

## Shoreham Cement Works Area Action Plan Issues & Options

### Summary of Responses

#### Chapter 5H: A Place to Visit

There were a total of 289 responses to this chapter. These consisted of 8 general comments on the chapter and 101, 93, and 87 responses to Questions 17, 18 and 19 respectively.

There were a total of 8 general comments on this chapter. These are summarised below.

#### Other Organisations

The **Aquifer Partnership** stated that there is an opportunity to capitalise on the site's location as a gateway to the Downs, and link biodiversity and green infrastructure.

The **Brighton & Hove Schools Wellbeing Service** commented that the natural integrity of the site must remain intact. The Service use a variety of outdoor activities to help young people with mental health and wellbeing, and it is difficult to find outdoor activities in this area. In particular, the Service suggested that the site could be used as a mixed outdoor activity centre for community, education, and tourism. The above could work in partnership with local schools and include; mountain biking, BMX, conferences, conservation, crafts, forest schools, orienteering, skating, woodwork, and zip lining etc.

The **Shoreham District Ornithological Society** commented that the existing nature based recreation (walking and bird watching) should be enhanced. The Society raised concerns that development would result in existing wellbeing benefits becoming lost. The Society stated that development should be no higher or prominent than existing buildings, and should be screened with existing mature overhanging vegetation. In addition, the Society explained that there is substantial ecological literature on the nature conversation value of abandoned mineral works, and so the Cement Works and MoonSpace are likely to have ecological interest that could be developed by nature conversation, nature-related recreation, and future sympathetic management.

The **West Sussex Local Access Form (WSLAF)** stated that Shoreham has high levels of deprivation and poor health. The health, leisure opportunities, and general quality-of-life for residents could be improved if access to the National Park and open spaces was improved.

#### Individuals

Overall, 3 individuals commented that:

- There is an opportunity for a major education, tourist and research facility;
- The Riverside is an attractive area, and the use of the waterfront should be explored; and
- The SCW could be added to the Devils Dyke double decker tour bus route.

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#### Question 17: What visitor attractions would you like to see on the redevelopment site?

There were a total of 101 responses to this question. These are summarised below.

#### Parish and Town Councils

**Findon Parish Council (FPC)** stated that visitor attractions should be sympathetic to the ethos of the National Park. Suggested examples included a cultural, education, and heritage centre (with café, museum and public conveniences), along with a nature reserve with bird hides, trails, and riverside activities.

**Upper Beeding Parish Council (UBPC)** would like to see;

- (1) A South Downs Visitor Centre to include café, camp sites, cycling centre, parks, shops, stables, and youth hostel;
- (2) A Sports Centre to include cycle track, gym, ice skating, mountain biking, rock climbing, skate boarding, ski slopes, swimming pool, water sports, and zip wire;
- (3) A music/concert and/or studio/practice venue;
- (4) A Museum & Heritage Centre to cover artefacts, bus, and cement works;
- (5) A Wildlife Centre & Sanctuary for birds, fish, and plants;
- (6) An Education & Innovation Centre for arts, science, and technology;
- (7) A tree-top restaurant;
- (8) An art gallery; and
- (9) A Riverside Hotel & Leisure Facility with jetty.

**Washington Parish Council (WPC)** welcomed the initial proposals to create a high-quality, sustainable hospitality and leisure development, with recreational accommodation, to improve facilities for visitors to the National Park.

#### Other Organisations

The **Brighton & Hove Cycling UK Group** would like to see a car-free development and a reduction of motor vehicles on and visiting the site. The Group explained that there should be; minimal car parking; and excellent active travel and sustainable public transport options with full accessibility for all, including disabled people.

The **Brighton & Hove Schools Wellbeing Service** would like to see a conservation, outdoor, and visitor centre.

The **Brighton City Airport** would like to see attractions which limit bird attractions and building heights.

The **Greening Steyning Group** would like to see the site redeveloped for nature, such as a woodland camping venue and/or education centre with opportunities for crafts, meditation and connection with nature.

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The **Shoreham District Ornithological Society** commented that the site has potential for enhancement as a nature-based recreational activity on the lower Adur Valley. This is in the context of minimising disturbance to important breeding species, and ambitions for ecological regeneration and re-wilding in the Adur Regeneration Project.

