

## **Core Strategy Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers**

# **POSSIBLE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITE AT EASTSIDE, NEWHAVEN**

### **Background and Aims**

The Introductory Topic Paper provides the background to the Local Development Framework (LDF), the progress made on the Core Strategy for Lewes District to date and how the content of all the Topic Papers has been formulated. This included engagement with District Councillors and representatives from Town and Parish Councils.

The aim of this consultation stage is to present the emerging work on the LDF Core Strategy and to seek the views of the public and key stakeholders on the various elements of this work. The consultation period will last **8 weeks**, running from the 21st May 2010 to the 16th July 2010. At the end of this paper, there are a number of questions that we are keen for individuals and organisations to respond to. Details on how to respond can also be found in this part of the paper.

### **Purpose of this Topic Paper**

Topic Paper 4 sets out a number of draft strategic planning objectives for the LDF Core Strategy, which will need to be incorporated into a deliverable spatial strategy for the period up to 2026. A key element of this spatial strategy will be identifying how and where growth will take place across Lewes District. This will include housing, employment, retail, transport infrastructure, recreational facilities and all other community services and facilities.

Due to the strategic nature of the LDF Core Strategy, only a broad, high-level, approach to how growth will be distributed will be set out in the document. The emerging strategic options for development are set out for comment in Topic Paper 5.

When an overall planning strategy for Lewes District has been agreed through the LDF Core Strategy, most of the specific sites for new development will be identified through a "Site Allocations Development Plan Document" or through Action Area Plans.





An exception to this would be if the Council wishes to identify a “strategic development site” through the LDF Core Strategy. Government guidance in PPS 12 defines such sites as those “central to achievement of the planning strategy” for the area. Whilst no decisions have yet been made on the planning strategy for Lewes District, two potential strategic development sites have emerged from work so far. These are:

- North Street, Lewes
- Eastside, Newhaven

The purpose of this Topic Paper is to provide background on the Eastside site and to explain how and when strategic development options will emerge for this area of Newhaven. Options for the Eastside site are going to be strongly influenced by the findings of a study being undertaken by the consultants BBP Regeneration. As this study has yet to be finalised the District Council has not yet identified any strategic planning options for this site.

### The Eastside site

The Eastside site is located immediately to the east of the River Ouse on the eastern side of Newhaven. The site has an extensive river frontage with quaysides, forming an important part of the port of Newhaven. As well as bordering the river, to the south of the site lies a wide shingle beach and the English Channel. To the north is the A259, which is where the main points of access to the site are gained. Beyond the site to the east is the Ouse Estuary, an area laid out as open space for recreation, nature conservation and land drainage. The site is subdivided by the Lewes–Newhaven–Seaford railway line.



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## The Eastside area

The Eastside site includes a variety of uses including industrial units, the Port, housing, a recreation ground, three railway stations (one of which is not currently operational) and a Waste Water Treatment Works. Significant parts of the site are vacant or under used, giving it some of the characteristics of previously developed land (also referred to as 'brownfield land'), which requires regeneration. Some of the factories and industrial units on site are no longer operational or, like the Parker Pen factory, are due to close shortly.

Much of the Eastside area is owned by Newhaven Port and Properties (see below). There is also a current unimplemented Local Plan allocation for an Eastside Business Area, the land within this allocation being largely owned by a private development company. This company have publicly proposed a major mixed use scheme, including housing, a superstore, hotel and some employment units as an alternative to the longstanding Local Plan allocation. However, as yet no formal planning application has been made for this proposal. Immediately to the west of this allocation are a number of warehouses and industrial units, beyond which is Railway Quay with the listed buildings of Marine Works that are in need of major repairs and appropriate new uses. Also at Railway Quay is Newhaven Town Station where the County Council has been working with the District Council and other partners towards the aim of creating a new Transport Interchange to improve connections between trains, buses and taxis, and to upgrade pedestrian and cycle links to the station.

The whole of the Eastside area is at a high risk of flooding according to the categorisation in Planning Policy Statement 25 (Development and Flood Risk). Any development in the area therefore needs to secure prior approval from the Environment Agency having satisfied the "sequential" and "exceptions tests" required by PPS25. Much of the area also has a history of industrial and transport uses leading to land contamination issues that will need to be addressed. A range of other issues including transport, air and water quality, renewable energy and climate change will need to be tackled as part of any development scheme in this area.

Whilst most of the land in the port area is owned by Newhaven Port and Properties (see above), a sliver of land alongside the river at Railway Quay is in separate ownership. This was acquired by Oakdene Properties, a commercial developer active in Newhaven through two phases of mainly residential development at West Quay. Oakdene were preparing major mixed use development proposals for the Railway Quay area when there was a dramatic downturn in the property market brought about by the "credit crunch" in 2008. The firm have since gone into administration and the site is now in the control of their principal financial backer, Royal Bank of Scotland.



