

WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT SPATIAL PLAN

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND AS AGREED BY WEST OF ENGLAND COUNCILS AND STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL ON 18th OCTOBER 2018

1. INTRODUCTION AND RESPONSIBLE PLAN-MAKING AUTHORITIES

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared jointly between Stroud District Council (SDC) and the West of England Councils (WoE) of Bristol City (BCC), South Gloucestershire (SGC), North Somerset (NSC) and Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES). As illustrated in the diagram below, SDC has a boundary with South Gloucestershire Council.

1.2 The purpose of the SoCG is to set out as at September 2018 areas of agreement between the authorities in respect of how strategic cross boundary issues were addressed through the preparation of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan.

Diagram 1: Local Authority boundaries in the West of England



2 KEY STRATEGIC MATTERS BEING ADDRESSED BY THE STATEMENT

2.1 The Key strategic matters that were relevant to the preparation of the JSP were;

- The housing requirements of the respective Housing Market Areas (HMAs)
- The spatial distribution of the housing requirements
- Appropriate strategic transport mitigation to support the sustainable delivery of growth proposals
- Commitment to working to address social, economic and environmental issues affected by the growth proposals

3 THE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 The WoE UAs have established formal governance arrangements through the Combined Authority (WECA) and the formal arrangements that preceded it. However the same level of formality has not been necessary between the WECA UAs and SDC. Instead the Councils have relied on less formal arrangements of liaison at key stages in the plan-making process.

4. RECORD OF AGREEMENT

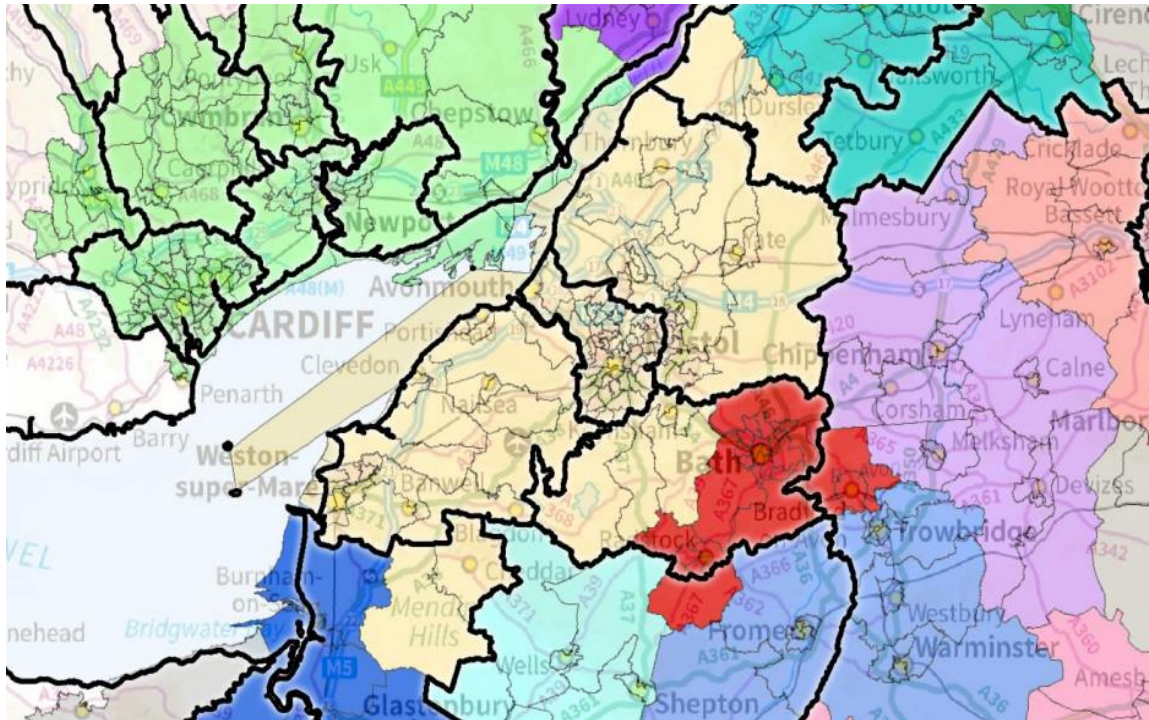
4.1 This section sets out the record of where agreements have (or have not) been reached on key strategic matters, including the process for reaching agreements on these.

