

# Commission of Inquiry - Vision for Hampshire 2050

## Evidence summary report

### Environment and Quality of Place

14 December 2018

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**HAMPSHIRE 2050**  
VISION FOR THE FUTURE



Environment  
and quality  
of place



## Contents

1. Purpose.....	1
2. Introduction.....	1
3. Theme scope .....	2
4. Expert evidence.....	3
5. Key points.....	5
6. Conclusion.....	19

## List of Tables

### List of Figures

Figure 1: Hearing Format

Figure 2: Negative feedback mechanisms: Interaction between Transport and Land Use

Figure 3: A new South Hampshire 2050

Figure 4: South Coast Sea Level Rise: Surging Seas

## 1. Purpose

This report summarises the expert evidence received in relation to the theme, Environment and Quality of Place, to assist Commissioners in considering, alongside the full evidence pack and theme hearing, the following three questions:

1. What do you think might happen in the future?
2. How will that effect/impact on what we do?
3. How will the County Council and Partners need to react in light of this?

## 2. Introduction

Quality of Place is generally regarded as all those features of physical environment and qualities of life that make a location a desirable, competitive, and economically vibrant place to live. For years, places measured their success in purely economic terms - jobs created, rising incomes and wages or the extent of high-tech industries but more recently, other considerations have entered the picture, and place-making efforts have emphasised quality of daily life.

There is a close relationship between quality of life and the environment i.e. people and place. People's lives are strongly affected by the condition of their physical environment. Environmental quality also matters intrinsically because most people value the beauty and health of the place where they live and care about the depletion of its natural resources. Conserving environmental, cultural and natural resources is one of the most important factors in maintaining and improving, well-being over time.

Local authorities have invested in everything from better parks and bike lanes to arts and cultural venues, all to help attract and retain talent and bolster residents' health and happiness. These quality-of-place amenities were once thought of as an afterthought or a by-product of economic prosperity but now it is clear that amenities, not just leisure and hospitality, but the holistic offer for example of public realm, museums and libraries, play a key role in attracting users of places, bringing subsequent economic prosperity. This theme will highlight how the environment and quality of a place is key, in supporting some of the ideas presented in the earlier theme hearings regarding economic prosperity and the role of our towns and cities.

Hampshire County Council's role in relation to placemaking is that of influencing and supporting the objectives of sustainable development through the planning system and through the provision of infrastructure, both hard and green. As the top tier authority and Highway, Education and Lead Local Flood Authority, the County Council works closely with the Local Planning Authority (district/borough council) to influence the planning system, as well as through its track record of delivery in other placemaking disciplines.

The County Council is a strong advocate of strategic planning, and the advantages that cross-boundary consideration of issues and formulation of solutions can bring. Successful planning and effective placemaking have an important role to play in contributing to the four strategic aims of the County Council:

1. Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity.
2. People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives.
3. People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment.
4. People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities.

The aim of this theme is to move beyond the issues that dictate the nature of planning today such as the amount of housing that is needed and look at fundamental changes in lifestyle that will drive planning and placemaking over the years to 2050.

### 3. Theme scope

This theme will examine the future direction of Environment and Quality of Place thinking and policy. This requires an understanding of what is valued about Hampshire's unique environment, and the quality of place that is sought. The theme will cover an assessment of the likely drivers that will impact on our future natural and built environment, what they will look like and how we can deliver it. The evidence for this theme should be considered closely alongside that of Theme 6: Rural Hampshire. Whilst all the themes being considered by this commission are closely linked, rural Hampshire and the natural environment have particularly close ties.

The approach to this theme has been to consider it under three broad topics. We have been asking evidence providers to consider a range of key questions relating to the theme:

#### 1. Natural and Historic environment

- What are the elements of Hampshire's natural and historic environment that create the quality of place?
- What are the impacts from a changing climate and natural environmental hazards (such as drought and flooding) and how will they be managed (e.g. Natural Flood Management, coastal defences)?
- What are the implications of a 'Natural Capital' approach to development and the principle of 'environmental net gain'?
- How can we make better sustainable use of the natural environment to improve our health and well-being, both mental and physical?

#### 2. Built environment

- What constitutes sustainable built development for Hampshire in the future, including?
  - Location – South Hampshire cities, M/A27 corridor, MDAs, new settlements?
  - What will the future housing needs be (affordable & specialist housing, assisted living, key workers, rural and National Park needs etc.)?
  - How will sustainable built development be planned for and delivered to meet the identified needs?
  - What are the infrastructure needs (built, green, blue, power, waste) and how will they enable or constrain the location of development?

- What resources and materials will be available (recycled first, modular building etc. – reduced reliance on minerals?)?
- What will future houses, work places, schools etc. look like and how will they achieve low carbon, energy efficiency?
- What impact will transport infrastructure & costs have on the location and function of future development?

### 3. Quality of place

- What defines ‘quality of place’ and how does it equate to quality of life and economic prosperity?
- How will ‘quality of place’ be perceived in the future and how will it be protected and maintained?
- Do younger generations value the same ‘place making’ elements as previous generations?
- How is ‘quality’ secured and maintained with reduced investment in the built environment and public space maintenance?
- How will the natural and built environments co-exist to create quality places (green infrastructure, outdoor recreation, walking & cycling etc.)
- What will communities look/behave like - where will we live, work, shop and play?
- Will there be a move to urban/city living or continued rural renaissance?
- What will be the Implications of individuals and communities taking increased responsibility for maintaining local services (as public sector funding is squeezed)?

## 4. Expert evidence

A wide range of individuals and organisations were invited to submit evidence. This included a range of environmental/ecological themed organisations and individuals, local planning authorities, planning consultancies to national level, independent charity organisations.

