

DRAFT

MINUTES of a meeting of the STRUCTURE PLAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING PANEL held on 11 June 2003

ATTENDANCE

Members of the Panel: M Bayes, R Clements (for M Saunders), A Dodd, R J Smith, I Simpson, W Storey (Chairman) B A York

Additional Members: D Ashley, M Janes

Officers Attending: Anne Fisher, Jon Tiley, Steve Bailes, Dave Humby, Geraint Hughes

Administrator: Joyce Brooks

MINUTES

1. **Apologies** were received from M. Saunders.

2. **Minutes of the meeting of 28 January, 2003.**

Correction: B York to be added to list of attendees.

Councillors York and Smith raised concerns about the Minutes. The Panel agreed the recommendations set out in the Minutes but reserved the right to review the wording and report back to the next meeting.

3. **Programme for technical work on the Structure Plan Alterations**

Following the letter from Government Office, on 20 May, 2003 the County Council resolved to postpone the Structure Plan EIP. It also resolved to continue considering the responses to the deposit draft and the need for Pre-Inquiry Changes, and to carry on updating technical work.

This report set out a proposed timetable of work involving three meetings of the Panel in July, September and October. A preliminary report of consultation responses would be put to the July meeting of the Panel, a summary of representations would be produced for the September meeting and an update of the Housing Capacity Study would be produced for the October meeting. A review of the overall progress of RPG14 would take place in the Autumn before deciding whether further work should be undertaken.

There was some concern from Members about the housing capacity figures. Jon Tiley said that work would soon start on updating RPG14 to deliver district level figures next year and assured the Panel that County was working closely with Districts through HTCOA to carry out joint technical work to update all the estimates. A number of meetings

had already taken place with the Districts and they would be continuing to work closely with them over the next 6/7 months to produce a set of figures for Hertfordshire.

In terms of the EIP, the Planning Inspectorate had been informed that the provisional date set would not now be required. Once the County Council has considered the situation and a decision had been made, a new date will be sought. In answer to a question by Cllr Smith, Jon Tiley confirmed that the County Council would be making representations at the Inquiry on the West of Stevenage planning applications in January/February 2004.

The programme was supported by the Panel.

4. Suggested County Council response to SERAS – Future Development of Air Transport in the South East

General Overview

This report advised the Panel of the second SERAS consultation and the work carried out by the County Council. The Panel's advice was sought on the proposed response to the consultation set out in the report which would go to Cabinet and County Council in July. An additional note was appended to the report summarising the main points made by the public at a series of public meetings held throughout the County. A brief note on the presentation on Off-Shore Airport Sites which took place at County Hall on 10 June will be provided for the Panel.

There was some discussion over the night flights. Members were concerned to reiterate the County Council's position that there should be no night flights. The current number of night flights at the three main London airports stands at 12,000 and is estimated to rise to 40,000 by 2030. There was discussion concerning the current status of Alconbury. Cllr Bayes was concerned that the local authorities objected to Alconbury and it would be imprudent to move our problems on to others.

Members agreed that there were other options to those proposed on the SERAS document, as evidenced by the briefing the previous day on estuarial and off-shore airports. It was agreed to recommend to Cabinet that paragraph 5.7 should be expanded to encourage the government to consider these options.

The proposals to develop 2 national freight airports, one north and one south were not yet open to public consideration and the Panel considered that Government should extend its consultation to enable the public to fully consider these options.

Roads

Dave Humby advised the Panel that since the publication of the first consultation paper there had been a number of changes regarding the context within which the surface access issues need to be considered.

Luton - The London South Midlands Multi-Modal Study had been published and a decision from the Secretary of State is expected in July. The Study is proposing to widen the M1 to four lanes between the M25 and the north of Luton and makes reference to a by-pass to the North of Luton. The role of the M1 is emphasised as a strategic corridor. Luton Borough Council has been progressing proposals for an East Luton Corridor Improvement Scheme to link the M1 to the airport to provide important road access. There is a public consultation on dualling the A505 from J10a to the airport.

Stansted – The Orbit Study has not taken account of any expansion proposals for airports as set out in SERAS. There are recommendations for widening the M25 but not between A10 and M11. Highways Agency is reviewing the implications of airport development. The London South Midlands Study says that the M11 corridor is a route of national importance which implies that the motorway will be expected to provide a national function. With 3 additional runways, 62% of the M11 traffic would be airport related.

Rail

Geraint Hughes reported that there was likely to be some considerable impact on the rail network from all airport options with Stansted being the most significant. Gatwick and Luton are dependent on Thameslink 2000 and there is no date given for its implementation. Stansted and Heathrow are dependent on Cross-Rail and no decision has been made on a preferred route or even on its principle.

Stansted - The proposals are reliant on rail and infrastructure being built and delivered within 8 or 9 years – at the moment this is not possible. Stansted Express is a successful operation on a busy commuter route and there will be more problems to and from London as operations grow. There is a problem of access to Stansted from the North and this requires a level of passenger growth to make it viable. One of the key proposals is a new direct rail route between Harlow and the airport. There are potential impacts on services between Cheshunt and Harlow which are very unclear, as is the balance between local services and airport services.

Luton – Flows are not so substantial and passengers presently travel in the opposite direction to the peak London flows to get to and from the airport. The strategy is based around existing long distance services. A proportion of services coming down from the north would have to provide seats for airport travellers and staff to travel from Luton to London which is contrary to normal commercial practice. The

alternative would be to make more use of Thameslink which could cause increase pressures on services.

Cllr Smith was concerned about the A1. Cllr Ashley said it was difficult to separate out airport-related road problems and other road problems but he did not think that the A1 was relevant in road access to the airport. Dave Humby said that the LSMMM Study played down the role of the A1M but it comes into play if the pressures on the M1 become greater. If Luton expands, there is the potential for more traffic to use the M1 to the detriment of neighbouring roads.

It was recommended that the paragraphs on road and rail infrastructure and access should be strengthened.

The Chairman advised the Panel that the Cabinet report would be circulated to them after being finalised.

The Panel agreed to recommend to the Cabinet that :

- Hertfordshire should accept the HCC policy stance on the use of the capacity on existing runways, but there should be no additional runways or extensions to existing runways at any of the airports.
- However, maximum usage should still be dependent upon provision of adequate infrastructure and public transport capacity.
- If Government forecasts were correct, airports should be able to manage with existing runways until about 2015.
- The County Council should not expect other authorities to accept unwelcome growth.
- The Government should consider more fully the range of options available to it, including estuarial and off-shore sites and better management of demand.
- The SERAS proposals would have major impacts upon the road and rail infrastructure. It is unclear how the volume of travellers would be supported by infrastructure capacity growth and improvements in access, or that this could be put in place particularly to meet the SERAS timescales.

5. Regional Planning Update – Presentation

Jon Tiley gave a presentation updating the position on Regional Planning. A copy is attached.

Anne Fisher advised the Panel that regional papers would be copied to the Panel as soon as they were available.

6 Regional Transport Strategy – Presentation

Dave Humby gave a presentation on the Regional Transport Strategy. A copy is attached. Dave Humby agreed to update the Transportation Panel on these issues at its next meeting.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Structure Plan & Regional Planning Panel – Friday, 18 July at 10.00 a.m. Venue to be advised.