

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The first Worthing Local Plan was adopted by Worthing Borough Council in February 1994. It contained policies and proposals for the development and use of land in Worthing up to 1996.
- 1.2 The Review of the 1994 Local Plan commenced in 1995 with the publication of a consultation document. In November 1999 a Deposit Draft was issued followed by a Revised Deposit Draft in 2000. The Local Plan Inquiry into the outstanding objections was held between October 2000 and February 2001, with the Inspector's report received in October 2001. The Council considered the recommendations of the Inspector and published modifications to the Local Plan Review. The consultation period on the proposed modifications ended on 27th June 2002.
- 1.3 Following the consideration of the objections received during this period, the Council resolved to publish a further modification. This was issued for consultation in February 2003. Following the close of the consultation period, the Council resolved to make no further changes. This Plan was adopted on 4th September 2003 and sets out the policies and proposals for the Borough up to 2006. This Local Plan has been prepared in the context of the 1993 West Sussex Structure Plan. It has also taken into account emerging Government advice and the West Sussex Structure Plan Review.
- 1.4 The importance of the Local Plan is underlined by Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Development Plan, comprising the Structure Plan and Local Plan will be the primary consideration in the determination of planning applications. This is referred to as the plan-led system. When considering a planning application, Section 54A requires that it shall be determined in accordance with the relevant policies in the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Applications which are not in accordance with the Plan should not be allowed unless material considerations justify granting planning permission. The plan-led system differs fundamentally from the weight given to the Development Plan in previous legislation where the planning policies were just one of a number of material considerations.
- 1.5 It is important that this document provides a clear policy framework within which to balance the demands for development with the need to protect and enhance the built and natural environment. In this way the Plan aims to evaluate the different public interests in the use and

development of the Borough's land resources and make explicit the priorities to be given to competing demands.

The Purpose of the Worthing Local Plan 2003

- 1.6 The purpose of the Worthing Local Plan 2003 is to set out a framework of policies to guide and encourage development in the Borough up to the year 2006, whilst safeguarding and enhancing its environment.
- 1.7 The Local Plan has two main functions:
- to set out the Council's policies for the control of development; and
 - to make proposals for the development and use of land, and to allocate land for specific purposes.

Relationship With Other Policies, Strategies and Plans

Government Advice

- 1.8 Regional guidance for the south east is set out in Regional Planning Guidance Note 9 (March 2001). Government advice is also contained in Circulars and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) which cover a wide range of issues. The Worthing Local Plan 2003 has been prepared in the light of this advice. The individual chapters of this document look in detail at the relevant PPGs.

West Sussex Structure Plan

- 1.9 Local Authorities are required to achieve the general objectives of the Structure Plan for their area. Both the West Sussex Structure Plan (adopted in 1993) and the Worthing Local Plan comprise the "Development Plan" for Worthing.
- 1.10 The 1993 Structure Plan is the approved Structure Plan for the County until it is formally replaced by the Structure Plan Review. However, the Review of the 1993 Structure Plan has status as the County Council's intended

changes to the approved West Sussex Structure Plan 1993, and as such has been taken into account in this Local Plan.

- 1.11 The County Council issued a public consultation document "The Choices Ahead" which looks at the changes needed to the 1993 Structure Plan and looks forward to 2016. The Deposit Draft was issued in 2001 and the Examination in Public completed in 2002.
- 1.12 West Sussex County Council is the highway authority for the Borough. It is responsible for most highway planning, construction and maintenance, and on-

street parking. The County Council produces a five year rolling programme of highway improvement schemes, set out in a Local Transport Plan for the county. This document defines overall transport objectives and covers parking, cycling, enhancement, traffic calming and highway improvement.

Other Documents

- 1.13 The Local Plan is essentially a land-use document. There are, however, wide-ranging social, economic, environmental and transportation issues which local planning authorities must take into account in drawing up local plan policies and proposals. A number of those issues are addressed in other policy documents adopted by Worthing Borough Council:
- The Green Charter and "Local Agenda 21" strategy - to promote sustainable development and environmental protection.
 - The Housing Strategy Statement and Housing Investment Programme - the Council's strategy and action plan for providing new housing opportunities to meet local need.
 - The Economic Development Strategy - draws on the results of three studies commissioned by the Council's economic development partnership.
 - The Tourism Strategy.
 - The Leisure Strategy (to be reviewed).
 - The Playing Field Strategy - reviewed in 1994.

