



## **SUMMARY OF THE SEAFORD PRE-SUBMISSION NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND SUPPORTING REPORTS**

**This document can be taken away for study to gain an overall appreciation of what we are consulting on.**

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**NOTE: This is a non-technical summary. The authoritative statements of our analysis and proposals are in the detailed documents themselves and not in this summary**



*Supported by Seaford Town Council* Seaford Town Council *in conjunction with*



## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **Purpose of this paper**

We are issuing and publishing on our website nearly 300 pages of information for public consultation. In addition, we are making about 150 pages of information available on request. This paper provides a summary of the key issues within this vast volume of words with cross references to relevant parts of the detailed papers so that the reader can quickly understand the issues and proposals and dip into the detailed papers when necessary.

### **Why have a plan?**

Within a Neighbourhood Plan, a Community can decide:

- where new development go;
- what areas should be designated as Local Green Spaces; and
- what infrastructure is needed.

Having a Neighbourhood Plan means Seaford will get will get a greater proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy, which is paid by developers to deliver infrastructure to support new developments

### **Government Policy**

There is a shortage, locally and nationally, of affordable homes. Our young relatives are unable to afford to live in Seaford. The government has set an overall target for the number of homes to be built by 2030. Targets for individual Local Authorities have been cascaded down. In our case Lewes District Council has been given a target of 6,900 homes to be completed by 2,030. Within that target Seaford was given a target of 553 homes by 2,030. However, a number of homes have been built or planning permission has given since the target was set. The residual target for Seaford is 185 homes. If the Neighbourhood Plan does not meet this target then it would not be recognised and the above advantages (paragraph 1) of a Neighbourhood Plan would not be available to Seaford.

### **Work done so far**

The Seaford Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) has been compiled over the last 18 months. In essence, the SNP Steering Group has overseen volunteers working, in Focus Groups (Environment and Countryside; Economy and Facilities; Transport and Housing) who have collected a lot of statistical information and sought the views of residents and local groups. The Focus Groups have produced a number of Evidence Reports and Working Papers (see <http://www.seafordnp.uk>) which culminated in recommendations for new planning policies

## Our Vision

### By 2030:

- Seaford will have retained its strong sense of community, made greater use of its seafront and heritage assets as well as promoting sympathetic development respecting the tranquil character of its historic nature to improve the economic, environment and social wellbeing of residents and visitors alike.
- Seaford's location as a gateway to the South Downs National Park with its green open spaces, seafront and spectacular views will have been retained, protected, enhanced and promoted, to benefit future generations. An improved transport infrastructure will have made the seafront, town centre, railway stations and outlying areas of the town readily accessible for all.
- Expanding the rich and diverse mix of independent shops, light industrial services, businesses, community and tourist facilities, while simultaneously addressing the shortfall in visitor accommodation, will have widened the town's economic base.

## 2. DOCUMENTS WE ARE NOW PUBLISHING FOR CONSULTATION

We are publishing three main documents;

- A **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**. This is a technical document which is central to how the SEAFORD Neighbourhood Plan has been developed.
- The **Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan (SNP)**, which recommends 18 New Planning Policies (including nine sites identified for development: and 11 sites for designation as Local Green Spaces (LGS) and hence where development can not take place) In addition, the SNP identifies 9 Community Aspirations which the Focus Groups have identified as worthwhile enhancements to the town.
- **The Environment and Countryside Focus Group's Revised Evidence Report on Local Green Spaces (LGS Report)** which analyses sites against the defined LGS criteria.

These documents are available from Seaford Town Council (via the Tourist Information Office in Church Street and from the Library in Sutton Park Road). The documents are on the Neighbourhood Plan website (<http://www.seafordnp.uk>).

