

REPORT ON EAST OF ENGLAND URBANISATION

30th April 2010

1 – Introduction

This report examines medium term (up to 2021) housing provision proposals for the East of England found in the Regional Spatial Strategy offered by the 2008 East of England Plan. It has been divided into two parts; **Part 1** dealing with the organisational structure that created the 'Strategy' and [Part 2](#) from page 13, Section 9, describing what can be done to oppose its implementation.

The overall target for housing development in the East of England was initiated by the then, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). This department was originally given the task of breaking the UK up from its historic system of Counties, Districts, etc., and imposing 'Regionalisation' on it when the UK joined the Common Market (EU). As part of the 'sector' creation, the East of England as an entity was created and EU designations were set up to describe this ([NUTS](#))

The responsibility for the development of detailed planning was passed onto the Government Office for the East of England (Go East) and then to the East of England Regional Assembly ([EERA](#)); thence to EEDA and onto local authorities.

In line with the spatial plans prescribed for them and in determining planning applications, local planning authorities were instructed to facilitate the delivery of at least 508,000 net additional dwellings over the period 2001 to 2021. Taking account of completions of 105,550 between 2001 and 2006 the minimum regional housing target 2006 to 2021 was set at 402,540. Part Grant Funding was to be provided from various sources, including the EEDA. although the majority 'dwelling build' was to be self funding, by 'developer's'. Generally the completion targets are slipping.

Part 1

2 – Preamble

The current rate of dwelling provision throughout the East of England sector is not sufficient for the latest population demography and an interim adjustment will have to be made to increase the build/conversion rate from now to 2031. This housing crisis has been caused partially due to immigration by peoples whose cultural/genetic procreation rates or Total Fertility Rates (TFR's) are higher than the [indigenous British](#). Immigration driven population growth is set

to rise disproportionately because of this under laying difference in TFR. And of course people are living longer, which adds to the housing burden.

The table below shows the 2010 forecast [Population](#) for 26 EU member states:-

Austria	8,372,930
Belgium	10,827,519
Bulgaria	7,576,751
Cyprus	801,851
CzechRepublic	10,512,397
Denmark	5,547,088
Estonia	1,340,274
Finland	5,350,475
France	64,709,480
Germany	81,757,595
Greece	11,306,183
Hungary	10,013,628
Ireland	4,450,878
Italy	60,397,353
Latvia	2,248,961
Lithuania	3,329,227
Luxembourg	502,207
Malta	416,333
Netherlands	16,576,800
Poland	38,163,895
Portugal	10,636,888
Romania	21,466,174
Slovakia	5,424,057
Slovenia	2,054,119
Spain	46,087,170
Sweden	9,347,899
Total	439,218,132

Should they wish, all of the above EU Citizens have the right to come and live, demand housing, take benefits, fill schools, use hospital beds/resources^ and take jobs in the UK and generally overburden our infrastructure.

^Extract from Citizens Advice Bureau – “Adviceguide”

“[Visitors](#) who can receive [NHS](#) hospital treatment free of charge

You and your dependants are entitled to free NHS hospital treatment if your need for it arose during your visit to the UK. A medical opinion may be needed in order to decide if treatment should be provided free of charge. You have the right to free NHS hospital treatment if:-

- *you are a national of an European Economic Area (EEA) country, living in an EEA state or Switzerland, or a refugee or stateless person living in an EEA state or Switzerland, or you are a non-EEA national who lives in an EU state and pays national insurance contributions there*
- *you normally live abroad, and are receiving a UK state pension, and have lived in the UK in the past for at least ten years*
- *you have lived in the UK for at least ten years in the past, but now live in an EEA state, or in a non-EEA state with which the UK has a reciprocal agreement*
- *you are a national, or a resident of certain non-EEA countries, with which the UK has a reciprocal agreement.*

EEA countries are the European Union countries and Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway.”

Even if adequately covered by Health Insurance migrants still add to the NHS burden.

Another [85](#) million are seeking to join the EU and will have the same rights!

It is against this background of forecast demand that the Government ordered the increase in dwelling provision in the Region and in fact revised their figures upwards since the mandate of 2008, (see figures in brackets beside dwelling numbers in Sections 4 & 5)

In Section 4.1a the table provides macro information about total dwelling provision in the medium term. Section 4b deals with Gypsy and Traveller site provision – use links provided to view more detail.

