

**PROGRESS ON THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH
STRUCTURE PLAN 2003, REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR THE
EAST OF ENGLAND (RPG14) AND ASSOCIATED STUDIES
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the progress with and the future timetable for the publication of Regional Guidance and to appraise Members of the results of the Stansted /M11 Corridor Development Options Study currently out for consultation. To inform Members of the notice by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to adopt the Structure Plan on 21st October 2003.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The period of consultation following the publication of proposed modifications to the Structure plan has now ended and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have issued a final version for adoption. The modifications were the subject of a report to the Cabinet on the 5th July 2003. In that report a nil response to the Structure Plan Authorities (SPAs) was proposed. No changes have been made to the policies that were highlighted in the July report. The plan extends to 2016 although it recognises the strategic pattern of growth adopted will give capacity in the sub area for growth beyond that period.

- 2.2 Various strategies and studies have been carried out in the East of England over the last two years concerning multi modal studies (MMSs) and strategies for growth and regeneration areas. They will inform the forthcoming RPG 14 that includes the whole of the Eastern Region and extends the plan period to 2021 and will replace the Structure Plan under new proposals currently going through Parliament The following studies have been completed:

- Cambridge Sub-region study (2001);
- Cambridge-Huntingdon MMS (mid 2001);
- Norwich-Great Yarmouth study (late 2001);
- London-Stansted-Cambridge study (July 2002);
- Milton Keynes-South Midlands study (September 2002);
- London Orbital MMS (ORBIT) (October 2002);
- London-Ipswich MMS (LOIS) (December 2002);
- London-South Midlands MMS (February 2003);
- Norwich-Peterborough MMS (April 2003);
- Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft study (April 2003); and
- Harlow Options Study (August 2003).

- Stansted-M11 Corridor Development Options study;

2.3 Work is continuing on the following studies/areas of work:

- Thames Gateway; and
- Peterborough and the Fens.

2.4 The implications that arise from the deliberations of the SERAS study and the future Airports White Paper may also impact upon regional strategy but the RPG14 will not be held up to await the publication of the White Paper.

2.5 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) Communities Plan is proposing an additional 200000 homes being delivered in the growth areas of Milton Keynes, Ashford, Thames Gateway, Stansted and London. That which is to be accommodated in the London Stansted Cambridge corridor is of greatest relevance to Huntingdonshire.

2.6 Members have already considered comments on the RPG 14 options consultation launched in September 2002 at their meeting on 5th December 2002. Members expressed a desire to ensure that growth is located closer to London or in London itself and this could partly be achieved by a fundamental review of the green belt around London. They supported the investment in the Thames Gateway and also supported a spatial strategy that was linked to regeneration e.g. growth of Stansted linked to the regeneration of Harlow.

2.7 The consultation document also considered how the spatial strategy was to be implemented. It suggested dividing the region into sub areas (similar to the Cambridge sub area) that would share a common vision and work across administrative boundaries to achieve it. The Members view was that the suggestion of a Peterborough and Fens sub area did not make administrative sense. Peterborough looks as much to Lincolnshire and the East Midlands as it does to the rest of Cambridgeshire and the Fens area is unique and some of which does not relate to Peterborough

3. EMERGING REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE PROGRAMME

3.1 The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) is responsible for the preparation of regional planning guidance. As part of the submission of this guidance a number of processes will take place between October and February 2004 when EERA approves the final draft for the Regional Planning Panel (RPP) to submit to the Secretary of State. They are as follows:-

- RPP will consider first draft in October and a second draft including district housing numbers in November.
- County workshops will be held in November and December before the final draft is considered by RPP in January 2004.

3.2 The Government Office is responsible for progressing the draft RPG to adoption as follows:-

- They will publish the draft RPG14 in March 2004 and there will be 12 week period of consultation.

- A public examination chaired by Corrine Swain with policy issues will take place in October.
- Proposed changes are due in early 2005 with the final adoption mid 2005.

