

Chapter 2
Context and Key Development
Principles

The Context

Introduction

- 2.1 A Borough Plan is not prepared in isolation but should reflect the wider context established in government guidance, regional guidance, the County Structure Plan and strategic documents prepared by Eastbourne Borough Council as well as taking into account public consultation. This context is an important factor in establishing a clear overall strategy for guiding development within the Borough.

Government Guidance

- 2.2 Central Government is committed to the principles of sustainable development, and there is a strong expectation that development plans will make a major contribution to their four broad objectives, set-out in "A Better Quality of Life, a Strategy for Sustainable Development in the U.K." (1999):¹

- "Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment;
- Social progress which meets the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment; and
- Prudent use of natural resources."

- 2.3 Sustainable development underlies Central Government's White Papers "Planning for the Communities of the Future" and "A New Deal for Transport". "Planning for the Communities of the Future" includes a number of proposals to concentrate more development within existing areas with the aim of making towns and cities more attractive places to live thus relieving pressures on the countryside and other undeveloped land. Whilst "A New Deal for Transport" marks a significant shift away from providing for the car towards more sustainable means of transport, including public transport, walking and cycling.

- 2.4 These themes have been further expanded in recent planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) which local planning authorities are obliged to take into account in preparing their development plans. Reference is made to the appropriate planning policy guidance note where material to the policies and proposals of this Plan. "PPG12 : Development Plans" has guided both the content of this Plan and the procedures adopted in its preparation.

Regional Planning Guidance

- 2.5 The former Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions produced Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) which aims to produce a more sustainable pattern of development, focussed on making better use of the urban areas in the region, and on promoting a switch from the private car to greater use of other transport modes. The RPG sets annual average housing provision figures for each of the counties in the region. Of particular importance to Eastbourne is the RPGs' recognition of the problems of the Sussex Coastal Towns in providing for job opportunities for the local residents and the acceptance that they should be included as a priority area for disbursement of funds for infrastructure, development and environmental improvement. In the Sussex Coast and Towns PAER (Priority Area for Economic Regeneration) local authorities are encouraged to diversify their employment base and improve access to employment by sustainable means. Additional housing provision is also proposed, with an increased supply of affordable housing regarded as desirable.

- 2.6 At the core of the RPG is the objective of promoting an 'urban renaissance', by promoting a significant improvement to the urban environment, so that urban areas are more attractive places in which to live, work, shop, spend leisure time and invest. This would reduce pressure for release of greenfield land and serve to create communities that are less dependent on the private car.

¹ Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans (DETR 1999)

Regional Economic Strategy

- 2.7 South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has adopted an economic strategy for the South East of England, called "Building a World Class Region". It sets-out a framework for a co-ordinated sustainable economic development strategy for up to the next 10 years. SEEDA wishes to see the South East Region as a "world class region" but recognises that insufficient investment has been made in education, infrastructure (transport and communications) and in business support. SEEDA is not promoting growth at any cost, but recognises that the region's social and environmental aspirations will not be met without a strong regional economy.

East Sussex County Structure Plan

- 2.8 The East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 (adopted 1999) also aims for a more environmentally sustainable future for the County. The key elements of its strategy relevant to Eastbourne are:

- Protection and enhancement of the character and quality of the environment;
- Strong protection and enhancement of the countryside in general, and areas such as the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in particular;
- A strong and positive approach to economic development and inward investment to improve economic prosperity and create jobs;
- Productive re-use of existing employment sites and allocations;
- Implementation of strategic commitments to business parks at Sovereign Harbour and Eastbourne Park;
- Cross County housing provisions to meet the Regional Planning Guidance figure, but recognising that in Eastbourne few opportunities remain for significant new development. The emphasis being on regeneration, renewal, and re-use of existing resources within the urban area;
- Encouragement of the provision of affordable housing;
- An integrated Transport and Environment Strategy which includes measures to reduce the need to travel, especially by private car, but promotes environmentally friendly forms of transport including bus, rail, walking and cycling. This has led to the production of a strategic plan for Eastbourne and the immediate area. (More can be found on the Local Transport Plan in the Transport chapter);
- Regeneration of towns through integrated measures to improve economic, environmental, and social well-being;
- Development and enhancement of the environment and vitality of Town Centres as places to live, work, shop, visit and access services;
- Encouragement and development of a better range of tourist and leisure facilities and activities;
- Necessary infrastructure to be in place for developments before they are permitted.

2.9 The specific area policy for Eastbourne is S18:

"The role of Eastbourne as a major shopping, tourist, leisure, conference, employment and service centre will be developed while protecting the townscape and setting of the town. No further outward expansion of the town will be permitted beyond existing commitments. Completion of the A22 New Route, to provide access to the Town Centre and to enable implementation of major business uses at Eastbourne Park will be sought. Ways will also be sought to realise existing commitments to major employment development at Sovereign Harbour. A Transport and Environment Strategy for the Greater Eastbourne area will be pursued to improve accessibility further, reduce reliance on the private car and enhance the environment for residents and visitors."

2.10 In preparing this Replacement Plan the Structure Plan has been a very important contextual document. However it was not considered appropriate to refer in detail to every Structure Plan policy that will apply, but Background Paper No. 1 correlates all Structure Plan policies with the policies of this Plan.

