



**Damian Hinds**  
*MP for East Hampshire*

7<sup>th</sup> October, 2010

## **Damian Hinds Tells Minister: A Referendum Will Be Vital**

Local MP Damian Hinds has re-stated his call for a future referendum on the proposed Eco-Town at Bordon, this time to the Minister responsible for the programme.

Housing Minister, Grant Shapps MP, has solicited views of MPs in all the proposed Eco-Town sites, asking particularly about public consultation and engagement.

In his response, Damian:

- noted the unique position of Bordon, given the Army's planned (but not yet certain) departure.
- described the Army's departure as "both a risk and an opportunity" for the town.
- said that given the risk of piecemeal sell-off of land, the Council had been right and shown foresight in trying to get local democratic control and trying to ensure the potential for improved facilities and services would be maximised, drawing up the GreenTown Vision and then applying for the then government's Eco-Towns programme.
- acknowledged that many people locally remain opposed to housing on the scale put forward, despite intensive exposition and discussion of the plans.

Damian welcomed the Council's plans for continued consultation and public engagement but concluded that ultimately a referendum would be vital to ensure the Eco-Town had local public support.

Damian Hinds said

*"I have repeatedly made clear that I think we need a referendum before going ahead. The right time for this is after the MoD have clarified their plans but before irrevocable decisions are taken on development. Now I have stated this to the Minister, too. The wording will be important. It must make clear there is a trade-off between scale of housing development and facilities and services provision. And such a referendum would also need to be carried out at minimum cost."*

ENDS

For further information, please contact Ed Condon on 0207 219 7057 or Damian's office through [Damian.Hinds.MP@parliament.uk](mailto:Damian.Hinds.MP@parliament.uk)