



Introduction

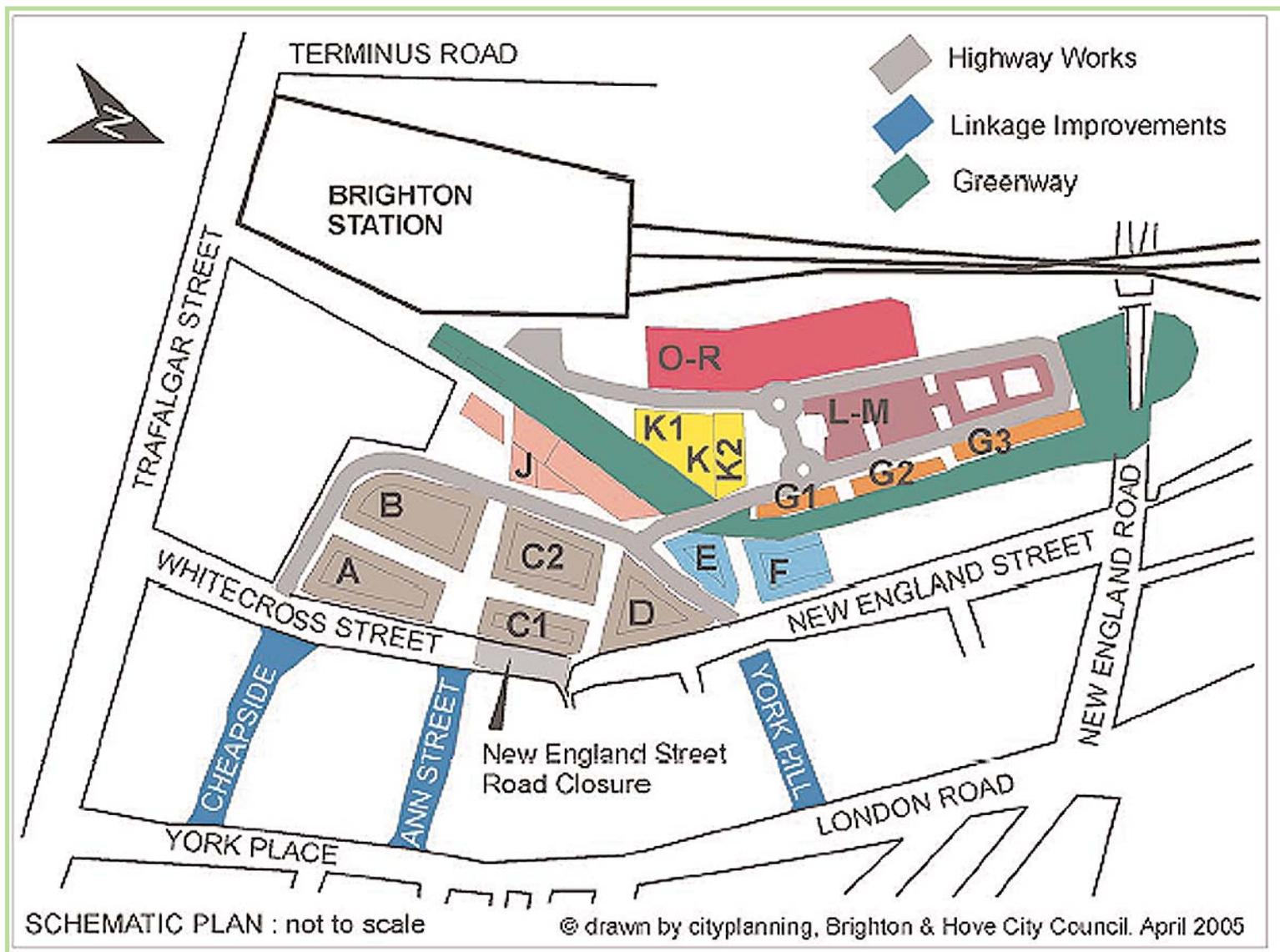
The purpose of this Briefing Note is to provide councillors and other interested parties with an overview and current state of play in respect of the emerging New England Quarter. The Briefing Note replaces and updates the previous Briefing Note that was issued in April 2005.

Background

A Masterplan for the regeneration of New England Quarter, a 8ha (24 acre) site in Brighton City Centre, was approved by Brighton and Hove City Council in September 2003. The approved Masterplan for the site consists of:

- Greenway and Site of Special Nature Conservation Interest
- **355 residential units**
- New car park for the station
- Sainsbury's Foodstore
- Language School
- New Community and Retail Facilities
- Two hotels
- Office and Workspace
- Training Centre

Since September 2003, development of the Core Site, consisting of Blocks A, B, C and D is nearing completion, and a series of full planning applications have been submitted for remaining portions of the site on Blocks G, K and E-F. These applications and additional items secured through a series of S106 Legal Agreements are summarised in further detail in this Briefing Note.



