

TALL BUILDING GUIDANCE SPD

November 2013



Worthing Borough Council



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Representatives of KAC also helped to facilitate two workshops that were held to consider tall buildings in Worthing. Officers, elected Members and other bodies such as English Heritage and the South Downs National Park Authority were invited to these sessions and many of the outcomes have helped to inform the drafting of this document.

The SPD was published in draft form for consultation in the summer of 2013. A statement of consultation is available to view on the Council's website. The Council thank those who made representations.

Part 1 – Introduction to Tall Buildings

Tall buildings can have a significant impact on the local environment in many ways. For this reason, in recent years a number of towns and cities within Britain have prepared guidance in relation to tall buildings and this is actively encouraged by English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). For Worthing, applications for higher buildings have not been considered within the context of a strategic borough-wide approach. The aim of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is therefore to provide clear and consistent guidance on the design and location of tall buildings in Worthing.

The relatively compact form of the Borough and the constrained nature of the surrounding areas means that pressure to ‘build upwards’ is likely to continue and this document will help to address this by leading taller buildings to the most appropriate sites and setting out the criteria by which the quality of developments will be assessed and controlled.

The guidance will ensure that the Council is equipped with the right tools to consider proposals for tall buildings and ensure the suitability and sustainability of their location as well as the quality of the design and construction. It will reduce the scope for inappropriate and speculative applications and will help to protect the historic environment and the qualities that make the town special. It will also help to encourage the building of high quality tall buildings in the right locations to ensure that Worthing can benefit from the positive impacts that they can have on an area, particularly with regards to regeneration.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The first sections of this document provide the background and policy context for this guidance. The latter sections are split into two key parts which, when combined, will form the criteria against which proposals for tall buildings will be assessed. These are ‘locational criteria’, which help to identify locations where tall buildings may or may not be appropriate and ‘design criteria’, which provide key design principles and guidelines that tall buildings will need to consider.

Key statements are highlighted in grey boxes. The Council will expect each of these to be addressed as proposals for tall buildings come forward.

Background

Tall buildings provide one of a number of solutions to contemporary development pressures. Proposals for tall buildings therefore need to be tested to ensure that they are the most appropriate form of development and that they are providing the maximum benefits.

Although tall buildings can often polarise opinion, they are enjoying something of a resurgence. Not only has there been an abundance of schemes in London, there has also been a number of tall buildings recently developed in provincial towns. In general, these more recent buildings have been exemplars of quality and have provided high standards of living and working accommodation to meet modern lifestyles. In some cases they have also been an effective catalyst for regeneration.

However, tall buildings by their nature can be assertive and dominant due to their visibility and for this reason design and architectural quality is of paramount importance. There have been many earlier examples of poor quality higher buildings, that have not been wholly successful. Therefore, it is equally important to thoroughly test the potential impacts of proposals.

This section reviews: what a tall building is; types of tall buildings; the role that tall buildings can play; and market demand.

What is a Tall Building?

There is no clear-cut definition of what a tall building is, as any interpretation could be regarded as relative. For instance, a five-storey building might be a tall building in a predominantly two-storey suburban area, but of a common height within Worthing town centre. Furthermore, tall buildings do not only consist of landmark buildings and skyscrapers. Even a relatively low building could be considered 'tall' if it is located on elevated ground, breaks the established skyline, or impinges upon an established backdrop. Thus, tall buildings must be considered in relation to their local context.

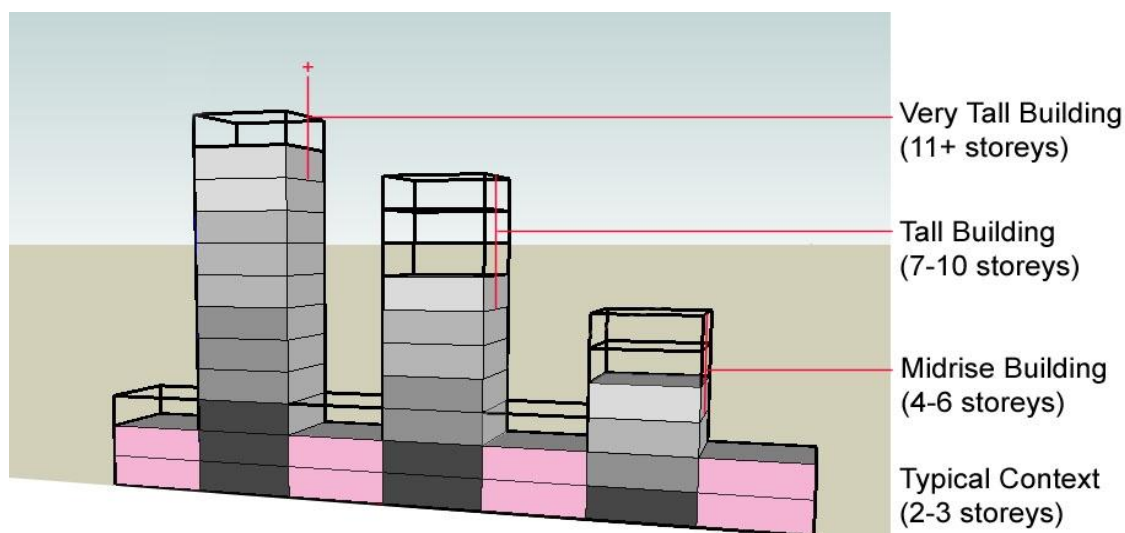
With context in mind, some authorities define tall buildings as those that are two to three storeys higher than their neighbours. However, for the purposes of this guidance, it is considered that the most appropriate definition for Worthing is the one used by CABI and English Heritage in their Guidance on Tall Buildings 2007 (below). This definition allows for the fact that areas of different character within the borough have different sensitivities:

“Tall buildings are those that are substantially taller than their neighbours and / or which significantly change the skyline.”

The local context is the key consideration when determining whether a building will be defined as ‘tall’. For the purposes of the design guidance set out in this document, it is considered that buildings below 12 metres in height (usually 4 storeys) would not usually be considered to be ‘tall’. Despite this, it should be noted that such proposals would still be subject to the usual planning considerations.

To assist in articulating the wide variety of scales associated with tall buildings in Worthing, three categories are used for the purposes of this study. Later sections of this document will clarify how these definitions will be applied to the assessment and locational criteria.

Figure 1. Defining Tall Buildings



Types of Tall Building

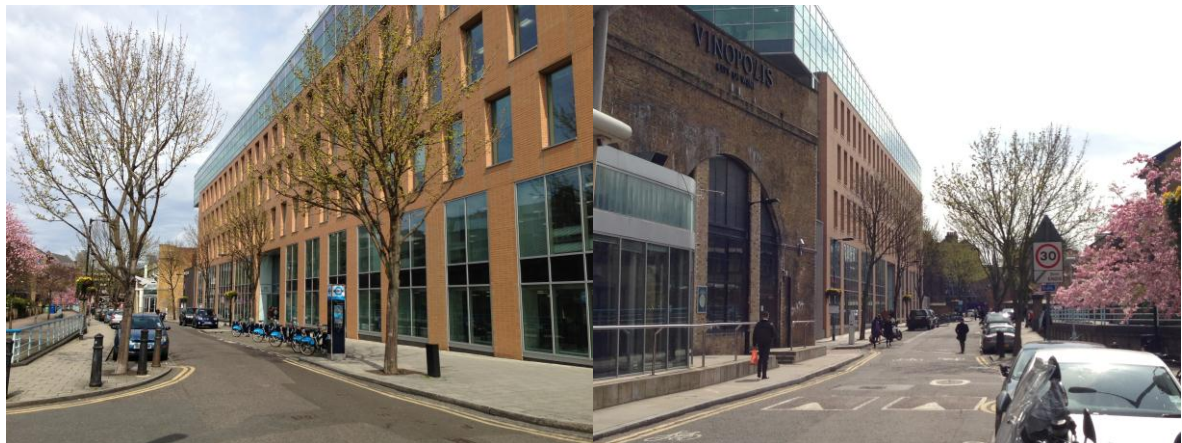
Tall buildings vary widely in form, function and their effect on the wider area and as such, different types of tall buildings respond better in different areas. To better understand the issues relating to the design and location of higher buildings, three common types are identified: townscape buildings; towers (landmark) buildings; and slab blocks. These typologies are discussed below and consideration is given in relation to Worthing later in this document. Not all high buildings will fit into the categories identified as some may combine different forms. The architectural assessment of the building will in some respects depend on the type of tall building proposed but all proposals will need to consider how its design principles relate to the context of Worthing as a whole.

Designers of tall buildings in Worthing should be clear about the character and role of their proposals and how these will fit into the wider urban context.

Townscape Buildings

These are often linear buildings arranged to form streets, squares and crescents. They are most successful when they help to define the character of a street, rather than standing out from it. They are generally only slightly higher than their context and, in this sense they often have less impact beyond their immediate vicinity (as they form areas of traditional townscape, albeit at an expanded scale). Townscape buildings can help to create new streets and squares, support a greater mix of uses and services and add to the vitality, interest and viability of an area. However, townscape buildings can be both long and bulky and can as a result have a considerable impact on the townscape, in limiting connectivity or negatively effecting levels of sunlight and daylight to surrounding properties. As such, they need to be inserted into streetscapes in a sensitive way if they are not to be perceived as isolated slab blocks. Townscape buildings work best where they are connected to the streets or spaces they line through complimentary uses and frequent access and openings. These qualities help to distinguish from slab blocks, which are less connected to their context.

Figure 2. Townscape Building, London Bridge



Tower Buildings

Tower (landmark) buildings are generally buildings that are tall and thin with a slender profile, and contrast substantially in height from the majority of buildings within the surrounding area. By their very nature, they are designed to stand out and make an impact. In the right location landmark tower buildings can: make the best use of tight sites; add interest and drama to the skyline; have a positive impact on long range views; create a 'location'; provide a focus for regeneration; help with way finding; and create vitality and interest. However, the visual impact and prominence of a landmark tower will be felt over a wider area than that of a townscape building and because of this, they are usually a difficult type of higher building to design and integrate sensitively into the landscape.

Towers can be grouped in clusters to create a more defined impact on the overall skyline, which would be lost should the same buildings be dotted randomly throughout the area. As such, their setting needs particularly careful attention and consideration, given the role that they play in the town. These clusters can provide for high densities and can mark out the urban centres.

Particular care needs to be taken in how towers address the ground (design, access and uses). Towers can be particularly appropriate on town centre sites where their density and prominence can act to enhance the vitality and wellbeing of the town.

Figure 3. Tower Buildings



a. Canary Wharf

b. Canary Wharf

c. Medway

Slab Blocks

Unlike towers, slab block buildings are more significantly broad in one direction (image 4a) and although they can take on many forms they are typically less often aligned along streets. They are usually significantly taller than surrounding buildings (image 4b) and are extremely prominent as a result. Their bulk means that they often have a less successful relationship to their context and street edge and often block rather than define views. The distinction between townscape blocks and slab blocks may at times be slight, but it is the lack of integration with the surrounding streetscape and visual dominance that marks out slab blocks. However, they are more likely to conform to their surroundings compared with the 'towers' which are designed to make more of an impact. They do not define space, but rather occupy it (image 4c). They tend to fail to provide enclosure to streets or spaces which results in poorly defined public realm.

Figure 4. Slab Block Buildings¹



a. Slab blocks are more significantly broad in one direction



b. They are usually significantly taller than surrounding buildings



c. They do not define space, but rather occupy it

Different forms of tall buildings will have different impacts and positive / negative connotations for a given site. Consideration of the most appropriate form of development should be explored at the options development stage.

¹ Figure 4b. Source: <http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/134896>; Figure 4c. Source: <http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/26517>



Figure 5. Slab Building

The Role of Tall Buildings

In the right place tall buildings can make positive contributions to urban life in a way that can also create a distinctive skyline. They can be excellent works of architecture in their own right. Individually, or in groups, they affect the image and identity of a town or city as a whole. In the right place, they can also add to the vitality of an area and serve as beacons of regeneration helping to stimulate further investment and support new public spaces. They also make efficient use of land and can deliver a mix of uses and provide landmarks and gateways. The design and construction of innovative tall buildings can also serve to extend the frontiers of building technology.



Tall buildings should be sited and designed in order to maximise their potential to add vitality to the area and contribute towards meeting regeneration objectives.

Figure 6. A landmark tall building – No.1 Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth. The redevelopment of this area has helped to add vitality to the Harbour.

However, by virtue of their size and prominence, such buildings can also dominate and harm the qualities that people value about a place. In the wrong place they can cause issues of overlooking and overshadowing and they can reduce permeability and connectivity. Tall buildings can also suffer from a lack of flexibility brought about by limited variety of floor-space configurations. In many cases one of the principal failings of the past has been that many tall buildings have been sited in inappropriate locations and designed with a lack of appreciation or understanding of the context in which they were to sit. There are many examples of tall buildings that were unsuitably sited, poorly designed and detailed, badly built or incompetently managed. These have often been accompanied by uninviting public realm that resulted in a perceived fear of crime.

