

## 4 The Five Areas of Shoreham Cement Works

- 4.1 The five areas of Shoreham Cement Works were introduced in Chapter 2 of this document as part of the spatial portrait and are shown in figure 2.2. This chapter looks at the five areas in more detail exploring their individual opportunities and constraints and then setting out design principles for each area.
- 4.2 There is a sequential experience as you pass through the different areas moving eastwards away from the main road either by vehicle or on foot. The design question arises as to whether we want to hide, frame or reveal new views?

### The Riverside

- 4.3 The **Riverside** is special because of its riverine location with long views across the Adur Valley. It is a flat area of made-up ground between the River Adur and the A283 and was the site of the original cement works. Most of the area is comprised of hardstanding and a number of former offices for the **Cement Works** now occupied by various industrial and storage uses. The area is linked by a tunnel under the A283 to the **Cement Works**. This is a brownfield site, mostly protected from flooding by embankments. A photo of the area from figure 4.1.
- 4.4 **Opportunities:** A great opportunity for the whole site is to open up the **Riverside** for public access to the river frontage, possibly with a boardwalk or similar, whilst maintaining adequate flood defences. This could be linked to the Downs Link via an integrated access network incorporating green infrastructure. The redevelopment should exploit views out over the valley to the south and west, possibly with a lookout. All new buildings that face on to the river should make a positive contribution to views into the site from the west.

**Figure 4.1: The Riverside looking west**



- 4.5 There are also opportunities to enhance the road frontage. The **Riverside** is the best location for housing, which would generate high values. The Downs Link

follows the **Riverside** offering opportunities for sustainable travel both north and south. An underpass links the **Riverside** to the **Cement Works**.

4.6 **Constraints:** Either a waste water treatment works or pumping station would need to be located here. Although not currently at risk from flooding, a small extent of the southern part of the **Riverside** is predicted to be within flood zone 3a in the future. It contains 3.5m of made ground and has the potential for combination hotspots. There are some but not many buildings that will need to be demolished here.

4.7 **Design principles:**

- Open public access to the river frontage compatible with flood risk mitigation.
- Integrated access network from the **Riverfront** and the Downs Link to the other side of the A283, incorporating Green Infrastructure.
- High contextual density would be appropriate. Buildings should face the River, positively contributing to views into the site and out. High quality architectural solutions would be needed.
- Opportunities should be maximised to provide a meaningful active public realm along the River Arun.
- Take opportunities for views out over the river valley to the south, west and north.
- Vegetation could aim to blend in with new buildings and the landscape, not necessarily screening it completely.
- Safe and comfortable connection to public transport options and the Downs Link should be a priority in the layout and public realm design.

### **The Cement Works**

4.8 The **Cement Works** is special as it contains the post war industrial buildings and chimney designed by cement industry leader Oscar Faber. This part of the site is contained by cliffs to three sides. It can be viewed at close quarters by passing motorists travelling along the Steyning Road. The character is created by the substantial industrial building and cliffs. This imposes a feeling of large-scale on the site, which in turn results in a sense of smallness when stood within it. A photo of the area from figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2: The Cement Works looking south east**



- 4.9 **Opportunities:** The **Cement Works** buildings block views from the main road to the east of the site including the **Bowl** and the **Moonscape**. If they are demolished then any new development is likely to be highly prominent. Any new buildings could make a significant entrance statement that conceals what lies beyond or frames a view further into the site or is subservient to the elevations of the quarry face. The quarry entrance onto the A283 forms a gateway into the site. There is an opportunity for the quarry faces to be featured as a dramatic landscape gateway frame for what lies beyond.
- 4.10 There are opportunities to improve and/or create a new access with the existing underpass and/or a new roundabout. There are also opportunities to retain some of the historic buildings such as the chimney and the equipment within the buildings such as the kilns. This is a good location for commercial development either on its own or as part of a mixed use scheme with housing. It could also be a location for a visitor attraction linked to the special qualities of the National Park and in particular the industrial heritage of the site.
- 4.11 **Constraints:** Obviously there are huge demolition costs relating to the **Cement Works** including its slab foundations. There is some made ground and the potential for some hotspots of contamination including asbestos, which also have cost implications.
- 4.12 **Design principles:**
- Any new buildings could make a significant entrance statement that conceals what lies beyond or frames a view further into the site or is subservient to the elevations of the quarry face.

- High contextual density would be appropriate.
- Microclimate conditions particularly glare and shade should be carefully considered.
- Safe and comfortable connection to the bus stop should be provided.
- There are opportunities to re-use the existing dilapidated elevator/steps to the **Clifflands**.