Written submissions were received from the following:

- Test Valley Borough Council
- Gosport Borough Council
- David Lock Associates
- Town and Country Planning Association
- Environment Agency
- Campaign for Protection of Rural England
- Hampshire County Council Archaeology
- Ordnance Survey
- Natural England
- Ecological Planning & Research Ltd
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Green Halo Partnership (Southern Policy Centre)
- Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme
- Historic England
- Boyle and Summer

- South Coast Urban Design Group
- Historic Environment (Steve Trow)
- Southern Water
- The Landscape Institute

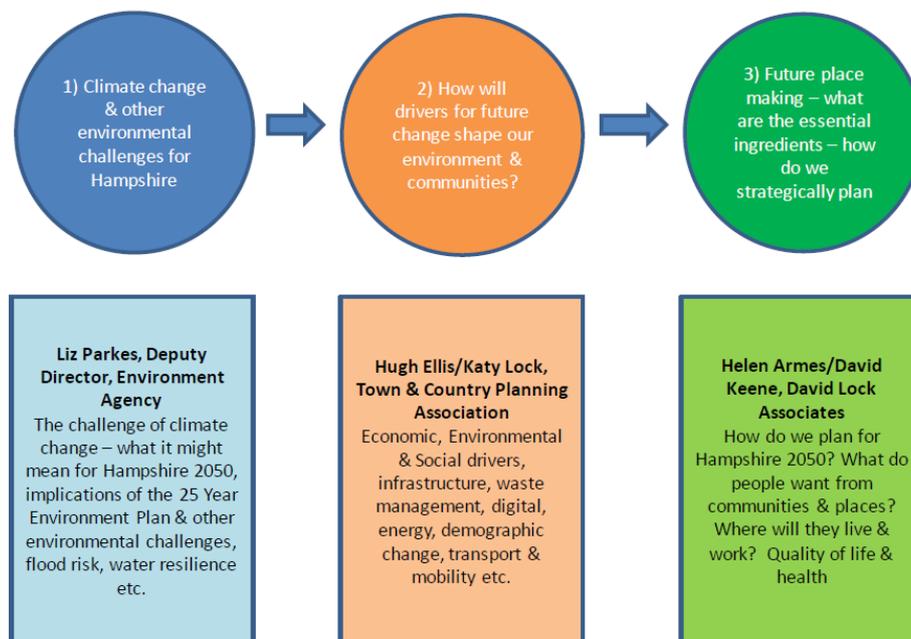
In addition, a number of Planning and Urban Design organisations submitted material that they had previously prepared, or the material was sourced for the Commission:

- Barton Wilmore
- ARUP – Foresights Project
- Royal Town Planning Institute
- Town and Country Planning Association
- Savills
- Committee on Climate Change
- Royal Institute of British Architects

A workshop was also held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> November with the South Coast Urban Design Group. This workshop was held to discuss the issues around the future of town centres and urban living given its prominence in the earlier theme sessions. The outcomes from that session have been considered as an evidence submission.

The Environment Agency, the Town and Country Planning Association, and David Lock Associates have been invited to present at the hearing, with the focus of those presentations taking the following form:

**Figure 1: Hearing Format**



The full catalogue of submissions and evidence reports will be provided to commissioners as an accompaniment to this report.

## 5. Key points

The following section summarises the key findings from the desk research and submissions from experts. The first section considers the natural and historic environment, setting the scene for how we think about Hampshire and what creates the quality of place that is so highly valued, as well as the role that Natural Capital will play in the future. The second section covers the Built Environment, what the likely drivers affecting the environment and communities will be, as well as the opportunities they are likely to present. The third and final section considers how 'quality of place' will be perceived in the future and how it can be protected and maintained.

### 1. Natural and historic environment

Our natural and historic environment is an essential contributor to quality of life and one of Hampshire's most valued assets. It provides local identity and distinctiveness, sense of place, sense of community, wellbeing and recreation, in addition to being of significant economic value. It has highly diverse, internationally important habitats including the chalk downs and chalk rivers, the heaths and woodland of the New Forest and the coastal and marine habitats of the Solent and its harbours. Approximately 85% of the county is rural and over a third is designated as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or National Park in recognition of its high landscape value. 20% of the total county area is wooded and nestled within and between these areas is a rich tapestry of small towns and villages, many with unique charm and character, such as the tranquil settlements lining the traditional river valleys of the Test, Itchen and Meon amongst many others.

Its southern climate and diverse range of habitats means that Hampshire has the greatest species diversity of any county in Britain. 13% of its landcover is designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar sites, providing an important network of legally protected areas across Hampshire, with a further 13% designated as Priority Habitat and/or Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. However, nearly all of England's 'natural' assets are, in fact, semi-natural and all of our landscapes have been formed and shaped by the interaction of natural and human influences.

Hampshire's historic heritage is exceptionally pronounced in icons of the past such as buildings and monuments, the landscape patterns, the archaeological sites, the ancient woodlands and historic trackways. It is as great and notable as Winchester Cathedral and as local and lowly as a sash window in a cottage. As with SSSIs it is important to recognise that the statutorily designated elements of the historic environment (listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments etc) comprise only a fraction of the overall historic resource and it is the far larger undesignated historic resource that makes a greater contribution to local sense, quality and fabric of place. All these areas, designated or not, give Hampshire its strong sense of place and contribute to its high environmental value. Any strategy for the future of the environment and quality of place in Hampshire should seek to integrate both natural and historic strands.

This environment is under threat from the demands of growth in terms of housing, infrastructure, employment space, intensive agriculture, and from climate change. Such pressures are causing small but noticeable and continuing annual declines across all habitats and species. Less than half of our SSSIs are in a favourable condition. Many species are now at risk of extinction in Hampshire; the nightingale and turtle dove are two examples. This is likely to become more prevalent as habitats become more fragmented and the effects of climate change continue to have an impact.

