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| BODY | CABINET |
| DATE | 11 December 2013 |
| SUBJECT | Employment Land Local Plan |
| REPORT OF | Senior Head of Development |

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| Ward(s) | All |
| Purpose | For Members to approve the Proposed Draft Employment Land Local Plan for consultation with the community and stakeholders. |
| Contact | Matt Hitchen, Specialist Advisor (Planning), 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne Tel no: (01323) 415253 E-mail: matt.hitchen@eastbourne.gov.uk |
| Recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That Cabinet approve the Proposed Draft Employment Land Local Plan for consultation with the community and key stakeholders between December 2013 and March 2014.2. To delegate authority to the Senior Head of Development in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member to make minor amendments before the commencement of the 12 week consultation period. |

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In May 2012, the Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan was subject to Public Examination by a Planning Inspector. The Inspector expressed concerns over the evidence that supported Core Strategy Policy D2: Economy, particularly relating to the employment land supply. In order to address this issue without delaying the adoption of the Core Strategy, the Inspector recommended that Core Strategy Policy D2: Economy be the subject of an early review, leading to its replacement with an additional Local Plan to deal specifically with the employment land supply. This review will be subject to Public Examination and should be adopted by the end of 2014. The Core Strategy was subsequently adopted in February 2013.
- 1.2 In order to meet this requirement, an Employment Land Local Plan (ELLP) is being produced. The ELLP will guide job growth and economic development in Eastbourne up to 2027 as well as identifying an appropriate supply of land for future employment development, in order to achieve a sustainable economy and make Eastbourne a town where people want to live and work. It specifically relates to land and buildings within the B1 (Offices and Light Industry), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) Use Classes.

- 1.3 A Proposed Draft ELLP has been produced and this document should be the subject of public consultation as the next stage in progressing the Local Plan towards adoption by the end of 2014.

2.0 Format of Proposed Draft Employment Land Local Plan

- 2.1 The Proposed Draft ELLP presents the proposed strategy and policies relating to the employment land supply over the Core Strategy plan period up to 2027. It is written with a series of questions to allow consultees to easily comment on the plan during the public consultation period.

- 2.2 The Proposed Draft ELLP also presents the different options that were considered in the formulation of the Plan, and asks consultees to comment on the proposed approach, whether they consider that the correct option has been taken forward, and whether there are any other options that should have been considered in the formulation of the Plan. This is necessary to meet Regulation 18 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and to assist in meeting requirements towards progressing the ELLP towards adoption.

3.0 Key Issues

- 3.1 There is a requirement to provide 43,000 sqm of class B floorspace over the plan period. This amount has been assessed through the Employment Land Review (GVA, 2013), and is based on forecasting projections that assume growth in key sectors in Eastbourne and increased participation rates as economic activity and working age population grows.

- 3.2 The figure of 43,000 sqm is less than the quantum in the Core Strategy. However the study confirmed that there would be no material change in the number of jobs created. The reduction is due to more efficient use of space, particularly in office environments. The study showed that since the last Employment Land Assessment, there has been a reduction of some 30% in floorspace needed for the same number of office employees.

- 3.3 It is important that more jobs are created in more diverse areas to reduce reliance on tourism, and that space be provided for start-up businesses to encourage indigenous business growth.

- 3.4 The ELLP also needs to identify how the requirement will be delivered, and specify the amount of employment floorspace that should be provided in the Town Centre and Sovereign Harbour.

- 3.5 Much of the existing commercial space in the town does not meet occupier standards, which means that employment land is being lost to other uses. The ELLP should provide high quality space that meets business needs and ensure key sites in employment locations are protected.

4.0 Strategy and Policies

- 4.1 The ELLP proposes to deliver the employment land requirement through

the intensification of existing Industrial Estates, and through the development of new employment space in the Sustainable Centres identified in the Core Strategy (Town Centre and Sovereign Harbour). This is established in Policy EL1 – Economy and Employment Land.

- 4.2 Policy EL1 also promotes employment development that provides for small and start-up businesses, encourages development which supports improvements in the local jobs market through the creation of additional jobs and employment diversification (which will provide a link to the Local Employment Technical Guidance Note), and supports the development of clusters and their supply chains.
- 4.3 The ELLP also contains policies specifically relating to the Industrial Estates, the Town Centre and Sovereign Harbour,
- 4.4 The Industrial Estates policy (Policy EL2) promotes the provision of 20,000 sqm of classes B1c (light industrial), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (warehouse and storage) floorspace through the redevelopment of sites within the Industrial Estates. It also protects sites from redevelopment to non-B uses in order to help protect the integrity of the Industrial Estates as business locations.
- 4.5 Policy EL3 (Town Centre) specifies that 3,000 sqm of B1a (office) floorspace should be delivered in the Town Centre, specifically on Development Opportunity Sites 2 and 3, as identified in the Town Centre Local Plan.
- 4.6 Policy EL4 (Sovereign Harbour) specifies that 20,000 sqm of B1a, b and c (office, research and development, and light industrial workshops) floorspace should be developed in Sovereign Harbour. It also states that other employment generating uses (except retail, restaurants and hot-food takeaways) would be acceptable development on any remaining land following the delivery of the 20,000 sqm of B1 floorspace.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 The Proposed Draft ELLP will, if approved by Cabinet, be subject to a 12 week formal consultation between December 2013 and March 2014.
- 5.2 Public consultation will be via a number of the usual methods and will be in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement. Appendix 1 details the proposed Consultation Plan for the document. Comments can be made on any aspect of the Proposed Draft ELLP. Representations can be made electronically via the Council's on-line consultation portal.