It should be understood that the numbers of dwellings targeted in the Plan include those to be provided by private and small builders as well as large construction companies and housing associations; and sympathetic planning reviews would be needed to achieve the ambitious objectives.

3 – Aim and Objectives

- To determine total dwelling provision numbers
- To define a timeline for the programme
- To examine the planning stage legalities.
- To identify means by which unwanted development may be halted.

4 — Housing Development

4.1a - Proposed dwelling numbers

Area (CTRL and click on location to find full details)	Number of dwellings by 2021 Figures in brackets denote increased totals by 2031
Bedfordshire and Luton	48,010 (64,500)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	79,390 (96,600)
Essex, Thurrock and Southend	98,600 (124,500)
Hertfordshire	65,720 (71,300)
Norfolk	62,340 (79,500)
Suffolk	48,100 (64,300)
Total for East of England	402,180* (500,700)

*Total in published in East of England Plan 402,450

4.1b – Proposed Gypsy and Traveller sites

Area (CTRL and click on location to find full details)	Number of sites by 2021 Figures in brackets denote increased totals by 2031	Provision for plots for Travelling Show people by 2031
Bedfordshire and Luton	374 (510)	(54)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	1106 (1,403)	(97)
Essex Thurrock and Southend	1131 (1,550)	(362)
Hertfordshire	564 (761)	(108)
Norfolk	445 (622)	(129)
Suffolk	437 (614)	(39)
Total for East of England	4,057** (5460)	(789)

**Total of 3,019 (East of England Plan) compounded by 3% over 10 years (2011 to 2021)

4.2 - Proposed timeline for dwelling programme

The delivery programme to achieve the planned total in 15 years must average out at approximately 26,830 per year across the East of England. Generally the rate of build has been lower than target so some acceleration is needed to achieve the overall plan.

As demand for housing is growing beyond the original government estimates, a further revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is now in draft form ([Draft 2010](#)) to plan up to 2031.

4.3 - Procedure for implementing and monitoring the [Regional Spatial Strategy](#) (RSS)

Government Offices work with regional partners to develop, implement and monitor 'Regional Spatial Strategies,' which set out Government's planning and transport policy for each region for a 15-20 year period. The strategies provide frameworks for determining planning applications, as well as for preparing both Local Development Documents.

The Regional Planning Body (RPB) for each region is responsible for reviewing the 'Regional Spatial Strategy' and preparing draft revisions in partnership with local and regional stakeholders. Once the RPB has prepared the draft strategy, it publishes it for at least 12 weeks public consultation.

Following public consultation, an Examination in Public is held to debate and test the Regional Planning Body's proposals. A Panel - independent of the Regional Planning Body and central Government - oversees this process. Following the Examination in Public, the Panel prepares a report of findings and recommendations to the Government on how the draft 'Regional Spatial Strategy' might be improved.

The Government then issues Proposed Changes to the draft strategy, taking account of the Panel's recommendations and representations on any matters not considered at the Examination in Public.

The Secretary of State then makes any final amendments in the light of the responses to the Proposed Changes consultation, and issues the final 'Regional Spatial Strategy'

Local authorities then prepare Local Development Frameworks (LDF's) and detailed Local Development Documents (LDD's), which are consistent with the 'Regional Spatial Strategy', identifying specific locations for development.

*NOTE: The Regional Planning Body (RPB) for the East of England sector was the EERA***, (a non elected body that was not subject to the Freedom of Information Act). The EERA was responsible to the Communities and Local Government Committee (CLGC): this Committee inherited the mandate from*

the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) that was originally tasked with the 'regionalisation' of the UK.

*The "Independent Body" responsible for the 'Public Examination', is the Inspection Directorate. **Both bodies report to the CLGC!***

******EERA responsibilities taken over by a Leaders Board (representatives from County Councils) plus the EEDA on 1st April 2010***

It would appear that if local councils do not agree with the proposals emanating from the RSS and its reviews their only get out seems to be 'planning refusal' for large single applications, but of course this can be over ruled on appeal.

