

**LOCAL PLAN TARGETS & INDICATORS
MONITORING REPORT**

HASTINGS BOROUGH

2003/2004



Summary of Key Points

General

- Of 24 planning appeal decisions received during the year, 18 (75%) were dismissed and 6 (25%) allowed. This compares favourably to the normal national average of around 65-70% dismissed.

Employment Land, Tourism and Shopping

- A combined 7,169 sq.m of new employment floorspace has been approved through planning permissions at Haywood Way, St Leonards Motors (John Macadam Way), and the Media Centre in Robertson Street.
- One new hotel has been granted planning permission this year, involving the change of use of a listed building in Wellington Square. However, planning permissions were granted leading to the loss of former hotel uses at Queens Hotel and Eversfield Place.
- Figures provided from a Town Centre Management survey show a vacancy rate of 6.3% for Hastings town centre, which achieves the target of 6.5% set in the Local Plan. However, the vacancy rate for St Leonards town centre is 14.4%, which is still well above the target of 10% set by the Plan.
- The analysis of planning decisions also showed 15 instances where single retail units in designated shopping centres had converted to other uses. The Hastings Shopping Area Survey 2004 shows that this is primarily in the smaller shopping areas where residential uses usually take their place.

Transport

- A 1km section of the South Coast Cycle route at Barley Lane has been resurfaced and design work is continuing on the sections of the route yet to be implemented. The SRB funded works on the Greenway at Brisco's Walk and Bethune Way have also been completed.
- Three Green Travel Plans have been agreed; two more than were registered last year.

Housing and Community Needs

- Over the 12 months to 31 March 2004, a net total of 220 dwellings were completed in Hastings Borough. This falls short of the average 300 dwellings needed each year to meet the Structure Plan housing target.
- Overall 77% of new housing built during the year to April 2004 was on previously developed ('brownfield') sites. This is well above the Borough target of 60% on brownfield land.
- Only 3 new affordable housing units were completed during the year, representing just over 1% of total housing built, whereas the Community Strategy target is 25%. This reflects the fact that most housing completed

was on sites which fell below the 15 dwellings threshold or which gained planning permission some years ago before the current Local Plan policy was in place. In addition, no RSL funded developments were completed during the year.

- However, progress was made towards the delivery of affordable housing through Section 106 agreements at Queens Hotel and Harrow Lane Caravan Site. Additional S106 agreements were put in place to provide social rented housing at Hollington Park School (Land north of Celandine Drive) and low cost shared ownership units at Hoadswood North/Wychmour.
- Two planning permissions for community uses were granted during the year.

Nature Conservation and Landscape

- Two new Local Nature Reserves, Summerfields Woods and Church Wood & Robsack Wood, have been formally designated during the past year. Work is underway to achieve the formal designation of further Local Nature Reserves at Hastings Country Park/Fairlight Place Farm and Ponds Wood during the next few months.
- A total of 42 planning applications with significant nature conservation impacts were referred to the Borough Ecologist for comments. Of these, 13 were refused wholly or partly due to their adverse impact. Of the remaining applications, 8 were granted subject to planning conditions or planning (Section 106) agreements to protect nature conservation or mitigate/compensate for the impact of development.
- All planning applications for development within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) were refused.

Development Control, Conservation & Design

- Seven new Supplementary Planning Guidance notes (SPGs) have been formally adopted by the Council as interim guidance covering affordable housing, development contributions, historic conservation issues and the provision of children's playspace in new housing developments.
- During the year, 7 planning permissions granted included provision for financial contributions from developers secured through Section 106 agreements.
- A total of 312 applications for planning permission, Conservation Area consent or Listed Building consent were referred to the Council's Conservation and Design team for comments.
- A total of 75 applications for Listed Building consent were received, of which 68 were granted. Of the 68 permissions granted, 61 were made subject to conditions or legal agreements requiring the restoration or protection of the affected Listed building(s), whilst a further 5 were permitted with standard conditions. In only 2 cases were no conditions applied.

