

Bognor Regis Regeneration Position Statement

Project/Opportunity	Update January 2021
<p>1. Enterprise Bognor Regis Enterprise Bognor Regis (EBR) comprises a series of commercial/industrial sites co-located north of Bognor Regis straddling the A29. The aim is to make the sites ready and attractive for early development to accelerate business and employment growth, and many pre-planning studies were undertaken which has hastened development. There is limited greenfield commercial land available on this scale within Coastal West Sussex area.</p>	<p>The site is allocated as a strategic employment site in the adopted Local Plan. Landowners of EBR sites are reporting good occupier interest. Oldlands Farm site – Construction work for the Lidl Lidl store is progressing well. Saltbox site – Live updates from site can be viewed via this link: http://cameracontroluk.com/client/rg/saltbox/index.php</p> <p>The proposed development will deliver £33.7 m of capital investment; provide approximately 30,520 square metres of new mixed-use floor-space and between 500 and 1000 new private sector jobs.</p> <p>Phase 1 of the 17.5acre site began in August 2020 with a 44-week programme to deliver premises for Warburtons, Aldi and two drive throughs (Greggs & Starbucks) plus the infrastructure (access roads, drainage and utilities) for the whole site. Build currently on target with completion expected early Summer 2021. Phase 1 projected to deliver over 200 jobs. The full planning application also includes the provision of the site’s infrastructure comprising access roads and a new entrance from Shripney Road, on-site open space provision, landscaping, drainage works and attenuation ponds. Outline permission was granted for the remainder of the site i.e. flexible delivery of employment space primarily in the form of two warehouses with associated car parking provision and landscaping.</p>
<p>2. Regis and Hothamton sites The Council owns two key regeneration sites at the Regis Centre and Hothamton car park and is seeking to develop them to obtain the maximum regeneration benefit for the town.</p>	<p>Hothamton site - The Council has decided that work on the proposed Pavilion Park be ceased. Cabinet in November 2020 and Full Council in January 2021 approved a refurbishment of the Sunken Gardens and play area with a budget of £500,000. The project comprises a new play area within the site, new southern entrance to the gardens, refurbished planting and seating. This project is being delivered by ADC Greenspace Team.</p> <p>Regis site - Work on the Regis site has also been halted until regeneration project priorities have been agreed. A paper on the Regis Site regarding a potential hotel was presented to a previous meeting and was deferred by Members.</p>

	<p>Place St Maur - Authority was given by Cabinet in March 2020 to proceed with background work for the Place St Maur enhancement project. During the summer, following a request for expressions of interest to Coast to Capital LEP, a full application was made to the “Getting Building Fund” to fund part of the Place St Maur enhancement scheme which was awarded £1.2m. Part of the criteria for this government funding is the need to be spent up by March 2022. Cabinet in November 2020 approved the project for delivery, including a contribution of £370,000 towards the project costs. Stakeholder and officer consultation are complete with public consultation underway. This project is being delivered by ADC Greenspace Team.</p> <p>The last required consultancy work around potential future changes to traffic flows on The Esplanade was included within the bid and funding awarded for Place St Maur. In liaison with WSCC Transport Planning Department, this work will be carried out during summer 2021 by ADC Greenspace Team.</p> <p>At the Arun District Council Full Council meeting in September 2020, a motion was agreed to invite submissions for council-owned regeneration sites across the town. Eleven submissions have been received with Member presentations scheduled for February. A report will be going to Full Council in March.</p>
<p>3. Town Centre Initiatives A vibrant and appealing town centre offer of shops, public realm and events is a key draw for both residents and visitors. A Business Improvement District (BID) is in place from April 2018 for 5 years. Work is delivered in partnership with BID Manager, BID Board and Bognor Regis Town Council.</p>	<p>The Council has worked closely with the BID and other councils to reopen the town centre safely using the £143k Reopening High Streets Safely Fund from government. This money has been used across the district to cover all areas with primary/secondary retail centres or a parade of shops.</p> <p>The BID worked in partnership with Bognor Regis Town Council to provide the best ever Christmas illuminations and light displays across the town, making it both welcoming and safe for people to visit. There is a fine balance to be drawn in terms of encouraging people to come into town whilst at the same time managing social distancing requirements and discouraging larger gatherings of people.</p> <p>Until the COVID-19 restrictions are fully lifted and there is a clear understanding of what social distancing measures are required and how they can</p>

be practically implemented, no events will be progressed.

The BID has worked with the Town Council to deliver some attractive street scene enhancements to draw footfall into less central areas of the town such as the new flower-pot planters in Queensway.

Fitzleet multi-storey car park is being fully refurbished by the Council including new signage and redecoration using the placebranding visual identity materials.