4.4 - Supporting infrastructure

The East of England Plan also specifies desirable generic infrastructure improvements to facilitate the additional population associated with the new homes. Some of this should have been reflected in the LDD's. It has been suggested that progress on these facilities has/will not keep pace with the demographic changes, (See Bibliography 10.1) and it has been mooted that the RSS numbers for new dwelling creation may be reduced accordingly. The question of house lead growth and/or job lead growth does not appear to have been addressed in the RSS but should have been considered in the individual Local Development Frameworks and LDD's.

5 – Location Details – Dwellings to be provided by 2021 - as of May 2008, with totals for 2031 in brackets

- 5.1 - Bedfordshire and Luton total – 48,010 (64,500) comprising:
MKSM Strategy Area - Bedford/Kempston/Northern Marston/Vale – 17,120 (19,500)
MKSM Strategy Area - Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis/Leighton Linlade – 21,900 (31,700)
Rest of Bedford BC – 280
Rest of Mid Beds – 7,880
Rest of South Beds – 830
Rest of Bedford UA – (1,300)
Rest of Central Bedfordshire UA – (12,000)
- 5.2 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough total – 79,390 (96,600) comprising:
Cambridge – 16,700
Cambridge City – (14,000)
East Cambs – 5,360 (11,000)
Fenland – 7,660 (11,000)
Huntingdonshire – 8,310 (11,000)
South Cambs – 19,980 (21,000)
Peterborough UA – 21,380 (28,600)
- 5.3 - Essex, Thurrock and Southend total – 98,600 {98,620 published} (124,500) comprising:
Basildon – 9,480 (10,700)

Braintree – 4,340 (6,600)
Brentwood – 2,580 (3,400)
Castle Point – 2,990 (4,000)
Chelmsford – 12,430 (16,600)
Colchester – 12,460 (16,800)
Epping Forest – 2,290 (3,200)
Harlow – 15,190 (16,000)
Maldon – 1,650 (2,300)
Rochford – 3,790 (3,800)
Tendring – 6,390 (8,600)
Uttlesford – 6,390 (8,000)
Southend UA – 4,370 (6,000)
Thurrock UA – 14,250 (18,500)

5.4 - Hertfordshire total – 65,720 (71,300) comprising:

Broxbourne – 3,650 (5,100)
Dacorum – 10,140 (6,100)
East Hertfordshire – 9,860 (11,000)
Hertsmere – 3,920 (5,000)
North Hertfordshire – 4,300 (15,800)
St. Albans – 5,370 (7,000)
Stevenage – 14,430 (6,400)
Three Rivers – 2,990 (4,000)
Watford – 3,790 (5,100)
Welwyn Hatfield – 7,270 (5,800)

5.5 - Norfolk total – 62,340 (79,500) comprising:

Breckland – 11,740 (12,800)
Great Yarmouth – 4,810 (5,000)
Kings Lynn & West Norfolk – 9,460 (13,100)
North Norfolk – 6,280 (6,600)
Norwich – 10,610**** (37,000)
Broadland – 10,520****
Rest of Broadland – (2,000) Excluding NPA
South Norfolk – 8,920****
Rest of South Norfolk – (3,000) Excluding NPA

****Areas affected by the Norwich Policy Area (NPA): numbers may be varied within the designated total.

5.6 – Suffolk total – 48,100 {48,090 published} (64,300) comprising:

Babergh – 4,260
Rest of Babergh – (6,700) Excluding Ipswich Policy Area {IPA}
Forest Heath – 5,590 (6,800)
Ipswich – 12,520 (17,000) IPA
Mid Suffolk – 6,400
Rest of Mid Suffolk – (8,500) Excluding IPA
St. Edmundsbury – 8,040 (10,800)
Suffolk Coastal – 7,640
Rest of Suffolk Coastal – (8,700) Excluding IPA
Waveney – 3,640 (5,800)

6 – Gypsy and Travellers Sites by 2021 as of May 2008, with
totals for 2031 in brackets

6.1 - Bedfordshire and Luton total – 373 (510) comprising:

Bedford – 60 (89)
Central Bedfordshire – 266 (356)
Luton – 47 (65)

6.2 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – 1106 (1,403) comprising:

Cambridge – 20 (38)
East Cambridgeshire – 126 (165)
Fenland – 366 (466)
Huntingdonshire – 60 (89)
South Cambridgeshire – 366 (443)
Peterborough – 168 (202)

6.3 - Essex Thurrock and Southend – 1131 (1,550) comprising:

Basildon – 234 (304)
Braintree – 67 (95)
Brentwood – 34 (51)
Castle Point – 20 (38)
Chelmsford – 109 (161)
Colchester – 40 (69)
Epping Forest – 172 (211)
Harlow – 66 (83)
Maldon – 73 (90)
Rochford – 24 (42)
Tendring – 23 (40)
Uttlesford – 83 (112)
Southend – 20 (38)
Thurrock – 166 (216)

6.4 - Hertfordshire – 564 (761) comprising:

Broxbourne – 54 (74)
Dacorum – 75 (98)
East Hertfordshire – 43 (71)
Hertsmere – 71 (91)
North Hertfordshire – 28 (46)
St. Albans – 108 (138)
Stevenage – 32 (43)
Three Rivers – 35 (52)
Watford – 27 (38)
Welwyn Hatfield – 91 (110)

6.5 - Norfolk – 445 (622) comprising:

Breckland – 63 (81)
Broadland – 23 (40)
Great Yarmouth – 26 (43)
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk – 196 (255)
North Norfolk – 22 (39)
Norwich – 44 (62)
South Norfolk – 71 (102)

6.6 – Suffolk – 437 (614) comprising:

- Babergh – 20 (38)
- Forest Heath – 71 (91)
- Ipswich – 78 (95)
- Mid Suffolk – 149 (196)
- St. Edmundsbury – 30 (52)
- Suffolk Coastal – 42 (77)
- Waveney – 47 (65)

Note: the published figures for Gypsy and Traveller sites have been compounded by 3% over 10 years – **as per the small print in the East of England Plan**. AND new figures from the draft plan have been factored by 3% for 10 years, from 2021 to reach a total in 2031.

7 - Summary

7.1 – Targets

The Government has set targets for more homes to be built throughout the East of England sector. This is mainly to keep pace with the demand imposed by population growth. This policy has been passed onto the local authorities for implementation.

The Regional Planning Body (RPB) published the draft proposal for the RSS for a 12 week period of public consultation (via the Government) and then arranged a ‘public examination’ of it by the ‘independent body’ (see 4.3). These activities should have taken place well before the Strategy was passed through other stages in Government before being laid before the local authorities to develop the Local Development Strategies and Local Development Documents (LDD’s).

The development of the RSS was initiated by the elected government; the draft went through various partially unelected quangos but the ultimate censure remains with the planning departments at elected local authority level.

The RSS suggests a total housing development target area by area but relies upon natural demand to fulfil this target. In the East of England there is usually more demand for house build permissions by developers than strategic proposals by Councils, et al. So by controlling the planning approval system in terms of numbers the elected body is in control. The same applies to the development of suitable support infrastructure; the councils develop the LDD’s and impose within them the obligation for the developer’s to build into their proposals such infrastructure as is deemed necessary, by the councils, (playing field, playground, parking, etc.) The developer’s proposal is then considered against the LDD and a decision made accordingly.

The funding for the housing development is self funding by the developer/house buyer and local infrastructure demands are met in the same

way. In terms of National infrastructure improvements to roads some funding can be sought from the EU to fulfil 'Growth Strategy' plans via the EEDA, but the majority must be born by direct public funding through the Government.

7.2 - East of England Plan

This was published by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. It incorporates the Regional Transport Strategy and covers the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Together with relevant sections of the Milton Keynes - South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, it constitutes the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The latest East of England Plan is a revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England and is one of a series of Regional Spatial Strategies introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It builds on the Draft East of England Plan prepared by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA), which was submitted to the Secretary of State in December 2004, and the findings of the independent Panel appointed to conduct the **Examination in Public of the Draft Plan, which closed in March 2006**. It takes account of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the East of England (but pre-dates the 2008 RES revision) and other plans and programmes that have a bearing on land-use activities, including the Regional Housing Strategy prepared by EERA and its partners.

This revision now replaces an initial Regional Spatial Strategy that comprised the Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6, 2000) together with relevant sections of the former Regional Planning Guidance for the South East and Thames Gateway (RPGs 9, 9B & 3B/9B). **It will set the strategic planning context for decision makers in the East of England for the period to 2021**. Work has already commenced on the next revision to RSS which **will roll forward the Plan to 2031**. Regional Spatial Strategies provide a policy framework within which Local Development Documents (LDF/LDDs) must be in general conformity.

