

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND
REGIONAL HOUSING BOARD**

Date: 16 January 2007

Subject: **Regional Housing Strategy – draft for consultation**

Report of: Regional Housing Board Project Team

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Board approve the contents of this report as forming part of the consultation document.

Purpose of Report:

This report sets out the proposed wording for the first part of the consultation document for the review of the Regional Housing Strategy.

Key Issues:

The primary purpose of the consultation is to provide an opportunity to seek views of stakeholders on issues that will directly affect the Board's advice on the allocation of the housing element of the regional funding allocation for the period 2008-2011. The consultation draft takes into account both the changing policy context and new evidence now available. The review process:

- Has produced evidence of improving delivery of affordable housing and greater understanding of stock condition issues against a backdrop of continuing housing need with an increased focus on homelessness and overcrowding.
- Highlights emerging tensions between current levels of public investment in housing and the cost of providing the size, type and tenure of affordable housing where it is needed.
- Identifies the importance of using public funds effectively by assessing the financial viability of development sites and meeting housing need on a sub-regional basis while recognising that work is not sufficiently far advanced to put these approaches at the heart of the strategy.
- shows how the RHS can integrate housing and wider strategic objectives by shifting the balance of investment in new affordable housing further towards social rented housing and focusing on locations with the potential for growth.
- Recognises the continuing importance of supporting thriving rural communities and vulnerable groups and households.

Regional Housing Strategy Review – 2007

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The South East England Regional Housing Board (RHB) is due to submit its advice on the allocation of the housing element of the Regional Funding Allocation in summer 2007. The recommendations will cover the three year period 2008/09 to 2010/11. As in previous years the Board's recommendations will address the allocation of funds between different areas of housing investment and its spatial distribution across the region.
- 1.2 The current version of the Regional Housing Strategy was published in July 2005. The way forward set out in it remains the foundation for the preparation of the region's advice on funding priorities. However there is a need to ensure that the advice takes into account the outcome of more recent research and information, and builds upon the region's submission on Regional Funding Allocations – "Investing in our future prosperity and quality of life" – submitted in January 2006.
- 1.3 The RHB therefore invites stakeholders in the region to comment on the proposals set out in this document.

2. National Policy Context

- 2.1 The policy context within which planning for housing takes place continues to undergo substantial change as a result of recent policy announcements by the Government.
- 2.2 Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) – Housing
 - 2.2.1 This was published in November 2006. As the national policy statement for housing its key objective is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. The aim is to ensure that the planning system is used in a positive way to deliver an identified level of growth having taken into account need and demand. It seeks to ensure that these should be high quality homes that are well designed, make the best use of land, are energy efficient, employ sustainable methods of construction and contribute to the wider goal of a more sustainable pattern of development. However the publication of PPS3 raises a number of issues the practical implications of which have yet to be fully understood.
 - 2.2.2 The importance attached to the role of Housing Market Assessments is supported in principle by the RHB. The pilot projects were a Board initiative. It invited sub-regional partnerships to undertake housing market assessments based on the draft guidance issued by government. Four local authority partnerships, covering five proposed housing market areas, joined the pilot group: the former county of Berkshire, Hastings and Rother, Oxfordshire and the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH).

- 2.2.3 An initial summary of the experience gained through the pilot projects was circulated to local authorities by the Board in September 2006.
- 2.2.4 However it is clear that issues relating to defining housing market areas, skills, use of secondary data and, notably, the long term role played by housing markets and how they relate to other geographical and partnership frameworks require further clarification before a full programme of housing market assessments could be carried out.
- 2.2.5 It is also clear that further work is required to ensure that the spatial planning framework set out in the draft South East Plan is properly reflected in the development of the partnerships required to undertake the work on housing market assessments.
- 2.2.6 The Board will continue to work with Government and local authorities to ensure that these issues are properly addressed in taking forward the concept of housing market assessments.
- 2.2.7 PPS3 highlights the importance of ensuring that public sector investment in housing results in a mixture of properties, both in terms of size and tenure that contribute to a balanced housing market. Research into this issue is ongoing within the region reflecting a growing concern that there is an imbalance in the housing market. In particular there is a concern that insufficient attention is being given to ensuring an adequate supply of family sized homes in the social rented sector.
- 2.3 Planning Gain Supplement (PGS)
 - 2.3.1 The Government has announced its intention to proceed with the proposal to introduce a Planning Gain Supplement as a mechanism through which a greater proportion of the uplift in land value realised through development is recovered by society.
 - 2.3.2 As part of the package of measures associated with the introduction of PGS it is proposed to make changes to the scope of planning obligations, commonly known as Section 106 agreements. While it is planned to retain affordable housing contributions within the future scope of planning obligations the details of how such obligations will be determined remain a subject for further consultation by Government.
- 2.4 Code for Sustainable Homes
 - 2.4.1 This new national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes, developed from the existing BRE EcoHomes system, was launched by Government in December 2006. Full technical guidance on how to comply with the Code will be published in April 2007. BRE will continue to maintain and operate the EcoHomes scheme during the transition to the Code.
 - 2.4.2 The code will lead to a “star rating” for new homes that enables purchasers to take an informed view on the quality of a new home. The rating will be determined on the basis of an assessment of the homes impact in terms of energy, water, waste, materials, pollution, management, ecology and health/wellbeing.