The following supplementary reports are available on request:

- Housing and Development Group's working Paper
- Statement on Seaford's Local Landscape Character and Views
- Housing and development Focus Group's Character Assessment

### 3. WHAT HAS THE EVIDENCE TOLD US?

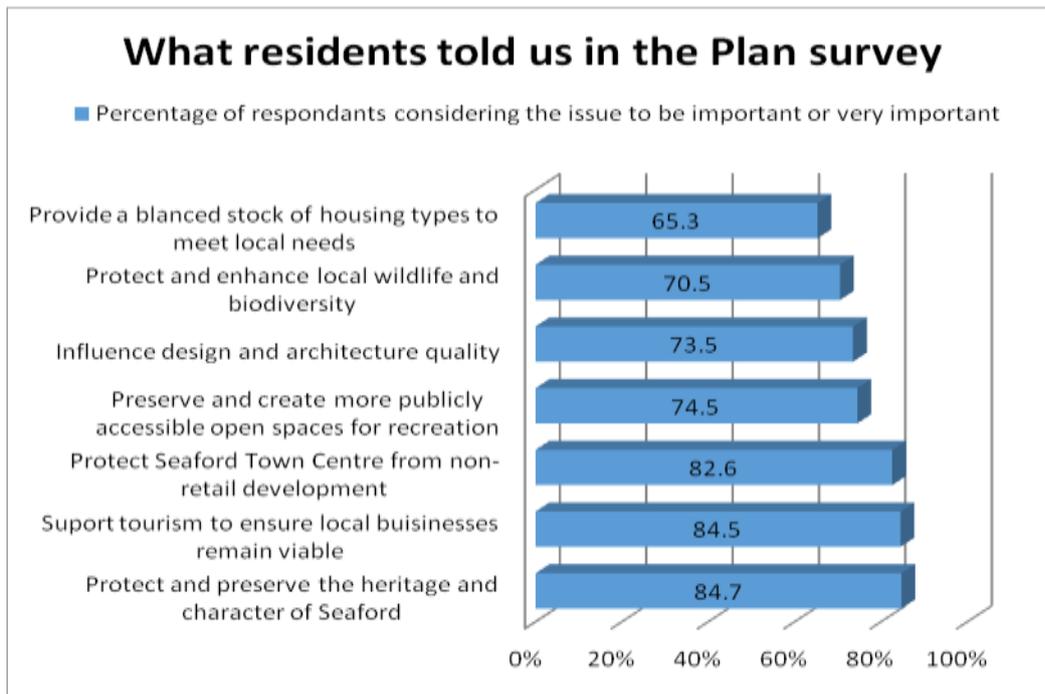
#### Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Statistics

Section 5 of the SA gives a Parish Profile, which includes various statistics on social, environmental and economic factors, including:

- **Demographics** which shows that in 2011 30% of the population in Seaford was aged 65 and over, compared with 16% over 65s in England as a whole. By 2,030, unless action is taken to attract more young people to the town, the percentage over 65s will be much higher.
- **Environmentally sensitive areas.** The town is surrounded by the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and contains a Local Nature Reserve, (Seaford Head), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI) and other sensitive areas (see Map 2 on page 16 of the SA).
- **Heritage Coast.** Part of Seaford Parish is within this area (see Map 3 on Page 17 of the SA)
- **Heritage Sites** including Listed Buildings in the town
- **Risk of Flooding** from the sea and from heavy rain exceeding the capacity to cope without flooding
- **Assessment of recreation space.** The NP Steering Group conducted a study which confirmed that Seaford has a deficit of recreation space equivalent to about 80% of the space occupied by The Salts Recreation Ground. There is a particular deficit on recreation space for outdoor sports including pitches, courts and bowling greens. There is also an unequal distribution of such spaces within the town with areas to the North being particularly poorly provided for.

#### Key findings of the SNP Survey (see SA paragraph 6.4)

The survey received 1100 responses (10.2%). Some of the key issues are summarised in the Table below. Contrary to popular belief, 84.5% of respondents thought that support for tourism to ensure local businesses remain viable was important or very important. This almost equalled the highest percentage of support (that is, 84.7 %) which was to protect and preserve the heritage and character of Seaford.



