



Planning Hampshire's Future

Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of this newsletter, which aims to keep you informed about emerging planning strategies and associated research.

Described inside are some big planning issues that are facing Hampshire.

The possibility of changes to the planning system is also in the air, with the County Council's bid for strategic planning to be returned to county level and an imminent general election.

Whatever the outcomes of those, we will strive to achieve the right balance of development in Hampshire.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. If you would like to be added or removed from the mailing list, please email

spatial.strategy@hants.gov.uk
or telephone 01962 846748.



Providing housing for the growing number of older people is a key planning issue – see page 2.

County bids for planning powers

A Hampshire County Council proposal for regional planning to be devolved to county level is now being considered by Government.

The submission has been made under the Sustainable Communities Act, which enables local authorities to ask the Government to devolve powers so that more decisions can be made locally. The Hampshire proposal has been shortlisted by the Local Government Association from over 300 proposals submitted by councils nationwide. The shortlist is now being studied by John Denham, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with the expectation of a decision before Easter.

Subject to that, work has begun on a new-style Regional Strategy, which will replace both the South East Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy. The new strategy is being prepared by the South East England Partnership Board which, under legislation passed last year, has replaced the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA). A project plan envisages public consultation on options at the end of this year.

■ *The project plan can be seen at www.se-partnershipboard.org.uk/index.php*

In Brief ■ ■ ■ ■

Whitehill-Bordon has been designated by the Government as an 'Ecotown' - one of only four nationwide - which will be exemplar green developments designed to meet the highest standards of sustainability. The town is to receive over £12 million from the Government's start-up fund for Ecotowns.

■ *More details at:*
www.whitehillbordon.com

A new marine planning regime was introduced under legislation passed late last year. The new system comprises a national marine policy statement, a series of marine plans and a streamlined process for approving individual developments. A new Marine Management Organisation will implement the arrangements.

■ *More details at:*
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/legislation/key-areas.htm>

A new duty on county and unitary councils to produce a Local Economic Assessment (LEA) comes into force in April this year. The first Hampshire LEA, steered by the newly formed Hampshire Economic Board, will be produced towards the end of the year. It will inform the preparation of the Regional Strategy

Housing for an ageing population

A recently completed County Council study assesses the housing aspirations of the growing number of older households and the extent to which those are matched by current planning policies.

Over the next twenty years, the number of older households in Hampshire is forecast to rise by 50 percent – an additional 75,000. The number of households headed by someone aged over 85 will double.

Currently, most older people live in mainstream housing, but one in ten reside in sheltered housing or care homes. This pattern seems set to continue, as the majority of older people want to retain their independence and remain in their own home for as long as possible.

Only three percent of the new homes built in Hampshire in recent years were specifically designed for older people. During that time care home capacity reduced, but the study forecasts increasing demand for this accommodation over the coming decades. It also predicts a growing demand for leasehold retirement properties, but reducing demand for conventional sheltered housing.

The report's recommendations – some to local councils, some to Government and some to housebuilders – include more assistance to those who wish to downsize their home and a requirement that all larger housing developments should include housing specifically designed for older people.

■ *You can view the study report at:*
www3.hants.gov.uk/planning/factsandfigures/othertopics.htm

and Local Development Frameworks, as well as a Hampshire Sustainable Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan.

A public inquiry took place last October into new targets for minerals supply in each of the region's nine counties. The planning

inspectors who conducted the inquiry have now submitted their recommendations to Government. When finalised, the targets will guide the amount of mineral extraction in each county.

■ *More details at:* www.gos.gov.uk/gose/planning/regionalPlanning/798061/



A container ship at Calshot

Data about Hampshire

A wealth of population, economic and development information can be seen on Hampshire County Council's 'Facts and Figures' website.

Attractive and easy-to-use pages contain current and future population estimates, employment and unemployment statistics, together with data on housebuilding and commercial development. Most of the information is available for individual boroughs/districts as well as the whole county, and there are useful factsheets for each authority's area.

A recent addition is the publication 'Development in Hampshire 2008/09 Monitoring Bulletin', which looks at past rates of housebuilding and employment development, compares those with policy targets, and assesses likely building rates over the coming years.

■ Can be viewed at:
www3.hants.gov.uk/planning/factsandfigures

Ports policy is panned

Draft national policies to guide port development have been criticised as inadequate and likely to lead to piecemeal decisions.

The comments are part of Hampshire County Council's response to the Government's draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for Ports. With fresh proposals having recently been unveiled for port expansion at Southampton (see below), the Council says it is vital that the NPS provides robust guidance for decisions on individual schemes.

The Government's approach is to let market forces decide which ports will expand, but the County Council fears that this could lead to disjointed and piecemeal decisions. The Council has called for a firmer steer from Government on where it would be acceptable for port expansion to take place.

Shortly before the Government published its draft document, consultation closed on a draft Masterplan for the Port of Southampton. The draft Masterplan forecasts continued cargo growth, especially containers. Until around 2020, that growth could be accommodated within the existing port, including through more efficient use of space. However, the document says that development at Dibden Bay would be necessary between 2021 and 2027.

In 2004, the Government rejected a port development proposal for Dibden Bay, and the County Council believes that the need for such development remains unproven.

Final versions of the Masterplan and the National Policy Statement are expected later this year.

Employment site assessment

Most sites earmarked for employment development in Hampshire are well suited to modern business needs, but one in five may need major investment before they can be developed.

These are the key findings of a Hampshire Economic Partnership panel of commercial agents and developers. They assessed all sites of a half hectare or more that have planning permission or are allocated in Local Plans for employment development.

Most of the 125 sites were deemed to be well suited to modern business requirements. However, 29 were judged to need remedial action - treating site contamination, for example, or improving the road access - before they can be developed. The other ten sites are unlikely ever to be developed for employment purposes, the study report says, and should be reviewed.

Compared to HEP's previous study carried out three years ago, there are fewer sites overall and fewer good quality sites, while the number in the 'unlikely to be developed' category has doubled. This reflects depressed market perceptions in the current recession and shows that the overall stock of sites is dwindling.

HEP is calling for faster progress on Local Development Frameworks, which will earmark new sites. Without these, it fears that economic recovery in Hampshire could be held back.

- *The report 'Employment Land in Hampshire – Large Site Assessment Study 2009' can be seen on HEP's website at www.hep.uk.com*

If you are interested in any of the information/documents referred to in this newsletter but cannot access the internet at home or in your local library, then contact Julia Ward in our Spatial Strategy and Research Group who will be pleased to post a copy to you. Tel: 01962 846748.

If you would like this information in an audio cassette or in Braille or in another language, please contact Hantsdirect:

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Textphone: **0845 603 5625** (for people who are deaf or hard of hearing)

Lines open 8.00 am – 8.00 pm Monday – Friday

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Local planning progress

Hampshire councils are making progress with the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs), which will replace their Local Plans.

The first two Core Strategies – for New Forest District and Southampton – were endorsed by planning inspectors and adopted by their councils late last year. Consultation is underway on the draft Rushmoor Borough Core Strategy and most other Hampshire authorities intend to consult later this year.

Councils will also prepare other LDDs for specific sites or individual topics, but priority is being given to the Core Strategy preparation.

- *The timetables for preparation of all LDDs in Hampshire can be seen at: www3.hants.gov.uk/planning/southeastplan/implementation.htm*