

FILE NOTE

North Street area, Lewes

Technical Group: Meeting No 12

LDC Offices, Southover House, Lewes

Thursday 31 January 2008

Present:

- Lindsay Frost (LF) - Director of Planning & Environmental Services, LDC
- Paul Hoppen (PH) – Assistant Director, Strategy & Regeneration, LDC
- John Magness (JM) – Director of Finance & Community Services, LDC
- Clare Flowers (CF) – Planning Policy, LDC
- Kate Stevenson (KS) – Planning Policy, LDC
- Natalie Carpenter (NC) – Planning Policy, LDC
- Andrew Hill (AH) – Development Services, LDC
- Chris Morris (CM) – Design & Conservation, LDC
- Tim Bartlett (TB) – Environmental Services, LDC
- Mark Reynard (MR) – Legal Services, LDC

- Alan Cook (AC) – ESCC Highways
- Clare Warwick (CW) – ESCC Highways

- Graham Steaggles (GS) – English Heritage

- Julia Wallace (JW) – ATLAS (Advisory Team on large Applications)

- Charles Style (CS) – Angel Property
- John Jolley (JJ) – Angel Property
- Jenny Exley (JE) – Jenny Exley Associates, Chartered Landscape Architects to Angel Property

	Action
<p>1 Apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matthew Bird (MB) – Sustainable Development, LDC• Michael Grey (MG) – Guinness Trust• Phil Griffiths (PG) – Affinity Sutton Housing• Grant Moffatt (GM) – Environment Agency• Jennifer Ross (JR) – Tibbalds, planning advisers to Angel Property• Kelvin Hinton – ATLAS (Advisory Team on Large Applications)	
<p>2 Notes of last meeting held on 6 December 2007 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	

3 Towards a Planning Vision for North Street

(a) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

- LF and PH reported that LDC had now received a draft SFRA from their consultants, Faber Maunsell. The document was still in draft form and has yet to be fully checked and formally endorsed by LDC and the Environment Agency.
- The SFRA is a huge document, which is a “toolkit” for assessing flood risk, both across Lewes District as a whole and on individual proposed development sites, and has been prepared using the guidelines in the Government’s Planning Policy Statement 25.
- Extracts from the draft SFRA were tabled at the meeting, in particular information on the more detailed modelling work done on flood risk for key sites in Lewes and Newhaven, and a flow chart for application of the “sequential test” to Lewes flood cells 4 and 5 (which includes North Street).
- LF emphasised that the SFRA does not draw conclusions, or make specific recommendations, about individual development proposals. It is intended to provide a body of information, and a methodology, for assessing such proposals.
- The next steps with the SFRA are as follows:
 - a) LDC have already sent a copy of the draft SFRA to the Environment Agency, and will seek the Agency’s endorsement of it as early as possible.
 - b) Once the SFRA has received technical endorsement from the Agency, LDC will commission further work using the SFRA to apply the PPS25 “sequential” and “exceptions” tests to the North Street site. This is a key piece of work for the “Planning Vision”.
 - c) Angel Property will update their existing draft site – specific Flood Risk Assessment for the North Street area in light of the SFRA. Their consultants, Atkins, will liaise on technical issues direct with Faber Maunsell. PH confirmed that LDC are willing to make available the detailed flood risk modelling work for Lewes.
 - d) LDC will need to keep updating the SFRA as new information becomes available. PH and CF will set up appropriate arrangements for collating such information, as it comes in.

PH

PH/CF

CS/Atkins

PH/CF

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LF said one such update would be the conclusions of the Pitt Review on the summer 2007 floods. Extracts from Pitt's Interim Report were circulated to the meeting. The role of surface water drainage in causing flooding (often off the floodplain) was highlighted by Pitt. LDC are participating in a national pilot programme on this issue and a report should be available later in 2008. • LF said that there was still no response from DCLG and the Environment Agency National Policy Group on the various PPS25 issues raised with them as far back as July 2007, and the subject of several subsequent chaser e-mails. He said that we had to now assume that we would get no guidance from them in advance of the PPS25 Practice Guide document, expected in Spring 2008. 	LF/Ian Kedge
<p>(b) Planning Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDC officers will pick up work on the "Planning Vision", now that the draft SFRA is available and work can begin on application of the "sequential" and "exceptions" tests to PPS25. 	LF/PH
<p>5 Progress on position statements</p>	
<p>(i) Access</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC provided some comments on the draft report by Space Syntax on pedestrian accessibility. He had concerns about a secondary pedestrian route across the proposed Phoenix Place junction which, he felt, could well be unworkable. He also questioned why the pedestrian route hierarchy did not show the route along North Street to the upper part of the town. ESCC officers will take up these points further with Angel Property. 	AC/CW/Angel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The model testing for the various Phoenix Causeway junction options has not yet been started by Owen Williams. AC raised concerns about these junction options being considered in isolation: it was also necessary to test the wider "knock on" effects elsewhere on the local highway network, working outwards from Phoenix Causeway. AC will liaise with Richard Pelham of Owen Williams. 	AC/CW/Owen Williams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCC officers have now given further consideration to the issue of whether there is a policy preference for routing through traffic up North Street and through the proposed development site, or around it, through East Street/Little East Street/Phoenix Causeway, as at present. Although ESCC officers initial preference was routing traffic through the proposed development site, they now consider it appropriate to keep an open mind, and use the Lewes Traffic Model to assess both options against the following 	

