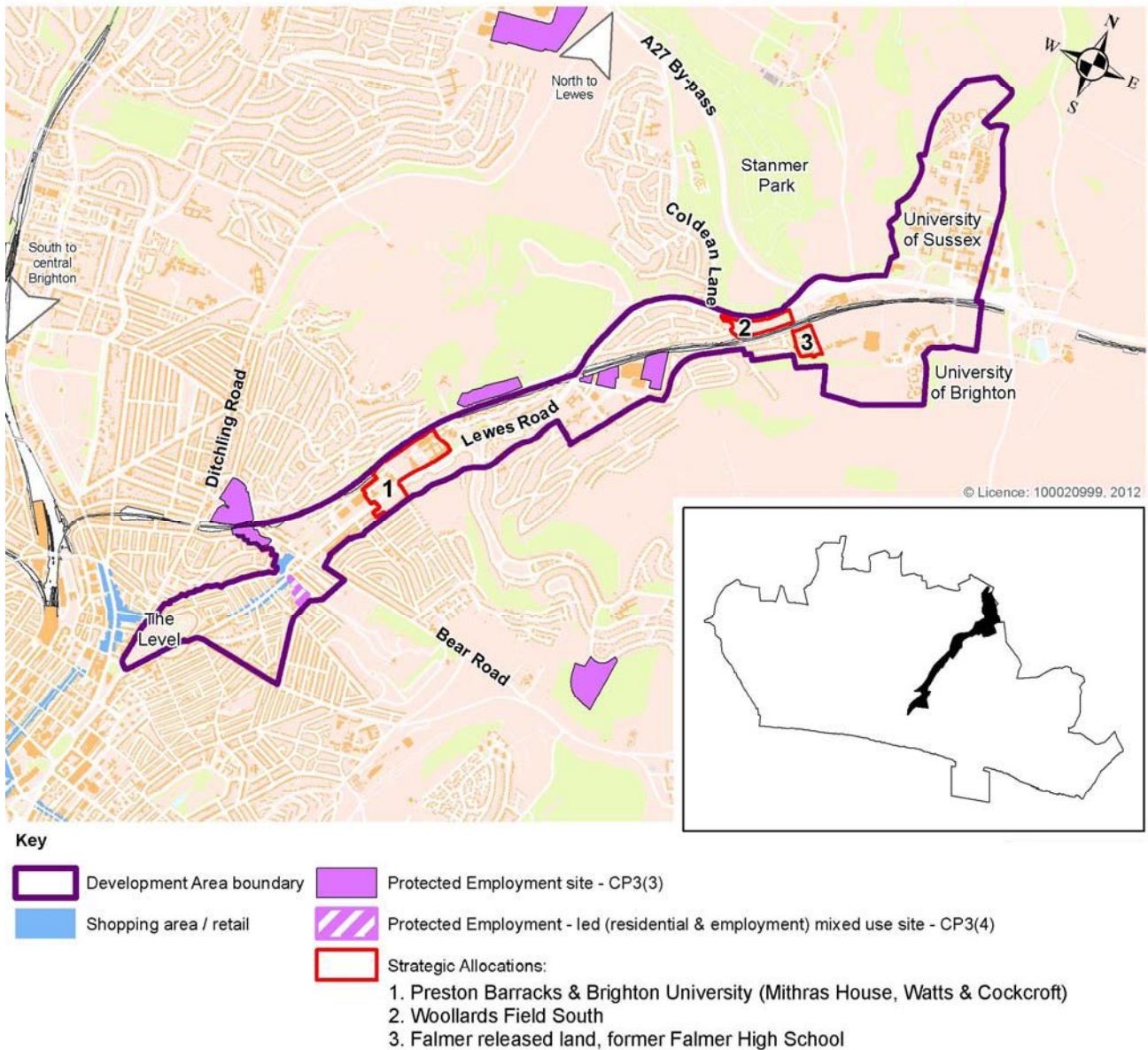


## DA3 – Lewes Road Area



### Context

3.22 The Lewes Road is the largest development area identified in the City Plan. It extends the length of Lewes Road from The Level in the south (open space) northwards to the Universities and the South Downs National Park at the city's boundary. Lewes Road is one of the main routes into the city and is identified as a sustainable transport corridor. The southern section of the development area is dominated by The Level, the Lewes Road District Shopping Centre and the Cemeteries to the east. The middle section is mixed in character including taller buildings and the Preston Barracks site. To the north are residential areas, open space at Wild Park and Stanmer Park, the two main University campuses and the Community Stadium. The area as a whole has a mixed and often poor quality townscape and public realm, dominated by the dual carriageway. There are two residential renewal areas on the eastern side of Lewes Road at Moulsecoomb and Bevendean.