#### **4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS KEY (see SA Section 2 and Section 7)**

Sustainable development is the cornerstone of the government's policy on development and therefore Neighbourhood Plans must demonstrate how Sustainable Development will be achieved. The Sustainability Appraisal therefore includes the identification of Sustainability Objectives for Seaford which cover:

- 1. Delivering high quality and affordable homes on brown field land, in the first instance.**
- 2. Sustainable Travel**
- 3. Community infrastructure**
- 4. Green infrastructure**
- 5. Heritage assets**
- 6. Conserving and enhancing the countryside within the setting of the SDNP**
- 7. Risk of flooding**
- 8. Biodiversity**
- 9. High quality design and impact on climate change.**
- 10. Employment, local businesses and encouraging tourism**

A number of questions and indicators were developed to assess sites and policies as to whether they would achieve sustainable development. Taking the Housing Objective as an example, relevant questions and indicators to ask for a particular site would be:

| Objective  | Questions   | Indicators  | SEA/SA Topic <sup>1</sup>               |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>SOCIAL</b>  |   |   |   |
| <p><b>1. Housing</b></p> <p>To deliver, in the first instance on brownfield sites, high quality new open market and affordable homes that meet the needs of the whole community both now and in the future</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the SNP support the number of homes required by LDC in the Parish?</li> <li>2. Does it help meet affordable housing needs?</li> <li>3. Does it encourage the use of brownfield land in the first instance, and land efficiency?</li> <li>4. Do the allocated sites respect the Parish's setting within the National Park?</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new homes completed;</li> <li>• Number of affordable dwellings completed;</li> <li>• Hectares of brownfield land redeveloped for housing;</li> <li>• Number of people on the housing register.</li> <li>• Percentage of new homes within the existing built up area boundary.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Housing/Health /Community</b></p> |

The Sustainability Appraisal Para 7.2 gives a full list of questions and indicators

In total 306 sites were included by the NP Team in an initial list of possible sites for development, These were reduced to a shorter list of 60 sites (see SA paragraph 8.9 for the reasons some sites were rejected). Much detailed information was collected for the 60 sites (see SA Para 8.10 for details). Independent Specialist Consultants (Action in Rural Sussex), assisted by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, undertook the Assessment of policies and sites (see SA Appendix C) against the Sustainability Objectives.

The key point to appreciate is that the Steering Group and Focus Group in scrutinising the work of the Consultants did not use opinions, likes or dislikes but followed the analysis of whether the Sustainability Objectives would be achieved by a particular policy or on a specific site.

## **5. PROPOSED POLICIES** (see NP Summary and Section 6)

The SNP explains the legislative requirements, and draws on the Vision (quoted above) and the objectives of the NP before arguing the case for the following **18 New Policies**:

### **(i) SEA1 Landscape, Seascape and Townscape Character of Seaford**

New development within the SNP Area will conserve and enhance the landscape, seascape and townscape character of Seaford. In particular, subject to other relevant development plan policies, development will be permitted provided that it conserves and enhances:

- a) the landscape setting of Seaford, including meeting the purposes of the SDNP and protecting the character of the Heritage Coast;
- b) the key views as identified in the Statement on Seaford Local Landscape Character and Views Report (available on request)
- c) tranquillity and dark night skies;
- d) the natural, locally distinctive and heritage landscape qualities and characteristics of Seaford including trees and hedgerows, particularly in areas which are currently deficient in such natural assets;
- e) features of biodiversity, geological and heritage interest, including appropriate management of those features; and
- f) the River Cuckmere, its margins and associated wetlands, preventing development which would adversely affect its quiet and natural character or have a direct or indirect effect on its wildlife and geological features.

### **(ii) SEA2 Design**

Subject to other relevant development plan policies, development will be permitted provided that its design, form and detail is of a high quality to reflect and distinguish the attractive and unique landscape, seascape and townscape character of Seaford and it incorporates best practice in sustainable design. Development must comply with the twelve design principles set out below (see Housing and Development Focus Group's Character Assessment available on request):

1. High Quality
2. Connections
3. Public transport
4. Character
5. Site and context
6. Creating well defined streets and spaces
7. Easy for people to find their way around
8. Streets for all
9. Car parking
10. Public and private spaces
11. External storage
12. Footways and paths.

