

BODY	CABINET
DATE	6 February 2013
SUBJECT	Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan (formerly known as the Eastbourne Town Centre Area Action Plan)
REPORT OF	Senior Head of Development & Environment

Ward(s)	Devonshire, Meads & Upperton
Purpose	To seek Cabinet authority to consult on the proposed modifications to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan prior to examination by the Planning Inspector.
Contact	Lisa Rawlinson, Principal Implementation Officer, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne Tel no: (01323) 415250 E-mail: lisa.rawlinson@eastbourne.gov.uk
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Members give authority to submit the revised Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate and consult on the proposed modifications to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan for a 6 week period. 2. To delegate authority to the LDF Steering Group to make minor amendments to the Local Plan prior to its adoption.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 14 December 2011, Cabinet approved the Submission Eastbourne Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) and Sustainability Appraisal and gave authority for the documents to be submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2012.
- 1.2 After formally submitting the AAP (at the same time as the Core Strategy) on 31 January 2012, the appointed Inspector wrote to the Council on 22 February and described the document as "*mainly a suite of development management policies which relate specifically to the TC [Town Centre] area*". She noted that there needed to be more detail of action taking place to progress identified schemes and additional information about implementation. The Inspector considered that the role of an AAP was to take forward and provide more detail of the Core Strategy and concluded that the submitted AAP seemed more akin to a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 1.3 In April 2012, the Inspector gave a more detailed summary that reiterated her concerns about the TCAAP and provided specific areas of the

document that she considered required additional information. The Inspector's main areas of concern were as follows:

- The AAP needs to take a more pro active and robust approach to demonstrate how and when the Town Centre proposals will be delivered.
- The AAP should include an element of project planning to demonstrate that the projects are realistic and set out how and when they will be implemented.
- The AAP should make clear where the public realm enhancements will take place and confirm the relationship between the proposals and the Development Opportunity Sites.
- There should be an indication of how the proposed arts trail will be delivered.
- The evidence base for the 'building heights' policy is unclear and it does not provide coherent guidance as to where tall buildings will be permitted.
- The boundaries of the Development Opportunity Sites, Transition Areas and Potential Areas of Change should be defined on a plan.

1.4 The Inspector was informed that the Council proposed to carry out additional work and DLA have been working with Officers in order to overcome the Inspector's concerns. This has resulted in an amended document.

2.0 Summary of Main Modifications to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan (formerly known as the Town Centre Area Action Plan)

- 2.1
- The supporting text for Policy TC17 'Strategic Approach to Town Centre Development Sites' has been revised to include a requirement for proposals to demonstrate how they will be implemented with appropriate consideration given to phasing and delivery.
 - The Implementation Framework now includes a Delivery Strategy for each of the Development Opportunity Sites as well as other identified projects within the Town Centre, including broad timescales over the Plan period, project leads, key partners and potential funding sources.
 - The Plan now confirms that the Council will monitor the progress of each of the Development Opportunity Sites and related projects over the Plan period and review the Implementation Framework as required in order to ensure the coordinated and timely delivery of development within the Town Centre.
 - A new diagram has been incorporated into the document to illustrate the location of proposed public realm enhancements in the Town Centre.
 - The text has been amended to provide additional clarity on how the Spatial Framework has been arrived at, making a clearer link between the public realm enhancements and reinforcing the legibility, identity, functionality and appearance of the Town Centre.
 - The Plan now provides details on potential implementation and funding. The Implementation Framework identifies which public

realm enhancements are likely to come forward as part of the Development Opportunity sites, and which will be funded from other sources. Information on the delivery timescales has also been provided, along with potential funding sources.

- A new paragraph has been added to confirm that the Council will lead on the delivery of the arts trail as part of the ongoing review of the Devonshire Park Complex. Further information on the delivery strategy for the trail is set out in the Implementation Framework and the proposed route of the trail has been included on Figure 1.
- A larger scale plan has been provided for each of the Development Opportunity Sites and Figure 1 now shows the boundaries of the Transition Areas and the Potential Areas of Change.
- Regarding the 'building heights' policy, the justification section has been revised to more clearly explain the urban context and structure of the Town Centre and hence the rationale for considering tall buildings within the Town Centre. This includes details on the general distribution, height, role and appearance of tall buildings currently in the Town Centre; those parts of the Town Centre where building heights are generally more uniform and therefore potentially more sensitive to change; the location of the Town Centre Conservation Areas that are potentially more sensitive to change; and those parts of the Town Centre that are the most accessible in terms of public transport provision.
- The name of the Plan has been changed to accord with the new guidelines and title of the Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan and is now called the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan.

