



Design Proposals and Public Realm Objectives

OVERVIEW

It is important for the design of homes and public spaces reflects the unique character of the town. The Housing and Development Focus Group have prepared a Character Assessment Report (available on request and available for reading at this event). This assessment will provide an important briefing for specialist consultants who have been invited to produce a Design Guide for Seaford which, when agreed, will lay out design guidance which must be followed by planners and developers.

DESIGN PROPOSALS

Proposal 1

In order to respect, maintain and improve the landscape and its relationship with the townscape, we endorse The Sussex Heritage Coast Key Principle 2: Support measures that will conserve and enhance the unique coastal landscape and retain its open character and uninterrupted views.

Proposal 2

That the existing policy framework relating to Design, Form and Setting of Development continues to be given full weight and consideration as part of the planning process, with particular emphasis on enhancing the quality of visual linkages and respecting the original flinty, varied, small scale character of the town and the rich red brick and period detailing. Following stakeholder and public consultation the Focus Group will consider if further policy is needed in relation to this.

Proposal 3

In order to conserve and enhance the Town Centre Conservation Area we support measures to:

- Reduce intrusive signage
- Keep design detailing to the fine character and quality of the area such as flint walls with brick quoins, intricate forms and varied rooflines
- Preserve the gaps which retain glimpses of the sea, Seaford Head and countryside

Proposal 4

To respect Bishopstone's historic character and strong local identity, we support sympathetic design detailing and features which conserve and enhance the Conservation Area.

Proposal 5

To conserve East Blatchington's existing quality and exclusive character, we support measures that reflect the prevailing density, traditional local materials and substantial screening or tree belts.

Proposal 6

To conserve the rural character of the Chyngton Lane Conservation Area, we support measures to maintain the transition or buffer zone between the built-up fringes of Seaford and the South Downs National Park to preserve the panoramic views of the Heritage Coast.

Proposal 7

Encourage evergreen hedging and the creation of a green network linking the town to the South Downs National Park.

Proposal 8

That existing policy framework relating to signage in Seaford continues to be given full weight and consideration as part of the planning process. We support adopting a consistent approach across the town and to take opportunities to reduce street clutter. Following stakeholder and public consultation the Focus Group will consider if further policy is needed in relation to this.

Proposal 9

We support the Built for Life¹ framework.

BUILT FOR LIFE FRAMEWORK

- New housing development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area must be of a high quality. The design and density should seek to reflect and distinguish the attractive characteristics of the town. Proposals must demonstrate how they have taken into account the following where appropriate and subject to viability:

- Connections

Development should integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site. Developers must demonstrate how they have had regard to movement (vehicular, pedestrian and cycle).

- Public transport and bus stops

Good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency and support public transport use. Bus stops should not be located in places where a lack of overlooking might encourage crime.

¹ <http://www.builtforlifehomes.org/>

- Meeting local housing requirements

Development should provide a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements.

- Character

The development should have obvious character, based either on local traditions in building materials and landscaping or locally inspired distinctive character

- Site and context

Development should take advantage of existing topography, landscape features, wildlife habitats, existing buildings and site orientation

- Creating well defined streets and spaces

Buildings should be designed and positioned, with landscaping, to define and enhance streets and spaces.

- Easy for people to find way around

Development should be designed to make it easy for people to find their way around and to recognise distinctive places.

- Streets for all

Streets should be designed in a way that encourages low vehicle speeds and allows the streets to function as social spaces.

- Car parking

Resident and visitor parking should be sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street and located so that it does not make crime easier to get away with. Public car parking should be located where it is accessible and likely to be well used. Car parking must meet minimum standards, as set out by East Sussex County Council. In addition, frontages must not be entirely dedicated to car parking, but should provide for appropriate and significant public and private open space and landscaping, reflective of Seaford's character and countryside and seaside setting.

- Public and private spaces

Public and private spaces should be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe. There should be suitable private outdoor amenity space for new dwellings so passers-by respect the boundaries and residents feel their personal space is protected.

- External storage

There should be adequate external storage space for bins and recycling facilities as well as for cycles.

- Footways and paths

These should always be located in places where homes overlook them so no-one feels at risk when using them, especially after dark.

PUBLIC REALM

What is the Public Realm?

The public realm is the external areas of space around the town where the public can circulate freely, including streets, parks and public spaces.

Why is the Public Realm important?

The state of the public realm impacts on the quality of life of the people living and working in the area. It is what makes an area attractive or unattractive and can encourage or discourage visitors, shoppers, tourists, commerce, employment, crime and inward investment.

Public Realm Objectives

Sense of arrival and Orientation

- Clear and attractive sense of arrival into the town
- Improved gateway experience at Seaford railway station with interpretation of key points of interest and the seafront
- Gateways and key views enhanced and promoted
- Strong, attractive and safe pedestrian links between the town centre and seafront with visual 'cues' of the seafront
- Traffic calming and improved crossing points

Connectivity and Town Character

- Improved public realm at the key entry points to the town centre
- A clearly defined core town centre of two main shopping streets, which are attractive to visitors
- Clearly defined pedestrian, vehicular and cycle movement corridors
- Coherent street furniture pallet, paving materials, tree planting and lighting in the town centre and seafront
- Shop fronts that are sympathetic to and enhance the conservation area
- Connectivity from Seaford railway station and the number 12 bus route to the National Park, National Cycle Route 2 and the South Downs Way

Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest

- A seafront with more local character using durable, distinctive paving and street furniture
- Soften the built up edges of the seafront with planting
- Heritage assets, conservation areas, gateways to the National Park, cycle and walking routes clearly advertised and promoted
- Enhanced recreational spaces and facilities along the seafront



Gateway to the Countryside

- Easily identified access to the National Park
- Promoted and enhanced gateways to the National Park, the South Downs Way, Vanguard Way, Seaford Head, Cuckmere Haven, National Cycle Route 2 and out of town destinations
- Promoted link and interpretation of Tidemills