3.23 The main thrust of the strategy for the Lewes Road Development Area is to promote and enhance the role of the area for higher education in Brighton & Hove. In addition there are a number of significant development sites within the area including three strategic allocations (the Preston Barracks site, Woollards Field South and the Falmer Released Land). The area will benefit from an improved public realm and townscape along with greening of the route.

#### DA3 Lewes Road

The strategy for the development area is to further develop and enhance the role of **Lewes Road as the city's academic corridor**<sup>40</sup> by supporting proposals which:

- improve further and higher education provision in the Lewes Road area;
- facilitate improved sustainable transport infrastructure that provides choice, including travel by bus, walking and cycling;
- secure improvements to the townscape and public realm;
- deliver inter-connected green infrastructure and biodiversity improvements, contributing to Biosphere objectives (see policy CP10);
- improve air quality in the Lewes Road area; and
- deliver the amounts of development set out in part B below.

A. The local priorities to achieve this strategy are:

1. The council will work in partnership with the Universities to support the sustainable redevelopment and expansion of the University campuses; deliver appropriate accommodation for students; and develop closer links between the Universities and local communities through sharing facilities and developing local opportunities for training and learning.
2. Promoting and investing in improved bus, cycling and pedestrian routes along Lewes Road from The Level to the Universities in partnership with public transport operators in order to achieve a modal shift and thereby help reduce the impact of traffic and ensure that new development does not negatively impact on the air quality of the area.
3. Encouraging the development of housing, employment floorspace and community facilities to increase opportunities for and to meet the needs of local communities.
4. Securing improvements to the public realm and townscape, including greening the route, through the adoption of comprehensive design guidance that will inform future planning decisions and investment in the area and encourage more efficient use of underused sites (see CP12 Urban Design).

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<sup>40</sup> Academic Corridor: Concentration of three major higher and further education institutions (the Universities of Brighton and Sussex and City College) along the A27/A270 axis in the Brighton area, which together provide enhanced facilities for high-technology and knowledge-based businesses.

5. Supporting and enhancing the district shopping centre by securing improved pedestrian links along and across the Lewes Road together with environmental and physical enhancements including high quality shopfronts.

6. Securing improvements in community safety, landscaping, air quality, open space, interconnected green infrastructure and biodiversity.

7. To ensure improvements to local air quality through implementation of the **council's Air Quality Action Plan and ensure** new developments do not increase the number of people exposed to poor air quality.

B. Provision will be made for the following amounts of additional development to be provided by 2030. Provision will be made through strategic site allocations (below) and through allocations made in the City Plan Part 2 for:

885 residential units;

15,600 sqm employment floorspace including an Innovation Centre;

Business School and additional academic floorspace (16,000 sqm);

Student Accommodation (1300 rooms); and

Community building at Bevendean.

C. Strategic Allocations in the Lewes Road Development Area are:

1. Preston Barracks and Brighton University (Mithras House and Watts/Cockcroft Site)

The city council will work with the University of Brighton and other partners to provide a mixed use employment-led development comprising a new business school, 10,600sqm employment floorspace, including an Innovation Centre; 750 rooms of student accommodation; 300 residential units and other ancillary supporting uses. Proposals will be assessed against the priorities for DA3 Lewes Road, citywide policies and the following criteria:

a) Proposals will be required to have a high standard of public realm, including a central square, and effective links across the Lewes Road and to Moulsecoomb Station in order to improve the quality and permeability of the area.

b) Residential development should provide for a mix of dwelling type, tenure and size to cater for a range of housing requirements and to improve housing choices.

c) The development should aim to be zero carbon and through creative landscaping solutions (including features such as green walls) should contribute towards Biodiversity Action Plan objectives, green infrastructure and wider landscaping enhancements.

d) Sustainable transport infrastructure will be required to support the scheme and to ensure that there is no adverse air quality impact;

e) The developer will be required to enter into a training place agreement to secure training for local people.