### **(iii) There are also other policies** on Conservation Areas, Areas of Established Character (SEA 3-5)

#### **(iv) SEA 6 Development on the Seafront**

Subject to other relevant development plan policies, sensitive development around Seaford Seafront will be permitted provided that:

- a) It does not detract from the natural, open, un-commercialised environment of the Seafront;
- b) It does not impact on the spatial or visual openness or attractiveness of the Seafront and its vistas;
- c) It enhances and preserves the biodiversity and amenity use of the Seafront; and
- d) Opportunities are taken to enhance the public realm of the Seafront and improve walking and cycling facilities as part of the development.

#### **(v) SEA 7 Recreational Facilities**

Subject to other relevant development plan policies, development will be permitted provided that it does not result in a loss of recreational facilities, particularly the outdoor sports facilities at the following locations:

- School Playing Fields
- Downs Leisure Centre and grounds
- The Salts Recreation Ground
- Blatchington Bowls Club
- Seaford Tennis Club
- Walmer Road Recreation Ground

Where contributions from new development towards recreational space are required by other development plan policies, or collected via the CIL, priority will be given to the provision of formal outdoor sports facilities to reflect the current deficit in Seaford.

**(vi) SEA 8 Local Green Spaces (LGS):** see below for Environment and Countryside Focus Group's Revised Evidence Report on LGS

**(vii) Other policies** cover Allotments, Health Facilities, new business space, visitor accommodation, Church Lane footpath, Seaford Planning boundary, windfall development/brown field site (**SEA 10-14** and **SEA 17-18**)

**(viii) SEA15 Site Allocations** (see paragraphs 6.59 and 6.60 in NP)

The following sites are allocated for development subject to other relevant development plan policies and meeting the Sustainability Objectives

- i. Dane Valley Project Area – 131 dwellings (net addition of 100) and employment space- see SEA 16 below
- ii. Jermyn Ford, 10 Claremont Road – 20 dwellings
- iii. 10 Homefield Place – 19 dwellings
- iv. Brooklyn Hyundai, Claremont Road – 13 dwellings
- v. Holmes Lodge, 72 Claremont Road – 12 dwellings
- vi. Station Approach/Dane Road – 12 dwellings above existing retail space
- vii. Seven Sisters pub, Alfriston Road – 9 dwellings
- viii. Old House Depository, Claremont Road- 35 homes
- ix. Elmcourt, Blatchington Road 9 homes

A total of 229 homes.

**(ix) SEA16 Dane Valley Project:** (see paragraphs 6.61- 6.62 in NP)

Development of the Dane Valley Project sites shall be carried out in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan to ensure that the following requirements are met:

- a. The delivery of about 131 dwellings;
- b. The delivery of replacement employment space for that lost on the site;
- c. High quality development that incorporates best practice in sustainable design;
- d. Measures to manage the potential for flooding on the site and prevent increased risk of flooding off-site;
- e. Measures to investigate and remove any contaminated material from the site;
- f. The provision of open space to provide amenities for the new residents and to protect areas of biodiversity and archaeological interest; and
- g. Enhanced transport provision to encourage new and existing residents to access the town centre and railway station by foot, cycle and bus.

There are major challenges in developing this site due to contamination, drainage, archaeological issues, multiple ownership and access. Specialist consultants, funded by central government are assisting with the development of this site and their positive report is expected shortly.

## 6. PROPOSED COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

A number of community aspirations have been identified by the Focus groups as areas where, in addition to the new Planning Policies listed above, useful improvements could be made in the town.

