

Appendix 9

Hove Station Neighbourhoods Forum's Preferred Option for Resolving the Overlap in the Areas

HOVE STATION NEIGHBOURHOODS FORUM

RESPONSE TO BHCC CONSULTATION ON OPTIONS FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AND FORUM

The HSNF prefers a single Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared by a newly constituted Hove Neighbourhoods Forum, which would be fully representative of all the neighbourhoods which will be affected by regeneration, particularly by the combined effect of the regeneration of DA6 and the Greyhound Stadium site.

So far, the public have been consulted on two neighbourhood areas which overlap. There has been no organized consultation to establish residents' views about a compromise solution – a single neighbourhood plan to be created through a joint planning process. However, our Have Your Say event in Hove Park Ward on February 11th indicated significant potential for support. In an e-mail to Hove Park Ward Cllrs Bennet and Browne dated February 13th and copied to HSNF, a Tredcroft Road resident wrote ' I am happy to engage with you and other north-siders (many of whom judging from the Tues meeting have similar views to my own) to support an alternative and more inclusive view.'

More recently, just under 50% of the Hove Park consultation responses stated a preference for a single Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared for an area wider than either of the two areas proposed to date. Whilst the majority were from outside the Hove Park Ward, they included many users of the community facilities north of Old Shoreham Road. Moreover, other Tredcroft Road residents stated in their response that a leaflet circulated in Hove Park '...did not suggest or highlight the benefits of having one forum, rather it suggested that the two areas were in conflict'.

In this context, the following report sets out the reasons for the single plan approach and outlines a process which could enable a single plan to be prepared. It concludes with a formal request that the BHCC planning officers recommend that the council defers a decision on the current applications in September. This would allow a single plan approach to be developed by all parties and a consultation process to be designed and implemented which would objectively assess the level of support for a single plan approach.

Why designate a single plan area?

Of the options set out by city planning officers we prefer option 1a. However, we believe that a final decision about the boundary of a single area should be informed by a more objective and systematic consultation process than has been possible so far.

Such a consultation would deal with a wide range of planning and community issues relevant to deciding the boundary question. It would raise awareness of these issues and give all residents the opportunity to make a choice about their preferred boundary, based on an understanding of the purpose, scope and potential benefits of neighbourhood planning.

Basic principles of neighbourhood planning for Hove neighbourhoods – what we want to achieve.

- In the specific context of Hove, the purpose of neighbourhood planning is to enable all the neighbourhoods which will be affected by redevelopment, both north and south of the Old Shoreham Road, to engage in a collaborative, communities-led process which will maximize their influence the forthcoming regeneration of our part of Hove.
- We need to develop a shared vision of what we want our area to be like in 5,10,15 and 20 years' time. Our overall view is that we need a Neighbourhood Plan that ensures that the long term regeneration process makes the best use of '*brownfield sites*' which have already been developed and conserves and enhances the '*Green Heart of Hove*' - the Park, the Recreation Ground., allotments and schools playing fields which are intensively used and highly valued by residents in all surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Currently the council is being forced by the government planning inspector to allocate more sites for housing on greenfield sites, which is prompting widespread opposition from residents elsewhere in the city. Pressure on open land in the city will continue to intensify. A single Neighbourhood Plan supported by all the communities, both north and south of the *Green Heart*, would provide the most effective mechanism for protecting our valued open spaces.

The neighbourhoods abutting and 'wrapping around' DA6

- For many neighbourhoods DA6 is on the doorstep. A variety of Victorian neighbourhoods south of the Old Shoreham Road, abut and wrap around DA6: the Artists Quarter and Poets Corner to the west; the Conway Street and the Clarendons to the south, the Hove Station, Denmark Villas and The Drive Conservation Areas to south and east and the Fonthill-Wilburys area to the north and east.
- Similarly, North of Old Shoreham Road, the post war houses of The Orchards and the southern part of the Nevill area also abut the DA6 and will share with the Victorian neighbourhoods the direct impact of DA6 redevelopment.
- All these neighbourhoods should be directly and equally involved in a single process which focuses on the detailed planning of DA6. For example, all will want to influence the long term future of the old railway goods yard opposite the Artists Quarter, which is currently ear-marked as a 'waste management site'

The neighbourhoods further afield

- The detailed planning of DA6 will influence the distribution of housing and commercial development within DA6. But it will also raise the question of the relationship between DA 6 redevelopment and the long term future of the three business parks to the west

along the Old Shoreham Road: St Joseph's - adjacent to the Artists Quarter and the Avenues; Sussex Park, west of the Avenues; and the English Business Park bordering the Cemetery. The development of a long term Neighbourhood Employment Policy would need to consider how all these sites in combination would contribute to the provision of sites for employment.

