

DA 3 – Lewes Road



Supporting Documents:

Sustainable Community Strategy -2006
 Refreshed Local Area Agreement - 2007
 Economic Strategy - 2005
 Tall Buildings SPG - 2004
 Preston Barracks SPG - 2003
 London Road/Lewes Road Study (LR2)
 Regeneration Strategy - 2007
 Employment Land Study -2006
 Reducing Inequality Review - 2008
 LR2 PBA Traffic Study - 2007
 Local Transport Plan - 2006
 Urban Characterisation Study - 2007
 Infrastructure Capacity Study - 2006
 Retail Study - 2006
 Public Space Public Life Study - 2007
 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study -2008
 Air Quality Action Plan - 2007
 Air Quality Detailed Assessment - 2007
 Bevendean Neighbourhood Action Plan -2007
 Audit of Community Level Infrastructure -2004
 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - 2008

Context

2.38 The Lewes Road development area extends from the Level, in the south, to the Universities of Sussex and Brighton up to the administrative boundary of the city. Lewes Road is part of Brighton & Hove's academic corridor and also contains a district shopping centre. It is the focal route for the two universities and their students: the Sussex University campus at Falmer and the campuses of Brighton University, which are located along the A270 from The Steine to Falmer. There is a city academy proposed at Falmer High School and there are a number of primary schools in the area.

2.39 Lewes Road is a busy primary transport route into and out of the city for both people and freight and well served by buses. It has been identified as a sustainable transport corridor where priority is given to facilitating efficient public transport, cycling and walking. The area of Lewes Road, south from the Vogue Gyratory is included in the 2008 declared Air Quality Management Area due to the exceedence of the government's Air Quality Objective for annual Nitrogen Dioxides. There are a number of recommendations to improve the road in the LR2 Study. The locality is dominated by the dual carriageway, which severs the communities on the eastern and western sides of the road and presents a barrier to community facilities, parks and shops and there is a higher number of road accidents along its length.

2.40 The area is characterised by mixed and often poor quality townscape and public realm. There are two residential renewal areas on the eastern side of the road. Both Moulsecoomb and Bevendean have been prioritised in neighbourhood renewal programmes.

2.41 The two universities make a major contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of Brighton & Hove and the wider region. They have a combined annual revenue expenditure of around £250 million and employ approximately 5,000 staff. Through initiatives such as the Sussex Innovation Centre they also have important links with high

value local businesses. Both universities maintain important links with business and the community, for example the Sussex Innovation Centre at the University of Sussex supporting start-ups and the University of Brighton ProfitNet programme working with over 500 local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Work with local community groups is sustained by the University of Brighton Community University Partnership Project (CUPP) and its joint project with Sussex University, the Brighton & Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange (BSCKE). Both universities have proposals to extend and enlarge their campuses.

2.42 There are a number of significant, identified development sites including the Community Stadium at Falmer, Woollards Field, and Preston Barracks as well as potential development sites like that of the former Moulsecoomb Infants school.

Local Priorities

2.43 The following local priorities have been identified for the development area:

- Promote the role of the area as a sustainable academic corridor and promote closer links between the universities and schools and the wider community.
- Secure high quality redevelopment of the significant sites in the area that will provide new space for employment, learning and residential development.
- Encourage technology and innovation transfer from the universities to existing businesses along the academic corridor and support opportunities for suitable new business accommodation that further develop links.
- Improve the townscape and creation of an attractive, safe and legible public realm through the preparation of a comprehensive design guide.
- Enhance the role of the Lewes Road as a district shopping centre and as a sustainable transport corridor and implement the priorities in the LR2 Study.
- Ensure improvements to local air quality through implementation of the council's Air Quality Action Plan and ensure new developments do not increase the number of people exposed to poor air quality.
- Explore opportunities for district heating/ combined heat and power technologies linked to new development.
- Increase training and job opportunities for local people.
- Secure investment in improving the quality of public open spaces in the area including Saunder's Park and William Clarke Park as well as under used open spaces in residential areas such as Moulsecoomb and Bevendean.
- Improve natural green spaces – better landscaping and biodiversity and street planting to enhance the whole route.
- Improve community safety in identified priority areas.
- Seek provision of a community building in Bevendean (identified shortfall in Audit of Community Level Infrastructure 2004) and youth facilities.

Preferred Option – DA3 Lewes Road

Enhance the role of the area as part of the city's academic corridor through supporting proposals which enhance secondary, further and higher education provision in the Lewes Road area and facilitate improved sustainable transport

links, improved air quality and an enhanced townscape and public realm. This will be achieved through:

1. Working in partnership with the Universities in preparing a Supplementary Planning Document to support the sustainable redevelopment and expansion of the campuses and support the need to provide appropriate accommodation for students and closer links between the Universities and local communities through sharing facilities and developing local opportunities for training and learning.
2. Supporting proposals for a city academy at Falmer High School including improved access to the site from Lewes Road and appropriate enabling development;
3. Promoting and investing in improved bus, cycle and pedestrian routes along Lewes Road from The Level to the Universities in partnership with public transport operators.
4. Preparing design guidance for the area through an Urban Design Framework in order to ensure a comprehensive approach that delivers an improved townscape, public realm and green approach to the city with more efficient use of underused sites;
5. Supporting and enhancing the district centre by improved pedestrian links with the Sainsbury's store at the northern boundary and elsewhere in crossing Lewes Road itself and overall environmental and physical enhancements including high quality active shop fronts (CP15 Retail Provision).
6. Ensuring that new major development benefits the surrounding area through high quality building design and public realm and through developer contributions, appropriate to the development, to meet priorities in the area including community safety, landscaping and open space improvements, community buildings and sustainable transport and biodiversity.
7. Working in partnership with the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the appointed developer to deliver a genuine mixed use, high quality, sustainable development that successfully focuses on employment (18,600 sq m) use whilst balancing community, residential, research, retail and training uses, in accordance with the adopted Preston Barracks SPG.
8. Supporting the delivery of the Community Stadium at Village Way North by Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club including 2,000 sq m teaching and learning space for courses delivered by City College and others targeted at improving access to employment;
9. Supporting redevelopment of the former Moulsecoomb Infants' School to provide mixed residential and office/community uses.
10. Supporting the development of Woollards Field for academic research or employment related development with East Sussex County Council and the Universities amounting to at least 5,000 sq m floorspace.
11. The area is expected to provide an additional 358 residential units over the Plan period

Supporting text

2.44 This strategy recognises the important role the universities have for Brighton & Hove and for the wider sub region. Both Universities have plans to expand year on year to meet national targets. This will require improvement and expansion of their campuses and the need for appropriate new student accommodation on and near the campuses. The council will work with the universities to deliver sustainable expansion through the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document for the academic corridor. The academic corridor encompasses the Grand Parade campus which lies outside the Lewes Road Development Area boundary. Work on the SPD is due to commence shortly. The Universities recognise that they have a role in forging closer links with nearby communities. Improved links will be implemented by expanding learning opportunities and sharing facilities with local people. There are also opportunities to encourage technology and innovation transfer from the universities to existing businesses along the academic corridor and to support opportunities for suitable new business accommodation that further develop links.

2.45 Improvement to the sustainable transport corridor, in particular the cycle and pedestrian routes, will be funded through the Local Transport Plan and appropriate developer contributions. These improvements will be closely linked to the other priorities for the area, in particular improving air quality, an improved public realm, greening of the corridor and improving community safety. A holistic approach to these matters as well as townscape improvements will be delivered through design guidance for the area.

2.46 Lewes Road District centre was identified in the 2006 Retail Study as a potentially vulnerable shopping centre. Whilst surrounded by a dense area of residential development and containing a good range of everyday services such as a post office, bank and pharmacy there is a poor range and quality of comparison goods retailers. Vacancy rates are high, pedestrian flows are low and the environment and pedestrian movements hampered by traffic congestion. The study recommended improved shopping environment and pedestrian linkages in order to provide an upgraded shopping environment for the local catchment population.

2.47 There are a number of potential development sites along the Lewes Road Corridor. The Community Stadium on land north of Village Way was approved by the Secretary of State's decision letter dated 23 July 2007. The stadium will provide a home for Brighton & Hove Albion FC whilst providing facilities and jobs for the wider community. The club's intention is to deliver the stadium by 2011. In the event that the stadium is not delivered the site will be safeguarded for university (B1 research and development) and university-related uses (not student housing) associated with expansion plans of the universities and this would be addressed through the Development Policies and Site Allocation DPD.

2.48 Preston Barracks, has been identified for high quality employment, training and academic floorspace and enabling residential units as well as ancillary retail and leisure uses. Whilst a preferred developer, selected by the city council and SEEDA, will implement a redevelopment scheme, it will be built in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2.49 The council has been working with Falmer High School, City College and other key partners to secure the development of a city academy at Falmer High School. The Falmer Academy project is looking to secure £26m in government funding to build new facilities at the site of the current Falmer High School. The development of the Academy will improve the educational opportunities for pupils drawn from adjacent wards that show high levels of deprivation and contribute to improved community facilities and cohesion.

Potential uses for any surplus land not required for the new academy will be community and educational development opportunities linked to projects in the Falmer and East Brighton Area.

2.50 Wider place making priorities identified for the area include the need for significant improvements to open spaces a number of which are of poor quality and have community safety problems (Saunders Park and William Clarke Park). There are also a number of open spaces that are underused and in need of investment (Moulsecoomb and Bevendean). There are wider community safety concerns around Lewes Road south of the Vogue Gyratory which is identified as a community safety hotspot. Additionally, the shortfall in provision of a community building in Bevendean is identified in the Community Infrastructure Audit and is a priority in the Bevendean Neighbourhood Action Plan.

Implementation

2.51 The development area proposals will be implemented through the following:

- The council will work with the University of Brighton and Sussex University to prepare a SPD for the academic corridor. Work on the SPD has commenced and will be completed in the next three years.
- Improvement to the sustainable transport corridor, in particular the cycle and pedestrian routes, will be funded through the Local Transport Plan and appropriate developer contributions.
- Townscape improvements will be delivered through design guidance for the area. Priorities for preparing this will be decided through preparation of the Urban Design Framework (CP2 Urban Design). Where appropriate, new development in the area should make developer contributions towards delivering the priorities.