Inspector:
Regarding a matter from yesterday’s session, it was suggested that the Examination be suspended for reasons including matters to do with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. My view at present is that any advantage resulting from a suspension is much outweighed by the need to get a sound Core Strategy adopted as soon as possible. Therefore, I am not persuaded at present to suspend the Examination.

Issue 4: Does the Core Strategy provide satisfactorily for the delivery of development, particularly its required infrastructure for public transport and other services, and convincingly demonstrate adequate monitoring of its provision and measures designed to rectify any shortcomings?

4.1 Has there been an adequate assessment of the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, water supply etc as required by the Framework paragraph 162?

Inspector:
Invites the Council to add to anything in their paragraph one in the light of representations received.
S. Rasaiah:
Nothing new to add really. There has been a detailed assessment and further refinements have come about through whole Plan viability assessments and then subsequently by the CIL studies, so there have been more updates to the evidence that has been commissioned.

Inspector:
Anything further from the council or other participants?

No further comments made.

4.2 Does the Core Strategy plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the Borough to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the Framework? Is there a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure, including for sustainable transport, is deliverable in a timely fashion?

Inspector:
Under paragraph 4, there is reference to an Internal Infrastructure Delivery Group and an External Infrastructure Delivery forum and at paragraph 11, an External Utilities Infrastructure Forum. Would it be better to put all the people concerned under one umbrella?

With some other Core Strategies, I have recommended the following and this has been included by some other councils, including Doncaster, in their strategies. So would the council consider the Inspector’s suggested re-wording for this part of the Core Strategy, as follows: “To monitor the delivery of the strategy and the timely delivery of infrastructure to support it, the council has nominated a lead officer for this purpose. He or she will head the Infrastructure Delivery Group and one of its functions will be to recommend to the council any actions required to keep the strategy on track during the Plan period and to liaise with the external Infrastructure Delivery Forum.” This would help the council to keep the strategy on track.

Council Response, D. Edwards:
In response to the first point, the Group and the Forum are now in effect the same group. They were initially started as separate groups, but we found they would be better if they were working together as one group. All three bodies are now in effect the same group.

Inspector:
Can there be further clarification, as it still isn’t clear in the wording which group is dealing with what and whether they are now all the same. Perhaps if I produce the suggested form of words to everyone, you can all consider whether this will help to make things clearer and more effective.

D. Edwards:
In response to the second point about the new wording, it is essentially what we are doing in practice. A lead officer has been appointed to co-ordinate all groups, this is in paragraph 46. The Infrastructure Delivery Forum is the same as the Utilities Infrastructure Forum but there is also an internal forum.

S. Rasaiah:
The internal group is the one that should be referred to in the Core Strategy, as the external group is more of an informing body to feed into the internal group.
Inspector:
I will ask Kerry to type up the suggested wording for everyone to consider.

R Bolton:
Noted that in promoting smaller sites no infrastructure showstoppers have been identified.

4.3 Is there sufficient reference in the Core Strategy to the possibility of more park and ride sites? What realistic prospect is there of such further sites?

Council Response. Paul Gibson:
The likelihood is that there will be more strategic park and ride operations, based around BRT and future tram-train projects. But not any more local park and ride because the trip patterns and the geographic layout of Rotherham, as confirmed by studies by South Yorkshire Transport, don’t support this.

No further comments made.

4.4 Does the evidence base convince that there is, or will be, sufficient energy resources, including gas, electricity and water, to support the scale and distribution of envisaged growth?

S. Rasaiah:
Just to add that the first Infrastructure Forum was very successful and the participants, including the utilities, were very excited about the opportunity to work together. This brought together the utility providers for gas, electricity etc. to monitor any problems which may affect the delivery of the Plan.

Inspector:
How often will this group meet?

S. Rasaiah:
Initially there will be more frequent meetings so that the group understands the critical data they will be looking at, but then it is envisaged that it will be a more virtual group with electronic communications between the members. Eventually, there will probably be one or two physical meetings each year but this will depend on whether important matters arise which need more urgent discussion.

D. Edwards:
The internal group will meet every two months.

Inspector:
I suppose it’s a matter of keeping the momentum going and keeping the Core Strategy on track and identifying any possible departures before those departures happen, in order to try to prevent them affecting the delivery of the strategy. I will look at a way to include some of this in the wording.