- The neighbourhoods north and south of the Old Shoreham Road should both be fully engaged in the debate about the possible re-location of the King Alfred's Leisure centre because two of the possible sites for the new centre are DA6 and the Greyhound Stadium.
- The regeneration of Hove will bring with it major challenges for dealing with a potential increase in the volume of vehicular traffic across a wide area, which makes it necessary for all local communities to be engaged in the development of a Neighbourhood Traffic Plan. These challenges will include planning the future of the Nevill Road- Sackville Road junction with the Old Shoreham Road, the issue of increased traffic along Fonthill Road- Goldstone Crescent access to the A27 and future volumes of traffic along Holmes Avenue, as the link between Hangleton Road and Old Shoreham Road.

A Joint Neighbourhood Planning Process

We propose a joint neighbourhood planning process, as illustrated in the attached diagram. The principles and key components of this process are as set out below.

- A collaborative and inclusive process will provide the most effective way of ensuring that all views are fully taken into account when developing ideas and policies which will give local people a say in the change that is inevitable as a result of the designation of DA6.
- Hove Neighbourhoods Forum (HNF) would be designated as the qualifying body to prepare the Hove Neighbourhoods Plan, which would include all the neighbourhoods which will be affected by regeneration and development across the wider area of Hove in the forthcoming years.
- The membership of the HNF will be open to all residents and people working in the area and to all ward councilors who represent parts of the designated area
- Current members of the existing Hove Park Forum and the existing Hove Station Forum would automatically become members of the Hove Neighbourhoods Forum
- New members could join either one of the two existing forums or join directly the new Hove Neighbourhoods Forum
- The two existing Forums would be reconstituted to have responsibility for the two Neighbourhood Planning Groups

- The Neighbourhood Planning Groups would each devise their working arrangements and prepare planning proposals for their sub-area. They would report progress to the monthly meetings of the Hove Neighbourhood Forum.
- The work of the two groups would be supported by a joint technical planning and community engagement group. Subject to resources, the core of this group would be three community planning experts - one appointed by each of Hove Park and Hove Station Forums and one appointed by BHCC. These professionals would be supported by members of the Hove Neighbourhood Forum with relevant skills and experience.
- All ward councilors would have the opportunity to join the relevant forums and contribute to their work in whatever way they agree with the forums. The Ward Councilors Group would be convened on a regular basis and at key stages in the preparation of the plan. This would enable councilors to be fully briefed about and provide advice on evolving planning proposals as they affect all their wards. This arrangement would be fully consistent with official advice about councilors' roles in neighbourhood planning.

'Your role here can be about enabling, mediating and managing expectations. Whilst the ownership of the plan is in the hands of the community, your input will be invaluable. Sometimes neighbourhood groups will have come together because of opposition to proposed developments the quality of past development, proposed planning strategies or the effect of national policy. Your role here will be to explain the reasons for strategic decisions taken by the council and mediating to find a consensus and a collaborative way forward'

Local Government Association and Planning Advisory Group. *Neighbourhood Planning. A Simple Guide for Councillors.* December 2013 p 9

Moreover, this collaborative neighbourhood planning process would complement and enhance – not diminish - councilors' longstanding role of supporting their constituents who are affected by development proposals

- The boundary between the sub-areas would be along the Old Shoreham Road.
 - This would enable a coherent and integrated approach to developing planning proposals for DA6 along with the future of the existing industrial and commercial business parks to the west
 - This boundary would also mean that the residents of the Victorian streets north of the railway and immediately adjacent to DA6 and the residents of the Amherst Crescent neighbourhood would be fully involved in the development of proposals for DA6 and the business parks to the west.
 - Most importantly this would take the current “dispute over territory” to a place where all residents north, south, east and west of the DA6 area would feel they have a voice and not feel alienated or dominated by one or either Forum.

- The Neighbourhood Planning Groups would prepare planning proposals for their sub-area and would then come together to agree a Draft Plan for the whole area for approval by the Hove Neighbourhoods Forum. This Draft Plan would be the subject of the statutory 6 weeks consultation across the whole area. Subject to amendments the Neighbourhood Plan would then be submitted to the BHCC and thence go to Independent Examination and a Referendum in which all residents would be eligible to vote.

Conclusion

We believe that a single plan approach will be the most effective way of enabling all the neighbourhoods which will be affected by the City Plan proposals for our part of Hove to influence future development of our area.

We also believe that there would be widespread support for this approach if there was the opportunity to engage residents much more fully in a discussion of the pros and cons of working together.