Vacancy rates from pre-lockdown in November 2020 showed a small drop in vacant units since the last check in September from 10.9% (29/266) in September to 10.3% (27 vacancies) for the core town centre and a small rise from 13.5% (54/402) in September to 13.8% (55 vacant) for the wider BID area. Soon it is likely that the downturn caused by the pandemic and the well-publicised continued demise of national chains will have a negative impact on these figures. During lockdown it was estimated by retail organisations that around 25% of retail outlets nationally may not reopen once lockdown is fully eased. It is however encouraging to note that new businesses are starting up, a few retail but many more food and drink, hair and beauty and other activities requiring the customer to be present which is good news in terms of footfall.

Footfall has held up during the pandemic better than other similar towns but even outside of lockdown was down on 2019 by 20-30%.

Work has already started between partners on a Town Recovery Plan led by Bognor Regis BID and Bognor Regis Regeneration Board.

The Pop-up shop proposal will progress as planned when restrictions are lifted, and it is practical to do so.

The Royal Hotel construction work is progressing well despite Covid challenges to the supply chain. The show flat, presented to a very high standard, is attracting significant interest. The Royal & East Lodge are due for completion imminently with occupation from end February. External lighting in progress. West Lodge is underway, due for completion mid-year with restaurant to follow.

	<p>Proposals for a new high-quality two week-long event on the Esplanade and Place St Maur for summer 2021 are on hold and the council funding is carried forward until this can safely be progressed. The likely required lead-in time is 18 months.</p>
<p>4. Seafront Regeneration The Seafront Strategy was adopted in 2009 and set out plans to enhance the area. The Seafront Delivery Plan for the central section of the seafront was approved in 2016, with thematic zones and a strategic template for delivery of regeneration initiatives.</p>	<p>The public toilets on the promenade remain closed however the legal dispute around building standards has been resolved and work is taking place on site to ensure the toilets are reopened for the summer season.</p> <p>The Council was awarded £50k from Coastal Revival Fund for heritage reinstatement works to the bandstand which has been matched by the Council. Work including the addition of a new disabled access ramp is in progress with completion due in Spring 2021. There is a desire from some quarters to examine the feasibility of having wind-break screens fitted to the bandstand and this will be further explored in the future.</p> <p>Cabinet has resolved that, based on the points made by the COVID-19 Recovery Working Party, the 2016 Bognor Regis Seafront Delivery Plan should be re-examined, and a series of deliverable interventions and actions prioritised. A report will be presented to the first Economy Committee meeting in June.</p>
<p>5. University of Chichester The University has a campus in both Chichester and Bognor Regis, with strong links with the wider regeneration of Bognor Regis. It has ambitious plans for campus expansion and doubling student numbers, and provides facilities for businesses such as hot-desking, meeting space and incubator units.</p>	<p>The Tech Park was formally opened by the Duke and Duchess of Wessex in Sept 2018.</p> <p>The University has secured planning approval for 176 bed on-campus student accommodation units.</p> <p>Further student accommodation of 104 beds above Wilkinsons store in London Road has also been approved.</p>
<p>6. Butlin's Butlin's has transformed much of their accommodation from chalets into modern hotels. This has changed</p>	<p>The resort reopened in July and has closed again during lockdowns and over Christmas. 'Day Visits' have been postponed until later in 2021. Measures were put in place to keep both guests and team safe including a reduced number of guests, new social distancing measures, drive-through check ins</p>

<p>the type of customer coming to Butlin's, and also what they want to do on holiday. Butlin's is an active partner in the wider town regeneration</p>	<p>and stringent, more frequent cleaning procedures, and an updated app.</p> <p>All entertainment had now moved indoors so there are no longer outdoor stages however, for safety reasons the indoor venues will be running at limited capacity with social distancing in place and guests are asked to wear a face covering while indoors.</p> <p>Resort Updates also include information on the Track and Trace process, advice from those with bookings travelling from areas with local lockdown restrictions, along with links to the relevant latest UK Government Guidelines. The Butlin's website / social media channels provide regular updates.</p> <p>A planning application has been received for a temporary indoor performance venue on the site of the old swimming pool. Estimated completion end April 2021. An application has also been received to bring the check-in kiosk further onto the resort and double the capacity to reduce queueing problems.</p>
<p>7. Old Town and Pier The Old Town area around Norfolk Street and Waterloo Square is on the up. Privately funded development will bring new good quality cafes/restaurants. Promotional activity will draw vibrancy and different footfall to this area of the town. The Pier Trust is spearheading plans to safeguard and improve the pier</p>	<p>The planning application for the Mud Club and 2-4 Waterloo Square site with commercial ground floor and residential above has been refused. A new application has been submitted and is awaiting determination.</p> <p>A new Amusement Arcade has opened in the previously closed building, and the award-winning Pinks Vintage Ice Cream are now open on the ground floor of 18 Waterloo Square with two new ADC temporary housing flats above.</p> <p>BID have also delivered a public art project in Norfolk Street using a local artist to create a mural featuring directional signage to encourage pedestrian flow through the Heritage Quarter/Old Town area.</p>
<p>8. Railway Station The Station occupies a key gateway position in the town. It is a listed building, was in very poor repair with vacant commercial opportunities, and is an identified site for improvement</p>	<p>Construction work on the Track Creative and Digital hub at the station is now complete and it is open for business which is mainly virtual currently. The hub operator Town Square has recruited Community Managers, and prospective customers are being invited to book up for a tour of the premises.</p>