While tall buildings can be liked or reviled from afar, it is in their own neighbourhoods that their effects are most acutely felt. Their height can cause strong winds at their base, can cast long shadows and, when grouped together, can create unintended noise impacts.

It is necessary to not only ensure that tall buildings are located strategically in the right place (which promotes their sustainability) but also to ensure that their impacts at the local level are positive and appropriate.

It is important to note that whilst it is vital that tall buildings need to ‘work’ for the ‘observer’ in terms of its design and location, it is equally important that the building ‘works’ successfully for the occupier.

It is vital that tall buildings are appropriate for current and future occupiers as well as their context.

Although, there are many examples of previous tall buildings that have failed, it is widely acknowledged that there is nothing intrinsically flawed with the idea of high-rise living and working. Sustainability, good maintenance, careful management and a sense of ownership can make tall buildings attractive and ensure that they make a positive contribution to the townscape. It should be noted that tall buildings can fail if one (or a combination of a number) of the potential negative attributes prevailed (e.g. poor design, inappropriate siting, bad management etc.). If these negatives were removed it was generally agreed that in the right place, well designed tall buildings could make a positive contribution to urban life and act as a catalyst for regeneration. A simple key test for all proposals in Worthing will be to ensure that the positive benefits of any new building far outweigh any potential negatives.

Market Demand

It should be noted that tall buildings are not always cost effective to construct and, in general, their delivery is directly linked to a buoyant property market, a stable economy and market demands specific to their location. These factors, combined, create the climate of confidence necessary to invest in building tall. Worthing adds to this equation with its constrained setting and projected housing needs, which are factors that fuel demand and place great pressure on development sites within the Borough to maximise urban capacity.

Prevailing market conditions for both the office and residential development sectors are, either singularly or combined, likely to drive any demand for tall buildings in Worthing. Recent assessment has indicated that in many circumstances and locations the construction of tall buildings in Worthing would not be viable under current market conditions². However, studies also conclude that some tall buildings may be viable and that this was largely related to their location (often seafront settings). This is supported by the level of interest in tall buildings in Worthing, which demonstrates a fairly strong demand currently and changes in macroeconomic conditions may further increase this demand in the future. Despite this, it will be vital that, at an early stage of development, promoters of tall buildings fully assess the market demand for their proposal.

Tall buildings can be demanding in terms of development cost and in execution. They will need to be designed and constructed to the highest standard which has implications in terms of the economics of development. This should be taken into account before tall buildings are promoted.

Delivery of tall buildings is also influenced by prevailing planning policies at the national and local level. Very restrictive policies relating to building heights would clearly act as a firm deterrent for tall buildings. Similarly, policy and guidance (such as this document) can also act as a means to encourage the delivery of taller buildings provided that they are located in the right places and designed to a high standard. However, it should be noted that the promotion of tall buildings can lead to unrealistic demands from a site as a result of the 'hope value' placed on building tall which may increase the price paid for the available land. In these instances there is a risk that the applicant may put pressure on the Council to relax tall building guidance in order to facilitate regeneration. Although the ability for a development to assist in the



Figure 7. A cluster of tall buildings to the rear of Brighton Station on Stroudley Road, which have contributed positively to the regeneration of this area.

² Worthing Borough Council – Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Assessment – Dec 2012

delivery of regeneration is an important consideration this, in isolation, should not outweigh other elements of this guidance.

Worthing Context

This section includes a review of existing tall buildings and a summary of where new tall buildings may be proposed within the town. Subsequent sections of this document then expand on this initial review by providing the urban and environmental analysis and the locational and design criteria that will apply to any scheme proposed.

There has historically not been a formal device for assessing the location of tall buildings in Worthing. In lieu of a clear framework, proposals for tall buildings have been considered on a case by case basis which has led to a somewhat piecemeal form of development that we see today. Not all tall buildings in Worthing are as successful as others.

Existing Tall Buildings

Worthing has a number of existing tall buildings and structures, but their location and distribution is not widespread. As can be seen on the plans below, the majority of tall buildings are found in the town centre and on, or near to, the seafront. There are some existing areas within the centre of Worthing where relatively high townscape buildings exist. However, by seeking a more sustainable urban form of development that will contribute vitality and life to their surroundings, it is recognised that certain regeneration areas may benefit from an overall increase in the height.

Currently, the tallest building within the town is Manor Lea which is a 13 storey block of flats, set back from the seafront and just to the west of the town centre. Along the seafront to the south of Manor Lea are a number of residential blocks, generally ranging between 7 and 9 storeys. Under the definitions set out within this document Manor Lea would be considered to be a 'very tall building' whilst the others would be referred to as 'tall buildings'.

There are office blocks in areas outside of the town centre that have incorporated tall buildings. In particular, the area adjacent to Durrington Station is characterised by large commercial properties and there are other examples of fairly high buildings such as Columbia House and Centenary House.

The plans and aerial photographs below help to illustrate the locations of tall buildings within the Borough. A short case study is also provided for a selection of these buildings that assesses their quality. This assessment uses parts of the assessment criteria included in this document which will now be used to help determine proposals for tall buildings.

Figure 8. Key Existing Tall Buildings in Worthing

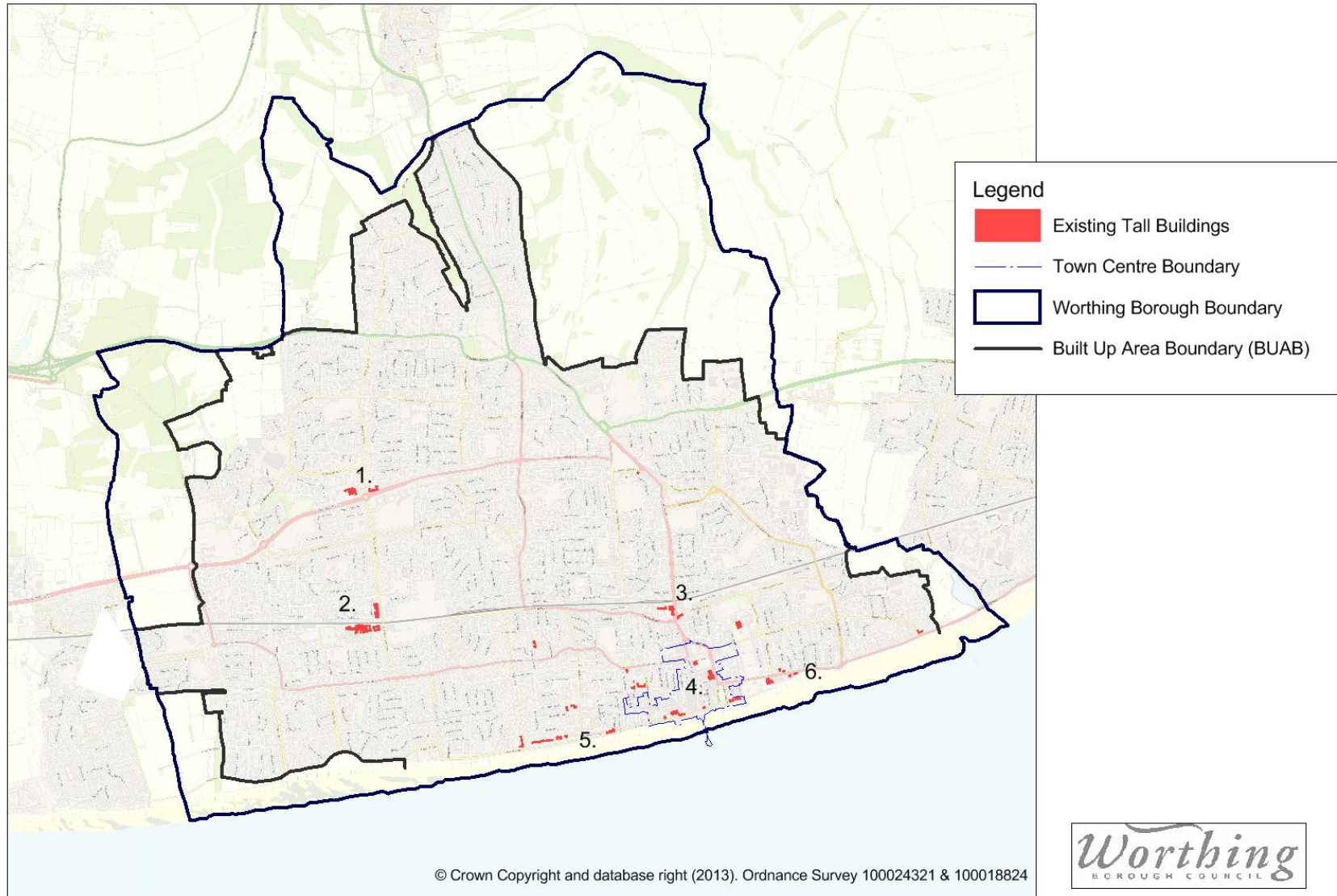


Figure 8.1 North of Littlehampton Road, Durrington



Highdown Court



Centenary House

Figure 8.2 Durrington Station



Lloyds Bank - The Causeway



Inland Revenue

Lloyds TSB – The Causeway

Description	Slab tower (8-9 storeys) in previous use as offices (now vacant but with recent permission granted for redevelopment)
Location	In close proximity to Durrington Station and a range of District Centre facilities.
Positives	Sited in sustainable location. Good use of fenestration onto street frontage.
Negatives	Poor relationship to the street and no active frontage. Building design and material have not aged well. Demand weakened due to inflexibility of floorspace. Poor relationship with neighbouring buildings. Car parking is ill considered – having negative impact on streetscape. Lack of interest on skyline / roofline.

Inland Revenue

Description	5+ storey slab block office development
Location	South of, and adjacent to, Durrington Station.
Positives	Siting of building takes good account of landscaping. Building appears to be well managed and maintained. Sustainable location. Does not impose on surrounding area.
Negatives	Scale and massing not appropriate for location. Lack of fenestration makes this building feel imposing / unwelcoming. Uninviting and unclear relationship with street and surrounding area.

Figure 8.3 Worthing Station



Former Norfolk Hotel Site

Former Norfolk Hotel Site	
Description	Recent mixed-use development of 4/5/7 storeys comprising of retail units on ground floor with residential above.
Location	Northern edge of town centre located on key roundabout that forms one of the main gateways to the town.
Positives	Attractive curves Contemporary design which enhances one of the gateways to the town Sustainable location Brings vitality to this part of the town Good use of levels to 'step up'
Negatives	Lack of space around the building Empty retail units on ground floor Missed opportunity to create landmark?

Figure 8.4 Worthing Town Centre



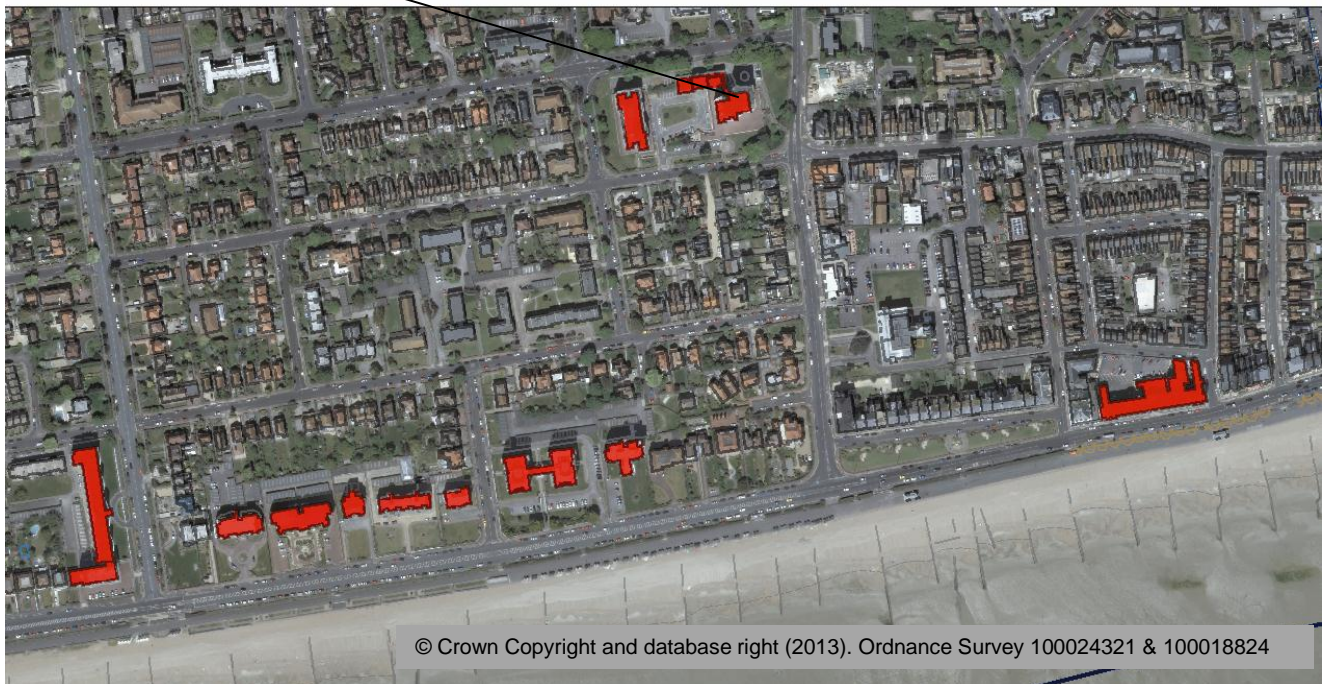
Town Centre Car Park (High Street)

Town Centre Car Park (High Street)	
Description	6 storey slab car park
Location	Town centre adjacent to central shopping area.
Positives	Efficient use of land near town centre Well-proportioned within townscape Building lines work
Negatives	Poor relationship with how it 'hits the ground' Use of land around the building is unclear and activity edges don't work.

