

Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029

Statement on Issues and Questions

Issue 1.2

Taking into account the previous question, have the Council complied with the Duty to Cooperate?

Date: 6th February 2015



Introduction

- 1.1 The Council considers that it has met its Duty to Cooperate in preparing the Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 and this has been demonstrated in document (LP/A4/5) in the submission library. This document highlights how the Council has engaged with various organisations to prepare a sound local plan. In particular it highlights the importance of the Council's role in the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). PUSH itself has produced a Duty to Cooperate Statement demonstrating how it fulfils its Duty to Cooperate and is included as document (LP/D3/2).

Duty to Cooperate in relation to the Quantum of Housing (South Hampshire Strategy)

- 2.1 Gosport is located in South Hampshire and is surrounded by other local authorities that are members of PUSH as can be seen on Map 1 in document LP/A4/5 (page3). PUSH has been recognised by the Government as a good model for cooperative planning. Paragraphs 3.1- 3.15 in document LP/A4/5 demonstrate how PUSH operates.
- 2.2 The PUSH authorities through the Duty to Cooperate worked together to produce a South Hampshire Strategy which was included in the South East Plan and was then subject to examination. Subsequent to the publication of the South East Plan PUSH recognising the need to take account of changing economic circumstances commissioned consultants to prepare an Economic Development Strategy. PUSH in light of the findings of the Economic Development Strategy saw the need to review the spatial strategy and in its Business Plan 2011-2013 identified a key action to prepare of a revised spatial strategy for the PUSH area. The updated strategy consequently took account of: the refreshed PUSH Economic Development Strategy/Preferred Growth Scenario (adopted in November 2010); work undertaken on LDF Core Strategies/Local Plans; and changes in the national policy context.
- 2.3 The South Hampshire Strategy was published by PUSH in October 2012. The purposes of the Strategy were seen as:
- assisting the PUSH ambition to create a prosperous economy in a sustainable way;
 - providing a spatial framework for PUSH activities and actions including the allocation of resources, and provide a context/support to bids for external funds for projects;
 - guiding and supporting the preparation of the Local Development Framework/Local Plan and providing part of the underpinning evidence base;
 - a means for PUSH authorities to discharge the 'Duty to Cooperate' with neighbouring authorities on planning issues with cross-boundary impacts which the Localism Act places on all local authorities;
 - enabling PUSH authorities to show they are meeting development

needs including dealing with development requirements which cannot wholly be met within one authority's area.

- 2.4 The PUSH South Hampshire Strategy 2012 is in line with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which envisages that the 'Duty to Cooperate' could be addressed through a jointly prepared strategy. The strategy is founded on sound evidence including that used to develop the PUSH Economic Development Strategy (DTZ 2010) which includes demographic and economic forecasts.
- 2.5 The views of the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership were especially important given the increasing role which the Government wishes LEPs to play in spatial planning. Solent LEP Board members provided vital input to the formulation of the employment land section of the South Hampshire Strategy 2012 in particular, based on their knowledge of the commercial property market and development trends.
- 2.6 Although the South Hampshire Strategy 2012 is a non-statutory document, it is considered as a material consideration and has been adopted by the PUSH Joint Committee which includes elected Members from all the PUSH authorities.
- 2.7 The South Hampshire Strategy reviewed the South East Plan's housing requirement in light of the PUSH Economic Development Strategy Preferred Growth Scenario forecast of housing requirements. It sought to distribute this housing requirement amongst the constituent local authorities.
- 2.8 Gosport Borough Council was an active participant in the discussions regarding the distribution of housing provision. Through this Duty to Cooperate the Council considered that it would be able to accommodate a greater proportion of the housing provision than it has been allocated in the South East Plan. In the South East Plan Gosport was allocated annual housing requirement of 125 dwelling per annum. In the South Hampshire Strategy 2012 the Council considered that having undertaken a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) it could take a greater share of the sub regional housing requirement and therefore proposed a housing requirement of 170 dwellings per annum.
- 2.9 The PUSH authorities have considered that the South Hampshire Strategy 2012 is the most appropriate mechanism for identifying housing requirements until a revised South Hampshire Spatial Strategy is produced. This has been confirmed by the PUSH Joint Committee in March 2014 (LP/D4/1) where it was resolved:

That PUSH authorities agree that they will not object to emerging Local Plans in the PUSH area on the basis of their housing numbers, where they are

consistent with the PUSH Spatial Strategy 2012, whilst the new spatial strategy to 2036 is being prepared.

