

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

BRIEF FOR THE PREPARATION OF A SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR SOUTH HAMPSHIRE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This project brief contains the South East Regional Assembly's specification for the preparation of a sub-regional strategy to address key cross-boundary issues in South Hampshire.
- 1.2 Work is being commissioned from the strategic planning authorities in the sub-region, namely, Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council. The Assembly expects that the strategic planning authorities will involve district councils and representatives of the social, environmental and economic sectors as appropriate in contributing to and steering the preparation of the strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places considerable emphasis on a sub-regional approach to addressing strategic cross-boundary issues both within the region and with other regions. Where necessary and clearly justified, the South East Plan will set out sub-regional policies and proposals to address a 'specific strategic policy deficit' which cannot be dealt with either by individual or joint development plan documents or by other policies in the Plan. This is in line with the policy advice given in draft Planning Policy Statement 11 'Regional Spatial Strategies'.
- 2.2 In Autumn 2003 the South East England Regional Assembly commissioned a number of sub-regional studies from steering groups involving representatives from local authorities and from the voluntary and economic sectors. Each study group was asked, drawing primarily on existing or on-going work, to identify its area's key characteristics, the main cross boundary issues it faces and the broad choices for dealing with them. The study groups were also asked to advise on whether distinct sub-regional policies are required in the South East Plan and the extent of the sub-region to be covered.
- 2.3 The completed study reports are available on the Assembly's Website at www.southeast-ra.gov.uk. The conclusions from the studies helped inform the Assembly's workshops held in May/June 2004 to discuss sub-regional issues.
- 2.4 The Regional Assembly has identified nine sub-regional areas for which it wishes further work to be undertaken by the end of October 2004 to inform the production of the public consultation draft of the South East Plan (see Figure 1). In reaching its conclusions the Assembly took into account the findings of the sub-regional studies, advice from strategic planning authorities,

views expressed at the sub-regional workshops and written responses received in connection with the Spring Debates.

- 2.5 The further work being commissioned by the Assembly in each area focuses on key sub-regional issues. It involves the development and appraisal of options for scales of change and patterns of development, advice on a preferred approach and the drafting of policies for dealing with issues that need specific treatment at the sub-regional level. Policies need to be in sufficient detail to provide a framework for the preparation of local development documents, local transport plans, community strategies and other relevant programmes, while allowing sufficient scope for local discretion.

3. Extent of the Sub-Region

- 3.1 The extent of the area is shown on Figure 2. It comprises the following:
- the whole districts of Southampton, Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Portsmouth and Havant;
 - those parts of the waterside within New Forest district not included within the proposed New Forest National Park;
 - the southern part of Test Valley Borough Council, south of the A3090 corridor, including the town of Romsey;
 - 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,
 - that part of East Hampshire district that is south of the proposed South Downs National Park.
- 3.2 It therefore includes all or part of the following administrative areas: Eastleigh Borough Council; East Hampshire District Council; Fareham Borough Council; Gosport Borough Council; Havant Borough Council; New Forest District Council; Portsmouth City Council; Southampton City Council; Test Valley Borough Council; and, Winchester City Council.
- 3.3 For data collection and analysis purposes it may be necessary to cover a wider area than that set out in para 3.1.
- 3.4 Sub-regional policies will apply to the whole of the area in para 3.1 except where further work clearly justifies further sub-division.
- 3.5 Key transport linkages with the Isle of Wight need to be taken into account in drawing up the options and policies for the sub-region.

4. Issues to be addressed

- 4.1 The overall issues to be addressed are to:
- (i) examine the housing, economic, employment and regeneration roles that the sub-region might play in the long term (ie. 20 to 30 years) and their impact on the environment and communities at sub-regional level;

- (ii) set the future role of the economy of the sub-region in the South East regional context; and
- (iii) set the future roles of Southampton and Portsmouth within the South East and how the other primary urban settlements – Fareham, Eastleigh, Havant and Gosport – will support the two cities in their roles.

4.2 The detailed issues to be addressed are those which require specific treatment in the South East Plan. They are as follows:

- (i) The broad amount (expressed in terms of hectares), type and distribution of employment development to 2021 and (in less detail) to 2026.
- (ii) The broad amount (expressed in terms of net additional dwellings and hectares), type (including affordable housing) and distribution of housing development to 2021 and (in less detail) to 2026.
- (iii) Locational criteria for sub-regionally significant development and broad locations for such development.
- (iv) Policies and mechanisms for maximising the potential for sustainable economic growth while reducing social inequalities.
- (v) Measures required to build on the strengths of the area and deal with the lack of skills in order to facilitate the regeneration of Southampton, Portsmouth and the other urban areas.
- (vi) The infrastructure required to address existing deficiencies and support sustainable development, particularly that related to transport, water supply, and to education, health and other community infrastructure.
- (vii) Delivery arrangements.