We sincerely believe that further consultation and dialogue would allow for a reconciliation of apparent differences between the two Forums and allow for a more inclusive rather than divisive future when it comes to giving an informed and unified response by residents to City Plan proposals for future development.

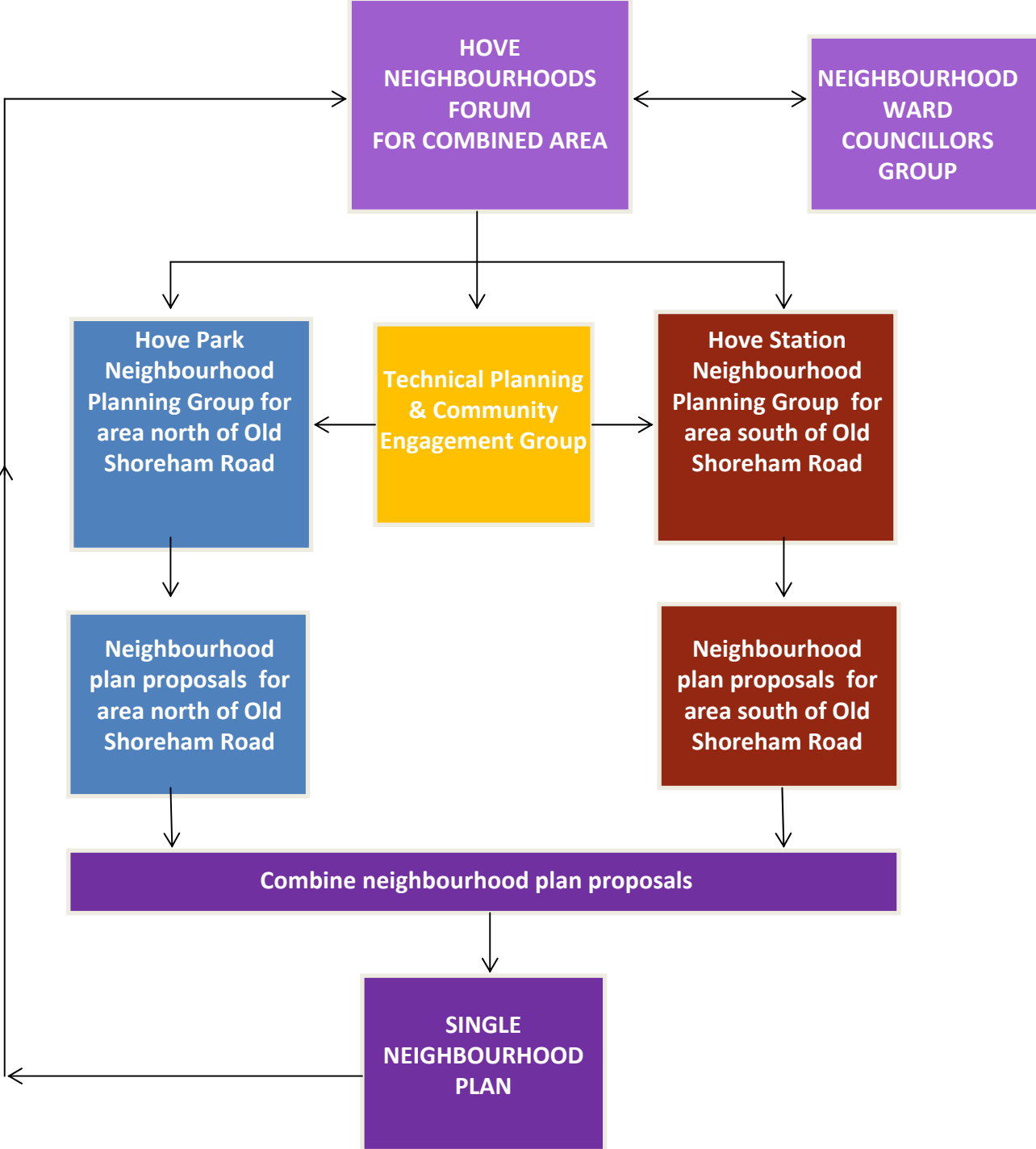
We recognize that officers may well consider it necessary to indicate their preferred option in their forthcoming committee report, based on the evidence currently available to them. However we formally request that officers recommend the BHCC to defer a decision on the two existing applications in September.

We have been transparent in our work to date, but have been the subject of scaremongering and misinformation. A deferred decision would allow the approach outlined in this submission to be developed and a consultation process to be designed and implemented which would objectively assess the level of support for a single plan approach. This consultation process would be greatly assisted if council officers and ward councilors were able to act in a facilitating role.