Block A, B, C and D (The Core Site) - Known as City Point

Construction of the Core Site, consisting of 247 residential units, a training centre and three retail units, including J Sainsbury, commenced in 2005 and is nearing completion. Blocks A, B and C have been built and are all occupied, and Block D is due for completion by Christmas 2007. Of the 247 residential units provided on the core site, 74 are affordable units. Sainsbury's opened for trading on 1 March 2007.

A number of residents of City Point have established a Residents Association and a Committee is appointed annually, with the purpose of raising general site related issues and seeking resolutions with the managing agents for development.

The conditions on the application relating to landscaping, street pavements, lighting and green walls have all been discharged.



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Blocks A, B, C and D - City Point



Block J

The developer the Beetham Group made the decision to submit a full planning application in January 2005, which departed from the approved masterplan. The application proposed a 42 storey tower block with 'sky garden' incorporating a hotel with 200 beds in the lower 6 storeys and 120-150 residential units on the upper floors, of which 30% would be affordable.

The impact of the height and bulk of the redevelopment proposals, in particular Block J, on the Grade II* listed Brighton Station and Grade I St Bartholomew's Church and West Hill Conservation Area were of particular concern prior to the determination of the planning application. English Heritage originally recommended the refusal of the proposals for these reasons. Following negotiation, Block J was amended to address these concerns and English Heritage withdrew their objection.

The application was considered at Planning Applications Sub Committee on 28 April 2005, where Members resolved to refuse planning permission. The application was refused for having an adverse impact on adjoining West Hill, North Laine and Valley Garden Conservation Areas, and the Grade II* Listed Station Building. The proposed scheme was also considered to be an inappropriate location for a tall building that would have been harmful on views into and out of the historic core of the City. The proposed scheme would have provided a poor level and quality of public civic space, and inadequate space for outdoor recreation.

Block J in the Foreground with the Core Site completed at the Rear



A Public Inquiry into the refusal for the Beetham Tower 42 storey was held in November 2006 and the Secretary of State dismissed the appeal on 15 May 2007.

The Local Planning Authority look forward to working collaboratively within the Masterplan Framework on a revised scheme with the landowner.

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Block K

The developer, Osborn Securities and Jurys Doyle Hotel Group plc, took the decision to submit a full planning application in August 2005 for a 234 bedroom hotel and 4 storey office block with public open space, piazza and landscaped garden. The application proposes to reverse the location of the office block and the hotel from the approved Masterplan, with a re-arrangement of the public open space and height increases of 2/3 storeys.



Block K - Jurys Inn Under Construction



The application was determined at Planning Applications Sub Committee on 11 January 2006 where members resolved to grant full planning permission, subject to the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement. The application was granted full planning permission on 3 April 2006.

The construction of the 3* Hotel commenced in November 2006 and was completed and occupied in November 2007. The hotel operator is Jurys Inn.

Planning conditions and obligations relating to landscaping, the provision of a children's play area, a lighting scheme, green walls, nest boxes and landscaping have been discharged with the City Council.

The developer has since made the decision to submit a further planning application for the proposed office block, which departs from both the approved Masterplan and the most recent planning permission. The proposed scheme seeks a greater quantum of office accommodation, an increase in building height and a revised design. The developer has yet to submit a planning application and there is no committee date for this application at the moment.

Block L-M - Language School

Planning permission was granted in July 2004 for a Language School with residential element for students. The approved scheme takes the form of two blocks - a five storey block at the southern end of the site comprising offices, teaching space, exam hall and library with B1 office space on the top two floors, and a four storey block at the northern end of the site, comprising 377 study bedrooms, cafeteria, kitchens and staff common room. The two buildings are joined by a single storey link with courtyards providing internal space for students and workers.



Main entrance to the language school

All the planning conditions have been discharged. The Language School has been built and is now occupied by Bellerby's College.



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Blocks E-F

The developer Crest Nicholson Bio-Regional, took the decision to submit a separate planning application, which departs from the approved Masterplan. The mixed-use application for 172 residential units, 1206 sq m B1 offices and a 972 sq m community facility with private and public open space, was submitted in May 2006. The application proposed no retail provision as originally envisaged in the approved Masterplan and 88 additional residential units are provided in addition to the 84 provided under the approved Masterplan. 54 of these residential units are affordable.

The application was considered at Planning Sub Committee on 21 February 2007 where Members resolved to grant full planning permission, subject to the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement. The S106 has now been agreed and signed by all parties.