- The Town Centre Initiative and Action Plan - identifies opportunities for enhancing the environment and vitality of the Town Centre.

Format of the Plan

- 1.14 The Worthing Local Plan 2003 consists of a written statement and a Proposals Map. The written statement sets out the policies and background information to guide development. The Proposals Map defines the area covered by the plan and identifies those areas of the Borough to which each policy and proposal relates. It consists of a Borough-wide plan together with a smaller inset covering the Town Centre.
- 1.15 The Plan contains policies which apply to the whole Borough, together with individual policies relating to specific areas or sites. The policies provide a framework for:
- Guidance - to guide local people, landowners and developers in respect of future development, within a borough-wide context.
 - Incentive - to promote particular land uses in order to stimulate or bring forward development by making clear allocations.
 - Control - to ensure that proposals brought forward conform to national policies, regional guidance and the policies of this document.
 - Certainty - for both developers and the public.
 - Involvement through consultation - by bringing local planning issues to the attention of the public, and responding through changes to the Local Plan.
- 1.16 As a result policies are both positive where specific forms of development are required and can be implemented during the Plan period; and restrictive, arising from the need to protect an area from undesirable or harmful development. The Plan also contains enabling policies, aimed at encouraging certain activities in appropriate locations.

1.17 A number of appendices have been produced to support the Plan. In addition, the Plan refers to a range of supplementary planning guidance, such as development briefs and policy statements. Whilst such guidance does not form part of the Plan, it amplifies and supports the policies and proposals contained in the Plan and can be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

KEY ISSUES FOR WORTHING

1.18 A number of important issues arise from the Structure Plan Review and changing circumstances since the adoption of the first Local Plan in 1994. Many of the issues and concerns set out below were raised by residents at the first round of public meetings held in the Autumn of 1994 and as responses to the Consultation Document , the Deposit Draft 1999 and Revised Deposit Draft 2000.

- How to safeguard and enhance Worthing's environment and ensure that fragile and irreplaceable resources are not damaged or lost.
- The need to conserve the existing built environment as well as the countryside.
- The importance of considering the location of new development, having regard to any impact on the environment and the availability of a choice of means of transport.
- Seeking ways of improving and diversifying the local economy.
- Ensuring that housing needs are met, with careful consideration to the density, scale, type and location of development.
- The need to achieve a high quality of design and layout in housing schemes.
- Ensuring that the existing social, community, leisure and shopping facilities are maintained and improved, with particular emphasis on the town and district centres.
- Working to maintain and strengthen the distinctive features which give Worthing its particular character and identity.

Key Aims

- 1.19 To address these issues there are several key aims which emerge. The following seven key aims provided the framework for the preparation of more detailed objectives, policies and proposals. This framework is an important part of the Plan in that it sets out the means by which the key issues for Worthing can be addressed. In particular, the aims reinforce the central theme of the Structure Plan Review - to achieve development and activity which is sustainable.

Aim One: To ensure that the development or use of land meets present needs whilst not reducing opportunities available to future generations. To ensure that there is no irretrievable loss of important natural or cultural resources or important environmental assets. Demand for development will not be met where it is clear that to do so would breach these principles.

- 1.20 Sustainable development seeks to deliver the objective of achieving, now and in the future, economic development to secure higher living standards while protecting and enhancing the environment. Economic prosperity can ensure the maintenance of the quality of the environment. The concept of sustainable development achieved prominence following the publication in 1987 of the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: "Our Common

Future" - also known as the Brundtland Report. This contains the following definition:-

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

- 1.21 In 1992, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio, World Leaders agreed on an Agenda 21 of practical measures for achieving sustainable development in the 21st Century. The UK Government has since published its UK Strategy for Sustainable Development, identifying the planning system as one of the main tools available. This is reflected in Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 which stresses that the continuing demand for development will need to be assessed within the context of sustainable development. Sustainable development must be environment-led and other plan objectives must

be achieved within this overriding aim. From this has developed the Local Agenda 21 which aims to develop local policies for sustainable development and build partnerships between local authorities and other sectors of society to implement them.

