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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 1D

Please find attached our Written Statement for Matter 1D.

Kind regards
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RESPONDENT NO. 530

MATTER 1D

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

MATTER 1D - OVERALL APPROACH

1. ISSUE (i) Does the draft RSS align with the RES, RHS and Regional Funding Allocation advice?
 - 1.1 We note that the new RES was published and the Regional Funding Allocation Advice was submitted to government during the RSS process, but concur with GONW view that the RSS does not clearly align with the RES and RFA visions.
 - 1.2 We note that the RES embraces the need to achieve Sustainable Development, which is stated to be at the heart of the RES (see page 11 ECO10). This statement is reinforced by the reproduction of the UK SDS Guiding Principles Diagram (see page 16 GEN10). We suggest that the RSS should equally embrace these principles and objectives. Failure to do so may risk the RSS promoting its vision, aims and objectives at variance from the RES, contrary to the advice of PPS11 para 1.7 (PP11).
 - 1.3 We also share several stakeholders concerns that the RSS lacks clarity in respect of the roles of Crewe, Chester, Preston, Warrington, Lancaster and Carlisle. We also share concerns regarding the focus on regeneration in East Lancs, Barrow and Western Cumbria which are RES priorities; reflecting the levels of deprivation in these areas.
 - 1.4 We also note that the RES seeks to both implement the Sustainable Communities Plan (Action 107) and to promote the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector, Social Enterprise, Trade Unions and Faith Communities in tackling social exclusion and improving community cohesion (Action 108). We consider that these priorities are not clearly reflected in the draft RSS.
2. ISSUE (ii) Does the draft RSS properly reflect the Northern Way and other relevant strategies?
 - 2.1 We share the views of GONW, who consider that with the exception of the city region concept, the RSS does not clearly reflect the aims and objectives of the NWGS (REG5).

- 2.2 The NWGS (REG5) has identified 10 Policy Priorities. Policy Priority C9 seeks to create truly Sustainable Communities. We consider that this priority is not clearly articulated in the draft RSS. We submit that a clear statement of the key features of sustainable communities and a clear objective of the RSS to promote the spatial elements of "sustainable communities" should feature prominently in the draft RSS Vision and Objectives. The Panel will also wish to consider the other policy priorities and the extent to which these are reflected in the Vision and Objectives and the body of the Plan.
- 2.3 In respect of other relevant strategies, the Plan must recognise that the region is not an island, but has a complex relationship with other adjoining regions including Scotland, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and Wales. From our perspective, the strong linkages are trans-Pennine, where Leeds has a strong link with the Manchester City Region, and with the southern regions; especially Crewe with East and West Midlands, and beyond, and Chester with North Wales.
- 2.4 These linkages are touched on in Part 1 of the draft RSS but it is unclear how the draft RSS has taken these into account.
3. ISSUE (iii) Are the separate objectives of the RTS appropriate and how do they link to the overall draft RSS objectives, spatial principles and the spatial framework?
- 3.1 Brethren's Gospel Trusts have not challenged the policies contained in Chapter 10 - Transport in the North West. However, as regular users of roads and to a lesser extent public transport, we have a keen interest in the outcomes of the RTS. We also acknowledge the vital linkages with both the draft RSS in terms of spatial policy and the RES, in support of economic growth. Our overall concern is that the Panel consider how the RTS will impact on the people of the region and their businesses as drivers of economic activity and growth, without which real renaissance including genuine improvements to quality of life will not be delivered.
- 3.2 For these reasons, we broadly support the response from GONW. We especially concur with the need for clarity at the sub-regional level.
- 3.3 We note that paragraph 10.14 of RSS envisages a review of national ports policy. We understand that this now appears unlikely to take place as Ministers favour a market led approach (report FT 27.09.06). We conclude that this implies continued dominance of south-east ports such as Southampton and Felixstowe/Harwich and, when implemented, London Gateway (former Shellhaven). The regional response to this should embrace enhanced facilities for rail freight distribution together with increased capacity for short trip feeder shipping. Globalisation of economic activity is a reality and the region must be equipped to play its part in the national interest.
- 3.4 The Panel should also be aware of neighbouring regional airport aspirations, especially Robin Hood Airport (former RAF Finningley) whose growth is real and ongoing regional significance is currently being debated at the Yorkshire and Humber Plan EIP. Ongoing growth, with surface access improvements, in Yorkshire will have significant implications for Manchester Airport and the Trans-Pennine Express rail services many of which serve the Airport.

3.5 We also register concerns at further wholesale review of Parking Policy and Provision, with particular reference to the potential social implications. In particular, despite dense and well served City Regions, the North West contains significant rural areas which are not well served by public transport. For these communities there is often little option than the private motor car. Faith communities and other Voluntary and Community Sector activities often involve travel at evenings and weekends, when alternative non-car modes are less frequent and inconvenient, if provided at all. Care is therefore needed to ensure that a review of Parking Policy and Provision does not have unforeseen social consequences including exacerbating social exclusion.