4.3 Other issues will be important in developing and appraising the options, but will not require specific sub-regional policies. Such issues include the impact of development on the trunk road network, the implications for the New Forest National Park and proposed South Downs National Park, and the implications of predicted sea level rise.

5. Developing Options

5.1 Options will need to be tested and evaluated for the levels and broad distribution of economic and housing growth to be planned for in the period to 2026, having regard to the key issues listed in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2.

5.2 The sub-regional options must consider the economic, social and environmental implications arising from different levels of development. At least two options for housing development should be tested, including:

- (i) 20 per cent above current RPG 9 rates; and,
- (ii) 40 per cent above current RPG 9 rates.

- 5.3 All options should test the relationship between different rates of economic growth (3 to 4 per cent) and the level of housing development required.
- 5.4 In developing the options account needs to be taken of:
- the revised demographic projections and employment forecasts commissioned by the Regional Assembly;
 - the Assembly's assessment of the need for affordable housing;
 - assessments of local housing need;
 - urban potential, including density and the use of previously developed land for housing;
 - local housing markets;
 - existing provisions for development;
 - strategic opportunities for capitalising on the potential regional hub focused on and to the north of Southampton Parkway/Airport;
 - the Journey to Work data from the 2001 Census;
 - initial outputs from the strategic transport model;
 - impact on quality of life;
 - strategic designations;
 - the need to provide recreational provision with the sub-regional area as alternatives to the National Parks;
 - pressures on infrastructure and natural resources and the scope for overcoming them; and,
 - the parameters agreed by the Assembly for guiding the next stages in preparing the South East Plan.
- 5.5 In parallel with the work being undertaken at sub-regional level the Regional Assembly will be developing options for the levels of growth to be accommodated at a regional level and the broad choices for distributing this development.

6. Testing and Appraising Options

- 6.1 The Assembly is combining the requirements for a sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental assessment and health impact assessment into an integrated sustainability appraisal process. A framework for the appraisal is being drawn up which should be used at the regional and sub-regional level. Further guidance on applying the framework is being prepared. While the appraisal needs to reflect local circumstances, detail which is inappropriate for a strategic study should be avoided.
- 6.2 As part of the appraisal process the impact on the quality of life in South Hampshire will need to be considered. The Assembly's Cross-Cutting Issues Group is to provide further guidance on how this element should be addressed. Each option will also need to be tested in terms of the feasibility of its delivery.
- 6.3 The strategic transport model for the South East, developed for the Assembly by TRL can be used to test sub-regional development options and the impact of various transport policies. An advice note on how the model

may be used at sub-regional level and the inputs required has been prepared by the Assembly.

- 6.4 In addition, the Assembly is working closely with the Environment Agency and the water companies in developing a better understanding of water resource/quality and flood risk issues in the region. The sub-regional strategy groups will need to be involved in subsequent more local discussions.
- 6.5 The sub-regional group should also engage the statutory agencies and utility/service providers in the development and testing of options.

7. Policy development, monitoring and implementation

- 7.1 A limited number of policies for possible inclusion in the South East Plan need to be drafted to address the issues in section 3. These should be related to a preferred option for the level and pattern of development with an indication given as to how they may need to be modified to meet the other options tested.
- 7.2 An indication of monitoring outputs needs to be given. These should link in with the regional indicators and targets being developed by the Assembly in conjunction with its Advisory Groups and with those contained in the Integrated Regional Framework.
- 7.3 It is also particularly important that initial comments should be made on appropriate implementation mechanisms and the organisations responsible for delivering policies and proposals.

8. Timetable

- 8.1 A draft report is required by the Regional Assembly by 4 October, to enable progress and initial conclusions to be reported to the Regional Planning Committee in late October.
- 8.2 A final report is required by 29 October to inform the preparation of the public consultation draft of the South East Plan to be considered by the full Assembly in November. The report should include:
 - a summary of key issues;
 - worked-up options for the level and spatial form of development;
 - a summary of the testing and appraisal of options;
 - detailing of the preferred option, including the broad phasing of development;
 - proposals for implementation and delivery; and,
 - further work required.
- 8.3 A draft of the South East Plan incorporating sub-regional policies and proposals is to be published for public consultation in early 2005. A revised draft taking into account the responses received is to be submitted to the Government Office for the South East in the summer of 2005.

