

EASTERN DORSET,  
SOUTH HAMPSHIRE AND  
ISLE OF WIGHT  
SUB-REGIONAL STUDY

**MAY 2004**

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## Foreword

This Sub-regional Study has been undertaken by the local authorities in eastern Dorset, south Hampshire and the Isle of Wight at the request of the South East England Regional Assembly. It provides advice to the Assembly on whether a sub-regional strategy needs to be prepared for the area as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy (the 'South East Plan') the appropriate boundaries for such a sub-regional strategy, and the options for development in the sub-region.

The Study has been steered by a Steering Group comprising one member from each of the seventeen local authorities: Christchurch Borough Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, East Dorset District Council, East Hampshire District Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Havant Borough Council, Isle of Wight Council, New Forest District Council, Poole Borough Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Winchester City Council. The Steering Group also includes a representative of the South East and South West Regional Assemblies, a representative of the economic partners (Bryan Taylor, Hampshire Economic Partnership) and a representative of the social partners (Clive Chatters, South East Forum for Sustainability). The technical work was undertaken by officers of the same organisations and their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

This sub-regional Study builds on, and should be read in conjunction with, the *South Hampshire Study*, published in December 2003 by Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council.

The sub-regional Study was considered by the Steering Group on 28 April 2004. Section 9 of the Study sets out its general views on the desirability of identifying South Hampshire as a sub-regional strategy area within the South East Plan; what role a strategy should perform, the level of growth it should accommodate and the area that it should cover.

The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, which consists of the local authorities comprising the urban core of South Hampshire (Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Southampton and Portsmouth and Hampshire County Council), has also considered the document. Its views are set out in Annex 1.

Over the next two months, the South East England Regional Assembly will consider this study report and decide whether to commission the preparation of a sub-regional strategy. In parallel, the South Hampshire authorities intend to undertake further technical work (see section 10 of this report) in anticipation of commencing strategy preparation in July 2004.

**If you have any questions on this Study, please contact Antony Payne, Environment Department, Hampshire County Council. Telephone 01962 846766 or email [antony.payne@hants.gov.uk](mailto:antony.payne@hants.gov.uk)**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the preparation of the South East Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy), the South East England Regional Assembly has commissioned studies in ten sub-regions. These studies are intended to provide the Assembly with advice on whether special policies are needed for each sub-region or whether region-wide policies would be sufficient.
- 1.2 A sub-regional study would also assist the regional planning process by contributing to the iterative process of testing the elements of the Regional Plan against the adopted Sustainable Development Criteria. Similarly, a study should provide valuable data towards the Strategic Environmental Assessment. These two processes will assist in ensuring that any Regional and sub-regional strategy is deliverable and will not encounter barriers to achieving strategic objectives.
- 1.3 More specifically, each of the sub-regional studies was asked to address four questions for its area:-
  - i) Is there a need for a sub-regional strategy? If so,
  - ii) What role should it perform?
  - iii) What level of growth should it accommodate?
  - iv) What area should it cover?
- 1.4 This Eastern Dorset, South Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sub-regional Study covers a large area stretching to Poole in the west, Winchester and Petersfield in the north, and Havant in the east. It includes the whole of the Isle of Wight. The Study area thus includes part of the South West Region and in total encompasses parts of three counties (Hampshire, Dorset, Isle of Wight) and fourteen unitary/district authorities.
- 1.5 A brief for the Study was agreed between representatives of the local authorities and the two regional assemblies in December 2003. In essence, the brief (reproduced as Appendix 1) requires two areas of investigation:
  - i) the linkages between South Hampshire and other parts of the Study area;
  - ii) the options for accommodating development in the area.
- 1.6 The brief stated that the linkages analysis should cover the whole Study Area whereas the development options should focus on urban South Hampshire. The analysis of linkages was expanded during the study to also include Salisbury and Chichester.
- 1.7 Four topic groups were established to consider development options from economic, housing, transport and environmental perspectives.

Their reports as attached as appendices and have been heavily drawn upon in the production of this document.

- 1.8 This Sub-regional Study also builds on the *South Hampshire Study* published in December 2003<sup>1</sup>, which analyses the existing situation and future trends.

## **2. Linkages**

- 2.1 The analysis of linkages has been undertaken by sub-dividing the study area into three:-

- an inner core area broadly equating to the Priority Area for Economic Regeneration in RPG9;
- an outer core area of the Authorities adjoining the 'inner core' comprising New Forest and the southern parts of Test Valley, Winchester and East Hampshire districts; and
- a wider area (Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset and Poole, Salisbury, Isle of Wight and Chichester).

- 2.2 The investigation of linkages has been constrained by certain factors:

- A tight timetable for completing the task
- Limited officer resources
- The limited availability of data, especially from the Census 2001 (migration and commuting)

- 2.3 However, sufficient work has been completed to form a general view on the extent of current linkages between South Hampshire and neighbouring areas. It should be noted that no consideration was given on the extent to which linkages might change or develop in the future.

## **Housing**

- 2.4 Available evidence has shown that there are relatively weak housing market linkages.

- Evidence on the origin of people moving to live in South Hampshire suggests relatively weak housing market links between the core area and neighbouring areas.
- Examination of the housing stock reveals marked variation between the general character of the core study area and that of the outer study area and areas neighbouring South Hampshire.
- Areas neighbouring South Hampshire are characterised, in general, by higher average house prices compared to properties within South Hampshire and a larger gap between the price of housing and the ability of local buyers to purchase property.

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<sup>1</sup> Published by Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council.

## **Transport**

2.5 Conclusions related to transport linkages are based on incomplete and rather patchy data sources, and the absence of complete 2001 Census information creates particular difficulties:

- Evidence on journeys to work suggest South Hampshire is relatively self contained, but with some movement to the core area from the west along the A31 and A36 corridors and two – way movement between South Hampshire and Winchester.
- Cars and other private vehicles dominate movement both within South Hampshire and to and from neighbouring areas (except the Isle of Wight).
- Rail links are most important to and from London.
- Ferry Services are crucial to links with the Isle of Wight and also are important for passenger traffic between Hythe and Southampton and Gosport and Portsmouth.
- Commuting trends tend to vary, but fewer in commuting journeys to Southampton in 2001 than in 1991 may reflect more people choosing to live in the City Centre.

