

Preferred Option – CP17 Other Employment Sites



Supporting Documents:

Draft PPS4 Planning for Sustainable
Economic Development - 2007
Draft South East Plan -2006
Employment Land Study -2006
Creative Industries Workspace Study - 2008
Economic Strategy 2005
City Employment & Skills Plan - 2007
Regional Economic Strategy - 2006-2016
Refreshed Local Area Agreement - 2007

3.140 Safeguarding a wider portfolio of employment land maintains the capacity for a diverse economic base in the city and provides jobs locally, reducing the need to travel. A good supply of land and buildings will offer a range of opportunities for creating new jobs in large and small businesses as well as start-up firms. Smaller business premises /workshops support growing sectors such as environmental technologies and the city's creative and cultural industries often have particular needs which may not be met on conventional industrial/ business sites. This preferred approach also responds to the need set out in SN2 to ensure a supply of smaller employment areas at the neighbourhood level.

In order to maintain a wider portfolio of employment land and to protect small and expanding local businesses along with major employment generators in the city:

1. Unallocated sites or premises in employment use (Use Classes B1- B8) will not be released to other uses unless the site or premise can be demonstrated to be both redundant and incapable of meeting the needs of modern employment uses (Use Classes B1-B8);
 - a) Proposals for enabling development will need to fully demonstrate how this would provide for reinvestment and refurbishment in the site or premise and there should be no net loss in employment floorspace unless there are significant and demonstrable gains in number of people employed;
 - b) Where release is permitted, preference will be given firstly to alternative employment generating uses, followed by live/work units or affordable housing.
2. The council will support appropriate expansion plans of hospitals and higher and further education establishments recognising their role as major employment generators (see also DA3 and DA5).

3. The council will encourage new employment opportunities for vacant or derelict buildings.
4. The council will recognise the often dual use of community facilities for employment activities through a policy protecting community facilities to be set out in the Development Policies and Site Allocation DPD.

Supporting Text

3.141 The Employment Land Study 2006 indicates the significant constraints on traditional employment land supply in the city. The Creative Industries Workspace Study 2008 has also indicated the lack of affordable, appropriate and available workspace to support the growing creative industries sector both within and outside the traditional B1-B8 Use Classes. The study concluded, that even if the sector were to only grow at a modest 2.5% per annum growth rate (regional and local forecasts suggests 5% could continue to be achieved over the next 10 years) there would need to be 78,967 sq m of new workspace. Therefore given the limited amount of land available for development in the city, it is important that the best use is made of all employment sites and premises and to avoid the loss of well-located viable employment sites which contribute significantly to the local economy and new job creation.

3.142 Redundancy and unsuitability for modern employment uses will be determined by considering the following criteria:

- a) location of the site;
- b) quality of the buildings;
- c) site or floor layout;
- d) accessibility;
- e) proximity to public transport/ trunk routes;
- f) other uses in the neighbourhood
- g) cost of demolition/ refurbishment sets against its future value for employment uses;
- h) the length of time the site has been vacant
- i) documented evidence of the marketing strategy adopted, particularly whether it has been marketed at a price that reflects local market prices and attempts to make the building attractive to different business or employment uses (the length of marketing will need to reflect the size and nature of the site or premise and therefore whilst a year to eighteen months is considered a reasonable marketing period for small sites/ premises but a longer period may be required for larger sites/ premises).
- j) for office uses the prevailing vacancy rate for the size and type of office in Brighton & Hove should also be considered;
- k) for an office building whether change of use is the only practicable way of preserving a building of architectural or historic interest.

3.143 Alternative employment generating uses are any uses that generate employment but are not classified as an employment use (uses falling outside the Use Class B1- B8). This excludes retail or leisure uses unless they comply with the tests of PPS6 Town Centres.

3.144 Draft PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Development encourages local planning authorities to take a broader view of economic development that looks beyond the traditional view of employment activities being only those that fall within the Uses Classes B1- B8 (B1 Business, B2 General Industrial and B8 Storage and Distribution). The

city contains a number of major employment generators including the two Universities, and the Royal Sussex County Hospital and the council will work with higher and further education sector and the city's Brighton and Sussex University Hospital NHSTrusts and Brighton & Hove Primary Care Trust to support appropriate expansion (see preferred options DA3 and DA5 and CP4). Vacant or derelict buildings such as historic buildings and buildings in rural areas can often provide opportunities for new employment floorspace. The council has set out opportunities for farm diversification in its Farm Diversification Planning Advice Note 01, adopted 2006. The Creative Industries Workspace Study 2008 highlighted that many creative industry businesses make use of community halls and performance and exhibition venues that are not traditionally viewed as employment spaces and a detailed development policy in the Development Policies and Site Allocation Development Plan Document will need to reflect the need to protect community facilities for this employment use as well as their community use function.

Implementation

3.145 Through implementing the Core Strategy, the Development Policies and Site Allocations Development Plan Document and through the development control process.