Meeting Eastbourne Borough Employment Needs

Wealden District Council consider that it has met Eastbourne Borough’s identified unmet employment needs within the Wealden Local Plan.

Eastbourne Borough Council’s Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) covers the proposed planning period of 2015-2035 and identifies an emerging unmet need of 50,770 sq metres of B8 floorspace which cannot be met in Eastbourne due to lack of suitable development sites.

This unmet need is translated (annualised) to a requirement of 33,000 sq metres for the purposes of Wealden District Council’s 13 year period of 2015-2028.

Wealden District Council’s forecast employment need up to 2028, as evidenced in the Wealden Economy Study (March 2018) and Wealden Economy Background Paper (January 2019) is 45,100 sq. metres of business floorspace (based on Experian forecasts).

Wealden District Council’s historic rates for employment development present a higher growth option for Wealden District Council as evidenced in paragraph 7.8 of the Economy Background Paper (January 2019). These translate to an anticipated employment provision of 85,800 sq m 2015 to 2028. The Council has an identified completion and commitment total of around 75,000 sq m since 2015, so has strong evidence that this level of development is coming forward.

Wealden’s forecast need of 45,100 sq metres plus Eastbourne Borough Council’s requirement of 33,000 sq metres space equals 78,100 sq m, which is within the 85,800 sq m historic rate figure and very near to the 75,000 sq m of business floorspace already committed and completed within Wealden since the start of the Plan period.

This provides strong justification that in combination the total amount of committed and completed development, the employment allocation of 22,500 mixed B space of the Wealden Local Plan will ensure meeting Eastbourne’s unmet need.

WDC 31st May 2019