## **Economy**

2.6 Considerable discussion has taken place with key contacts involved with economic development both in South Hampshire and the neighbouring areas of Hampshire and adjoining Counties. Initial indications are that there are no significant linkages.

- Firms relocating tend to want to move locally, particularly in the South Hampshire core urban area.
- Labour markets are quite localised and many employees are reluctant to make journeys to work significantly longer than of 20 minutes.
- There are linkages in terms of comparison goods retailing, but there are no definite trends.

## **Environment**

2.7 Limited evidence indicates that there is not a significant variation overall on the quality of life between the core area of South Hampshire and neighbouring areas, although there are likely to be significant pockets of deprivation in urban areas.

2.8 Two important areas of linkage with neighbouring areas are:

- Water resources - if water resources in South Hampshire are used to meet increased demand from the Isle of Wight and Sussex, then this will potentially constrain further development in South Hampshire itself.

- Coastal dynamics - a combination of processes means the area's coastline is experiencing relative sea level rise with the incidence of sea defence breaches and flooding likely to increase in the period to 2026.

2.9 These are likely to require policy responses that embrace an area far wider than South Hampshire and should perhaps be addressed at the regional level.

### **Implications of linkages analysis for boundary of potential sub region**

- 2.10 The linkages analysis shows that Eastern Dorset and West Sussex have no significant linkages with South Hampshire other than local cross-boundary links (between, for instance, Chichester and Havant and Portsmouth in the east and Ringwood and Christchurch and Bournemouth in the west).
- 2.11 The lack of significant links between South Hampshire and neighbouring areas reinforces the view that South Hampshire should be regarded as a largely self-contained unit for planning purposes and should look to meet development needs arising locally within its own boundaries – predominately the 'urban core' and adjacent hinterland. The only reason why an expansion of this boundary might be necessary would be because the scale of development proposed was such that a larger area offered more sustainable solutions than might otherwise be available within a more tightly drawn boundary.
- 2.12 Linkages could become strengthened if areas outside South Hampshire were identified for substantial growth in the emerging regional spatial strategies, subject to investment to improve cross-boundary transport routes. However, the interim report for the Sussex Coastal Towns Sub-regional Study has concluded that "there is very little scope for further development in sustainable locations close to the coastal towns and the environmental constraints surrounding them are tightening". It also raised serious doubts about the sub-region's long term ability to continue to deliver housing development within the towns at the same rate as in the recent past. The Bournemouth – Poole conurbation is similarly constrained by environmental factors. Unless these constraints were relaxed there would appear to be little prospect of accommodating some of South Hampshire's growth by expansion to the east or west.
- 2.13 Links with the Isle of Wight and central Hampshire are more evident and could be developed further if they were embraced within a wider definition of South Hampshire than 'urban core and immediate hinterland'. Inclusion of the Isle of Wight could address the weaknesses evident in its economy and encourage a more balanced social and economic structure whilst inclusion of parts of central Hampshire could help correct some of the present commuting patterns

and problems through a combination of new housing and employment developments and investment in transport infrastructure.

### **3. Development Options**

3.1 This section of the study assesses the development needs of South Hampshire and, building on the conclusion above, starts from a position that these development needs should as a first preference, be accommodated within South Hampshire.

3.2 The general strategic direction for development in the area for the period up to 2011 has already been established through the approved Hampshire County Structure Plan Review. In addition, other policy documents (eg local plans, Local Transport Plans, Regional Housing Strategy and Area Investment Frameworks provide more detail and define the investment priorities for the next few years. The main focus of the new strategy will therefore be from 2011 to 2026.

3.3 Four key aspects in the formulation of development options are:

- i. Providing a context for the economy to growth
- ii. Accommodating housing growth
- iii. Managing the demand to travel
- iv. Recognising the environmental capacity and constraints that affect the choices associated with the preceding considerations

3.4 Individual topic papers considering development options have been produced and are included as appendices to this report.

### **4. Economic options**

4.1 South Hampshire is one of South East England's main economic centres, accounting for 13 per cent of the Region's economy. The Ministry of Defence/Navy, seaports and Southampton Airport are important elements in the sub-region's economy, but the decline in manufacturing means that the biggest employment sectors are now shops/hotels/restaurants, public services and finance/business services. There is evidence of existing emerging business clusters in the marine sector, pharmaceuticals, aviation, electronics, telecommunications, computing, media/creative arts and scientific research.

4.2 The universities at Portsmouth and Southampton underpin South Hampshire's strength in research and innovation. However, the area suffers from poor skills levels and a significant mismatch between the skills available locally and those needed to meet the requirements of the growth sectors.



- 4.3 Unemployment across the area as a whole is around the South East average of 1.5%, but this masks pockets of high unemployment and deprivation in Havant, Portsmouth and Southampton.
- 4.4 In 1991, South Hampshire was a net exporter of labour. 14,000 people commuted in, mainly from Dorset, Wiltshire and other parts of Hampshire. 20,000 South Hampshire residents commuted to jobs elsewhere, largely in London, Surrey and Basingstoke. These figures may seem high but actually represent less than 5% of all workers in South Hampshire, the vast majority of whom both live and work in the area. Initial data from the 2001 Census indicate that South Hampshire has seen an increase in net out-commuting compared with 1991.
- 4.5 Although there is a shortage of good quality industrial premises, since 1996, around 90,000 square metres of new employment floorspace has been built each year in South Hampshire, predominantly for mixed business use. It is notable that development for industrial use continued despite a decline in manufacturing employment. Much of this new building was off-set, however, by losses of existing floorspace to other uses, primarily housing. Indeed, in Portsmouth and Southampton, the creation of new floorspace has not kept up with the loss of existing space. Commercial agents and the Hampshire Business Development Needs Study 2002 indicate a current shortage of business premises and sites, together with a need for more space in future to cater for firms' growth plans.
- 4.6 The area is currently defined in Regional Planning Guidance as a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration (PAER) in recognition that the economy is under performing, especially in comparison to the rest of the South East and the relatively high levels of deprivation and inequality experienced by its residents.
- 4.7 The local authorities, working closely with partners, have prepared two Area Investment Frameworks (AIF) for Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport and Fareham, and for Southampton. These seek to address the weaknesses of the sub-region, regeneration needs and to ensure that it realises its growth potential. Specifically, the AIFs seek to achieve:
- a competitive and diverse economy
  - a well motivated, aspirational and successful workforce
  - inclusive and prosperous community
  - quality urban places
  - a fully integrated transport system
  - a positive cultural identity
- 4.8 The Economic Futures for South Hampshire paper (Appendix 3) sets out four options for the South Hampshire economy to grow. These were considered to be realistic and achievable given the assets of the area and its current economic profile. They are:

- Urban renaissance and diverse economy
- Enterprise, innovation and youth
- UK gateway and international competitiveness
- Designation as a 'Strategic Development Area'

### **Urban renaissance and diverse economy**

#### 4.9 Focus:

- Recognise that indigenous growth has been, and is likely to remain the main component of the South Hampshire economy. Indigenous business requirements will inform most demand in the next few years
- Build on urban renaissance to increase attractiveness of city and town centres as places to do business
- Develop the economic dynamics of the two city-regions and recognise their individual distinctiveness
- Nurture growth of existing SMEs within South Hampshire
- Develop entrepreneurial skills
- Recognise the hopes and aspirations of people in the area

### **Enterprise, innovation and youth**

#### 4.10 Focus:

- Foster an entrepreneurial spirit and encourage innovation
- Aim to retain graduates from local Higher Education institutions
- Develop urban living experiences, evening economy
- Maximise the attractiveness of the area for young people to live and work
- Aim to nurture and develop growing businesses – once established they rarely relocate wholesale

### **UK gateway and international competitiveness**

#### 4.11 Focus:

- Position South Hampshire as a gateway to UK, Europe and the world – few parts of the UK have the locational advantages of South Hampshire for a "Gateway" role
- Develop "Gateway" resources: ports, ocean-going cruise ships, ferries, maritime support services, naval establishments, airport, road and rail freight distribution
- Target inward investment from US, China and Europe - ideally for high tech 'high added value' advanced manufacturing and services, rather than freight distribution
- Position South Hampshire to compete with, and attract high tech firms from, Thames Valley and other world class sub-regions

## Designation as a 'Strategic Development Area'

- 4.12 Focus:
- Help underpin South Hampshire's role as a regional growth centre (i.e. to accommodate a higher level of population, housing and economic growth than envisaged under the other 3 scenarios)
  - Local economy to grow faster than currently required
  - Compete with other regional and national growth centres
  - May absorb the whole or parts of previous options
- 4.13 The business land requirement for the first three options may be very similar - the main difference is in its spatial distribution, site size and quality. The first two look to nurture talent largely from within the area with a clear focus on urban regeneration. The third option may require the identification of large strategic sites, most likely on greenfield land. The strategic development area option differs from the other three by virtue of being of a different order of magnitude and is predicated on South Hampshire catering for a significant amount of regionally generated demand for housing and employment.
- 4.14 All four options would require different skills and necessitate re-training amongst the existing workforce. The inter-relationship between future in-migration, skill shortages and sustainable economic growth will need further consideration in the light of discussions of housing growth options, including the provision of affordable housing.
- 4.15 Forecasts of demand for employment land are more closely related to output growth than to changes in employment. Manufacturing output increased during the 1980s and 1990s despite the loss of jobs, because of productivity improvements, and is forecast to continue to increase into the future. Early indications suggest that output growth in all the business space sectors will continue at similar levels as in the past and that future demand for employment land could be as great as in the past. Over the last 15 years development of business floorspace has averaged between 90,000 and 100,000 square metres per year. This would equate to about 25-30 hectares of land each year. However, if the future is likely to be different from the past, with competitiveness increasingly based on productivity growth in a knowledge-driven economy, then the picture could be quite different.
- 4.16 Recent employment forecasts of labour demand produced by Hampshire County Council and the Regional Assembly broadly concur for the period to 2016. After this date there is a noticeable divergence, with the Assembly forecasts indicating a significant tapering off or even decline in overall numbers. Uncertainty over the forecasts beyond 2016, and its implications for employment land requirements, are in need of further investigation.

## 5. Housing Options

- 5.1 Providing a decent home for everyone who wants one is a hallmark of a civilised society. More housing will be needed in South Hampshire over the coming 20 years to cater for a rising number of households. This is largely due to social factors, such as younger people aspiring to independence earlier in life, more people choosing to live on their own and elderly people living longer.
- 5.2 In addition to new households forming over the coming years, demographic experts say there is a backlog of households which formed in past years but have not been able to obtain housing. This manifests itself in rapidly rising house prices, essential workers unable to afford a property in high-price areas like Hampshire, youngsters forced to live with parents or on a friend's sofa, families in temporary accommodation, and others homeless.
- 5.3 The recently published Barker Report sets out the case for increasing house building rates in order to reduce house price inflation. Concern has been expressed over the implications of the rates of house building mooted in the report. Notwithstanding these concerns, it is apparent that the amount of housing to be accommodated in South Hampshire to 2026 should be no less than is currently planned for in the period up to 2011. Much higher build rates could be needed depending upon the weighting given to the Barker Report and the degree to which the area is required to absorb higher levels of in-migration.
- 5.4 Based on a continuation of South Hampshire's share of the current Regional Planning Guidance (RPG), the area would have to accommodate about 68,000 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026. The Regional Assembly has asked the Sub-Regional Studies to consider the implications of growth at between 20% and 40% above RPG figure. This would result in the areas seeking to accommodate between 81,000 and 95,000 new dwellings. At the top end of the growth range, application of the Barker Reports' recommendations to reduce real house price inflation to 1.8% and 1.1% could imply growth levels at 50% and 90% above the RPG figure. This equates to between 102,000 and 129,000 new dwellings.
- 5.5 The lowest end of this range would largely provide for new households forming from the existing population. The higher figures would also provide for significant in-migration and thus a considerable increase in South Hampshire population.
- 5.6 On the supply side, updated figures based on the published South Hampshire Study indicate that around 20,000 dwellings are expected to be built in the period 2006 – 2011. Around 4,500 dwellings are also available in the form of the Structure Plan reserve housing sites. In addition, supply from brownfield and urban capacity sites for the period 2011 to 2026 could be around 15,500. These figures taken together

indicate a current supply of around 40,000 dwellings potentially available between 2006 and 2026.