The natural and historic environment is central to the county's identity and is a significant economic asset. It is part of what residents and visitors value about the place and helps attract investment to a place where quality of life compliments connectivity and a highly skilled population. The tourism sector is itself an important source of economic prosperity with Hampshire being the most visited county in the South East. £2.7 billion is estimated to have been spent by day and staying visitors in 2014, with a total value of £3.26 billion when including induced expenditure. However, economic growth should not be considered an end but a means to an end which provides us with the opportunity to live fuller, more enriched lives

### Climate change

Our changing climate presents several risks to our wildlife and heritage with extended periods of drought; greater temperature extremes; significant periods of heavy rainfall and flooding; a changing sea level and accelerated coastal erosion; and a spread in invasive species and pathogens. All are likely to place greater stress on communities, wildlife and the provision of vital infrastructure such as clean water and sewage removal. With extremes in temperature fluctuation, flourishing of pests and diseases, unpredictable rainfall and drought stress, one of the most immediate and emotionally charged impacts of climate change will be on Hampshire's trees and woodlands. The oak, ash and beech are integral to the character of the Hampshire landscape, history and folklore and yet we are on the verge of losing one of these species completely and seeing increasing threats to the other two. Trees and woodlands are vital to the vision for the future of Hampshire in 2050. With rotation lengths for commercial stands typically reaching maturity in 35 - 45 years, there is the opportunity now to begin to invest in a new dynamic landscape scale approach. The Landscape Institute recommend a Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan for Hampshire - that will realise that vision.

If we can increase our resilience by ensuring our natural and historic assets are better protected and managed, then we may be able to minimise the severity or frequency of the impacts of a changing climate. The value of our natural and historic heritage needs to be accommodated within cost/benefit calculations when considering coastal protection and flood alleviation schemes, and historic buildings or their setting might need to be adapted to flood risk. Working with nature to create more natural flood storage systems will create more resilient ecosystems with increased biodiversity and a host of additional benefits to society.

### Natural Capital and Environmental Net Gain

Defra's 25-year Environment Plan is built on the ideas of 'Natural Capital' and 'Environmental Net Gain' – concepts that recognise that the natural environment

provides a variety of essential goods and services to our communities, called 'ecosystem services', and that previous 'no net loss' in biodiversity through planning decisions has not been effective at preventing further losses. The principle of 'environmental net gain' as set out in the latest revision of the National Planning Policy Framework is a response to these severe declines and is seen as being necessary to help restore biodiversity.

Ecosystem services takes a variety of forms, from the contribution trees make to reducing the amount of pollutants in the atmosphere through to the way in which properly managed habitats in the upper reaches of rivers can hold water, and so prevent flooding downstream. These services have a monetary value, in that if they were not present, a technological alternative would be required to provide the same role that would have much greater cost implications. Recognising the value of natural capital will encourage society to value the natural environment because of the significant contribution it will make in a changing society.

The Natural Capital approach offers a way in which Hampshire can protect and enhance its precious countryside to achieve a better balance between nature and development. It helps capture the true contribution the environment makes so that protecting and enhancing our natural capital should become integral to policy and decision-making, rather than as an afterthought. In doing so, it will help us tackle some of the future challenges we face, for example by:

- Making a case for protecting and enhancing our distinctive habitats and wildlife so reducing decline and achieving net gain
- Maintaining or establishing natural vegetation to help tackle the threat of air or ground pollution from traffic and other sources;
- Managing land better naturally in such a way as to prevent costly downstream flooding of communities and improve water quality;
- Using nature to tackle a variety of physical and mental health challenges faced by our communities. Individuals with easy access to nature are 40% less likely to become overweight or obese and national research shows the huge impact that nature can have on combatting mental illness.
- Planning development to include nature as an integral part of green infrastructure, helping us build better places to live, and make existing communities more willing to accept growth. Every development should make a meaningful contribution to nature's recovery and our own sense of wellbeing.
- Recognising the economic opportunities that the natural environment offers through, for example, tourism, energy generation and use of natural materials.

### The Hampshire Ecological Network

It has long been recognised that the natural environment needs wildlife sites which are 'bigger, better and joined up' across a network to recover their losses and build resilience to climate change. In response to this the Government's 25-year plan for the environment sets out a commitment to create a national Nature Recovery Network.

The essential mapping of Hampshire's nature recovery network has been undertaken using best available data to identify the core network which must be protected and managed to the highest standard, as well as a wider network of

opportunities to create habitats and restore the all-important connections. This Local Nature Partnership led project has been undertaken by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre in conjunction with the Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Local Planning Authorities and the maps have been tested and well received by planning officers and local authorities and should form the evidence base for all future proposed local plans and developments. The maps should not only highlight where the important sites are that need to be protected, but also help to inform where investment should be focused in order to restore and enhance habitats, thus achieving meaningful net gains for biodiversity and the environment.

The application of Natural Capital and the local ecological network in planning and shaping future development will help retain and enhance our natural assets whilst greater opportunity should be taken to conserve and use the historic environment for the positive contribution it can make to community, sense of place and quality of life.

## **2. Built environment**

Understanding what drives people to live where they live, will help to understand how future changes and challenges might impact on the on future development demand. The Royal Institute of British Architects has listed the top ten primary characteristics of places where people want to live:

1. The right place for the right housing;
2. A place to start and a place to stay;
3. A place that fosters a sense of belonging;
4. A place to live in nature;
5. A place to enjoy and be proud of;
6. A place with a choice in homes;
7. A place with unique and lasting appeal;
8. A place where people feel at home;
9. A sustainable place for future generations;
10. A place where people thrive.

These characteristics bring together the vital elements that make quality of place, design, availability of services, access to green spaces etc. but such characteristics don't prescribe location. The quality of development is key in creating places where people want to live. One area that the planning system does not consider is 'Social Capital'. This is the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a society, enabling that society to function effectively – and arguably a key characteristic of many Hampshire settlements. Community links and informal support networks, especially in more sparsely located rural communities, are vital to maintaining support structures when state services are limited.