Figure 8.5 Western Seafront



Manor Lea



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Manor Lea

Description	13 storey block of flats set within single tower.
Location	Just west of town centre and set slightly back from seafront.
Positives	Efficient use of land near town centre Generous landscaping Internally the flats are well proportioned and light
Negatives	Isolated and out of scale with surrounding area. Uninviting public realm with no obvious use Little interest on roofline Too uniform in design

Figure 8.6 Eastern Seafront³



The case studies above, which were informed by the workshops, demonstrate that all existing tall buildings have some positive qualities although it is acknowledged that there are still lessons to be learned in many regards. It is felt that a number of the existing tall buildings in Worthing are not particularly well integrated into the surrounding townscape or wider landscape. All of these existing tall buildings have been built in the absence of specific guidance to inform their location and design.

New buildings must learn from the past and that poorly designed and managed single use blocks should act as a constant reminder that tall buildings require excellence in design, maintenance and use to heighten their contribution to the skyline, attract investment and to mitigate any potential negative impacts.

Following a review of existing tall buildings it is clear that there are a greater proportion of positive comments attributed to the more recent examples when compared to the earlier schemes. This is reassuring as it could indicate how the lessons from the past are being learned. However, the fact that a significant number of negative attributes are still identified for all locations demonstrates how further work is required to ensure that future tall buildings are better related to the townscape and designed to a higher standard. This document will help to achieve this.

Proposals for tall buildings should learn lessons from the past and deliver excellence in design.

³ Please note that this figure does not show the newly opened Splash Point Leisure Centre.

Future Tall Buildings

A key aim of the Core Strategy (2011) is to secure sustainable regeneration and improve economic performance. Particular emphasis is placed on key areas and sites within the borough that provide the greatest potential to deliver social and economic benefits. These 12 'Areas of Change' will be the likely focus for major development coming forward in the town over the Core Strategy period up to 2026. Hence, there may be some potential for tall buildings in some of these locations.

When these opportunity areas are considered it is clear that the town centre and seafront area offer the greatest scope for major redevelopment. Whilst not completely uniform in character, the areas outside the town centre offer less opportunities for significant change or the building of tall buildings. The map within section 3 indicates the location of these potential opportunity areas.

In the context of tall buildings currently proposed, the most significant development is the permission at the end of 2011 for a key regeneration scheme at Teville Gate. This is a site of strategic importance and its redevelopment provides a real opportunity to significantly improve the entry to the town centre and to set high standards of design. Known as the Worthing Gateway scheme, its key elements include two residential towers of 17 and 14 stories containing more than 200 flats. When constructed, these will form the tallest buildings in Worthing. Other uses will include hotel / conference facilities, restaurants, shops, health and fitness centre and a multiplex cinema.

More recently, is the permission at The Causeway, next to Durrington Station. This is a redevelopment of the existing Lloyds TSB site, with a new mixed-use tall building that will include a retail use on the ground floor and 154 residential units.

A key consideration when assessing new tall buildings is the effect they can have on the image of Worthing and their ability to contribute to the regeneration of key sites, particularly in and around the town centre. At a more local level, the potential impact of tall buildings on immediate neighbours is a key consideration. As set out in later sections of this document other issues of particular relevance within the context of Worthing are: access to open space; impact on heritage; accessibility; local views; help with wayfinding; and impact on the skyline.

Policy Context

This section outlines a brief summary of the planning framework in which the guidance for tall buildings must operate.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF (2012) forms a key part of the Government's reforms to promote sustainable growth and make the planning system less complex and more accessible. All local plans and planning documents now need to be in conformity with this higher level framework. When published it replaced a number of Planning Policy Statements that had previously had some relevance to tall building issues. Despite this, many of the key principles contained in those statements have now been incorporated within the NPPF which includes the following elements that are relevant to tall buildings (paragraphs 56-61):

- Design solutions should optimise the potential of a site to accommodate development
- Great importance should be attached to the design of the built environment
- Design innovation is encouraged
- Local Planning Authorities should consider and help to guide the appropriate scale, massing and height of new development
- Design solutions should seek to integrate new development into the natural, built and historic environment

CABE Guidance on Tall Buildings

As a result of increasing concern over the negative impacts of tall buildings, Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage published 'Guidance on Tall Buildings' in 2003 and updated it in 2007. This sets out the basic principles and design elements for planning authorities to build into planning policy documents. The document also stresses the need for tall building applications to consider their impact on the surrounding natural and built environment and highlights that design quality is paramount when seeking to achieve safe, positive and attractive additions to the urban area. To varying degrees ten of the eleven criteria are relevant to the context of Worthing and all aspects have been incorporated within the assessment criteria that follow.

CABE and English Heritage's Guidance on Tall Buildings 11 Assessment Criteria:

1. Relationship to context
2. Effect on the historic context
3. Effect on world heritage sites – (not applicable for Worthing)
4. Effect on the local environment
5. Architectural quality of the building
6. Sustainable design and construction
7. Relationship to transport infrastructure
8. Credibility of the design
9. Contribution to public space and facilities
10. Contribution made to permeability
11. Provision of a well-designed environment

The CABE document encourages planning authorities to produce local guidance to provide the framework and strategy against which tall building proposals can be considered. To help assess whether sites are appropriate and suitable for tall buildings the document also sets out criteria that should be used to assess proposals for tall buildings and their locations. These tools are used as the basis for the local criteria for Worthing set out later in this document.

Local Policy

Prior to the emergence of this document there were no specific guidelines in respect of tall buildings within Worthing or any specially 'protected views' of the town. However, Worthing's Core Strategy was adopted in April 2011 and it now provides the strategic planning policy tool for the town. It was informed by relevant background documents such as the Worthing Masterplan (2006) and a Seafront and Public Realm Strategy. The Core Strategy includes a Vision for the town which will be realised by the delivery of key outcomes set out in Strategic Objectives - the most important in relations to this document being:

- Revitalise Worthing's Town Centre and Seafront
- Deliver a Sustainable Economy
- Deliver High Quality Distinctive Places

In addition to this guidance the Core Strategy policies (and some a saved Local Plan policy) will be important considerations for any proposals for tall buildings that may come forward. Of particular relevance are:

Core Strategy Policy 16: Built Environment and Design
Core Strategy Policy 17: Sustainable Construction
Core Strategy Policy 18: Sustainable Energy

Core Strategy Policy 19: Sustainable Travel
Saved Local Plan Policy CT2: Protection and enhancement of seafront area.

Proposals for the construction of tall buildings will need to take account of the above, which provide policy guidance on: the protection of sensitive green spaces; the use of environmentally advanced construction technologies; and the need to respect and enhance the local built environment.

In relation to tall buildings the local policy position is very much in line with that of the NPPF. Principles of good design are established in Core Strategy Policy 16 and its supporting text makes it clear that scale, massing and height are key considerations. Innovative and contemporary design solutions are encouraged but there is an over-arching need to take account of environmental, physical and historical characteristics.

The policy context has been incorporated into the following sections which provide the criteria against which any proposals for tall buildings in Worthing will be assessed.

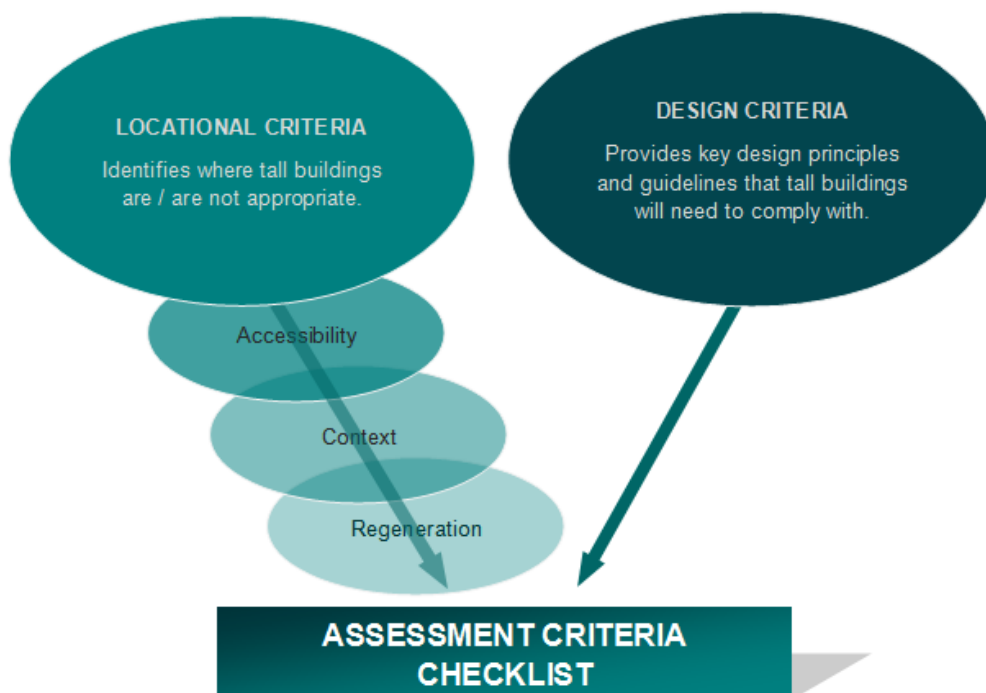
Part 2 - Assessment Criteria

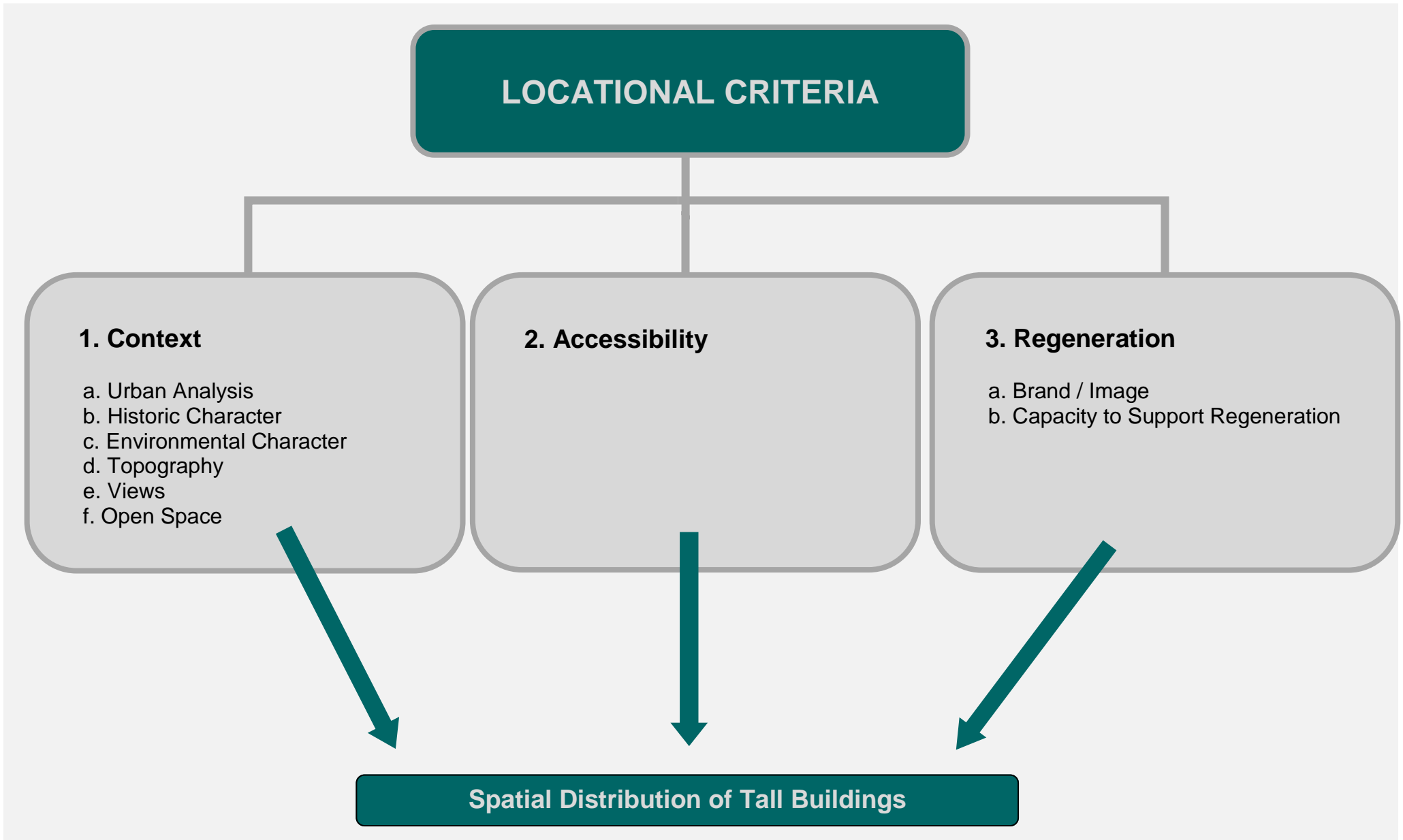
The assessment criteria applied within this document and used to help guide the delivery of tall buildings in Worthing, takes into account the CABE and English Heritage Guidance and the outcomes of the two workshops.

