

## DA4 – New England Quarter and London Road



### Supporting Documents:

- Sustainable Community Strategy - 2006
- Refreshed Local Area Agreement - 2007
- Economic Strategy - 2005
- London Road and Lewes Road (LR2) Regeneration Strategy- 2007
- Pelham Street Knowledge Quarter Development Brief - 2008
- Urban Characterisation Study - 2007
- Tall Buildings SPG - 2004
- Retail Study - 2006
- Employment Land Study - 2006
- Creative Industries Workspace Study -2008
- Public Space Public Life Study - 2007
- Brighton Station Site SPG - 2000
- Air Quality Action Plan - 2007
- Air Quality Detailed Assessment - 2007
- Hotel Futures Study - 2007
- Local Transport Plan - 2006
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - 2008

### Context

2.52 The current regeneration of New England Quarter is beginning to act as a catalyst for the redevelopment of the surrounding area, some of which currently has a 'backstreet' character, albeit containing a vibrant residential area with a local school and a range of important small start-up units, creative industry businesses and workshops and builder's merchant units which supply the city's building trade.

2.53 The area east of Brighton Station provides opportunities for further development being in close proximity to the retail and commercial core of the city and well placed to capitalise on excellent transportation links provided by Brighton Station. Trafalgar Street to the south provides a link to the vibrant North Laine shopping and conservation area and there is real potential to invigorate this part of the city and create a high quality public realm which improves the arrival experience of those coming to the city by train.

2.54 London Road Town Centre serves as a community hub and key retail centre for the surrounding residential areas and with the city's only permanent Open Market, offers affordable goods for those on lower incomes. However its performance as a town centre has been in decline. There is a positive outlook for London Road and its future as a local retail area, but there is a great need for regeneration and improvements, with particular attention to the Open Market and refurbishment of retail units to attract prospective tenants. City College has its main campus in this area and is a key provider of vocational training to meet the rapidly expanding demand for a broad range of workers to support Brighton & Hove's economy. In order to meet the operational requirements of the College and the contemporary needs of students and a modern curriculum City College has identified the need for redevelopment of current facilities. The proposals would involve the phased redevelopment of the entire Pelham Street and Wilson Avenue sites.

2.55 London Road is the main entrance and exit route from the city; heavily trafficked and suffers from congestion at peak times, designated a sustainable transport corridor.

London Road, south of Preston Circus has been designated as part of the 2008 declared Air Quality Management Area due to the exceedence of the government's Air Quality Objective for annual Nitrogen Dioxides. It offers a 'green approach' to the city centre – lined by mature trees and punctuated by large open green spaces (Withdean Park, Surrenden Field and Preston Park). Preston Road West is characterised by high rise office blocks opposite Preston Park's western boundary and is surrounded by low density residential development to the north and tall residential blocks midway along the route. This is a secondary office location providing a range of office floorspace, along with a hotel and new GP practice and pharmacy.

## Local Priorities

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

- Achieve greater integration and accessibility between the London Road shopping centre and the Brighton Station/New England Quarter area to the west.
- There is a need to improve health of the Town Centre through managing, enhancing and consolidating the existing retail provision and improve the 'public realm' and the pedestrian environment of London Road shopping centre.
- Need to secure the redevelopment/refurbishment of key retail sites along London Road including the Open Market which is a prominent feature in the area.
- Safeguard existing employment space in the area and seek intensification/ redevelopment to accommodate a net addition of at least 20,000 sq m of office space over the period 2016-2026.
- Work with City College to secure campus improvements, recognising the role of City College in vocational training and further education and as an extension to the Academic Corridor.
- Acknowledge that workspace affordability, appropriateness and availability is crucial to maintaining the significant creative industries business cluster and arts workshops and venues in this area and seek to strengthen their presence.
- Maintain and enhance environmental quality along the route of the London Road Corridor and complete the remaining phases of the Sustainable Transport Corridor which is designed to give greater road space/priority to sustainable modes of transport (buses, cycle lanes and pedestrian access).
- Environmental improvements to create high quality streetscapes through shared surface streets and alternative traffic routes to reduce the impact of traffic and create better linkages between the Level, Valley Gardens and the seafront.
- Ensure improvements to local air quality through the implementation of the council's Air Quality Action Plan and ensure developments do not increase the number of people exposed to poor air quality.
- Take advantage of the areas central location, sustainable transport links and district centre role to ensure new development delivers high quality exemplar sustainable living and explore opportunities for district heating/ combined heat and power technologies linked to new development.
- Opportunities to enhance the appearance of the existing tall building frontage to the west of Preston Park.

