Greater Brighton & Coastal West Sussex Background Papers

Executive Summary

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Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners
Planning. Design. Economics.

Greater Brighton

COASTAL WEST SUSSEX and GREATER BRIGHTON STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD

Introduction

This Executive Summary report has been prepared to accompany a series of background papers that consider strategic issues relevant to achieving long-term sustainable growth in Greater Brighton and the wider Coastal West Sussex area ('GBCWS') between 2015 and 2025.[i]

The papers have been developed by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) and Interfleet Transport Advisory (ITA) with three considerations in mind:

1. The background papers focus on the three topic areas of **economy, housing market** and **transport system.** The papers review existing evidence and identify cross-cutting themes relevant to future strategy in the GBCWS area in these respects.[ii]

2. The analysis is scoped to include both **Greater Brighton** and the wider **Coastal West Sussex** area (see Figure 1)[iii], drawing together evidence to consider how these areas currently inter-relate with each other and how this might change in the future.

3. The papers seek to identify potential **future opportunities and actions** to collectively support the long-term growth needs and ambitions of the two areas across the three topics.

The process for preparing the background papers has followed a three-stage methodology:

1. evidence review and data gathering;

2. synthesis and identification of key themes; and

3. identifying implications and intervention options.

This has been informed by consultation and engagement with a range of stakeholders including an officer workshop and presentations of emerging findings to relevant groups.

Purpose

The brief for the background papers identifies that achieving long term sustainable growth across GBCWS will depend on addressing key strategic issues – notably employment land, housing, transport and other infrastructure – in an integrated and deliverable way. These factors are individually and collectively critical as drivers of growth[iv]:

- **Economy** – the scale and concentration of businesses and sectors, and particularly the extent to which clusters of related or complementary activities can drive wealth-generating activity and new business creation.

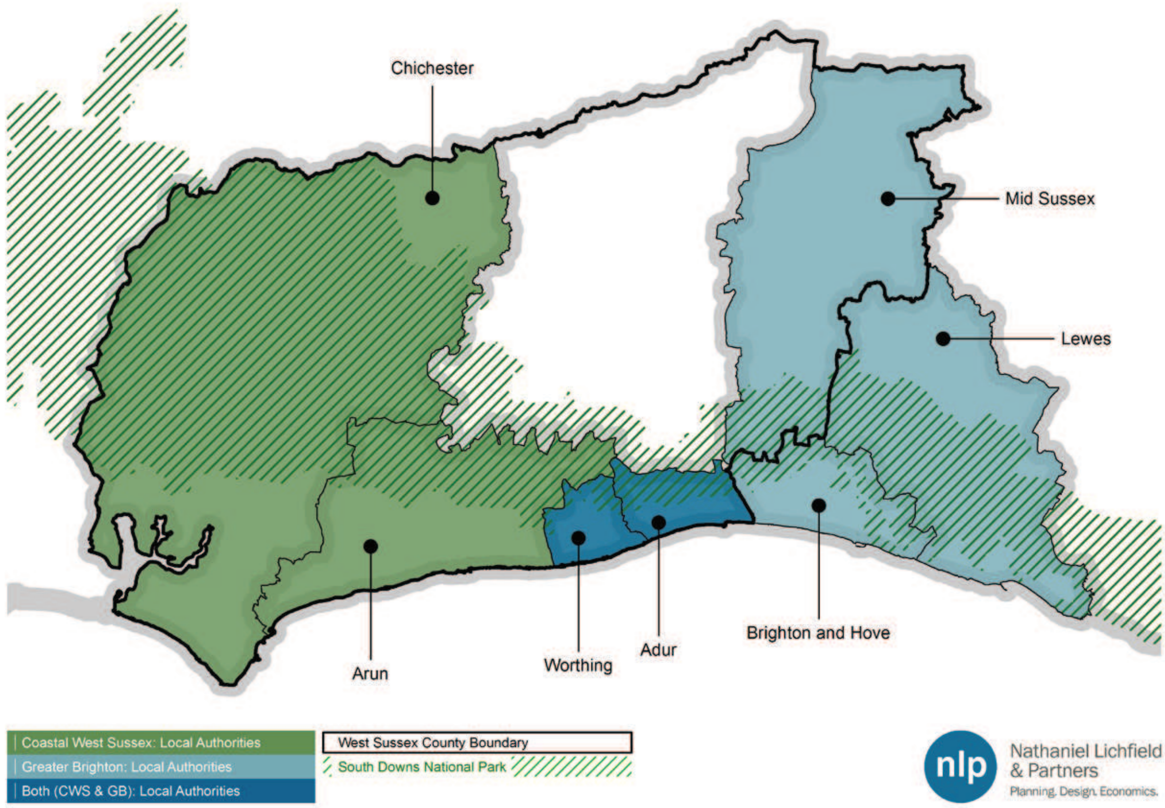
- **Housing market** – a major determinant of access to labour supply and human capital required to support economic growth and innovation, but also as a source of demand for goods and services.

