERE ARE NO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

PROVISION FOR ANY NEW AIRFIELD, EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING AIRFIELD OR AIRCRAFT LANDING SITE FOR LOCAL RECREATIONAL PURPOSES SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, PARTICULARLY ON LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITY.

Tourism

- RLT8 PROPOSALS FOR NEW OR IMPROVED TOURIST ATTRACTIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON THE NATURAL OR HISTORIC HERITAGE, PROVIDED THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THEY ARE WELL RELATED TO THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK.

Hotels and Camping Sites

- RLT9 PROVISION FOR HOTEL, CONFERENCE AND OTHER SERVICED ACCOMMODATION SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED WITHIN TOWNS AND VILLAGES. ELSEWHERE DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS OR BE RELATED IN SCALE, CHARACTER AND STYLE TO APPROPRIATE EXISTING BUILDINGS.

RLT10 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL CAMPING AND TOURING CARAVAN OR CHALET / STATIC HOLIDAY HOMES SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE. PROVISION FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT BE MADE IN THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA AND THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE. IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY ANY DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSE OF SUCH DESIGNATION.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable Energy

- RE1 RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES WILL BE SUPPORTED IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS. IN EXAMINING PROPOSALS, REGARD SHOULD BE PAID TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO THE POTENTIALLY CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCALITY.

Wind Power

- RE2 PROPOSALS FOR WIND TURBINE GENERATORS AND WIND FARMS, TOGETHER WITH ANY CONNECTIONS TO THE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION NETWORK, SHOULD NOT DETRACT FROM THE VALUE OR INTEREST OF AREAS AND FEATURES DESIGNATED FOR THEIR LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL CONSERVATION INTEREST.

PROVISION OF MAJOR PROPOSALS WITHIN THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA AND AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY SHOULD NOT BE MADE UNLESS PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND INCAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THESE AREAS.

MINERALS

Meeting the need for minerals

- MSP1 A CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS FOR MINERALS WILL BE MAINTAINED AT A LEVEL WHICH IS APPROPRIATE TO THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PLAN AREA'S MINERAL RESOURCES AND WHICH WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS.**

MINERAL DEVELOPMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE RESISTED, UNLESS THE NEED FOR THE PARTICULAR MINERAL IS OVERRIDING.

ENCOURAGEMENT WILL BE GIVEN TO THE EFFICIENT USE OF ALL MINERALS AND MAXIMISING THE USE OF SECONDARY AND RECYCLED AGGREGATES WHEREVER PRACTICABLE, TO REDUCE THE NEED FOR MINERAL EXTRACTION.

Protecting the Environment

- MSP2 WITHIN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY AND THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA, PROPOSALS FOR THE EXTRACTION OF SAND AND GRAVEL, CRUSHED ROCK, CLAY OR CHALK SHOULD BE ASSESSED AND DEMONSTRATED TO BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.**

Restoration of Minerals Sites

- MSP3 LAND USED FOR MINERALS EXPLORATION OR WORKING OR FOR ASSOCIATED PLANT OR BUILDINGS SHOULD BE RESTORED AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO A STATE WHICH WILL PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WHICH IS SUITABLE FOR A BENEFICIAL AFTER-USE APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCATION. IN PARTICULAR:**

- ii) THE AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL OF ANY AREA OF BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND SHOULD BE MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED BY RESTORATION OF THE SITE AND**
- ii) WHERE APPROPRIATE, RESTORED LAND SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO A PERIOD OF AFTERCARE.**

Minerals Resource Conservation

MSP4 SIGNIFICANT WORKABLE MINERAL DEPOSITS SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED AGAINST OTHER FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND, WHENEVER PRACTICABLE, SHOULD BE EXTRACTED PRIOR TO ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD RESULT IN THEIR STERILISATION.

Provision of Aggregates

MSP5 THE MINERAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL SEEK TO:

- 5. MAINTAIN A LANDBANK FOR SAND AND GRAVEL IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE. IN DOING SO, SEPARATE LANDBANKS WILL BE MAINTAINED FOR SOFT SAND AND SHARP SAND AND GRAVEL; AND,**
- 6. IDENTIFY PREFERRED AREAS, AREAS OF SEARCH AND SITE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE EXTRACTION OF SOFT SAND AND SHARP SAND AND GRAVEL IN THE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN, BASED ON THE SUB-REGIONAL APPORTIONMENT AS AGREED BY THE REGIONAL AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY, TO ENSURE THE MAINTENANCE OF THESE LANDBANKS.**

Raw Materials for Cement Manufacture

MSP6 PROVISION FOR THE EXTRACTION OF CEMENT RAW MATERIALS WILL BE SOUGHT IN THE VICINITY OF WESTBURY CEMENT WORKS TO MAINTAIN LANDBANKS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE, SUBJECT TO SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT.

Transportation of Minerals

MSP7 PROVISION SHOULD BE SOUGHT, WHERE APPROPRIATE, FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF MINERALS BY RAIL OR PIPELINE SUBJECT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS.

Onshore Oil and Gas

MSP8 FACILITIES FOR THE APPRAISAL OR PRODUCTION OF OIL OR GAS WILL BE CONTROLLED SO AS TO ENSURE THAT REGARD IS PAID TO THEIR CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Reducing, Re-using and Recovering Waste

- W1 REDUCTION OF VOLUMES OF WASTE REQUIRING DISPOSAL WILL BE SOUGHT BY ENCOURAGING INITIATIVES TO MINIMISE THE PRODUCTION OF WASTE, AS WELL AS MAXIMISING THE RE-USE OF MATERIALS AND THE RECYCLING OF HOUSEHOLD, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND CONSTRUCTION WASTE.**

Provision of Recycling and Recovery Facilities

- W2 IN ORDER TO INCREASE RECYCLING AND RECOVERY OF RESOURCES FROM WASTE, PROPOSALS FOR THE RECYCLING OR THE RECOVERY OF ENERGY FROM WASTE WILL BE FAVOURABLY CONSIDERED, SUBJECT TO THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.**

Provision of Adequate Waste Facilities

- W3 PROVISION FOR AN ADEQUATE NETWORK OF WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES SHOULD BE MADE HAVING REGARD TO:**
- 1) MEETING THE WASTE MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF THE PLAN AREA**
 - 2) THE PROXIMITY OF THE FACILITIES TO THE SOURCE OF THE WASTE**
 - 3) MAKING A CONTRIBUTION, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TOWARDS ACHIEVING REGIONAL SELF SUFFICIENCY**
 - 4) ACHIEVING THE BEST PRACTICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL OPTION.**

General Environmental Criteria

- W4 PROPOSALS FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO EFFECTS ON LOCAL AMENITIES, NEARBY LAND USES, LANDSCAPE, THE NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, TRAFFIC GENERATION, WATER RESOURCES, POLLUTION AND RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE OF THE SITE.**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- TE1 PROPOSALS FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. MAJOR PROPOSALS IN THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE NEW FOREST HERITAGE AREA AND IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY SHOULD ONLY BE ALLOWED IF PROVED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND INCAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED OUTSIDE THESE AREAS.**