Sport & Recreation and Open Space

- There were no planning applications received affecting playing fields or sports pitches during the year.
- There was no designated open space lost to other uses through planning applications during the year.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The recent Government reform of the planning system has placed increased emphasis on monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of planning policies. An initial monitoring report was produced last year covering the year 2002/03. Now that the Hastings Local Plan 2004 has been formally adopted, it is important to continue the monitoring process, and work towards strengthening it as part of the new Local Development Framework.
- 1.2 The Local Plan targets and indicators on which this report has been based were produced as part of the Local Plan Review, and included in Chapter 12 of the adopted Local Plan. They are intended to provide a sound basis for monitoring the implementation of the Local Plan and assessing how well the policies are working. Where relevant, the Plan targets and indicators have been formulated in conjunction with targets and indicators set out in other key strategies produced by the Council and its local partners, in particular the Community Strategy. Relevant national and regional targets have also been taken into account.
- 1.3 This report presents summary monitoring information covering the period from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004. The format of the report is similar to the report produced last year, with the Plan targets and indicators assessed on a chapter by chapter basis. Detailed performance data is presented in a tabular format at the end of the report. Where relevant, this year's monitoring results are compared with those from the 2002/03 report, although it should be recognised that analysis of trends will be more relevant once further annual reports have been produced.
- 1.4 In addition to this report, the Forward Planning section has also produced further more detailed reports on housing, employment land and shopping areas within the Borough. These are listed below.

Housing Development Monitoring Report 2003/04

Provides detailed analysis of housing development and housing land supply in relation to the key housing targets and indicators set out in the Plan.

Employment Land Commitment: Hastings Borough 2003/04

Provides information on site availability and development progress on allocated and other employment land identified in the Plan.

Hastings Shopping Area Survey 1994-2004

Provides comparative information on retail and other uses within the main shopping areas within the Borough.

2.0 General

- 2.1 This category includes two general indicators, which provide a broad overview of how far the Local Plan policies are being applied.
- (i). Planning applications advertised as departures from the Local Plan (i.e applications for development which do not conform with the land use allocations in the Local Plan).
 - (ii). The number of appeals registered and the percentage awarded against the Council (this will be introduced as a Government Best Value Performance Indicator from 2004/05).
- 2.2 Only one departure was permitted, which was an application for alterations to access, parking and extensions at Kings Church on The Ridge, sited outside the built up area. There were two additional applications which would have constituted a departure, of which one was withdrawn, and the other is still awaiting a decision. This is an application for the siting of additional caravans at Shearbarn Caravan Park, where the site is situated within the AONB.
- 2.3 Of 24 planning appeal decisions received during the year, 18 (75%) were dismissed and 6 (25%) allowed. This compares favourably to the normal national average of around 65-70% dismissed.

3.0 Employment

- 3.1 There are two targets for this chapter. The first relates to Policy E2 of the Local Plan and aims to achieve the release of 5 ha of new employment land to serve the town by 2006, and 15 ha by 2011. No additional land has been released to date, but the Hastings and Bexhill Task Force (SeaSpace) is currently working on proposals to bring forward development on Land West of Queensway (Marline Fields site).
- 3.2 The second target, which is taken from the Community Strategy, seeks the provision of 100 new business premises. Although no new purpose-built premises were occupied by 31 March 2004, SeaSpace were developing 11 units as part of the Media Centre development at 17-19 Robertson Street. Of these, 10 units are available for rent by individual businesses, with the other unit to be used as shared space.
- 3.3 Analysis of major planning applications for the year has shown that a combined 7,169 sq.m of new employment floorspace has been approved through planning permissions at Haywood Way, St Leonards Motors (John Macadam Way), and the Media Centre in Robertson Street. In addition, a further 11 planning applications were granted for smaller developments such as extensions and changes of use. Only one planning application granted involved a significant loss of existing employment floorspace, but this was the application by Hastings College to convert the former Seeboard Depot in Parker Road to use as a training facility for the electrical, brickwork and plastering trades.
- 3.4 Further detail on employment land availability is provided in a separate report, Employment Land Commitment: Hastings Borough 2003/2004.

4.0 Tourism

- 4.1 There are two targets relating to this chapter, firstly to develop five new tourist related facilities in the period up to 2011, and secondly, to increase by 10% the number of serviced visitor bed spaces. The latter cannot be measured through the analysis of planning applications, but research has seen that the current figure is at 1050 bed spaces. A further 105 would therefore have to be provided to reach the target of a 10% increase.
- 4.2 One new hotel has been granted planning permission this year, involving the change of use of a listed building in Wellington Square. In addition, there were 3 other applications for smaller developments providing tourist facilities – an extension to Shearbarn Caravan Park, alterations to The Stade, and an extension to Combe Haven. However, planning permissions were also granted leading to the loss of existing hotel uses at Queens Hotel and 30/31 Eversfield Place. In both cases, the hotels in question had been derelict for several years and were no longer considered viable. No permissions were granted involving language schools.