- 2.4.3 A one star home will be the entry level, while six stars reflects exemplar development in sustainability terms, a “carbon neutral” home. The code introduces minimum standards for energy and water efficiency at every level so high sustainability performance is required in all areas to achieve a high rating.
- 2.5 Decent Homes to Decent Communities
- 2.5.1 This discussion document considers how local authorities and housing associations can harness the energy and direction of the decent homes programme to create decent communities. This would require funding streams to be aligned if not combined and action on a multi agency basis. The existing target for decent homes of 2010 would be relaxed in a limited number of cases where local authorities are engaged in or wishing to pursue major transformations of their assets or where an extension would ultimately secure better long term value for money.
- 2.5.2 The Board will continue to build upon the region’s submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review by identifying opportunities to improve the alignment of funding streams.
- 2.6 New Regeneration Agency
- 2.6.1 During 2006 the Government initiated a review of the support available to local authorities in their drive to create and shape prosperous and cohesive communities. The review considered how the functions of the Housing Corporation, English Partnerships and key elements of Department of Communities and Local Government (including decent homes, housing market renewal, housing delivery and urban regeneration) might be managed as part of a holistic approach to housing and regeneration.
- 2.6.2 The outcome of the review is awaited and the Board will consider the extent to which it may have an implication for the delivery of affordable housing in the region.
- 2.7 Design for Manufacture Competition
- 2.7.1 This competition was announced by the Deputy Prime Minister in April 2005 as a potential means of addressing the pressure of increased construction costs and was run by English Partnerships. The competition demonstrated that it is possible to build a high-quality home for a construction cost of £60,000. The nine successful Stage Two winners have been invited to bid to build their designs on one or more of the 10 publicly-owned sites made available as part of the initiative. Six of these sites are in the region.
- 2.7.2 The Board will continue to monitor progress with the competition and it will seek to ensure that the experience gained is applied to the construction of new homes in the region.
- 2.8 Housing Corporation - Future Approaches to Investment

- 2.8.1 In autumn 2006 the Housing Corporation (HC) consulted on proposals designed to ensure that its investment programme achieves greater certainty of delivery and real efficiency gains. These included proposals for longer term funding of strategic sites to be determined by the Regional Housing Board and the possibility of leaving a proportion of the National Affordable Housing programme as uncommitted at the bid stage in order to provide a degree of flexibility at the delivery stage.
- 2.8.2 The Board expects any changes arising from the consultation to influence the allocation of funds for the period beyond 2008.
- 2.9 Homelessness Strategy
 - 2.9.1 The HC launched its Homelessness Strategy in November 2006 with its emphasis as much on homelessness prevention measures as new affordable housing provision. On-going support to prevent homelessness and to enable households to remain in their homes is as important as the provision of new homes.
 - 2.9.2 The South East Homelessness Forum has been established to encourage the provision of housing advice to a consistent standard through the region and to ensure continued progress in tackling homelessness. The Board will continue to support the work of the Forum.

3. Regional Policy Context

- 3.1 Since the publication of the Regional Housing Strategy in 2005 the regional policy context has continued to be developed through the work associated with the Draft South East Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy.
- 3.2 The South East Plan
 - 3.2.1 The Draft South East Plan was submitted to Government in March 2006. It is currently undergoing an Examination in Public before an independent panel of Inspectors. The EiP is scheduled to run until the end of March 2007, following which the Panel will submit its report to the Secretary of State. The Government's response to the Panel's report is anticipated towards the end of 2007.
 - 3.2.2 The policy framework within the Draft South East Plan identifies a need to provide an annual average of 28,900 net additional dwellings over the twenty year period to 2026. The evidence base underpinning the Plan provides the basis for identifying a need for 25% of new housing to be social rented, with a further 10% provided in the form of other forms of affordable housing. Sub-regional variations to these figures are identified in the sub regional strategies where there is a suitable evidence base. In order to fulfil this policy requirement the region needs to deliver (on average) 7,225 social rented homes and 2,890 other forms of affordable housing per annum – a total of 10,115 homes per annum.