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## Evidence to inform strategic planning options for the area

As stated in a number of the other topic papers, the District Council has and continues to prepare significant detailed technical work that will be used as evidence to identify and evaluate strategic planning options for the Core Strategy. At a District-wide level this work includes:

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (in preparation: expected completion – July 2010)
- Employment Land Review (in preparation; expected completion in July 2010)
- Retail Study (Completed April 2005: to be updated in light of new Government guidance)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (completed October 2009)
- Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development (in preparation: expected completion : August 2010)
- Green Infrastructure study ( recreation, open space, and nature conservation) (in preparation : expected completion by December 2010)
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all development options

The outcomes from this work will be key in identifying the options that could be considered for the Eastside area of Newhaven. Also of significant importance will be a piece of evidence that was commissioned by Newhaven Strategic Network (NSN), and funded by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), and is in the process of being completed by the consultants BBP Regeneration. This is entitled '**Physical Development Vision for Newhaven**' and it will contain a 20 year vision for the town, which will include options for achieving that vision. The role that the Eastside area of the town could play in achieving the vision is going to form a key component of this study.

The study being prepared by BBP Regeneration is due to be consulted upon in late Summer/early Autumn 2010. This consultation will be co-ordinated by NSN. As part of this consultation the Council expects some strategic planning options for the Eastside area to be identified, with comments sought on them. These options will be based on the outcomes from the BBP study as well as the evidence base work identified previously in this paper.

Another key influence on any strategic policy options for the Eastside area is going to be the future role of the Port. Newhaven Port and Properties (NPP) have commissioned specialist consultants, Royal Haskoning and DMH Stallard, to prepare a **Masterplan for the Port**. The Masterplan will look at the future prospects for the port and what it needs to do to sustain the cross-channel ferry and commercial shipping traffic. It will also examine what other opportunities may arise for development of port business, such as, for example, supporting offshore wind farm development. This work also includes community and stakeholder engagement. The Council hope that by the time consultation on the BBP study, along with options for the Eastside area, is undertaken the future role of the port will be clearer and this can be reflected in the consultation material.



Until the findings and recommendations of the BBP study are known it seems sensible for the Council not to identify and consult upon potential strategic planning options for the Eastside site, particularly given that such a consultation will form part of the engagement exercise that will be undertaken on the wider study later on in the year. Hence, the purpose of this Topic Paper is simply to identify the current position with regards to developing and considering options for this potential strategic development site.

**Despite the above, if you have any ideas or views at this stage on what should happen to the Eastside area of Newhaven, the Council would welcome any such comments. Such comments will be considered along with comments that will be made on the strategic planning options for this site that will be identified and consulted upon later in the year.**

### **Obtaining additional copies of the Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers**

Downloading it from **[www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategy)**

Emailing **[ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)**

Visiting Lewes District Council at Southover House

Telephoning the Planning Policy Team on **01273 484417**

### **How to respond to the Core Strategy Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers**

Views are invited to the questions that are located at the end of each of the Topic Papers. You need only reply to any part of the questions that are of interest to you, or you may introduce other comments.

### **Comments may be sent to the Council by:**

By email to: **[ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)**

By fax to: **01273 484452**

By post to: Lewes District Council

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**Comments must be received by the 16th July 2010**

# **LDF**

Local Development Framework

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**Annex A – Key policies and influences relating to the Eastside site****National planning policy****Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3: Housing**

Some of the key messages and policy requirements in this document, which are of relevance to the Eastside site, are;

- New housing needs to be developed in suitable locations that offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- New housing should contribute towards cutting carbon emissions by focusing it in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or by means other than the private car.
- The priority is that new housing is developed on previously developed land. Opportunities for housing provision on surplus public sector land also need to be considered.
- Planning Authorities need to develop policies and implementation strategies that ensure sufficient and suitable land is available to achieve the housing objectives. This includes identifying deliverable sites to deliver housing in the first five years of the plan period and to identify broad locations and sites that will enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of LDF adoption.
- Sites identified for housing within the first five years of the plan need to be available now, be a suitable site within a suitable location and have a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years (i.e. viability issues do not prevent it from being delivered). Sites and broad locations identified beyond the first five year period will also need to meet these criteria, with the exception that they will only need to have a reasonable prospect of being available for development.

**Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth**

Some of the key messages in this document that are relevant to this topic paper are:

- The overarching national objective is sustainable economic growth in order to generate wealth, improve economic performance, promote regeneration and tackle deprivation. Local authorities should have a clear and flexible vision and strategy for their area to meet these objectives.
- Economic growth should promote more sustainable patterns of development, reduce the need for travel, and respond to climate change.
- Local planning authorities need to assess the existing, and future, supply of land available for economic development, ensuring that existing site allocations are considered against national policy and, where possible, be combined with Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments.
- A range of sites should be identified to meet a broad range of economic development needs, including mixed use sites, with priority for brownfield sites and for sites which meet the needs of existing and growing sectors of the local economy.



- The vitality and viability of town centres should be promoted. Local authorities should consider the need for additional retail and leisure floorspace and, in meeting any future needs, apply a sequential approach giving preference to sites in, then on the edge of, town centres, before any “out of centre” development.

### **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Spatial Planning**

Some of the key messages in this document that are relevant to this topic paper are:

- A Core Strategy can allocate strategically important sites. This could include large-scale housing sites, or sites for mixed-use development.
- Evidence will need to be provided that will demonstrate how and when the physical, local and green infrastructure, which will need to accompany development of a strategic site, will be provided.