Mr. Bolton, you said in your response, “This suggests that if development does not proceed, then there will be no increase in population.”

R. Bolton:
Believes that with reference to things such as sustainability assessments, you can’t assume that if there is no development of sites that there will be no increase in the
need for water, electricity and housing etc. However, is still convinced that there will be sufficient supplies of the utilities. But when you are assessing need, you can’t assume that the increasing population will disappear.

**Inspector:**
Anything further from anybody about 4.4? – No further comments.

### 4.5 Does the Core Strategy include sufficient provision for reducing the risk of flooding, and in this respect is it in accord with the Framework including its Technical Guidance?

**Inspector:**
Does the council have anything to add to its response on Policy CS25?

**Council’s response. R Shepherd:**
Just to comment that the policy does comply with the NPPF and its technical guidance. It was prepared in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

In response to the question raised by Mr. Bolton regarding part 3a. This approach is in line with other South Yorkshire authorities in terms of run-off rates and the reduction in the run-off rate for brownfield sites at 30%. The aim is to try to reduce run-off rates at the same level as guidance from the NPPF and the Environment Agency.

**R. Bolton:**
Have some difficulty in understanding all the aspects of the policy. Has concerns about new developments and the requirement to reduce run-off rates. Is it right to have two different approaches for different areas and what is the justification for that?

**R. Shepherd:**
This policy will be mainly used by Development Management on new proposals. Site selection will be informed by the NPPF, together with this policy and all other relevant policies. There are two levels of approach in accordance with the evidence base and this results from a strategic flood risk assessment and the production of a Flood Risk Toolkit for developments. This was produced by the council with Jacobs consultancy in conjunction with the relevant agencies. The importance of flood risk in the Rotherham Urban Area, particularly relating to the River Don, has led to the two area approach in the policy.

### 4.6 Are the various indicators and targets sufficiently precise? Has the Council and/or its Core Strategy got justified, effective monitoring systems in place? What mechanism is there to monitor the delivery of the strategy? What would be the composition and status of any group appointed for such monitoring and the making of any consequent recommendations? What provisions are in place, or could be put in place, if need be to get the strategy back on track?

**Inspector:**
Can I ask for clarification in relation to paragraph 20? Is the Annual Monitoring Report the method of monitoring the delivery of the Core Strategy? At what point might you come to the conclusion that the Core Strategy is not on track and what might be the trigger points?

**Council’s response. N. Rainsforth:**
The Annual Monitoring Report is reported to an internal group called the Local Plan Steering Group and if the Core Strategy is going off track, this would be highlighted to
the Group and it would be escalated to the Infrastructure Delivery Group for them to take appropriate action. A judgement would be made on the seriousness of any housing delivery deficit but no precise number has been set as a target.

M. Good:
Concerns that this doesn’t show any transparency to interested outside parties. Would like to see targets for housing deficits so that outsiders could see what the trigger point is and what the council would do if a trigger point is hit.

R. Bolton:
There is a need for a policy to explain what the council will do if the targets for housing are not being met. Need to have a target and a trigger point at which action would be taken by the council. For the same reason I have suggested an early review of the Plan.

Inspector:
Could the mechanism be the Core Strategy setting out the functions of the Infrastructure Delivery Group and how it will report deficits to the council? And that they would escalate this to the council in order for the necessary actions to be taken.

R. Bolton:
Would like to see something in the policy about what action could be taken. This could be under three alternatives:

1. A complete review of the Plan, although it is unlikely this would be necessary as it would cause delays to the implementation of the Plan. Perhaps a partial review could be undertaken.
2. To increase the supply of suitable sites.
3. To remove particular obstacles to sites coming forward, such as infrastructure.

Inspector:
You mean by this to take a more positive approach. The council has also talked about partnership arrangements in order to address any deficits.

R. Bolton:
A policy that talks about how any shortfall will be addressed would be helpful. Would welcome this and also like to see things like Compulsory Purchase Orders for ransom strips being a potential action.

Inspector:
Focused Change 147 talks about the table below which shows flexibility and situations that might arise which the council cannot predict, and the contingencies for dealing with a reduction of the housing supply, etc. Could Mr. Bolton please look at producing a form of wording for a draft policy which will be subject to consultation?

