

# MEMO



Lewes District Council

<b>To</b>	Jeremy Patterson – Case Officer
<b>From</b>	Peter Sharp - Head of Regeneration
<b>Application Ref</b>	LW/799/CM(EIA)
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Corinne Day – EZ Newhaven Programme Manager
<b>Date</b>	29 January 2018

## INTRODUCTION

We write on behalf of Regeneration, Lewes District Council, to comment on the above planning application for *‘the construction and use of plant, namely aggregate processing plant, aggregate bagging plant, concrete batching plant, concrete block-making plant and buildings, ancillary offices and stores for processing and utilising aggregates landed at Newhaven Port and distribution of the products by road and rail together with access to the public highway and the extension of an existing rail siding, Fishers Wharf, Newhaven Port, Newhaven’*.

## PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

The Government aims to secure economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity by building on the country’s strengths. Furthermore, the Government has stated that it is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything that it can to support sustainable economic growth and create jobs.

Lewes District Council’s ‘Council Plan’ 2016 to 2020 was informed and developed in consultation with our residents, partners and other stakeholders. The plan identifies the district as an outstanding location for business and enterprise with over 4,700 businesses employing more than 30,000 people.

## NEWHAVEN ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Newhaven Enterprise Zone covers eight key sites, with the aim of increasing investment and regeneration to create new employment floorspace, jobs and homes. Over a 25-year lifespan from April 2017, the Enterprise Zone is forecast to create and sustain around 2,000 jobs, create 55,000m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floorspace and refurbish a further 15,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floorspace. The Enterprise Zone will make Newhaven a more attractive destination for business, with some small-scale financial incentives available for inwards investors.

The intensification of higher value economic uses on the eight designated sites is a key ambition for the Enterprise Zone. Working closely with partners, including local land owners, we plan to redevelop the sites beyond their current uses, as we are already beginning to see happen on Eastside South, Railway Quay, Avis Way and the Town Centre. There is growing demand for high quality commercial development in Newhaven through the employment space built and pre-let on Eastside South (Phase two is already coming forward) and current increased quality of enquiry coming through for development sites and employment space.

The vision for East Quay, which incorporates the application site, is for commercial development that supports a sustainable and vibrant Port in Newhaven. It is recognised that this is a significant and vital component of the local economy.

## The proposal

The proposal is located on the East Quay. East Quay does have deep water berths which enables the larger modern dredgers to dock at all states of the tide. The location will take advantage of existing



planning permission to extend the quay and the planned extension to the new port access road which will open up the Port for investment.

The proposal for a road and rail connected marine dredged aggregate terminal at East Quay contributes to the Port Authority's long term sustainable development objectives. The proposal also contributes to the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton and Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (2013) responding to market demand and supply, and providing local supply to meet forecasted construction growth in the locality and region.

Whilst the proposal (when all four stages are completed) is estimated to create near to 100 jobs, 74 of which will be net additional jobs to the area, they are primarily low skilled employment opportunities. The development proposals will cover an estimated 5.17ha. Based on 100 jobs, this equates to more than 500m<sup>2</sup> per job which we consider is a low employment density for the type of industrial use being proposed.<sup>1</sup>

The consultation has received a high level of concern regards visual impact and loss of local amenity. The site is in an operational area of the port, and as such a level of understanding is given regards to the visual aesthetics of the operation proposed. However, allowing this scheme to go ahead in its current form would severely undermine Newhaven's potential as a visitor destination within the South Downs National Park and coastal biosphere, especially as it relates to the desired growth in the visitor economy and the leisure focused regeneration of the town centre. We would welcome a redesign of the scheme to better consider the natural environment through more innovative use of build and engineering.

#### **ASSESSMENT**

Newhaven is at the heart of LDC's regeneration ambitions and, as one of the eight Enterprise Zone sites, East Quay will play a key role in delivering sustainable and inclusive growth at a local level. We acknowledge that there is a need for additional marine dredged aggregates through Ports. Newhaven is a working, maritime-focused port and is the only operational port in East Sussex. We also acknowledge that this proposal fits with the published Port Masterplan.

We are however, keen to ensure that any consent is provided subject to the construction of Phase 1a of the Port Access Road, and that any consent has appropriate mitigations proposed to minimise the impact on surrounding commercial and residential sites.

We are concerned at the low density of employment provided through the scheme, although we do recognise that new job creation is important in Newhaven. We would also like to see a commitment to offering the newly created jobs to local people, perhaps through an employment open day, and would encourage Brett's to collaborate with local colleges to consider skills provision and training where the business requires. Should consent be granted, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss these employment opportunities with the applicant to maximise local benefit from the proposals.

We would like to see the proposed design reconsidered, to enable consideration of a wider range of options that take account of the wider regeneration ambitions of the town and the impact that this proposal will have on the visual amenity of the area from both Seaford and Newhaven.

---

<sup>1</sup> The HCA's Employment Densities Guide (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, November 2015) sets out estimated space per job for all use classes.