- 1.22 Reducing demands for energy and protecting resources are key aims of sustainability. Much can be done through careful consideration of the location of development, together with efficiency in building practice and in the building of energy efficient home, offices and factories, for example :-
- (i) reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling or use of public transport;
 - (ii) encouraging re-use of urban land;
 - (iii) minimising the loss of countryside resources;
 - (iv) recycling, including building materials. Some can be broken down and re-used, others can be cleaned up for re-use, such as bricks, tiles and timber. Such re-use can be particularly helpful in securing sympathetic new building and restorations in relation to conservation areas and listed buildings.

Built-up area boundary

- 1.23 The built-up area boundary is a policy line which separates urban land, on which development will normally be permitted, from the countryside, within which development is normally resisted. The built up area boundary also serves to preserve the setting of Worthing, by protecting the surrounding countryside from unnecessary development. This concept is set out in the Structure Plan but it is necessary for the local plan to define the boundary.
- 1.24 The concept of the built-up area boundary is fundamental to the sustainable strategy. It is the main tool for ensuring the most efficient use of unused or under-used land within the urban area and so minimising the consumption of the resources of the countryside.

Objectives:

1. To promote a pattern and form of development which reduces the use of energy and transport. (Policy RES1)

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2. To establish a clear and defensible boundary to the built-up area. (Policy C1)
 3. To promote the use of the Borough's resources of renewable energy within environmental constraints. (Policy RES2)
 4. To increase tree cover in order to absorb carbon dioxide.
 5. To protect and enhance habitats and encourage the creation of new habitats for wildlife. (Policies RES3 and RES4)
 6. To protect, manage and improve the quality of natural resources such as air, water, land and minerals. (Policy RES10)
 7. To reduce pollution and to mitigate the effects of pollution where it does occur. (Policy RES7)

Aim Two : To maintain and strengthen those factors which give Worthing its particular physical character.

- 1.25 Worthing was granted its Royal Charter in 1890 and at that time the Borough covered an area of 1,790 acres and had a population of 16,000. Today it is the largest town in West Sussex covering an area of over 8,000 acres and with a population exceeding 98,000. Worthing as a town has evolved from a number of established villages and settlements, such as Broadwater, Tarring and Goring. The characteristics of these settlements can still be seen within the urban fabric of the town and must be retained to preserve the historical origins of Worthing itself.
- 1.25 Worthing has the dual attractions of the coast and the countryside, and these aspects have shaped the development of the town as a whole. In particular, the seafront plays an important role in defining the character of Worthing, with distinctive seaside uses, open space and architecture; not least being the Pier. The countryside surrounding the town falls largely within the Sussex Downs Area of

Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Downs to the north of the town give a unique setting to Worthing, with views from within the town of the attractive countryside and views towards the town, clearly demonstrating the growth pattern of the urban area and its seaside setting.

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- 1.27 Of particular importance are the open gaps along the coast which separate Worthing from neighbouring authorities. These strategic gaps give Worthing its definition as a distinct town, with its own characteristics.

Objectives:

8. To protect and enhance the distinctive landscape quality of the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. (Policy C2)
9. To protect and enhance the open character of land between the built up area boundary of Worthing and adjacent settlements. (Policy C5)
10. To maintain and improve the promenade, seafront paths, beaches and open space which contribute to the character of Worthing's seafront. (Policy CT3)
11. To conserve and enhance the buildings, street patterns and other features which comprise the original historic village settlements from which Worthing developed. (Policies BE1-BE29)

Aim Three : To conserve and enhance the natural and built environment of the Borough.