4. THE STANSTED/M11 DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS STUDY

- 4.1 The study area is based on the Stansted/M11 corridor including parts of Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire (South Cambs and Cambridge City). The study looks into the development options for the sub-region for the period of RPG14. Like the Harlow study, it will inform possible development options in the M11 corridor and spatial strategy for the area within RPG14, recognising that the possible growth of Stansted Airport is a key driver. It will enable a view to be formed of the possible contribution to the Deputy Prime Minister's Communities Plan growth aspirations in the M11 corridor. It also looks at longer term potential for growth which may be raised in the Airports White Paper (which would require a subsequent review of RPG14). Its aim, apart from estimating the amount of growth resulting from the growth in passengers at the airport, is to recommend a spatial development strategy to accommodate all growth that is anticipated to occur in the area.
- 4.2 The study now published recognises that the Stansted influence will decline with distance and the impact on commuting patterns if growth was dispersed beyond a certain distance. They therefore defined a core area based on an approximate 30 minute drive time from the Airport (this includes some of South Cambridgeshire but not Cambridge City) and the study concentrated on the distribution of future growth within this core area.
- 4.3 Capacity, transportation and environmental constraints were examined to develop different patterns of future development. The potential impacts of these patterns were then compared using ten sustainability tests to measure the overall impact in arriving at a preferred strategy.
- 4.4 The preferred strategy is based on development around the junction of the A120 and M11. Further growth in Harlow, Bishops Stortford and growth in existing settlements along the A120 at Gt. Dunmow and Braintree are envisaged together with new a settlement close to Stansted. It recognises a supportive role for major settlements like Cambridge outside of the core area.

5. THE MILTON KEYNES STUDY

- 5.1 The results of this study, after further work ensuring that its growth recommendations are appropriate and deliverable, indicated that the main growth should be directed towards the Bedford and Luton/ Dunstable area and the Milton Keynes, Northampton, and the Corby /Kettering/Wellingborough areas and is unlikely to affect Huntingdonshire.
- 5.2 The studies were required to provide an early input to RPG14 (and to alterations to RPG8 for the East Midlands, and a partial review of RPG9 within the South East Region). They will enable a view to be formed of the possible contribution to RPG14 and to the Deputy Prime Minister's Communities Plan growth aspirations in the Milton Keynes/South Midlands area.

6. THE PETERBOROUGH AND FENS SUB AREA

- 6.1 The possibility of Peterborough providing a sub-regional focus was raised in the RPG14 Options Consultation Document and is now being investigated further. Consultants were appointed in July and are due to complete the draft final report in October.

7. EMERGING RPG CONTENT

- 7.1 Taking account of studies referred to above the work in progress was reported to the Regional Planning Panel on the 17th October. This took the form of draft chapters of the Regional Plan. Whilst the emerging policies would appear to support the stance of this Authority the timing of its publication has not allowed scrutiny of all its contents. These will be reported verbally at Cabinet.

8. CONCLUSION

- a. The various studies described above will feed into the RPG and influence the final settlement pattern. It is pleasing to note that both the Milton Keynes study and the Stansted study are directing growth away from Cambridgeshire.
- b. The Cambridgeshire Structure Plan provides opportunities for growth post 2016 in the new settlement and Cambourne that will help in accommodating the Communities Plan growth envisaged and help in keeping pressure away from Huntingdonshire.
- c. Delivery of growth across administrative boundaries is possible where there is common interests as in the Cambridge sub area. In advance of convincing evidence from the current study it is not felt that common interest exists in a Peterborough sub area which includes most of the Fens.

9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 That Members

1. Support the findings of the two studies and their influence in directing the RPG
2. Note the adoption of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
3. Note the programme for delivering RPG14
4. Reserve their position with regard to the advantage of a Peterborough and Fens sub area for delivering growth in the region.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The above mentioned plans and studies.

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