9. Working arrangements and political engagement

- 9.1 The principal authorities will need to establish appropriate working arrangements to progress the sub-regional strategy in accordance with the above timetable.
- 9.2 The Assembly expects the principal authorities to involve the district councils in the area and representatives from the social, environmental and economic sectors. Arrangements also need to be agreed for liaising with Government Agencies such as the Environment Agency and other service providers, including the water and utility companies and for keeping informed local strategic partnerships and other key stakeholders.
- 9.3 The Assembly expects that the principal authorities will wish to establish a steering group and technical officer group with a similar structure and reporting arrangements to those set up to progress the initial sub-regional studies. An Assembly staff member should attend steering and officer group meetings as an advisor with representatives of SEEDA and GOSE attending the steering group as observers.
- 9.4 The local authorities and other organisations represented on the steering group may need to put in hand arrangements to enable them to consider the contents of the draft strategy to ensure that their representatives on the Group have a mandate for the submission of proposals to the Assembly.
- 9.5 It is for the Assembly to decide whether these suggestions, in whole or in part, shall form part of the Consultation Draft Plan. Publication of the Draft Plan will not imply that the sub-regional proposals have been fully agreed by the constituent authorities or indeed the Assembly. The only agreement that is necessary is to go forward with a set of options for consultation. All local authorities and other organisations will have the opportunity to comment formally on the sub-regional proposals during the public consultation period early in 2005. Engagement with the wider public is not required before then.

10. Contact details

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Figure 2: South Hampshire
Sub-regional Strategy Area

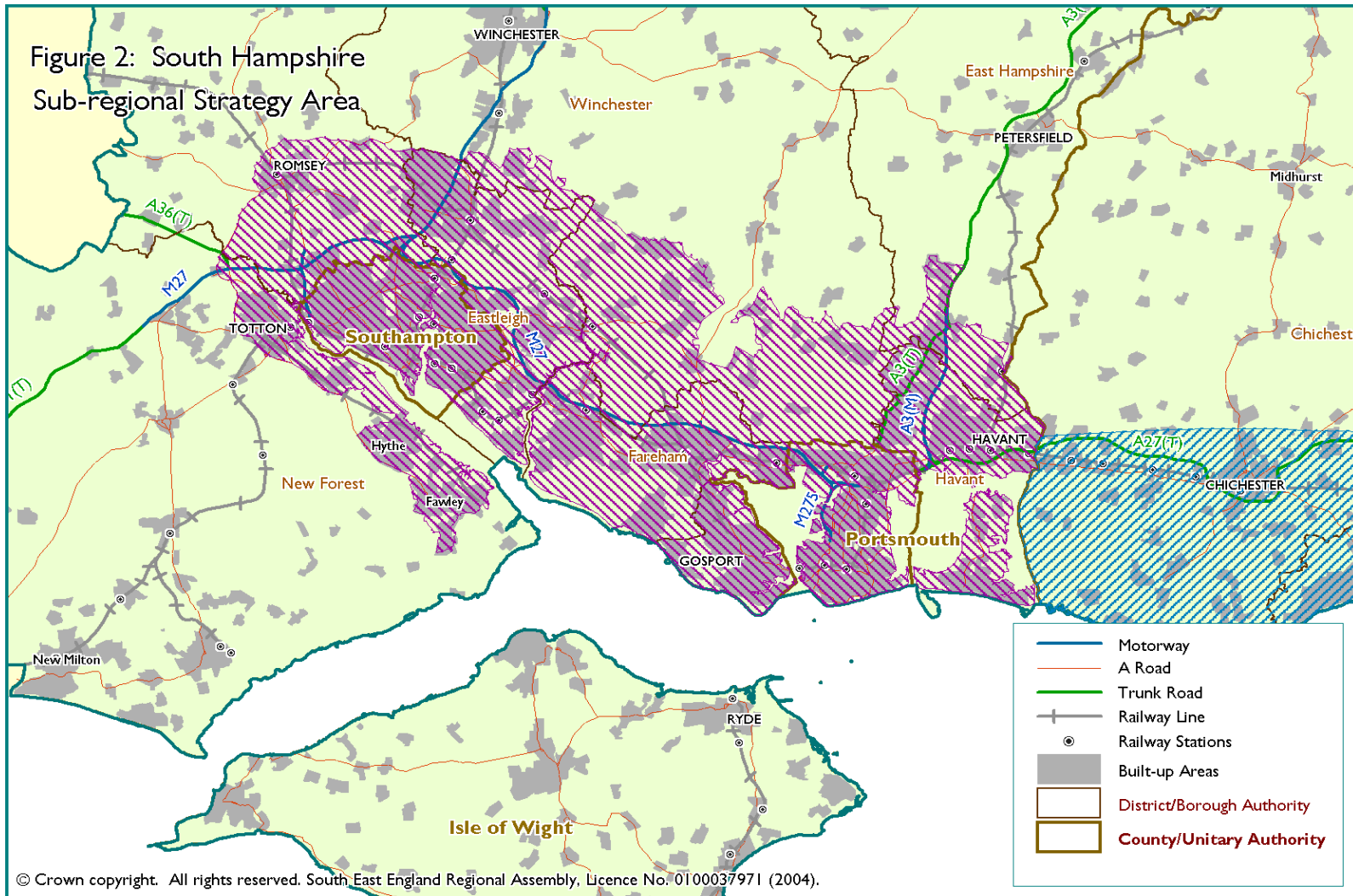


Figure I: Sub-regional Strategy Areas