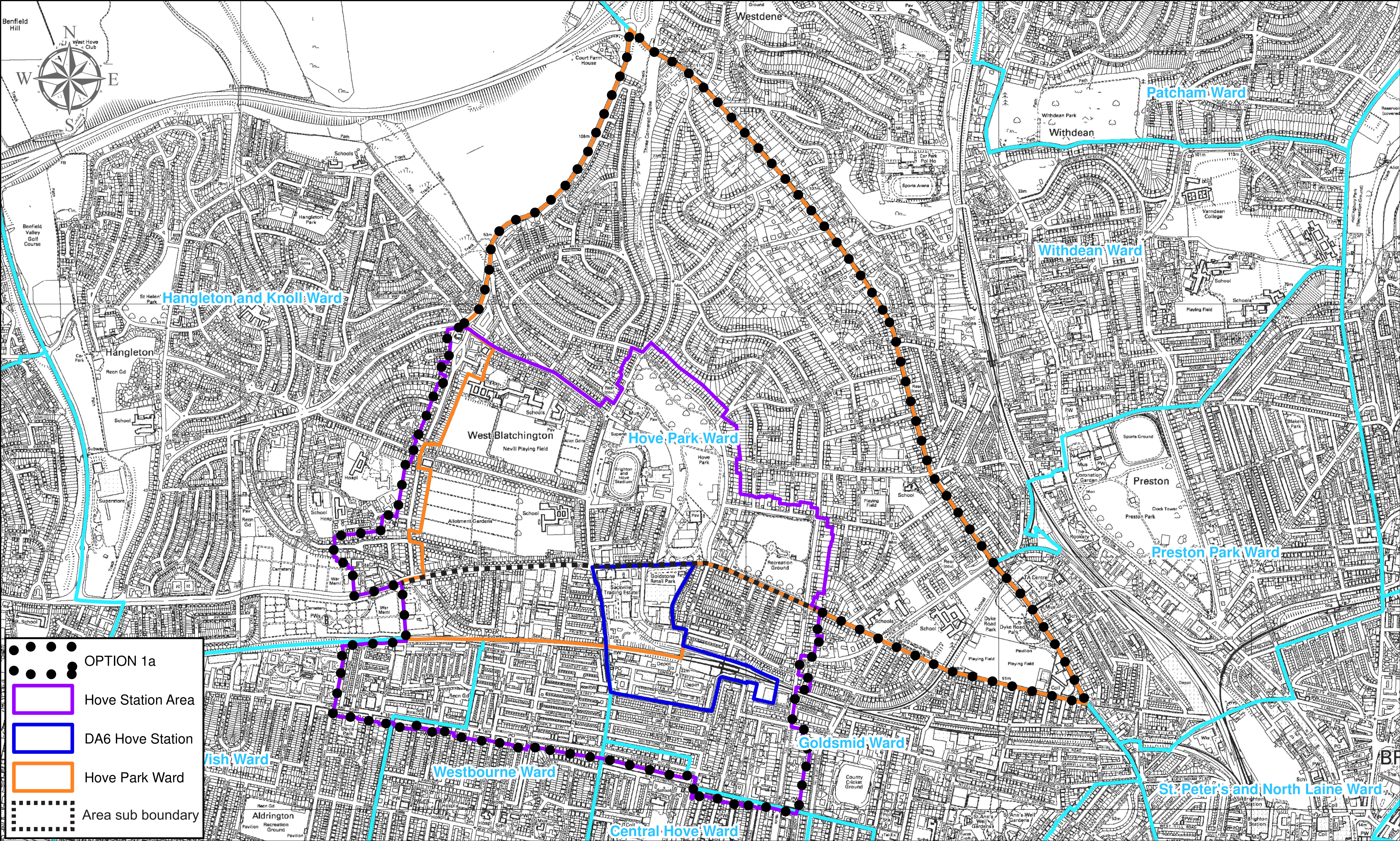
We further request that this submission is appended in full to the officers' report to committee.

Finally, since February our limited voluntary resources have had to focus on the designation process. However, this process has meant that many residents and local businesses in the area are now much more aware of development issues and the possibilities of neighbourhood planning. Moreover, we have learned a lot about residents' views of their neighbourhoods. Thus in parallel with continuing the efforts to establish a consensus about a single plan process the Committee wants to resume work on the options for DA6, which will be useful whatever the designation outcome. This would best be taken forward jointly with BHCC planning officers and we would welcome a meeting to discuss this issue.

SINGLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: PROPOSED JOINT PLANNING PROCESS



Hove Station and Hove Park Neighbourhood Areas



Scale: 1:13,491



(c) Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence: 100020999, Brighton & Hove City Council. 2014. Mapping & Information, Planning Strategy Group.