



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
SOUTH EAST REGION

CPRE South East Briefing

31 August 2006

South East Briefing

Welcome to the second edition of South East Briefing. Comments and feedback will be very welcome: briefing@cprese.org.uk. Please feed in contributions for the September edition, which is now in preparation. The Thames Gateway features heavily this month, rather as though the departure of Prescott has flushed the critics from cover. Brownfield is also in the news, with the Tory's railing against development in gardens and DCLG claiming that there is enough brownfield available for one million homes.

1. CPRE in the South East

South East Plan EiP. The preliminary list of matters for debate and participants in the Examination in Public has been issued (<http://tinyurl.com/fz93e>). CPRE is listed as participating in about half the matters (see list at: <http://tinyurl.com/elbpb>). The EiP list is subject to consultation until 28 September 2006. CPRE South East is seeking feedback on the list from branches: secretary@cprese.org.uk

CPRE Surrey is backing the Stop Dunsfold Park New Town (STOP) campaign to oppose 2,600 homes and an expanded business park on a former airfield. Surrey chairman Tom Harrold said. "The choice is clear—urban encroachment or beautiful landscape and countryside tranquillity." Surrey Advertiser: <http://tinyurl.com/nzhtc>. STOP: <http://tinyurl.com/m5vct>

Kent housing. The BBC reviewed house building plans in Kent. "Nobody denies there is a crisis in affordable housing in the South East," says Dr Hilary Newport of the CPRE. "But there is so much more that can be done to balance the worst excesses of green field developments." The director of Kent Science Park, which wants to build 5,000 homes said "It is a very British problem. The local people want to preserve the countryside which is very commendable. But we are trying to create something very important here." <http://tinyurl.com/he785>

Bucks CPRE chairman, Peter Cleasby criticised Aylesbury Vale's record in using brownfield land. Aylesbury Today: <http://tinyurl.com/jtk3s>

Thames Gateway. See below.

Voikhanskaya. A former Russian dissident is to set off on a 500 mile cycle ride to highlight the threat to the countryside in the south-east and east of England on behalf of CPRE. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/hucnp>. CPRE: <http://tinyurl.com/orqwe>

CPRE 80th. As part of the 80th anniversary celebrations, CPRE is hosting an exhibition of its campaigning history at the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading from 8 August to 1 October. Sir Max Hastings will be giving a lecture on the history of CPRE at the Museum on 21 September. <http://tinyurl.com/qlorr>

2. Enough Brownfield for 113,000 Homes in the South East

DCLG said that existing stocks of available brownfield land could accommodate up to one million new homes (<http://tinyurl.com/lgfxn>). 63,500 hectares of previously developed land was available for development in 2005: 44% was judged to be suitable for housing. In the "three south-east regions", where demand for housing is highest, it is estimated that there is enough land to accommodate over 400,000 new homes. In the South East Region there is enough land for 113,000 homes.

The estimates are based on the National Land Use Database, using data 15 months old: <http://tinyurl.com/jo2r3>. This creates a number of inaccuracies for specific sites and in the summary statistics. There are also some anomalies; for example, there are no data for South Oxfordshire. Summary data for the South East Region are:

	Sites	Houses	Hectares*
Buckinghamshire	286	12,688	793
East Sussex	130	6,883	224
Former County of Berkshire	296	11,564	537
Hampshire	678	23,868	1,136
Isle of Wight	36	1,163	49
Kent	897	39,279	2,996
Oxfordshire	192	5,875	1,031
Surrey	166	6,529	406
West Sussex	224	5,262	275
South East	2,905	113,111	7,447

* Hectares are for total brownfield area, which may include non-housing areas

Data for individual South East planning districts are on the CPRE South East website: <http://tinyurl.com/l5b8n>

3. Housing

SE homes target "must double". The government's target for new homes in the South East over the next decade needs to double to cope with demand. The Institute for Public Policy Research said that the planned 210,000 new homes in the region's four 'growth areas' was nowhere near enough and called for an extra 217,000. The report also claims that the government's plans for affordable homes risk creating the 'sink estates of tomorrow'. The Observer: <http://tinyurl.com/p8jwv>. IPPR: <http://tinyurl.com/plc8h>

Social housing. DCLG has announced that it is to review social housing in September. 24dash: <http://tinyurl.com/qj3t6>. CIH: <http://tinyurl.com/l12of>

Gardens and flats. The Conservatives have launched a campaign to build more family homes with gardens—instead of "pokey one-bedroom flats". They say there is "growing concern about how John Prescott's planning rules are leading to leafy gardens being dug up and replaced with soulless and ugly blocks of flats". BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/fvmd2>. The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/f3zrk>