- 3.2.3 The draft South East Plan identifies nine sub-regional areas and one special policy area for which specific policies have been developed in response to an identified policy deficit. Further work is required to fully understand the nature of the relationship between these areas and the areas covered by housing market assessments.
- 3.2.4 The policy emphasis within the draft South East Plan remains on focusing new development in the region's urban areas. The Plan identifies a requirement that over the 20 year lifetime of the Plan at least 60% of additional housing should be provided on previously developed land (brownfield). The Plan recognises the need for some housing development in rural areas in order to meet identified social and economic needs.
- 3.2.5 The Implementation Plan identifies a key role for the RHB in maximising the opportunities to act as a catalyst for the delivery of affordable housing. The importance of aligning investment strategies at regional level, and, most importantly improving the alignment of investment strategies of national agencies with regional priorities are also emphasised.
- 3.2.6 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments are being carried out across the region as required by the Housing Act 2004. The results of these assessments will inform the Partial Review of the Draft South East Plan now underway. The funding for investment in gypsy and traveller sites is currently identified at the national level. However as the evidence base gathered through the assessment work becomes available so it will be possible to provide a reasoned argument for the level of investment required.
- 3.3 The Regional Economic Strategy
- 3.3.1 The revised Regional Economic Strategy was submitted to Government in November 2006. Housing is identified as an essential part of the infrastructure needed to support the region's economy and to ensure that the region achieve sustainable prosperity while remaining competitive as a world class region.
- 3.4 Transfer of the Regional Housing Board
- 3.4.1 Responsibility for the Regional Housing Board was transferred to the Regional Assembly in April 2006. The transfer provides the opportunity for greater integration of funding to derive maximum value from public investment in housing, transport economic development and to deliver improved quality of life for residents in the region.
- 3.4.2 Continuity was a key element of the transfer arrangements and has been achieved by retaining the partnership nature of the Board, with membership continuing to be drawn from the Regional Assembly, the South East England Development Agency, GOSE, the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships. The Board is supported by three advisory groups that provide a wide range of technical expertise.

4. Updating the Evidence Base

4.1 The Regional Housing Strategy identified a number of “gaps” in the evidence base. Through its partners, the Board has commissioned a number of pieces of research that address these gaps. The need to provide further advice on funding allocations provides the Board with the opportunity to take into account the outcome of this research. It also provides the opportunity to update some of the underlying information where this is now available.

4.2 Housing Supply

4.2.1 For the year ending March 2006, 33,300 new homes were completed. The five year average for the period 2001-2006 was approximately 28,000 per annum.

4.2.2 The Board’s investment in affordable housing for 2006-08 represents a significant increase in funding compared with the previous two years. However at a regional level delivery of new build affordable housing remains below the level identified in the Draft South East Plan. The current programme is forecast to deliver 6484 units (3670 for social rented, 2814 intermediate) of grant-funded affordable housing in 2006/07 and 8152 (5414 social rented and 2738 intermediate) in 2007/08.

4.2.3 The Open Market Homebuy programme which involves providing an equity loan to enable an existing home to be purchased on the open market (and in recent years has been focused on designated 'key workers') is excluded from the above comparison as the homes are not new build.

4.2.4 The provision of affordable housing does not depend entirely on grant being available however monitoring arrangements for affordable housing have yet to be sufficiently well developed to enable a comprehensive picture of completions to be obtained. Regional partners are currently developing proposals that will improve the monitoring arrangements in this respect.

4.3 Housing Need

4.3.1 Homelessness

4.3.2 Households in priority need reported in PIE returns to DCLG were consistently in excess of 3,000 per annum until the end of 2004. More recently, reflecting the success of local authorities in developing homelessness strategies and undertaking prevention work, the trend has been downwards, reducing to 1,800 by the end of the second quarter of 2006.

4.3.3 Affordability

4.3.4 House prices in the South East have continued to rise, albeit at a slower rate than during 2001-04. According to DCLG Housing Market Statistics the 2001-05 average increase for the South East was 10.1%. However affordability remains a problem, a point borne out by recent work by Steve Wilcox on The Geography of Affordable and Unaffordable Housing (JRF, 2006).

