

BODY	CABINET
DATE	18 April 2012
SUBJECT	Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD)
REPORT OF	Senior Head of Development & Environment

Ward(s) Sovereign

Purpose For Members to approve the draft Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document for consultation with the community and stakeholders

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Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approve the draft Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document for consultation with the community and key stakeholders between May and July 2012.
2. To delegate authority to the Senior Head of Development and Environment in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member to make amendments before the commencement of the 12 week consultation period.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 It has been recognised that the completion of the Sovereign Harbour development is long overdue and that the area is missing the social and economic infrastructure that is required for it to become a sustainable community. The Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared to guide development and ensure that new and improved community facilities are at the heart of future building plans.
- 1.2 Sovereign Harbour is identified in The Eastbourne Plan (Core Strategy) as a Sustainable Centre and sets a vision and policy for the Sovereign Harbour neighbourhood (Policy C14), which is a priority location for balanced housing growth alongside delivering significant improvements to the provision of community facilities and services and improving linkages.
- 1.3 The SPD provides a detailed strategy for the implementation of this policy by providing guidance on the uses considered to be appropriate for each of the remaining development sites, including details of the size, scale and form of development and the specific community benefits to be delivered.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 The Eastbourne Plan Policy C14: Sovereign Harbour, states that a maximum of 150 new homes will be developed in Sovereign Harbour to contribute towards the delivery of housing in meeting the target of 5,022 new houses in Eastbourne between 2006 and 2027. The majority of the dwellings should be houses rather than flats, and the housing will facilitate the provision of the other community infrastructure that the neighbourhood needs in order to make it sustainable.

2.2 Existing policy in the Eastbourne Borough Plan requires all residential development with a capacity of 15 or more dwellings or sites of 0.5 hectares or more to provide 30% affordable housing on site, although in exceptional circumstances a commuted payment in lieu of on-site provision may be agreed.

Emerging policy in The Eastbourne Plan also includes a requirement for affordable housing. Sovereign Harbour is identified as a High Value Neighbourhood, which means that up to 40% affordable housing will be sought, subject to viability. This equates to 60 homes. Provision of the affordable housing should be on-site, however if it can be proved that this would be unviable, the Council may accept an equivalent commuted sum to provide the affordable housing off-site.

2.3 The Eastbourne Plan Policy C14: Sovereign Harbour, describes the Council's ambition to develop a Business Park (B1(a) Office) in Sovereign Harbour to provide high quality skilled employment opportunities for local communities and attract investment into the town.

Policy D2: Economy, supports the development of B1(a) office uses at Sovereign Harbour and land is identified for 30,000 square metres of B1(a) development to contribute towards the requirement of 55,430 square metres of employment land by 2027.

2.4 Sovereign Harbour lacks a dedicated community centre. Sovereign Harbour is identified in The Eastbourne Plan as a Sustainable Centre, where improvements to community facilities will be delivered in order to make the neighbourhood more sustainable through developer contributions from additional housing growth. The Eastbourne Plan Policy C14: Sovereign Harbour, states that the provision of community facilities is an issue that should be addressed through the development of the remaining sites and this needs to be guaranteed before there is further housing development.

2.5 Other issues that the SPD will address at Sovereign Harbour include the lack of open space and children's play areas, the provision of additional retail, leisure and tourism uses, accessibility across the neighbourhood via a range of transport methods, and the operational needs of the fishermen and boats.

2.6 The SPD provides details of the characteristics and constraints of each of the remaining development sites within Sovereign Harbour and then confirms the development opportunities associated with them.

3.0 Site Specific Proposals

The full draft SPD is attached at Appendix 1, however the following section provides a summary of the proposed development opportunities associated with each of the remaining sites at Sovereign Harbour.