"UK developers gearing up for age of eco-home." The Business newspaper reviews current progress on environmental friendly housing. <http://tinyurl.com/pj6pw>

House building up. In the 12 months to June 2006, there were 182,400 starts in England: up 4% on the same 12 month period last year; and 165,400 completions, up 5%. DCLG: <http://tinyurl.com/nr87z>

The Northern Way is to drop housing from its priorities. Inside Housing: <http://tinyurl.com/k6y3v>

4. Planning

Countryside jewels threatened. CPRE said the British countryside is under an assault from development on greenfield "beauty spots", with increasing encroachment from housing, roads and wind farms. Daily Telegraph (with map): <http://tinyurl.com/zcfn7>. Daily Telegraph Leader: <http://tinyurl.com/ohbnw>. The Independent: <http://tinyurl.com/fbnga>. CPRE Press Release: <http://tinyurl.com/j5rxo>

Local Development Frameworks. Planning inspectors rejected the first two core strategies to be submitted for assessment as "unsound". The West Midlands planning authorities involved have called for more detailed guidance from central government. Planning Portal: <http://tinyurl.com/gdwma>

"Renewing Suburbia: Creating Suburban Villages" is the title of an internal Conservative Party paper. The characterless dormitories of the suburbs, with their postage-stamp-sized lawns and ostentatious garages, should be transformed into vibrant modern villages where families can live and work. Poundbury gets praise. The Independent: <http://tinyurl.com/qrrvk>

Subdivision of rural plots. DCLG is planning to make it easier for local authorities to prevent or reverse subdivision of rural land by fences, etc. as it passes into multiple ownership, often for speculative development. <http://tinyurl.com/lq8uo>.

Planning gain should be greater. Planning Minister, Yvette Cooper, issued new guidance calling on local authorities to make better use of "Section 106" agreements to deliver more affordable housing and infrastructure. 60% of medium and large, and 90% of minor residential planning permissions do not include S106 agreements. DCLG: <http://tinyurl.com/qw595>. 24dash: <http://tinyurl.com/z2nnb>. The Audit Commission published a route map to S106 agreements: <http://tinyurl.com/pzume>

Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. DCLG is consulting on the new grant to planning authorities (DCLG: <http://tinyurl.com/rwjn8>). Henry Oliver of CPRE said: "This idea seems to be a return to 'predict and provide', with a bribe attached. It encourages local authorities to throw away the rule book..." Telegraph: <http://tinyurl.com/lf9a6>. CPRE is asking for views from branches and members: <http://tinyurl.com/ptxbq>

Infrastructure needs across South East England amount to £38 billion over the next 20 years, the South East England Regional Assembly told the Treasury. SEERA: <http://tinyurl.com/mdvr6>

5. Transport

Developers must not rely on increased road capacity. The DfT is consulting how planning policy affects the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It says providing ever more road capacity is not viable in the long term. Developers will be expected to manage demand for transport before expecting road enhancements. A "ring master" approach will ensure that infrastructure costs are shared between developers. <http://tinyurl.com/ovzz2>

Rail. SEERA is pressing for improved train services on the Brighton Main Line. <http://tinyurl.com/omo6n>.

A34 motorway? Delays in a multi-million pound railway scheme at Reading will have a damaging knock-on effect on A34 congestion: Oxford Times: <http://tinyurl.com/jquny>. Oxford MP Andrew Smith led calls to turn the A34 into a motorway. Oxford Times: <http://tinyurl.com/k6mvk>

Motorway overhead gantries will increase as the DfT brings hard shoulders into use for traffic at peak hours. The Times: <http://tinyurl.com/ply4o>. The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/esxp8>

Rural traffic speeds. The DfT issued guidance that may lead to speed limits on many country roads being cut in an attempt to reduce accidents. Minister Stephen Ladyman said: "existing 60 mph limits could fall on all but the best country roads, while drivers will be limited to 30 mph in all villages." The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/gtrab>. The Times: <http://tinyurl.com/g4333>. DfT guidance: <http://tinyurl.com/ekn22>.

Quiet Lanes. The DfT published its regulations on Quiet Lanes (<http://tinyurl.com/grded>), following an extended consultation: <http://tinyurl.com/eanex>. The signage will be smaller and more traditional in design, and the Quiet Lane designation will remain restricted to quiet lanes; i.e. it cannot be used for traffic calming or reducing traffic flows. CPRE welcomed the move: <http://tinyurl.com/njmog>.