N. Rainsforth:
Although it may be an ideal to have targets, it may be that other conditions such as housing market driven changes would affect supply and a reduction in supply may have a host of reasons. We might release more sites and possibilities that did not get developed due to housing market conditions at the time.

S. Rasaiah:
We have looked at effective demand in relation to housing targets. There needs to be some flexibility in targets. If the market does not want to deliver enough housing, then there is very little the council could do. So would like to see flexibility so that outside influences could be taken into account.

**R. Bolton:**
Will look at producing a form of wording for consideration.

### 4.7 Does the Core Strategy include sufficient provision for setting out how the proposed development, and the infrastructure upon which it relies, will be delivered? If so, should it include reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Section 106 Agreements and reference to the nature of such agreements as was expressed in Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations which referred to the *negotiation* of private agreements and the *seeking* of planning obligations? For example, is Policy CS22a in accordance with national policy?

**Inspector:**
There is a Focused Change for this matter (CS 22a) which was read out to those present. I am concerned that you cant "require or demand” a developer to sign an agreement. Surely it must be subject to negotiation, so I wondered if the emphasis was right in the policy.

**S. Rasaiah:**
The representations received comment on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements and what is the distinction between the two, and whether there will be any double counting. Improvements required for Rotherham Infrastructure will be mainly strategic, so will mainly come under CIL, rather than Section 106. There is a clear understanding by the council about the distinction between CIL, which is strategic, and Section 106, which would be site specific (policy CS 32). This would be covered by legislation.

**Inspector:**
Read out Policy CS 32 for everyone to hear.

But the council agrees with me that the wording should be that agreement would be “sought”, rather than “required or demanded”?

**M. Good:**
Not sure there is clarity about this in CS 32, although it is appreciated that CIL is not yet in place, so there is still some uncertainty. Should there be reference to paragraph 204 of the NPPF? When looking at the Infrastructure Delivery Study and parts of policy in other areas, there does not seem to be enough clarity about what will be expected.

**R. Bolton:**
CS 32 requires long term maintenance of green spaces. Does it mean the council will look to developers for this, or management companies? There is a Focused Change on this as well.

Second point on CS 32, is that money will be gathered by CIL and money will be received under the New Homes Bonus. Once CIL is collected, there is no requirement for CIL to be used in a certain way. I think the council should include the fact that it will be receiving the New Homes Bonus and have the option of using this for infrastructure.
S. Rasaiah:
CIL or S106 monies will not provide enough to cover the total infrastructure costs. The New Homes Bonus and other sources of income will contribute towards requirements for infrastructure and other necessary improvements resulting from development. I don’t think it is appropriate to list all the sources of funding in the policy, as some of the sources will not currently be known because there could be a number of grants and funding arrangements in the future.

R. Bolton:
Paragraph 4.13 of my submission highlights that £52 million of £122 million (approximately half) is related to new developments and is attributable to meeting infrastructure costs.

D. Edwards:
On the earlier question about the council adopting green spaces: It will depend on individual circumstances but generally the council does not want to adopt more green spaces.

Ten minute break.

At this point, Councillor R. McIver of Dinnington St. Johns Town Council joined the tables for those speaking, as he had been sitting in the public area during the first part of the session. Councillor McIver was welcomed by the Inspector and asked whether he had any comments on the matters previously discussed. He had no comments to make.

4.8 Is the Council a “charging authority” with regard to the CIL? If not, is it likely to be so at some stage during the plan period, and what would be the implications for the provision of infrastructure?

Inspector:
Does the council wish to add anything to its written response?

S. Rasaiah:
There is a strong intention to move to CIL but that would only amount to part of the infrastructure costs. When CIL is implemented it will be used with Section 106 contributions in their separate areas, as discussed previously.

R. Bolton:
The council will become a charging authority but the amounts of CIL must be viable for developments to take place.

4.9 In respect of infrastructure requirements, has an appropriate balance been struck between the amount of detail set out in the Core Strategy and the supporting documents? What is the status of the Infrastructure Delivery Study (IDS)? Is it a “living document”, to which various bodies will continue to contribute?

D. Edwards:
The Infrastructure Delivery Study is a living document and the setting up of Infrastructure Groups will inform and develop the document.