Review of South Hampshire Strategy

- 3.1 PUSH at its Joint Committee on 26th March 2013 resolved to commission a SHMA for South Hampshire as the first element of the review /roll forward of the South Hampshire Strategy.
- 3.2 The South Hampshire SHMA was published in January 2014 (LP/E7/3) and made it clear that it was piece of evidence which would provide an input to the review of the South Hampshire Strategy that would provide an agreed framework for development to 2036. Whilst the SHMA in its Appendices (LP/E7/3a) Table 19 (page 51) provides details on housing need on a district basis it is qualified by paragraph 1.26 in that it takes no account of development constraints or land supply. There is a specific mention of the particular problems facing Gosport in meeting this level of identified housing need.
- 3.3 The principle that the SHMA is a piece of evidence and should not be seen as a proxy for a final housing requirement is supported by the Planning Minister in his letter to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate dated 19th December 2014 (see Appendix 1).
- 3.4 PUSH at its Joint Committee on 25th March 2014 (LP/D4/1) recommended that work should commence as soon as possible on the new strategy. The published SHMA report emphasises that housing need estimates at a district level cannot be interpreted as allocations. It is therefore important that PUSH progress as rapidly as possible to develop allocations, using the SHMA as part of the evidence base along with a range of other evidence sources including detailed work to assess the availability of land that can sustainably accommodate development, environmental constraints and impacts assessments, economic development and employment analysis, infrastructure capacity and consideration of what new infrastructure might be needed.
- 3.5 PUSH published a timetable for the Spatial Strategy Review at it Joint Committee 24th June 2014 (LP/D4/1a). This timetable envisaged consultation on draft Options over the summer 2015 leading to development of new strategy with further consultation and final adoption early 2016. A report to the PUSH Joint Committee on 23rd September 2014 (LP/D4/1b) gave an update on the progress of the review of the Spatial Strategy and highlighted the weight that could be attributed to the current South Hampshire Strategy 2012 pending the completion of the review.

Publication of Gosport Borough Local Plan in advance the Revised South Hampshire Strategy

- 4.1 The Council recognising that the revised South Hampshire Strategy would take some time to complete wanted to produce a local plan as soon as possible in line with the sentiments of the NPPF paragraph 213. However before proceeding it considered it to be prudent to seek the advice of the Planning Inspectorate. Consequently an Advisory Meeting was arranged and Inspector Jill Kingaby met with officers of the Council on 30th January 2014. Jill Kingaby advised that early submission, even if an early review is needed, would be more consistent with national policy than holding back for 2 years waiting for PUSH to complete further planning, and would make more effective use of resources and work carried out so far. (LP/A4/12).

Conclusion

- 5.1 The Council therefore considers that it has complied with the Duty to Cooperate which regard to the provision of housing. It is currently engaged in a series in of meetings with PUSH officers to develop the first stage of the review of the spatial strategy. This includes a review of the issues and constraints within the region having regard to the most recent evidence leading the formulation of options for future development which will be the subject of public consultation.

APPENDIX 1 - Letter from Minister for Planning



Brandon Lewis MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning

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19th December 2014

Dear Simon,

Strategic Housing Market Assessments

I am writing to ensure our existing policy position on emerging evidence in the form of Strategic Housing Market Assessments is clear.

We have set out in our recent guidance that a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is just the first stage in developing a Local Plan and councils can take account of constraints which indicate that development should be restricted (http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/stage-5-final-evidence-base/#paragraph_045).

The extent of constraints will be justified on a case by case basis for each Local Plan, depending on particular local circumstances, within a housing market area.

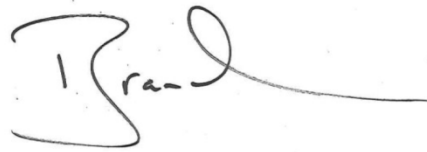
Many councils have now completed Strategic Housing Market Assessments either for their own area or jointly with their neighbours. The publication of a locally agreed assessment provides important new evidence and where appropriate will prompt councils to consider revising their housing requirements in their Local Plans. We would expect councils to actively consider this new evidence over time and, where over a reasonable period they do not, Inspectors could justifiably question the approach to housing land supply.

However, the outcome of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is untested and should not automatically be seen as a proxy for a final housing requirement in Local Plans. It does not immediately or in itself invalidate housing numbers in existing Local Plans.

Councils will need to consider Strategic Housing Market Assessment evidence carefully and take adequate time to consider whether there are environmental and policy constraints, such as Green Belt, which will impact on their overall final housing

requirement. They also need to consider whether there are opportunities to co-operate with neighbouring planning authorities to meet needs across housing market areas. Only after these considerations are complete will the council's approach be tested at examination by an Inspector. Clearly each council will need to work through this process to take account of particular local circumstances in responding to Strategic Housing Market Assessments.

As you are aware, the Secretary of State can recover appeals, for example where he considers that they raise issues of national importance. This is important to support the application of relevant policies at national level.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon Lewis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

BRANDON LEWIS MP