The scheme includes the 'One Planet Living' Concept and is pioneering for its approach on Sustainable Development. The One Planet Living Concept (OPL) is a joint initiative between Bio-Regional and the World Wildlife Fund. Its aim is to enable people to live within a sustainable ecological footprint by taking responsibility for the consumption of resources and changing the way people relate to their community and the environment. The scheme is the first of its kind in the UK and will raise significant interest in Brighton and Hove.

10 core principals underline the One Planet Living Initiative:

- Zero Carbon
- Zero Waste
- Sustainable Transport
- Locally sourced/ sustainable materials
- Locally sourced/sustainable food
- Sustainable Water
- Natural habitats and wildlife
- Culture and heritage
- Equity and fair-trade
- Health and happiness

The development proposes a radical, state of the art sustainable building that includes energy efficiency measures and on site renewable technologies, which aims to reduce CO2 emissions by 76%. This exceeds the target of 40% originally secured through the S106 Legal Agreement on the approved Masterplan.

Some of the environmental credentials of the scheme are outlined below:

- Net carbon neutral scheme
- Development to achieve BREEAM / Ecohomes 'Excellent' rating
- Energy demands reduced through energy efficient design
- Ongoing sustainable management supported by a commitment to monitor and manage the building
- 500kw wood chip fired boiler system providing hot water and space heating to meet more than 10% of the buildings energy needs
- 8 roof mounted swift wind turbines
- Re-cycling facilities for on site segregation of commercial and residential waste
- Zero waste aspiration with targets, which increase incrementally over a period of years. By year 5: 80% of all household organic waste to be composted on site
- Scheme uses SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage) approach
- Target for residential water use to be less than 100 litres per person per day
- Rainwater harvesting
- Extensive vertical planting to facades providing a habitat for insects and birds
- Wildlife and habitat plan
- Provision of a car club with 5 cars, including 1 electric car
- Discounted cycle purchase scheme and feasibility of a cycle club
- Aim to source construction materials within 50 miles of the development
- 25% of building materials to be from recycled/reclaimed sources



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Blocks E and F

The building to contain the Community Facility has increased in size from the approved Masterplan from 929 sq m to 972 sq m. Arrangements are in place for The Ethical Property Company to run the community facility which will be delivered as a substantial community benefit.

The concept of a Community Trust is also recognised as being beneficial to community governance and will enable the implementation of the One Planet Living Concept. The proposed role for the trust is to take the lead in supporting green living for residents and monitoring the environmental impact associated with the community. The Trust will also be responsible for managing and maintaining the public realm associated with the One Planet Living development.

There are a number of planning conditions and obligations to discharge on the development relating to nest boxes, climbing wall, green walls, landscaping and a Site Waste Management Plan.

Block G

The developer, QED Brighton Ltd, took the decision to submit a separate planning application that departs from the approved master plan. The application was submitted in April 2006 and proposes a mixed-use scheme of 21 townhouses, 14 apartments with 1,138 sq m of commercial office space, access and parking. The application represents an additional 11 residential units and 255 extra sq m of B1 office/workspace from that permitted under the approved Masterplan. Together with a small increase in height of the buildings at either end (1.07 metres), the scheme incorporates 12 additional car parking spaces on and off site. A total of 13 units are secured for affordable housing.

The application was approved on 30 June 2006. The development will achieve a BREEAM / Ecohomes 'Excellent' rating with a 64% reduction in CO2 emissions; this exceeds the 40% savings required under the approved Masterplan.

The sustainability measures on the approved scheme include:

- Low energy lighting in all habitable rooms
- Solar heating of domestic hot water to be provided by roof mounted evacuated tube panels
- Community heating scheme for apartments and townhouses 20-21
- Heat metering in each flat to record energy consumption
- B1 building to be naturally ventilated with heat recovery and mechanical cooling

Block G - Under Construction



The conditions and obligations under the S106 Legal Agreement that relate to the planning application have been agreed and discharged with the Local Planning Authority, and development has commenced on site.

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The SNCI / Greenway

Following negotiations, the developer of the NEQ, Quoin Estates and Developments, has submitted detailed final drawings in respect of landscaping and plant specifications for the Northern Site of Nature Conservation Importance. The Countryside Management Team and City Council's Ecologist will be responsible for the maintenance of both the Northern and Southern SNCI, and additional funding secured through S106 Agreements has been secured for this purpose. The implementation of the Greenway and Northern Site of Nature Conservation Interest is scheduled for the spring 2008.