7.3 Objections by the Public or other Organisations

The following responses were received during the iterative editing process before publication in May 2008 of the East of England Plan:-

First draft
Total Responses 19,755
Objecting 17,864
Support 1,573
Observation 318

Second draft
Total Responses 9,183
Objecting 8,862
Support 321

For full details see GoEast page via link below and open pdf file:- Supporting Document for details of public comments and objections.

http://www.gos.gov.uk/goeast/planning/regional_planning/

Following the publication of the East of England Plan in May of 2008 the opportunity to object further is enshrined in law thus:-

*“In accordance with section 113(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, any person aggrieved by the relevant document may **make an application to the High Court no later than the end of a period of six weeks starting on 12 May 2008** on the grounds that:*

*a) the document is not within the relevant power granted by Part 1 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; or
b) a procedural requirement has not been complied with.”*

7.4 - Plan Implementation

Following the issue of the East of England Plan the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has developed an Implementation plan. The East of England Implementation Plan (EEIP) is a high-level regional business plan developed to set out the key delivery needs for the East of England Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy.

A consultation on the draft EEIP was published on 8 April 2009 and it ran until 3 July 2009.

See the link below for details of the consultation:-

http://www.eeda.org.uk/files/EEIP_Final_Consultation_Report_06_11_2009.pdf

The 12 week consultation period on the East of England Implementation Plan ended on 3 July 2009.

7.5 – New Draft plan dated 2010

This is to cover until 2031 and can be found in Bibliography by following the link.

8 - Conclusion

The concept for the East of England area development identified within the RSS was democratically derived, within our system of governance; originating with an elected body, (our Government), to be controlled by locally elected bodies, (our Councils). To further this regional development the East of

England Implementation Plan (EEIP) was produced, by EEDA (non elected body), and reviewed by EERA (non elected body) [IMP 1-3 policy changes](#)

Although it is now too late to formally object to current 2008 Regional Spatial Strategy and the subsequent EEIP, there is time left in many areas to raise objections to specific actions proposed by local authorities, (See Part 2). Successful challenge to Government proposals can be effective if made during the statutory consultation periods as evidenced by the High Court hearing in May 2009, which found in favour of the legal challenge brought by Hertfordshire County Council and St Albans District Council against the Government on aspects of the Plan relating to development in the Green Belt around the towns of Hemel Hempstead, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. Further information on how the Government intends to 'repair' the Plan can be found on the Government Office's website at www.goeast.gov.uk. Accordingly this report includes the original data from the plan pending the 'repair'.

It is worth noting that the 2010 draft RSS makes plain that even more green belt land will be impacted by increased housing demand up to 2031!

Part 2

9 – Planning Objections

Awareness of local development can start in different ways: there may have been a letter from the Council publishing a nearby development proposal or an application notification may have been posted on the proposed site or in the local paper. The proposal on its own might not be objectionable but it could set a precedent.

Regional Local Development Frameworks and the ultimate Local Development Documents will precede and in fact guide planning applications from developers. Lobbying can be undertaken as these documents are being prepared and pass through their 'consultation' processes as well as to the specific planning applications.

A planning objection should start with careful consideration of such matters as the impact of the scheme upon the local environment, highways issues, nature conservation, flood risk and many more detailed issues.

Some housing and infrastructure development may be considered necessary but when proposals for an unwanted development are discovered in a particular area, local resident's views should be polled and petitions signed up so that informed and accurate representations can be made to the relevant Council. The more signatures fielded the more weight will be carried by the presentation: so a 'door to door' effort is essential.

To stand a chance of being taken seriously by the Council any objection must be rational, impersonal and directed principally to the planning issues raised by the proposal.

When a planning application is submitted it is processed by the planning department within a set procedure. Applications are usually dealt with within 8 weeks of submission.

Once the application is accepted as valid by the Council a series of consultation letters are sent out to a range of Statutory Consultees (such as the Highways Department, Environmental Health, English Heritage etc) which vary depending upon the individual proposal. These consultees are required to respond within 21 days with their comments on the application.

The local Parish Council will be notified and they will consider the application at one of their regular meetings. They will formally respond giving their views on the application and stating whether they approve or object.