- 3.1 **Site 1** - It is considered that Site 1 should predominantly consist of open space, including a children's play area, with an extended promenade along the seafront, improving accessibility to Sovereign Harbour for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.2 The site could accommodate between 50 and 80 homes. However, in order to protect the openness of the site, deliver the necessary community benefits and respect the setting and views of the Martello Towers, it is considered that approximately two thirds of the site should remain open which would therefore restrict the amount of built form to approximately only one third of the site.
- It is considered that the site will become an important destination and there is the opportunity for Martello Tower 66 to be converted to another use, for example a café with an external seating area.
- 3.3 **Site 2** - It is considered that Site 2 could in part, be used for boat storage with the retention of around 37 car parking spaces for berth holders.
- 3.4 Alternatively, the site could accommodate some residential development, which would be in keeping with the surrounding locality. It is considered that between 10 and 15 homes could be provided on site. However, there would still be a requirement to provide car parking spaces for berth holders.
- 3.5 **Site 3** - Consideration has been given in the past to extend the Waterfront into this area, however to date, the site has not been considered to be sufficiently prominent for a commercial development, as it is detached from the existing bars and restaurants. The site is also close to a number of residential properties and any commercial development could have an impact on residential amenity. Nevertheless, because of the site's proximity to the existing Waterfront facilities, proposals to provide additional retail and food and drink uses on Site 3 would be supported.
- 3.6 However, should it be demonstrated that it would not be commercially viable to provide an extension to the Waterfront it is considered that the site would be suitable for a residential development, as this would be in keeping with the development on the opposite side of the west channel. It is considered that the site could accommodate between 15 and 25 homes.
- 3.7 Site 3 is currently used by fishermen for the storage of equipment and parking of their vehicles and a number of their boats are moored immediately adjacent to the site. However the site is not large enough to meet the needs of all of the commercial fishermen currently operating from the Harbour. For this reason, it is considered that as part of any development proposed on Site 3 arrangements to deal with the fishermen's needs will need to be put in place to provide for them to land their catch and

to store their equipment.

- 3.8 **Site 4** – It is considered that Site 4 should comprise a mixed use development incorporating bars, restaurants and retail units on the ground and first floor with potential for some B1 office space above. This will enhance the offer that already exists at the Waterfront for both residents and visitors and will maximise the opportunities associated with this centrally located, prime waterfront site.
- 3.9 As part of any development on Site 4 there will be a requirement to provide a new harbour walkway and a public open space adjacent to the water that could be used for a variety of purposes.
- 3.10 **Site 5** – It is considered that the central location of Site 5 and its close proximity to the retail park and the Waterfront facilities means that this would be an ideal location for a community centre to serve the neighbourhood.
- 3.11 It is considered that a community centre with a footprint of approximately 750 square metres will be needed to meet the needs of the Sovereign Harbour neighbourhood. It is acknowledged that the cost of providing such a centre may impact on the viability of the remaining development sites. If this is the case then the landowners will be required to provide a contribution that equates to providing a building with a footprint of at least 400 square metres. Eastbourne Borough Council together with its partners will seek opportunities to secure 'gap' funding in order to deliver the size of community centre required. The facility must be built as a priority in the phasing of the overall development of the Harbour and should therefore be provided prior to commencement of development on any of the remaining residential development sites.
- 3.12 The site of the proposed community centre should ideally include space for a children's play area. In addition, it will be necessary to provide access for delivery vehicles, disabled parking and cycle parking.
- 3.13 **Site 6** – It is considered that Site 6 should comprise an office/business park. As a gateway into the town and a highly visible site, the development should be of a high quality and could provide up to 15,000 square metres of B1(a) office floorspace. The employment space should be flexible enough to allow different businesses at different stages of development, including start-up businesses, to occupy the office space.

However, subject to viability, other employment generating uses will be considered, although a general retail use would not be permitted on this site. Should other employment generating uses be proposed on Site 6, they would not contribute to the 30,000 square metres of B1(a) office space required to be provided at Sovereign Harbour.

- 3.14 **Site 7** – It is considered that Site 7 could provide a mix of uses that increase the sustainability of Sovereign Harbour. The main use of the site should be a business/office park of a high quality design to provide a distinctive gateway into the town and Sovereign Harbour. The development should ideally provide between 15,000 and 20,000 square metres of office

floorspace, and this space should be flexibly designed to accommodate a range of occupier needs and to future proof the development.

However if other employment generating uses are proposed for Site 6, then the amount of office floorspace to be provided on Site 7 would need to be higher in order to ensure a total of 30,000 square metres of B1(a) office space is provided at Sovereign Harbour.

It is also important that pedestrian and cycle links through the site are provided to connect to the retail park, the community centre on Site 5 and the Waterfront.