- 1.28 The countryside should be viewed as a limited resource and protected for its own sake in order to preserve and enhance its physical character. This includes the protection and management of areas of natural interest and protecting the best areas of agricultural land from irreversible loss. By directing development to within the built up area boundary, journeys can be made more efficient. This approach to the protection of the countryside can be seen as helping to meet the aims of sustainable development.
- 1.29 The built environment is also a resource. Improving its quality encourages inward investment and is important to the prosperity of the Borough. The quality of the built environment has a considerable effect upon the quality of life, consequently good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and should be encouraged everywhere; it can help promote sustainable development; improve the quality of the existing environment; attract business and

investment; and reinforce civic pride and a sense of place. Careful design can reduce crime in new development. The Council has an important role to play in balancing and reconciling all the issues which influence and shape the quality of the built environment.

Objectives:

12. To promote a high standard of design in all elements of development. (Policy BE1)
13. To preserve and enhance areas of townscape value and improve areas with a poor quality environment. (Policy BE3)
14. To preserve and enhance the Borough's listed buildings, conservation areas and safeguard archaeological remains. (Policies BE5-BE29, A1-A3)
15. To protect landscaping and open space which makes a positive contribution to the environment and to ensure that new and enhanced landscaping and open space is created, particularly within the built up area. (Policy BE17)
16. To protect the countryside for its own sake, to protect and enhance the physical character of the countryside. (Policy C1)
17. To protect and enhance the best and most versatile agricultural land from irreversible loss. (Policy C4)

Aim Four: To foster a sense of place, identity and community both for local areas and for Worthing as a whole.

- 1.30 The concept of a sense of place and community follows on from Aim Two which emphasises the factors which give Worthing its particular character. The planning system has an important role to play in enhancing the sense of place and community. In particular, it can serve to promote the development of local centres and ensure that self contained communities are both retained and created. In this way the pattern of development can build upon the historic origins of the Borough.
- 1.31 The town centre is an important focus for retailing, business, leisure and social facilities; as well as providing a range of residential opportunities. It is this mixture of uses which contribute to the vitality and viability of not only the town centre but also all centres within the Borough. As stated in

PPG6: "Town Centres are part of our national and civic heritage, and securing their health helps to foster civic pride and local identity".

Objectives:

18. To promote and support Worthing's identity as a centre of commerce and tourism, and as a high quality residential location for all sections of the community. (Policies BE1-BE29)
19. To develop the role of the town centre as a sub-regional shopping centre, business centre and focus for entertainment and leisure activities; providing facilities for people from Worthing and beyond. (Policies S1-S16)
20. To promote the development of local centres as a focus for retailing, business, leisure and social facilities at a community level.

(Policies SC1-SC8, S1-S16)

Aim Five: To maintain and improve the social well-being of those who live or work in the Borough.

- 1.32 Facilities for education, health care, and other social needs such as community centres and meeting rooms play an important part in community life. It is important that adequate facilities are provided with new development and that social and community facilities are accessible to all. Sufficient provision should be made for the recreation needs of the community, with the protection of existing open space.
- 1.33 The Local Plan must also address the housing needs of the Borough, with consideration given to the location and type of new accommodation; this includes a community's needs for affordable housing. It should identify an adequate and continuous supply of housing land to meet future requirements which is both available and sustainable. Policies should therefore make effective use of land within urban areas, whilst protecting open space, playing fields and green spaces.
- 1.34 The town centre is important to the quality of life and plays a key role in delivering sustainable development. Plan policies need to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre and maintain an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector. Plan policies should

ensure the availability of a wide range of shops, employment, services and facilities to which people have easy access by a choice of means of transport.

Objectives:

21. To maintain and improve the range and quality of social, community, recreation, leisure and retail facilities throughout the Borough for residents and visitors to the town. (Policies LR1-LR12, S1-S16)
22. To ensure that infrastructure is adequately provided in new development, and to encourage the provision of infrastructure improvements where they are necessary. (Policy RES12)
23. To maintain and improve Worthing's housing stock, including the provision of a variety of dwelling types and tenures for existing and future residents. (Policies H1-H18)
24. To protect and improve the amenity of those living and working in the Borough and to improve security throughout the environment. (Policy H18)

Aim Six: To improve accessibility and the choice of transport in a safe and sustainable way.