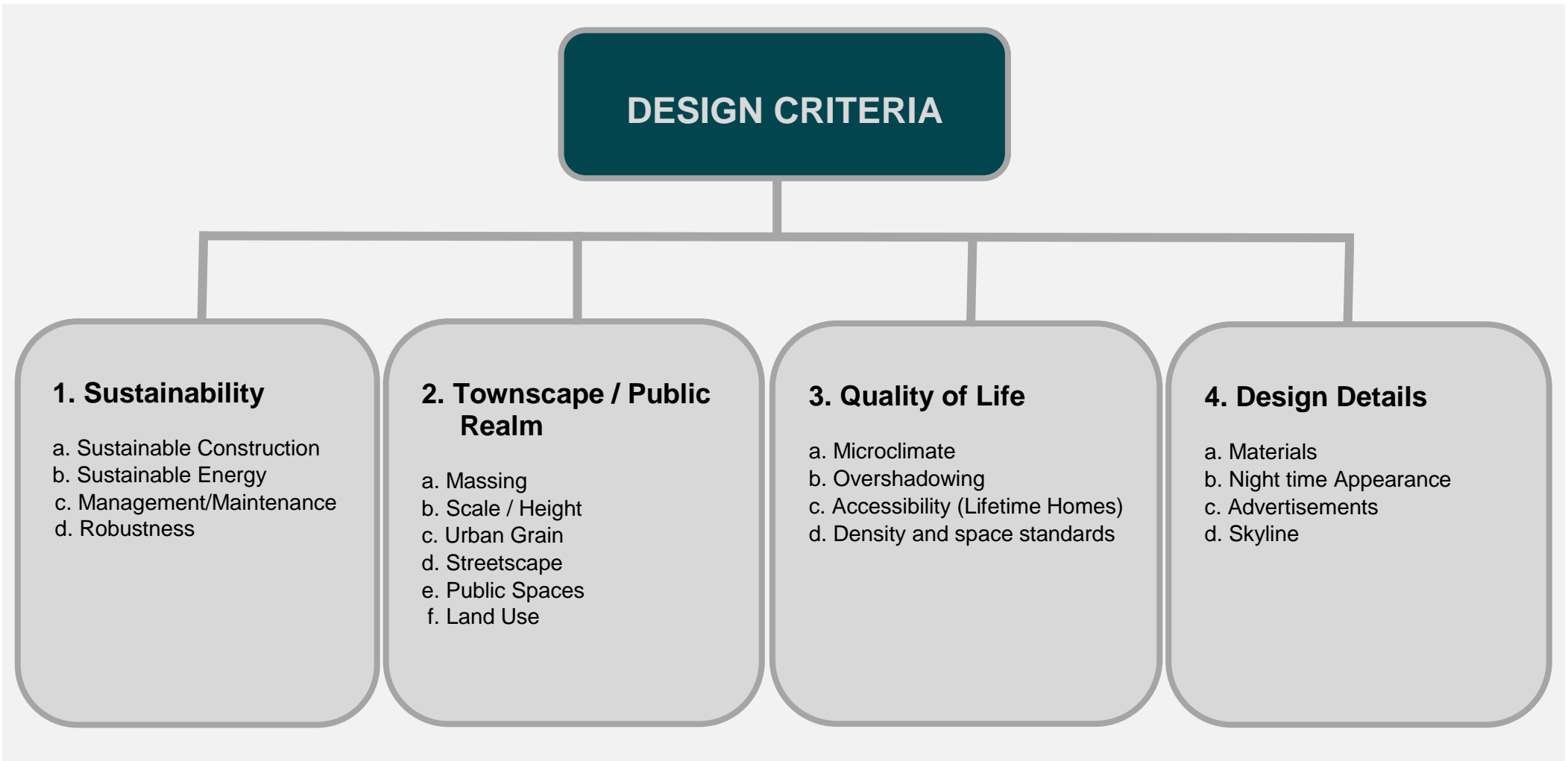
There are two principal levels of assessment criteria: those which are concerned with **where** tall buildings are to be located, and those which deal with **assessing** the nature, impact and quality of any proposal. These criteria could be considered to constitute layers which will be used to guide the location and assessment of tall buildings. This layered approach, illustrated below, allows for the cumulative assessment by topic areas to identify the opportunities and constraints in relation to tall buildings. It will also help to influence the type of building that may or may not be appropriate for a particular site.

There will clearly be some overlap between the sets of criteria and there will be locations where particular assessment criteria are appropriate and others are not. Similarly, just because some key criteria are met this doesn't mean that a scheme is suitable. For example, high design standards will only be acceptable if the tall building is also located in the right place whilst a tall building in a good location will only be acceptable if the design criteria are appropriate for that particular area. In this way the layers of assessment can be considered to be cumulative.

Therefore, those using this guidance should combine aspects from both sets with weighting given to criterion depending on the location of the development site within the borough and the nature of the scheme proposed. The appropriate weighting will respond to fact that certain criteria are less relevant on some sites than others.







Through the application of both the locational and design criteria specified above, the overall assessment criteria developed within subsequent sections of this document will be applied to assessing all proposed tall buildings in Worthing. A summary assessment criteria checklist is located in Part 5.

Part 3 - Locational Criteria

The locational criteria are one element of the overall assessment criteria. These criteria are used to identify locations where tall buildings may or may not be appropriate within the Borough. An array of factors and considerations will impact where tall buildings are suited but for the purposes of this study these are best broken into the following three headings:

1. Accessibility
2. Context
3. Regeneration

These factors (or layers) can be combined to provide an overall indication of site suitability. The layers are used to cumulatively identify the opportunities and constraints of the urban environment in relation to tall buildings. This methodology helps to identify those sites that are generally suitable or not suitable for the development of tall buildings. Although all relevant criteria should be satisfied, the criteria are not the subject of a quantitative scoring system as it will be a combination of factors for any location and design that determines whether it is acceptable. Furthermore, consideration of the locational criteria will help to inform the spatial distribution of tall buildings and determine a suitable approach is suitable for Worthing.

1. Accessibility

a. Transport and Movement

To deliver development in sustainable locations tall buildings should be located so as to minimise dependence on car use and maximise access to a mix of transport options. Tall buildings should be located around transport corridors and interchanges (typically within a 10 minute walking distance).

Tall buildings will need to fully consider their implications for transport and infrastructure as a result of the increase of density and movement that they will create. The capacity of public transport to cope with the additional footfall, traffic and density of a tall building can often be overlooked. Proposals must therefore consider the feasibility of making improvements where there is a need if the existing demand cannot be adequately met. To help achieve this Travel Plans will be required to ensure that tall buildings take into account their impact on all aspects of transport infrastructure in Worthing.

Tall buildings should be sited around transport corridors and interchanges. Where appropriate, improvements must be made to the local transport infrastructure to ensure that future demand can be adequately met.

Similarly, parking arrangements must be addressed through the design process. Although there are standards for parking provisions for residential and commercial development particular care must be taken to ensure that appropriate design methods are used to ensure that parking arrangements for tall building proposals do not lead to a cluttered and unattractive streetscape. The provision of cycle spaces is important towards contributing to more sustainable travel methods and once again these will need to be designed sensitively as will the consideration of access to and from the building.

Parking implications must be taken into account during all stages of the design process.

b. Town Centre

Tall buildings offer the opportunity to create higher density living / working and in appropriate locations they can provide a sustainable form of urban development. Linked to Council's regeneration aims, tall buildings must therefore be sited so that their occupiers can benefit from access to a wide variety of uses close at hand. Development in the right place and of the right mix can help to add vitality of their location and support town and neighbourhood centres.

Subject to meeting the requirements of this SPD, very tall buildings are more likely to be considered appropriate within, or in close proximity to, Worthing town centre as these are the locations most likely to be able to contribute towards the delivery of wider regeneration aims.

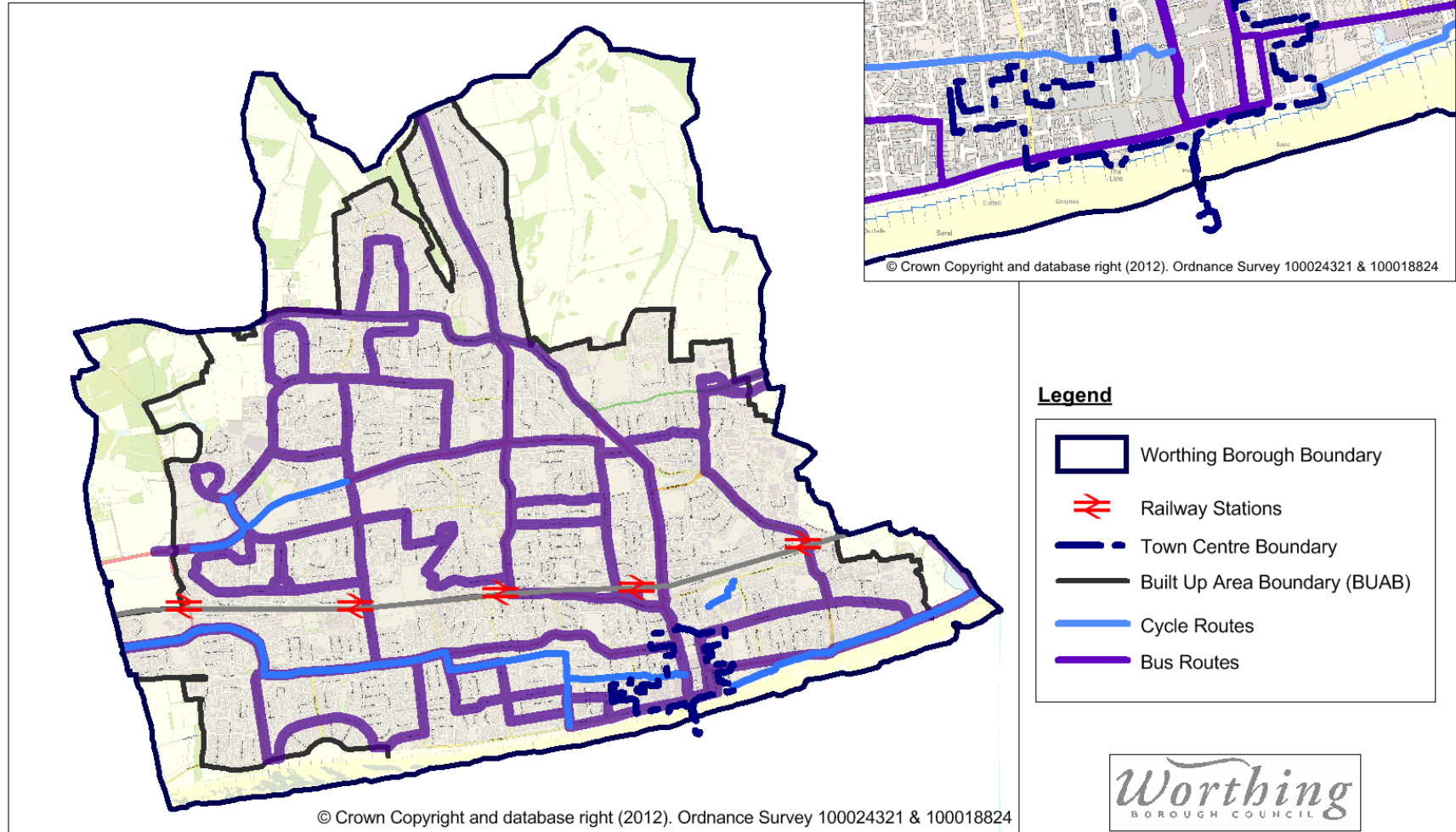
Proposals for tall buildings should seek to strengthen existing centres by focussing intensification on areas well served by existing facilities and services. Proposals which are located in areas which do not strengthen existing centres are less likely to be supported.

c. Public Open Space

Tall buildings often make intensive use of sites. While all new tall buildings will be required to provide external space for future residents and occupiers, proximity to adequate public open space will be a prerequisite in considering the suitability of a site for the development of a tall building.