Wealden Local Plan

2.11 Wealden District Council administers the area around Eastbourne. A District-wide Local Plan was adopted in December 1998, and the District Council are currently reviewing this Plan. The context for the Wealden Local Plan is similar to that for the Eastbourne Borough Plan, although their administrative area has been asked to accommodate a significant proportion of additional development within East Sussex. This growth has been focussed upon Uckfield, Hailsham and Stone Cross, of which the latter two lie within the Eastbourne Travel to Work Area. In their Local Plan, Wealden are committed to promoting appropriate forms of sustainable development and to maintaining the countryside gap between Eastbourne and Pevensey, Westham, Stone Cross and Pevensey Bay.

Borough Council Strategic Documents

2.12 The Borough Council adopted a Corporate Plan in January 2000 which is a statement of the Council's vision, purpose, aims, objectives and values. The Corporate Plan sets out a vision for Eastbourne of creating "A prosperous, fair and socially inclusive community which protects people and values and enhances its environment". Six aims for action have been adopted:

- To develop a strong and sustainable local economy, encouraging business and investment into Eastbourne;
- To enhance the opportunities for enjoyment within Eastbourne through active pursuits and simple relaxation;
- To make Eastbourne a safe place to live, work and visit;
- To protect and improve health and reduce health inequalities within Eastbourne;
- To encourage a fair and socially inclusive society;
- To protect and enhance the Borough's environment, sympathetically developing it for future generations.

Within these aims a series of corporate objectives are also identified.

2.13 Relevant corporate aims and corporate objectives are identified at the commencement of each chapter in this Plan in order to identify a clear linkage to the corporate vision for the town. Corporate aims and objectives are also identified for each policy to ensure further consistency (see chapter 15: Appraisal and Review).

- 2.14 The Corporate Plan sets the overall vision for other Council strategies. The following table sets out the Council's adopted strategies and those which are being prepared. Where relevant these strategies have been taken into account in preparing this Plan and are acknowledged within the individual chapters.

<u>Current Strategies</u>	<u>Strategies under Development or Review</u>
Performance Plan 2003-04	Consultation Strategy
Crime Reduction Strategy 2002-05	Waste Management Strategy
European Strategy	Affordable Warmth Strategy
Seafront Strategy	Communication Strategy
Community Strategy 2003-04	Homelessness Strategy
Cultural Strategy 2003-07 - incorporating Leisure Strategy, Art & Heritage Strategy	Risk Management Strategy
Housing Strategy 2003-08	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2004/5-06/7
Seaside Road Regeneration Strategy	Housing Benefit Strategy
Comprehensive Equality Policy	Regeneration Strategy
Race Equality Scheme	Commemorative Presentation Strategy
Arts & Heritage Strategy	Environmental Stewardship Strategy 2003-06
Contaminated Land Strategy 1990	Asset Management Plan
Local Transport Plan	Borrowing Limit & Treasury Management Policy 2003-04
Leisure Strategy	Anti-poverty Strategy
Implementing E-Government Statement	Tourism Strategy
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Capital Strategy
Eastbourne Urban Area Local Transport Plan	Emergency Plan
Accommodation Strategy	
Human Resource Strategy	
Service Procurement Strategy	
Downland Management Plan	
Primary Care Trust Local Delivery Plan	

Local Plan Consultation

- 2.15 Sustainability was an important issue for those responding to the Issues Consultation. Local residents attached significant importance to the protection of Eastbourne's environment with agreement that this should be an important consideration for the Plan. There was also a substantial proportion of respondents who felt that new residential development should be within the existing built-up area rather than on greenfields. (Further details are available in the Report on the Issues Consultation, see paragraph 1.13).

Key Development Principles

- 2.16 It is clear from the wider context that the primary development principle should be to provide for sustainable development. There are many definitions of what constitutes sustainable development but the most commonly used is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

- 2.17 In order to achieve the primary development principle of sustainable development, the Plan adopts the following key development principles:
1. To conserve and enhance Eastbourne's valued "green" environments whether natural (the Downland, coastland, woodland and sites of local nature conservation importance) or man-made (the parklands and other amenity space), including the promotion of biodiversity within the Borough;
 2. To value the best of Eastbourne's urban environment and enhance the rest so that the town remains an attractive place to live, work and visit;
 3. To provide at least 60% of new residential development within the existing built-up area in well designed schemes that make efficient use of urban land;
 4. To provide a supply of housing which will satisfy projected needs and requirements, including providing affordable housing;
 5. To provide for a strong and sustainable local economy which will benefit all sections of the community;
 6. To promote the use of more sustainable means of transport including locating developments in locations accessible not only by the private car but by other means as well, including walking, cycling and public transport;
 7. To limit the amount of long-distance commuting by seeking to retain and develop a stock of business and industrial premises within the town so that employment is available locally for residents;
 8. To promote the Town Centre as the main centre for shopping, leisure and service provision;
 9. To ensure that shopping, community and other facilities which contribute to the quality of urban living are available locally;
 10. To sustain the Town's role as a quality destination for tourism.