

STRATEGY FOR HASTINGS

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THE STRATEGY FOR HASTINGS

Introduction

3.01 The Local Plan sets out the land use policies and proposals for the town for the next decade. It has to be read in the context of other strategies and policies for the town. As well as strategies for particular topics, such as Transport, Housing, Tourism and Nature Conservation, there are three broadly based strategies from which the Local Plan has developed land use policies.

3.02 In 2003 the Council adopted its first Community Strategy. This overarching document, developed in partnership with many local bodies, brings together all of the strategies for the town and sets out a physical, social, environmental and cultural programme to revive Hastings. The Community Strategy vision is that:-

“by 2013 we want our town’s strong community spirit, culture, young population and extraordinary natural environment to be the foundations of a safer, healthier and more prosperous place with lasting opportunities for everybody”

The Community Strategy identifies the major social, environmental and economic issues facing Hastings in the future and sets 21 key targets for 2005, 2008 and 2013. Not all of the Community Strategy targets relate to land use matters but where possible they have been incorporated into the Local Plan (see Chapter 12 ‘Monitoring’).

3.03 ‘Making Waves : A Regeneration Strategy for Hastings and St Leonards’ was produced under the aegis of the Hastings Regeneration Partnership in 2002. It sets the framework for investment in key economic, environmental and social projects and has been successful in winning financial support for regeneration projects from the Government’s Single Regeneration Budget.

- 3.04 The Borough Council has also formulated a Sustainable Development Strategy in association with other organisations in the town. It provides the basis for a range of projects and initiatives in the town. The Local Plan will contribute to this and it reflects a sustainable approach in its policies and proposals. The principle of sustainability requires us to live within our environmental means. It is not about calling a halt to development but about how development, change and conservation, are handled in an equitable manner. We have to ensure that any development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 3.05 Policies and proposals in this Local Plan will play a major part in future job creation, regeneration and transport development in the town. It will also contribute significantly to community safety through environmental and other improvements and development standards. The Local Plan has been the subject of an extensive public consultation process.

The Local Plan Strategy

3.06 The following general summary of the Local Plan's strategy for land use and transport in the town for the next 10 years is intended to provide an easy reference for Community Planning and other strategy development processes:-

Economic Regeneration – Employment

- Providing more land and premises for employment mainly by redeveloping sites, reusing redundant and under-used buildings and maintaining, improving and extending existing industrial estates.
- Focusing on key areas of the town which need regeneration and a programme of comprehensive redevelopment and conservation – mainly Broomgrove, the Seafront, the town centres of Hastings and St Leonards, Old Town, and West St Leonards.
- Lobbying for development outside the town which is necessary to improve the economy, environment or housing opportunities of the residents and businesses of the Borough.

Economic Regeneration – Town Centres

- Continuing to improve Hastings town centre for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.
- Strengthening other centres by improving the environment and encouraging retailing and other businesses.
- Preventing larger scale retailing outside existing centres.

Social Regeneration – Housing

- Providing for more housing, giving priority to the development of 'brownfield' sites.

- Reducing local housing needs by requiring developments to include affordable housing and by bringing empty homes into occupation.

Physical Regeneration – Environment

- Continuing to protect and enhance the town's built environment, dealing with dereliction and implementing programmes of improvement for historic buildings and spaces.
- Protecting and linking the town's main greenspaces to provide an accessible network of recreation, amenity and nature conservation areas.
- Maintaining strict control over development in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to maintain its amenity for residents and visitors, and to provide a boundary to the town.

Integrated Transport

- Introducing a package of measures to reduce and manage traffic in the town and to provide better facilities for public transport, cycling and pedestrians.
- Encouraging the improvement of the railway stations and their surrounding areas.
- Continuing to lobby for the improvement of the primary road and rail network.

Working with the Community

- Encouraging local people to influence Hastings' future through consultation and participation in projects.
- Bringing investment into the town by working in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors.

The Millennium Community

- 3.07 During Summer 2001, the Borough Council submitted an expression of interest to English Partnerships for a new Millennium Community demonstration project in Hastings, based on the 'String of Pearls' concept. The bid was successful and in 2002 the Government announced a Millennium Community in Hastings. This will make a major contribution to the regeneration of the town.
- 3.08 The concept of the 'String of Pearls' is to promote new sustainable housing development on brownfield sites clustered around existing railway stations at Ore, Hastings and Warrior Square and at possible new stations at West Marina, Bulverhythe and Glyne Gap. The Millennium Community is being taken forward by the Hastings and Bexhill Task Force and will initially concentrate on the Ore Valley, the Hastings Station Yard site and West St Leonards, all of which are allocated for development in the Local Plan. Development at Bulverhythe, where there are flooding and other issues to be resolved, will be considered within the Local Development Framework, which will replace this Plan.