- 4.3.5 Recent research indicates that acute affordability problems occur in urban areas within the region and are caused by a diverse range of factors which cannot be addressed by a single measure or package of measures.
- 4.3.6 The same research suggests that public subsidy could be used more effectively if financial viability issues were better understood and managed by local authorities. More effective application of public investment could release additional funds for social rented housing. The Board is committed to identifying and promoting a suitable model that will help local authorities assess financial viability of sites.
- 4.3.7 Overcrowding
- 4.3.8 It is estimated that there are approximately 58,000 overcrowded households lacking one or more bedrooms, according to the bedroom standard (the most widely recognised measure of overcrowding). The majority of these households are families with children. Provisional results of the Survey of English Housing shows a trend of reducing overcrowding rates with 57,000 households overcrowded in 2004/05.
- 4.3.9 However, overcrowding is increasing among tenant households, both in private and social rented housing. Recent research on the type and size of new housing identifies a particular problem within the social rented sector where families receive high priority under the homeless legislation, but where new provision linked to section 106 agreements now comprises a large proportion of flats with one or two bedrooms.
- 4.3.10 Sharing
- 4.3.11 The trend for Households not in Self Contained Accommodation (Survey of English Housing) also appears to be downward. The 3 year average to 2001 identifies 35,000 such households. The 3 year average to 2004 shows a reduction in the figure to 19,000.
- 4.3.12 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households
- 4.3.13 Households from Black and Minority Ethnic communities are significantly more likely to experience overcrowding and homelessness than the wider population. The Board is looking to bring a renewed focus to addressing the needs of the BME population throughout the South East. It is committed to investigating further the causes of homelessness and housing need amongst the BME communities.
- 4.4 Private sector housing
- 4.4.1 As part of the Board's programme to develop the regional evidence base it commissioned a piece of work that examined the nature, level and location of private sector housing condition. This showed that the condition of private sector housing is a particular concern in the coastal areas, including the cities of Brighton and Hove, Portsmouth and Southampton, and towns in the east of the region such as Dover, Shepway, Thanet and Swale.

However, the report also highlighted a problem in rural areas, which whilst small in scale showed an extensive geographic spread.

4.4.2 Using information from the 2003 English House Condition Survey, the research identified that:

- 28.6% of private sector stock (853,779 dwellings) fails the decent home standards
- The vast majority of non decent dwellings failed on thermal comfort considerations (74.6%), (82.3% of which due to poor insulation)
- Representation was disproportionately higher in rural areas (31.8%)
- 17% of vulnerable households were living in non decent homes and 34% of those were in the private rented sector
- Of those vulnerable households, 73.7% failed on thermal comfort criteria (high % in rural areas) and only 16.8% on ground of fitness (low% in rural areas).

4.4.3 Alongside this research, information has been collected from the region's local authorities on the level of their private sector renewal spend. Such work is funded partly through monies made available through the Board and partly from local authorities own resources.

4.4.4 In overall terms the total spend has reduced by approximately 50% in the last three years, from £45m in 2002/03 to £23m in 2005/06. The reasons for the fall are not clear but the general pressures on authorities' budgets, linked to declining receipts from Right to Buy sales in many authorities, is undoubtedly a factor. The need to commit increasing amounts of their own resources to fund mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) is a significant element of the pressures for many authorities. Combined with the focus of the available regional funding at the 22 authorities with the greatest problem means that, from 2006/07 some authorities have little or no private sector spend beyond DFGs.

4.4.5 The 22 authorities in receipt of regional funding for the period 2006/2008 were free to design their own programmes, having regard to the broad guidelines set out in the Regional Housing Strategy. The activity falls into four themes:

- Energy efficiency (13% of regional spend)
- Private sector Decent Homes PSA7 (51% of spend)
- Private Rented Sector (20% of spend)
- Empty Properties (16% of spend)

4.4.6 Local authorities' current private sector renewal programmes cover quite a wide range of different activities which complicates the view on what additional funding would provide.

In very broad terms £1 million allocated to private sector renewal could transform the dwellings of 200 vulnerable households or provide a warm home for 333 vulnerable families (with attendant result of alleviating fuel poverty and addressing HHSRS “Excess Cold” Hazard 1) while a similar amount could produce 22 additional affordable homes (16 social rent and 6 intermediate housing for example).