Towers and very tall buildings will only be acceptable in the most accessible locations. In areas which are less accessible other forms of development, such as mid-rise buildings are likely to be more appropriate. In areas with poor accessibility tall buildings are unlikely to be an appropriate form of development.

Figure 9. Worthing Transport Accessibility Map



2. Context

In order to minimise the negative visual impacts of tall buildings, it is important to assess the local context of Worthing to understand where tall buildings may be appropriate.

a. Urban Analysis

The process of analysing the urban characteristics of the borough helps to guide the development of a strategy for tall buildings. The development of Worthing, as with most seaside towns, has evolved for economic and recreational reasons but has always retained a connection with the sea. This focus has resulted in an urban form that concentrates density and activity along the southern edge of the town and its 7.5km of shoreline. The town is then characterised by a general and incremental reduction in densities towards its periphery. Such an urban pattern creates what is in effect a 180 degree town with its 'central' and most dense areas on the edge of the seafront. Outside of the town centre and seafront area the borough is more suburban in character although there are pockets of higher densities in areas around the town's railway stations.

The historic development of the town occurred through the merging of separate villages and centres such as Tarring and Broadwater. The expansion of the town in this way is still evident today with distinct areas centred on the parish church or local shops, and each has their own identity and character which needs to be understood and respected. A significant amount of growth in the town was seen between the wars resulting in large areas of predominantly two storey residential developments. Any new development will need to explore and respond to the character of the town, its neighbourhood and street.

b. Historic Character

Worthing has a rich and varied architectural context, including Regency, Victorian and art deco, together with later twentieth century buildings. Strategic Objective 6 of the Core Strategy establishes a key priority for Worthing to protect and where possible enhance these areas. Designers and promoters of tall buildings in Worthing will be expected to act responsibly towards this heritage.

Worthing has 26 Conservation Areas (including a number around the town centre), which are designated due to their important visual and historic contribution to Worthing and to allow for their protection. A tall building proposed in, or in close proximity to these areas would have to be particularly sensitive to design issues and would generally only be considered if it served to enhance the overall area. However, current guidance and best practice suggests that contemporary buildings, although not necessarily tall ones, can be comfortably stitched onto conservation settings as long as they can relate to the local urban patterns and geography, respect key views, respond to the scale of adjacent development, utilise vernacular materials, and most

importantly positively contribute to the overall urban setting. Schemes of this nature will only be developed successfully if there is a good early understanding of the local context.

There are over 360 Listed Buildings in Worthing. This includes Castle Goring, a Grade I Listed Building to the north west of the borough boundary. Grade II* buildings include the Dome Cinema, various churches and buildings at Park Crescent, South Street and Tarring High Street. Important Grade II buildings include the Pier and the Lido at Marine Parade, as well as the Worthing Tabernacle and Town Hall in the civic hub. In addition, there are over 1,000 buildings regarded as being of important local interest.

Certain listed buildings contribute positively to the character of Worthing through establishing a unique skyline (e.g. The Dome Cinema). Developments which impact on these characteristics will need to be thoroughly tested, and will not be supported where they fail to respect and enhance these historic assets.

These historical buildings are an important feature of Worthing and contribute positively to the built area's character. Tall buildings by their very nature are visually intrusive and require careful design to integrate them with the surrounding environment at ground level. As such, tall buildings must ensure that they do not impact negatively on these historic assets. The setting of a tall building needs to be fully considered and where a Listed Building is a landmark feature its backdrop needs to be protected to ensure that it continues to be viewed distinctively. Integration of a tall building within the townscape may be particularly difficult where listed buildings are prominent or where groups of tall buildings are found.

Worthing is also home to Environmental Areas of Special Character which are designated because their character stands out in such a way that contributes positively to Worthing's historic environment and as such, they are offered a greater level of protection. Tall Buildings in these areas would have to be sensitive to the visual impact that they could potentially cause, although this consideration would not usually have as much weight as it would in a Conservation Area.

Many of the key heritage assets in Worthing are located in and around the town centre and seafront. In general, these are also the most sustainable areas that could lend themselves to a greater intensification of land uses. A balance will need to be struck when considering these demands and constraints and this document will help to provide a steer in this regard.

Proposals for tall buildings must understand and respect the fine historic townscape and character of Worthing. As such, their design would need to fully consider the potential impacts on each historic asset adjoining, or in close proximity to, the proposal site.

c. Environmental Character

Despite being principally urban in character Worthing contains a number of environmentally sensitive areas. To the south of the town is the Sussex coast, which gives Worthing its character as a seaside resort and tourist location and has areas of ecological importance. Most of the land outside the built up area to the north falls within the South Downs National Park and many parts of the town have views of the Downland. The borough is also home to eleven Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Cissbury Ring).

As identified in the Worthing Core Strategy, there is also environmentally sensitive land outside of the built up area boundary to the east and the west. These areas represent long established breaks in developments between settlements and are currently protected from development unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Tall buildings will not be permitted on land that currently falls outside the Built Up Area Boundary of the Borough (as illustrated on the Core Strategy Proposals Map).

As a result of the sensitive nature of this environment, a tall building would not be acceptable within the National Park. However, it is important to note that in this regard the South Downs National Park Authority is the designated planning authority for the land covered by National Park designation. Any proposals for tall buildings within Worthing will need to take into account the potential impacts that they may have on views into and out of the National Park (see 'views' below).

d. Topography

The topography of an area can play a key strategic role in the location of tall buildings and it is important that there is a positive relationship with relevant topographical features and other tall buildings. Placing new development in exposed locations, such as at the top of a hill, will emphasise the structure and make it stand out. A more subtle and often more successful approach is to use natural valleys to make tall buildings appear less overpowering. The developed area of Worthing, however, is predominantly located on the coastal plain with few places reaching above 25m.

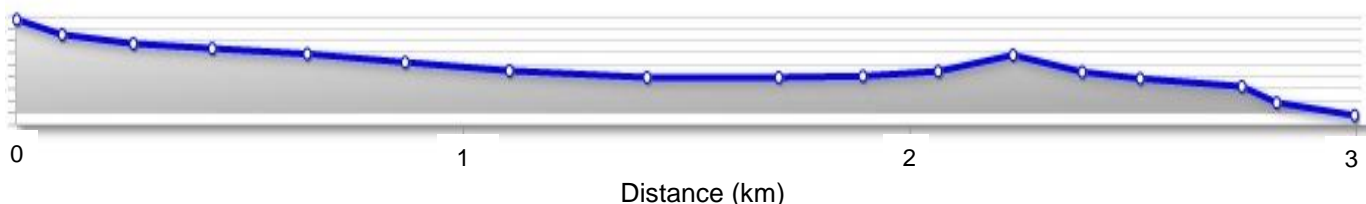
High Salvington is the exception to the north of the town centre with a topographical height nearing 50m. To the north of the town is the South Downs National Park which is significantly higher than the majority of the Borough, with its peak at Cissbury Ring, which has a height of over 175m. As a result, the Downs offer excellent views of Worthing Town Centre and the South Coast. Any tall buildings would need to take topography into consideration to ensure that they were not visually intrusive on those views.

Owing to the flat coastal nature of Worthing it is not possible to take advantage of the topography to ‘hide’ buildings in valleys, unlike other coastal towns such as Brighton. Furthermore, the higher areas to the north of the town would not be appropriate areas for tall buildings owing to their sensitive nature on the fringes of the National Park and, as such, even a landmark building of high design quality would be detrimental to the skyline of this natural environment. As a result, Worthing is a relatively ‘level playing field’ and although the impact on views will be need to be taken into account for all proposals, topography plays no real role in assessing the location of tall buildings in the town centre. Therefore, greater consideration will have to be given to other design factors.

The relationship of any new tall building with its topographical context must be appropriate for its urban role within the town.

Figure 10. Cross Section of Topography from the A27 to Worthing Pier.

Height (m) Ranging from below sea level to -2m to 16m above sea level



e. Views

Retaining and enhancing key strategic views, vistas and corridors through the sensitive siting of tall buildings is a key objective. Applicants for tall buildings will be expected to undertake analysis of panoramic views and prospects as this can help to assess the potential for tall buildings by showing where the development of a tall building in an area might be appropriate and where one would create negative visual impacts. Using recognised methodologies the applicant must demonstrate a clear understanding of the qualities and value of each relevant view (seafront, South Downs etc.) and how their development would impact on these.

This list is not exhaustive, but in particular, these views need to be appropriately protected and where there is some potential for negative impacts it may be possible to mitigate these through appropriate design methods. Consideration needs to be given as to the impact that a tall building would have on important views and a detailed assessment would be required.

Given the location of Worthing tall buildings will potentially afford occupiers with views of the sea and / or the South Downs

Tall buildings should complement, not compromise strategic views in the Borough and respect significant local views.

f. Open Spaces

There are over 360 hectares of parks and open recreation spaces in Worthing and they are areas highly valued by the local community. Of particular significance is Highdown Gardens on the western edge of the borough boundary which is on the Register for Parks and Gardens of Special Interest in England. There are various other gardens in the town centre which contribute positively to the area, including Liverpool Gardens, Steyne Gardens and Marine Gardens. Brooklands Recreation Area is also an important asset for Worthing and is a large open space offering a range of facilities, including a boating lake.

Open space and recreation studies have found that the majority of open recreation spaces in Worthing have high rates of usage. However, as a result of the relatively dense urban characteristics of Worthing, there is often increased pressure to release open spaces for development. As a result, national and local policies seek to protect these valued community facilities from redevelopment, unless in exceptional circumstances where a change of use would lead to the overall enhancement of Worthing Borough as a whole. In addition, the Council promotes the provision of new facilities to be incorporated into new development where there is a need.

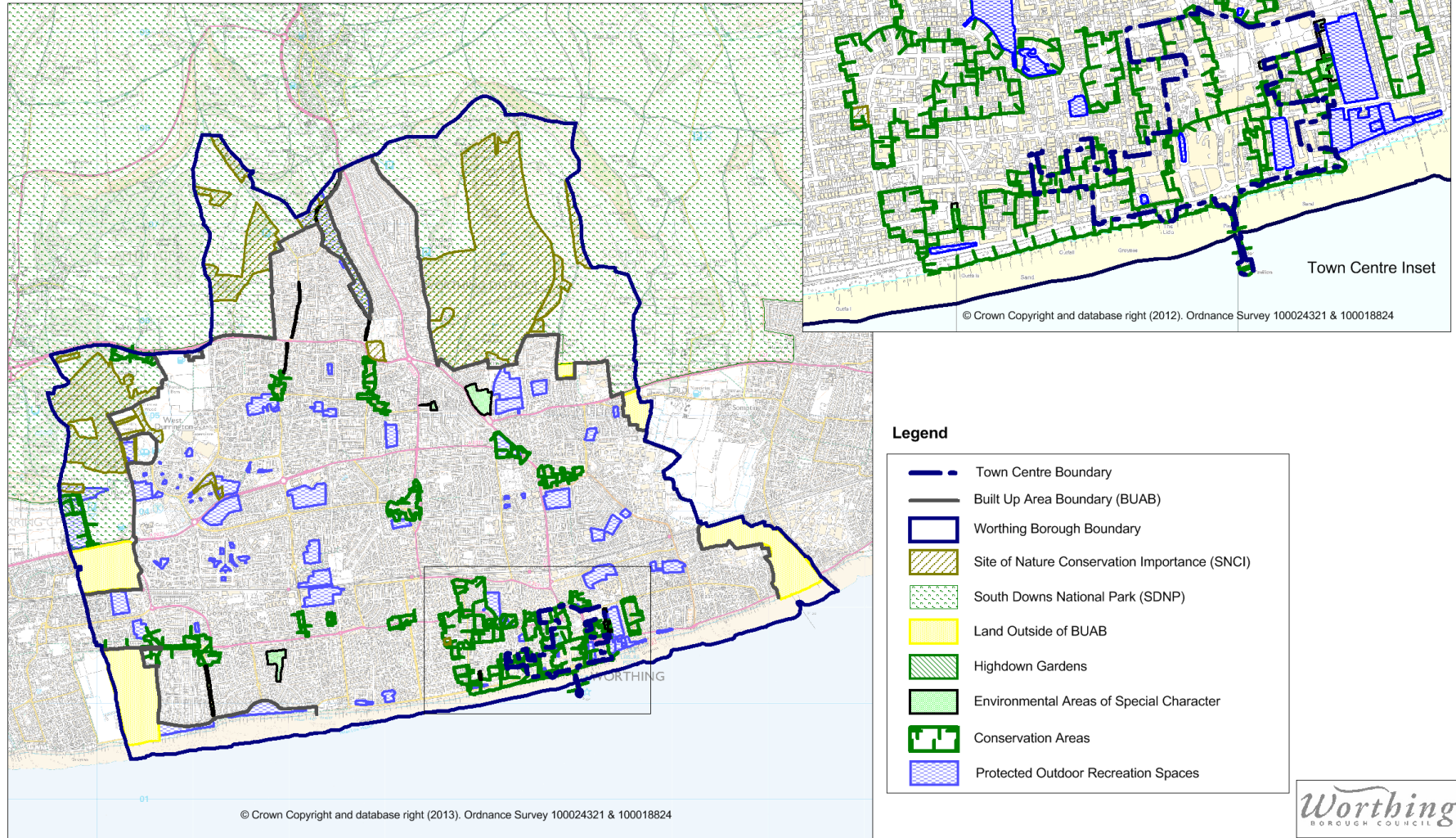
Private open space for residents and occupiers of new buildings will be required. This is discussed in Part 4.