According to Savills, the Hampshire experience is one of dispersed rural communities, towns and cities performing to different levels, all transposed onto a network of stressed connectivity, increasing housing demand, poorly designed places and greater pressures on green/natural spaces. Planning is dominated by short-termism created out of a pressure to accommodate growth (often by appeal) in

places with poor access to transport, facilities and jobs. These are areas where Social Capital is often in short supply.

Dispersed settlement pattern or concentrated communities

A question that will face Hampshire is what pattern of growth we think the county will experience in future years, a continued favour towards dispersed rural settlements, or a more concentrated focus on urban communities. The Country Land and Business Association has been investigating the sustainability of rural communities across the country. The evidence they have collected shows that more than 2,000 villages across England are overlooked by the local planning process as they are judged to be ‘unsustainable’ due to a lack of public services such as a post office.

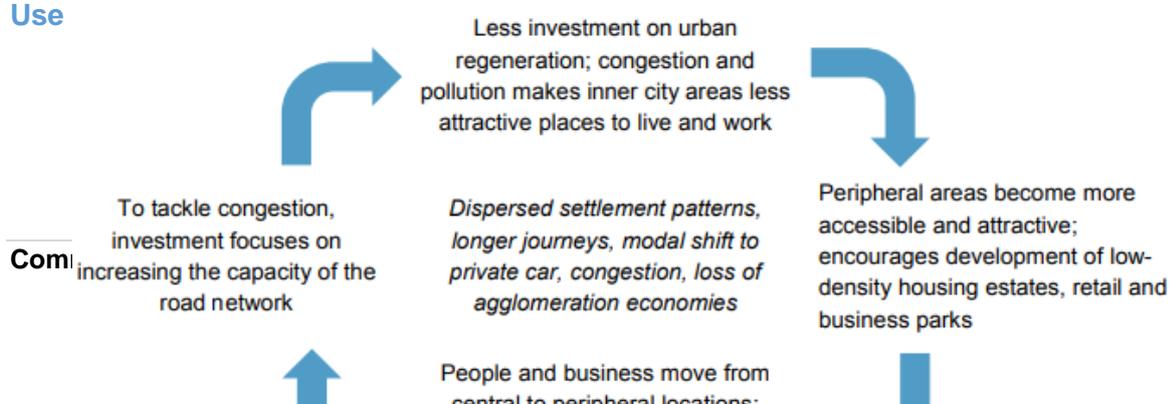
Local Authorities use ‘sustainability assessments’ to score settlements on the range of services available in the vicinity. Villages are then placed in a hierarchy according to their score, with Local Plans allocating new housing to those towards the top. Unsustainable villages are not allocated housing and have very limited development options to improve their sustainability, leaving them in a cycle of decline.

The perceived flaw in this current system, as highlighted by the CLA, is that sustainability assessments **measure villages against a range of services and amenities more akin to how previous generations lived and used services**. Assessing communities on how they lived 50 years ago is leading to perverse outcomes of stagnation. If we are truly to understand what makes a place sustainable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century then we must use 21<sup>st</sup> century criteria. Local authorities in Hampshire will need to factor in how advances in technology have shaped modern life and consider how emerging technology will change rural Hampshire, or more villages could fall into the sustainability trap, with no clear mechanism available to lift them out.

Connectivity is a key facet of modern life, yet only 18% of local authorities (CLA research) consider broadband when determining the sustainability of a settlement. More than any other factor, broadband has a substantial impact on rural life, reducing isolation, opens access to services like banking, shopping, education, healthcare, employment and entertainment. Most importantly, it is a key element in the ongoing struggle of how to deliver services to small numbers of people of over larger distances – a key strand in ensuring rural communities remain robust.

The reliance on private car use also serves to make communities less sustainable. Those who work in the countryside face house prices that far outstrip local salaries and therefore must travel from where housing is more affordable to their place of work. To reduce carbon emissions from reverse commuters, local planning policies should be more supportive of building homes people can afford close to employment.

**Figure 2: Negative feedback mechanisms: Interaction between Transport and Land Use**



*RTPI (adapted from Wenban-Smith, 2016)*

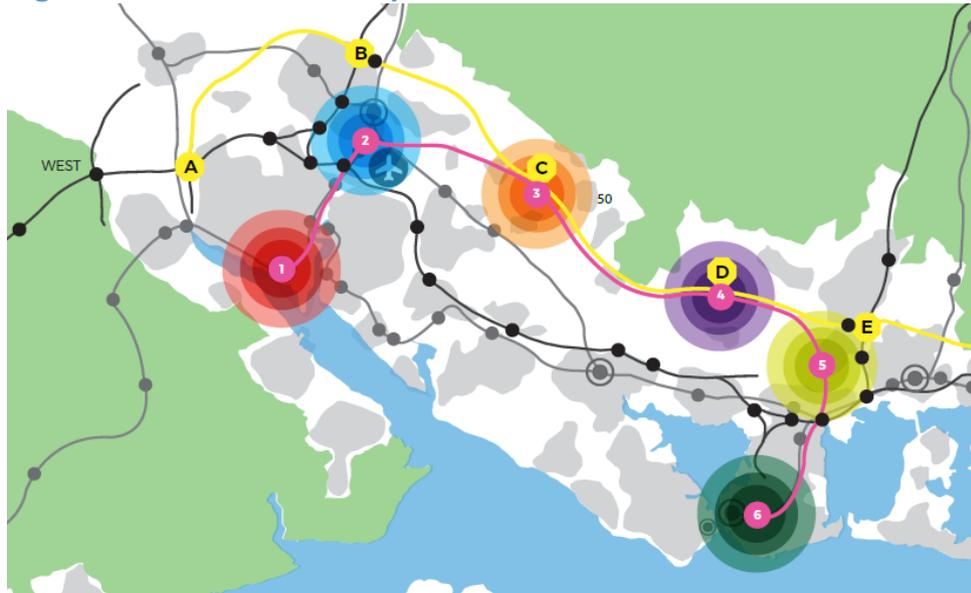
The CLA research highlights that there is a multitude of factors for why people of all ages leave their rural community with the provision of housing being an important one. Importantly, communities deemed to be unsustainable will more likely see a reduction in social capital as homes to support the next generation will not be built. **Without proactively planning for the future now, rural communities will suffer in the long term.** Successful communities require continuous improvement, and the question is not so much what will happen, but what do we want to happen? What do we want our communities to look like in the coming decades or more and how can we work to achieve this?