- 3.15 It is considered that the middle part of the site should be used to provide a usable open space. This space should be flexible enough to provide a range of open space uses, but should also include a children's play area.
- 3.16 It is considered that the northern part of the site would be appropriate for residential development and could accommodate between 30 and 70 homes. It is also considered that there is the opportunity to provide some sheltered or assisted living (C3 residential) accommodation on this site and perhaps a limited amount of care home accommodation (C2). However if a care home use is proposed for this site, it must not compromise the delivery of the proposed open space and employment space requirements detailed above.
- 3.17 The site should have extensive pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding area, and particularly linking through to the open space, the office park, the retail park, community centre and the Waterfront.
- 3.18 **Site 8** – Similar to Site 4, this site is one area where the community can enjoy a more extensive area close to the water. In order to provide views through the site of the Harbour and an area at the waters edge, it is considered that at least 50% of the site should remain public open space. The public space should include a new harbour walkway linked to existing walkways. In addition, land needs to be set aside for future berth holder's facilities, should additional pontoons need to be provided at this end of the Harbour in the future.
- 3.19 This site is within the predominantly residential area of the North Harbour. The site has long range views out over the water and has the potential to provide a high quality residential scheme to complete the development around the Harbour. It is considered that between 20 and 26 homes could be accommodated on the remaining 50% of the site area, although this would also need to include private space around the development.
- 3.20 **Sovereign Harbour Retail Park** – subject to there being no adverse effect on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre, the Council will continue to support improvements to the leisure and retail offer associated with the retail park
- 3.21 As part of any future development proposals, it will be necessary to provide a bus link between the North and South Harbour areas which includes the retail park on the route. It is also important to ensure good pedestrian integration between the retail park and the existing complementary uses at

the Waterfront.

- 3.22 **The Boat Yard** - The boat yard occupies a prominent site within the heart of Sovereign Harbour and along with the boat hoist, boat storage and berth holders facilities, it is essential for the maintenance of a fully serviced marina operation. However, it is acknowledged that it is not ideally situated, being adjacent to the Waterfront bars and restaurants, but there are currently no opportunities to provide an alternative site for the yard that has easy access to the water.
- 3.23 **Shingle Bank** - Whilst there are currently no opportunities to develop this site as the costs of removing the landfill material would be prohibitive, it is considered that the site could be enhanced as an open space including the provision of informal paths.
- 3.24 **The Outer Harbour Peninsula** - When the Harbour was originally planned it was proposed that the fishermen would occupy the Outer Harbour Peninsula, however to date, this has not happened and they currently use Site 3 at the rear of the Harvester pub/restaurant. However, there is insufficient space available to cater for the needs of all of the commercial fishermen that use the Harbour.
- 3.25 In order to relocate the fishermen to the Outer Harbour Peninsula, it would be necessary to undertake considerable works that would involve dredging the Outer Harbour and providing pontoons and access to the higher level spit. As a result of these works and the associated costs, it is considered unlikely that the fishermen would be able to relocate on this site.
- 3.26 It is therefore considered that the Outer Harbour Peninsula should remain as a public amenity space only and that enhanced facilities for pedestrians, such as seating and paths should be provided.
- 3.27 **Land adjacent to Lock Gates** - This site occupies an important position as it is the gateway to Sovereign Harbour for many pedestrians and cyclists using the harbour walkway from the South Harbour residential development. There is an unrestricted route for pedestrians all the way around the harbour and a shorter 'permissive' route across the lock gates.
- 3.28 It is considered that there are opportunities to improve the appearance of this site and it is proposed that it should be formally laid out as car parking for the public and possibly berth holders and that the site should be extensively landscaped.
- 3.29 **Martello Tower 64** is a building of historic interest and is one of a number of towers that were built to protect the coastline in the early nineteenth century. The Tower could in principle be converted into an alternative use. However having regard to its remote and exposed location and due to its poor state of repair and the associated costs of refurbishment, this is considered unlikely in the short term. It is therefore recommended that the owners of the building should seek to secure the long term repair and maintenance of the Tower and any possible future plans to convert the building would need to be subject to detailed discussions with English Heritage.