- **Transport system** – critical to determining the relative physical connectivity between businesses, suppliers, workers and consumers, and the costs, time and reliability of these connections.

Analysing the local assets and dynamics related to these drivers, as well as their interactions with each other, provides a basis for thinking about potential actions and strategies for supporting long-term growth across GBCWS.[v]

The headline findings of the analysis, strategic implications and potential opportunities and actions are set out on the following pages.

Figure 1: Spatial Definition of Greater Brighton and Coastal West Sussex



Economy:
Broader foundations for growth

GBCWS is a significant economic sub-region, accounting for nearly half of all jobs within the Coast-to-Capital Local Enterprise Partnership area and having recorded faster job creation rates in proportionate terms than some other LEP areas in the wider South East. Brighton & Hove is the largest and fastest growing local economy within the area and has expanded significantly over the past decade. Particular strengths include a blend of high growth sectors, access to universities, and high levels of new business creation. Across GBCWS, recent trends indicate that the share of jobs focused in the urban centres has increased relative to the more rural areas over time. Looking ahead, employment forecasts indicate potential for 57,000 new jobs by 2031 across GBCWS, which in line with past trends will be mainly focused in Brighton & Hove and Chichester although all areas are expected to register net job gains.

The workforce skills profile in GBCWS is also relatively strong. A large share of the resident labour force is employed in higher skilled roles, with Brighton & Hove, Lewes and Chichester supporting the largest proportions. Significantly the area overall is a large exporter of skilled workers to other locations (notably Greater London) at levels equivalent to nearly a third of all higher skilled residents within GBCWS.

A number of future challenges can be identified. Although the growth of the Brighton & Hove economy is a critical driver of the economic strength of the area, the City is physically constrained (particularly employment land) and increasingly congested which may begin to erode its competitiveness for leading growth sectors. This is particularly critical as businesses mature and scale-up (i.e. move on from the start-up phase) to become larger businesses. At the same time, some adjoining parts of Coastal West Sussex have not yet developed the broader mix of sectors or skills base that can sustain higher levels of jobs and economic output, but do offer capacity for future growth including on new strategic employment and housing sites identified in Local Plans. Individual initiatives are underway in some of these areas to help grow sectors and build new economic strengths, including through investment in infrastructure.

Strategic Implications:

a. **Adopt a polycentric growth strategy:** plan for a wider distribution of growth by developing a complementary offer across all parts of GBCWS, to help retain new and growing businesses and skilled workers who currently commute elsewhere.

b. **Raising productivity and output in all areas:** support future growth needs within the area and the transition to higher-value sectors and more polycentric growth through targeted investment (including skills base).

c. **Broaden employment land supply:** explore potential for intermediate employment space and site opportunities, particularly in locations closest to Brighton & Hove, that can provide a ‘stepping stone’ for expanding businesses and complement future strategic site propositions.

ECONOMY

Potential Opportunities and Actions:

Strategy element	Opportunities and actions	Relevant Themes: Economic Growth and Sectors	Relevant Themes: Access to Labour Force	Relevant Themes: Provision of Employment Space
1. Develop polycentric growth strategy for GBCWS	• Identify the key strengths and opportunities for clustering across GBCWS, including 'mapping' of sectors to land and infrastructure requirements • Define a complementary role for each part of GBCWS, and develop coordinated economic strategy • Coordinated approach to retaining growing businesses by offering scale-up potential in accessible or proximate locations	✓✓	✓	✓
2. Ensure economic activity is retained within the sub-region	• Analyse growing business needs from main centres of activity (i.e. Brighton & Hove, Chichester) • Work with expanding firms to identify future requirements for resources and space • Promote the potential of new strategic employment sites (see 4 below)	✓	✓	✓
3. Raise productivity levels and economic output	• Accelerate growth in high growth sectors through targeted investment in new initiatives • Help low-growth legacy companies to repurpose assets and adopt new technologies • Support existing companies to retain local HQs and/or encourage local expansion • Expand skills and training programmes for sought-after skillsets and to help address skills deficits in some locations	✓✓	✓	
4. Ensure adequate provision of employment space to meet business needs	• Devise realistic delivery programme for strategic sites that are planned • Identify dedicated resources to support delivery and to promote new sites to market (linked to 5 below) • Address the 'missing middle' in employment land supply terms, and use this as an opportunity to promote other locations	✓		✓✓
5. Make GBCWS a premier investment location	• Leverage the Brighton & Hove 'brand' to articulate the economic potential of the wider area • Seek cross-area place marketing to maximise potential in a crowded investment marketplace (e.g. 'Superfused') • Develop institutional capacity to enable more unified approach across GBCWS to meeting indigenous and inward investment needs (in liaison with LEP)	✓	✓	✓