The **Shoreham Society** would like to see an information, recreation and sports centre, including the potential for an eco-lodge with accommodation and camping. The site could be used for biking, fishing, horse-riding, kayaking, sailing, SUP, and wild swimming etc.

The **Whaleback Planning Consultancy** would like to see a natural amphitheatre, a café/restaurant, an educational/visitor centre, and tourist accommodation. The Group believed that facilities should be limited, and events should be facilitated with a shuttle bus service from Shoreham Station. In addition, recreational activity should be encouraged along the river.

### Individuals

There were multiple responses which overlapped across Q17-19. A number of individuals either combined their answers to Q17-19 in a response to one of the questions, or replicated the same answer for all three questions. In order to ensure that responses and public opinion have been captured correctly (as much as possible), the individual responses have been appropriately split up / divided across Q17-19. A summary of the responses to Q17 is below.

There were 12 individuals who commented that there should be no or limited visitor attractions at SCW in order to let it re-wild, whilst a further 2 individuals wanted to see the redevelopment of the site focused on housing and employment space rather than tourism uses. Finally, a further 3 individuals expressed concern over visitor attractions and tourism uses contributing to increased carbon, traffic and recreational pressures in the National Park.

However, notwithstanding the above, the majority of individuals alluded that they wanted to see visitor attractions which complement the purposes and duty of the National Park, whilst also responding to climate (including zero/low carbon energy generation), health and wellbeing, and nature recovery objectives. There were 21 individuals who favoured the delivery of an Education/Information/Visitor Centre and, in connection, a further 21 and 26 individuals wanted to see a Café and Museum/Exhibition/Gallery/Community Space respectively. In terms of the latter, suggestions included education and exhibitions around the cement works, the National Park, archaeology, biodiversity/nature/wildlife, crafts, farming, fossils, geology, local artists, local history, and the railway. In addition, 8 individuals suggested a shop/retail, and 1 individual suggested a heritage skills academy. There was a recurring theme that any “centre” could be operated by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA).

There were various suggestions as to where certain visitor attractions and tourism uses should be located around the site; however, there was not an obvious consensus. Of those who wanted to see visitor attractions which complement, and foster and understanding of, the National Park, the main ideas included outdoor activities such as; walking trails within, around the perimeter of, and connecting to existing PRoW outside of, the SCW [30 individuals] (some individuals also suggested viewing areas; arts and sculpture trails); cycling routes similar to the above [14 individuals] (some individuals suggested mountain biking and/or BMX tracks); a nature/wildlife park/sanctuary [12 individuals]; an amphitheatre, theatre, entertainment and/or performance space [9 individuals]; a garden/park area [7 individuals]; bat and bird hides [7 individuals]; climbing activities [5 individuals];

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camping [2 individuals]; horse riding and stables [2 individuals]; aviaries [1 individual]; mountain boarding [1 individual]; and star gazing [1 individual].

In terms of water-related attractions, there were 15 individuals who wanted to see water sports and water-based activities. This varied amongst open up access, and use of, the River Adur, as well as suggestions for a reservoir or new lake. As part of the above, individuals suggested boating, canoeing, fishing, jetty, kayaking, paddle boarding, and wild swimming. In addition, 1 individual suggested the creation of new wetlands.

As for more formal attractions and built facilities, suggestions included; zip-wire or go-a-pe style high ropes and abseiling [13 individuals]; ski slope and/or ice skating [8 individuals]; skate park [7 individuals]; swimming pool [4 individuals] (1 individual suggested a water slides and a Jacuzzi); adventure park/activity centre [5 individuals] (1 individual suggested an assault course); visitor accommodation [5 individuals] (individuals suggested hotels, spa hotels, and youth hostels); cinema [3 individuals]; mini/crazy golf [2 individuals]; gym [2 individuals]; amusements [1 individual]; aquarium [1 individual]; cable car [1 individual]; toboggan run [1 individual]; handball court [1 individual]; padel tennis court [1 individual]; and a new leisure centre [1 individual]. In addition, 2 individuals wanted to see a film studio or filming of some description, whilst 1 individual wanted to see the rebuilding of the Adur Valley / Steyning railway line.