Traffic levels rose on rural roads in the first quarter of 2006 but fell in towns. DfT: <http://tinyurl.com/otlro>

Canals & rivers. The Freight Study Group has reported on progress in increasing freight traffic on inland waterways. DfT: <http://tinyurl.com/h258d>

6. Environment and Heritage

£200m environment budget cuts. The debacle over Single Farm Payments has led to cuts in Defra agency budgets. The Environment Agency in England is losing £14.9m for flood defences, £8.5m from spending on environmental protection. Natural England is facing cuts of £12m before it begins work. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/p55km> Planning Portal: <http://tinyurl.com/kwtb7>. Developments, such as the Thames Gateway on low-lying land in the south-east, increased the flood risks and the need for adequate protection, scientists warned. Environment Agency budget cuts were criticised. The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/gob3t>

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. GOSE issued statements on the TBHSPA, which is made up of 13 sites of special scientific significance spread across Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey, in 11 local authority areas. <http://tinyurl.com/qp2ca>. <http://tinyurl.com/mppdm>

Upper Thames Reservoir. Thames Water is launching a consultation over future plans for water provision—including a new reservoir in Oxfordshire: Oxford Mail: <http://tinyurl.com/qsgy4>. CPRE Oxfordshire on the reservoir: <http://tinyurl.com/nmhvb>

Coastal. The Environment Agency's is taking on a strategic overview role for all sea flooding and coastal erosion risk management in England. Defra is consulting on the details: <http://tinyurl.com/z43qa>

The **water vole** is to be protected in a new 22,000 acre Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the Kent and East Sussex coast. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/ouwfu>. English Nature: <http://tinyurl.com/hzgam>.

Deer. Damage caused by wild deer could be reduced under changes to deer protection laws proposed by Defra: "Wild deer populations are damaging some of our most threatened woodland habitats and causing millions of pounds' worth of damage to agriculture." Defra: <http://tinyurl.com/qmedx> The Times: <http://tinyurl.com/ntffp>

Biofuel. 900,000 hectares of land will be needed to meet the government's target of a 5 per cent inclusion of bioethanol and biodiesel in road transport fuel by 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/fhhtl>

Landscape costs. Research by the University of Reading revealed that farmers in England receive little compensation for the hundreds of millions of pounds they spend each year on the maintenance of landscape features—even though the public benefit greatly from this activity. Farming UK: <http://tinyurl.com/rw9cj>

Food. Action is needed now to minimise the impact of climate change on food production, says a report by the University of East Anglia and the Country Land and Business Association. CLA: <http://tinyurl.com/oxqfa>

Wiki contract. Defra is asking people to help draft an 'environment contract' for the UK on a website where anyone can edit the content: <http://tinyurl.com/jus5y>

Windcrofting. Thousands of wind turbines could be "planted" in hedgerows on farmers' land in a new £200m energy scheme. An energy company is hoping to recruit 3000 UK farmers for a "windcrofting" project: it claims that the 14.9m tall turbines will be less obtrusive than the taller, traditional machines. The managing director said "The beauty of this sort of small scale wind farming is that it doesn't interfere with the landscape." CPRE is briefly quoted as saying it welcomed such small-scale renewable energy projects, provided they did not damage hedgerows. The Independent: <http://tinyurl.com/nhjjae>. Farmers Weekly: <http://tinyurl.com/rxylq>

Butterflies. The Highways Agency and English Nature have published a guide on how to design roads from an ecological standpoint, including design and planting to attract and protect butterflies: <http://tinyurl.com/zenby>

Dutch Elm disease is threatening the surviving English Elms in Sussex. The Independent (subscription): <http://tinyurl.com/mvlkv>

Horse chestnuts. The Guardian said "Conker trees face multiple threat" <http://tinyurl.com/pdenx> and the Independent paid homage to the tree: <http://tinyurl.com/h3fb5>

Sussex. Tree-top protestors trying to save Titnore Woods near Worthing by occupying a raised village built in the trees have lost their fight in the High Court. <http://tinyurl.com/q9z4z>

100 environment questions. Scientists at the University of East Anglia have drawn up a list of the 100 biggest questions facing the UK environment. The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/rt65g>. Full list: <http://tinyurl.com/falr8>

7. Thames Gateway

"Focus on the Thames Gateway": The title of a CPRE report highlighting ten key environmental, social and economic indicators for the Thames Gateway Growth Area. Nigel Kersey, CPRE's Thames Gateway project leader said: "There is a great deal of rhetoric... It is now time to start looking closely at how well the rhetoric is being matched by the reality." CPRE: <http://tinyurl.com/p9rkc>. Shelter called for "homes that are well-designed and sustainable, with enough space for families." 24dash: <http://tinyurl.com/oq6fm>

Judith Armitt, Chief Executive of Medway Council, has been appointed as the Chief Executive of the Thames Gateway. DCLG: <http://tinyurl.com/nbsmf>. Sunday Times: <http://tinyurl.com/p9mwb>.