Local Authorities also carry out public consultation. The way in which this is undertaken varies considerably between Councils. Some require the applicant

to post a public notice on the site for a period of 21 days, or place an advert in the local paper. Others use their public address database to select addresses local to the application site for notification by letter. Increasingly weekly planning application lists are published on Council websites. **The actual procedure for your Council is established in their Standing Orders.**

All too often objections are submitted which are based on **an incorrect understanding** of the application. The first step must be to inspect the application and understand it. The application may be reviewed at the Councils' planning department or online through the Council's website. Each application is allocated a unique planning reference number - it may look something like this a/b/2009/12345/FUL. If known the application details should be sought by reference to that number. Otherwise make sure the address of the property or site is correct

The public will be allowed to inspect the application forms, plans, drawings and other information submitted by the applicant but may not be allowed to view the responses from consultees or other objectors, although increasingly these are published online. The planning department will outline areas of objection and support in their report to the planning committee.

The application should be considered carefully and it can usually be discussed with a Duty Planning Officer so that any technical details can be better appreciated. Notes can be made and copies of the application may be available for sale, (but probably not any plans as these will be copyright).

Actions 1 - Review the Local Plan policy.

When un-acceptable LDF's and LDD's have been drawn up and approved despite the efforts to stop or modify them, objections can still be raised to individual planning applications as they come in. The Council will have copies of their Local Plan available either to view or purchase. This may take a bit of reading but will almost certainly contain policies that have a bearing upon the application. Do they support or deter the proposal? Reference could be made to relevant policies in the letter of objection.

Actions 2 - Check the planning history of the location.

Sometimes the site/project may have been subject to prior refusals/ approvals that will have a bearing upon the matter.

Actions 3 - Write down concerns and supporting details for them.

Set out comments logically and in a straightforward manner. Keep it brief. Long or rambling commentary is unhelpful: use sub-headings to illustrate each point. Photographs are often helpful to illustrate to the Council the particular concerns. If there is a matter that requires the Planning Officer to inspect personally, he should be asked to visit, (This will normally be during office hours).

Send the objection to the Council Planning Department. There is usually a Case Officer or Area Group allocated to deal with the application, but if the exact person cannot be identified then just send the letter to the Planning Department. Always try and include the Planning Reference Number and location of the development. Some authorities accept online submissions via the planning pages of the Council's website.

Actions 4 - Timing

The Council will probably ask for the objection to be made within the 21-day consultation period established at the outset of the planning application. However, objections / supporting statements can be made right up to the moment the application is considered. The later it is left though the less chance there is of the Council really giving the comments due consideration.

Putting the comments in writing is far better than simply telephoning the Council. Always remember to keep a copy for record purposes.

Actions 5 – Monitor Progress

Larger applications may take some time to determine. It is worthwhile asking the Council if they can keep the 'objector' informed of progress. Once logged as an objector most Council's today will notify any material alterations.

Actions 6 - Check to see how the application will be handled.

There is an increasing trend toward the use of Officers Delegated Powers, where the application is determined by the Officers, rather than going to a full planning committee.

If the application is to be heard at a planning committee there is an entitlement to inspect a copy of the Officers Report to Committee. This is usually available 3/4 days prior to the committee meeting and sets out the Planning Departments full consideration of the various planning matters, including a discussion of any objections or statements. Check the committee pages of the Council's website for the agenda and minutes.

Actions 7 – Attend the Planning Committee Meeting.

The objector is entitled to attend any planning committee meeting to hear the applications being considered by the Council. Committees are usually held on a monthly basis, but may be more frequent depending upon the Council workload. Committee dates are usually posted in the Council Offices and can be checked with the Council's Committee Clerks Department or the planning department, or online.

The committee agenda will indicate when the application will be considered during the meeting, but often the 'batting order' is altered, at the Chairman's discretion, to bring forward applications where there are significant levels of

public interest. This is to avoid people having to wait all evening to hear a particular application.

Increasingly the public is being allowed to speak at committee meetings and each Council adopts their own procedure for this. In most cases the objector will need to notify the Council in advance of the intention to speak. Check with the Planning Department or Committee Clerks office about the procedure adopted in the particular Council.