Finally, a number of existing examples were submitted as potential ideas. These included; the Eden Project [6 individuals]; Guildford Spectrum Centre [1 individual]; Jurassic Falls Crazy Golf [1 individual]; Landschaftspark (Germany) [1 individual]; Llangrannog Ski Centre (Wales) [1 individual]; Needles Cable Car [1 individual]; Pines Calyx Community Space [1 individual]; and Sussex Amazon Rainforest Retreat [1 individual]. In addition, 1 individual suggested working with the universities, whilst another individual suggested the potential for a kinetic battery / mini electric mountain such as those used in North Wales.

### **Question 18: What visitor attractions would you not like to see on the redeveloped site?**

There were a total of 93 responses to this question. These are summarised below.

#### **Parish and Town Councils**

**Upper Beeding Parish Council (UBPC)** did not want to see inappropriate uses such as funfairs, late night entertainment (i.e., casinos, music venues, and night clubs), and theme parks.

#### **Other Organisations**

The **Brighton City Airport** did not want to see areas of open water, fireworks/laser shows, floodlights, landscaped areas for birds, and/or tall structures. In addition, the airport did not want to see any renewable energy (i.e. solar panels and wind turbines) without the appropriate Aerodrome Safeguarding Assessment to ensure no operational impact to the airport.

The **Greening Steyning Group** did not want to see attractions which would lead to large crowds and/or significant physical and/or noise disturbance.

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The **Sussex Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** believed that there is no reason to consider uses related to; business, retail, zip wires, and other sports or arena developments.

The **Shoreham District Ornithological Society** believed that adventure based recreational activities would result in disturbance of vulnerable bird species. More specifically, the Society stated that leisure and sporting activities – such as zip wire or ski slope facilities – in the Bowl or Moonscape would be likely to cause visual and noise disturbance to Peregrine Falcons and Ravens which could lead to permanent abandonment of nest sites.

The **Sussex Ornithological Society** stated that the Adur Valley is already heavily impacted by recreational activities. More specifically, recreational water-based activities are already having a detrimental effect on the River Adur SSSI and the RSPB Reserve. Given the above, the Society opposed any new base for water activities and/or launch points on the River Adur.

### Individuals

There were multiple responses which overlapped across Q17-19. A number of individuals either combined their answers to Q17-19 in a response to one of the questions, or replicated the same answer for all three questions. In order to ensure that responses and public opinion have been captured correctly (as much as possible), the individual responses have been appropriately split up / divided across Q17-19. A summary of the responses to Q18 is below.

There were 4 individuals who did not want to see any visitor attractions, whilst another 24 individuals provided general comments about not wanting to see attractions which would; be motorised and/or noisy [7 individuals]; contribute to traffic congestion [7 individuals]; contribute to; air, noise, and light pollution [3 individuals]; draw in large crowds [2 individuals]; be unrelated to nature [2 individuals]; include concrete [1 individual]; include high rise development [1 individual]; and would be “garish” or “shiny” [1 individual]. In terms of specific attractions which individuals would not want to see, these included; theme parks [12 individuals]; large retail parks / supermarkets [9 individuals]; festivals and music venues (both inside and outside) [8 individuals]; funfair/fairground [7 individuals]; skate parks [7 individuals]; cinemas [6 individuals]; zip wires [5 individuals]; bowling [4 individuals]; cable cars [4 individuals]; fast food establishments [4 individuals]; car parking [3 individuals]; Eden Project [2 individuals]; hotels [2 individuals]; housing [2 individuals]; nightclubs [2 individuals]; soft and indoor play areas (e.g. urban jump and laser quest) [2 individuals]; bars [1 individual]; casinos [1 individual]; circuses [1 individual]; coffee shops [1 individual]; cycling tracks and repair shop [1 individual]; film site [1 individual]; football pitch(es) [1 individual]; go-ape [1 individual]; industrial uses [1 individual]; mainstream chains [1 individual]; ski slopes [1 individual]; theatres [1 individual]; and water sports [1 individual].

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**Question 19: What do you think is special about this part of the National Park that could attract visitors and can you suggest how it could be enhanced as part of the redevelopment?**

There were a total of 87 responses to this question. These are summarised below.

