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----- Original Message -----

From: John Shephard [jrs@jjdesign.org.uk]
Sent: Monday 2 October 2006
To: statement@northwesteip.co.uk
Subject: Brethren's Gospel Trusts/RESP530/Matter 1B

Please find attached our Written Statement for Matter 1B.

Kind regards
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RESPONDENT NO. 530
MATTER 1B

DRAFT REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE NORTH WEST
EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC - PARTICIPANTS WRITTEN STATEMENT

MATTER 1B - SPATIAL PRINCIPLES

1. ISSUE (i) Does the draft RSS set out the right underlying principles for spatial planning in the region?
 - 1.1 For the reasons set out in Sections 2 and 3 in our Matter 1A Statement, we conclude that the draft RSS fails to set out the right underlying principles for spatial planning in the region.
 - 1.2 However, we consider that a clear commitment to the need for all plans and strategies developed in the region to ensure a strong, healthy and just society is promoted, to meet the diverse needs of all people in both existing and future communities and to promote social cohesion and inclusion, with equal opportunity for all to meet their full potential should be an over-arching objectives of Policy DP1. This would provide a clear basis for delivery of outcomes contributing to truly sustainable communities.
2. ISSUE (ii) Are the different elements of DP1 clearly stated and how will they be monitored?
 - 2.1 We share the view expressed by GONW (response 395 Annex 1 para 8 (c)) that DP1 confuses policy with principle and omits important over-arching spatial issues. In our view DP1 lacks the 'high-level' approach appropriate to RSS and repeats elements of broad planning principles of universal application, rather than providing a truly regional flavour to meet identified regional issues.
 - 2.2 We note that the SA supports our view that 'more sustainable transport decisions would benefit from a regeneration that such decisions should include for engagement with communities. The SA comments: "As an over-arching principles this would address a lack of community recognition throughout the document". We wholeheartedly concur with this observation, which is especially relevant to vulnerable and 'hard to reach' groups, such as residents in deprived areas, both urban and rural, older people and ethnic minorities, as well as faith communities, many of whom are largely ignorant of planning procedures but in need of positive spatial outcomes if quality of life improvements are to be delivered effectively in the plan period.
 - 2.3 Chapter 7 of the UK SDS 'Securing the Future' (CD : GEN10) includes 68 indicators to be used to monitor progress. In respect of active community participation Indicator 37 is linked to Home Office PSA 6 & 7 objectives. Similar indicators are available for many other values promoted in DP1. However, we have some doubts as to the effectiveness of monitoring outcomes at this level.
 - 2.4 A number of the Monitoring Indicators set out at Annex D of the RES

(ECO10) may also be considered relevant to Policy DP1.

3. ISSUE (iii) Is the sequential approach in DP1 appropriate?

3.1 We understand the reasons for promoting a sequential approach to development generally, in the interests of making the most effective use of land, buildings and infrastructure. However, rigid adherence to the sequential approach can inhibit economic growth and delay needed housing provision including community and social infrastructure, due to time consuming sequential searches being required for all types of development irrespective of the urgency of need and costs of provision.

3.2 We would therefore urge the Panel to recommend that the rigid adherence to the sequential approach is required for all strategic development proposals, such as major housing schemes and significant employment proposals, in the RSS, other sub-regional plans and strategies and in Local Development Documents. Regional and sub-regional retail and leisure facilities should also be required to conform with the sequential approach. However, we submit that minor housing developments, small employment opportunities and other community proposals will be inhibited if subjected to rigid sequential procedures, especially where such development proposals are brought forward in the rural and smaller market towns, where such developments often provide significant local economic or social benefits.