

This Update is intended to help keep interested people and organisations abreast of planning policy issues in Rother District Council's area. At a national level there have been many significant changes affecting planning policy in recent months. The Coalition Government is making many new and significant changes to the system.

This note has been compiled by the Council's Planning Strategy team and web links have been included to assist stakeholders to finding the documents and statements referred to.

Government Changes to National Planning Policy

On 9th June 2010 the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Minister for Decentralisation, made a Ministerial Statement announcing the reissue of [Planning Policy Statement 3](#) (Housing) excluding private residential gardens from the definition of previously developed land and the deletion of the national indicative minimum density requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare.

South East Plan Revoked

On 6th July 2010 the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, announced the revocation of [Regional Spatial Strategies](#) with immediate effect, using his powers under s79(6) of the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

There are many significant implications to the loss of the South East Plan most notable being the removal of housing number requirements set for individual local authorities such as Rother. A need for housing remains within the district, but the responsibility is now with Local Authorities to decide on the level of housing, which must be supported by a robust evidence base. There will be a similar need to ascertain the number of local pitches for the Gypsy and Traveller community having regard to local need and historical demand.

The revocation of the South East Plan also removes the wider statutory regional and sub-regional policy framework from local planning. There are significant policy implications for transport, regeneration, energy and the environment. We are working to address any consequent policy gaps.

The Coalition Government has advised that revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies is not a signal for local authorities to stop making plans for their area. Rother District Council is continuing to develop its Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD.

The LDF will guide development in its area and provide certainty for investors and communities. However we need to review our evidence base and emerging policies in light of the revocation of the South East Plan to ensure the Core Strategy will be found 'sound'.



The Bexhill – Hastings Link Road

The Coalition Government is undertaking a [Comprehensive Spending Review](#) that is expected to be completed by 20 October 2010. The review will prioritise where resources are allocated and this will impact on the delivery of services and infrastructure across the country.

As a consequence, the Coalition Government has suspended the decision on the Link Road until the spending review has been completed, when the Department of Transport will be able to assess its financial budget for the coming year and prioritise resources accordingly.

The implementation of the Link Road retains the support of [East Sussex County Council](#), Rother District Council and Hastings Borough Council and is seen as a pivotal catalyst for regeneration, unlocking land for employment and housing, bringing significant benefits to this part of East Sussex. A decision not to implement the Link Road would have significant implications for the Core Strategy. A favourable decision is still hoped for.

Further Changes Anticipated

The emerging [Devolution and Localism Bill](#) is anticipated this winter and is expected to introduce new legislation shifting power from Central Government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. It is envisaged that planning will play a central role in this new direction of governance.



LDF - Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD Timetable

Unfortunately, and as a direct consequence of these changes at a national level, we must review our timetable for the Core Strategy. It will not be published this Autumn as previously planned.

There will be a knock-on for planned consultation on the Site Allocations DPD.

We will formally amend our LDF programme (the LDS) in the autumn once the implications of all the changes have been made clear, but in meantime we will review our emerging policies and continue to work with our communities, stakeholders and parish councils to develop a locally robust strategy.