The weakening of rural communities and the loss of people of all ages to urban areas, raises the question of the long-term future for those areas? To assess this question a workshop was organised in partnership with the South Coast Urban Design Group, the Future of Town Centres and Urban Spaces was discussed.

The current perceived assessment of Hampshire's town centres and urban spaces is that they are reaching their boundary limits, with the urban sprawl and dated transit networks contributing to soulless places, with a significant lack of social capital. Clearly in the wider context of sustainability of our communities, these approaches are no longer the most effective solutions. Previous hearings have highlighted the key role that urban areas are set to play in economic growth and productivity, as well as fostering the changes likely in work, skills and mobility. The workshop was used to ask the question 'what will the future role of these areas be and what will we come to expect from the design and function of urban form, structures and buildings?'

One of the overriding messages from the Urban Design Group is the notion that land use planning remains transport dominated and that contrary to belief, technological 'solutions' are not a long-term approach to sustainable planning as they are still based on the traditional view of mobility as well as retrofitting solutions to historical (struggling) transport networks. This is a view shared by the architect's firm Boyle and Summer who submitted, as part of their evidence a notional strategic masterplan for South Hampshire. Their vision for the future is one based around vibrant urban centres, easier movement, higher density of housing and memorable, sustainable, diverse, healthy and green places.

Figure 3: A new South Hampshire 2050



Boyle and Summer Architects

Whilst on the face of it, a development strategy as shown in figure 2 may be unpalatable for the identification of new settlements at locations 2,3,4 and 5, these roughly correspond to communities that are already being progressed through the planning system. The key suggestion in this evidence submission is the proposal for wholly new strategic connections between such centres, rather than relying on those networks that are already under significant pressure to cope with the urban network we already have.

#### Transport Innovation - Rethinking Urban Mobility

The Urban Design Group are keen advocates that one impact of technological change as well as a potential planning response to pressure is to facilitate a shift away from and a reduction in the need for personal mobility. The long-term future of the prosperity of our urban towns and cities relies on the success of the smart city concept. To achieve this, we need to concentrate on the smart, 'innovative' choices that can be delivered in urban areas. The Urban Design Group shared a common consensus that contrary to popular belief, 'infrastructure' led planning (especially transport) inevitably leads to undesirable, soulless places, where social capital suffers.

In rethinking Mobility, ARUP suggest that seamless journeys and shared, autonomous mobility will be driving forces in the future. It is important to create strategies to engage with demand responsive and ride sharing services, or plan to provide more seamless journeys with new services. Users will need to be put first, with encouragement given to seamless multi-modal journeys and a real integration of public transport and demand responsive transport. The key for policy planning for transport will be to keep up with technology and especially consumer demand for new services. New infrastructure should be built that can react to changing models of ownership and shifting travel behaviours. The impact of shifting travel modes and patterns on urban form, including suburbs, at all scales: street, building, town, city, will need to be understood. This raises an important question for planning; then do we draw the line and stop investing in, and retrofitting existing, under pressure, 20<sup>th</sup>

century infrastructure, and start afresh with new purpose design and built, flexible and adaptable networks.

The Town and Country Planning Association also highlight several alternatives to travel which are gaining momentum. Successful alternatives range from teleconferencing, videoconferencing and web-conferencing, to working flexible hours, and working remotely – either from home or remote hub (to many experts the notion of ‘home working’ refers more to the idea of working away from ‘headquarters buildings, to a more hub approach, whether this be community working hubs established in new developments, or alternative flexible working environments).

Technology, as we know, is developing at a dramatic speed. The TCPA highlight the emergence of Telepresence technology. This is a set of robotic technology that provides stimuli to a user’s senses that makes them feel as though they are in or having an effect in another place other than their true location. Using a simple robot, the user can transport themselves to another location, move around through offices and interact face to face with people they might not otherwise ever meet.