#### **District, Borough, City and County Councils**

**Adur & Worthing District Council (AWDC)** explained that the Adur River Landscape Recovery Project has the potential to see a healthy river, which is connected to its floodplain, with thriving ecosystems and habitats running through a wildlife-friendly farmed landscape. The Project will support life and provide biodiversity, carbon storage, and natural flood management for Bramber, Beeding, and Shoreham. The Riverside could provide eco-tourism opportunities for visitors looking to connect with the Downland and River Adur. There are opportunities for habitat interpretation boards, bird hides, and wildlife viewing points, as well as a visitor centre and a café. Finally, AWDC would welcome further discussion as the current AAP proposals could conflict with the Project.

**West Sussex County Council (WSCC)** stated that if any hedgerows and/or trees are to be planted along the existing public rights of way (PRoW), then thought should be given to; preventing obscuration of unique views; preventing damage to PRoWs from tree roots; and ongoing maintenance to keep vegetation from encroaching onto the PRoW.

#### **Parish and Town Councils**

**Findon Parish Council (FPC)** stated that the diverse landscape, downland setting, protected species, and riverside all make the site attractive to visitors. Any development must be sympathetic to the setting.

**Upper Beeding Parish Council (UBPC)** stated that this part of the National Park is beautiful, eerie, magical, and has tremendous views and potential. The area should be sympathetically developed to; support and provide key objectives of the National Park; preserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage; promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park; seek and foster economic wellbeing for the local communities; provide community access to open spaces, social, cultural, and educational benefits and wellbeing; and be inspirational from the interaction with nature whilst supported by a strong healthy economy.

#### **Other Organisations**

The **British Horse Society** stated that, in the local area, there are over 1700 passported horses contributing £10m per annum to the economy. The busy main road has rendered connections to the existing public rights of way (PRoW) “impossible”, with the existing road crossing being dangerous. There have been past requests for a signalised crossing, and/or for the existing underpass to be used for non-motorised users (NMUs). The existing underpass could then be connected to the Downs Link and South Downs Way (SDW).

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The **Greening Steyning Group** believed that this part of the National Park is special due to the habitats, the riverside, the South Downs Way, and the easy connections to London via Brighton.

The **Sussex Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** stated that the area is a key cut through of the Downs by the River Adur. The Valley's development since the Ice Age is said to have produced considerable wealth in medieval times, and the following may offer potential stimuli for considering the historical importance of the area, i.e.; the clearance of the Downs, the recreation of the Adur Valley's development in Roman and Norman times; Coombe's, Botolph's churches; the former Erringham Chapel and long house; the area's war time experience and training camps; the area's ancient pilgrim and drover routes; and the old rail route to Guildford.

The **Whaleback Planning Consultancy** believed that the views of the Adur Valley and the accessibility of the South Downs Way should be maximised from new buildings, public spaces, and new connections respectively.

### Individuals

There were multiple responses which overlapped across Q17-19. A number of individuals either combined their answers to Q17-19 in a response to one of the questions, or replicated the same answer for all three questions. In order to ensure that responses and public opinion have been captured correctly (as much as possible), the individual responses have been appropriately split up / divided across Q17-19. A summary of the responses to Q19 is below.

There were 4 individuals who commented that attracting visitors would be detrimental to the aim of conserving natural beauty, and that the ability for nature to claim back a brutalist building should be embraced. However, the vast majority of respondents wanted to see the area enhanced in some way. A summary of these responses is below.

The top five answers for what is special about this part of the National Park (which could attract visitors) included; the scenic beauty, landscape and views over the Adur Valley, Downs and exposed chalk cliff [26 individuals]; the existing walking and cycling network (incl. Downs Link and South Downs Way) [23 individuals]; the existing biodiversity (incl. habitats and wildlife) [19 individuals]; the River Adur [12 individuals]; and the existing cultural/industrial heritage [11 individuals].

Notwithstanding the above, other responses also included; access to nearby settlements [2 individuals]; proximity to the coast [2 individuals]; access for watersports [1 individual]; the Dark Night Sky [1 individual]; along with the Bowl, Chimney, and Moonspace themselves [1 individual each]. As part of the above, individuals suggested that the special qualities of this part of the National Park could be enhanced as part of the redevelopment by creating a new gateway which includes a new education/visitor centre and café. In addition, it was suggested that the redevelopment could; enhance biodiversity and support nature recovery; enhance active travel and public transport routes to nearby settlements; provide opportunities for re-wilding; and deliver education boards, hides, and an art/nature/sculpture trail. Other suggestions also included a museum, watersports, hotel, and an offering similar to the Eden Project.