- 1.35 In order to achieve sustainable patterns of development and to help reduce the environmental impacts of transport, the Local Plan should integrate transport and

land use policies to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, encourage alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact and reduce the reliance on the private car.

- 1.36 Policies must guide the location of development to where there is access to different modes of transport and foster forms of development which encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.

Objectives:

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25. To promote a pattern and design of development which will enable access by all sections of society including the elderly and the disabled. (Policy TR8)
 26. To reduce the dependence on the private car by ensuring that development provides facilities and access for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians, as appropriate, and by promoting transport initiatives and improvements that support these forms of transport. (Policy TR3)
 27. To improve safety by supporting traffic management initiatives. (Policy TR2)
 28. To support improvements to the road network which are necessary to improve safety and reduce the local environmental impact of road traffic, particularly on residential areas. (Policy TR1)

Aim Seven: To promote and enable development and economic activity that will meet the employment needs of the Borough and contribute to a strong local economy.

- 1.37 It is important that the Local Plan should have regard to the importance of encouraging industrial and commercial development if the local economy is to prosper; particularly when technological and other requirements of modern business are changing rapidly. One of the key aims within PPG1 is to encourage continued economic development in a way which is compatible with stated environmental objectives.
- 1.38 Worthing is heavily dependent on a small number of major firms, with employment growth not keeping up with the demand for new jobs. It is important that the Plan addresses the need for sites of the quality and size needed to attract new investment. The policies therefore promote business development which will help advance the economic and social well-being of the Borough's existing and future inhabitants.

Objectives:

29. To allocate land for development of sufficient quality and quantity to meet future employment needs. (Policy B1)

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30. To enable existing businesses to expand and adapt in the Borough.
 31. To identify and promote facilities which will support and encourage businesses to invest in the Borough.
 32. To support the growth and retention of employment across a wide range of economic sectors which will improve the range and quality of local employment opportunities. (Policy B10)
 33. To enable the tourism industry to adapt to changing tourism trends. (Policies T1-T7)

Plan, Monitor and Manage

- 1.39 The requirements for local authorities to plan, monitor and manage are set out in PPG12: Development Plans and PPG3: Housing. Worthing Borough Council will monitor the policies of the Local Plan in accordance with this guidance.
- 1.40 The effect of monitoring will be to address two fundamental questions:
 - are the policies being applied in practice?
 - are they the right policies?
- 1.41 Monitoring will establish whether the Plan is achieving its objectives and identify which of those policies need strengthening, maintaining, modification or removing from the Plan. It also provides the opportunity to reassess existing site allocations and review policies in the light of any changes in national policy guidance.

Proposed Framework

Annual Report

- 1.42 The Borough Council will undertake an annual review, to be published as an annual report. The responsibility for providing an annual report will be embodied as a Key Task for the Strategic Planning and Housing Group to demonstrate the commitment to the Plan, Monitor and Manage approach. The annual report will be presented to the Executive Member for Planning and Economic Development at the end of each year and will reflect a common format repeated from one year to the next.

Content of the Annual Report

1.43 The report will include a factual account of population and market trends, including population estimates, household projections, housing needs, housing stock and employment trends.

1.44 The report will present a review of the following policies:

H1	Amount of housing
H4 - H8	Housing Allocations
H3	Affordable housing provision
MS1 - MS4	Mixed Site Allocations
CT5	Sea Place/Eirene Road Allocation
TR9	Parking Standards
B1	Employment provision
B2 - B9	Employment allocations
LR5	Protection of open space
LR8	Provision of open space

1.45 In addition, in accordance with PPG3 regarding the supply of housing land, the annual report will present the following information:

- number of dwellings provided in the plan area
- housing completions
- number of permissions for housing development
- delivery rates
- the proportion of dwellings provided on previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings
- the number of dwellings provided on windfall sites
- the number of affordable dwellings provided
- the density of new development
- car parking provision

1.46 The results of the regular monitoring of the policies and allocations of the Local Plan will determine whether an early review of the Plan is necessary, particularly in respect of the overview of the housing land supply position.