The Housing Requirement.

4.2 SDC agrees that in light of the transitional arrangements, the Standard Methodology for assessing housing need is not a minimum requirement for the JSP. As the Plan was prepared under the 2012 NPPF. It will be this approach that the JSP exam Inspectors will apply to the JSP in assessing soundness. Respective Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAS) for the SDC HMA and the West of England HMAs have been developed alongside each other and so provide a consistent basis for plan-making.

4.3 Both WoE and SDC agree that whilst the wider Bristol HMA extends into the southern part of Stroud District, as set out by ORS in the SHMA for the West of England, given it does not include any large settlements, it is an appropriate pragmatic approach to 'snap' the HMA to the South Gloucestershire Council district boundary. This is consistent with the approach taken by the West of England authorities.

Diagram 2: HMAs in the West of England and adjoining Local Authorities



- 4.4 WoE and SDC agree that the spatial strategy set out in the Publication version of the JSP is based on the objective of accommodating all the objectively assessed need (OAN) for the West of England Councils within the Plan area. Policy 1 of the JSP identifies that the WoE UAs should plan to accommodate around 105,500 new dwellings between 2016 and 2036 and that 24,500 of these should be affordable homes, as set out in JSP Policy 4.
- 4.5 Notwithstanding the requirement for SDC to meet its own housing requirement provision and the significant constraints within SDC, SDC is willing to work with the WoE Councils to understand the nature of any potential shortfall should this arise through the JSP Examination, and to discuss whether there is any scope for a revised growth and investment strategy to the north of the JSP area.

The Spatial Strategy

- 4.6 SDC supports the JSP and its strategy of accommodating the needs of the West of England for homes and economic growth within the sub-region. Both parties have considered the scope for SDC to assist the WoE in meeting its sub-regional housing need as per the correspondence listed in Annex 2.
- 4.7 However, both parties agree that the most sustainable strategy for the WoE does not include accommodating any of the WoE's housing need in Stroud. This conclusion has been reached in a way that complies with the Duty to Co-operate to ensure that housing needs are met in full, whilst taking into account national policy on the Green Belt and is consistent with the NPPF.

- 4.8 SDC welcomes the strategic transport packages and approach to ensuring the sustainable development of the Strategic Development Locations at, Buckover Garden Village, Charfield and Thornbury as set out at policies 7.8, 7.9 and 7.11 of the Publication version of the JSP because they help to support sustainable commuting patterns.
- 4.9 Both councils agree that they have maintained an ongoing technical dialogue during the preparation of the JSP, along with Highways England and Gloucestershire County Council on cross boundary transport matters as part of developing JSP Strategic Development Locations growth proposals and supporting infrastructure packages.
- 4.10 Stroud DC have also participated in the strategic development location consultation events (as one of a number of stakeholders) held in Autumn 2017 and Spring 2018 as part of the ongoing SDL master planning consultation process.
- 4.11 Both parties confirm that there is ongoing technical liaison between neighbouring planning and highway authorities currently for the planning for the SDLs at Thornbury, Buckover and Charfield, including the strategic transport packages, consistent with the principles of sustainable development and the objective to avoid unsustainable commuting.

5. CO-OPERATION ON LOCAL PLAN PREPARATION

- 5.1 South Gloucestershire Council and Stroud District Council have worked together to review cross boundary infrastructure and growth issues, as illustrated by the Stroud Issues and Options document published October 2017. https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/356516/local-plan-review_issues-paper_iso-compliant_medium-quality.pdf (see pages 29 - 30). This reflects the cross boundary working to date and commitment to ensure both councils' development plans present the strategic growth agenda.
- 5.2 Both parties agree to maintain this working dialogue and that as part of the statutory duty to co-operate on cross boundary issues, the key issues are:
- Appropriate strategic transport mitigation provisions are achieved to support the sustainable delivery of the SDLs at Buckover, Charfield, Thornbury
 - Commitment to working to address social, economic and environmental issues affected by the proposed SDLs and non-strategic growth components of the JSP to inform the emerging South Glos Local Plan policies.
 - Commitment to involving SDC as part of ongoing master planning consultation process for the SDLs to ensure development takes place in a co-ordinated manner.
 - Appropriate strategic transport mitigation provisions are achieved to support the sustainable delivery of growth proposals contained within the Stroud Local Plan Review Preferred Strategy document

