



**Planning & Transportation
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Our ref PES/SH/16-2-11
Date 13 April 2005

Dear Mike

DRAFT SOUTH EAST PLAN

I write to formally submit the views of the Borough Council on the draft South East Plan. In so doing I have attached a report made to the Council's Planning & Engineering Advisory Board of the 28 February 2005 endorsed by the Council's Cabinet on 6 April. This represents a comprehensive summary of the main issues that the Borough Council wishes to raise and to be taken into account by SEERA at this stage in the preparation of the Plan.

I hope you will take the trouble to consider the attached report and in particular the specific points raised in Sections 1.4 to 1.11 and that you will take them into account in your further deliberations on the South East Plan.

May I draw your particular attention to para.1.61. This repeats a concern that I have raised with you and your colleagues on several occasions already during the process to date. As the report says at the beginning of the South East Plan maps articulating levels of growth in sub-regions include the Thames Gateway Zone of Influence within the growth area. Previously you have helpfully let me know that this is not the case and indeed the text on page 215 of the draft Plan makes it clear that there is no direct linkage in terms of growth levels between the Gateway growth area and the Zone of Influence. Notwithstanding this the plans on pages 35-37 depict a different state of affairs. I need to ask you again, therefore, to make sure that this issue is absolutely clear.

In common with other local authorities in Kent we are now engaged at Member and Officer level in the work towards identifying appropriate levels of housing growth at a

district level. We are committed to play an active role in this process to arrive at some realistic levels of future development and associated infrastructure provision to ensure that you and your colleagues have the best possible locally derived advice on these matters to take account of during the next stage of the Plan.



In submitting these comments at this stage I should also record the dissatisfaction that the Council has felt over the extent of public engagement at this stage of the preparation of the Plan. Despite the efforts of all the local authorities in this area to assist in the process it is the Council's experience and observation that few local communities have been properly informed of a process that will have a very major impact upon their areas over the next few decades.

If you require any clarification on any aspects included in the Council's representations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Steve Humphrey
Director