Public Art

The Public Art contribution, secured by the S106 agreement, was agreed in association with the Masterplan application. A Steering Group was set up to manage the contribution and influence which is managed by the developer and consists of representatives from Brighton & Hove City Council, the developer, representatives from local residents and 3 artists who were commissioned to look at New England Quarter and devise a strategy that influences the provision of public art throughout the development to the value of £2 million.

An initial financial contribution of £150,000 was secured under the original S106 agreement associated with the Masterplan application for the provision of public art. Since that time, additional funding of £79,500 has been secured for public art through S106 agreements signed in association with applications that depart from the approved Masterplan on Blocks E and F, G and K and through Brighton & Hove Arts Commission's Making a Difference cultural programme.

The Artistic Vision for the New England Quarter is based on a hierarchy of routes throughout the site, focusing on linkages to London Road, the Site of Nature Conservation Interest and New England Square, which will provide important foci for public art. A team of three locally based artists has been commissioned to produce pieces throughout the NEQ based on landscape architecture, metalwork and sculpture. Bespoke tree grills and glass blocks embedded in paving form an intrinsic element of the hard landscape along New England Street and a series of enamel plaques, which will provide a graphic representation of the site's history, have been commissioned for St Anne's Square.

Planning permission has been granted for a 6 metre high wooden sculpture by the nationally renowned artist Walter Bailey on the corner of Cheapside. A series of metallic 'running men' are located along the guard rails within the Core Site and 13 seats produced in cast concrete by the artist Rachel Reynolds will run throughout the site. Rachel has also worked successfully with St Bart's Primary School and produced a giant abacas with a bead made and designed by every child in the school.



Sustainability

As part of the planning permission a S106 Legal Obligation was signed with the developer. Within the S106, many of the obligations are related to achieving sustainability. For instance a Travel Plan is required on a block by block basis in order to help reduce the number of car trips generated by the development. In addition, Employment Strategies are required to ensure recruitment is sourced locally in the first instance, then regionally. The S106 also addresses urban biodiversity by requiring the creation of a 'greenway' through the centre of the site, which will incorporate a range of wildlife habitats.

Sustainability Measures - Green Walls, Language School (Block E F) and Roof Terrace (Block A)



Highway Works, Improvement Links and Road Closure

Much of the transport infrastructure on the Core Site, comprising new roads, pavements, cycleways, traffic signals and pedestrian crossings is now in place. The works to the improvement links to London Road at Anne Street, Cheapside and York Hill are all complete and the Station Car Park (Block O-R) has been operational since April 2005. New steps have been constructed enabling pedestrian access at York Hill and new street lighting and furniture installed on Anne Street. An upgraded pedestrian crossing has been installed on London Road and the width of the footway has been increased at strategic points. Sainsbury's Supermarket Car Park is now fully operational. The remaining Highways Infrastructure is due for completion and handover to Brighton and Hove City Council towards the end of 2008.

As part of the transport infrastructure provision on New England Quarter, funding secured through S106 planning agreements has enabled Brighton and Hove Buses on behalf of Brighton and Hove City Council, to operate an NEQ circular bus route from the rear of Brighton Station, Preston Circus, London Road, Somerfield Supermarket, back to the Station, Mondays-Fridays. The City Council in collaboration with the bus company, will seek to operate longer hours to extend the route as more of the site is developed.

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S106 Agreement

Additional items that have been legally secured through S106 Agreements signed in association with applications that depart from the approved Masterplan are summarised below:

Block E F

- 105K Recreational Open Space Activities
- 100k Education Contribution
- 60K Transport Contribution, of which 50K will be in the improvement of sustainable transport modes
- 25K Public Art Contribution
- Community Trust
- Employment and Training Strategies for Construction and Operational Phases of the development, in association with City Council
- Green Travel Plan to include provision of a Car Club for Residents
- Sustainability Measures

Block G

- 5K Public Art
- 10K Management and Maintenance of the Northern/Southern SNCI
- 16.6K Recreational Open Space
- 22K Sustainable Transport Modes
- Travel Plan for the Office Block
- Employment and Training Strategy for Construction and Operational Phases of the development, in association with City College
- Sustainability Measures

Block K

- 45K Recreational Open Space
- 25K maintenance of landscaped areas to be incorporated into the Southern SNCI
- 10K Public Art
- Secure Access to Childrens Play Area
- Childcare Plan for Employees of Jurys Inn Hotel
- Employment and Training Strategies for Construction and Operational Phases of the development, in association with City College

Communications Arrangements

- Briefing Notes available to Members and Chief Officers are placed on Brighton and Hove City Council's website and passed to the press office;
- Press office is advised of any significant activity on the site;
- Distribution of minutes of steering group meetings;
- Monthly project updates go forward to the Departmental Management Team;
- Planning applications are publicised in accordance with statutory regulations.

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