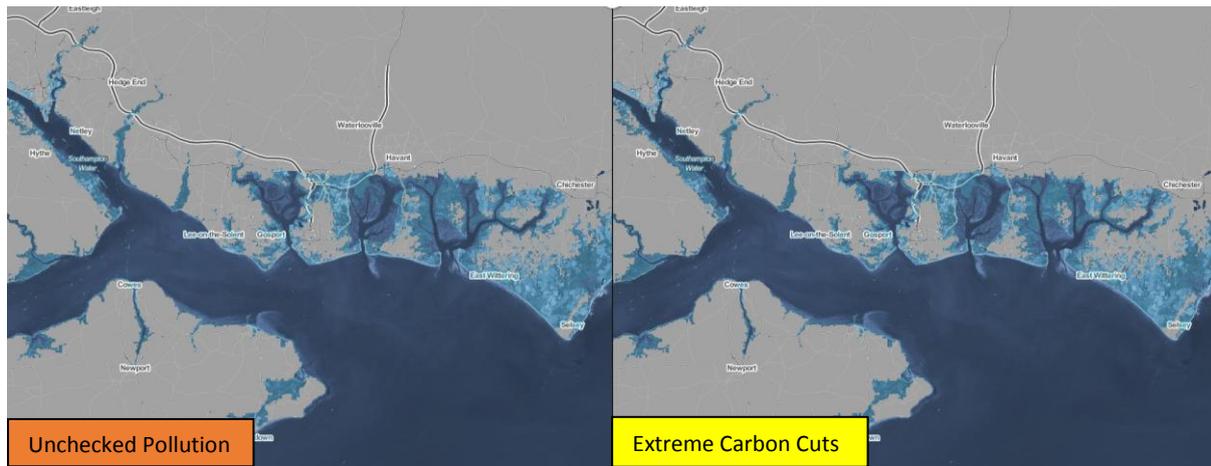
### Climate Change and energy

Of all the issues facing the future of society climate change is by far the most serious. That is the sentiment of scientists around the globe, and one echoed by the TCPA. Unchecked it will directly threaten the county’s towns and cities and reshape the countryside. A transformation of our energy and transport systems will be required, as well as change in how we organise urban areas to secure their resilience to the inevitable increase in severe weather.

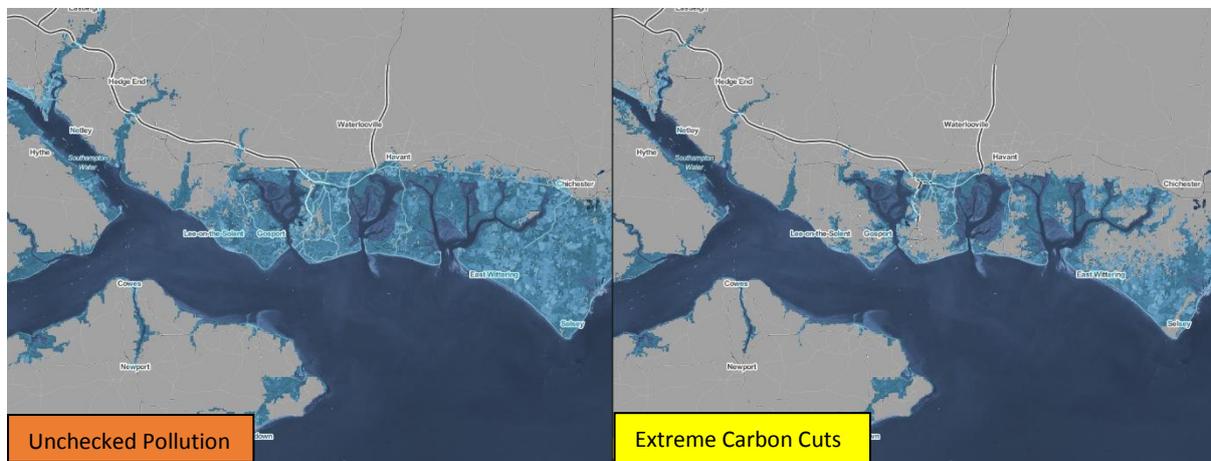
Of most concern to Hampshire will be sea level rise. This is now unavoidable by 2080, and seas will go on rising beyond that date. Sea level rise will have potentially significant impacts on Hampshire’s coastal communities. Public authorities will need to consider one of the most extensive and costly coastal defence programmes ever conceived in the UK, along with the relocation of population over the long term.

In Hampshire some extremely vulnerable, economic centres as well as natural environment assets face uncertain long-term futures. Big choices will need to be made as to the future of these assets and the significant levels of investment they will require to secure their futures. Climate change will impact on all sectors and require an integrated process capable of managing long-term change. Hampshire will need to consider a transformation in the design and location of housing growth as well as the resilience of key transport and energy infrastructure.

**Figure 4: South Coast Sea Level Rise: Surging Seas  
2050 Scenario**



**2100 Scenario**



Surging Seas: <http://sealevel.climatecentral.org/>

The Town and Country Planning Association summarise with a stark conclusion that climate change resilience is directly related to economic prosperity. It is the growing cost of insurance and the relationship of that cost to future investment which will be a major problem for the future. Insurance costs will climb sharply in the coming decades and the least resilient places will find it expensive or impossible to obtain insurance, at which point investment will simply stop.

### Demographics

Demographics, especially an ageing population, is likely to be a big influencer. As we have seen in previous Hearings, Hampshire’s population is steadily ageing and is projected to continue to do so. Meeting the evolving needs of this cohort and their changing lifestyles will be important. Demographic changes do not lead to a perceived increase in any one lifestyle. David Lock Associates suggest that affluent, educated, active and design aware individuals will seek out urban lifestyles, culture and nightlife, and will require cities/towns to respond to their needs at a local level.

This cohort also contains the individuals likely to be more engaged in community-based groups that take ownership of local services, providing the core of the social capital that is key to our rural communities. Likewise, the contrast can also be seen in living arrangements. New models of ‘elderly’ living accommodation are becoming

commonplace and later retirement ages (which mean longer mortgages) mean there is an increase in the number of this cohort remaining in their own homes. The TCPA also point out that consideration would also need to be given to everyday human behaviours. This means recognising the contribution that everything from the provision of public toilets, to an inclusive public realm, to accessible and adaptable housing types make to communities.

At the other end of the scale, Generation Z and beyond are the future of the county, bringing different expectations and lifestyles. This generation are increasingly footloose, and experience driven, with a global perspective and almost complete reliance/immersion in technology in most aspects of life. This cohort will likely have a continued focus on larger urban areas in proximity to universities, culture, nightlife and employment, and are less likely to own their own homes (due to affordability issues and market changes). This will mean they are more mobile in the job market, shifting jobs more freely promoting new models of business and making it increasingly important for Hampshire to support economic growth with the right range of business space and business support.