### Preferred Option – DA4 New England Quarter and London Road

To revitalise the London Road retail area and create a major new business quarter for Brighton & Hove consisting of high quality business accommodation connecting London Road with the New England Quarter and to maintain and enhance a green gateway to the city at Preston Road West, characterised by a high quality employment-led mixed-use park land environment with local amenities. This will be achieved through:

1. Planning for a new business quarter for the city in the New England Street area (the area bounded by New England Road to the north, Elder Place to the west and New England Street to the east) to accommodate the identified need for 20,000 sq m of office floorspace post 2016;
2. Managing, enhancing and consolidating the existing retail provision within the defined prime frontage of London Road Town Centre, recognising the importance of retaining key retail sites to act as 'anchors' for the centre;
3. Working with landowners and traders to secure the redevelopment/refurbishment of key retail sites along London Road.
4. Working with City College and the Learning and Skills Council to secure Pelham Street campus improvements, recognising the role of City College in vocational training and further education and as an extension to the Academic Corridor;
5. Safeguarding existing identified employment sites and recognise Preston Road West's potential for employment led mixed use development;
6. Implementing the Local Transport Plan priorities for London Road Sustainable transport Corridor;
7. Strengthening links between the New England Quarter, London Road shopping centre and the North Laine shopping area with high quality streetscapes, pedestrian routes, cycle ways, and public realm improvements;
8. Maintaining and strengthening the significant creative industries business cluster in the area through ensuring that workshops, office space, studios, storage and other premises remain affordable, appropriate and available for use;
9. The area will provide a minimum of 795 additional residential units over the life of the plan\*

A Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared.

\*of which 454 residential units are a commitment at Brighton Station as at 1 April 2007

#### Supporting text

2.57 The London Road and Lewes Road (LR2) Regeneration Strategy 2007 identifies the potential of the London Road Corridor to become a strong and attractive gateway to the city and identified opportunities for regeneration in distinct areas (Preston Road West, London Road Shopping Centre and east of Brighton Station) which would strengthen and enhance the overall character and diversity of the city.

2.58 The Employment Land Study 2006 identified the need to find sites suitable to accommodate the forecast need for 20,000 sq m of high quality office floorspace post

2016 and suggested that the New England street area (the area bounded by New England Road to the north, Elder Place to the west and New England Street to the east) appeared to have redevelopment potential.

**2.59** The LR2 Regeneration Strategy 2007 further indicates the potential for the creation of a 'Commercial Quarter' in this location. The opportunity to create a commercial quarter, offering a range of office space and type, in the heart of the city and close to the main train station would offer allow local businesses to grow, would build on the success of the New England Quarter to create a mixed use area of the city. The greater numbers of people living and working in the area will help to revitalise the shops and market in London Road and will reduce the need for people to travel outside of the city for work. This vision also complements the city College's plans to modernise and expand their facilities on their Pelham Street Campus, growing their linkages with businesses through the provision of continuous professional development and meeting room and conference facilities to the public, together with enhancing and developing their core activities. A development brief for the Pelham Street site has been prepared (Pelham Street Knowledge Quarter) to provide a masterplan to guide future development of the site.

**2.60** The Retail Study 2006 recommends that the Council should aim to enhance and consolidate existing retail provision and the overall physical environment in order to improve the shopping experience and manage its role as a town centre. Key sites for new retail opportunities include the Open Market, former Co-Op Department Store, former Sainsbury's and Buxton's. The Retail Study indicates that there is capacity for additional convenience and comparison goods floorspace in London Road over the LDF period. These should be of a scale appropriate to the function of the town centre.

**2.61** The creative industries sector has been identified as a growing and dynamic sector with a shortage of affordable and appropriate workspace, it is important that existing clusters of creative industry workspace are maintained and strengthened. The Creative Industries Workspace Study 2008 has highlighted the importance of the existing cluster in the city centre and New England House as a unique and successful example.

## Implementation

**2.62** The preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document for New England Road and London Road area will ensure a coordinated and more detailed framework for the delivery of development in the area. The SPD will provide a framework to guide developers and decision makers on the form and content of development and the provision of infrastructure. The emphasis will be on:

- Positive management of the Council's land assets to facilitate development which supports the policy framework set out above.
- Partnership working with the city College, Open Market Traders, landowners and others on key development opportunity sites.
- Securing community benefits through Section 106 agreements and other mechanisms, prioritising environmental and shop front improvements.
- Integration with the Local Transport Plan programmes for the sustainable transport corridor which are designed to give greater road space/priority to sustainable modes of transport (buses, cycle lanes and pedestrian access).
- Potential use by the Council of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to deliver the vision for the area.
- Work on the SPD has commenced.