



Seaford Neighbourhood Plan Site Notes for Site SS6 Florence House reviewed Sept 2018

Site Name and address if known	Land at Florence House, Southdown Road, Seaford BN25 4JS
Name of site owner Details of any consultation held	Mairin Colleary [REDACTED]
Photo	 
Site Location	Borders SDNP and Heritage Coast next to Seaford Head Golf Course O.S Grid Ref. TV490983
Gross site area	0.258 hectares
Current use	Florence House is a retreat and conference centre, wedding venue and B&B. Development of land would not affect the running of the business.

Previous use (if known)	Greenfield
Type (greenfield, brownfield or both)	Greenfield
SHELAA reference and comments (if any)	<p>22SF (AUG 2017) Site yield 10 units</p> <p>Suitable, Available & Achievable. Greenfield site adjacent to planning boundary. SDNP borders site. Within Archaeological Notification Area and Heritage Coast designation crosses eastern boundary. ESCC highways consider access is achievable. If a higher number of units were considered (proponent also suggested 72 units) then provision of footways along Southdown Road would be expected. Site is not within recommended walking distance of public transport or town centre services. ESCC landscape architect highlights site is within sensitive location which would be unsuited to a large development. Smaller development possible. Seaford are in the early stages of producing a neighbourhood plan – no preferred housing options have been identified as yet.</p>
Planning Policies covered by Lewes Local Plan for the site	<p>Outside planning boundary</p> <p>CT1 (Planning Boundary and Key Countryside Policy) CT8 (Heritage Coast) CP10 (Natural Environment and Landscape Character) RES6 (Residential Development in the Countryside) SSSI Impact Risk Zone with respect to all planning applications outside or extending outside existing settlements/urban areas affecting greenspace, farmland, semi natural habitats or landscape features such as trees, hedges, streams, rural buildings/structures</p> <p>This granite-built 1920's Voyseyesque house has a history of planning applications, a summary of which is available with Application LW/14/0864 which in summary includes refused applications as follows: 1963 for 25 houses, 1971 multiple applications for 16 and 32 dwellings, 1972 for 14 dwellings, 1984 for 20 sheltered dwellings. There is a comprehensive planning statement included in application LW/09/0239 which was approved on 16 April 2009, to restore the planning use to residential accommodation.</p>
Suitability	<p>Landscape Capacity Study by Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority September 2012 http://www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan_LCS_2012.pdf</p> <p>Concludes land South of Chyngton Road as follows: Landscape Value: Substantial Landscape Sensitivity: High Landscape Capacity: Negligible/Low</p>
Achievability & Availability	<p>Site put forward by owner in response to Call for Sites. Site in single ownership and available immediately.</p> <p>By letter dated 4 August 2017, Parker Dann, Planning Consultants for the owner submitted a proposal for a terrace of 6 detached houses behind the hedge fronting Southdown Road, and a further house intended for the manager's residence, a total of 7 homes. The proposal was accompanied by the following text “ <i>The Steering Group's sustainability objectives, as prepared by their consultants, are set out below. The site's response is set out in blue beneath each criterion.</i></p>

1. Housing - To deliver high quality new open market and affordable homes that meet the needs of the local community and to deliver this on brownfield land in the first instance.

The land at Florence house would deliver both market and affordable housing. Affordable housing contributions are required on sites of 11 dwellings or more or when the cumulative residential floorspace of a development exceeds 1,000 sqm. This is confirmed by Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 23b-031-20161116 of the National Planning Practice Guidance. The site would accommodate floorspace in excess of 1,000 sqm and therefore would contribute towards both market and affordable housing. This can be confirmed with Estelle Maisonnial - Neighbourhood Planning Officer at Lewes District Council if necessary. It should not matter whether 10 sites of 10 dwellings or 1 site of 100 dwellings is brought forward in the Neighbourhood Plan. The required percentage of affordable houses is the same for both scenarios therefore the number of affordable houses delivered would be the same also.

2. Sustainable Transport and walking/cycling - To ensure that the Plan area has a robust, accessible and sustainable train system. To support people to walk and cycle.

Seaford Head School is 0.69 km away whilst the town centre (railway station) is 1.38 km away.

Paragraph 4.4.1 of Manual for Streets confirms walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by a range of facilities approximately 800 metres walking distance away which can be comfortably accessed on foot. It is explicit though that this is not an upper limit and PPS13 (now redundant) states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 km.

The services and facilities of the town are within the upper limited of 2 km suggested by Manual for Streets.

3. Community infrastructure - To maintain and enhance community infrastructure within the Parish.

The development of the site would not result in the loss of a business or any community infrastructure. Occupants of the proposed development would utilise existing community infrastructure enhancing its viability.

4. Green Infrastructure - To maintain and enhance green infrastructure within the conurbation to include a range of areas.

The proposed development of the site would not result in the loss of green infrastructure areas within the conurbation as the site sits outside the existing urban area.

5. Heritage Assets - To protect or enhance the heritage assets and historic environment of the Parish.

The nearest listed building (Seaford College of Education) is 440 metres away as the crow flies. There are a substantial number of buildings and amount of vegetation intervening. There would be no impact on the listed building as a result of the proposed development. Part of the site is within the Heritage Coast. The Indicative Plan included at Appendix B shows a development of 6 properties (in excess of 1,000 sqm cumulatively) outside of the Heritage Coast area. Please note this plan is for illustrative purposes only and shows the area which 'could' be developed. No firm proposals for the site are in place and we would be

happy to work with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in this regard. The site is within Archaeological Notification Area – an assessment would need to be carried out. A desk-based archaeological assessment could be undertaken and submitted with any future planning application. If necessary Conditions could be attached to a future consent requiring a watching brief.