The Chairman will invite those who have registered to speak to address the committee from a suitable position in the Council Chamber. Two or three minutes are common time periods allowed for individual public address to the committee and are strictly controlled. This is not long and therefore it is a good idea to read a pre-prepared (and timed) statement or have a series of bullet points to make sure you remember all the points you wish to make. Here again, keep your comments simple, keep them to the point and avoid personal jibes. The committee is only interested in the planning merits of your comments and how they relate to the application. You may even be prevented from speaking if you just use the opportunity for making political or personal statements, make personal comments about the applicant or you lose your temper.

The most effective objector is always the cool, calm and collected representative of personal or local opinion, who has done their homework and presents a logical planning case against the proposal under consideration. A proxy speaker can be used to speak for the objector's but this must be made clear to the committee.

If other people are being represented, formal permission should be sought to speak on their behalf. This may be requested by the committee to prove permission has been granted so a letter of authority would be useful.

Group objectors wishing to say much the same thing are generally encouraged to group their comments together with one or two speakers only, but more time per speech may be negotiated as a result. This should be discussed with the Clerks office or planning officer well before the committee meeting date. The applicant or his agent will also be allowed to speak and will usually be given the chance to address the committee last so that any points raised by other speakers can be reviewed and commented upon. Sometimes matters are considered 'in camera' i.e. without public access, but this is increasingly uncommon.

Actions 8 – If the application is approved.

If the application is approved then this may be the end of the matter, although if it is considered that the Council acted in a manner that did not conform to established procedures then a complaint could be made to the [Ombudsman](#).

If the application is refused the applicant may go to appeal. The objector will then need to repeat the process at an [Appeal](#). Do not assume the objections will automatically be represented at this stage. The objections must be made again.

To summarise:-

- Investigate the application and associated planning policy
- Consider helpful amendments / modifications
- Consider discussing the application to resolve problems
- Write down and send concerns to the Council as soon as possible
- Monitor the application
- Attend the committee to hear the decision
- Consider addressing the committee
- Keep all comments to the point, impersonal and related to the planning Issues
- Make sure other people's permission has been granted to speak on their behalf

Actions 9 – Supporting activities

Sometimes just following the 'objection' procedure is not enough. There are a number of things that can be done to make local authorities aware of public displeasure at their proposals:-

Historically the majority of planning objections are started too late (procedurally), so 'development awareness' is essential. To maintain this awareness it may be necessary for 'concerned citizens' to form groups to share the load of the campaign, council meeting attendance, etc., and whose sole purpose is to develop objections against unwanted development.

One example of this is [SNUB](#), (Stop Norwich Urbanisation) that is a group concerned at the massive housing and infrastructure proposals in place for the area to the North East of Norwich, in Norfolk.

Pressure groups could be formed by local residents who could highlight their concerns by producing placards stating their objections and to 'post' them around the area of concern. They could also place adverts in local newspapers stating their objections. Such groups could arrange marches and peaceful demonstrations outside their Council Offices, or other significant focal points, (the police and media should be advised of dates and venues in

advance). In this way the council will learn directly the strength of feeling about their proposals.

It is imperative that any marches or demonstrations are marshalled and that good order is kept.

The objector(s) could also write and object direct to the proposed developer as soon as details are known. Let the developer know the level of opposition they face and involve them with the media. The developer's image should be targeted where possible, as potential destroyers of quality of life, peace of mind, etc., Green Issues should be emphasised, but be factual: libelous messages of any kind must be avoided.

Infrastructure development may be another subject for objection due to the apparent lack of coordination planned for it versus housing growth.

The 'Regional Spatial Strategy' is a fact of life and cannot be removed from without but the detail can be changed by consistent hard work by concerned people.

Section 10 - Bibliography

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10.2 – Regional Spatial Strategy

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10.3 – IMP 1-3 policy changes

<http://www.eera.gov.uk/Documents/Meetings%20and%20Events/Assembly%20and%20Panels/Planning%20Panel/RPP%20Meetings/2007/8%20Mar%2007/2007-03-08%20Item%204%20Appendix%20B%209p%20Implementation%20response.pdf>

10.4 - SNUB (Stop Norwich Urbanisation)

An example of a group of 'concerned citizens' whose aim is to stop unwanted growth, is SNUB (Stop Norwich Urbanisation), who actively object to the developments proposed by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNPD), their Joint Core Strategy and in specific the developments proposed for the Norwich Policy Area (NPA).

Contacts: snub@orangehome.co.uk and snub@me.com

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