

## Matter 2 - Housing Requirement (as set out in Policy DR1)

Submission by Anthony Portal

From Going, Going by Philip Larkin

*Their kids are screaming for more—  
More houses, more parking allowed,  
More caravan sites , .....*

*..... ; but all that remains  
For us will be concrete and tyres.*

2.2 Housing Requirement. The Havant Borough Council Booklet "Where Next for Housing in Havant" published in July 2016 appears to be the foundation document for the housing requirement as finally set out in the Borough Plan. This document deserves study. It proposes a total need of 11250 houses which can be met by 6447 houses for which plans have been approved, 1431 New urban extensions and 2050 in Strategic sites leaving a shortfall of 1322 houses. The need of 11250 was taken from PUSH SHMA 2016. This in turn was based on population forecasts dating from 2012.

The population figures show an increase in overall population between 2016 and 2037 of 11127 persons. This increase is not evenly divided over age groups. There were falls in the number of children from 0 to 8 years old of 201 and of adults in the age bracket of 43 to 62 years old of 4101. These were offset by rises in the number of children from 9 to 18 of 931 and of adults aged 19 to 42 of 1298 persons. There was also a rise in the population of persons over 62 years of age and aged under 89 of 10280 and of 3000 persons aged 90 and over. The figures for those aged 90 and over had increased by 200% since 2016.

It seems unlikely that the housing need over the period will require approximately one house per person. The first imponderable is the likely error rate in forecasting population. This is accepted to be of the order of 2.5% over a 6 year forecast period and up to 10% for the longer period of 20 years. Applying these error rates, it is evident that the forecasts can be significantly different from those used. It is possible, at the margins of these rates of error, that the population will have reduced overall by 2037.

The second factor to take into account is the need which may be generated by the policies outlined in Document EB34. This document provides useful information regarding employment, salaries and commuting. Havant has grown to its present size for a number of reasons, but one extremely important factor has been its excellent road and rail links. These have contributed to creating a large commuter section originally biased heavily towards the Royal Navy and the Dockyard and still heavily influenced by defence industries. Employees in these industries tend to make their jobs a lifetime career and are unlikely to switch to jobs unrelated to this sphere of activity. The creation of new industries in Havant is likely to increase the number of incoming commuters rather than reduce the outgoing commuter surplus. This aspect of Havant's working population may also account for the statistics quoted in paras. 1 to 4 of EB34, these being typical of defence based employments.

The third factor is the economic principle known as Say's Law. This postulates that although demand usually creates supply, the converse is also true in that supply will itself initiate demand. The building of new housing beyond what is needed in Havant will therefore create a demand for those houses making over-estimates of "need" a self-fulfilling prophecy.

If houses are built in accordance with the draft plan, it is certain that somebody will eventually buy them or use them. The implementation of the plan will thus ensure its fulfilment. It is equally clear that if there were to be no development at all, the population would be unlikely to grow and, if it were possible to squeeze an even larger number of houses into the area, the population would grow even more. This self evident truth demonstrates that the draft plan is based on a forecast of need which may have no validity. The question that planners should be asking themselves is "What sort of town do we wish Havant to become?" It is on the answer to this question that planning decisions should be made rather than on statistics which by their very nature must be prone to wide margins of error.

It is my view that the residents of Havant would prefer to see the Borough retain its character as a semi-rural group of small towns rather than turn into an over-developed homogenous urban area indistinguishable from many other built-up areas in the South-East.

The plan is mainly directed at housing for which the need has not been shown, I therefore submit that the plan is not sound and could not be made sound by changes.

### **Policy KP5**

2.14 to 2.17

2.14 Impact on Strategic Road Network. Even without a new "Spine Road" and junction to the A27, the impact of the additional traffic created by 2200 new dwellings on the Southleigh site (KP5) is likely to be high. This will probably double the number of users at the choke point of the Barton's Road/Horndean Road/Emsworth Common Road at most times of the day.

This is particularly the case with traffic whose entry point is in the Barton's Road. Since the Mainland Transport Assessment Addendum Southleigh Development Impact – Part 1 was written in late 2019, there have been approximately 300 further houses built on sites which debouch directly on to the Barton's Road and which do not form part of KP5.

At the date of the study there were already serious issues at peak times at this choke point. This has become worse since the new construction although this deterioration has been disguised by the reduction in traffic flows resulting from the Coronavirus restrictions.

Any further increase in traffic will have to go somewhere and it is to the North and West of this choke point that the increase will be felt. The crossroads at Wichers Gate, Petersfield Road/Horndean Road/Redhill Road, is likely to become a serious blackspot as is the entry to the Petersfield Road from the Barton's Road.

I conclude that the existing network is barely adequate at peak times. The already approved additional housing will make it still less adequate and the further addition of some 2200 houses and the associated commercial centre imagined by Policy KP5 will make the approach roads to Havant from the North virtually unusable in peak periods and heavily over-used in off-peak periods. This will have a harmful effect on the quality of life in the area centred round the Southleigh Site (KP5) in particular on air quality.

2.15 and 2.16. The A27 Junction. I am not a traffic expert and so can not comment on the methodologies and modelling. The existing exit for Havant/Emsworth on the A27 is used as the end-point for a rat-run between the A3M at Dell Piece (Junction of A3m

and B2049). This contributes to the levels of traffic at the choke points on the Horndean Road.

The proposed new junction will undoubtedly prove a more attractive option than the existing route along the Southleigh Road, Eastleigh Road, Barton's Road, Horndean Road, and is likely to attract a significant level of traffic at all hours of the day.

The new junction and Spine Road envisaged in the Consultation Report by Messrs Levitt Bernstein (EB13) and the Masterplan produced therefrom (EB14) do not envisage much traffic from the junction to the Spine Road nor along the Spine Road (see in this respect the drawing at p.62 of EB13). The Spine Road is taken from the new junction to the Barton's Road about 300 yards West of the junction with Horndean Road. The plan envisages cutting the Horndean Road between the junction with the Southleigh Road and the junction with the Emsworth Common Road. This would ensure that all the existing traffic North from Emsworth, Warblington and Denvilles would be concentrated on to the Spine Road together with new traffic generated by the new junction. This traffic would undoubtedly include HGV's bound for the commercial premises as well as those making for New Lane, via the Barton's Road and traffic to and from the A3M.

I conclude that the new junction would exacerbate the problem rather than tending to solve it.

2.20 and 2.21 Agricultural Land. The development of agricultural land, which is generally irreversible, can only be justified by conclusively demonstrated need. The Plan states at para. 5.67 that the Council would not be able to meet objectively assessed need without developing BMV agricultural land. This is disputed, see the first part of my submission above. The majority of the land in KP5 is BMV agricultural land and to develop this land would conflict with the stated policy of the NPPF as quoted in para. 5.66 of the plan as well as Policy E6.

The Plan excludes land within the settlement boundaries, as defined in Policy E3, from Policy E6. Virtually all the BMV agricultural land in the Borough, outside Hayling Island has been included in the settlement boundary. Of this land the site of KP5 is by far the largest unbroken area.

These two policies E3 and E6 taken together are not logical. The development of the agricultural land in KP5 is clearly inconsistent with the important NPPF priority of preserving viable agricultural land in its current use.

I submit that because of the deficiencies demonstrated in the preceding paragraphs the submitted plan is not sound and could not be made sound by changes.