Source: NLP analysis

✓✓ = Major contribution to theme | ✓ = Supporting contribution to theme

Housing Market:
Meeting needs and providing choice

The population of GBCWS has been expanding including through significant levels of in-migration from other parts of the UK, notably younger working-age groups from Greater London (mainly to Brighton & Hove). This has helped increase the overall working-age population of the area in turn supporting job growth. The local population is highly mobile demonstrated by internal migration flows within the area, notably outwards from Brighton & Hove, mainly due to housing costs and more limited accommodation choice within the City.

Constrained housing supply and increasing costs are creating a number of pressures: these include affordability challenges for residents and businesses (as some commercial space is redeveloped or converted to residential use) and on the transport system as workers who move (particularly out of Brighton & Hove) commute across the area to access jobs and services.

The GBCWS local authorities are currently planning to provide c.30,500 new dwellings through Local Plans over the period to 2025, which existing evidence indicates may be lower than the level of housing growth required to meet forecast demographic and economic needs within the area.[vi] The evidence also points to the need to broaden the current choice of housing types in some locations so that the housing needs of different groups can be met more effectively and reducing the need for people to move further away (and potentially outside of GBCWS) to secure the type of housing they require. The South Downs National Park Authority is also at the early stages of preparing a Local Plan, which will include a housing requirement focused on meeting local affordable needs.

Local authorities have identified capacity for c.36,000 dwellings to be delivered by 2025 through their housing trajectories. This implies an uplift of nearly 50% on past housing completion rates in the area. Nearly 60% of planned dwellings are on medium and large sites with the majority focused in the western part of GBCWS, particularly Arun and Chichester.[vii] Larger development sites typically have longer lead-in times and early work is required if the identified sites are to have a realistic prospect of delivering within the next 10 years, but do offer the opportunity to put in place up-front infrastructure in a coordinated and phased way. This is particularly important in respect of potential improvements to the transport network that can help improve the connections between new strategic sites and existing centres of employment and services.

Strategic Implications:

a. **Explore opportunities to meet unmet housing needs:** authorities should continue and develop duty-to-cooperate discussions within and without the boundaries of the GBCWS area, and consider options for developing an over-arching spatial framework to guide future delivery.

b. **Broaden housing choice:** consider stock and tenure patterns to frame strategies for broadening housing choice – particularly needs arising from more constrained locations – including on new strategic sites.

c. **Focus on delivery of strategic sites:** local stakeholders need to ensure delivery of strategic sites moves forward quickly, and coordinate this with new infrastructure investment that can improve sustainability of peripheral locations and connectivity to main centres; engagement with the wider development industry will be key to help drive delivery.

Potential Opportunities and Actions:

Strategy element	Opportunities and actions	Relevant Themes: A Growing and Mobile Population	Relevant Themes: Meeting Future Housing Requirements	Relevant Themes: Delivering New Housing Supply
1. Explore long-term opportunities to meet unmet housing needs	• Continue and develop duty to cooperate discussions to explore long-term opportunities to meet unmet housing needs • Consider options for developing an over-arching spatial framework to guide future delivery • Explore opportunities with local planning authorities outside of the GBCWS boundary	✓	✓✓	✓
2. Widening the choice of housing supply	• Analyse the housing needs of those unable to meet their housing choices in constrained locations • Consider the potential to broaden the range of stock and tenure on strategic sites in conjunction with pump-priming of new public transport provision (e.g. more frequent bus connections) • Although it is easier to widen types of supply when there is greater physical capacity, opportunities to specify the types of housing to be delivered even in constrained authorities should be considered	✓✓	✓	✓
3. Ensuring early delivery of housing sites in GBCWS	• Put in place measures to necessitate technical evidence to improve prospects of projected delivery rates being achieved • Increase delivery coming from smaller sites should the delivery of strategic sites take longer than currently projected • Work either alone or with developers to ensure that major infrastructure/other constraints are delivered at the earliest opportunity. This may include identifying funding. • Potential to identify dedicated resources to support delivery of strategic sites and key development areas to help co-ordinate the process (linked to 4 below)	✓	✓	✓✓
4. Engaging with developers and investors to help support delivery	• Engage with a wider range of investors and developers within and outside of the region to encourage delivery of stalled sites and improve capacity to help support delivery • Explore potential scope for public private sector partnerships to deliver portfolios of smaller sites (e.g. joint ventures, Local Asset Backed Vehicles)		✓	✓✓

