

## **PPWG 17 April 2018**

This report takes into account the latest East of England economic forecasts. These forecasts were prepared in 2016 and the report is dated October 2017, so it has taken a little while to reach us.

The essential point is that the latest economic forecasts show a much lower figure for job creation over the plan period. The report shows that after allowing for commuting patterns, a further 20,000 jobs would still be needed in the SHMA area in order to match the proposed housing growth.

It is suggested that much of this shortfall could be made up for by expansion at Stansted airport. A figure of 10,000 extra jobs, taken from a 2015 report by the airport owners, was put forward. The consultants were never asked to check the validity of the calculation and it has been repeatedly challenged, but inexplicably it's still being used.

However, the recent planning application by MAG shows a changed picture. If passenger growth continues according to government forecasts, then it is estimated that there will be an extra 3,000 airport jobs. If planning permission is granted and numbers increase well above government forecasts then a further 3,000 jobs will be created. So, we are looking at 3,000 or maybe 6,000 jobs rather than 10,000.

But we need to remember that the airport is notorious for exaggerating employment prospects. Based on recent experience a more accurate figure would be about half of these latest projections.

The result is the provision of more homes than we have jobs for. Allowing for other minor factors, this could mean about 10,000 additional new residents without local jobs, who would have to commute out the area to find employment. As the report states we would be creating dormitory towns, but also putting massive additional pressure on road and rail systems.

This issue is not new. It was raised initially in October 2015 and has been repeated by me alone on at least six separate occasions. Now there is a difference. The problems have been highlighted in this consultant's report and the airport have come up with much lower, and slightly more realistic, employment forecasts.

We are now faced with a serious imbalance – after allowing for commuting ratios there are still far more homes planned than available jobs. Having ignored the issue for two and half years I believe that urgent action is now needed to bring the two factors into balance and to be assured that there really is a need for three new settlements in the district.

Michael Young

April 2018