6.0 Resource Implications

6.1 Legal Implications

- 6.1.1 The Proposed Draft ELLP has been prepared in order to meet Regulation 18 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

6.2 Financial Implications

6.2.1 There are no financial implications to the Council as a direct result of this report. The cost of the publication and publicity for the ELLP will be met from within the existing service budget.

6.3 Human Resource Implications

6.3.1 Officers in the Customer First team will manage the consultation arrangements for the ELLP, and the collection and processing of representations received.

6.4 Equalities and Fairness Implications

6.4.1 An Equalities and Fairness Impact Assessment was undertaken during the scoping stage in the production of the ELLP, and the assessment demonstrates that the ELLP is unlikely to have any significant impacts on equalities and fairness.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The need to produce an Employment Land Local Plan (ELLP) stems from the examination of the Core Strategy. The ELLP identifies that 43,000 sqm of employment floorspace will be required in Eastbourne up to 2027, and this will be delivered through the intensification of Industrial Estates and new employment development in the Town Centre and at Sovereign Harbour.

7.2 Cabinet is requested to approve the Proposed Draft ELLP for consultation with the community and stakeholders between December 2013 and March 2014.

7.3 It is anticipated that a further report will be submitted to Cabinet in May, outlining the representations received and any amendments necessary to progress the ELLP to Proposed Submission stage.

Background Papers:

- Proposed Draft Employment Land Local Plan (November 2013)
- Employment Land Local Plan Options Report (October 2013)
- Employment Land Local Plan Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (November 2013)

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

Appendix 1 – Consultation Plan

Introduction

This Consultation Plan outlines the consultation schedule of the Proposed Draft Employment Land Local Plan (ELLP) that is being carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The public consultation is being carried out for a 12 week period between 20 December 2013 and 14 March 2014 in order to allow the community and other stakeholders to comment on the ELLP. The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, which was adopted in 2009.

How the consultation will be publicised

Letters

Letters will be sent to all contacts on the Local Plan mailing list, informing them of the consultation on the ELLP. Letters will also be sent to all properties on each of the designated Industrial Estates. A summary leaflet will be included with each letter.

Summary Leaflet

A summary leaflet will be produced that briefly explains the background to the ELLP, why it is being produced and what it contains. It will also direct stakeholders to how they can view and comment on the ELLP. This summary leaflet will be double sided A4, and written in a clear and concise manner. The summary leaflets will be made available at the Council offices and the Library, and will be sent to other stakeholders who may be interested in the ELLP.

External Media

A public notice will be placed in the local newspaper confirming the dates for the consultation. It will also advise where the ELLP can be viewed and how representations can be made. There will also be a press release publicising the ELLP consultation.

Exhibitions and Presentations

A static unmanned exhibition will be put on display in the Library during the consultation period. This will explain the background to the ELLP, why it is being produced, and what it contains. It will also direct viewers on how they can make a representation on the ELLP.

Presentations will be offered to organisations or community groups that may be interested in the ELLP, for example the Chamber of Commerce.

How stakeholders can make representations

Website

A dedicated webpage will be set up for the ELLP at www.eastbourne.gov.uk/ellp with a link to the Council's on-line consultation portal where the public and other stakeholders can view and comment directly on the ELLP.

Letter/email

Representations will also be accepted via letter to Specialist Advisory team, Customer First, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW, or via email to planning.policy@eastbourne.gov.uk.

Stakeholder Event

A stakeholder event will be held in the Town Hall during w/c 27 January 2014. Stakeholders will be invited to the event, which will include a presentation and question & answer session.

Drop-in session

A drop-in session will be arranged during w/c 3 February to allow stakeholders to visit and to talk to Officers who will answer any questions and provide more information if necessary. The drop-in session is yet to be arranged, but should take place in an accessible location close to the Industrial Estates in order to allow local businesses to attend.

Post-consultation

At the end of the 12 week period, all duly-made representations will be considered and any necessary amendments will be suggested and reported to Cabinet in order to progress the ELLP to the Proposed Submission stage.