Source: NLP analysis

✓✓ = Major contribution to theme | ✓ = Supporting contribution to theme

HOUSING MARKET

Transport System: Towards an integrated transport strategy

An efficient and effective transport system is critical to the success of GBCWS as a location where many economic opportunities exist in close proximity to each other, but also given the functional economic and housing market relationships with adjoining areas such as Crawley/Gatwick Diamond and Greater London. The area is characterised by high levels of short and medium length trips being made by car together with significant levels of non-car travel in urban centres such as Chichester and Brighton & Hove. Brighton & Hove, in particular, has made significant gains in growth of non-car travel over the past decade.

Many of the area's transport pinch-points are well-documented and some improvements have already been made or are planned.[viii] The currently poor levels of east-west connectivity across GBCWS by road and rail represent a particular limitation, notwithstanding that a wider distribution of both housing and employment development is planned in the future, while the main urban centres will continue to grow. Transport improvements can support job growth in existing high employment areas within and outside of GBCWS by improving commuter access (through increased speed, reliability or comfort) and also job growth in new areas by connecting them to the wider economy. As noted above, new strategic housing and employment site opportunities present opportunities to front-load new infrastructure delivery and expand public transport provision that works with the grain of planned growth.

Improvements along the A27, increasing connectivity through improvements to bus and rail provision and increasing the role of non-car modes in urban areas have all been identified as measures to support economic growth. However, some measures imply potential choices and trade-offs. For example, creating a more attractive rail service across the area with express services may compromise the 'metro' nature of existing Greater Brighton rail services or require significant investment in order to create an enhanced service which meets both local and longer distance needs. These choices will require further appraisal, but above all need to be considered through the lens of a more integrated transport strategy for GBCWS that needs to be developed.

Strategic Implications:

a. **Improve access to labour markets:** the region needs to be allowed to grow by relieving some pressure points and encouraging growth in less constrained areas. This is consistent with adopting a more polycentric approach to growth.

b. **Improve connectivity across the region:** the sum of the Greater Brighton and Coastal West Sussex area is greater than the individual parts and improving connectivity across the region will increase market size and enable off-peak trips which can contribute to the wider economy.

c. **Increase non-car mode share:** non-car modes have been proven to support economic growth (particularly in Brighton & Hove) through the creation of capacity as well as improvements in overall environment.

Potential Opportunities and Actions:

Strategy element	Relevant Themes			Delivery Stakeholders
	Access to labour	Improving area-wide connectivity	Improving non-car mode choice	
A27 pinch point relief: E-W/Brighton incl Brighton by-pass junctions	✓✓	✓✓		Highways Agency, DfT, Local Authorities,
Removing bottlenecks around ports		✓✓		Local Authorities, Port Authorities, Port owners (if not owner)
West Coastway -Brighton rail capacity	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	Network Rail, DfT, TOC, Local Authorities
Brighton Mainline capacity	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	Network Rail, DfT, TOCs, Local Authorities
Service pattern improvements: B&H, mid-Sussex and Crawley/ Gatwick	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	Network Rail,DfT, TOCs, Local Authorities
East of Brighton rail service improvements	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	Network Rail, DfT, TOCs, Local Authorities
Rail journey time improvements	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	Network Rail, TOCs, DfT,Local Authorities
New direct route services via schemes such as Arundel Chord	✓✓	✓✓		Network Rail, DfT, TOCs, Local Authorities
Last mile peak-time access to larger urban areas:				Highways Agency, Local Authorities, bus operators, developers
• Traffic flow management through ITS and transport choice	✓	✓✓		
• Park & Ride options	✓	✓✓	✓✓	
Non-car mode choice:				Local authorities, developers, local business, (e.g. new tenants on strategic sites), potential sponsors
• Improvements to way finding, pedestrian prioritisation, safe havens			✓	
• Bicycle friendly traffic engineering	✓	✓	✓	
• Quiet/safe route creation	✓	✓	✓	
• Residential and workplace secure storage	✓	✓	✓	
• City bike schemes for business travel		✓	✓✓	
• Wheels2Work expansion	✓✓	✓	✓✓	