4.4.7 The results of the research has led the Board to conclude that action needs to be targeted in three ways:

- promotion of the use of loans/equity release products to fund improvement work rather than grants and the benefits of joint working by LAs
- a clearer focus on the outputs/outcomes delivered through the RHP funding; and
- a need for improved integration across funding streams, particularly Warm Front, and agencies involved in action to improve the living conditions of vulnerable households.

4.4.8 The 30,000 long-term empty homes in the region offer the potential to increase overall housing supply. While many vacant properties will return to use there remains in each district a hard core of longer-term properties which attract social problems. Some areas have demonstrated that a robust approach to finding and incentivising absentee owners can bring accommodation into use with relatively low financial support. A proportion (16%) of the Board’s current programme of investment in private sector renewal is being used in this way.

4.5 Rural affordable housing need

4.5.1 Research commissioned by the Board sought to identify levels of affordable housing need in rural areas and provide advice on the adequacy of current levels of provision in the Regional Housing Strategy. The findings indicated that the backlog of rural affordable housing need could be addressed by the provision of 350 new affordable homes per year over a ten year period and that the number of new households unable to afford market purchase or private rents form at the rate of 950 per year.

4.5.2 In considering the research results the Board noted that there is no proven economic case for increasing the emphasis given to targeting public sector funds towards investment in small villages. In particular there is no evidence that providing affordable housing in such circumstances will guarantee the sustainability of communities. In this context the nature of the relationship between the small villages and their market towns is more critical and supporting the role of these larger rural communities offers a more sustainable solution to housing need.

4.5.3 In taking the work forward the Board is minded to:

- Maintain the current level of funding for affordable housing in rural areas
- Emphasise that investment in specific rural settlements should be based on evidence of local housing need and of a sustainable future (i.e. local employment, transport and other infrastructure)
- Emphasise that increased attention should be given to making effective use of the existing housing stock in rural areas by addressing empty homes and poor private sector conditions.

4.5.4 The Board's research recommended a definition of rural areas that would better reflect the Rural and Urban Area Classification 2004. The HC is currently tasked with reporting on rural settlements of less than 3000 population. This aligns with the definition for small rural (or "market") towns used in the draft South East Plan as being between 3,000 and 10,000 population. The Board is therefore minded to retain this definition for the 2008-11 programme.

4.6 Supported housing

4.6.1 An area identified in the Regional Housing Strategy as requiring further work was the provision of supported housing and links with support services funded through Supporting People. Research was commissioned to produce an overview of the 19 Supporting People strategies in the region, to consider options for improving effectiveness of delivery through joint working and to consider the need for clearer links between the Regional Housing Strategy and the Supporting People strategies.

4.6.2 The research highlighted both the need for access to mainstream affordable housing, particularly for move-on accommodation as a means of tackling blockages in supported housing supply, and for increased provision of supported housing. Supported housing provision in the region is currently the lowest in the country at around 5%.

4.6.3 The Board is keen to ensure that the needs for supported housing are met, however it is clear from the research that further work is required in order to be able to distinguish between general needs housing for particular client groups and the need for specialist supported housing. As a consequence of this gap in the evidence base the Board feel it is inappropriate to identify a target level of funding, however it is keen to encourage funding for such measures to continue at current levels.

4.7 Accommodation Needs of Young Ex-offenders

4.7.1 Following discussion between the Board and the National Offender Management Service, a survey of current practice in Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) has been carried out. This work is still in progress but it is clear from initial findings that a considerable proportion of young people who were YOT clients and who became or were at risk of becoming homeless were not obtaining access to suitable accommodation to which they were entitled.

- 4.7.2 The Board will continue to work with the NOMS to ensure that mechanisms are developed through existing structures to secure the availability and integration of suitable accommodation, advice and support services for young ex-offenders.
- 4.8 Older people
- 4.8.1 Although no work has been undertaken with a specific focus on older people, their housing needs and aspirations have emerged strongly as a common theme in all our research. It is clear that many of the smaller households identified in household projections are existing, older households occupying larger homes which they may find difficult to maintain and that current provision does not offer attractive alternatives to them. The Board is committed to taking forward as a priority research that will address this gap in the regional evidence base.
- 4.9 Conclusion
- 4.9.1 Evidence of housing supply and need suggests that the picture is generally improving and that affordable housing is making an important contribution to overall housing completions. However, current provision falls short of the assessed requirement that 70% of new affordable housing should be social rented. If this review is to achieve an improved balance of social rented housing of the correct size and type to meet priority need, additional public investment is required.

