

THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

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See at www.TheReigateSociety.org.uk/committees/transport.

HS REPORT No. 48.3

SUSTAINABILITY;- (Ref;- Inspectors questions 1.5 & 1.6 date 14.05.2013).

(It is recognised that the population has the need for homes.)

1.0 R&B Question asked;-

“What is the objective of the 47 Reports submitted by the transport committee of the Reigate Society” ?

The answer is “**to contribute to the sustainability discussion**”

2.0 CASE “A” Agricultural Metropolitan Green Belt Land;-

2.1 The Metropolitan Green Belt is not just for the benefit of Reigate and Banstead (RB) to be disposed of at will but is for the benefit of others within the whole metropolitan area.

2.2 Consideration needs to be given to the objectives of the London Plan and the problems of the London Boroughs both within and without our Local Enterprise Partnership Area (LEP) and adjacent LEP areas

2.3 In the case of London we know that there is a need to plan for a population expansion of One point one million extra persons within the plan period and no doubt more thereafter.

2.4 In the case of Croydon it is known that the Authority is having problems finding space for homes and proposes to build housing adjacent to the R&B boundary with access to a narrow rural lane without pedestrian or safe cycling facilities.

2.5 In the case of Sutton provision was requested for Logistic facilities on a protected open space.

2.6 Kingston has to accept that persons working in the Borough live elsewhere.

2.7 Other London Boroughs propose to redevelop and provide homes adjacent to major traffic routes and on brown field sites.

It is suggested;- That access to the Metropolitan Green Belt should be maintained for all populations.

3.0 CASE “B” Agricultural land;-

3.1 Building on agricultural land results in the loss of food production in the UK where we are unable to feed the present population. There is of course the argument that we do and can continue to import food products from elsewhere but is this sustainable when considering transport and other costs, the Climate Change Act. (Report No. 24) and population density.

3.2 Comparative Population density;-

Sweden at 23 persons/s.km; Bulgaria at 66 persons/s.km;
France at 103 persons/s. km; England at 407 persons/s. km;

3.3 In any event we need to consider some of the long term problems of the UK economy set out in case “C” below that may have an effect on costs of imported foods and other forms of energy.

4.0 CASE “C” The UK Economy and local opportunities and risks;-

(It is noted that Economists are predicting a relatively lower wage structure and a reduced living standard)

4.1 The reported current account trade deficit £12.83 billion combined with the governments need to fund annual expenditure with over £100 billion per annum borrowings does not appear to be sustainable in the long term although the sale of business and housing assets for foreign currency may give some temporary relief.

4.2 Employment levels appear to be rising but so is the number of unemployed reported in the last week of April.

4.3 The building of homes may help to provide work but the increased import of building materials and energy demand may have a negative effect on the trade balance.

4.4 Previously we were advised that Banking and the City would replace the income produced by manufacturing industries and that employment would be provided by growing service industries. However banking lost money, claimed financial support and is now reducing staffing levels.

5.0 CASE “D” The Suggested Local action now needed to assist National Objectives.

5.1 The local demand for Energy;- Wave, tide or hydro electric power within the LEP area might be supported and wind and solar energy schemes might be considered.

5.2 If the population is to increase brown field sites need to be retained for the new industries needed to provide employment and export growth required to correct the trade deficit.

In this respect the Factories Act rules might be used to calculate the floor space required for the population to be locally employed rather than make it necessary for the people to participate in commuting cost and energy consumption.

5.3 Warehousing should be avoided where possible on the grounds that it frequently involves imported rather than exported goods and a low employment density compared with calculations based on the requirements of the Factories Act.

5.4 Because the North Sea oil reserves are in decline consideration might be given to sourcing of local carbon supplies especially now that systems have been invented for the conversion of gas to oil.

6.0 CASE “E” Transport ;-

6.1 It has been held throughout all reports that a safe, effective, efficient and economical transport system is essential if a successful exporting economy is to be re-established and maintained for the benefit of UK residents.

John Chittenden, Chairman RS Transport. (logistics) Committee
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