5.0 Shopping

- 5.1 The targets for this chapter relate to shop vacancy rates for the Hastings and St Leonards town centres. The figures quoted here are based on a survey by Town Centre Management. They show a vacancy rate of 6.3% for Hastings town centre, which achieves the target of 6.5% set in the Local Plan. However, the vacancy rate for St Leonards town centre is 14.4%, which is still well above the target of 10% set by the Plan. This highlights the continuing problems of St Leonards as a shopping centre, which have been identified in previous retail surveys.
- 5.2 Detailed analysis of retail and other uses in the main shopping areas within the Borough is provided in a separate report, the Hastings Shopping Area Survey 1994-2004.
- 5.3 In terms of new retail floorspace, the only major new permissions granted during the year were for a 2,024 sq.m extension to Safeway at Queens Road and a 560 sq.m extension to the Lidl supermarket on Bohemia Road.
- 5.4 The analysis of planning decisions also showed 15 instances where single retail units in designated shopping centres had converted to other uses. The Hastings Shopping Area Survey 2004 shows that this is primarily in the smaller shopping areas where residential uses usually take their place.

6.0 Transport

- 6.1 This year has been quite successful in achieving both targets and indicators for sustainable transport related development. A 1km section of the South Coast Cycle route at Barley Lane has been resurfaced and design work is continuing on the sections of the route yet to be implemented. The SRB funded works on the Greenway at Brisco's Walk and Bethune Way have also been completed.
- 6.2 Three Green Travel Plans have also been agreed; two more than were registered last year. These relate to the Hastings College proposals for training facilities at the former Seeboard depot in Parker Road, the industrial development at Haywood Way and the new Health Club at Beauport Park Hotel. In addition, there have also been five instances where cycle facilities have been sought as conditions or legal agreements, including the developments at Safeway and Lidl.
- 6.3 There are two further Local Plan transport targets, which relate to ensuring that new development is accessible to bus routes and assessing compliance with County Council parking standards. These targets are not specifically monitored at the moment, but it is intended to develop monitoring systems to provide this data in the near future.

7.0 Housing

- 7.1 Detailed analysis of the housing targets and indicators is provided in a separate report, Housing Development Monitoring Report 2003/04 (see Appendix C). The main conclusions of the report are summarised below.
- Over the 12 months to 31 March 2004, a net total of 220 dwellings were completed in Hastings Borough. This falls short of the average 300 dwellings needed each year to meet the Structure Plan housing target.
 - The annual completions figure is lower than for the previous two years, although still close to the average for the past decade.
 - A particular feature of the past year's housing completions has been the amount of development on unidentified ('windfall') sites. These accounted for nearly half of the total housing development in the Borough.
 - Overall housebuilding rates in the period since 1991 are currently running at only 75% of the projected Structure Plan housing figures.
 - There is sufficient allocated land to provide for just under 8 years housing development supply when set against Structure Plan housebuilding requirements or around 10.5 years supply based on actual completion rates since 1991.
 - Only 3 new affordable housing units were completed during the year, representing just over 1% of total housing built, whereas the Community Strategy target is 25%. This reflects the fact that most housing completed was on sites which fell below the 15 dwellings threshold or

which gained planning permission some years ago before the current Local Plan policy was in place. In addition, no RSL funded developments were completed during the year.

- On the sites at Queens Hotel and Harrow Lane Caravan Site, where there are outstanding Section 106 agreements for affordable housing, no units were completed during the past monitoring year. However, the social housing units at Queens Hotel and some of those at Harrow Lane Caravan Site will be completed in the forthcoming year 2004/05.
- During the year, the Council has signed a Section 106 agreement as part of the outline permission for the Hollington Park School site (Land north of Celandine Drive) providing that 25% of housing to be developed on the site should be social rented. In addition, an agreement has been signed with the developer at Wychnour/Hoadswood North to provide 23 low cost shared ownership units.

7.2 The Council has now published a Supplementary Planning Guidance note on Affordable Housing and the Council formally adopted this as interim guidance in July 2004. It is intended to take this guidance forward as a Supplementary Planning Document within the LDF when the forthcoming Government proposals to reform the current system of planning obligations are known.

8.0 Community Needs

- 8.1 The first of the two targets for this section relates to the provision of wheelchair adapted housing as part of major housing developments. During the year, no wheelchair adapted dwellings were completed.
- 8.2 With regard to the second target, there have been two planning permissions for community uses within the town, which will provide small, but useful facilities. The first was a temporary application for a new community centre in Bristol Road to replace the existing facility at the Evesham flats while they are being redeveloped. The second is for the siting of two portacabins for community use at Hollington School.