5. Strategic Alignment

- 5.1 The Regional Housing Strategy identifies that 20% of the regional programme will be allocated to the region's Growth Areas, 50% to the areas with the highest level of need and 30% to the remaining areas. This distribution is shown in Figure 19 of the Regional Housing Strategy. The spatial distribution was arrived at by mapping the affordability index; derived from three weighted measures, homeless households in temporary accommodation, over crowding and sharing households and housing affordability. The data sets used to produce the map remain broadly valid and while there is some updated data available for some of the measures it is unlikely that this would substantially alter the classification of local authorities.
- 5.2 If the same spatial geography were to be used there could be a case for arguing that the focus should switch from one of a percentage of the total funding available to the percentage of homes to be delivered. Such a change in emphasis would mediate against different costs across the region (e.g. in 2006-08 15% of the funding will deliver 20% of the housing numbers as a result of lower costs in the Growth Areas).
- 5.3 The draft South East Plan sets out a spatial framework for the region. The majority of the planned level of growth set out in the Plan is located within the sub-regional areas and it could be argued that this provides a more appropriate spatial geography for the allocation of regional funding.

- 5.4 The Plan identifies 21 regional hubs on the basis of their role, or potential role, as centres of economic activity with accessible transport services which should be the focus for development and investment. The RES also sets out the importance of existing centres of economic activity as providing the focus for accommodating sustainable growth supported by appropriate and timely investment in infrastructure.
- 5.5 The Board's long-term aim has been to make allocations on a sub-regional basis, with affordable homes, particularly on large sites with strategic significance, made available to meet housing need on a cross-boundary basis. With the development of the draft South East Plan and publication of the revised RES the Board is minded to change the spatial geography used in the allocation of regional funding to one that better reflects the regional policy framework.

Q1: What is the most appropriate spatial geography for the allocation of regional funding?

Q2: Should a spatial distribution of regional funding be based on a percentage of the total funding available or a percentage of the number of homes to be delivered?

Q3: Should greater priority be given to support investment in the regional hubs identified in the draft South East Plan?

- 5.6 The Board continues to recognise the contribution that large sites and strategic land releases can make to the supply of affordable housing. The Housing Corporation's consultation on Future Investment Approaches suggests that improved cost-effectiveness and quality could be achieved through moving to longer-term funding on sites of this nature. The Board will update the list of strategic sites in the Regional Housing Strategy (annex D) and make it available as part of the submission of our advice on funding allocations to Government.
- 5.7 The spatial framework set out in the draft South East Plan continues the focus of planned growth in the urban areas and sets a target that at least 60% of all new development should be on previously developed land. The overwhelming majority of development is delivered through the Plan is therefore likely to be on smaller scale sites within the existing urban fabric.

Q4: What do you think should be the appropriate balance within the funding programme between investment focused on the delivery of large scale strategic sites and that focused on smaller scale sites within the existing urban fabric?

- 5.8 The Regional Transport Board has identified a forward programme of investment in strategic transport schemes for the period to 2016.
- 5.9 Work undertaken with the Environment Agency and the water companies has identified sensitive locations within the region where water supply and/or water treatment capacity may be an issue in the ability to support planned growth. The work concludes that there are seven locations¹ within the South East where additional houses connected to the works may have significant capacity and environmental protection issues. One falls within the PUSH Growth Point and two within High Priority Investment Areas identified in the RHS 2006 in West Berkshire and Test Valley/ Winchester.
- 5.10 A further 10 locations have been identified where further studies are required. Further work is in progress within all 17 catchment locations to fully understand the implications of the issues and agree the future steps required.
- 5.11 Through the Implementation Plan the draft South East Plan has identified the infrastructure requirements that must be met in order to deliver the planned level of growth. The definition of infrastructure has been set sufficiently wide to ensure that in future the planning system deliver sustainable communities that are supported by the timely provision of infrastructure.

Q5: What weight should be given to the availability, or planned availability, of supporting infrastructure in determining priorities for regional funding?

Q6: What consideration should be given to the progress made by the relevant local authorities in reducing homelessness and introducing measures for preventing homelessness in determining priorities for regional funding?

6. Monitoring Arrangements

- 6.1 Proposals for monitoring the effectiveness of the funding programme will be developed to reflect the priorities identified by the Board in light of this consultation. Any monitoring arrangements will be consistent with the monitoring regime established as part of the draft South East Plan and RES.

¹ Location place names refer to sewerage catchments that do not necessarily coincide with administrative areas of the same name.