- Commitment to working to address social, economic and environmental issues affected by the growth proposals contained within the Stroud Local Plan Review Preferred Strategy document

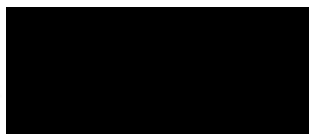
5.3 This co-operation will be facilitated through:

- Monthly development plan liaison meetings between South Gloucestershire Council and Stroud District Council to:
 - Discuss and share local plan development work programmes and forthcoming public consultation/ engagement events – with opportunities to involve both councils
 - Discuss and share each authorities local plan preparation particularly with regard to development in rural areas/ settlement hierarchy and emerging policy framework.
- Strategic transport liaison meetings with South Gloucestershire Council, Stroud District Council, Gloucestershire County Council and Highways England
- Maintaining and exchanging planning application consent/ appeal details for housing and development proposals which impact upon M5 J14 and the surrounding road networks.

5.4 Both parties confirm that cooperative working between WoE Councils and SDC remains satisfactory, that there are no outstanding Duty to Co-operate issues and we will continue to co-operate and work together on strategic cross-boundary issues through the West of England Joint Spatial Plan and the new Local Plans currently under preparation by South Gloucestershire Council and Stroud District Council.

Signed on behalf of West of England Councils

Signature



Name and position:  SRO for West of England Joint Spatial Plan

Date 09/11/18

Signed on behalf of Stroud District Council

Signature



Name and position:  Planning Strategy Manager

Date 19/10/2018

ANNEX 1: LIAISON BY THE WEST OF ENGLAND UAS AND THE ADJOINING AUTHORITIES
DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE JOINT SPATIAL PLAN

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Date	Activity	WoE *	Responses (where received) *
August 2012	Letters to neighbouring authorities preparing the housing market areas	WoE 1. (Letter)	No responses on record
January 2015	Letters to neighbouring authorities to explore opportunities through the Duty to Co-operate to work with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary issues including exploring ability to meet some of the wider Bristol housing need should the evidence show that we are unable to meet it in full	WoE 2. (Letter)	Resp 1a. Glos County Council Feb 2015 No further responses on record
Nov 2015	I& O consultation Consultee letter on publishing Regulation 18 and seeking duly made representations	WoE 3. (Letter)	Resp 2b Sedgemoor Resp 2c Stroud DC Resp 2d Wiltshire Council Resp 2e - Gloucestershire CC Resp 2f- Mendip DC
Jan 2016	PHCB letter to stakeholders setting out joint approach to the SHMAs and pre-commencement document of the JSP	WoE 4. (Letter)	n/a
17 th February 2016	Meeting with adjoining authorities on cross boundary issues- Purpose of the meeting: WoE to provide an update to neighbouring	WoE 5a. (Agenda) WoE 5b. (Key issues table)	n/a

	authorities on the Joint Spatial Plan and to seek views on any cross boundary issues at this stage of the process.		
May 2016	Letters to neighbouring authorities to understand the opportunities through the Duty to Co-operate to work with neighbouring authorities in order to meet some of the wider WoE housing need should the evidence show that we are unable to meet it in full	WoE 6. (Letter)	Resp 6a - Taunton Deane & West Somerset Resp 6b Forest of Dean
Nov 2016	Letters to neighbouring authorities re the JSP launch of the of the Towards an Emerging Spatial Strategy event in Nov	WoE 7a. (Letter) WoE 7b. Invitation to launch event	Resp 7a Somerset County Council Resp 7b Wiltshire Council Resp 7c – Stroud Resp 7d - Gloucestershire CC Resp 7e – Mendip DC