Business Plan. DCLG is aiming to produce a costed business plan for the Gateway detailing how it intends to meet social, economic and environmental targets, for November 2007. Regen Net: <http://tinyurl.com/fstj2>

Funding. The 2012 Olympics face a funding shortfall, which is likely to come from the Gateway budget, claims The Observer: <http://tinyurl.com/z4jaa>

Sustainability. Professor Tim Dixon questioned the sustainability of the Gateway. There is a lack of infrastructure, local people may be priced out and the Gateway needs streamlined governance. The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/mq9pb>. Dixon's papers: <http://tinyurl.com/hxgee>.

Greening the Gateway. Architect Sir Terry Farrell said the government's plans for the Gateway were "pathetically unambitious" has called for an environmentally friendly scheme. He said the government had given no clear vision and was wrong in believing "that the shortage of homes should be met by putting commuter dormitory towns in Kent and Essex." BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/hz646>

London Gateway Port. The Secretary of State for Transport is minded to approve the Port: DfT: <http://tinyurl.com/rtrfr>. Port website: <http://tinyurl.com/m6x52>.

8. South East Headlines

Dover. The BBC looked at potential for regeneration: <http://tinyurl.com/k3z5f>

Eastbourne regeneration announced. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/esfbp>

Essex. Tolls could be introduced on roads at Stansted Airport and Harwich Port. 24dash: <http://tinyurl.com/hzrd2>

Kent incinerator. A Kent MP has criticised the consultation process. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/nu8b5>

Kent. Plans to build a nature reserve in Kent have been put on hold due to a £2.5m landfill tax bill. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/fqfdo>

London. DCLG launched a consultation on powers for the Mayor of London to decide planning applications of major strategic importance. 24dash: <http://tinyurl.com/kcdgx>. DCLG: <http://tinyurl.com/fxhxt>. The Association of London Government expressed concerns. <http://tinyurl.com/qzvrj>. Outspoken architect Will Alsop emerged as a frontrunner to become London's "design tsar". The Observer: <http://tinyurl.com/kh7wn>

Lower Lee catchment. The Environment Agency is consulting on a flood risk management strategy. Deadline 20 October. <http://tinyurl.com/hsvq5>

Thanet wind farm. Plans to build the world's biggest wind farm off the coast of Thanet have won the support of the district council. The scheme has 271 turbines. <http://tinyurl.com/hpxnq>

9. Government in the South East

Aggregates. SEERA has published its 2004 Aggregates Monitoring Report: <http://tinyurl.com/rdpjj>

GO South East. GOSE has issued an online video featuring Ashford: <http://tinyurl.com/gjwa6>

10. Other News

East of England. The Regional Cities East (RCE) scheme will unite Peterborough, Colchester, Ipswich, Luton, Southend and Norwich. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/qcybp>

Energy map. The DTI has launched a website devoted to renewable energy, with an interactive map of renewables installations. Press release: <http://tinyurl.com/m3m6m>. Website: <http://tinyurl.com/oakd8>

Right to roam. The Country Landowners Association is preparing its campaign against extension of the right to roam to Britain's beaches. The Independent: <http://tinyurl.com/kaa2p>

Tesco came under fire for breaking planning laws on Radio 4's *Face the Facts*, including for a waste dump in the Chilterns AONB. The programme argued that some of the violations are detrimental to local shops. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/qj6n9>

Water grid. The merit of a national water grid is being considered by the Environment Agency. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/nmo7h>. Water industry body Water UK opposes the grid: <http://tinyurl.com/erpxh>.

And finally... Sir Paul McCartney has come up with a unique approach to planning laws. He will demolish other buildings on his East Sussex country estate if he is allowed to retain a building erected without planning permission. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/gd5hx>

11. Diary

7 September. Preliminary Meeting of SE Plan EiP. 10.00am, Reading Town Hall

15 September. SEERA Executive Committee

27 September. SEERA Planning Committee

6 October. SEERA Regional Housing Board

17 October. Preliminary Meeting of SE Plan EiP

20 October. SEERA Executive Committee

27 October. SEERA Regional Transport Board

[Further details of SEERA Meetings.](#)

CPRE South East Briefing is a free service. [Subscribe](#). You can unsubscribe at any time.

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Forward](#) | [Change Details](#) | [PDF Version](#) | CPRE also publishes a national **Campaigns Update**: [more information](#)

Issued by [CPRE South East](#). Editor: Andy Boddington. The information in this Briefing is gathered from a wide range of sources and views expressed are not necessarily those of the CPRE South East Regional Group. CPRE South East, c/o CPRE, 128 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SW. briefing@cprese.org.uk. www.cprese.org.uk.