<p>wider traffic objectives for Lewes Town Centre:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce cross town centre traffic 2. To improve pedestrian access to the town centre from the Phoenix Quarter, via Green Walk and along Eastgate Street. 3. To improve pedestrian access to the Bus Station across Eastgate Street 4. To accommodate bus movements to/from the existing bus station into Phoenix Causeway (and reduce bus circulation around the one way system) 5. Reduce the speed of traffic in the town centre 6. Reduce pollution in the town centre, which has been designated an Air Quality Management Area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LF asked AC and CW if they could liaise with Richard Pelham to prepare a revised programme for testing of junction options at Phoenix Causeway, and for testing of the wider traffic impact of the proposed Phoenix Quarter development. The latter would depend on Angel Property indicating an updated quantum of development, following their current Master Plan work. A separate meeting to cover these matters was suggested by TB, and he will liaise with AC to put arrangements in hand. 	<p>AC/CW/Owen Williams</p> <p>Angel</p> <p>TB/AC</p>
<p>(ii) Design & Conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JE reported progress on the contextual analysis of the North Street site, she is undertaking for Angel Property, and circulated a folder of text, drawings, maps and photographs representing “work in progress”. The contextual analysis covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Physiography (Downland setting, river etc) ❖ History, growth and built form of Lewes ❖ Previous land uses in the North Street area ❖ Social and economic history ❖ Traffic and transport ❖ Classification of character areas ❖ “Experiential planning” – how streets and spaces are seen and felt by users • GS encouraged JE to look at the English Heritage publication “Seeing the history of the view”, available on their website, as providing a good guide to contextual analysis. • JE will supply a copy of the contextual analysis work so far on DVD to AH, CM and GS for their comments, so that any feedback can be considered before the document is finalised 	<p>JE</p> <p>JE</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Flood wall along the front of Pelham Terrace; practicality of demountable defences? • A flood defence proposal will also need to be put to Lewes District Council, in their capacity as a major landowner in the North Street area. • Boreholes to test land contamination at North Street will be sunk on February 11 by Phlorum Consultants, acting for Angel. Angel and their consultants need to continue liaison on this work with Tim Bartlett (Land Contamination) and Casper Johnson and Paul Roberts (Archaeology) • TB said that he is still awaiting background work on noise issues, and would welcome a meeting to scope the necessary work with Angel's consultant, Ken Collins. • Further work on the air quality impact of development at North Street depends on the outcome of the traffic modelling work (see item 4(i) above). 	<p>Angel</p> <p>Angel TB/CJ/PR</p> <p>TB/KC</p>
<p>(v) Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lewes Community Land Trust (LCLT) have published their vision for the North Street area and the wider town centre. The vision involves retaining existing buildings in employment use, but gradually upgrading them to increase their resilience to flooding and to make them more attractive to modern businesses. The package also includes a media and technology centre, a riverside walkway, parking, and housing off the flood plain higher up North Street. Any retail development would be between the High Street and Phoenix Causeway, close to the existing shopping centre. Details and a press statement by LCLT were tabled at the meeting. • LCLT intend to consult widely on their planning vision and an initial meeting was held with LDC officers on January 15. LF said that LDC planning officers are currently examining the proposals and, in particular, would be liaising with the Environment Agency, and Locate East Sussex, on flood risk and business viability issues respectively. Other parties will need to consider their own response to the proposals. 	<p>LF to coordinate</p> <p>EA,ESCC LTC etc</p>
<p>(vi) Sustainability</p> <p>The Dunlop report is still not available for comment by LDC officers. CS said that Angel will review the current draft document, when the design of the scheme has firmed up following further Master Plan work.</p>	

(vii) Commercial development

- No change since meeting on 6 December 2007

(viii) Strategic Choices

- As before (see notes to Technical Group meeting No. 9)

(ix) Community & Social Development

- CF is still working on the matrix of community and social infrastructure.
- LF referred to the recent Government publication on a “Community Infrastructure Levy”, as a means of ensuring that new development is adequately served by physical, social and economic infrastructure. LDC officers are currently examining the new proposals.

5 Progress on planning applications by Angel Property

- AH reported that Angel Property have submitted a planning application for B1, B2 and B8 development and a long stay car park at Malling Brooks East, Lewes (ref. LW/07/1608). If permitted, the proposals will allow relocation of a number of businesses and facilities from North Street, so as to facilitate redevelopment there. AH said that LDC officers had commenced public consultation on the application.
- LF said that it might be useful for AH to meet Angel Property after the end of the application consultation period (February 28) to review all comments received and identify any issues requiring further work or clarification on the application.
- CS and JJ tabled a document called “Evolution of the Master Plan for the Phoenix Quarter”, showing how the scheme proposals have evolved in recent months and which they would like to make the focus of another round of public consultation. LF asked that an electronic copy be provided, so that LDC and ESCC officers can feed back comments prior to any further public consultation. CS is keen to “freeze” the Master Plan design, so that all necessary documentation can be assembled for a planning application.

(NB Angel are strongly recommended to complete the contextual analysis and to use this as the basis for preparing planning objectives, and then a Master Plan for the site – see 4(ii) above).

AH/CS

JJ

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LF asked Angel to provide an update on progress with the various supporting documentation for an application at North Street, using the matrix developed at earlier Technical Group meetings. CS and JJ to consider. • PH reminded Angel of the need to review the Site Flood Risk Assessment in the light of the draft SFRA and referred Angel to possible use of the EA's "letter of compliance" procedure, as a means of expediting matters. <p>6 Any other business</p> <p>No matters raised.</p> <p>7 Matters to be referred to senior LDC councillors for guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft SFRA and further work by LDC on the "sequential" and "exceptions" tests. • Response to LCLT proposals • Whether LDC have any interest in relocating facilities to new buildings at Malling Brooks East (e.g. North Street Recycling Centre), should planning permission be granted. <p>8 Date of next meeting</p> <p>Thursday, 13 March 2008, 10:00 am – Rooms 7 & 8 Southover House.</p>	<p>CS/JJ</p>
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L Frost
 Director of Planning & Environmental Services
 13 February 2008