9. Transport and Car Parking

Transport is a key element of development within the town as is car parking. It is essential to co-ordinate with and consider these issues as part of the development process. Strategically, proposed future improvements to the A27 at Chichester, Arundel and Worthing, and A29 as part of the Barnham-Eastergate-Westergate housing plans (included in the Local Plan) will significantly enhance the viability of development land in and around the town.

The 2-hour free parking agreement for 2021 has been agreed between BID, Bognor Regis Town Council and Arun DC, and discs are being sold. There is now a 3-year agreement in place.

Proposals to make the railway station junction more pedestrian friendly were agreed in principle with WSCC and JWACC in 2018 however there has been no action to deliver this project. Taking a 'people first' approach, improvements to this junction are a local aspiration, receiving strong support across ADC, the Town Council, BID and other stakeholders. Officers are continuing to seek commitment to delivery.

A29 – planning for northern section is due for determination in March 2021. Discussions with site promoters indicate that the planning application for rest of the road, strategic allocations and site masterplans are due around Spring 2021.

10. Placebranding and Promotion

Bognor Regis is particularly hampered by negative perceptions of the town. The place-branding initiative led by Hemingway Design will set out to change the narrative and promote the town as a modern, forward-thinking investment destination.

The three core values for the placebrand as derived from the public survey findings are:

A BEACON FOR A BOLD FUTURE – a place of opportunity, looking forward and futureproofing our designs, developments and people, attracting investment and talent

BLUE SKY THINKING – celebrating our fabulous natural assets and environmental credentials, innovative thinking and going beyond the expected

READY FOR FUN – stay quirky, design the fun in

A paper is being submitted to this meeting asking the Council to adopt the Placebrand and commit to using it in **all activity** for Bognor Regis. All other key partners have formally agreed or are in the process of agreeing to adopt and use the placebrand.

The core values provide a "Brand Filter" through which all local **activity and** decisions must successfully pass. It is being trialled in a live Council project with the enhancement work to Place St Maur.

The local multi-agency **stakeholder Delivery Group** lead by Bognor Regis Regeneration Board as **stewards of the place branding initiative is working to implement the placebranding.**

The "Invest in Bognor Regis" website is in the process of being updated with new information and rebranded in line with placebranding.

<https://www.bognorregisregeneration.com/>

<p>11. Gigabit West Sussex This is a WSCC project and aims to extend the delivery of ultrafast fibre networks in some public buildings in towns across the county.</p>	<p>The Gigabit West Sussex project (funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) and led by WSCC to install superfast gigabit fibre broadband, is progressing well. Specific public buildings in Bognor Regis received the first phase of installation within the district in early 2019, and installations are nearing completion.</p> <p>WSCC have successfully bid to Government to become a pilot area for the new 75% business rate growth retention scheme. This will be used to deliver 'Phase 2' of improving the county's fibre network and connecting up towns in the county. The County wide officers working group 'Everything Connects' is meeting regularly to develop the project programme.</p>
<p>12. Wider Economic Strategy/Policy Regional and sub-regional strategy and policy impacts both activity and funding streams for economic development within Arun</p>	<p>The Arun Economic Development Strategy has been approved and is available on the ADC website.</p> <p>Local Authorities and partners across West Sussex have been working collectively, where appropriate, during the COVID-19 restriction period to understand the economic impact of the restrictions, immediate interventions needed to assist businesses and longer-term economic recovery measures.</p> <p>The Arun Growth Deal was signed in 2018. This is a joint commitment between ADC and WSCC to align resources to deliver economic growth and unlock opportunities for new homes, infrastructure, employment floor space and rejuvenated town centres. Officers, County and District Council Cabinet Members meet regularly to monitor project progress.</p> <p>The West Sussex Economic Strategy and Coast to Capital (C2C) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) were launched in 2018. The LEP is currently drawing up a Local Industrial Strategy which is likely to determine future government funding priorities locally.</p> <p>The Coastal West Sussex Partnership Board has a new Chairman and several new business members.</p>

	<p>Arun District Council is a member of the Greater Brighton Economic Board. The Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB) currently comprises the local authorities of Adur, Brighton & Hove, Crawley, Lewes, Mid Sussex and Worthing. The overarching aim of the Board is to protect & grow the economy by coordinating economic development activities and investment at City Region level.</p>
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