

THE SOUTH EAST PLAN – REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH EAST (May 2009)

This guidance note has been prepared jointly by Barton Willmore and the Home Builders Federation

CONTEXT

Following the publication of the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the South East Plan in July 2008, the final South East Plan was published on 6th May 2009. **Note: All references to "changes" throughout this note are changes from the contents of the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes of July 2008, unless otherwise stated.**

HOUSING

The regional housing figure is 32,700 (2006-2026), 425 dwellings per annum (dpa) lower than the 33,125 (2006-2026) recommended by the Secretary of State in her Proposed Changes, albeit an increase of 13% above the level set out in the draft plan submitted by SEERA in March 2006.

The final regional housing figure falls well short of the expected increase in the number of households of about 40,000 per year in the South East to 2026 and the Government's Housing and Planning Advice Unit findings that at least 37,800 dpa and up to 49,700 dpa should be considered if housing demand and affordability problems are to be addressed.

A fundamental change from the approach advocated in the previous version of the Plan is that housing allocations to local authorities are no longer to be treated as a minimum and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are no longer encouraged to test higher numbers or to plan for an "upward trajectory" of housing completions.

Future reviews of the RSS will need to take into account any announcements on Eco-towns. The review will enable confirmed Eco-town proposals and additional Growth Points to be assessed and brought forward.

Sub-regional indicative targets for affordable housing are to take precedence over the regional target which is for 25% social rented and 10% intermediate affordable housing. Higher targets for affordable housing are set for the London Fringe; Gatwick; and Central Oxfordshire Sub-regions.

An overall regional density target of 40 dwellings per hectare is confirmed.

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Growth, regeneration and economic activity will be focused on, or accessible to, 22 regional hubs and Strategic Development Areas (SDA). The hubs are Ashford, Aylesbury, Basingstoke, Brighton, Canterbury, Crawley-Gatwick, Dover, Ebbsfleet, Guildford, Hastings, High Wycombe, Maidstone, Medway Towns, Milton Keynes, Oxford, Portsmouth, Reading, Reigate-Redhill, Slough, Southampton, Tonbridge-Tunbridge Wells and Woking.

The final plan identifies 7 Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) but deletes the proposed SDA East of the M1 Motorway, Milton Keynes, which, together with other possible alternatives, is to be the subject of further investigation. The SDAs are:

1. South East Milton Keynes
2. South West Milton Keynes
3. Fareham, Hampshire
4. North of Hedge End, Hampshire
5. Whitehill/Bordon, Hampshire
6. South of Oxford
7. Shoreham, West Sussex



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Support is given for the development of clusters and for six key economic sectors: digital media; marine technologies; health technologies; environmental technologies and services; built environment; and aerospace and defence.

Local Authorities are to review all employment (including mixed use) land allocations and unsuitable land is to be reallocated for other purposes. Strategic employment land will be identified and focused at locations identified in the sub-regional strategy and at hubs or gateways. Indicative job numbers are identified for each sub-region but these are for monitoring purposes only.

GREEN BELTS/STRATEGIC GAPS

Selective reviews of Green Belt will take place at north and north east Guildford and (possibly) south of Woking; south of Oxford and at the former DERA site at Chertsey. Smaller scale reviews are envisaged elsewhere including Redhill-Reigate and at Tunbridge Wells if needed. The deletion of Strategic Gap Policy is confirmed.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

No significant changes have been made to policies covering sustainable design and construction.

Any LPA seeking sustainable construction in advance of national timescales will need to demonstrate local circumstances that warrant such an approach and must set out their requirements in development plan documents. Policy NRM11 encourages the use of renewable energy in line with national guidance thus referring to “decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources”. Targets (to be “ambitious but viable”) should be set out in development plan documents.

Until these are produced, the Plan confirms an interim target of 10% of energy in all developments of more than 10 dwellings (or 1,000 m² of other floorspace) to be secured from “decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources”. LPAs are to set local targets and Integrated Combined Heat and Power (CHP) is to be encouraged. Cross Cutting Policy CC2 adds a target of reducing the region’s carbon dioxide emissions progressively to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

There will be greater emphasis on provision and management of existing and new green space, including recognition that domestic gardens can form part of networks of Green Infrastructure. The previous focus on biodiversity is broadened to include landscape, recreation, water management and social and cultural benefits. This will be particularly important at Regional Hubs and SDAs.

THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPA

SANGS (sustainable accessible natural greenspace), and other forms of mitigation will be provided in perpetuity, at the rate of 8ha/1,000 population within a 5km (linear) zone of influence. A 400m exclusion zone for new residential development is prescribed within which mitigation measures are unlikely to be effective. Only in exceptional circumstances may this vary. On larger developments bespoke solutions may be required which deliver not only SANGS but also green infrastructure and recreational benefits.

Any different standards or thresholds which are proposed locally must be agreed with Natural England.

SOUTH HAMPSHIRE SUB-REGION

There are no fundamental changes made for this Sub-region. The housing requirement for the Sub-region remains at 80,000 dwellings for the period 2006-26. The 2 SDAs at Fareham and North of Hedge End are allocated.