3.30 **The Haven School** is well established and now that the nursery building has been provided and once the planned extensions are built there will be little land remaining for further development. There is therefore little scope for expanding the school on its current site and there is no other available land in the immediate vicinity. However, should open space be provided on Site 7, as proposed above, there is scope for the school to use these facilities.

4.0 Public Consultation

4.1 The draft SPD has been informed by discussions with the landowners of the remaining development sites, key stakeholders and the Sovereign Harbour Residents Association. The draft SPD will, if approved by Cabinet, be subject to a 12 week formal consultation between May and July 2012.

4.2 Public consultation will be via a number of the usual methods and will be in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement. Appendix 2 details the proposed Publicity Plan for the document. Comments can be made on any aspect of the draft Supplementary Planning Document. Representations can be made electronically at www.eastbourne.gov.uk via the Council's 'Limehouse' system.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications to the Council of this report. The cost of the publication and publicity for the Sovereign Harbour SPD will be met from within the existing service budget.

5.2 Human Resource Implications

Officers in the Planning Policy Team will manage the consultation arrangements for the Sovereign Harbour SPD, the collection and processing of representations and the production of the final version of the SPD for adoption at the same time as The Eastbourne Plan (Core Strategy).

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The completion of the Sovereign Harbour development is long overdue and the area is missing the social and economic infrastructure that is required for it to become a sustainable community. The Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has therefore been prepared to guide development and to ensure that new and improved community facilities are at the heart of any future building plans.

Cabinet is requested to approve the Draft Sovereign Harbour SPD for consultation with the community and stakeholders between May and July 2012.

6.2 A further report will be submitted to a future Cabinet on the results of the

consultation process.

Background Papers:

- Draft Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (March 2012)

To inspect or obtain copies of the background paper, please refer to the contact officer listed above.

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT SOVEREIGN HARBOUR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

Please note that in the interests of economy appendix 1 (the full SPD document) has not been printed with the agenda. Copies have been sent to the members of the Cabinet and the lead Opposition members, placed in the Members' Room, at the Town Hall reception and on the Council's website at <http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/council/meetings/cabinet>

Proposed Publicity Plan

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Publicity Plan outlines the publication schedule of the Draft Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2008. A 12 week period, in which the community and stakeholders can make representations, has been scheduled from the 1 May until 24 July 2012.
- 1.2 The draft SPD has been informed by discussions with the landowners of the remaining development sites at Sovereign Harbour, key stakeholders and the Sovereign Harbour Residents Association. Public consultation will be via a number of the usual methods and will be in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement. At the end of the 12 week period, all of the representations received will be considered and any amendments made to the SPD in light of these, will be carried out and reported to Cabinet later this year.

The following sections detail how the document will be publicised:

- Letters
- Summary leaflet and posters
- Dedicated page on Council's website
- External media
- Public exhibition

2.0 Letters

- 2.1 Letters will be sent to all residents of Sovereign Harbour, landowners and key stakeholders informing them of where the Draft SPD can be viewed.

3.0 Summary Leaflets and Posters

- 3.1 A summary leaflet will be produced providing the key details of the Draft SPD. This leaflet will be available at the Council's receptions, libraries and various venues around Sovereign Harbour.
- 3.2 Posters advertising the document will also be displayed throughout the town and Sovereign Harbour.

4.0 Dedicated page on Council's website

- 4.1 A dedicated page will be set up on the Council's website for the Draft SPD. The website will provide a link to the document which will be able to be viewed and/or downloaded. The website will also provide an external link to 'Limehouse', the Council's online consultation portal (<http://eastbourne-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/>). This will allow the community and

stakeholders to make representations on the document between 1 May and 24 July 2012.

5.0 External media

- 5.1 A public notice will be placed in the local newspaper confirming the dates that representations can be made on the Draft SPD, advising where the document can be viewed and providing details of the planned public exhibition and there will be a press release in the Eastbourne Herald inviting residents to take part in the consultation.

6.0 Exhibition

- 6.1 There will be a public exhibition during the 12 week consultation period at a venue in Sovereign Harbour in order to publicise and promote the document to both stakeholders and the community.
- 6.2 Officers will be available at the exhibition to provide information on the Draft SPD and to answer any questions members of the public may have.