However, similarly to the ageing population, the lifestyle of the young cohort is not expected to be predetermined to one style. A significant element may prefer rural, simpler, slower lifestyles, resulting in an increase in the younger population in the countryside and smaller market towns. Importantly, this experienced focused generation will be more interested in leisure activities and the outdoors than consumerism, potentially increasing the pressure on protected areas, making the requirement for the integration of green space and the environment increasingly important.

### The future of Town Centres

The TCPA highlight that the combined impact of innovation and development in other sectors such as transport, can have major and negative impact on the way people live. This is most starkly apparent in the impacts on town centres and civic space. The current changes to retailing and financial services are leaving town centres struggling to reinvent themselves.

The success and vibrancy of urban and town centres will be key to their long-term sustainability, meeting the needs of those who live there. The Association of Town and City Management have been warning about the state of town centres for some time. Their research shows that the high street and the retail sector are facing a period of tremendous pressures from local, national and global consumer trends, including rapid changes in fiscal climate affecting local authorities.

The association advocates for a fresh approach to town centres, instead of the reactive approach to consumer trends, there needs to be a rethink of the strategic positioning of town centres. ARUP states that the key elements in delivering a strategy focused on total retail will be:

- Smaller format, curated shops;
- New configurations in physical shops;
- A focus on placemaking with retail design and planning;
- Flexible and adaptable spaces;
- Technological advances.

### The Changing Face of Green Infrastructure

A recurring element in the quest for improved quality of place is the need to rethink the approach to green infrastructure and the role it plays in delivering quality of design and place. The link between Green Infrastructure and the Natural Capital approach are wide ranging and should be considered at the heart of placemaking in the future.

Green Infrastructure will need to be considered for the multitude of benefits it provides in terms of social, environmental and economic factors:

#### **Social Benefits: Rethinking Urban Communities**

- Encouraging healthy and Sustainable Lifestyles
- Supporting Urban Communities
- Investing in Liveable Spaces
- Providing for 'real world' Experiences.

#### **Environmental Benefits: Smart and Resilient Environments**

- Enabling Long-Term Climate Resilience
- Creating Smart and Connected Landscapes
- Fostering Urban Biodiversity

#### **Economic Benefits: Urban Resource Streams**

- Integrating Urban Food
- Renewing Urban Spaces
- Enabling Energy and Resource Efficiency

Hampshire Public Health in particular, stress in their submission that the research shows that green spaces and natural areas improve our physical health and mood. With the increasing pressures of urbanisation and modernity on mental wellbeing, it will be increasingly important to preserve, enhance and increase our green spaces and networks as welcome to all. With the likely increase in the digital world, and virtual experiences, the provision of green spaces could become one of the fundamental drivers in planning policy.

### **3. Quality of place**

Delivering Quality of Place, or placemaking as many people refer to it, remains an 'art' that cannot be left alone to the private market to deliver. The evidence highlights several key elements to ensure that the future changes we expect to encounter, are managed and delivered in a way that is of the most benefit to the entire community of Hampshire.

Putting communities at the heart of placemaking is a notion that the Garden Communities agenda along with Savills and several other respondents keenly stress. This entails a genuine change in direction, putting 'the place' at the heart of all considerations and giving communities a key role in shaping the future direction of their 'home'. Such an approach requires an in-depth knowledge of:

1. The place (local identity and settlement context; constraints; opportunities – sense of place; connectivity)
2. The risks (what creates a successful place? Needs to be a legible connected environment; what does long term flexibility look like? Can the strategy be responsive?)
3. The site (ensure that there is logic to the design; proposal will be responsive to context and need; proposals more likely to be deliverable if based on sound appraisals).

Some kinds of technology could have a major and positive impact on rebuilding trust between communities and local Government, allowing us to have informed, inclusive conversations about the future. New technology could transform the way people engage with the built environment, by giving them better access to information and providing tools to help create and express community visions. But capitalising on these new technologies will be a major challenge in the context of local authorities no longer having the resources to fund such community initiatives.

Understanding the nature of individual places however will only result in half of the desired outcome being secured. Understanding how those places relate to one another and fostering the environment for those places to thrive in partnership remains a vital element. David Lock Associates advise in their submission that this is where the role of strategic frameworks can significantly help an area to capitalise on the opportunities it has, whilst being sympathetic and supportive to those things that make it great.

Such frameworks are as much about creating the conditions in which good growth can happen, as fixing sites on plans. Conventional growth studies look at how much growth should be delivered and by when. This alternative approach considers what the optimum 'end state' growth should be (scale and pattern) for the area and for the individual places within it. Such a framework would be 'boundary blind', led by the physical, human and social geographies and the principles of good planning, rather than a numbers game defined by administrative areas.

A framework would set out:

- Scale and direction of growth at the highest level;
- 'rules' within which growth should happen and 'terms' under which those delivering development will be permitted to do so;
- Resilient strategic infrastructure projects;
- 'imperatives' which development in specific locations will be expected to build in to secure consent;
- Areas of strategic reserve for longer term growth, so that early investment in infrastructure can be fully realised;
- Growth typologies considering options that are more resilient to change;
- The absolutes needed to unlock growth, what to safeguard for the future and what to protect.

## The Hampshire Context

So, what might these patterns and changes, all set within the global context of climate change, mean for Hampshire? David Lock Associates were commissioned to provide some ideas of these impacts:

### **Cities/Large towns: Drivers of Growth – Southampton, Portsmouth, Winchester, Basingstoke**

- Maintained and reinforced role as economic engines and generators of GDP – particularly those with universities;
- Likely densification as settlements reach their spatial limits and existing sites redeveloped to accommodate new housing typologies and city living;
- Smart cities with connected transport networks controlled and accessed via personal technology;
- Green cities – bringing the countryside and water into the city as well as urban food production;
- Human scale experience greatly enhanced – walkable, accessible and connected spaces;
- Clusters of business activity and co working focused on knowledge centres;
- Decentralised and micro-energy and waste networks;
- New models of urban building – integrated infrastructure, flexible, energy/food producing, green, modular, efficient, connected to transport, ‘smart’ buildings;
- Retail cores transformed by cultural, community offer and ‘experience’ retail;
- Smaller business typologies emerging, entrepreneurship and innovation requiring flexible business space with facilities sharing;
- Economic growth underpinned by housing delivery to house workforce and retain skills.