Policy SH3 identifies the delivery of 59,000 new jobs in the Sub-region during the period 2006-26. In particular, Eastleigh Borough is to prioritise bringing forward the South Hampshire Strategic Employment Area with capacity for 130 hectares.

SUSSEX COAST SUB-REGION

The housing requirement is lower as a result of a reduction at Brighton & Hove. Total requirement is for 69,300 dwellings 2006-26. Shoreham Harbour is identified as a New Growth Point for mixed use development including 10,000 dwellings as an interim figure, subject to more detailed testing including through the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

Sustainable urban extensions to be provided in Arun, Chichester (at the city or other sustainable locations in the District if this is not possible), and at Rother and Wealden Districts, to include new employment allocations.

EAST KENT AND ASHFORD SUB-REGION

No major changes have been made to the Sub-regional Strategy. The housing requirement is unchanged at 56,700, some 8,700 (18%) above the level in the draft Plan.

40% of the Sub-regional housing requirement will be delivered at the Ashford Growth Area. Dover is identified as a New Growth Point with a requirement for 10,100 dwellings (2006-26).

KENT THAMES GATEWAY SUB-REGION

No material changes have been made for this Sub-region. The housing requirement remains unchanged at 52,140 dwellings over the Plan period, 4,140 (8%) above the level in the draft Plan.

LONDON FRINGE SUB-REGION

The housing requirement is reduced by 740 dwellings (2006-2026) to reflect a lower allocation to Reigate and Banstead (see also Gatwick Sub-region) due to constraints within the Borough and the high level of growth already proposed. The final requirement is 47,880 dwellings (2006-2026).

The broad extent of the Green Belt will be protected but proposed urban extensions will require selective/small-scale reviews where housing needs cannot be met within urban areas (Policy LF3). This includes urban extensions at North East Guildford (for 2,000 dwellings), and possibly at Woking (South of Woking). Also smaller scale reviews are signalled at other locations including at Redhill/Reigate.

2,500 dwellings are planned at the former DERA site at Chertsey (Policy LF6) to come forward from 2016 subject to detailed planning and Green Belt Review.

40% of new housing in the Sub-region should be affordable.



WESTERN CORRIDOR AND BLACKWATER VALLEY SUB-REGION

The housing requirement is unchanged at 102,100 dwellings. However, following the deletion of the proposed SDA south west of Reading in the Proposed Changes, no replacement capacity has been identified to meet the needs of the Greater Reading Area.

Development is to be focused at regional and sub-regional hubs (Basingstoke, High Wycombe, Reading, Slough, Bracknell, Maidenhead and Newbury), with sustainable greenfield allocations focussed at the periphery of Basingstoke, Reading, Bracknell and Newbury. Smaller allocations which meet the same sustainability considerations may be brought forward elsewhere.

Green Belt boundaries should not be inviolate if the economy is to be supported and a “step-change” in housing delivery is to be achieved. There are areas including Maidenhead where it is likely that Green Belt alterations will provide the most sustainable option.

Berkshire authorities should carefully review the continued use of Gap policies in their development plans to ensure they have a continuing justification and don't duplicate other protection policies.

The Sub-region is to accommodate a minimum of 79,300 jobs 2006-16. A need for 40-60ha of new employment land is identified for north Hampshire principally at Basingstoke. A new science park related to the University of Reading is signalled in the vicinity of development south of the M4 at Shinfield/Spencers Wood/Three Mile Cross.

CENTRAL OXFORDSHIRE SUB-REGION

The housing requirement is unaltered at 40,680 dwellings. At least 40% of all new housing should be affordable. There is allowance for some flexibility in the distribution of housing within districts.

Emphasis is placed on growth within and immediately adjacent to Oxford to reflect the Oxford – Cambridge Arc and foster an axis of development between Didcot and Wantage/Grove.

Development at the Didcot Growth Point will include 6,000 dwellings in South Oxfordshire and 2,750 dwellings in Vale of White Horse District, to be agreed through a joint DPD.

A review of the Green Belt is required to accommodate the South Oxford SDA through a joint DPD. Reference to delivery of this SDA “in the longer term” has been deleted.

Job growth of 18,000 is indicated for the period 2006-16.

MILTON KEYNES AND AYLESBURY VALE SUB-REGION

52,350 dwellings are allocated to Milton Keynes of which 41,360 are in the Unitary Authority area; 5,390 in an SDA south west of the city in Aylesbury Vale District; and 5,600 in Bedfordshire, to be allocated through a review of the East of England Plan. Of the 41,360 dwellings within Milton Keynes UA, 4,800 are to be within the SDA to the south-east (with the SDA then extending into Bedfordshire).

A possible SDA East of the M1 Motorway for at least 5,600 dwellings has been deleted pending further testing of this and other possible locations for growth.

In Aylesbury Vale District provision is made for 26,890 dwellings comprising 5,390 in the south west of Milton Keynes SDA, 16,300 in the Growth Area around Aylesbury Town, and 4,700 dwellings in the rest of the District. Reference to opportunities for growth at Leighton Linlade has been deleted.

The jobs target for Milton Keynes is increased to 44,350 and for Aylesbury Vale to 21,500 – 1 job per new home (taking into account smart growth).