- 5.7 When compared to the range of housing requirements (5.4 above) the estimated supply is short by between 28,000 and 89,000 dwellings. This shortfall would have to be made good by either developing additional housing within the existing urban areas in the form of intensification and higher densities or development on greenfield sites. Between 700 hectares and 2,250 hectares of land would be required if all the shortfall was to be met on greenfield sites<sup>2</sup>.
- 5.8 The options to accommodate the housing requirements are:
- Concentrating development within established town and city areas (urban regeneration including urban intensification).
  - Expansion beyond existing urban areas, particularly the two cities, with a concentration around the periphery
  - Concentrating development around public transport hubs and corridors (both existing and proposed)
  - Concentrating development around existing transport hubs and corridors (private car), especially those offering easy access to the present highway network
  - Concentrating development in a series of smaller major development areas in various locations both within and possibly outside the core area
- 5.9 Concentrating development in a single major development area was considered but discounted on the basis that there is not an identifiable area where it could be located.
- 5.10 None of the options in 5.8 could accommodate even the lowest housing requirement in full. Therefore a strategy for South Hampshire will need to be based on a combination of them.

## **6. Transport**

- 6.1 Government advice is increasingly emphasising accessibility as a key criterion when considering the new development. It must be located where there is accessibility by a range of transport modes. Facilities should be provided close to where people need them, thereby reducing the need to travel. Poorly planned and located development is likely to only exacerbate the already over-congested highways network. Well planned development in accessible locations should reduce the need to travel and offer alternatives to the private car. They may also provide the critical mass required to justify investment in existing transport infrastructure to facilitate improvements.

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<sup>2</sup> Assumes an average of 40 dwellings per hectare

### **Increasing highway capacity**

- 6.2 Within the timescale of the study it is predicted that over 95% of the trunk road network in the area will be operating beyond capacity. This impacts upon the local road network with longer distance traffic on inappropriate roads, a spreading of the peak hours and worsening congestion for all traffic, including freight deliveries and buses.
- 6.3 It is understood that the M27 motorway caters principally for internal movements within South Hants, rather than long distance strategic movements. The Highways Agency is currently opposing some new developments that are within close proximity to the motorway network over concerns that additional traffic would add to congestion. This issue needs to be resolved if South Hampshire is to accommodate the levels of housing and employment growth that this paper considers.
- 6.4 However, current policies contain a strong emphasis on more sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) in place of increasing car usage.
- 6.5 Although limited improvements to the highway network are possible, comprehensive widening would achieve little in the long term. There may, however, be scope for new roads that:
- Secured a split between inter and intra sub-regional traffic (to enable strategic routes to perform as originally intended)
  - Improved access to public transport interchanges (e.g. under-utilised rail stations)
  - Allowed prioritisation of public transport services (e.g. dedicated bus routes)
  - Provide access to areas of new development
- 6.6 Any new road will need to demonstrate that it offers benefits over and above simply increasing road space, which would probably be taken up by new traffic in a few years. Increased highway capacity, on its own, is not likely to be a sustainable foundation for significant development growth in South Hampshire.

### **Public transport**

- 6.7 On the rail network, whilst there are capacity limits on radial routes into London, the local orbital routes and most bus services have capacity to spare. These could be adapted to make them more attractive to regular users, such as commuters.

### **Behavioural change, restraint and demand management**

- 6.8 Behavioural change is an important element of any transport strategy for the sub-region. The design of development areas must encourage

behavioural change with a fresh approach to layout and urban design that places an emphasis on sustainable transport.

- 6.9 Demand management is also essential if the growth in car traffic is to be contained. The potential benefits and costs associated with introducing such measures will require considerable modelling and analysis.

### **Development options**

- 6.10 Options for transport development are likely to feature elements of limited extra road capacity, a range of demand management and behavioural change measures couple with further public transport initiatives. Based on the above analysis, development options should focus on:

- Minimising the need to travel and introducing measures to manage the demand for travel
- Providing alternatives to the private car, allied with the development of strategic park and ride facilities
- Maximising opportunities for rail and bus travel, through, for instance, an expansion of the South Hampshire Rapid Transit (SHRT) network
- Promoting behavioural change through travel planning, marketing and incentives
- Securing integrated management to managing transport provision through the Solent Transport partnership

- 6.11 Spatial options for facilitating the above include:

- Identifying Transport Development Areas around important existing or new public transport interchanges where higher density developments would be encouraged
- Locating development close to rail routes that have spare capacity
- Using new development to support the provision of new public transport infrastructure (e.g. extension to SHRT)
- Concentrating new greenfield development in major development areas which can be planned to offer alternatives to the private car
- Limiting new road schemes to those which provide 'added value' to meet objectives other than simply increasing road space

- 6.12 The infrastructure costs for new transport infrastructure is likely to be considerable and further work is necessary to cost these elements and proposed funding mechanisms. In addition, transport integration, travel demand measures and behavioural change initiatives need to be

progressed in parallel with investment in transport infrastructure and other allied facilities to build viable communities.

## **7. Environment**

- 7.1 The environment of South Hampshire is a key reason why both people and businesses choose to live and locate in the area. It is both a major asset and selling point. It should not, however, be taken for granted. The availability of water to serve new development and the avoidance of building in areas of flood risk are matters which will help shape a strategy for South Hampshire. Development should also enhance biodiversity and minimise its impact on the two proposed National Parks.