6. Countryside, Landscape and Key Views - To conserve and enhance the countryside of the Parish and surrounding area, including the setting of the National Park.

As shown in Appendix B, and as acknowledged by Lewes District Council as part of their SHLAA Report a development can be accommodated without an undue impact on the character and appearance of the countryside or the National Park.

7. Flood Risk - To steer new development away from areas at high risk of flooding or where it may cause or increase flooding either on site or elsewhere.

The site is in Flood Zone 1. The lowest risk zone.

8. Biodiversity - To protect and enhance the biodiversity of the SNP area including locally, nationally and internationally designated areas as well as local wildlife sites and priority habitats and species.

Proposed area for development is not a locally, nationally or internationally designated area in terms of biodiversity. A phase 1 ecology survey would be carried out prior to development with any necessary further surveys that stem from this.

9. Sustainable Design - To encourage high quality design and layout in all new development and reduce the Parish's impact on climate change.

All developments have an equal opportunity to respond to this desire. One development site should not be favoured over another based on this criterion.

10. Local businesses and tourism - To maintain existing employment areas and support local businesses and encourage tourism.

The proposal would not result in the loss of a local business. Florence House has been in its current ownership since 2004 and operates as a retreat and personal development and visitor/tourist venue. The building is in need of refurbishment and modernisation to protect the business at Florence House, the jobs it provides and accommodation for visitors and tourists. Modern accommodation largely provides en suite facilities and is disabled accessible. At present Florence House has no en suite facilities and limited disabled access. In the past 4 years it has experienced a substantial increase in request for en suite and disabled facilities which it is unable to provide with resulting loss of business. This is a threat to ongoing viability. Their major client from the Middle East has been requesting en suite facilities for a considerable time and this summer took a large group to an alternative venue which can offer these facilities at a loss to Florence House. If the development is agreed it would enable Florence House to reinvest to carry out the upgrade of their facilities and provide additional bed and communal spaces which would allow the business to continue and grow. This is of a particularly benefit to Seaford in our view given the fairly limited amount tourist accommodation currently on offer.

	<p>Your email suggests that “the fact that Florence House borders the National Park and Heritage Coast and is not large enough to generate many affordable homes may have impacted on your site’s assessment”</p> <p>As I confirm above, the development can be delivered in a fashion that does not compromise the National Park or Heritage Coast. This has been agreed by Lewes District Council. I hope I have corrected the misconception that the site is not large enough to generate affordable homes.</p> <p>I remain of the view that Florence House offers an excellent opportunity for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to allocate much needed growth to Seaford to an appropriately located site which is well connected to surrounding employment hubs by good transport infrastructure. Small clusters of housing inevitably have less of an impact when compared to large sites.</p>
Acceptability	
Site Summary	<p>Distance to amenities: Seaford Station: 1.49 km (on foot), 1.81 km (by car) GP surgery: 1.49 km Post office: 1.29 km Secondary school: 0.97 km Primary school: 2.09 km (on foot), 2.41 km (by car) Shop: 1.13 km (on foot), 1.49 km (by car) Bus stop (119): 0.64 km Source: https://www.google.co.uk/maps</p> <p>Dark Skies E1 (Buffer or Rural Transition Zone)</p> <p>The speed limit on Southdown Road is 30mph There have been 0 reported traffic accidents at or close to the site</p> <p>The elevation of the site is 20m According to the SDNP Viewshed Analysis, the site is visible from 6-10 viewpoints in the National Park</p> <p>Higher Level Stewardship Target Area: South Downs Nitrate Vulnerable Zone 2017 ID: G56 Sussex Chalk Woodland Priority Habitat Network – High and Lower Spatial Priority. Farm Wildlife Package Area: South Downs High priority for countryside stewardship in relation to Farm Wildlife Package Areas Environmentally Sensitive Area: South Downs National Character Area Level Landscape Features: Hedgerow Priority - High Bankside Tree Priority - High Field Margins and Buffers Priority - High Winter Stubble Priority - High Permanent Grassland Priority - High Landscape Risk Value – High Contributions of Land Use Associated Features - Prominent http://www.magic.gov.uk/</p>

	<p>UK Biodiversity Action Plan species: Corn Bunting, Grey Partridge http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5163 Birds of Conservation Concern Red List: Corn Bunting, Grey Partridge and Amber List: Redshank https://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/birdsofconservationconcern4_tcm9-410743.pdf Species "of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity" covered under section 41 (England) of the NERC Act (2006) and therefore need to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions with a view to conserving biodiversity. Corn Bunting, Grey Partridge – Source: http://www.magic.gov.uk/</p>
<p>Further Comment from statutory bodies</p>	<p>Met with Sarah Nelson, Strategic Planning Lead, SDNPA on 26.1.17. She confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential sites that border the National Park or Heritage Coast should be considered as if they are <u>in</u> the National Park/Heritage Coast. "It may sometimes be the case that development outside the boundary may have an impact within it. Local authorities have a duty to have regard to the National Park purposes (as required in Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995)." • SDNPA are very protective of the iconic Heritage Coast • SDNPA revised policies will have stronger emphasis on landscape – particularly relevant to this site are: Landscape Character (SD5), Safeguarding Views (SD7), Relative Tranquillity (SD8) and Dark Night Skies (SD9).
<p>Summary views from residents (would they support this site?)</p>	