GATWICK AREA SUB-REGION

The housing requirement is reduced to 36,000 to reflect lower figures for Reigate and Banstead.

Existing locations for growth are confirmed at Crawley, Horsham, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Horley. If these sites cannot be delivered, LPAs should identify alternatives to meet housing requirements.

In Mid Sussex, expansion will take place to the West and South-west of East Grinstead. Burgess Hill may also have potential for longer-term growth.

AREAS OUTSIDE SUB-REGIONS

Few changes have been made to these provisions although housing provision for Winchester District (outside South Hampshire Sub-region) is reduced by 500 (25 dpa) and the level of housing provision in the ‘rest of Buckinghamshire’ is reduced by 120 dpa as a result of corrections to the figures relating to growth at Milton Keynes.

Whitehill/Bordon SDA in East Hampshire District is identified for a mixed use development including 5,500 dwellings.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells/Tonbridge are confirmed as the only Regional Hubs outside of a defined Sub-Region, with their respective housing provision remaining at the higher level of 11,080 units and 6,000/9,000 as per the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes.

NEXT STEPS

There is no longer a commitment to an early review of the Plan.



District/Strategic Development Area	Draft Plan dpa	Government's Proposed Changes dpa	Final Plan dpa (* = changed)
Adur		105	105
Shoreham Harbour	130	500	500
Arun	465	565	565
Ashford	1,135	1,135	1,135
Aylesbury Vale	1,060	1,345	1,345
Basingstoke & Deane	825	945	945
Bracknell Forest	539	639	639
Brighton & Hove	550	620	570*
Canterbury	360	510	510
Cherwell	590	670	670
Chichester	430	480	480
Chiltern	120	145	145
Crawley	350	375	375
Dartford	785	867	867
Dover	305	505	505
East Hampshire		260	260
Whitehill/Bordon	260	275	275
Eastbourne	240	240	240
Eastleigh	354	354	354
Elmbridge	231	281	281
Epsom & Ewell	181	199	199
Fareham	186	186	186
Fareham SDA	500	500	500
Gosport	125	125	125
Gravesham	465	465	465
Guildford	322	422	422
Hart	200	220	220
Hastings	210	210	210
Havant	315	315	315
Horsham	620	650	650
Isle of Wight	520	520	520
Lewes	220	220	220
Maidstone	410	554	554
Medway	815	815	815
Mid Sussex	705	855	855
Milton Keynes	2,440	2,348	2,068*
Mole Valley	171	188	188

District/Strategic Development Area	Draft Plan dpa	Government's Proposed Changes dpa	Final Plan dpa (* = changed)
New Forest		196	196
New Forest National Park	207	11	11
North East/North of Hedge End SDA	300	300	300
Oxford	350	400	400
S Oxford SDA	0	200	200
Portsmouth	735	735	735
Reading	521	611	611
Reigate & Banstead	387	562	500*
Rother	280	280	280
Runnymede	146	286	286
Rushmoor	310	310	310
Sevenoaks	155	165	165
Shepway	255	290	290
Slough	235	315	315
South Bucks	90	94	94
South Oxfordshire	510	547	547
Southampton	815	815	815
Spelthorne	151	166	166
Surrey Heath	187	187	187
Swale	415	540	540
Tandridge	112	125	125
Test Valley	446	501	501
Thanet	325	375	375
Tonbridge & Malling	425	450	450
Tunbridge Wells	250	300	300
Vale of White Horse	575	578	578
Waverley	230	250	250
Wealden	400	550	550
West Berkshire	525	525	525
West Oxfordshire	335	365	365
Windsor & Maidenhead	281	346	346
Winchester	522	637	612*
Woking	242	292	292
Wokingham	523	623	623
Worthing	200	200	200
Wycombe	330	390	390

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– REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

FOR THE SOUTH EAST (May 2009)

SUMMARY TABLES

Sub-regions	Draft Plan dpa	Government's Proposed Changes dpa	Final Plan dpa (* = Changed)
Sub-regions			
South Hampshire	4,000	4,000	4,000
Sussex Coast	2,700	3,515	3,465*
East Kent & Ashford	2,400	2,835	2,835
Kent Thames Gateway	2,400	2,607	2,607
London Fringe	1,868	2,431	2,394*
Western Corridor Blackwater Valley	4,476	5,105	5,105
Milton Keynes & Aylesbury Vale	3,500	3,573	3,413*
Central Oxfordshire	1,700	2,034	2,034
Gatwick	1,650	1,825	1,800*
Total sub-regions	24,694	27,925	27,653* (-272)
Outside the 9 sub-regions			
Isle of Wight	520	520	520
Rest of Hampshire	800	1,245	1,220*
Rest of West Sussex	300	330	330
Rest of East Sussex	300	330	330
Rest of Kent	1,200	1,444	1,444
Rest of Surrey	230	250	250
Rest of Berkshire	50	50	50
Rest of Oxfordshire	660	726	726
Rest of Buckinghamshire	150	305	185*
Total Rest of County areas inc IoW	4,210	5,200	5,055* (-145)
Total	28,904	33,125	32,700* (-425)