### **Water supply**

- 7.2 In South Hampshire, there has traditionally been a stable and plentiful supply of fresh water from the chalk aquifer feeding its rivers. These sources are now widely seen as being at their limits in environmental terms. Increasing the amount of water abstracted could have a critical impact on river water quality. There is also an increasing expectation at a regional level that water shortages already evident in parts of Sussex and Kent may be eased by utilising resources in Hampshire.
- 7.3 If sufficient water supplies are to be available in southern Hampshire to meet the needs of an increased population without a critical adverse impact on the quality of Hampshire's rivers, greatly enhanced water efficiency will be an essential component of all development and redevelopment. There is also likely to be a need for new water supply infrastructure such as new reservoirs, in addition to that proposed at Havant Thicket.
- 7.4 Development inland rather than on the coast can often be more sustainable and less costly in terms of water management because of the greater potential to recycle available water and replenish watercourses and the aquifer.
- 7.5 The discharge of cleansed water from sewage treatment works into rivers increases the water volume, to the benefit of the environment, and ensures a sufficient flow so that water can be abstracted downstream for domestic supply. The recycling of water in this way, is only possible if abstraction, the return of treated waste water, and thus urban development, is inland rather than on the coast. As a general rule, therefore, development should be located as far up river as possible. The appropriateness of this policy approach requires further investigation in the context of South Hampshire's watercourses and aquifer capacity and quality.



## **Flooding**

- 7.6 The extent of fluvial and tidal floodplains are shown in Appendix J in the published South Hampshire Study.
- 7.7 Climate change, coupled with predicted sea level rise and storms, may lead to substantial loss of New Forest coast and within Portsmouth and Langstone harbours. It could also necessitate major flood defence measures to protect the continued status and function of Portsmouth as a naval base and commercial port and city. This could, however, be at the direct expense of Hayling Island's coast. It may also become increasingly difficult to protect some other urban areas in the medium term.
- 7.8 To help allow for a flexible response to coastal change undeveloped land along the coast should be kept free from development. This would also leave scope to accommodate de-salination plants at a future date, should they be required, to augment land sourced water supplies.
- 7.9 The expected increase in frequency of intense storms may overwhelm existing drainage systems and there will be a need to design for flood routeing and containment in major new development. The concentration of new development in major development areas would ease the process and reduce both costs and risks of managing flooding because of the ability to design and build-in sustainable drainage systems and flood prevention measures.
- 7.10 It should, however, be noted that sustainable urban drainage solutions (SUDS) can be relatively expensive or land hungry and as such be contrary to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. The implementation of SUDS is also not the answer to wider flooding issues.
- 7.11 Consideration of flood management issues should be undertaken on a catchment basis.

## **Biodiversity and National parks**

- 7.12 International and national environmental designations are shown as Appendix K in the published South Hampshire Study.
- 7.13 Development options should consider the cumulative indirect impacts on important nature conservation sites, including displacing rural land-uses, increasing recreation and disturbance, and the loss of air and water quality. They should also aim to deliver benefits for biodiversity centred on important nature conservation sites within and adjacent to the South Hampshire Urban Core through the identification of Areas of Significant Opportunity for Biodiversity.
- 7.14 The development options also need to have regard to the proximity and purpose of the proposed New Forest and South Downs National Parks.

If there is a conflict between the national park purposes and other functions of relevant authorities, greater weight should be attached to the conservation purpose. The options should also include sufficient alternative locations for recreation and other activities that would be inappropriate within the Parks.

### **Quality of Life**

- 7.15 Quality of life is a major concern to people living and working in South Hampshire and there is a view that it is being eroded by development. Quality of life is a difficult concept to define or to measure – it can mean different things to different people, and may encompass economic factors, the quality of the environment, the availability of essential services or freedom from the fear of crime – all of which may be given different weighting by different individuals. If quality of life is to be given the emphasis it deserves, alongside economic and other criteria, consideration needs to be given to developing a more robust and measurable way of reflecting it. This is not a problem unique to South Hampshire, and it is something the Assembly should also address at a regional level through its research programme for the South East Plan. Their Regional Sustainable Development Framework could be a starting point for its development.”

## **8. Developing the options**

- 8.1 South Hampshire should plan, at the very minimum, to meet development requirements that originate from within the area. These arise from the needs of local residents to be properly housed and local businesses to expand. They need in turn to be supported by a wide range of other developments including education and health care facilities, other social, recreational, leisure and community facilities and transport initiatives.
- 8.2 To meet these needs implies a rate of housing and business land development broadly similar to that seen over the past decade. This broadly met local needs but also allowed for some growth through net in-migration. It will require substantial public and private investment. Difficult decisions will also need to be taken to deal with rising levels of congestion that are expected to happen irrespective of further development pressures.
- 8.3 In addition to meeting needs generated from within the area South Hampshire also has an opportunity to argue for a higher level of development to underpin and enhance its importance as a regional centre. The Regional Assembly has specifically requested the sub-regional studies to consider the principle and potential for identifying what it terms ‘Strategic Development Areas’ within their area. The potential benefits of concentrating growth in particular locations is that they can produce a lever for attracting both public and private investment and development can be planned and co-ordinated to

provide critical mass to, for instance, justify new investment in public transport schemes.

- 8.4 Meeting requirements from within South Hampshire could be accommodated through a combination of developments within existing urban areas and through sustainable urban extensions. The designation of all or part of South Hampshire as a Strategic Development Area is, however, likely to result in growth of a different order of magnitude and present different options for accommodating it.

### **Urban renaissance**

- 8.5 The regeneration of urban areas is at the heart of Government policy and is also the starting point for any consideration as to where development should take place. Much is already being done to realise the 'urban potential' available in vacant, derelict, under utilised land and buildings. Put bluntly, if the existing towns and cities had the capacity to absorb and accommodate all the new development this should be the leading option for development.
- 8.6 Unfortunately current approaches to regenerating the towns and cities of South Hampshire are unlikely to provide enough scope and opportunity to accommodate the level of development required. Taking housing as an example, a continuation of current planned building rates would require 68,000 dwellings to be built 2006 – 2026. Under two-thirds of this could be expected to be accommodated within existing urban areas or on other sites already planned. Land for a further 28,000 dwellings would need to be identified.
- 8.7 Two ways to address the shortfall would be through urban intensification or the development of sustainable urban extensions

### **Urban intensification**

- 8.8 Urban intensification is essentially using land already developed more efficiently. This could be achieved by:
- Increasing the density of mixed development schemes at designated Transport Development Areas (typically rail and bus stations and other transport interchanges)
  - Redeveloping poor quality housing areas at a higher density (although this would need to be tempered with the provision of car parking and amenity open space).
  - Re-engineering existing business or retail parks into mixed development schemes. These are currently characterised by single storey buildings surrounded by substantial amounts of surface car parking. There may be scope for these areas to embrace a much wider range of land uses (including residential, entertainment, social and community facilities). Higher and

different types of occupancy and density could also facilitate and support public transport improvements

- Re-developing other urban sites, often in single use (e.g. surface car parks, supermarkets) into mixed development schemes (e.g. residential uses above the initial primary use).