Given the policy position and the constrained nature of the Borough valued open spaces, parks and play areas will not be suitable locations for tall buildings. In addition, due to their importance locally and nationally in some cases, proposals for tall buildings will need to carefully consider the visual (and other) impacts on the enjoyment and appreciation of these open areas. Where tall buildings are acceptable they will be expected to help deliver new open spaces and public realm improvements as part of the scheme.

New buildings should therefore be located to gain from but not compromise open space.

Land that is currently used for recreation or informal open space is not appropriate for tall buildings.

Figure 11. Worthing Environmental and Historical Context



3. Regeneration

a. Brand / Image of Worthing

Tall buildings can play an important role in relation to the perception of the Borough. As such, new buildings should be located so that they enhance the image of the town and where appropriate, they could be used to send a message to residents, visitors and the development about the status of the town. In this regard, the quality of proposals needs to be carefully assessed to provide an understanding as to what they say about their context and the future of Worthing.

Historically the development of tall buildings in the Borough helps to tell the story of the changing emphasis of Worthing and what it considered to be important. Early tall buildings were built for civic uses, leisure or as churches and in more recent years as a mix of offices and residential buildings. What do we want tall buildings in Worthing to say about developments in the early twenty-first century when they are appraised in the future?

As more towns develop tall buildings for office and residential use, there is an awareness that the globalisation of construction and design processes can lead to the erosion of identity. Worthing has many qualities which come together to create a unique identity and context. As such, any new building, especially those that are tall and/or highly visible, must contribute to understanding, preserving or enhancing the identity of the town. New tall buildings must therefore respond to the town's context and history and display understanding of their location, culture and climate in concept, design, composition, choice of materials and detailing.

The development of tall buildings should add vitality to the town by creating vibrant and lively environments.

b. Capacity to support regeneration

Given the over-arching aims of the Core Strategy, new development should be located so as to assist with the wider regeneration of the town. With this in mind attention must be given to whether a tall building(s) might be a form of development which could help to support other policies and objectives.

In some instances the support and approval of a tall building may help to 'unlock' stalled development sites. However, the need to maximise the use of the site will need to be balanced against development viability and all other potential impacts set out in this guidance. Creating dense and vital communities and development can take many forms and building tall is only one of them. The appropriate form of composing an increased amount of development, tall or otherwise, will need to be explored and tested with relation to guidance found in this document.

As explained in previous sections, the town centre and seafront areas, which incorporate a number of the Areas of Change, offer the greatest scope for major mixed-use redevelopment that would support wider regeneration objectives.

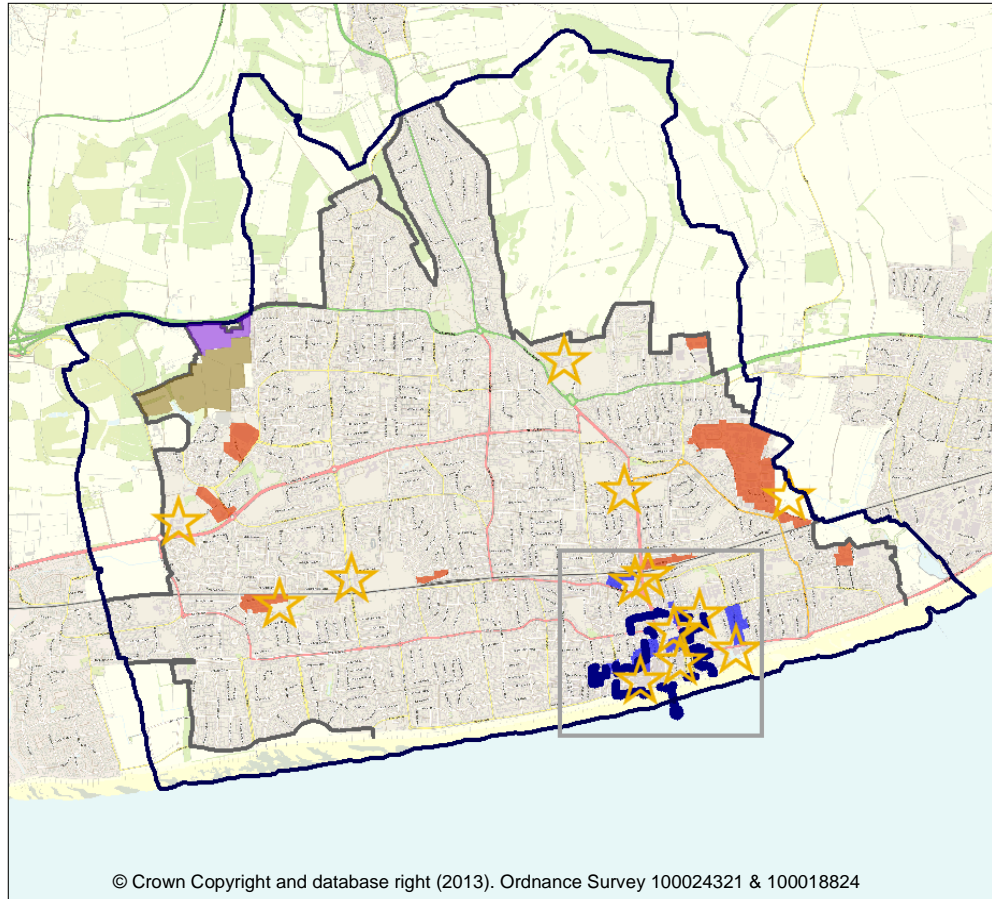
The Worthing Town Centre Masterplan previously identified the need for Worthing seafront to become a high quality visitor destination and valued local resource, with improved linkages to the town centre. There is the opportunity providing they did not look out of place or appear overpowering. There is the opportunity with appropriate tall buildings to achieve this, providing they do not look out of place or appear overpowering. This would also help to contribute towards Worthing's reputation as a distinct, high quality destination through the provision of new facilities and attractions. Any tall building would also need to contribute towards improving connectivity and linkages between the seafront and town centre.

Where appropriate, proposals must ensure that the symbolic qualities of tall buildings build on and exemplify the regeneration of the town centre and seafront.

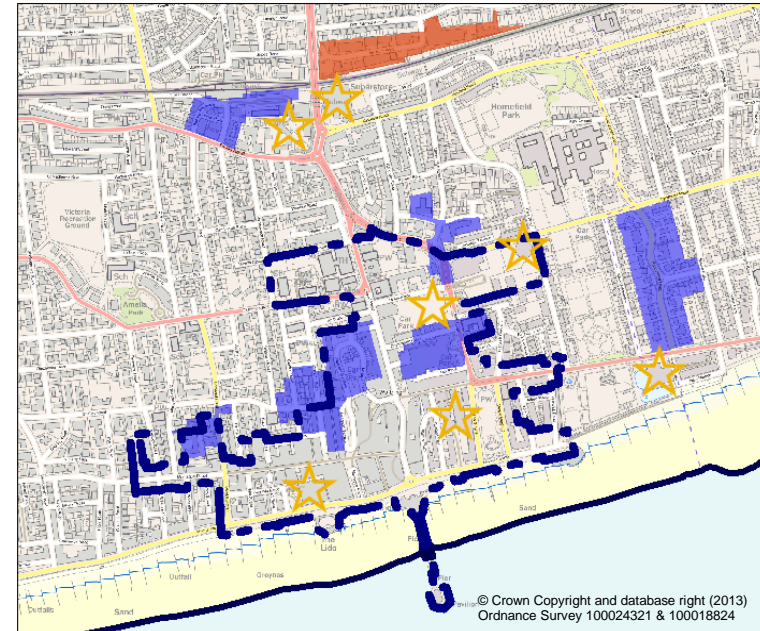
The Council will be supportive of tall buildings where they help to promote sustainable development.

Figure 12. Worthing Core Strategy Opportunity Areas

Note: Using the assessment criteria established in this document it is clear that most of the development opportunity areas outside of the town centre are unlikely to be suitable for tall buildings.



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Legend

-  West Durrington Potential Future Development Area
-  West Durrington Strategic Allocation
-  Worthing Borough Boundary
-  Areas of Change
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB)
-  Key Office Locations
-  Key Industrial Estates and Business Parks

Conclusion - Spatial Distribution

This section has demonstrated that although there are a number of constraints that would restrict the development of tall buildings in many areas of the Borough there are also other areas that have a high level of accessibility and that, subject to design criteria being met (see next section), would provide an opportunity to deliver buildings of height that contribute towards meeting some of the regeneration aims of the town.

Tall buildings must address their effect on the setting of, and views to and from historic buildings, sites and landscapes over a wide area. They also need to ensure that the proposal will preserve and where possible, enhance building sites, landscapes and skylines. The above context for Worthing creates environmental, townscape and historic constraints that will help to inform decisions as to where tall buildings should be located as a result of the potential visual impacts on these areas.

The locational criteria should not be considered in isolation. It is in combination that the rich layers of Worthing's complex challenges and opportunities can lead the development of new tall buildings to appropriate locations.

As a result of the topography of the borough and the fairly ad hoc arrangement of existing tall buildings within parts of the town, there is no strong consensus that would guide tall buildings to one specific site or area. As such, and with the need to allow for a degree of flexibility, this guidance, unlike some other examples, does not set out specific boundaries or any indication of preferred heights for certain areas of the town. However, through the preparation of this document it is apparent that areas in and around the town centre, along the seafront or in close proximity to stations are favoured as locations for tall buildings when compared to other areas.

Using the 'layered approach' of constraints and opportunities and balancing all of the locational criteria there is a very clear indication provided as to where tall buildings would and wouldn't be acceptable. The key principles which help to form these layers are summarised in section 5 of this guidance. This and the associated checklist will help to lead the development of tall buildings to the right place. Of equal importance are the design considerations which are set out in the following section.

Part 4 - Design Criteria

The quality of design is of paramount importance as to whether a tall building is viewed positively or negatively, therefore it is essential that any tall building proposed for Worthing is of the highest design quality. Tall buildings require design excellence to ensure that they create attractive places, make a positive contribution to the skyline and maximise their ability to attract investment. Ensuring good design when considering tall building development presents a number of challenges and opportunities, but the ultimate aim is to achieve a unique example of contemporary architecture.

Concerns about visual impacts are one of the most frequent reasons for objection to tall buildings. By their nature, they are often intended to stand out and make a statement, however if their impact to the visual surroundings is negative, this will be to the detriment of Worthing as a whole. This section looks at the design principles that will be used to ensure that only high quality buildings are delivered in the Borough.

Policy 16 (Built Environment and Design) of the Worthing Core Strategy highlights the importance of good design and the benefits it can bring. This is even more important for tall buildings owing to their high profile and visual impact on local surrounding. This is the case for all tall buildings but especially for very tall or prominent developments.

It is important to note that 'good design' is not only an end product, but is also a process. In summary, good design:

- is sustainable
- is responsive to environmental constraints
- is flexible enough to incorporate potential future changes
- contributes positively to the skyline
- contributes positively to the public realm at ground level
- allows tall buildings to be celebrated rather than concealed
- enables investment
- acts as a catalyst for regeneration

The key design criteria have been broken down into the following headings and the key requirements are incorporated within the application checklist that follows:

1. Sustainability
2. Townscape/Public Realm
3. Quality of Life
4. Design Detail

1. Sustainability

a. Sustainable Construction

Good design is inseparable from sustainability, which is one of the most important aspects of designing a tall building. Proposals will need to consider detailed guidance relating to performance, construction, energy consumption and management strategies, waste and water management, and the appropriate use of materials.