### (i) Community Aspiration 1

It is recommended that:

- Consideration is given to improving **signage and access** from the A259 to the Town and Seafront and from the Seafront to the Town as well as rationalising signage elsewhere.
- **Enhancing the town centre**, such as, with new light standards, Victorian shop front scheme, cobbled lanes, etc.
- Wherever possible, any **disturbance to wildlife and natural vegetation should be avoided**;
- There should be **better maintenance** of the paths and walls along the **Seafront**, as well as sensitive enhancement of the man-made features, such as benches, toilets, sea defence groynes and shelters;
- **Lighting** should be reviewed to ensure it as effective as possible, and at the same time reducing wherever possible any light pollution;
- The “**free parking**” **policy**, for cars and motor cycles, on the Seafront, with a dedicated coach bay (with drop off point in the town centre) should be retained;
- Seaford Town Council and the South Downs National Park Authority should continue to work closely together to deliver a joint approach to better signage to the National Park from the Town, and possibly associated tree planting and landscaping if **deemed** appropriate;
- Impact Seaford should investigate the level of **accommodation for visitors** to the town and consider the options for sites for such accommodation.

### (ii) Other proposals cover:

- Heritage assets
- Grass verges and trees
- Flood prevention

- Infrastructure( including health care)
- Services for the young
- Policing
- Recycling
- Suggestions on improving sustainable transport

## **7. REVISED EVIDENCE REPORT ON LOCAL GREEN SPACES (LGS)**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

Paragraph 76 States that '*Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green area of particular importance to the. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.*' The Local Green Spaces Report (Sections 2 and 3) give full details of the requirements and the approach used by the Group to identify sites that meet the criteria in Paragraph 77 of the NPPF which states that '*The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:*

- *Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- *Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular significance for example, because of its:*
  - *beauty,*
  - *historic significance,*
  - *recreational value (including as a playing field),*
  - *tranquillity or*
  - *richness of its wildlife, and*
- *Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.'*

### **The Environment and Countryside Focus Group's approach**

The Group:

- Identified an initial list of 66 open spaces in the town. Of these 22 seemed to have LGS potential.
- Undertook a more detailed assessment of these 22 sites, including site visits, because it was thought they might meet the above LGS criteria
- Of these 22, 8 sites were initially identified (in November 2016) as meeting the above LGS criteria.
- Following a review in August October a further 3 sites were identified.

This work has led to the following policy on LGS being proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan:

## **SEA 8 Local Green Spaces**

The NP designates the following 11 locations as Local Green Spaces

1. Blatchington Pond
2. Normansal Park/Chalvington Fields not in the National Park
3. Chyngton Way Field
4. The Crouch
5. Foster Close Open Space
6. The Ridings (Lexden Road)
7. Princess Drive Village Green and old Grand Avenue Bridleway
8. The Old Brickfields and site adj to Surrey Road
9. Tidemills
10. Bishopstone Village Green
11. Alfriston Road (4 sites)

## **8. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

We are required to follow the following process;

- When consultation on this Draft of the SNP is completed on 20<sup>th</sup> December, representation will be considered and any necessary further amendments will be made
- The SNP and required documents will be submitted to Lewes District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority Regulation 15
- Lewes District Council and SDNPA will arrange for further consultation (Regulation 16 Consultation).
- The plan will then be examined by an Independent Examiner.
- If all these hurdles are overcome then the Plan will be put to a local referendum in Autumn 2018 and then, if a majority of those voting agree, the SNP will be Adopted in the Winter of 2018/19. Note: These dates are dependent upon a relatively speedy Independent Examination and hence are therefore subject to delay.
- The SNP will then be used to determine planning applications and to guide future development of Seaford.

## 9. TELL US YOUR VIEWS

We have already undertaken much consultation as our work has progressed but we are anxious to know your views on our proposals summarised in this paper and laid out in full in the various reports described herein. Please:

- If you wish to read the documents, they are available to be viewed at :
  - the Tourist Information Centre, 37 Church Street, or
  - Seaford Library 15-17 Sutton Park Road, or
  - on the Neighbourhood Plan Website [www.seafordnp.uk](http://www.seafordnp.uk)
  
- Attend the drop in consultation events at
  - the Clinton Centre, Clinton Place, Seaford on:
    - Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 4pm-8pm
    - Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2pm-5pm
  - Bishopstone Church Hall (see our website for details).
  
- **Complete the Consultation Response Form** (available with this paper and on line)