8.9 To realise the full potential from urban intensification will require political will, the cooperation of communities and businesses affected, a readiness to use compulsory purchase powers if necessary, and support from developers to achieve high quality designs. One of its main benefits is the creation of 'critical mass' to underpin improvements in the public transport system. One of its drawbacks is that much residential development is likely to be in the form of flats/apartments and may not appeal to prospective purchasers.

8.10 It is unlikely that this could accommodate all of South Hampshire's internally generated development needs and still provide the full range of facilities and quality environment which people will expect. Further work is required to assess the likely contribution from this option.

### **Sustainable urban extensions**

8.11 Well designed mixed development schemes on greenfield sites which can be integrated into the urban fabric can help resolve existing transport and other infrastructure problems through careful design and investment. These are termed sustainable urban extensions.

8.12 There are a number of ways that South Hampshire could develop sustainable urban extensions. These include:

- Extensions to planned major development areas
- The development of new major development areas
- Development along under-utilised transport corridors
- Development which facilitates and supports the creation of new public transport corridors or nodes

8.13 A detailed evaluation of actual sites and opportunities is required to determine which of the above offer the most sustainable options for South Hampshire having regard to the environmental constraints outlined under section 7 above.

### **Strategic Development Area**

8.14 The promotion of development through urban intensification and sustainable urban extensions are predicated on meeting South Hampshire's requirements based primarily on indigenous growth. If the area was required, or sought to accommodate a higher level of housing and employment growth a different range of options present themselves.

8.15 The designation of South Hampshire as a strategic development area in the South East Plan would see the area not only meeting the requirements of the indigenous population but also attracting a significant level of in-migration of both households and jobs. Reasons why this is an attractive option include:

- It will attract higher levels of public and private investment that could help address some of the existing infrastructure and development problems of the area (e.g. regeneration of poor quality housing stock, transportation)
- It will reinforce South Hampshire as the major conurbation of the South East and enable the area to raise its profile both nationally and internationally
- It presents an opportunity for the area to re-engineer its local economic profile and transform itself into an area capable of challenging the Thames Valley and other economic dominant centres both in the UK and Europe.

8.16 However, higher levels of growth also present significant challenges:

- To ensure that the level of investment is sufficient to undertake the infrastructure improvements required
- To ensure that housing and employment growth are in balance and supported by a full range of other facilities and services
- To ensure that the quality of life of existing communities are enhanced as a result of new development
- To ensure that environmental quality is safeguarded and opportunities taken to add to the stock of environmental assets

8.17 The initial focus of accommodating this higher level of growth should still be the urban areas, with urban intensification and sustainable urban extensions playing an important role. However, in the context of South Hampshire, a regional growth area designation will inevitably involve building upon a large amount of undeveloped land and, depending upon the scale of growth envisaged, may necessitate a different approach to accommodate it.

8.18 Table 1 below, shows three scenarios based on different levels of housing and employment land growth.

Scenario 1 – essentially a continuation of current trends. Considered to be the minimum level of growth that the area would have to plan for.

Scenario 2 – growth at 20% above current development rates

Scenario 3 – growth at 40% above current development

8.19 Note that for all the scenarios the additional land requirement shown is just the housing and business land requirement and excludes other

types of development that would also be required (e.g. schools, hospitals etc.) or open space requirements.

**Table 1 Housing and employment land requirement 2006 - 2026**

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
	Continuation of current levels of growth <sup>3</sup>	Current growth levels plus 20%	Current growth levels plus 40%
Housing requirement 2006 - 2026	68,000	81,600	95,200
Met through			
Planned development and urban capacity <sup>4</sup>	40,000	40,000	40,000
New urban intensification <sup>5</sup>	5,000	5,000	5,000
New greenfield development	23,000	36,600	50,200
Additional housing land requirement (@ 40 per ha)	575	900	1,250
Business floorspace requirement (ha) <sup>6</sup>	500	600	700

8.20 Understanding what the above figures might mean for South Hampshire can be challenging. By way of simple illustration, the planned West of Waterlooville MDA extends over 280 ha and makes provision for 3,000 homes at a density of 40 per ha, as well as identifying some 28 ha for employment use.

8.21 Although the actual form of new development may not result in a proliferation of West of Waterlooville sized developments, the majority of the new greenfield development can be expected to be located close to the existing urban areas. The most likely areas of search are therefore likely to be focussed on:

- Undeveloped parts of Eastleigh, Fareham and Havant Boroughs
- Undeveloped areas within the southern parts of Test Valley, Winchester and East Hampshire Districts<sup>7</sup>.

8.22 Given the scale of growth envisaged by Scenarios 2 and 3, there may be merit in widening the area of search beyond the urban core of South Hampshire and its immediate hinterland to provide a greater choice of potential sites, some of which may well be more sustainable than seeking to accommodate it within the already heavily built up and physically constrained South Hampshire agglomeration. This would, however, be outside of the remit of the original brief set by the Regional Assembly.

<sup>3</sup> Current level of growth is that for urban south Hampshire plus the waterside part of New Forest district and the southern parts of Test Valley, Winchester and East Hampshire districts

<sup>4</sup> Planned development is that which the current Structure Plan and local plans expect to be built, largely before 2011. Urban capacity is potential supply up to 2026 based on current assessments and assumptions.