### The Bowl

- 4.13 The **Bowl** is special as it is a vast amphitheatre of chalk created by the cliffs, which almost encompass the whole space. There is a sense of vast scale and a feeling of a ‘secret’ or ‘hidden’ world as the existing buildings and structures peter out. It is dominated by mosaic habitats and small-scale changes in topography. Scrub is largely restricted to the edges of the site and follows the pattern of topography, accentuating the ‘bowl’ shape created by the cliffs. There is a sense of tranquillity in the **Bowl**, which is pitch black at night. A photo of the area from figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3: The Bowl looking north**



- 4.14 **Opportunities:** the **Bowl** is defined as greenfield or undeveloped land and is relatively accessible from the main road. There is the potential to build lightweight commercial buildings that could be accommodated on the contaminated, made ground and would generate value for the site. The Bowl contains habitats of ecological value including Open Mosaic Habitat and there are important opportunities for enhancement and habitat creation in the north/east of this area. Along with the **Moonscape**, it could be the best opportunity for recreation and tourism, and still be fairly hidden inside the wider landscape. They could both accommodate active recreation with zip lines, mountain biking or toboggans whilst also adding value to the landscape and habitats.
- 4.15 **Constraints:** The **Bowl** area was licensed as an inert landfill to dispose of highly toxic cement kiln dust from the Cement Works. A former lagoon is also located in the **Bowl**. The substantial land contamination reduces opportunities for significant development within this area.

#### 4.16 Design principles:

- Any development should be well integrated within the existing natural environment. It should also maximise opportunities for views through the site.
- A 360 degree view of the **Bowl** and **Clifflands** should be retained.

#### The Moonscape

4.17 The **Moonscape** is special as it is a vast space, which feels quite other-worldly and lunar. Despite being a quarry site, the sense of human intervention is reduced. It feels very remote and all-encompassing as a result of the cliffs and past quarrying. The constantly changing topography creates numerous ecological niches and the sense that the more you look the more there is to see. The return of nature in this space is awe-inspiring. It is highly tranquil and remote from day-to-day activity. A photo of the area from figure 4.4.

4.18 On a more negative note, the **Moonscape** has been described as ‘a substantial scar,’ which is visible over a wide area and from a large number of viewpoints including the South Downs Way. The **Clifflands** that surround it on three sides are steep and the **Moonscape** is separated from the **Bowl** by further **Clifflands**.

**Figure 4.4: The Moonscape looking north east**



4.19 **Opportunities:** the **Moonscape** is defined as greenfield land and has high potential for habitat enhancement and creation. There is no contamination or made ground. Along with the **Bowl**, it could be the best opportunity for recreation and

tourism. Any such development could remain fairly hidden inside the landscape or made into a landmark feature or focal point for the site, albeit subservient and complementary to the cliffs. The **Moonscape** could host active recreation whilst also fostering and enhancing the landscape and habitats. It could also provide nature and geological trails for people to explore the biodiversity and geodiversity of the site.

4.20 **Constraints:** the **Moonscape** is at risk from rock fall from the **Clifflands**. It is remote from the rest of the site and highly sensitive in landscape terms.

4.21 **Design principles:**

- The area could retain its existing character taking opportunities to conserve and enhance its biodiversity and geodiversity value.
- Any development should ensure that its tranquillity and sense of place are conserved.
- A contextually designed connection to the South Downs Way beyond could be explored.

### **The Clifflands**

4.22 The **Clifflands** are special as they encircle the whole site to the east of the Steyning Road and are visible from afar. The **Clifflands** separate the **Cement Works** from the **Bowl** and in turn the **Bowl** from the **Moonscape**. A photo of the area forms figure 4.5.

4.23 They vary in height and steepness considerably. In places this presents any developer with serious issues and constraints and in others the cliffs have been benched to provide a more graduated edge to the quarry. The north-facing cliffs have successional species and include important habitats such as woodland, semi-improved grassland, ruderal herbs, scattered trees and undisturbed mosaic habitats. Hanging vegetation is typical on the southern cliffs which face north.

4.24 The **Clifflands** surround and enclose three quarters of the site and include complex topography. They will provide a theatrical backdrop to any potential development displaying a record of the site's industrial heritage, a geological showpiece of how the South Downs were formed and a haven for wildlife.

**Figure 4.5: The Clifflands looking east**



- 4.25 **Opportunities:** the **Clifflands** are home to Peregrine falcons and many species of bats. It may be possible to provide nature and geological trails for people to explore the biodiversity and geodiversity of the site. There is an opportunity to highlight the sensitivity and value of this area for educational purposes. The design challenge would be to provide access and interpretation without disturbance or risk of adverse impact. Ideally such a proposal would also enhance the area's biodiversity value through appropriate management interventions.
- 4.26 **Constraints:** all of the Clifflands are at risk from rock fall. It is remote from the rest of the site and highly sensitive in terms of landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 4.27 **Design principles:**
- These shall remain largely undeveloped.
  - Views of the **Clifflands** should be achieved broadly from any other character area.
  - No engineered erosion protection measures should be installed and cliffs should remain largely natural.

**Q8: Should the redevelopment hide, frame or reveal new views moving eastwards away from the main road or a combination of all three?**