Policy 17 – ‘Sustainable Construction’ in the Core Strategy emphasises the need for new development to contribute towards making Worthing a more sustainable place to live and work by reducing its contribution to carbon emissions and ensuring that the town is resilient to the local impacts of climate change. Furthermore, owing to the high profile and local impact of tall buildings, any proposal would need to be of an exceptional standard.

In the past, operational efficiency and construction costs have often taken precedence over longer term environmental impacts. However, it is important to strike a good balance between low impact construction versus lower consumption to ensure that maximum efficiency is achieved and to increase the overall and long term sustainability of any proposed tall buildings.

In recent years there have been significant advancements in sustainable construction owing to improved technologies and a raised public awareness about sustainability issues. Incorporating these methods will play a key role in delivering a sustainable future for Worthing’s residents. Sustainable construction methods often used include: energy conservation; re-use of water; re-use of natural resources; using recycled building materials and; minimisation of waste and pollution.

New buildings should take into account orientation in their design to exploit passive solar input, as well as views afforded to potential residents and occupiers. Single aspect north facing flats should be avoided.

Tall buildings must consider ways of increasing energy efficiency through its orientation and the management of storm water and rainwater, as well as incorporating waste reduction and recycling schemes. This could, for example, be achieved by adapting the building form, creating natural ventilation and using sky courts to improve day lighting and internal air quality. The use of green spaces to reduce carbon dioxide emissions should also be incorporated into tall building designs where possible. This could include the use of green roofs, green walls and urban green landscaping, all of which should reduce the negative impacts of climate change including urban heating, storm-water runoff and air pollution.

Tall building development will need to achieve as a minimum the latest targets and standards for sustainable construction with a particular emphasis on water efficiency which is a particular issue in Worthing. At present, this includes the Code for Sustainable Homes, which are national standard to

increase the sustainability of construction of residential development in terms of energy and CO₂ emissions. With regards to non-residential development tall buildings, will need to consider BREEAM standards (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) or any national standards that supersede them. This is already outlined in Policy 17 – Sustainable Construction in the Core Strategy. Where viable and achievable, tall buildings will be expected to go beyond those and be exemplars of best practice.

b. Sustainable Energy

Energy use is one of the major contributors to carbon emissions and is therefore one of the most important areas to address when considering the sustainability opportunities of tall buildings. Tall building proposals should seek to exceed the latest regulations and planning policies for reducing energy use and minimising carbon emissions over the course of development. In particular, proposals will need to respond to Government aims to ensure that all housing built after 2016 will be carbon zero and that all non-domestic development built after 2019 will contribute nothing to national net CO₂ emissions.

As already identified in Core Strategy Policy 18 Sustainable Energy, development will be required to include sufficient on-site renewable energy generation to at least exceed the requirements of the latest national and regional targets. Compared to many other forms of development, tall buildings offer a greater opportunity to maximise energy generation and, as a result, they should seek much high attainment than traditional development in order to maximise their potential. As such, tall buildings will need to consider the appropriateness of alternative energy generation such as solar or wind and the use of combined heat and power units.

Overall, tall buildings represent significant opportunities for exploring, developing, and utilising new practices in design and construction. The latest and most appropriate technologies and design approaches will be encouraged for Worthing.

c. Maintenance and Management

Efforts should be made to consider the long-term maintenance and management of tall buildings as this is critical to the image they project to the public realm. A comprehensive plan to address this will need to be prepared and agreed with Worthing Borough Council. This will include the building itself, as well as the surrounding public spaces. Tall buildings which are poorly managed or maintained can negatively impact on wider areas and whole neighbourhoods. Additionally, their unique nature can mean that it is hard to make alterations and, for example, change window units etc. Therefore, a practical approach to maintenance should be adopted whilst not diminishing the elegance of the building.

d. Robustness

The need for a flexible approach with regards to tall buildings is of great importance, as the long-term resources and energy efficiency of tall buildings will be enhanced if their design can be adapted over time. The long term adaptability of tall buildings and flexibility for productive reuse should be considered to ensure their longevity and maintenance and to limit their future obsolescence. Information exploring how this important issue has been approached and addressed in the design of new tall buildings will be required.

Proposals for tall buildings must be sustainable. To ensure this, design proposals must consider:

- **the need to achieve the latest standards for sustainable construction;**
- **the need to reduce energy use and minimise carbon emissions;**
- **the long term management and maintenance of the building;**
- **the long term adaptability and flexibility for productive reuse.**

2. Townscape / Public Realm

a. Massing (shape and volume)

Tall buildings in Worthing need to understand and respect the context in which they sit and be appropriate with regards to the existing built environment and not appear dominant, bulky or overpowering. Developers should pay great attention to the proportion of new buildings and aim towards a more elegant and appropriate form.

It will be important the right type of tall building (landmark, slab, townscape etc.) is proposed on the site in question as different building types will have different impacts. However, in general, boxy and slab like buildings should be avoided. For townscape and tower buildings the following principles in particular should be followed:

- Townscape buildings should address: the rhythm of the street; the breaks between buildings; fenestration; composition; ridge lines; set backs; and the public realm.
- Towers should: be slender; composed of a single elegant element; provide a significant departure from the existing datum height; deliver a positive impact on the skyline and views; and avoid inelegant proportions.

b. Scale / Height

The scale of tall buildings in Worthing will depend on their surrounding context. However, it is important to ensure that they look appropriate with regards to the local environment so that they are not visually intrusive. Scale can be manipulated to make tall buildings seem smaller than they actually are. Tall buildings that can adopt these design methods would be looked on more favourably in circumstances where there are visual constraints. This can only be really successful where the massing of the building is also right for its context.

It will be the context and particular details of a site that will indicate the appropriate height of any new building. This analysis should be tested and a range of options explored.

The height of existing tall buildings in Worthing is relatively low in comparison with some other town centres, owing to the nature and characteristics of the borough. Whilst buildings of a very tall height are not ruled out, it will be important to take the height of adjoining buildings into consideration when considering the height of proposed tall buildings to ensure that they do not look unsightly or disproportionate.

c. Urban grain

Through the examination of the patterns of development in Worthing, proposals for tall buildings will need to complement the existing urban fabric of Worthing. A contextual study of a development site will inform the appropriate response, which will take into account both the front and back of the building and the relationship that it will have with its neighbours. This study will also need to consider the relationship to routes and spaces around the site, breaks in building line, set backs and landscape. Any increased height in the streetscape should respond positively to its urban location.

d. Streetscape

The view of a tall building from ground level is important as it is how it will be viewed for most people, especially those that live there and / or use the facilities. As a result, it is vital that the building contributes positively to the surrounding context to make the public realm a desirable place to be, and to contribute positively to people's perception of safety, and overall quality of life.

Tall buildings should promote a high level of interest at ground level and integrate visually with the streetscape. This can be achieved by enabling 'active' uses such as leisure, retail or food. Well-defined, inviting entrances are also important when attracting people to the area. There should be opportunities throughout the development to create attractive, interesting, safe, connected and uncluttered spaces. Furthermore, tall buildings should create good local pedestrian connections to other parts of the streetscape and create open spaces and frontages. Land uses within the proposed building should be compatible with those adjoining, to reinforce the character of

streets, with a clear public frontage and more private areas out of view. Frequent entrances to large blocks will help to create greater connection between the building and the public realm. Single large blocks with one point of access should be avoided.

Service areas, bin stores and car parking should be kept away from public spaces and located in appropriate areas.

For Worthing seafront in particular, any proposed tall building would need to ensure that linkages between the seafront and town centre are enhanced. The need to improve permeability also applies to tall buildings in close proximity to the stations. The Worthing Town Centre Masterplan has identified opportunities for Worthing to improve linkages throughout the town centre, creating green networks to make the town more pedestrian user friendly and tall buildings will need to consider this.

In appropriate circumstances, allowing the general public access to a tall building will be viewed favourably, to enable a more positive engagement with the building, and to help to create a stronger sense on community.

e. Public spaces and facilities

There are opportunities through tall buildings to enhance the public realm, add vitality and regenerate areas that have previously been under-used or are visually unwelcoming. All tall building proposals will need to demonstrate how they will contribute to improving social engagement, safety, diversity and the vitality of the area and create a sense of place. Public open space needs to be functional, well lit and safe.

Developers should assess the need for community facilities as part of tall building development. Furthermore, open space requirements for residents could be accommodated through roof, terraces, balconies and internal courtyards. However, these elements alone are unlikely to be enough to ensure that all users of the building have access to sufficient areas of open space. As a result, tall buildings will be required to contribute proportionately to the enhancement of the existing public realm and parks in the vicinity.

f. Land Use

Appropriate land uses are important in integrating new tall buildings into their urban settings. A vertical mix of uses within a tall building will be encouraged as this can help to achieve greater vitality in the public realm and encourage activity throughout the day.

It is vital that proposals for tall buildings relate and respond to the townscape and enhance the public realm. To ensure this proposals must:

- **understand and respect the local context which will inform the appropriate massing, scale and height of the building;**
- **complement the existing urban fabric;**
- **promote a high level of interest at ground level and integrate visually with the streetscape;**
- **seek to enhance the public realm, add vitality and regenerate areas;**
- **provide (where appropriate) a vertical mix of uses.**

3. Quality of Life

a. Microclimate

New tall buildings can adversely affect the environmental quality of surrounding areas through the diversion of high speed winds to ground level and through over-shadowing of adjacent property or public spaces. This is especially the case due to Worthing's location on the south coast. The impact of both these elements can often be mitigated through good design and sensitive siting. Windswept spaces must be avoided through architectural devices such as awnings and terraces, as well as through setbacks in the façade of the building. An assessment of these aspects will need to be carried out to ensure they are understood, minimised or improved.

b. Overshadowing / overlooking

Consideration will need to be given to reduce the negative impacts of overshadowing / overlooking on neighbouring buildings. This in itself is very difficult to remove completely, but it can be minimised through appropriate siting of the building and through orientation, floor space dimensions and overall building height. Access to natural light as well as privacy issues for new and existing residents should be considered during the design process. It should also be noted that the redevelopment of an existing site could present the opportunity to improve any existing issues of overshadowing / overlooking.

c. Accessibility (lifetime homes)

Tall buildings must comply with current building codes, building legislation, health and safety procedures and be fully compliant with all aspects of disability discrimination legislation. The provision of ramps, lifts, gentle rising steps, disabled parking will need to be provided to ensure that this is achieved. The provision of automatic opening doors, sensitive and appropriate lighting, clear signage, emergency exits, seating provisions and clear layouts will also be required.

d. Density

The potential benefits of seeking higher densities, through both tall buildings and more compact forms of development are well recognised. However, proposals for residential uses will be expected to meet or exceed the requirements of the Council's Space Standards SPD and ensure that development densities are not progressed at the expense of overall design quality and access to functional and well-designed public and private open space.

To ensure that any potential negative impacts of tall buildings on occupiers and neighbours is addressed proposals must ensure that:

- **potential negative impacts on the microclimate are understood, minimised or improved;**
- **any potential negative impacts of overshadowing / overlooking on neighbouring buildings is minimised;**
- **the building is accessible and fully compliant with all aspects of disability discrimination legislation;**
- **the density of development is not at the expense of the overall design quality.**

4. Design Detail

a. Materials and fenestration

Worthing is a coastal environment and the choice of materials and detailing must respond to the implications of building in a potentially harsh marine environment.

Tall buildings should use high quality materials and have a high standard of detailing that makes reference to their physical, cultural and historic surroundings. The arrangement of windows, balconies and other features can make a building's appearance look more interesting and an holistic design approach is encouraged. The design of elevations should avoid large areas of blank spaces. Where appropriate, the use of locally-sourced materials will be encouraged to help support the local economy and reduce transport costs and impacts.

b. Night time appearance

The view at night-time is an important consideration, and the impact of Worthing's night-time appearance as a result of an additional tall building will need to be assessed. Lighting in particular is a key design consideration, as it can greatly impact on long and near views. Lighting can be manipulated to the advantages of a tall building, to accentuate particular features. Developers and designers will need to carefully consider this and submit a lighting

strategy with their application. Excess and inappropriate lighting will be discouraged.

c. Advertisements

Generally, the Council would not support tall buildings that would incorporate advertising at a high level. As such, any tall building developments which intend to do this should state so at the pre-application stage.

d. Skyline profile and roof-top apparatus

Tall buildings can significantly alter the skyline and consideration will need to be given to minimise the negative impacts of development on the existing skyline. Furthermore, high quality design should be implemented to enable the enhancement of the skyline, particularly at strategic viewpoints and areas where there are high levels of pedestrian activity. This is particularly the case for landmark buildings.

