

# ***Bognor Regis Regeneration Board***

## **Representation on Objectively Assessed Need for Housing, Arun District Council**

### **1.0 The Bognor Regis Regeneration Board (BRRB)**

The Board was established in 2007 to act as an independent advisory body, bringing together leading representatives from the key public, private and community stakeholders in Bognor Regis. The Board recognises that a collective and cohesive approach can generate and secure the economic benefits sought by those who live and work in Bognor Regis.

The Board has three key objectives:

- To collectively promote Bognor Regis as a great place to live, work, visit and invest
- To consider, give opinion and comment upon how to what extent planned and proposed developments contribute to:
  - the town's growth and development
  - addressing and overcoming the town's socio-economic challenges; and,
  - maximising benefits and opportunities for the town.
- To consider and evaluate strategies which impact upon the economic growth of Bognor Regis and offer comment, opinion and where appropriate modifications.

Board membership is drawn from the major private and public organisations including the University of Chichester, West Sussex County Council, Arun District Council, Butlins and Sime Darby London Ltd. A full list of Board members and contact details can be found on the BRRB website: [www.bognorregisregenerationboard.com](http://www.bognorregisregenerationboard.com).

### **2.0 The Representation is on the following two questions**

2.1 Do you agree with Objectively Assessed Needs (OAN) figure of 758 homes per year as set out in the “Objectively Assessed Need for Housing: Arun District, GL Hearn, March 2015” evidence base document?

2.2 Please explain why you agree / disagree with the Objectively Assessed Needs (OAN) figure of 758 homes per year as set out in the “Objectively Assessed Need for Housing: Arun District, GL Hearn, March 2015” evidence base document. If you disagree, please provide evidence to support your argument.

### **3.0 Response – Summary**

The Board agrees with the requirement for 758 homes per annum over the plan period as set out in the independent GL Hearn report. This is the latest statistically based requirement for the period 2011-31 and should be confirmed as the basis for the Local Plan to be taken forward.

The suspension of the Local Plan over the OAN is threatening the planned growth in employment and the key infrastructure investments that will secure the Enterprise Bognor Regis employment sites. It should be noted that Arun has the poorest school attainment in West Sussex and the lowest Gross Value Added (GVA) within the Coast to Capital LEP. To address these issues in a structured co-ordinated manner requires the early adoption of the Local Plan and the Board urges Arun District Council to progress the Local Plan as expeditiously as possible.

### **3.1 Economic Growth**

Arun's GVA at £18,777 is the lowest within West Sussex and the Coast to Capital LEP, reflecting on skill levels and educational attainment. Economic growth is a key driver to addressing these issues.

Arun District Council, working with landowners has identified 69 hectares of employment space, designated as Enterprise Bognor Regis (EBR), which has the potential to accommodate 150 businesses and 4000 jobs. Initial progress is encouraging with Rolls-Royce Motors occupying their new 30,000 sq metre Technology & Logistics centre in January 2016. A Local Development Order for three of the four sites will be in place by early 2016 ensuring a fast track planning process.

A further important economic development is the planned University of Chichester's Engineering and Digital Technology Park. The £23 million investment based on the Bognor Regis campus will provide at least 400 new undergraduate and postgraduate student places per annum in Bognor Regis doubling the number of students on the Bognor Regis Campus to circa 3,000. Currently graduates have a very limited choice of local employment opportunities; as this improves with Enterprise Bognor Regis coming on stream and the creation of a digital and creative hub linked to the University, there needs to be affordable housing available. The 2-3000 proposed housing development in the Barnham/Westergate/Eastergate villages is ideally located within close proximity of EBR employment land therefore minimising commuter traffic and costs.

### **3.2 Transport infrastructure.**

The growth in jobs and new homes has to be accompanied with an improved local road network funded primarily through Section 106 contributions. The Local Plan highlights the importance of the A29 realignment between Bognor Regis and the A27 Fontwell junction to alleviate problems of traffic congestion notably at the Woodgate level crossing. The importance of the A29 realignment to the local economy has been recognized with £13m funding allocated through the Government's Growing Places Fund. It is proposed that the balance of the project costs will be funded through developer's Section 106 planning obligations for the new homes in Barnham, Westergate and Eastergate. The road infrastructure plans are fundamental in bringing together ADC's strategic vision for employment and housing. The four main road initiatives: Bognor Regis Relief Road, A29 realignment, link road into the Lec Airfield site and A27 improvements are necessary to support future economic growth.