## 2. Woollards Field South

Provision of 5,000 sqm of B1 office space south of the archive centre, known as The Keep, approved in 2011. Proposals will be assessed against the priorities for DA3 Lewes Road, citywide policies and the following criteria:

- a) The development will be required to achieve a high standard of design.
- b) Sustainable transport infrastructure will be required to support the scheme and to ensure that there is no adverse air quality impact.
- c) As a greenfield site, the development will be expected to be zero carbon and to achieve an Outstanding BREEAM rating and, through creative landscaping solutions (including features such as green walls), should contribute towards Biodiversity Action Plan objectives, green infrastructure and wider landscaping enhancements.
- d) Development should ensure that there will be no adverse impacts on the setting of the South Downs National Park or any locally or nationally designated landscape, historic or ecological sites.
- e) Development will be required to contribute towards reducing the heat island effect and reduce surface water run-off and flood risk, with run-off being controlled to maintain greenfield run-off rates.
- f) The developer will be required to enter into a training place agreement to secure training for local people.

## 3. Falmer Released Land, Former Falmer High School

Redevelopment for a range of uses including housing, purpose built student accommodation, offices (B1), educational use, a car park related to the American Express Community Stadium and the provision, on or off site, of permanent accommodation for the Bridge Community Education Centre. Proposals will be assessed against the priorities for DA3 Lewes Road, citywide policies and the following criteria:

- a) The development will be required to achieve a high standard of design.
- b) Sustainable transport infrastructure will be required to support the scheme and to ensure that there is no adverse air quality impact.
- c) Development should ensure that there will be no adverse impacts on the setting of the South Downs National Park or any locally or nationally designated landscape, historic or ecological sites.

d) The development should aim to be zero carbon and, through creative landscaping solutions (including features such as green walls), should contribute towards Biodiversity Action Plan objectives, green infrastructure and wider landscaping enhancements.

## Supporting Text

3.24 The strategy recognises the contribution made by the city's two universities, based on the Lewes Road, to the economic, social and cultural life of Brighton & Hove and the wider region<sup>41</sup>. The Universities offer popular and respected courses and have plans for overall growth and for improvements to their campus facilities to meet student demand and rising expectations. This will require improvement and expansion of their campuses and the need for appropriate new student accommodation on and near the campuses. The Council is keen to work with the universities to secure these objectives, which align closely with council strategies, particularly on student housing.

3.25 The Council will work with the universities and other education providers, in conjunction with Policy CP21 on student housing, to address the need for dedicated purpose built student accommodation in the local area where there is increasing pressure to accommodate students within the existing housing stock. The council will seek to control the location of new small Houses in Multiple Occupation (C4 use class) within the Lewes Road corridor in order to avoid problems of overconcentration and to maintain healthy and inclusive communities.

3.26 In terms of providing benefits for and working with local communities, the Universities recognise that they have a role in forging closer links with local people by expanding learning opportunities and sharing education, community and sports facilities. There are also opportunities to encourage technology and innovation transfer from the Universities to existing businesses and to support new opportunities for suitable new business accommodation that further develop links. The universities also contribute positively to the community through student volunteering and other outreach work.

3.27 Improving the sustainable transport corridor and access to the South Downs National Park via the Lewes Road, in particular the cycle and pedestrian routes, will be implemented and funded through the Local Transport Plan<sup>42</sup> and developer contributions. These improvements will be closely linked to the other priorities for the area, in particular better air quality<sup>43</sup> and improving the public realm and community safety. There is currently relatively good bus and train access to the area, but there is scope to significantly improve services in response to the additional demands resulting from the implementation of major development schemes. Work will be undertaken with Lewes District Council and bus and train operators to identify and secure improvements.

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<sup>41</sup> The universities have a combined annual revenue expenditure of approximately £350 million. They directly employ 5000 staff and support several thousand jobs in the wider area, predominantly in the city. The universities contribute to employment through initiatives such as the Sussex Innovation Centre at the University of Sussex which provides support for start-up businesses and the ProfitNet programme at the University of Brighton that has worked with over 1000 local small and medium sized businesses. Work with local community groups is sustained by the University of Brighton Community University Partnership Project (CUPP).

<sup>42</sup> LTP3, the city's current Local Transport Plan, was adopted in 2011 and sets out a fifteen year strategy for transport proposals and improvements. It is prepared in order to bid for Government funding for all forms of transport.

<sup>43</sup> The area of Lewes Road south of the Vogue Gyrotory is included in the 2008 Air Quality Management Area as it exceeds the government's Air Quality Objective for annual Nitrogen Dioxides. This will be addressed through the implementation of the council's Air Quality Action Plan.