<sup>5</sup> Figure represents an increase of one third on that expected to come forward in urban areas under existing policy. It is illustrative and requires further research to determine actual likely contribution

<sup>6</sup> Some of this requirement is expected to be met on brownfield rather than greenfield sites and is based on a continuation of recent annual average rates of completion. Actual floorspace requirements depends upon the type of businesses to be accommodated

<sup>7</sup> There is considered to be no scope for significant development within New Forest district due to the constraints imposed by the proposed National Park

- 8.23 The proposed New Forest and South Downs National Parks severely constrain opportunities for expansion to the west and north east. Work undertaken as part of the linkage analysis indicates there is no immediate prospect of looking towards either Dorset or West Sussex to accommodate additional growth (see 2.10 – 2.12 above). The only extensions possible are therefore southwards to embrace the Isle of Wight or northwards into central Hampshire.
- 8.24 The inclusion of the Isle of Wight within a regional growth area centred on South Hampshire would give rise to a number of difficulties. Firstly, any development on the island would need to be a balanced mix of housing and employment. Secondly, there will need to be confidence that the market will be interested in developments on the island on the scale envisaged. The linkage analysis found little evidence of close links between the island with the exception of some commuting and retail patterns. Thirdly, the issue of transport links (e.g. cost, frequency) needs careful consideration. Fourthly, large parts of the island are included under one or more national or international environmental designations and effectively constrain opportunities for growth.
- 8.25 Extending the boundary of the sub-region into central Hampshire may provide greater scope and flexibility to accommodate development but could further exacerbate congestion if it is poorly located and does not provide alternatives to the private car.
- 8.26 Existing issues concerning water supply capacity and effluent, which will need resolution whatever level of growth is planned, will present a higher challenge under the strategic development area growth scenarios. The same is also true of the likely pressure (in terms of visitor numbers and impact) on country parks, nature reserves, sensitive habitats and species and the two adjacent national parks).

## **9. Conclusions of the Steering Group**

- 9.1 The Regional Assembly has posed four questions in relation to South Hampshire:
- i. Is there a need for a sub-regional strategy? If so,
  - ii. What role should the strategy perform?
  - iii. What level of growth it should accommodate?
  - iv. What area it should cover?
- 9.2 This section sets out the views of the Steering Group in response to them.

### **Is there a need for a sub-regional strategy?**

- 9.3 The answer is clear and affirmative. South Hampshire is the region's major conurbation and current Regional Planning Guidance identifies it

as a sub-region and a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration. The area faces considerable development pressures and the scale of new development is likely to give rise to impacts that cross local planning authority boundaries. The local authorities have long recognised the need for strategic planning in South Hampshire and, with the forthcoming abolition of Structure Plans, the only statutory mechanism to achieve the required overview is through the identification of the area as requiring a sub-regional strategy within the South East Plan.

### **What role should the strategy perform?**

9.4 South Hampshire intends to play a full and active part in the development and achievement of regional objectives. It has a number of important features which give it regional and strategic significance:

- It is the largest urban area in the South East outside London
- Portsmouth and Southampton are major centres of employment, with a significant influence on the regional economy
- It is an important international gateway, with two major seaports, including the region's largest international deep sea port, and the Southampton International Airport
- It contains the region's leading shopping centre and is an established regional centre for a wide range of social and cultural services
- It contains the largest priority area for economic regeneration in the region, with significant areas of local deprivation
- There are major opportunities for further large-scale urban renewal projects and for high quality development on major brownfield sites
- The urban areas are surrounded by high quality coastal and countryside areas, contributing to a high quality of life within the sub-region

9.5 The core authorities of urban South Hampshire are also developing a vision for managed growth, which will contribute to the delivery of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan. This will deliver key aspirations in urban South Hampshire for affordable housing provision, economic regeneration, investment in infrastructure and key services, transport improvements and environmental initiatives. Carefully managed growth will ensure that there is a balance maintained between environmental protection and the release of land for development.

### **What level of growth it should accommodate?**

9.6 Expressed in its simplest terms, options for growth in South Hampshire fall into three camps:

1. To maintain and accommodate a level of growth similar to that which has been achieved in recent years. This should not be seen as an easy/non-contentious option – there will be real challenges to



identifying suitable sites and securing the necessary public and private investment.

2. To plan for a level of growth that is higher than that seen in recent years.
  3. To plan for a level of growth that is significantly higher than seen in recent years.
- 9.7 In all three cases, development will involve a mix of urban regeneration, intensification and sustainable extensions to urban areas. The focus will remain on the two cities but there will be a need for some development on greenfield land within close proximity. Further work is required to ascertain the most sustainable locations for the new development.
- 9.8 The justification for going for growth should be on the basis that it will attract significant levels of public and private investment to address not only consequences of that growth but also other issues that the area currently faces. It will need to be demonstrated that these benefits, and other that will accrue, could be planned to ensure that they outweigh any environmental and social costs.

**What area it should cover?**

- 9.9 The sub-regional strategy should focus on the area defined as South Hampshire in paragraph 12.10 of RPG 9 (namely the administrative districts of Southampton, Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Portsmouth and Havant and parts of New Forest, Test Valley and Winchester districts), with the addition of part of East Hampshire district. More specifically, the area should comprise:
- i. The whole districts of Southampton, Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Portsmouth and Havant;
  - ii. Those parts of the waterside within New Forest district not included within the proposed New Forest National Park;
  - iii. That part of South Test Valley district, east of the A3090 corridor, including the town of Romsey;
  - iv. That part of Winchester district south of the proposed South Downs National Park and east of the A3090 corridor and excluding the city of Winchester; and
  - v. That part of East Hampshire district that is south of the proposed South Downs National Park
- 9.10 The above area should be known as the South Hampshire sub-region.
- 9.11 Whilst the South Hampshire sub-region should aim to strengthen economic, transport and other links with neighbouring areas, there is little support within the Steering Group to formally include them within the area to be covered by the strategy.

## Implementation

- 9.12 It will take time to put in place the necessary infrastructure to facilitate whatever level of growth is envisaged for South Hampshire. In addition to investment in housing and business development, the Study has identified transport and water infrastructure as being particular areas of concern. These require long lead in times and, unless steps are taken now to address them, they could delay much of the anticipated growth until the latter part of the plan period.

