



GOVERNMENT OFFICE  
FOR THE SOUTH EAST

***Matter 8Bii / South Hampshire: Housing & Countryside***

***Government Office for the South East of England (7447)***

Draft RSS for The South East of England -The South East Plan  
Examination in Public - November 2006 to March 2007  
Written Statement on behalf of HM Government - December 2006

***NB: The publication of PPS3 may necessitate a revision of government statements relating to housing and affordability when the full implications of the PPS for regional spatial strategy have been established.***

**8Bii.1 Is the proposed housing provision figure for the sub-region at the most appropriate level, taking account of social, environmental, economic and other factors (Pol SH12)?**

- 1 The Government recognised the potential for economic and housing growth in the Urban South Hampshire area, and the favourable environment created through the level of co-operation demonstrated by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire. This contributed to PUSH being one of the successful 4 big partnerships awarded New Growth Point (NGP) status in England.
- 2 As part of the NGP status PUSH were asked to demonstrate how the proposed growth would meet Government's sustainable development objectives. The NGP funding will help:
  - enable partners to identify and plan for the additional water supply, sewerage, waste and other environmental infrastructure their proposals require. They will then be able to show how these needs will be addressed when their specific detailed proposals come forward;
  - achieve more sustainable travel outcomes, for example through the design and location of new development encouraging greater use of bus, cycling and walking and minimising any increase in long distance commuting. We will continue to encourage partners to exploit existing public transport networks in determining the most sustainable locations for growth but we recognise that additional infrastructure will also be needed.
- 3 An important aspect of implementation is the deliverability of the infrastructure necessarily associated with housing growth. A condition for New Growth Point Status is that PUSH progress with studies and other work to assess the scale and feasibility of delivering New Growth Point housing levels. As this stage no unresolvable impediments to delivery have been identified.

**8Bii.2 Is the level of affordable housing justified and capable of being implemented (Policy SH13)?**

- 1 We note that policy SH13 differs from the affordable housing policies in other sub-regions and the Plan more generally. We have concerns in relation to the application of blanket targets for affordable housing at the regional and sub-regional level and these concerns are outlined in our statement on Matter 4A.

**8Bii.3 Are the proposals for the SDAs justified and appropriate (Policy SH2)? How will they contribute to meeting the need for socio-economic regeneration of parts of the sub-region, particularly in its urban centres? In the absence of detailed assessment, is the specificity about the SDA locations appropriate? Is the approach to phasing set out in paragraph 2.6 realistic and achievable?**

- 1 We suggest that the Panel consider testing the evidence base which supports the SDA proposals, in particular how the infrastructure which is required to support new communities, such as education, health care, etc, can be provided. The introduction of the SDAs post 2016 would increase travel demand between the SDAs and the main centres of employment and services, and we would ask the Panel to consider whether the sub-regional strategy is coherent, achievable and consistent with the sub-regional objectives.
- 2 If the Panel support the SDA proposals, we would need a clear policy in the South East Plan to guide the preparation of DPDs. This policy must provide sufficient detail about the location and timing of the proposals so that there is no delay in DPD preparation and adoption.

**8Bii.4 In all other respects, is the proposed apportionment of the overall housing provision figures to the Districts at the most appropriate level, taking account of the balance between brownfield/ greenfield, and other socio-economic and environmental factors?**

- 1 We are not in a position to comment on the proposed apportionment of the housing provision figures within the sub-region, but our statements on Matters 1G and 1H sets out our position with respect to the level of housing and the sub-regional distribution overall.

**8Bii.5 How should the relationship between employment growth and release of housing land be managed (Policy SH5)?**

- 1 We would not support a complex and highly mechanistic approach to this relationship, however we would wish to see a broad alignment between the demand and supply for labour to facilitate sustainable economic growth. Once the strategy for the sub-region has been finalised in the South East Plan we would expect local authorities to bring forward DPDs that fully conform with that strategy. The local community, development interests and infrastructure providers require certainty about the location and timing of development.

**8Bii.6 Is the policy for Strategic Gaps properly justified (Policy SH3)?**

- 1 GOSE questioned the need for, and the detail of, gaps policy per se in the SEP under Matter 2B.3. The SEP contains various general (CC10b) and sub-regional (SH 2, SH3, KTG10, WCBV8, GAT1) policies that deal explicitly or implicitly with gaps. However, it appears far from clear whether they do so in a joined up, consistent fashion. It would appear that the sub-regional policies are remnants of past Structure Plans, each with a somewhat different background, purpose and extent. Policy SH3 is a prime example of this. Consequently, it is unclear, for example whether:
  - SH3 that names various gaps that already exist in the Structure Plan/Local Plans complies with CC10b and, if it does not, what the particular local justifications are for a different approach.
  - paragraph 2.8 that states that the SH3 gaps should be designated in LDDs, is consistent with para 2.10 that merely suggests they should be considered for adoption in LDDs.
  - on the basis that paragraph 2.9 accepts that the gaps named therein do not fulfil the regional criteria and are not strategic there is any added value in naming them in a strategic document.
- 2 If the Panel concludes that there is a continuing need for a strategic gap type policy, they may wish to also make recommendations in order to ensure that a joined up, consistent approach is taken with regards to the criteria for identification and use of gaps across the region as a whole.