3.28 A holistic approach to improving the public realm and townscape will be achieved through the preparation and adoption of comprehensive design guidance for the area that will form part of the citywide Urban Design Framework (see policy CP12) and will be subject to community engagement. It will cover matters such as improving biodiversity and greening the corridor. This will make a significant contribution to improving quality of life within the area. It will also contribute to improving the appearance of the built environment, such as shopfronts, and to enhancing pedestrian routes and connections through the district centre.

3.29 Lewes Road District centre was identified in the 2011 Retail Study Update<sup>44</sup> as a potentially vulnerable shopping centre. Additionally the LR2 Regeneration Strategy<sup>45</sup> identified a number of opportunities to improve the local shopping environment. The comprehensive design guide will help to achieve this by influencing future development proposals and future Local Transport Plan proposals. Melbourne Street Industrial Area is located to the east of the Lewes Road District Centre and is in need of investment. It has been identified in policy CP3 for employment led (residential and employment) mixed use development.

3.30 There are a number of local priorities for the area that will be delivered through city council and other strategies supported by appropriate developer contributions. These extend to benefits for disadvantaged neighbourhoods adjacent to the Lewes Road. One is to address lower incomes and unemployment in adjoining neighbourhoods by securing training and job opportunities for local people in major development schemes. There is also an identified need for investment in public open spaces in the area including Saunders Park and William Clarke Park as well as under-used open spaces in Moulsecoomb and Bevendean and to connect otherwise isolated green spaces via the development of green networks.

3.31 Lewes Road south of the Vogue Gyratory is identified as a community safety priority area<sup>46</sup>. Public realm and park improvements will help to address this priority. In terms of community facilities, the need for a dedicated community building is identified in Bevendean (Audit of Community Level Infrastructure 2004<sup>47</sup>) and for youth facilities.

3.32 Preston Barracks is a large mixed use site which has significant potential for high quality employment, training and academic floorspace and for a significant number of

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<sup>44</sup> The Brighton & Hove Retail Study Update 2011 provides an update to the earlier 2006 study, which identified current and future capacity for retail floorspace in Brighton & Hove. The studies assess the existing network of larger and smaller centres in the city and in the function and effectiveness of the current retail hierarchy. Whilst surrounded by a dense area of housing and containing a good range of everyday services, such as a post office, bank and pharmacy, there is a poor range and quality of comparison goods retailers in Lewes Road. Vacancy rates are high, pedestrian flows are low and the environment and pedestrian movements hampered by traffic congestion. The 2011 update recommended traffic management and improved pedestrian linkages in order to provide an upgraded shopping environment for the local catchment population.

<sup>45</sup> The LR2 Regeneration Strategy (London Road and Lewes Road Regeneration Strategy 2007) identifies options and opportunities for the regeneration of the London Road and Lewes Road area. The emphasis is on measures to improve the quality of urban design, streetscape and enhance the gateways to the city and to seek development opportunities in the area.

<sup>46</sup> The Community Safety, Crime and Drugs Audit 2004 identifies the Lewes Road as a community safety priority area and proposed measures for improving safety.

<sup>47</sup> The Audit of Community Level Infrastructure 2004 was commissioned by the Local Strategic Partnership to identify the level of community infrastructure in the 15 Neighbourhood Renewal areas across Brighton & Hove.

residential units and purpose built student accommodation, integrated with creative urban greening. It is a strategic allocation due to its potential to help meet targets for housing and employment floorspace in the city. Future development on the site will be employment-led and there is scope for it to provide an element of affordable managed workspace for local small businesses and education floorspace linked to the University. The council is signed up in principle to a shared vision for a wider development opportunity for Preston Barracks and the nearby University of Brighton sites. A planning brief for Lewes Road (Preston Barracks and University of Brighton) was adopted in September 2011.

3.33 Planning permission was granted in 2011 for an archive centre with related conference, education and research facilities on the Woollards Field site to the south of Falmer Station. The remainder of the site to the south is allocated for office (B1) floorspace totalling 5,000 square metres. This development will help provide local training and employment opportunities and could help to strengthen the Universities' positive role within the local economy. Land at the southern end of the former Falmer High School site is no longer required for educational purposes. The site has potential for redevelopment for a range of uses, including student accommodation, residential, offices and educational use. These uses could work in conjunction with car parking use for the nearby American Express Community Stadium. Permanent accommodation for the Bridge Community Education Centre should also be provided, either on the Falmer Released Land or in an acceptable alternative location.