



## South London Business News

August 1<sup>st</sup> 2003 – Issue 8

### The draft London Plan – Examination in Public Panel Report

The strategic plan for London - 'The London Plan' – reached an important stage last week when the Independent Panel appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct an Examination in Public delivered its report to the Mayor and the First Secretary of State, John Prescott.

The Examination Panel's conclusions for South London were positively in favour of the case we put forward, as the quotes below illustrate:

- 3.12 – *“We have also concluded in Chapter 1 that the employment “allocations” indicated in Table 2A.3 are to be regarded as indicative and not as setting targets for the sub-regions”.*
- 3.81 – *“We do not consider that a strategy which under-achieves South London’s employment growth potential on the scale implied is compatible either with the other objectives of the draft Plan or with sustainable development”. We are pleased the Panel is recommending that growth in South London is not artificially constrained.*
- 3.82 – *“We conclude that the strategy needs to do more than accept the development weighted trend based forecasts, by making it a priority to promote more employment opportunities in the South London sub-region. The discussion suggested a number of places where this would be particularly relevant, notably the Wandle Valley, the sub-region’s four Metropolitan centres and other town centres, and the main industrial areas”. We are pleased the Panel has recognised our argument in favour of promoting development in South London which will assist in reducing levels of out-commuting, and improve our inward investment offer.*
- 3.85 – *“We consider, however, that the South London sub-section should identify intensification in all the town centres as a priority for the Sub Regional Development Framework”. We have argued strongly that South London’s towns should not be allowed to become simply dormitories supplying labour to Central London. They need to be vibrant economies in their own right.*
- 3.86 – *“Improving the access to and quality of sites for a variety of industrial and other uses is mentioned by a number of Boroughs as a priority for preventing the further loss of industry and jobs in South London.....The Boroughs will need to work together through the SRDF to apply the overall approach to employment land”. We are pleased that the Panel has recommended a sub-regional approach to employment land. This is vital to the development of a coherent South London inward investment offer.*
- 3.8 - *“We conclude that, whilst the proposed sub-region boundaries should not be altered, the dual role of the City and the concept of permeability, with the involvement of Boroughs in “neighbouring” sub-regions should be more strongly brought out in the Plan”. This supports our approach of working with the Thames Gateway boroughs south of the Thames, and Wandsworth.*

The Mayor will respond to the Panel's report and we look forward to discussing with his team points that affect South London. Our understanding is that the Mayor is not required to act on the recommendations of the Panel but that the Government Office for London, representing the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), will want to ensure proper regard is paid to the Panel's recommendations. It is worth noting that the ODPM has the authority to 'call-in' the Plan if it is not satisfied with it. We would be surprised if the Mayor would want to leave such a door open, given that a 'call-in' would lengthen the process and he will want to have the plan published well in advance of the 2004 Mayoral elections.

A PDF file accompanies this newsletter containing the relevant South London sections of the Panel Report.

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#### **Promoting Innovation in South London– Workshop, 17<sup>th</sup> July**

South London Business has recently won funding from the London Development Agency for the formation of a South London Innovation Centre (SLIC). Confirming the agreement Susan Shaw, Head of Business Development at South London Business, said “South London is a highly competitive market, with business formation rates in all seven South London boroughs above the national average. Through the “SLIC” we hope to harness the innovative and entrepreneurial characteristics of the sub-region and develop our thriving economy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”.

To launch the project, we recently organised a highly successful meeting of key stakeholders and potential partners, at the Croydon Park Hotel, to share ideas and expertise and to shape the future of the ‘innovation agenda’ in South London.

The event included a joint key-note speech by David Normington, Permanent Secretary at the DfES, and Sir Robin Young, Permanent Secretary at the DTI, entitled “Innovation and Skills - DfES and DTI working together”. For further information on the South London Innovation Centre, please contact Susan Shaw – [susan.shaw@southlondonbusiness.co.uk](mailto:susan.shaw@southlondonbusiness.co.uk)

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#### **Transport & Regeneration joint event with the South London Partnership 21<sup>st</sup> July**

South London Business and the South London Partnership recently held a joint event at the Croydon Park Hotel to promote transport and regeneration in South London. Over 90 property developers, local business representatives and local authority decision-makers attended the event, chaired by Lord Tope. Presentations were given on the South London Business Industrial Sites Study and the South London Partnership’s Office Availability and Croydon Tramlink Impact Studies.

Both South London Business and the South London Partnership will be using the data from these LDA-funded studies to develop the South London Development Framework that will be a supplement to the London Plan – once published.

The final report on the South London Business Industrial Sites Study can be downloaded from the Press Release page of our website. Information on the two South London Partnership studies can be requested from Shireen Dawankar - [shireen\\_dawankar@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:shireen_dawankar@croydon.gov.uk)

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#### **Team Changes:**

**Becky Price**, our Inward Investment Manager, has joined London First Centre (LFC) as a Business Development Manager. Becky’s dual role will see her continue to work with South London Business four days a week, on secondment from LFC, with Fridays spent in LFC’s offices in Hobhouse Court.

**Prema Popat** our Property Advisor is leaving to enrol at Edinburgh University where she will undertake a Masters degree in Nutritional Studies. Prema’s contribution to the success of our Commercial Property Database has been invaluable, and we wish her every success for the future.

**Simon Turnage** and **Alena Harvey** join us from 4<sup>th</sup> August. Simon joins as Business Retention Manager working with Susan Shaw, and Alena joins as Research & Information Officer, working jointly for Susan Shaw and Becky Price. We look forward to the positive contributions they will make to South London Business.

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