## 10. Working Towards a Strategy

- 10.1 The timescale for producing a sub-regional strategy for South Hampshire is extremely tight and, in recognition of this, the Steering Group has agreed to undertake further technical work in anticipation that the area will become a sub-regional strategy area within the South East Plan. This work will help inform the development of strategic choices and options and is required irrespective as to the final brief from the Assembly.
- 10.2. It is accordingly proposed that the following work be undertaken over the next two months:
- i. Additional data analysis, including commuting origin and destination and migration tables from the Census 2001 (assuming they are published) and demographic projections.
  - ii. Assess the capacity of existing towns and cities to absorb further development is likely to be a key consideration in determining the spatial pattern of future development. Further work could be undertaken to:
    - Quantify future supply of brownfield land and the assumptions concerning its realisation
    - Assess the potential for Ministry of Defence land and other publicly owned land to be released for redevelopment for civilian purposes
    - Quantify the potential yield from re-developing older/poor quality housing areas and identify mechanisms to achieve this
    - Quantify the potential from intensifying land usage through the re-development and re-engineering of existing business and retail parks as mixed development schemes and identify mechanisms to achieve this
    - Determine policy implications of a continued loss of existing employment sites to other uses (e.g. housing)
    - Consider policy mechanisms to secure development on less attractive employment sites

- Quantify the development potential and density implications associated with the designation of Transport Development Areas and mechanisms through which this could be achieved
  - Investigate the potential for achieving higher densities whilst securing high quality environments and providing a range of housing types
- iii. a detailed investigation of constraints to augmenting water supply and issues associated with effluent discharges
- iv. a more detailed consideration of the policy approaches to be taken in South Hampshire to 2026 and beyond, in response to the dynamic coast
- v. further work to evaluate the area's economic drivers and business needs in the context of the Regional Economic Strategy, test scenarios and quantify the amount and distribution of future land for employment use
- vi. Engaging health, education, utility providers and similar organisations in order to begin to develop the full spatial dimension of the emerging strategy
- vii. Take stock of housing needs surveys already undertaken and advise on any further work required such as a sub-region wide survey.
- viii. Audit existing retail data/studies and advise on further work which needs to be undertaken.
- ix. work up in more detail the preferred option(s) identified in the South Hampshire Sub-Regional Study. Particular areas to address are:
- infrastructure costs and how these would be financed
  - Locational options for greenfield development having regard to environmental constraints and opportunities and potential integration with existing urban centres
  - Transport options and costing to create a more sustainable transport network by 2026.
  - Consider how development options could affect the quality of life

## **Annex 1 Views of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire**

*The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) consists of the seven local authorities whose areas comprise the urban core of South Hampshire: Eastleigh Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Havant Borough Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council. Their Leaders have considered the sub-regional study. The statement below sets out the Partnership's vision and aspirations for the future planning of urban South Hampshire.*

1. We believe that urban South Hampshire has immense natural advantages and a bright future. It has an environment that is the envy of many parts of England, with easy access to rural hinterlands and miles of beautiful coastline. It has a vibrant economy, world class higher education institutions, and excellent transport links, by air, road, rail and sea. Historically it has been England's sea gateway to the continent, the Americas and beyond and it still plays this role today. Most of all, it is a place where businesses want to invest and where people want to live.
2. Growth has occurred on a massive scale over the last forty years. South Hampshire is now the largest urban area in the south of England outside London. This growth has created a complex urban area focussed on two major cities and a series of adjacent complementary settlements, which now form an almost continuous conurbation adjacent to the Solent coastline. The complexities of our local government arrangements, with two Unitary cities, four District Councils and a County Council has meant that it has been more difficult to achieve a co-ordinated approach to the strategic planning of the area. It is to achieve that unified voice, that PUSH was established.
3. It is our view that further growth in the area is to be welcomed. We must plan for sustainable development and change in a way which will maximise the benefit to the area and its people. Such an approach must acknowledge the differences and particular needs of the various locations that make up South Hampshire, while at the same time recognising the complementary and common interests which the whole area shares as a continuous urban area with a common future.
4. Economic growth will bring many benefits to the area. It will bring more investment, more jobs, more people to enrich communities and more services to meet their demands. The challenge we face is how to create regeneration through growth: to build the necessary infrastructure, tackle the problems the area faces, maintain its superb environment and enhance its prosperity and well being. We need to be

able to meet this challenge in order to move confidently towards status as a growth area and eventually create a world class city region.

5. The following issues are key to our approach to growth: -
  - A better transport infrastructure, with an emphasis on better choice and availability in public transport, which allows people to move more efficiently and safely within the region.
  - Complementary and parallel investment in utilities, services and facilities to maintain and enhance the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors.
  - Enhancing the advantages of particular localities within the area (motorway corridor, town or city centre, waterfront or suburb) as a focus for appropriate employment and business development that will enhance prosperity.
  - Facilitating and encouraging inward investment, whilst recognising that indigenous growth will be the main driver of the area's economic future, building on its strengths in research and innovation, and its emerging business clusters.
  - Ensuring that economic growth benefits all sections of the community and that there is investment in skills to enable people to participate in local employment growth and opportunities.
  - Regenerating older urban areas to enhance their particular historic and environmental qualities, and to further develop the social and cultural infrastructure to support them.
  - Ensuring that housing development focuses on the changing needs of a changing population, including smaller housing units and more affordable housing.
  - Respecting the environment, safeguarding bio-diversity and areas of high ecological importance, and providing access to recreational and countryside areas.
6. Development that is sustainable needs to respect the balance between housing and employment, be of the highest quality, be supported by appropriate infrastructure, and have the least possible impact on greenfield sites and high quality spaces within and between settlements. It needs to be supported by investment in facilities, services and skills.
7. New development should be carefully targeted to locations where it would benefit the sub-region, through associated transport improvements for example, or helping to reduce social deprivation. The overall focus should be on the regeneration and renaissance of the two

cities and older urban areas, embracing mixed use development and very high densities in appropriate locations. Development elsewhere must show it would complement and not conflict with that aim.

8. We believe the case for a sub-regional strategy covering South Hampshire is overwhelming and indisputable. For such a strategy to be successful, a real commitment will be required from the Government to provide substantial funding for key transport infrastructure enhancements, particularly to improve access into Portsmouth and Southampton from other parts of the sub-region. Subject to that commitment, we support the designation of the Urban South Hampshire sub-region as a "Strategic Development Area" in the South East Plan.
9. The future for South Hampshire is bright. We want to see it become a world-class city region in the South of England. We are committed to meeting the challenges of sustainable growth and we call on the Government to make the necessary investments to ensure that we can achieve our aims.

*N.B. This is a provisional statement which is subject to formal approval by some authorities through their normal constitutional arrangements*