Source: ITA analysis

✓✓= Major contribution to theme | ✓= Supporting contribution to theme

TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Strategy element	Relevant Themes			Delivery Stakeholders
	Access to labour	Improving area-wide connectivity	Improving non-car mode choice	
Integrated ticketing	✓	✓✓	✓✓	Local Authorities, bus operators, TOCs,
A review of bus fares and affordability	✓✓	✓	✓	Local authorities, operators
Mixed mode choice for port access (remove pedestrian/commercial vehicle conflict)			✓✓	Local Authority, Port Authorities, Port operators
Improvement in freight route management		✓✓		Highways Agency, local authorities, Port Authorities, Port operators

Source: ITA analysis

✓✓ = Major contribution to theme | ✓ = Supporting contribution to theme

TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Framing a Spatially Integrated Strategy

Greater Brighton and Coastal West Sussex represent two distinct yet highly inter-connected areas, creating growth opportunities and challenges for each.

The practical challenge in **Greater Brighton** is how the future needs (for both employment and housing) of the City can be accommodated in such a way that its competitiveness is not unduly constrained. The factors that have made Brighton & Hove a highly effective generator of jobs, rising productivity and incubator for new businesses over the past decade need to be protected and enhanced, with critical thinking required for how the needs of the City's leading sectors can now be met as they mature and scale-up. However, the strategy also needs to recognise that adjoining authorities have their own needs and economic priorities to consider, recognising that outwards expansion from Brighton & Hove (and other locations including the Gatwick Diamond) will offer potential to access high-value growth sectors.

Coastal West Sussex has, so far, had a slower growth trajectory and retains a more 'traditional' economic fabric (apart from Chichester which functions as a significant service centre in its own right), and with generally poorer levels of transport connectivity. However, the role of the area is set to change: part as a result of the planned supply of new strategic employment and housing sites set out in Local Plans, and part due to the general outward migration from the main centres through the functioning of the housing market which looks set to continue. This will provide opportunities to support growth and define a broader economic role for parts of Coastal West Sussex, whilst acknowledging that the South Downs National Park and sensitive environmental designations are also important factors shaping development in this area.

In future, there is likely to be some greater correlation between the economic performance of Greater Brighton and Coastal West Sussex as the two areas become even more inter-connected. Drawing on capacity from across GBCWS will support the ability to achieve growth in a complementary way (and hence retain it within GBCWS), whilst diversification will benefit local economies outside what are currently the main growth 'hotspots'. In this way, maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal transport connectivity that joins the two areas will be fundamental to achieving the strategy.

Endnotes

[i] This reflects the timescale of the refresh of the Local Strategic Statement (LSS) by the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board and Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton Local Strategic Statement to be prepared jointly with the Greater Brighton Economic Board (under the auspices of the Office Programme Board).

[ii] It should be noted that this is not necessarily an exhaustive literature review but is based on a filtering of the existing evidence of most relevance at the strategic level. The papers have incorporated the latest data and other evidence available at the point of preparation. The accuracy of data derived from third party sources has not been checked or verified by NLP or ITA.

[iii]Greater Brighton incorporates the City of Brighton & Hove, Adur and Worthing, Lewes and Mid Sussex, while Coastal West Sussex also including Adur and Worthing alongside Arun and Chichester. These areas incorporate parts of the South Downs National Park Authority.

[iv] These issues are considered in more detail in a range of current literature on urban economic competitiveness, including for example Industrial revolutions: capturing the growth potential (McKinsey & Company/Centre for Cities, 2014) and Delivering change: making transport work for cities (Centre for Cities, 2014).

[v] See individual papers for more detailed commentary on potential opportunities and actions that have been identified for each of the topic areas.

[vi] Based on evidence contained within the Coastal West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013) and Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (draft, 2015). Figures exclude South Downs National Park Authority for which a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is currently being prepared but not available at the time of writing.

[vii] Defined as sites with capacity in excess of 100 dwellings.

[vii] See for example the A27 Corridor Feasibility Study published by the Department for Transport in March 2015.

Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners
Planning. Design. Economics.

Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd.
14 Regent's Wharf, All Saints Street
London. N1 9RL

T: 020 7837 4477
E: info@nlpplanning.com
nlpplanning.com

Interfleet
Transport Advisory
Member of the SNC·LAVALIN Group

Interfleet Transport Advisory
5th Floor, 9a Devonshire Square
London. EC2M 4YN

T: 020 7105 3700
E: groupcommunication@interfleet.co.uk
interfleetgroup.com