



Campaign to Protect
Rural England

Secretaries: Gill & Dave Gray - 01275 857746

Report to ALCA, North Somerset Group
Wednesday, 11th February 2009

'Are they listening?'

On the 21st January 2009 CPRE along with other campaigning groups attended a meeting in Westminster to discuss the proposals in the draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Several MPs and campaigners had secured a meeting with Iain Wright, Junior Minister, Department of Communities and Local Government. At the last minute Iain Wright refused to meet with campaigners and also explained that he had taken legal advice, and that, although he would meet the groups of MPs he was not able to relay any of the MPs concerns to the decision-making Minister, as this would prejudice the Minister's quasi-judicial role. He could respond on points of general policy, but not on the specifics of the South West RSS. Whilst MPs saw Iain Wright, discussion in the packed Committee Room started with CPRE commenting on the policy background and summarising the current position. This was followed by contributions from six other local action groups setting out their concerns. When MPs returned, they updated the group on their meeting with the Minister and the items discussed. These included:

- **Timing** - consultation on the SWRSS began just before Parliament's summer recess and ended shortly after the house returned. This had restricted the opportunity for MPs to have discussions with Ministers during the consultation period.
- The **lack of debate** in Government time on RSSs and **silence** from our South West Regional Minister, Ben Bradshaw.
- The **inconsistency of** Government's professed desire to protect the Green Belt with proposals to build in large parts of it.
- The record number of **35,000 representations** to the SWRSS – Ministers needed to **listen** to ensure public confidence.
- **Inflated GVA figures** being used and the changed economic situation.
- **High housing numbers** – predict and provide rather than plan, monitor, manage.
- Need for **sequential approach**.
- Developers using the draft RSS to **'cherry pick'** the **easy-to-develop green field/Green Belt sites**.

Our local concerns are:

- High housing numbers making assumptions of economic growth.
- The lack of sequential approach across local authority boundaries.
- No phasing of greenfield supply to support brownfield first policy.
- Removal of Green Belt for urban extensions
- Removal of land at the Port and Airport from Green Belt
- No recommendations for extensions to Green Belt (apart from a small area between Portbury Docks and Portishead).

Our full CPRE response to the SWRSS can be found on www.cpresouthwest.org.uk

We are already seeing developers pushing forward with applications locally and would urge you to continue to write to Hazel Blears, your local MP and District Councillor with your views.

Bristol International Airport

Following a flurry of 'permitted development' applications from Bristol International Airport (BIA) including more car parking, a new Fire Station on the south side of the runway and the eventual submission of a Certificate of Lawfulness for the Walkway ensuring they did not need a full planning application for a structure almost a third of a mile long, BIA have started their pre-application consultation.

The BIA Master Plan indicated that the airport was looking for a capacity of 9 million passengers by 2016. Despite the economic downturn, this has been increased to 10 million passengers and includes proposals to double the size of the terminal, a multi-storey walkway across the whole of the site, more aircraft stands, multi-storey car parking to the north, plus further car parking to the south outside the operational boundary and in Green Belt.

Please take the opportunity to comment at this pre-application stage.

For further information on the consultation see

http://www.bristolairport.co.uk/about_us/our_future/planning_application.aspx

For a critique of the consultation document see <http://www.nobristolairportexpansion.co.uk/>

The planning application is due to be submitted in April.

Severn Tidal Power Consultation

Our CPRE expert team are currently working on a response to this consultation which ends on the 23rd April 2009 see <http://severntidalpowerconsultation.decc.gov.uk/>

And that's not all..... under discussion at the moment - road proposals, rapid transit, new football stadium and consultation on waste!!!

<http://www.westofengland.org/waste/preferred-options-consultation>

TMTV (Traffic Management for The Villages)

TMTV has been working for the last 8 years on the problems of NON LOCAL HGVs using rural road as short cuts. Last year an experimental NON LOCAL HGV ban was officially placed from Churchill traffic lights to the bottom of Burrington Combe. This is now due for review and we wish to thank all those Parish Councils who have written in support of this ban continuing.

Stop the Drop!

Our President, Bill Bryson is still working hard on the campaign to keep our countryside free of litter and fly tipping. All CPRE member Parish Councils should have received a special 'Stop the Drop' pack which we hope will be helpful in reducing litter locally. We are also pleased to have worked with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to produce a new education pack for schools. Details on 'How to Run a Whole School Litter Campaign' can be found on <http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/stop-the-drop/litter-and-fly-tipping/litter-campaign-update>

Georgie Bigg

District Chairman, CPRE North Somerset, February 2009

Local website: www.cpreavonside.org.uk

Local Email: info@cpreavonside.org.uk

National website: www.cpre.org.uk