Inspector:
I will look at a redrafting of the wording on this matter.

**M. Good:**
The Infrastructure Delivery Study talks about funding infrastructure but as there will be a funding gap, will the council be able to clarify how the gap will be funded and will the council prioritise this towards the supply of housing?

**S. Rasaiah:**
The priority of the Infrastructure Group will be to look at the requirements of sites and general provision of strategic infrastructure. As infrastructure requirements are constantly changing, it is perhaps inappropriate to try to set out how they will be provided.

**Inspector:**
I will look at including this in my suggested re-drafting of the policy, which is currently: "The group will manage the promotion of growth by assessing individual sites, their timely delivery, potential obstructions to their delivery, etc. See paragraph 46.

**4.10 To what extent are the policies and proposals in the Core Strategy aspirations rather than a deliverable, confidently funded plan of action? At a time of economic uncertainty and austerity, is the Core Strategy and the IDS setting out false hopes? Should a greater note of caution be introduced in an early page?**

**Inspector:**
In the Focused Changes there is now a mention of caution and the present austerity measures. In 5.83 there is wording about the current economic difficulties and the risks and uncertainties. “This Plan is prepared is specifically prepared with austerity and cost saving measures in mind.”

**D. Edwards:**
The Plan is ambitious but we feel it is grounded in reality and deliverable as the Infrastructure Delivery Study was prepared during the current economic downturn. Problems with delivery. A lot of the utilities are going through retrenchments but we feel quite positive about building new ways of delivering infrastructure in partnerships in the future.

**R. Bolton:**
In terms of funding, in Appendix B there is a list of infrastructure requirements. Work has already been done on selected sites and the infrastructure requirements such as educational costs have already been factored in.

**4.11 How secure is the funding for the infrastructure needed for the various development proposals? To what extent are the funding bodies committed to the Core Strategy policies and proposals? To what extent have they been involved in its preparation? Should they be invited to any Hearing, particularly this one?**

**S. Rasaiah:**
This is a long term plan which looks at the long term costs. What it can’t do is estimate the income to be received during this period. There will be many sources of income that service providers can access, some of which are not known or easily predicted at this stage. Providing there is a strong delivery mechanism in place to manage delivery, we are confident this is an austerity designed plan. We are confident
it is deliverable.

**Inspector:**
What have been the main aspects of infrastructure provision in Rotherham?

**S. Rasaiah:**
The transport interchange and some other major projects like the railway station. For local issues like schools, it is the provision of local transport and open spaces.

**P. Bolton:**
There is the South Yorkshire Integrated Transport Project. Major projects have provided the impetus for increased capacity. There have also been many more minor projects which have been successful in reducing congestion and increasing transport provision, such as bus lanes and the re-organisation of traffic routes around school. Some of the improvements are not always visible or obvious and there are many minor changes which produce good results which are often not visible. A bus partnership has been started with all the bus operators to try to improve and rationalise services and ticketing. This has previously been undertaken in Sheffield and it has shown the potential to reduce weekly and monthly ticket prices by up to 50 or 60 per cent.

4.12 What is the current position concerning the Rotherham – Sheffield Tram Train trial? Is the scheme likely to go ahead? Is there a list of planned schemes to ensure that public transport services and infrastructure are provided in line with planned development, as mentioned by SYPTE.

**Inspector:**
Can I first of all ask about paragraph 51, where it says that the order to the tram-train vehicles has already been placed. Do we know where they will be built?

**P. Gibson:**
Not known at present where they will be built. The government has allocated £46 million for the trial of tram-train and adjustments to the route are already planned for, such as a lowering of the platform at Rotherham station, transfers at Meadowhall etc. The current start date is January 2016.

**Inspector:**
On KSD4 the Infrastructure Delivery Study, it says at paragraph 9 “No show-stoppers were identified at this stage based on the information presented that would prevent the delivery of the proposed growth”. Can I take it that that is still the case?

**S. Rasaiah:**
Yes, that is correct.

**Inspector:**
Paragraph 25 sets out: “the need for careful planning and management of infrastructure funding and delivery. We would suggest that a formal Infrastructure Delivery Mechanism be established”. Which brings us back to the draft I’m looking at producing.

Any further comments from anyone, in relation to this last item and all the other items we have covered this morning?
No further comments were made.