2.2 One further modification relates to the Inspector's specific concern that the Plan fails to take a pro active and robust approach to demonstrate how and when the Town Centre proposals will be delivered. In order to overcome this concern and ensure that 450 residential units and 3000 sq m of new B1(a) office space is delivered in the Town Centre, the document now states that the Council will monitor the overall delivery rates and residual capacity, across the five Development Opportunity Sites.

2.2.1 In the event that proposals come forward and are granted planning permission on a number of the Development Opportunities Sites and it becomes evident that the residual capacity on the remaining sites is unlikely to deliver sufficient residential units and office floorspace, contingency options will be implemented.

2.2.2 The Plan confirms that the Council will work with landowners and developers to deliver an uplift of residential and employment development on the remaining Development Opportunity Sites, still to be brought forward. If there is no reasonable prospect that the remaining Development Opportunity Sites will meet the residual residential and employment land requirements, then this will trigger the implementation of the following contingency options:

- Promote opportunities for residential and B1(a) office development on other available sites within the Town Centre including the two

Transition Areas and the Langney Road/Pevensey Road Potential Area of Change;

- Review the contribution that windfall development has had on the overall delivery rate in the Town Centre and re-evaluate the overall targets;
- Use Compulsory Purchase powers if necessary; and
- Undertake an early review of Town Centre Local Plan in order to identify additional sites.

- 2.2.3 These revisions maintain a degree of flexibility in the implementation of the Plan to allow for the current uncertain economic climate and the impact this is already having on business confidence and investment decisions. The approach provides a firm policy basis for schemes to come forward whilst retaining some flexibility to allow for market conditions.
- 2.2.4 This flexibility has enabled the major town centre development scheme at the Arndale Centre to come forward which will have major benefits to the local economy, and which otherwise probably would not have been possible if the policy requirements had been too restrictive. The Council has taken a pragmatic view on bringing forward this scheme because of the associated wider regeneration benefits.
- 2.3 The revised Town Centre Local Plan indicating the proposed modifications was sent to the Inspector in December 2012, to enable her to consider whether the changes made are sufficient to overcome her original concerns. On 14 January, the Inspector confirmed that the Council has made considerable effort to deal with the issues of delivery and monitoring which were her main concerns and is therefore happy for the Local Plan to go forward to consultation and submission.
- 2.4 The Local Plan has been endorsed by the cross-party LDF Steering Group.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1 The Council will need to carry out six weeks of publicity on the proposed amendments (major modifications) to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan to enable stakeholders and interested parties a further opportunity to make representations to the Inspector. Letters will be sent to all interested parties on the LDF Database, including those who have previously made representations on the AAP and an advert will be placed in the local newspaper. The revised Local Plan and details of the proposed modifications will also be placed on the Council's website to enable comments to be made online.
- 3.2 Representations will be invited on the changes (modifications) to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan only. These will be summarised by the Council and forwarded to the Inspector, but will not be responded to by the Council. The Council will also make a series of background evidence documents available for inspection on submission of the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate. This will include a revised Sustainability Appraisal and Changes to the Policies Map. These accompanying documents will be available to view on the Council's website

3.3 After the consultation period the Local Plan will be able to proceed to Examination and we await confirmation of a date for this from the Inspector. Delegated authority is requested from Cabinet to enable LDF Steering Group to make minor amendments to the Local Plan which do affect 'soundness', prior to its adoption.

4.0 Resource Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

4.1.1 There are no financial implications to the Council of this report. The cost of the consultation on the proposed modifications to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan and the Examination in Public will be met from within the existing service budget.

4.2 Human Resource Implications

4.2.1 The consultation will be managed by Council Officers.

4.3 Equalities and Fairness Analysis

4.3.1 This assessment will be carried out after consultation with the community and stakeholders. Any representations can then be taken into consideration prior to the Examination in Public.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Cabinet are requested to give authority to consult on the proposed modifications to the Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan prior to examination by the Planning Inspector. Authority is sought to give delegated authority to LDF Steering Group to make minor modifications to the Local Plan before its publication.

Background Papers:

Eastbourne Town Centre Local Plan Submission Version Final (12 December 2012)
Copies of the Plan (with tracked changes) have been placed in the Members' Room, at the Town Hall Reception and can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/council/meetings/cabinet>

Planning Committee Report 5 February 2013

Planning Committee Report 29 November 2011

Cabinet Report 14 December 2011

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