9.0 Nature Conservation

- 9.1 There are two main targets relating to this chapter. The first is to designate five new Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) by 2006. Two of these, Summerfields Woods and Church Wood & Robsack Wood have now been formally designated. Internal consultation is underway which is intended to lead to the designation of Hastings Country Park/Fairlight Place Farm within the coming year. Ponds Wood is also expected to be formally designated as an LNR within the next few months, as part of the implementation of a Section 106 agreement already in place linked to the proposed housing development at Hollington Park School.
- 9.2 The second target is to ensure that all development granted should have no adverse effect in terms of designated nature conservation areas, protected species or habitats, or where this is the case, suitable mitigation or conditions are put in place. During the year, a total of 42 planning applications with significant nature conservation impacts were referred to the Borough Ecologist for comments. Of these, 13 were refused wholly or partly due to

their adverse impact. Of the remaining applications, 8 were granted subject to planning conditions or Section 106 agreements to protect nature conservation or mitigate/compensate for the impact of development. In addition, there was a total of 9 applications where the impact on ancient or preserved woodland was given as a reason for refusal.

10.0 Landscape

- 10.1 The number of planning applications permitted or refused in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a useful measure in the success of Local Plan policies in controlling development in this environmentally important area. Analysis for this year shows that all planning applications for development within the AONB were refused.
- 10.2 In addition, 19 major applications and 33 smaller applications were permitted subject to planning conditions relating to landscape issues. Seven applications were refused partly on landscape grounds.

11.0 Development Guidelines

- 11.1 The targets and indicators for this chapter primarily relate to achieving good standards of development in design and layout terms, in addition to the various indicators aiming to protect amenity. A total of 127 planning applications this year were refused on design and layout grounds, with 65 being refused due to amenity issues such as noise, lighting and pollution. This suggests that these policies are being applied rigorously and proving effective in preventing poor quality development.
- 11.2 The Council remains committed to producing a 'Good Design Guide' and checklist. This document will now be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Sustainable Design and Construction, which will form part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) for Hastings. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) now sets out a timetable for the preparation of the SPD leading to adoption in July 2006.
- 11.3 The Council has now published a Supplementary Planning Guidance note on Development Contributions and the Council formally adopted this as interim guidance in July 2004. It is intended to take this guidance forward as a Supplementary Planning Document within the LDF when the forthcoming Government proposals to reform the current system of planning obligations are known. During the year, 7 planning permissions included provision for financial contributions from developers secured through Section 106 agreements.
- 11.4 The third target for this chapter relates to the provision of children's playspace in new housing developments. The Council has now published a Supplementary Planning Guidance note setting out its approach to securing children's playspace, and this was formally adopted by the Council as interim guidance in July 2004. It will now be taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document within the LDF. During the year, there were 4 planning applications where conditions for the provision of playspace were imposed. In one of these, the Council has received a financial contribution for its implementation.

12.0 Historic Environment

- 12.1 The number of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in Hastings means that a large number of planning applications have impacts on the historic environment. During the year, a total of 312 applications for planning permission, Conservation Area consent or Listed Building consent were referred to the Council's Conservation and Design team for comments. Of these, 15.7% were refused due to their impact on the historic environment, and 75% of applications for demolition in Conservation Areas were also refused permission.
- 12.2 A total of 75 applications for Listed Building consent were received, of which 68 were granted. Of the 68 applications granted permission, 61 were made subject to conditions or legal agreements requiring the restoration or protection of the affected Listed building(s), whilst a further 5 were permitted with standard conditions. In only 2 cases were no conditions applied.
- 12.3 A further application for development was refused permission, as it did not contain enough information to assess whether or not it would have an impact on the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Hastings Castle.

13.0 Sports and Recreation

- 13.1 There were no planning applications affecting playing fields or sports pitches during the year. One application was granted for the improvement of changing rooms at Gibbons Memorial Field.

14.0 Open Space

- 14.1 The target set in the Local Plan relates to access to open space and has been taken directly from the Community Strategy. It is anticipated that the Council will be able to make an effective assessment of this issue following the Open Spaces Audit which is currently in progress.
- 14.2 There was no designated open space lost to other uses through planning applications during the year. Planning permission was granted for the development of facilities for allotment users at Croft Road.