The design of the top of tall buildings should not be overlooked. However, this is an important and prominent feature of the building, particularly in relation to the skyline and strategic views. Therefore, all buildings should produce an appropriate strategy for apparatus and masts on the roofs of tall buildings. All roof top apparatus and masts should be kept to a minimum, where they are required and cannot be included within the roofline, the developer would need to demonstrate how they have been composed to enhance, not detract, from the aesthetics of the building and its context. Scope for future increase in plant to accommodate new technology should be considered.

It is vital that proposals for tall buildings relate and respond to the townscape and enhance the public realm. To ensure this proposals must:

- **understand and respect the local context which will inform the appropriate massing, scale and height of the building;**
- **complement the existing urban fabric;**
- **promote a high level of interest at ground level and integrate visually with the streetscape;**
- **seek to enhance the public realm, add vitality and regenerate areas;**
- **provide (where appropriate) a vertical mix of uses.**

Summary

Through quality design, sustainable construction and townscape integration tall buildings must look to provide Worthing with a well-designed environment that contributes to the quality of life for those who use the buildings, for neighbours or visitors to the town.

The design considerations set out above provide an important set of criteria that must be considered alongside the earlier locational criteria to help establish the appropriateness of tall building proposals in the Borough. The following section combines these two elements within a summary and checklist.

Part 5 - Assessment Criteria Checklist

To help ensure that proposals for tall buildings are of the highest quality and that they make a positive addition to Worthing, a checklist has been produced. This checklist, which summarises those aspects developers will need to consider before submitting tall building proposals, incorporates the locational and design criteria established earlier in this document. Although this checklist provides a useful tool for developers, it should not be seen as a substitute for pre-application discussions, which is considered essential.

It is vital that tall buildings are considered 'in the round' and that the locational criteria and the design criteria are not treated in isolation. High design standards will only be acceptable if the tall building is also located in the right place. Those using this guidance should therefore use the checklist below to combine aspects from both sets with greater scrutiny given to certain criterion depending on the location of the development site and the nature of the scheme proposed.

Through the application of both the locational and design criteria, the overall assessment criteria (summarised below) can be applied consistently to tall building proposals in Worthing. These criteria, which constitute layers, allow for the cumulative assessment of the opportunities and constraints in relation to tall buildings which can then be used to guide the location and assessment of proposals. All of the criteria below should be cross-referenced against the appropriate sections of parts 3 and 4 of this document which provide the local context. If the proposed building does not respond positively to these tests a different form, scale, massing and height will be required. Conversely, in general terms, if the proposal responds well to all key tests then this is likely to indicate that the site has the capacity for a tall building. However, an application that responds to all criteria does not necessarily mean consent for planning permission will be given.

The Council will monitor and evaluate the success of this guidance and, if required, the development checklist may be updated as sites come forward or if the economic and social context changes.

Site Promotion Process

Using the Locational and Design Checklist provided at the end of this document and taking into consideration the Key Principles established throughout, developers and applicants of tall buildings in Worthing are encouraged to take the following steps in when promoting their site:

Pre-application advice

Promoters of tall buildings in Worthing are encouraged to engage with the Council (as local planning authority) and other key stakeholders at the earliest opportunity. Depending on the scale and impact of the proposal the applicant may also be advised to consult with external review organisations such as English Heritage and the specialist Design Panel for Coastal West Sussex.

Site Appraisal

Undertake a contextual and character appraisal of the site and surrounding area (including, if appropriate, more distant views).

Option Testing

The applicant will be expected to have tested a range of design options for a particular site and these considerations should form part of the design statement (see below). Visual Impact Assessments (VIA) and micro climate preliminary assessment should be undertaken at this stage to ensure thorough testing of options. The VIA will be needed to ensure that any proposed tall buildings are not to the detriment of the local environment (day and night).

Design Review

The independent review will consider the opportunities and constraints of the site and articulate how the proposal relates to its geographical and architectural context. As a result, prospective developers will need to demonstrate how their tall building responds positively to its context and enhances the visual and other aspects of Worthing. As such, visual impact assessments will need to be carried out to ensure that any proposed tall buildings are not to the detriment of the local environment.

Preferred Option

Work up and undertake a detailed assessment of the preferred option.

Submit Application

Given the potential impacts of new tall buildings and the importance placed on design, applicants are discouraged from submitting outline planning applications where design issues are addressed under reserved matters. All applications will be considered in a consistent manner informed by the contents of this guidance. As with applications for new tall buildings, proposals to add floors to existing buildings will also be expected to take into account the guidance set out in this document.

Supporting Information

Submissions must include written and illustrative supporting information to include:

- A **Survey Plan** and calculations that illustrate the proposal's relationship to the surrounding areas
- A **Character Area Study** to set out how the proposal relates to its context (including impact on heritage assets).
- A **Design Statement** that sets out the rationale for the proposal and responds the checklist below. This will include evidence of how other forms of development have been considered.
- An **Environmental Impact Assessment** which is likely to be required where development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use.
- A **Sustainability Statement** which will outline how the proposal contributes to meeting the social, environmental and economic objectives for the Borough.
- A **Land Use Statement** which will describe how the mix of uses proposed supports and complements the surrounding area and local community.
- An **Infrastructure Statement** which will assess the capacity of existing infrastructure and identify additional services and facilities required as a result of the development.
- A **Transport Statement** which will include a transport assessment and travel plan (for non-residential development) that provides a sustainable approach to transport issues.
- A **Microclimate Study** to consider the impacts of overshadowing, wind effects and so on.

The supporting information required by the Council and outlined above should be framed by the Key principles established in this guidance document. These are set out below. A more specific location al and design checklist follows, which pulls out the key issues that the Council will expect the applicant to have considered and, where appropriate, addressed. Similarly, if the applicant is not able to respond to some of these requirements the reasons for this should be clearly explained.

Tall Buildings in Worthing - Key Principles

Part 1 – Introduction to Tall Buildings

1. “Tall buildings are those that are substantially taller than their neighbours and / or which significantly change the skyline.”
2. Designers of tall buildings in Worthing should be clear about the character and role of their proposals and how these will fit into the wider urban context.
3. Different forms of tall buildings will have different impacts and positive / negative connotations for a given site. Consideration of the most appropriate form of development should be explored at the options development stage.
4. Tall buildings should be sited and designed in order to maximise their potential to add vitality to the area and contribute towards meeting regeneration objectives.
5. It is necessary to not only ensure that tall buildings are located strategically in the right place (which promotes their sustainability) but also to ensure that their impacts at the local level are positive and appropriate.
6. It is vital that tall buildings are appropriate for the occupiers (today and future) as well as their context.
7. Proposals for tall buildings should learn lessons from the past and deliver excellence in design.

Assessment Criteria:

Part 3 – Locational Criteria

8. Tall buildings should be sited around transport corridors and interchanges. Where appropriate, improvements must be made to the local transport infrastructure to ensure that future demand can be adequately met.
9. Parking implications must be taken into account during all stages of the design process.
10. Proposals for tall buildings should seek to strengthen existing centres by focussing intensification on areas well served by existing facilities and services. Proposals which are located in areas which do not strengthen existing centres are far less likely to be supported.

11. Proposals for tall buildings must understand and respect the fine historic townscape and character of Worthing. As such, their design would need to fully consider the potential impacts on each historic asset adjoining, or in close proximity to, the proposal site.
12. Tall buildings will not be permitted on land that currently falls outside the Built Up Area Boundary of the Borough (as illustrated on the Core Strategy Proposals Map).
13. The relationship of any new tall building with its topographical context must be appropriate for its urban role within the town.
14. Tall buildings should compliment, and not compromise strategic views, in the Borough and respect significant local views
15. Land that is currently used for recreation or informal open space is not appropriate for tall buildings.
16. The development of tall buildings should add vitality to the town by creating vibrant and lively environments.
17. Where appropriate, proposals must ensure that the symbolic qualities of tall buildings build on and exemplify the regeneration of the town centre and seafront.
18. The Council will be supportive of well-designed tall buildings where they help to promote sustainable development.

Part 4 – Design Criteria

19. Proposals for tall buildings must be sustainable. To ensure this, design proposals must consider:
 - the need to achieve the latest standards for sustainable construction;
 - the need to reduce energy use and minimise carbon emissions;
 - the long term management and maintenance of the building;
 - the long term adaptability and flexibility for productive reuse.
20. It is vital that proposals for tall buildings relate and respond to the townscape and enhance the public realm. To ensure this proposals must:
 - understand and respect the local context which will inform the appropriate massing, scale and height of the building;
 - complement the existing urban fabric;
 - promote a high level of interest at ground level and integrate visually with the streetscape;
 - seek to enhance the public realm, add vitality and regenerate areas.

21. It is vital that proposals for tall buildings relate and respond to the townscape and enhance the public realm. To ensure this proposals must:
 - understand and respect the local context which will inform the appropriate massing, scale and height of the building;
 - complement the existing urban fabric;
 - promote a high level of interest at ground level and integrate visually with the streetscape;
 - seek to enhance the public realm, add vitality and regenerate areas;
 - provide (where appropriate) a vertical mix of uses.

22. Design details can have a significant impact on the success, or otherwise, of a tall building. For this reason, proposals must:
 - ensure that the choice of materials and detailing responds to the local environment;
 - carefully consider the buildings night-time appearance and lighting strategy;
 - avoid the use of advertisements;
 - consider the design of the top of the building and keep to a minimum the number of masts and apparatus.

Locational Criteria		✓ or X
1.Context	How does the proposal respond to its context – topography, natural features, skyline, urban grain, grouping and scale?	
	Demonstrate how the proposal sits within the existing townscape. This should be illustrated through montages or models that help to analyse the potential impacts on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the built environment and local views - the setting of Conservation Areas - the setting of Listed Buildings - 	
	What impacts will the proposal have on environmentally sensitive areas in and around the Borough: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - South Downs National Park - Other designated areas - Seafront - Open spaces 	
	What impact will the proposal have on key strategic views, corridors, local views and gateways?	
	How does the proposed land use mix support and complement the surrounding land use pattern and local community?	
2. Accessibility	How well is the proposal related to the capacity of public transport and local services?	
	What is the approach to car parking provision and servicing?	
	Does the development provide for all types of movement?	
	Are opportunities to create new links and routes taken?	
	Is a full transport impact assessment provided?	
3. Support for regeneration	How does the proposal support the strategic vision for the town and how can it contribute towards meeting social, environmental and economic objectives for the Borough?	
	How does the proposal strengthen existing centres by focussing intensification on areas well served by existing facilities and services?	
	What role will the building play in the branding and perception of Worthing?	

Design Criteria		✓ or X
1. Sustainability	Have sustainable construction methods been used and have prevailing codes and standards been met (or preferably exceeded)?	
	Has the proposal explored the opportunity for developing and utilising renewable energy technologies?	
	Has the future maintenance and management plans been properly considered?	
	Are materials locally sourced?	
	Does the layout and design allow for future adaptation?	
	Is the proposal economically viable?	
	Has the current capacity of local infrastructure been assessed and have additional facilities and services required as a result of the proposed development been identified?	
	If additional infrastructure is required can it be incorporated within the proposal or are contributions to off-site infrastructure required?	
2. Townscape / Public Realm	Has the proposal been informed by a comprehensive urban design analysis and does it respond to existing local character?	
	What is the rationale, design quality and architectural intent of the proposal?	
	Is the scale and massing of the building justified and is it sensitive to its setting (neighbouring buildings, public spaces and the wider skyline)?	
	Is the building well-articulated, avoiding the creation of blank and uninteresting elevations?	
	How does the proposal respond to existing building alignments or capitalise on opportunities to frame views?	
	How do the proposed uses contribute to the streetscape, add vitality at street level and integrate with the surrounding area?	

	Is the impact of building height on the streetscape mitigated through sensitive design?	
	Is there a clear distinction between public, semi-public and private spaces?	
	Has the scheme been designed to add vitality through the creation of high quality public spaces and are arrangements in place for their maintenance and management.	
	Is landscape recognised as an integral part of the overall design proposal?	
3. Quality of life	Has the potential impact on wind, noise, microclimate, overshadowing been considered and how will the proposal impact on the amenity of those in the vicinity of the building?	
	Does the building meet or exceed accessibility requirements and provide suitable access for all?	
	In what way does the building encourage public access?	
	Does the proposal deliver active frontages, natural surveillance and legible entrances?	
	Do any proposed residential uses meet or exceed the requirements of the Council's Space Standards SPD?	
4. Design detail	What materials are to be used and how do these make reference to local character? (Samples may be required, as will examples of where the materials proposed have been successfully used).	
	Is the effect of materials on the surrounding area understood?	
	How are any differences between daytime and evening use addressed?	
	Does the lighting strategy positively emphasise the building while showing consideration for the surrounding buildings and spaces?	
	Are advertisements included and, if so, how will these impact on the surrounding area?	
	How well considered is the roofline and does it avoid clutter? Is there a strategy for apparatus and masts?	