### **Rural Hampshire**

- Countryside economy responding to changing agricultural practices – smaller farms, increased use of technology and diversification;
- Technological improvements in food production and diet (less meat) may reduce land required for agriculture, freeing it up for alternative uses;
- More specialist approach to rural business (albeit dependent on concurrent infrastructure enhancements e.g. broadband);
- Traditional affluent rural population relocating to urban areas, potentially freeing up larger properties for families (affordability issues to remain?);
- Younger population bringing new life to rural areas and expectation of access and ‘experience’ of the countryside;
- Potentially increased role in energy generation -solar arrays, wind turbines.

### **Smaller Towns/Centres – e.g. Gosport, Havant, Petersfield**

- Underperforming smaller centres will need to recognise and respond to a new role for the high street and increasing their complementarity – not competing to deliver the same offer but building on individual characteristics and potential;
- Connectivity to urban areas/countryside achieved through smart transport networks;

- Cultural and social projects will be important, and the historic environment will continue to be highly valued, afforded protection and seen as integral to the quality of the county;
- Historic centres remain sought after but potentially less able to adapt to changing technologies e.g. decentralised energy;
- Centres potential locations for smaller, flexible business and community uses in proximity to more affordable homes;
- New business models for delivery of public services – sharing economy, co-operatives, local community ownership. Decentralisation of services may require more, smaller, more flexible premises;
- Last mile logistics.

### **South Downs and New Forest National Parks**

- Enhancements resulting from increased visitors. Viewed as assets rather than absolute constraints;
- Improved connectivity and ‘experience’ of the outdoors linked to technology;
- Opportunity for appropriate development that supports local economies and infrastructure and helps retain local skills.

### **New Towns/Settlements**

However, by 2050 Hampshire will also need to accommodate major growth and development beyond its existing settlements as they reach natural capacity. It is commonly agreed that strategic scale development in the form of new towns and villages can achieve a critical mass of development that guarantees delivery of community facilities and infrastructure benefits.

So, what will new development in Hampshire need to incorporate:

- Decentralised energy and waste networks built from the outset;
- Smart technology influencing connectivity and transport – mass transit and people centred movement;
- Increased importance of green and blue infrastructure;
- New models of construction – modular, pre-fabricated;
- Likely blurring of traditional employment/residential typologies – fewer employment zones more mixed use, flexible development areas that can accommodate a changing mix of uses;
- Healthy lifestyles impact on public realm, open space, transport, relationships between homes and jobs, local health provision;
- Centres of change and experimentation;
- Human scale design which responds to context. Quality of public spaces streets and architecture and enhanced design aesthetic;
- Diverse mixed use, affordable to local people and related to employment and services;
- Social infrastructure at the right time – schools, culture, healthcare, community – timing critical;
- Community focused and invested – opportunity for ownership assets/running of services.

## 6. Conclusion

When considering what the future will bring in terms of Environment and Quality of Place, it is useful for the commission to remind itself of the fundamental driver – where do people want to live. RIBA tell us that the top ten primary characteristics are:

1. The right place for the right housing;
2. A place to start and a place to stay;
3. A place that fosters a sense of belonging;
4. A place to live in nature;
5. A place to enjoy and be proud of;
6. A place with a choice in homes;
7. A place with unique and lasting appeal;
8. A place where people feel at home;
9. A sustainable place for future generations;
10. A place where people thrive.

The preferences for these 10 elements will never be the same for two different people, which means creating and delivering a strategy for Hampshire that delivers everything for everyone will also prove challenging.

We have seen in the evidence submitted that it is likely that many residents will choose to live in vibrant urban towns and centres, whilst many others will choose the lifestyle found throughout the myriad of smaller towns and villages throughout the Hampshire countryside. The key message for all areas, both urban and rural however is that no matter what the pattern of demand, both urban and rural communities will require interventions (growth) to ensure their sustainability and survival. Therefore, whilst valuing what makes Hampshire so special, we cannot use it as a reason to ‘preserve in state’ the network of communities we cherish so dearly.

The evidence presented to this Commission shows that in terms of Environment and Quality of Place, the narrative is as much around the framework for growth as to what future technological expectations are. Changes in lifestyles and the way people live and work will happen irrespective of ‘planning’, but what we do need to engage with is how those changes are managed at the macro scale that ‘market forces’ will not deliver, and which will determine the very success and prosperity of Hampshire.

The concept of Strategic Frameworks is not a new idea, but the proposed approach to ‘strategic level’ planning identified in this report is. A critical piece of evidence is the assertion that we must plan and assess scenarios on 21<sup>st</sup> century requirements, moving away from our ongoing inclination to base our planning on a rose-tinted vision of our past.

The focus on infrastructure recognises that economic activity depends on the movement of people, goods, services and information. Infrastructure enables these flows to occur, but also influences the shape of the built environment. As urban economies grow, and towns and cities expand, the complex interactions between infrastructure, settlement patterns and urban form combine in ways which have a major impact on the economy.

True placemaking requires diversity, all things for all people, high and low value opportunities. To achieve this, planning needs to operate on a place-based approach, rather than an organisation approach as it currently does. Determining the goal for places and working collaboratively to meet those objectives should be the way forward for future planning and placemaking. Working to collective goals and objectives for the locality, involving the communities who live there, for the benefit of the place will be the key to the successful placemaking of the future.