### **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25: Development and Flood Risk**

Some of the key messages in this document that are relevant to this topic paper are:

- The overall aim of national policy is to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages of the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas at highest risk (The “sequential test”).
- Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in areas at flood risk, national policy aims to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, reducing flood risk elsewhere (The “exceptions test”).
- Local planning authorities should prepare and implement planning strategies that help to deliver sustainable development by appraising, managing and reducing risk in a partnership involving the Environment Agency, other operating authorities and other stakeholders.
- A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) should be prepared by the local authority to provide a framework for the appraisal, management and reduction of flood risk in both LDFs and individual development proposals.
- Where development is considered in an area at risk of flooding, it needs to be considered against the SFRA, site specific Flood Risk Assessments and opportunities for mitigating residual flood risk (e.g. development behind existing flood defences, upgrading of flood defences with developer contributions, flood resistance and resilience, and flood warning and evacuation plans).

## **Regional Planning Policy**

### **South East Plan – Policy H1**

- This requires Lewes District Council to prepare a plan to enable delivery of an annual average of 220 net additional dwellings. This equates to a total of 4,400 net additional dwellings over the SE Plan period to 2026.

### **South East Plan – Policy SP3**

- Requires a focus on development in urban areas, in order to foster accessibility for employment, housing, retail and other services, and to avoid unnecessary travel.





### South East Plan – Policy CC8

- Local authorities, and others, should work together to provide and manage connected and substantial networks of multi-functional green space. This will conserve and enhance biodiversity, landscape, recreation, water management and flood risk management.

### South East Plan – Policy RE3

- Requires local authorities to have regard to the changing local economy and to facilitate a flexible supply of land to meet the needs of different business sectors.

### South East Plan – Policy NRM4

- Requires application of the sequential approach to development in flood risk areas, as set out in PPS25, avoiding development in flood risk areas, unless there is an overriding need and an absence of suitable alternatives.

### South East Plan – Sussex Coast sub-region (Policies SCT1 – SCT7)

- The priority in policy SCT1 is sustainable economic growth and regeneration of the Sussex Coast.
- Policy SCT5 requires that a significant proportion of the Council's housing requirement is met in the part of the District covered by the Sussex Coast sub-region (this sub-region includes all the main towns within the District including Lewes). Across this sub-region an annual average of 170 net additional dwellings (3,400 across the plan period) will need to be provided. Some flexibility will be allowed in relation to these requirements.
- Most of the residential development in the sub-region should be focused on existing towns by optimising the use of previously developed land and, where necessary, by making new land allocations as sustainable urban extensions.

### The Council's own documents and evidence base

The Council has already produced a number of documents and prepared a number of pieces of evidence that will inform the emerging policy on housing distribution. Further evidence is also currently being, or will be, prepared to inform the emerging LDF Core Strategy. The majority of this evidence will be in place to inform the Preferred Strategy stage of the document.

### Lewes District Sustainable Community Strategy (2008)

- One of the priority themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy is "Decent and Affordable Housing for All". Two shared aims underpin this priority theme, which are "decent, affordable and sustainable housing for all, regardless of tenure" and; "meeting the housing needs of everyone in the District".



## Annual Monitoring Report (2008/09)

- There have been 969 net dwelling completions between the 1 April 2006 and the 31 March 2009. The residual requirement for the District is, therefore, 3,431 dwellings, which equates to 202 net additional dwellings per annum.
- The Annual Monitoring Report identifies that the Council's current five year housing requirement is expected to be met and can be identified at this stage.

## Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (to be completed in 2010)

- The 'call for sites' and initial screening has resulted in a significant number of sites that will be assessed through the SHLAA, some being strategic in nature (parts of the Eastside area are being considered through the SHLAA).

## Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2008)

- The SHMA considers that there are significant constraints, such as the National Park designation and significant areas at risk from flooding in urban areas, which could impact upon the timely delivery of housing.
- The SHMA has also concluded that the District Council may need to develop proposals for reasonably significant land releases in the north of the District and outside the proposed National Park to secure the long term delivery of housing.

## Employment Land Review (ELR) (to be completed in 2010)

- The ELR examines the current stock of employment land across Lewes District and its continued suitability to meet the needs of businesses (the Eastside employment land, including the unimplemented allocation, will be assessed as part of this study).
- It will also consider whether additional land needs to be allocated to meet the needs of the local economy.

## Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2009)

- Part one of this document provides detailed mapping of flood risk in Lewes District from all forms of flooding.
- Part two provides a more detailed assessment of flood risk in Lewes and Newhaven, taking account of flow paths, velocities and depths, and the performance of existing flood defences.
- The SFRA provides a "toolkit" for the assessment of flood risk in both the Local Development Framework and individual development proposals.



# LDF

Local Development Framework

## Topic paper number

# 8

May 2010



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[www.lewes.gov.uk](http://www.lewes.gov.uk)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audiotape,  
disk or in another language upon request.**

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email [lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk)**